

# CHIMO



*Salmon*

*Danny Dennis*

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# *Chimo*



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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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# From the President

*Ayubovan (Greetings)*

In many ways, 2002-2005 at the West Coast have been remarkable years for CACLALS, and I believe this is the first time that the association's headquarters was at a University College. I'm happy that the association prospered, not only in increased numbers, but in various projects, some of which have been concluded while others are in progress. CACLALS is now poised to move from a Small Association in the Canadian Federation of Humanities and Social Sciences to a Medium Association. This is encouraging, as not only will the association receive more funding from the Aid to Scholarly Associations grant, thereby being positioned well to disburse more funding to conference presenters, but it will also qualify for two representatives in the Federation's General Assembly.

These have been incredibly busy years for this Executive, resulting in three well-attended conferences - in Halifax, Manitoba, and London, Ont. - and Canada becoming the new headquarters of ACLALS. Apart from conference-related activities and publishing CHIMO, the CACLALS headquarters regularly updated the website. All past issues of CHIMO have been uploaded now, providing an interesting history of the association.

Our association has also been involved in disseminating research and literature through the new open-access e-journal, *Postcolonial Text*, which is now preparing to publish a conference proceedings issue, edited by Sabine Milz, David Jefferess, and Julie McGonegal. Future issues include a special edition on "Nollywood and Postcolonial Cinema in Africa," edited by Onookome Okome. I thank John Willinsky for the software of the Open Journal Systems that he developed and for continuing managerial assistance. *Postcolonial Text* is grateful to the CACLALS Executives for their support at the inception of the journal, and to those members who have submitted articles or who serve the journal in various editorial capacities.

CACLALS has been complimented for the contribution we made to the SSHRC self-transformation exercise – in particular for the report we submitted to SSHRC following two teleconferences, detailed questionnaires, and an Association Presidents' meeting in Ottawa. (Our association's response is in the SSHRC report and on the CACLALS website.)

You will see our association featured in the Federation publication *Renewing Scholarly Associations: Knowledge Networks for the Next Generation* (2005) and in the ACLALS newsletters, attesting to the lively participation of our members.

During these three years, I have represented CACLALS in the Federation's General Assembly and have also had the privilege to serve on its Board of Directors as one of three elected representatives of Small Associations. The Board meeting in March 2005 included a comprehensive overview of AUCC entitled "Contributing to a better tomorrow: Canadian University Research and Knowledge Transfer," presented by Michelle Gauthier, and an informative discussion paper on Copyright Reform by Vice-President Noreen Golfman. With new projects such as the "New Generation Initiative" introduced by President Don Fisher and the "National Dialogue on Higher Education" (November 28-29, 2005 conference at the Congress Centre in Ottawa), the Federation is moving ahead with plans to provide even more substantial support to the scholarly community, on many levels. (More details on the Federation website: <http://www.fedcan.ca>)

Sukeshi Kamra, as the new President, will now represent CACLALS in the General Assembly of the Federation. The Federation will call for nominations for my replacement to the Board in the months to come. It is also good to see another member of CACLALS, Donna Palmateer-Penne, as the new Vice-President of the Federation's Women and Equity Issues Network: WEIN. Donna has invited nominations for a member to represent CACLALS in WEIN.

I have been most gratified by the willingness of many members to help the Association in various ways. To my Executive and all who helped in the conferences, I can only say what a great team you have been at this demanding time. Thanks are also due to Robert Fleming (Executive Officer/Secretary-Treasurer 2002-2003) for helping us to get started with the work of the association in a very efficient manner, and Catherine Nelson-McDermott for holding the reins from August to December 2003, despite her heavy workload at UBC. Jennifer Kelly, who took over half-way into the Executive term at a particularly challenging time, handled the work of the Secretary-Treasurer (from Calgary) with good humour and admirable patience.

I thank the English Department of Kwantlen University College for unanimously voting to support this association, and our host institution for their generous financial support. Thanks are due to the Canadian Federation of Humanities and Social Sciences for funding and planning assistance for Congress and the Commonwealth Foundation for continued funding to CACLALS through ACLALS. These various organizations helped our budget to remain in good health.

Finally, I want to thank several people, who wish to remain anonymous, for their unwavering support through good times and bad. Without their faith in me and what the Association stands for it would have been well nigh impossible to get through the immense workload successfully and in a timely manner.

I will look back on these years with pleasure, especially when I light a candle (no, many candles) and inhale the essence of the aromatherapy which the Executive gave me on behalf of you all. It has been an unforgettable journey. I wish Sukeshi Kamra, Maria Casas, and the new Executive an equally memorable three years.

*Suba Pathum ( Best wishes),*

*Ranjini*

Ranjini Mendis  
August 2005

## FROM THE SECRETARY-TREASURER

Hello all.

My activities as Secretary-Treasurer are recorded in the minutes of the AGM, and so my comments here will be brief. I'm delighted to report that the finances remain healthy, thanks to a steadily increasing membership and to Ranjini's work with the Commonwealth Foundation, whose annual grant we recently received. I hope that in the coming years, the grants that we have come to rely on, such as the SSHRC grant for travel support to our annual conference at the Congress, will increase to keep pace with rising costs. The Federation's development of a web-based membership renewal system for member associations is indeed welcome news. And while some of the details of the system still need to be worked out (see the AGM minutes), it does promise to reduce a good deal of the work involved in maintaining CACLALS memberships-and you will be able to pay online, and with a credit card! (Many of you have been asking for this for years.) Watch for more details.

We have received numerous emails and notes of appreciation for the welcoming atmosphere of the 2005 Conference and for the travel support we are able to provide to presenters.

Please note that one of the many benefits of membership is access to the CACLALS listserv, where you can post conference announcements, calls for papers, requests for information, and other news. Just go to the CACLALS homepage (<http://www.kwantlen.bc.ca/CACLALS/>) and follow the instructions. (You will receive information about subscribing to the new listserv when the new Executive takes over, and the listserv is set up through Carleton University.)

As this is my final report as Secretary-Treasurer, I would like to thank the members of the Executive for the warm welcome and support as I took on the position (and a steep learning curve). I would like also to acknowledge the Department of English, University of Calgary, for letting us use the IUTS for correspondence, which helped keep some costs down considerably. In particular I thank Ranjini Mendis, whose remarkable attention to detail and positive approach to the labour of running and promoting our organization (not to mention her ability to send emails-and remember them all) are impressive, to say the least.

With best wishes for all your endeavours,

Jennifer Kelly  
Secretary-Treasurer

## CACLALS 2005 AGM MINUTES

MAY 31, 2005

**Present:** Jennifer Andrews, Geraldine Balzer, Maria C. Casas, Jill Didur, Jo-Ann Episkenew, Robin Freeman, Susan Gingell, Gugu Hlongwane, Jennifer Kelly, Douglas Ivison, Sukeshi Kamra (left early), Eddy Kent, Judith Leggatt, Diana Lobb, Ranjini Mendis, Prabhot Parmar, Don Randall, Terry Tomsy, Christine Vogt-William

**Regrets:** Chandrima Chakraborty, Kelly Hewson, Wendy Robbins.

The meeting was called to order at 4:15.

1. It was moved by Sukeshi Kamra, and seconded by Susan Gingell, to adopt the Agenda as presented, with the minor change of moving the visit of representatives of the Federation (Item 4) to the second item, due to time constraints. Carried.

2. Federation representatives (Agenda Item 4): Donna Pennee reported on the various activities of the Federation that have specific interest to CACLALS. She noted that the Federation has been examining the changing demographics of the next generation of academics, and that the Aid to Scholarly Publishing program has been reviewed with the recommendations of more funding and increased prioritization given to first-time authors. She referred to Federation-run sessions at the Congress to address Copyright Legislation and Open Access, and Mentoring for scholars new to the academy and/or who represent a new or minoritized demographic in post-secondary education. The Open Access program, for example, is looking to support online journals. Regarding SSHRC, Dr. Pennee reported that the process for the Standard Research Grants has been reviewed and an additional 10 million has been allocated. There has been a new level of funding introduced, to be implemented in 2007, to provide smaller grants than the Standard Research Grants and to support smaller projects over a three-to-five-year period. Dr. Pennee commented that the SSHRC Transformation Process continues with the support from the Humanities, and that the Equity committee is reviewing the progress of the Canada Research Chair program regarding issues of equitable representation. She acknowledged the input from CACLALS to the Women's and Equity Issues Network (WEIN) committee and invited CACLALS to suggest a representative to the committee.

Jacqueline Wright noted that next year's Congress will be held at York University, and the dates provided for the CACLALS conference are May 26 through May 29. (The incoming executive may select from these dates.) ACCUTE's dates are May 28 through May 31. The 2007 Congress will be at the University of Saskatchewan, the 2008 Conference will be at UBC, and in 2009 it will be in Ottawa, with the specific university still to be determined.



Ranjini Mendis mentioned that Jacqueline Wright is retiring this year and on behalf of CACLALS she thanked Ms. Wright for her many years of service and support of CACLALS. Ranjini also thanked Donna Pennee for her work in the Women's and Equity Issues Network and offered the Commonwealth Foundation's handbook on Gender and Equity.

2. Moved by Sukeshi Kamra and seconded by Jo-Ann Episkenew to approve the minutes from the AGM 2004 as circulated in *CHIMO*. Carried.

3. Business Arising from Minutes

i) Clarification of Aboriginal Roundtable and Specific Sessions on Aboriginal Literatures

Jennifer Kelly commented that at the 2004 AGM the possibility of having sessions devoted specifically to the critical analysis of Aboriginal Literatures, in conjunction with the Roundtable, was discussed and agreed upon. Ranjini reported that she had suggested Renate Eigenbrod be the coordinator for Aboriginal sessions for allied associations, but had been informed that Marianne Fiset was co-ordinating Aboriginal sessions for the Congress. Ranjini had written to ACCUTE President Keith Wilson that Renate would be co-ordinating the sessions of CACLALS and ACCUTE, but due to programming difficulties, this did not occur. Susan Gingell noted that we did not receive many papers on Aboriginal literature this year which resulted in few papers spread out in the program. There was some discussion regarding the benefits and potential limitations of specific sessions on Aboriginal literatures. As the current Executive is now completing its term, this is an issue to be addressed by the incoming Executive.

This led to further discussion regarding which organizations with similar interests in Aboriginal literatures could be contacted in the near future regarding joint sessions at the Congress. These include CWSA, ACTR, ACQL, CASCA (Canadian Anthropology Society/La Société Canadienne d'Anthropologie), among others.

ii) Moved by Maria C. Casas and seconded by Gugu Hlongwane to approve the abbreviated period for the position of President-Elect (given that Sukeshi Kamra's election by acclamation occurred after the regular one-year term of President-Elect began). Carried.

iii) Susan Gingell inquired as to the progress of the study, proposed by Arun Mukherjee at the 2004 conference, to examine the progress of post-colonial literatures entering curricula. Ranjini Mendis responded that only one response had been received, and that Professor Mukherjee will be contacted for follow-up.

- iv. Sukeshi Kamra commented on this year's scheduling conflicts with ACCUTE and the need for additional communication among organizations with similar interests and shared members. Susan Gingell suggested that each organization put links to other organizations' conference programs on their websites to assist participants in planning their conference attendance.

#### 4. President's Report

Ranjini spoke of the very interesting, overwhelmingly busy, and highly productive three years of the current Executive in CACLALS. She noted the increase in membership, renewal of interest in the conference, and active participation of members-and that CACLALS is only twenty members short of moving from a Small Association in the Federation to a Medium Association.

She noted the Association's accomplishments of the last three years: three successful conferences; five issues of CHIMO to date; active participation in the SSHRC Transformation Exercise (CACLALS report is in the "Report on the Response of Scholarly Associations in the Humanities and Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada"); and contribution of information to the Federation's publication entitled "Renewing Scholarly Associations: Knowledge Networks for the Next Generation."

She mentioned the founding of *Postcolonial Text*, the new e-journal for postcolonial studies (during the current term of the Executive), and thanked John Willinsky for developing the software and continuing to support the management of the journal.

Ranjini spoke of the challenging year that CACLALS has been through following the ACLALS election in Hyderabad, and offered to answer any questions from those present. She gave a summary of the work that is under way in ACLALS, including the Commonwealth Foundation annual application for funding. She reported on a Commonwealth Consultancy she had attended a few days earlier, in London, England. The 2007 ACLALS conference will be held in Vancouver, and Ranjini will be sending out a call for CACLALS members to volunteer to various committees.

She thanked Kwantlen University College for hosting CACLALS and for generously supporting her work, and the Commonwealth Foundation and ACLALS for funding to CACLALS during the three years. She also thanked the Federation for the support and planning assistance to run the annual conference.

Finally, Ranjini thanked all those who had taken a keen interest in the work of CACLALS and the CACLALS Executive (by name) for vetting papers, suggesting special speakers, assistance in editing CHIMO, and responding to

numerous queries on conference-related matters. She specially thanked Jennifer Kelly for taking on the Secretary-Treasurer position in the midst of an extremely busy period in the life of the Association. She appreciated Jennifer's conscientious attention to detail.

## 5. Secretary-Treasurer's Report

Jennifer Kelly reported that as of May 25, 2005, there were 221 members of CACLALS. This figure includes 76 students and 11 honorary members. Included in this figure are 16 members from the US and 29 members from other nations. Membership has enjoyed a steady increase during the tenure of the current executive.

Jennifer distributed the financial statement published in the Winter 2004/Spring 2005 issue of CHIMO (No. 49). She commented that the CACLALS account balance fluctuates around the time of the conference and that a core balance of approximately \$5,000 is the norm. She also noted that it is commendable that the balance has remained steady despite increased costs and the absence of a comparable increase in grants.

Jennifer presented information on the Membership Renewal System the Federation has developed with Leverus Inc., a web developer, to “offer associations an inexpensive and secure system for online membership renewal” (Irene Sullivan). IATS Ticketmaster will act as the intermediary for associations and credit card companies. Jennifer commented that the workload for maintaining the membership is time consuming and that the cost-benefit makes the system appealing. The Executive discussed the system at the Executive Committee meeting and indicated its support of the system as well. The Executive proposed asking the membership to consider increasing membership fees to cover the costs of the system. As outlined by the Federation information, and in relation to our membership, the costs of the system are as follows:

## Membership Renewal System

### Annual Income Membership (based on 215 members)

155 reg. @ \$45 each	\$6,975.00
60 students/PTS @ \$20 each	\$1,200.00
total membership income	<u>\$8,175.00</u>

### Membership Renewal System (first year)

Startup fee	\$235.00
Transaction fees (215 @ 0.46 cents each)	\$ 98.90
Credit card discount fees (8175 x 2.1%)	\$171.68
Total Year 1 costs	<u>\$505.58</u>
% of dues collected	6.18%

### Membership Renewal System (second year)

Web hosting/usage fee	\$50.00
Changes to website (15.00 per field)	\$30.00
Transaction fees (215 x 0.46 each)	\$98.90
Credit card discount fees (8175 x 2.1%)	\$171.00
Total Year 2 costs	<u>\$350.58</u>
% of dues collected	4.29%

While many membership renewal receipts are sent through the IUTS mail system, there are many sent through regular post at a rate of approximately \$100.00 per year. These figures therefore would account for an additional saving of \$100.00. Under this system, receipts would be forwarded directly to the members.

Jennifer provided the following list of responses to specific questions as provided by Irene Sullivan of the Federation:

- i) International transactions will be handled the same way as Canadian transactions - via credit card.
- ii) Payment by cheque is not allowed by this system. This could be a detriment to some, particularly graduate students who may not have credit cards. This also means that while much of the workload of membership maintenance and accounting will be reduced, it will not be eliminated entirely.

- iii) The system does not generate renewal reminder notices via email (though this may be a future development). While receipts are mailed directly to members, and a notice of renewal forwarded to the organization, it is the organization's responsibility to maintain its membership files.

Susan Gingell inquired as to whether or not the Federation/Ticketmaster have provided a guarantee that fees will not increase over time.

Douglas Ivison commented that in his experience about half of the members are likely to want to make payments by cheque.

Moved by \_\_\_, seconded by \_\_\_ to raise the regular membership fee from \$45 to \$50 on the condition that the above concerns are adequately addressed and that the fee increase be implemented at the time of the commencement of the system. Carried unanimously.

## 6. Book Review Editor's Report

Although current reviews editor Shao-Pin Luo was absent, previous book reviews editor Susan Gingell presented review statistics provided by Shao-Pin and commented that the books of three CACLALS members (one of these is an international member) are currently being reviewed for CHIMO. She noted that there is a need for reviews of films and asked for suggestions on making this possible. In particular, it is difficult to get copies of films (i.e. that of Armand Garnet Ruffo) for reviewing purposes.

## 7. Graduate Students' Report

Diana Lobb reported on SAGE, a graduate student organization, which responded to the SSHRC Transformation through a conference entitled "Between the Ivory Tower and the Street." There was some discussion regarding the value of having conference sessions on professional concerns and professionalization that will foster open discussion and conversation.

## 8. New Business

- i) Sailaja Krishnamurti has agreed to be the local representative for CACLALS at the 2006 Congress at York University.
- ii) There was some discussion as to the role that cultural studies plays, or should play, in conference programming and in relation to the CACLALS mandate. It was suggested that the CACLALS mandate posted on the CACLALS website be examined and broadened to include these perspectives and concerns. It was agreed that this is a matter for the incoming Executive to address.

- iii) Susan Gingell presented the following Notice of Motion on behalf of the 2002-2005 Executive:

Whereas email has rendered unnecessary the requirements and desiderata that the President and Secretary-Treasurer of CACLALS reside in the same region and that where possible be at the same or proximate institutions, I move the deletion of sections 8a and b of the constitution, which set out terms of reference for the Executive Committee, and that currently read:

- a. The chief officers of the Association shall belong in the same region on Canada, preferably to the same or proximate institutions.
- b. Regional Representatives will be distributed in the following manner: British Columbia and the Territories: one; Prairies: one; Ontario: one; Quebec: one; Atlantic Provinces: one. The region in which the Headquarters of the Association is situated shall be held to be represented by the chief officers.

In the place of these sections, I move that the following be substituted:

- a. The regional representatives shall be distributed in the following manner: British Columbia and the Territories: one; Prairies: one; Ontario: one; Quebec: one; Atlantic Provinces: one.
- b. The region in which the headquarters of the Association is situated shall be held to be represented by the President.

As per the requirements of a Notice of Motion as outlined in the Constitution, 10 signatures of members were collected. Motion carried.

- iv) Following a suggestion made at the Aboriginal Roundtable that CACLALS support Ward Churchill in his fight to maintain his tenured position despite conservative political opposition to his views, it was moved by Jo-Ann Episkenew and seconded by Maria C. Casas that the Association write a letter of support to the Governor of Colorado, on behalf of CACLALS. Carried. Jennifer Andrews agreed to write the letter on behalf of the Association.
- v) Elections of CACLALS Executive 2005-2008: President:  
Sukeshi Kamra (formerly President-Elect), Carleton University  
Secretary-Treasurer: Maria Caridad Casas, OISE/University of Toronto  
Atlantic Representative: John Ball, University of New Brunswick  
Quebec Representative: Heike Harting, Université de Montréal  
Prairie Representative: Jo-Ann Episkenew, First Nations University of Canada  
BC and Northern Territories Representative: David Chariandy, Simon Fraser University  
Graduate Student Representative (2005-2007): Prabhjot Parmar, University of Western Ontario

Graduate Student Representative (2004-2006): Diana Lobb, University of Waterloo

Dorothy Lane, of Luther College, Regina, was nominated as College Representative at the AGM, and she has since accepted the position.

- vi. Diana Lobb raised the need for a moderator, or guidelines for the CACLALS listserv. She offered to explore such guidelines and provide these to the membership for consideration.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:50 p.m

Jennifer Kelly  
Secretary-Treasurer

## **Guidelines for the CACLALS listserv: “Netiquette”**

by Diana Lobb, University of Waterloo

With a membership spread across Canada (and the globe), the Internet offers CACLALS a unique opportunity to foster real-time discussion amongst its members through e-mail exchanges and via the CACLALS list-serv. However, while it speeds up communication and fosters greater ability for us all to participate in intellectual exchange and debate, this “new” technology also brings with it some challenges. As list-serv exchanges over the last year have demonstrated, we, as a group, need to come to some agreement as to what constitutes acceptable “netiquette” in our discussions. What is “netiquette?” Wikipedia defines it as follows:

Netiquette (neologism, a contraction of “network etiquette”) is a catch-all term for the conventions of politeness recognised on Usenet, in mailing lists, and other electronic forums such as internet message boards. These conventions address group phenomena (such as flaming) with changes in personal behaviours, such as not posting in all uppercase, not (cross-) posting to inappropriate groups, refraining from commercial advertising outside the biz groups and not top-posting. RFC 1855 is a fairly lengthy and comprehensive set of such conventions.

(<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Netiquette>)

The RFC (Request For Comment) 1855 (<http://rfc.net/rfc1855.html>), a set of guidelines solicited and endorsed by the Internet Engineering Task Force (<http://www.ietf.org>) of the Internet Society International Secretariat (<http://www.isoc.org>), does provide an extensive code of netiquette conduct. However, its focus is very broad-being generally applicable to everything from “DOOM” discussion groups to forums for academic debate. The question I propose, and which I raised at the Annual General Meeting, is that, as a collective, how do we adapt the broad recommendations of a code of conduct like RFC 1855 to allow for the free exchange of ideas and at the same time discourage what the editors at Albion.com describe as “flame wars-series of angry letters, most of them from two or three people directed toward each other, that can dominate the tone and destroy the camaraderie of a discussion group” (<http://www.albion.com/netiquette/rule7.html>)?

Before we meet again at York in 2006, I would like to put together a draft of a CACLALS code of netiquette. To that end I ask for the input of the membership as a whole. If your institution, or a list-serv or internet forum has an existing netiquette code of conduct that you think might be helpful-please forward it to me, along with any other suggestions that you might have for making the CACLALS netiquette code more useful and of course, user friendly.

Cheers,

Diana Lobb, [df2lobb@uwaterloo.ca](mailto:df2lobb@uwaterloo.ca)



## CONFERENCE REPORTS

### CACLALS CONFERENCE AT CONGRESS 2005

Report by Sukeshi Kamra, Carleton University

The 2005 CACLALS conference opened with a situating of the theme of the Congress, “Paradoxes of Citizenship”, in ongoing debates around decolonization by Himani Bannerji. The question that informed her talk is the very critical one of the work of postcolonial theory in shaping contemporary discussions of citizenship. The talk began with identifying what Bannerji considers to be a practice of postcolonial theory that she finds most problematically expressed in Dipesh Chakrabarty's *Provincializing Europe*. As a very particular under-standing of the politics of domination, she argues, *Provincializing Europe* re-employs terms made available by colonial discourse, erecting a false opposition between tradition and modernity that encourages a de-historicised and exclusively cultural approach to the study of postcolonial India. Absenting or, at the very least, neglecting social relations (particularly those described by gender and economic relations) is done, she argues, in the name of a rejection of modernity since modernity is identified, over-simplistically, with the colonial project. It results in an absence of contemporary India, its peoples, and urgent political issues and a continued refocusing of attention on a colonially identified and articulated difference (here of tradition versus modernity) as something worth writing about. The dangers posed by this (ultimate) reification of the politics of difference, she argues, is more immediately apparent in representations post-911 in U.S. and Canadian media, particularly photo exhibitions staged by Magnum Photos. The question to ask, she suggests, is what is accomplished by the organization's extensive coverage of events noted for their extraordinary violence, by their indulging in what she described as the “hermeneutics of harm.” Both in the latter and in Chakrabarty's work she finds a dismaying expression of a politics of passivity that privileges the hermeneutical over praxis, reading over action. Further, both can be regarded as involved in an aestheticising of disaster and devastation and thus in an erasure of the very real history of struggle with which the texts purportedly deal. Against this type of practice of representation, she suggests, we consider the work of Edward Said, whose particular practice of postcolonialism refuses a rejection of humanism and its legacies. The talk ended with an abbreviated discussion of Said's refusal in his work on culture and activism of the very notion of irreducible forms of difference, his insistence on the political engagement of the intellectual and his active involvement in the Palestinian struggle.

The plenary delivered by Henry Giroux offered a very nice complement to Bannerji's talk as it practically took up where the latter left off: arguing for the need to keep Said in the forefront of discussions regarding intellectuals and

public culture in the face of the rise of anti-democratic tendencies in the U.S. and across the globe. Giroux began with describing current attempts at redescribing crisis as criticism in some critical opinion and linked it with a worrisome tendency to posit the contemplative as the “proper” intellectual activity (and negate political engagement) of academe. The problem, he argues, is particularly acute as this crisis in higher education (that is at its most obvious level a corporatizing of campuses across North America) forms part of a much larger social and political crisis, particularly in the U.S. Invoking Said’s positioning of himself as a border intellectual, as a secularist, and as a politically engaged intellectual, Giroux spoke of Said’s legacy as one that requires us to keep the very question of the public intellectual alive at all times. In his writings on culture and politics, Giroux pointed out, Said always reminds us what it means for those engaged in the academy to take responsibility as citizens of that very important space—the public space of education. Giroux described some of the ways in which he believes Said modeled such responsibility: by always speaking against quietism, by never being afraid of controversy, by regarding theory as the democratic underpinning of political action, by situating border literacy in the plural, by expanding the sites of pedagogy to the larger cultural world and thus suggesting how the seemingly ever-present gap between academe and the broader society could be bridged. Many of the sessions looked at the ways in which literary texts and cultures map citizenship, noting in particular exclusions required by the process and attempts of those excluded to deal with the very fact of their exclusion, invisibility, or erasure. In one session, thinking through biculturalism was the focus. Papers by Asha Sen, Deepa Chordia and Karen Dielman described the very active relationship between a dominant English language cultural production and other language productions in literary works as well as addressing the staging of the ethnicity-language-religion nexus in negotiations between government and settlers (Dielman on negotiations between the Canadian government and the incoming Mennonites between 1870 and 1925). In another session, papers looked at literary texts that grapple with contemporary political and cultural realities of formerly colonized nations. Gugu Hlongwane’s paper on Zakes Mda’s *The Heart of Redness* looked at the ways in which the novel addresses excesses of the post-apartheid South Africa and attempts to imagine the nation in terms of diversity. Julie Mehta’s paper on Amitav Ghosh’s *Hungry Tide* grappled with the novel’s description of new liminal spaces of dialogue in the geographically and culturally unstable landscape of the Sunderbans. Prasad Bidaye’s paper on Zulfikar Ghose’s *The Triple Mirror of the Self* approached the text through the lens of Said’s deliberations on exile by extending it to a reading of Ghose’s exploration of home, homecoming, and re-membering.

In a session that looked at the ways in which the literary continues to be explored as a place of belonging (especially within the context of internal colonization), Jennifer Andrews argued for the building of literary language as a

place of transformation and play in the work of Diane Glancy. Kofi Campbell looked at poetry written by Bud Osborn, from within a ghetto in Vancouver, and its claims of a community that specifies the limits of race, gender and ethnic terminologies. Sarah Brouillette offered a reading of Zulfikar Ghose's *Triple Mirror* that focused attention on the work's staging of the biographical refusal (Ghose's) to claim an "authentic" South Asian past in the face of critics' demands that he do so.

In a panel with papers that shared an interest in the politics of violence, as a requirement of state, papers addressed texts that reproduce or interrogate dominant opinion and representation. Sophie McCall's paper on the legacy of the Oka crisis examined the war of images that produced the conflict in media in years following the crisis in terms that only specify the kinds of exclusions performed when it comes to representing violence identified with an other. Prabhjot Parmar's paper on Mulk Raj Anand's novel *Across the Black Waters*, which deals with the forced participation of colonial India in the First World War, moved from discussing this early critique of colonial politics to recent Remembrance Day ceremonies in the U.K. and Canada, noted for their exclusion of Indian veterans. Her paper suggested a parallel between the response of Indians to such exclusion, and Anand's interventionist novel. Paulomi Chakraborty's paper on partition stories in Jhumpa Lahiri's collection, entitled *Interpreter of Maladies*, examined the implications of the construct of a conjuncture between the historical necessity of exile and uprooting as a result of the partition of Bengal in 1947 with the emigration of middle-class Bengalis to the United States over the last few decades. In this fact, Chakraborty finds the contradiction of localism (Bengali culture within which both types of historical experience are located) and universalism (the positing of exile as a universal, trans-historical experience) problematically articulated.

In many ways, and at the risk of generalizing, a majority of sessions highlighted a very important concern: problematizing notions of felicitous citizenship. This they did by bringing into visibility cultural texts that one way or another attempt to describe and articulate the painful conditions under which newness enters the world (to return to Rushdie's evocative phrase for de-scribing the interstitial space occupied by a primarily immigrant culture in the metropolitan West). Whether the particularities that the papers explored were of an individual or collective transported past, the forced occupation of the space of counterpublics or of the search for belonging/home by the forcing of existing locations of identity paradigms, and the complications attending the task of claiming rights, to name only a few, the conference offered much in the way of cultural spaces of struggle for equity within the notion of citizenship.

## **Sixth Annual CACLALS Aboriginal Roundtable: The Im/Possibility of Decolonizing Research Collaborations**

Report by Maria Caridad Casas, Organizer, University of Toronto

The Sixth Aboriginal Roundtable, held at the annual CACLALS gathering, was hosted by the University of Western Ontario this year. The tone was set by opening prayers led by Dan and Mary Lou Smoke (University of Western Ontario); the atmosphere was then focused but relaxed, leading to a long, fruitful discussion about the (mostly internal) conflicts of academics engaged in collaborations with non-academic members of First Nations and Native Americans. The situation of Ward Churchill, whose tenured position at the University of Colorado at Boulder is being threatened, was raised and later tied in to a discussion of the power of institutions of knowledge. This power was a part of the participants' ambiguity about the role of the academic researcher. Some researchers also felt a kind of moral implication in the sometimes-terrible knowledge created by their research. The different responsibilities of the academic and non-academic researchers in collaboration, and the discomfort felt by academic researchers at continuously being confronted with a choice between body and mind in the culture of academic research were other topics of discussion. Ric Knowles (Guelph University) and Monique Mojica (Turtle Gals Performance Ensemble) participated as a collaborating team; among the other participants in the discussion were Jennifer Andrews (University of New Brunswick), Jennifer Kelly (University of Calgary), Renate Eigenbrod (University of Manitoba), Jo-Ann Episkeneu (First Nations University of Canada), Nora Stovel (University of Alberta), Priscilla Walton (Queen's University). Many of the twenty-five participants had clearly come prepared to listen very closely; their listening silence supported the discussion, while the final joining of hands helped to make us feel like a community of real people. I would like to thank Dan and Mary Lou Smoke for their prayers, Renate Eigenbrod and Jo-Ann Episkeneu for contributions to the call for papers, Nora Stovel for input on this report, and Ranjini Mendis for her help in making this Sixth Roundtable a reality.

## **TransCanada: Literature, Institutions, Citizenship**

Report by Sophie McCall, Simon Fraser University

What might *TransCanadian* literature look like in this present moment of resurgent nationalism, institutionalized multiculturalism and accelerated globalization? What is Canadian citizenship worth within a North American security perimeter fence that practices differential surveillance? Can institutions such as the university play a role in social change, or do they merely reproduce their own stasis? These were some of the questions that preoccupied the 100-plus delegates at the conference *TransCanada: Literature, Institutions, Citizenship*, held at the Wosk Centre for Dialogue in Vancouver (June 23-26,

2005), and coordinated by Smaro Kamboureli (University of Guelph) and Roy Miki (Simon Fraser University), with help from committee members Alessandra Capperdoni, David Chariandy, Jeff Derksen, Sophie McCall, Kathy Mezei (all from SFU) and Mark McCutcheon (U Guelph). A recurrent theme that emerged from the discussions was the desire for transformation. There was a palpable hunger for political relevance as delegates tried to conceptualize how university academics might better use their institutional positions to initiate change within the university systems, as well as build meaningful links with writers, artists, activists and other communities.

The emphasis on transformation emerged from the format of the conference, which encouraged self-reflexive thinking and dialogue about current critical junctures in Canadian literary studies. Rather than holding multiple parallel sessions, in which delegates presented tightly focused papers on their own research projects, the conference unfolded in a series of provocative keynote addresses, response papers, position papers and research cells. Each session was followed by lengthy debates, coordinated by discussants who had to keep track of ever-lengthening speakers' lists and impulsive interjections from the delegates, some of whom became quite enthusiastic about the UN-style venue in the Dialogue Centre (an amphitheatre with microphones at each seat). Small-group, research-cell presentations helped counter the dizzying effects of the sometimes circular argumentation that whizzed around the amphitheatre at high speed.

A strong focus of the discussion was the middle term of the conference's title: institutions. This was a welcome departure from most academic conferences, in which "the institution" becomes the large, ignored elephant sitting in the middle of the room. While Diana Brydon (University of Western Ontario) and Stephen Slemon (University of Alberta) offered a hopeful vision of how to change existing university and national institutions, Rinaldo Walcott (OISE, University of Toronto), Len Findlay (University of Saskatchewan) and Julia Emberley (UWO) urged us to imagine alternative kinds of institutions. A memorable instance in the conference was Richard Cavell's (University of British Columbia) emphatic exhortation that "we have to stop talking to ourselves," and that we need to reclaim the role of the public intellectual to reach wider and more diverse audiences. This discussion brought to light the disparities between delegates, each of whom has vastly uneven access to institutional power. Artists, writers, contract faculty members, graduate students and post-doctoral fellows at times pointed out that discussions were focusing too heavily on the macro-political level of university governing structures. The closing session of the event, entitled "The Future," promised to articulate what TransCanada's political project might be. Roy Miki and Smaro Kamboureli, who were jointly facilitating the session, helped push the discussions towards concrete outcomes and future collaborations. Though it was not possible to articulate a single statement about the focus of such a project, Stephen Slemon, in an amazing

moment of spontaneous intellectual creativity, managed to pound out a few sentences that will provide a starting point. More importantly, there seemed to be high interest and enthusiasm for holding a follow-up conference at the University of Guelph, where Smaro Kamboureli is establishing an Institute of Critical Studies in Canadian Literature.

Talk of institutions risks a certain evacuation of content, but the many outstanding presentations over the weekend, including keynote addresses, position papers, research cells, the artist panel and the literary readings, provided focus and specificity for the debates. It would be impossible to provide a sketch of them all (in any case they are still available at [www.transcanadas.ca](http://www.transcanadas.ca)), but I was particularly taken by Ashok Mathur's (Thompson Rivers) deliberation on hybridity and the politics of representation in post-1990 critical race debates, and Lily Cho's (UWO) paradoxical imagining of a "diasporic citizenship." Daniel Coleman's (McMaster University) keynote address on English-Canadian civility provided Peter Dickinson (SFU) with a perfect foil for his highly entertaining response paper. And the doctoral students' plenary session, which showcased five intriguing and original PhD dissertations in the last stages of production, suggested a real 'future' to TransCanada.

Last, but not least, was the hospitality that TransCanada offered its guests. TransCanada's parties will not be soon forgotten. As Margery Fee (UBC) pointed out, the best way to get people talking and thinking together is to feed them well and get them on the dance floor. Collaboration and intellectual exchange take on unexpected forms in the small hours of the morning....



## CACLALS at COSSH 2005



Plenary Speaker: Henry Giroux (L) Jill Didur (R)



Himani Bannerji



Loma Goodison



Aboriginal dramatist Monique Mojica



“Author Meets Critics Panel”

From L to R: Susan Gingell, Cheryl Suszack, Neil ten Kortenaar,  
Ted Chamberlin and Regna Darnell



From L to R: Diana Lobb, Judith Leggatt, Ranjini Mendis,  
Jill Didur, Susan Gingell, Jennifer Kelly  
(Missing: Kelly Hewson, Shao-Pin Luo, Wendy Robbins)



## INTRODUCING THE INCOMING CACLALS EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE (2005-2008)

**President:** Sukeshi Kamra is Associate Professor in the English department at Carleton University. She teaches and researches in the areas of South Asian literature and culture, Postcolonial Theory and Colonial India--history and culture.

**Secretary-Treasurer:** Maria Caridad Casas is interested in the interfaces between orality, writing, and literature (as institution). She is currently working on the First Nations' reception of Robert Bringham's Haida texts. She has also written on social semiotic theory and on the poetry of Dionne Brand, Lillian Allen, and Robert Kroetsch and Gertrude Stein. She teaches Canadian literature at the University of Toronto

**Atlantic Representative:** John C. Ball is a graduate of the University of Toronto (B.A., M.A., Ph.D.), who has taught at the University of New Brunswick in Fredericton since 1995. A co-editor (with Jennifer Andrews) of the journal *Studies in Canadian Literature*, he is the author of many articles, reviews, and interviews, as well as two books: *Imagining London: Postcolonial Fiction* and the *Transnational Metropolis* (University of Toronto Press, 2004).

**Prairies:** Jo-Ann Episkew is the Associate Director of Programs and Administration at the Indigenous Peoples' Health Research Centre and Associate Professor of English at the First Nations University of Canada. From 1996 to 1998, Jo-Ann served as Department Head of English and from 1998 to 2003 as Academic Dean at the Saskatchewan Indian Federated College (now the First Nations University of Canada). Jo-Ann is a doctoral candidate at the Institute for Anglo and American Studies (University of Greifswald, Germany.) Her current scholarship examines Indigenous literatures as a response to and healing from Canadian public policies.

**BC and Northern Territories:** David Chariandy is an Assistant Professor in the department of English at Simon Fraser University. He specializes in contemporary postcolonial writing, especially Black Canadian and Anglo Caribbean literatures. Currently, he is working on a co-authored book on the evolution and impact of diasporic theory within cultural studies debates.

**College Representative:** Dorothy F. Lane is Associate Professor of English at Luther College, University of Regina, where she has been teaching since 1993. She completed her doctorate at Queen's University in 1992. Her current research is the intersection of colonialist and Christian discourses in postcolonial literatures; she has published several articles focusing on metaphors of "dominion," "conversion," and "cultivation" in Canada, Australia, and India.

**Quebec Representative:** Heike Harting received her Ph.D. in Canadian and postcolonial studies from the University of Victoria. She teaches at the Université de Montreal and is a SSHRC-funded co-investigator of the MCRI "Globalization and Autonomy" (McMaster University). She holds an FQRSC research grant for her project on global violence and the politics of corpses in postcolonial narratives of war.

**Graduate Student Representative (2004-2006)** Diana Lobb is a doctoral student in the Department of English at the University of Waterloo. She is the moderator of the ACLALS grouplist: [aclals@yahoogroups.com](mailto:aclals@yahoogroups.com)

**Graduate Student Representative (2005-2007)** Prabhjot Parmar is a doctoral student in the Department of English at the University of Western Ontario. With strong interest in South Asian literature and Cinema, she is working on the Partition of India and its cultural representations.

**Past-President:** Ranjini Mendis has been a CACLALS member since 1991. She has served as President from 2002 to 2005 - and as College Representative and B.C. and Northern Territories Representative in previous CACLALS Executives.

## BOOK REVIEWS

Editor: Shao-Pin Luo

### ***AESTHETIC EXCHANGES THROUGH THE MIDDLE PASSAGE***

Tobias Döring. *Caribbean-English Passages: Intertextuality in a Postcolonial Tradition*. Routledge, 2002. 236 pages. US\$34.95.

Review by Philip Mingay, University of Alberta

The notion of a unifying Caribbean literary tradition is an unproductive one, argues Tobias Döring in his book *Caribbean-English Passages: Intertextuality in a Postcolonial Tradition*. The creative influence of the English literary tradition on Caribbean writing is one of ebb and flow, and, with this in mind, “rather than stressing coherence and autonomy...Caribbean poetics [are] principally engaged with a rhetoric of transfer and constant change” (6). Intertextuality, then, is the order of the day, and is “the middle passage” by which the postcolonial critic engages with the complicated history of imperial culture in the Caribbean. The term itself implies a shared tradition, but as Döring clearly explains, intertextuality is not “innocent” (14), and the thematic organization of the book attempts to reveal that an engagement with tradition is not necessarily a quest for belonging.

This focus is both the book's strength and its weakness. On the one hand, Döring rightly focuses on authors whose works and backgrounds are not unproblematically Caribbean, including Derek Walcott, V.S. Naipaul, David Dabydeen, Wilson Harris, and the eighteenth-century Scottish-born poet James Grainger. Naipaul in particular receives considerable attention, and Joseph Conrad is the frequent nemesis of a number of authors. On the other hand, Döring deliberately excludes a number of significant authors, including George Lamming, as well as women writers who engage with tradition in a very productive, but very different, manner and because of this are not included in this study in order to preserve the book's critical strategy. Furthermore, the included authors have been treated at length in various other critical contexts. That said, in its six chapters, *Caribbean-English Passages* does offer a unified, detailed study of the “poetics of passages, of cross-cultural connectedness and spatial relocation” (7) regarding aesthetic exchange between the Caribbean and the English literary tradition.

Chapter One, “Rough passages,” charts the early literary configurations of the journey from the Old World to the New World. Because of its seemingly imperial collusions and notoriety, Döring compares Naipaul's *The Middle Passage* to his other “anchor” text, J.A. Froude's *The English in the West Indies*, or the Bow of Ulysses, in order to argue that “the real problem lies in *writing* the West Indies,” and that “the inadequacies of narrative conventions when confronting Caribbean history” have led to Naipaul's disgruntlement (22).

Furthermore, Naipaul is not simply replicating Froude's Victorian images of the Caribbean. Rather, as the novel's title implies, the middle passage is the one that is "neither first nor final, it is positioned between the others, imperial or postcolonial, and owes its meaning mainly to the linkage, remembered or anticipated, with their more powerful and definite domains. *The Middle Passage* thus forms a threshold text" (39). This threshold does not pardon Naipaul's anxieties or his dismissiveness of Caribbean culture, but Döring does see it as providing opportunities for new modes of representation, such as Amryl Johnson's *Sequins for a Ragged Hem*.

After Chapter One's focus on travel, Chapter Two, "Sugar cane poetics," emphasizes plantation writing and the "cultivation" and "settlement" of Caribbean literature. The plantation is the significant contact zone between colonizer and colonized, and Döring considers Grainger's long poem *The Sugar-Cane*, first published in 1764, as one of the first examples of the English form's inapplicability to the Caribbean landscape. I enjoyed reading Döring's enthusiastic close reading of the poem:

*The Sugar-Cane* provides occasion to contemplate and substantiate the material nexus between English and Caribbean culture....The sugar at the bottom of the English cup of tea not only constitutes a claim of belonging but also effects a reconfiguration of cultural identities. The tropes and figures by which such identities are constructed derive from material conflicts whose scars are hidden in the more successful English texts. Grainger's text, by contrast, has allowed us to retrace the ruptures and anxieties at the bottom of the English colonial project.  
(75)

As Döring reads the conventional ending of Grainger's poem as a nod to the hybridity of the plantation, the emergence of a visual aesthetics in Caribbean literature is expanded in Chapter Three, "The 'Congo' in the Caribbean." The discourse of cartography-maps used as curtains on the windows of Teeton's boarding room in Lamming's *Water with Berries* come to mind-is indicative of the power of navigational authority in the construction of the Other. Here, Döring contrasts Conrad's Marlow with Harris's surveyor, Fenwick, from *The Secret Ladder*, and with Professor Challenger from Arthur Conan Doyle's *The Lost World* to reveal the mapmaker as a "figure combining mystical experience with imperial desire" (92). With Jameson and Said as a theoretical foundation, Döring concludes that postcolonial Caribbean writing emerges as distinct cartological expressions and rhetoric that both accept literary continuities and instigate cultural change.

The most interesting and exigent section is Chapter Four, "Remapping the mother country," and its principal examination of Naipaul's *The Enigma of Arrival*, an autobiographical "novel" that is both remarkable in its arrogance and

its delicateness. At the novel's beginning, when the narrator opens his English cottage door and observes that he “saw what he saw very clearly, but [he] didn't know what [he] was looking at,” I read the narrator's gaze at the English landscape not as an act of dislocation but as the beginning of his attempt to see in it a fluctuating, mythical world of art that the narrator, as an artist himself, can also use as his literary palette, regardless of his origins. Döring, however, sees Naipaul's arrival as endlessly deferred, a reflection of his uneasiness as “Naipaul still finds himself circumscribed in the figure of the oxymoron: 'colonial' and 'writer'” (130). He also refuses to accept entirely *The Enigma of Arrival* as a novel and calls it instead an autobiography because it makes Naipaul “a subject *in* discourse” (121). In Chapter Four, Döring also configures David Dabydeen's *The Intended* into this notion of autobiography, as elsewhere Dabydeen has acknowledged *The Enigma of Arrival's* influence on his own work. Of particular interest is Döring's introduction of the term “parabiography” to describe the critical linking and overlapping of life-stories by postcolonial writers. It is separate from another term, “life-writing,” because life-writing still implies self-invention rather than intertextuality. Parabiography, then, avoids questions of authenticity and mimicry by focusing on the authority that intertextuality gives to the evolving postcolonial culture.

*The Enigma of Arrival* surfaces again in Chapter Five, “Turning the colonial gaze: Caribbean-English ekphrasis.” Detailing the visual lineage of the novel's title (from the surrealist Giorgio de Chirico painting of the same name, who, in turn, was given the title by the French poet Apollinaire), the image becomes part of the narrator's own story of arrival, as well as a critical ekphrastic model. However, although Döring sees Naipaul's narrator as an example of loss due to the effects of mechanical reproduction on the postcolonial subject, I would argue that Naipaul is more interested in the artist figures themselves than their art's reproductive effects. Nevertheless, when the book's attention turns to an ekphrastic comparison of Dabydeen's long poem *Turner* and the art of the English romantic painter J.M. Turner, Döring makes a valid point: if the original focal point can be disrupted, then “the loss of this controlling point or origin and origination...can have a cathartic function” (166). The book concludes with Chapter Six, “Writing across the meridian,” with an exploration of Derek Walcott's *Omeros*, and a demonstration of its literary and ekphrastic connections to the previous chapters. Like most of the texts scrutinized in *Caribbean-English Passages*, *Omeros*, “even as it bows to classical tradition, it manifests a post-canonical postcolonial tradition in Caribbean-English writing” (202).

Döring's strength is the way he contrasts texts. Also, this is one of the few critical books that directly engages with the critical difficulties of ekphrastics to explain the intricacies of the visual in the written, rather than relying on unproductive references to the “sister arts.” To “look” at Caribbean-English writing is both a fallacy and an opportunity to redirect it to more productive

directions beyond canonical relationships. At times I felt Caribbean-English Passages determinedly characterized the literary canon as static to emphasize the unfixed nature of Caribbean writing and its revisioning of the middle passage. Walcott and Naipaul in particular see the opportunities of myth in a community of artists, not always as European artists in opposition. Nevertheless, it is an insightful book that covers much familiar territory in a distinct, critically original way.

**“HEAR NO EVIL, SEE NO EVIL”**

Tony Eprile. *The Persistence of Memory*. Norton, 2004. 297 pages. \$37.50.

Review by Wendy Robbins, University of New Brunswick

“History, memory, is plastic here in R.S.A. You remember it the way you would have wanted it to be, not the way it was” (19). Tony Eprile, a South African writer now living in the USA and author of the 1989 short-story collection *Temporary Sojourner and Other South African Stories*, has written an incisive first novel, which cuts against the grain. *The Persistence of Memory*, equal parts social satire, *roman à these*, and *bildungsroman*, is a provocative and darkly humorous tale about what it takes to be a man and a soldier, and, more importantly, what it means to be human.

At the centre of this double coming-of-age story are the new South Africa and the angst-ridden, skeptical, yet amiable Paul Sweetbread. (What's not to like about a guy who has a talent for cooking, sews for relaxation, appreciates life's absurdities, and tries to live the examined life?) Paul is white, Jewish, liberal, fat, philosophical, obsessed with history and word origins, and fascinated by insects-his father was an exterminator. What really makes him feel freakish, however, is his photographic memory, a “power of recall that is not only accurate but empathetic” (14), which proves more curse than gift.

Paul, who was born on the day Robert Kennedy was shot, feels like “some lungfish that has crawled up onto land only to discover that the age of mammals is in full swing” (85). The novel's present time spans the years 1968-2000, but its historical reach is vast, from “ancient bones” which mark humankind's origins in Africa, through European imperialism, to the early twentieth-century immigrant experiences of Paul's grandparents, Polish Jews. His grandfather survived on selling knickknacks and sharpening kitchen knives; his grandmother did washing for her Indian neighbours, but surreptitiously, lest her husband be ashamed of her doing “kaffir work.” Growing up in the Jewish northern suburbs of Johannesburg under apartheid, Paul has never “really conversed” with a domestic servant, nor has he set foot in a Black township. Both racism and anti-Semitism are toxins, and being victimized by one does not guarantee immunity from acting on the other.

The three-part narrative structure of *The Persistence of Memory* offers three takes (or more) on violence: in the family, the military, and South African society, even after the end of apartheid. Paul's childhood trauma centres on his father's affair and suicide—Paul discovers the corpse. His adolescence culminates in his catastrophic military service, which entails his participation in a bloody ambush near the Angolan border—during a truce. As a young adult, he lays the shaky foundations of a career in anthropology, suffering from post-traumatic stress and the deeply disillusioning experience of testifying before the Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

The opposite of Paul, his mother has a “remarkable ability to re-remember [*sic*] the past in a positive light” (50). So, too, apparently, does much of white South Africa. His mother sends her precocious son for therapy in order to get over, even forget, the shock of the violent early death of his father. Later he returns to therapy to deal with senseless death writ large: a massacre of more than 60 Namibian freedom fighters in which he participates at Captain Lyddie's command, and during which he kills two people. If Athol Fugard's post-apartheid South Africa lacks faith in itself to dream big and to succeed, and J.M. Coetzee's runs amuck in self-recrimination and revenge, Tony Eprile's new South Africa is awash in moral relativism, denial (think HIV-AIDS), and a reprehensible lack of empathy.

The country's TRC is depicted, not as a courageous moral experiment, but as an absurdist “Apartheids Anonymous”:

[B]lack policemen confessing their sins far outnumber the government ministers willing to admit that they might ever have been complicit in some wrongdoing....A Martian or Betelguesian reading the hearings' transcripts would be justified in believing that apartheid was something enforced by a few rogue policemen and that blacks did to each other, while the honorable ministers shuffled their papers and picked their noses in Pretoria. (224)

Paul discovers that the revelation of horrors is not necessarily healing, nor does truth appear with a capital 't'—“the ultimate vanity they dare to call Truth” (225). The best metaphor for memory may be neither erasable slate, camera lens, nor computer, but something much more subjective, contextual, and tenuous, “filaments of connection” (220).

From *Odysseus* to “The Bear,” the rites of passage from boyhood to manhood in Western societies have required the spilling of blood, in war or hunting. *Lord of the Flies* lurks underneath Eprile's text like pus under a scab. Schoolboys' pranks are portents of a pervasive violence: schoolteachers' strappings, political killings, random stabbings, necklacing, war, and, out of sight but not out of

mind, the Holocaust. While borrowing parts of the classic formula-bloodletting is still initiation-Eprile's is an antiwar story, told by an antihero. Thus *The Persistence of Memory* falls somewhere between *The Apprenticeship of Duddy Kravitz* and *Macbeth*, as neither Paul nor South Africa reaches adulthood without indelible blood on their hands.

Paul tries to understand the appeal of brute power: "to revel in one's own ability to menace those weaker-or even stronger" (128). With his reputation as "the weak impala in the herd," Paul can empathize with the powerless. He frequently identifies (think Kafka) with insects. His nickname, "Gogga," means "bug." Grotesquely, his dead father's yellow vans, still in service throughout Johannesburg, sport the Terminex business slogan, "No more Goggas!" (48). The leap from speciesism to racism is menacingly short. Bigoted stereotypes persist, such as "the African is inferior":

The urban legends and blatantly bigoted comments formed their own 'total onslaught,' nonsense told often enough that it became believed. 'Just replace the word *African* with *Jew*, then see if you still believe that story,' Brenner [Paul's highschool teacher] had advised our history class. (170)

The novel is intelligent and witty, analytical and even poetic; its language bristles with similes and metaphors. For example, a pregnant woman is described as "ballooning out as if she daily inhaled helium but did not expel it" (18); a teacher's red hair piled on top of her head looks "like a Zulu hut aflame" (20), a nauseated child's spume of vomit is seen "trailing the car like Isadora Duncan's scarf" (40), and TRC commissioners' earphones "protrude from the sides of their heads like dragonfly eyes, and if I half close my own eyes it looks as if I'm attending a tribunal judged by insects" (233). Ultimately, this is a story about story-telling itself, the most distinctively human activity. "The greatest of human inventions is the library, a vast repository of collective memory, far larger than any single mind can hold....So long as one's narrative survives, one's ideas and versions of history are passed along, like genetic code, to ensuing generations" (68). At the end of the day, the once alienated adolescent becomes an activist anthropologist; Paul sends his students out to the former Bantustans to record the stories of the elders, whom he honours as "gnarled, ancient human libraries" (272). The vocation of scribe and story-teller is reaffirmed: "And perhaps because it is so strongly opposed, the urge to provide a faithful transcription of one's times comes to feel like a sacred trust" (69).

*The Persistence of Memory* will make a significant contribution to courses in cultural, Jewish, and masculinity studies, and in African or Commonwealth literature. It also adds to current debates about liberalism, the culpability of "the silent majority," and the individual's ultimate responsibility-even within military



and political hierarchies (think Abu Ghraib). Is Captain Lyddie villainous killer or ideal soldier? He defends the brutal loss of life with the banal cliché that “war is war,” but he lacerates Paul over his complicity: “You’re a typical English liberal: you think your silent objection means you have no responsibility” (137). If ignoring evil is wrong, so, too, is sidestepping the obligation to set things right. As the wise woman MaRathebe concludes: “You can’t rely on the government to do things for you, my son. You have to make amends yourself” (280). Alongside *July’s People*, *Sarafina*, *Valley Song*, *Disgrace*, and *Long Walk to Freedom*, *The Persistence of Memory* is a defining work for a critical, moral period.

### **ENVISIONING POSTCOLONIAL TAIWAN**

June Yip. *Envisioning Taiwan: Fiction, Cinema, and the Nation in the Cultural Imaginary*. Duke University Press, 2004. 356 pages, US\$24.95.

Review by Guy Beauregard, National Tsing Hua University

Since I arrived in Taiwan in August 2003, I’ve been consistently struck by the many and varied signposts that mark forms of collective engagement with its status as a postcolony. Heated debates over aboriginal rights, ethnicity, language use, history textbooks, and national identity all stand as markers of a difficult and ongoing process of decolonization needed to rethink its officially sanctioned “Chinese” identity (in place since the Chinese Nationalist takeover in 1945) and reimagine Taiwan as a multi-ethnic and multilingual postcolonial nation.

Some controversies over Taiwan’s postcolonial status stem from disagreements concerning when-if at all-Taiwan somehow “became” postcolonial. As Liao Ping-hui pointed out in the early 1990s: “In the case of Taiwan, not only did colonialism pass through several historical stages-Dutch conquest (1622-61), Chinese settlement (1661-1895), Japanese occupation (1895-1945), and [Chinese] Nationalist ‘recovery’ (after 1945)-but there have been experiential differences in terms of race and genealogy” (“Rewriting” 286). Instead of attempting to name, once and for all, some single moment of postcolonial “arrival” in Taiwan, we may instead recognize how each of the shifts in colonial administration named by Liao entailed deep and often violent reorganizations of language use, social spaces, and cultural identities in Taiwan—a process of social and cultural reorganization that remains ongoing today.

Cultural criticism produced in Taiwan and elsewhere over the past fifteen years or so has attempted to make sense of these changes and why they should matter to us now. This body of criticism includes groundbreaking work by Chiu Kuei-fen and Liao Ping-hui to map out emerging terms of postcolonial debate (see Chiu; Liao, “Rewriting”; and Liao, “Postcolonial”); A-chin Hsiao’s detailed

investigation of contemporary cultural nationalism in Taiwan and “the uncoordinated project of crafting a nation” (2); and Emma Teng’s recent intervention in what she calls (drawing on the work of Leo Ching) the “‘absence of decolonization’ [that] determines contemporary China-Taiwan affairs” (250)-an absence that stems from a failure to acknowledge Qing dynasty imperialism in Taiwan that, Teng suggests, has consequently made it impossible “to name the historical relation between China and Taiwan as ‘colonial’” (250).

June Yip’s *Envisioning Taiwan* (2004) contributes to these debates in important and original ways. Of particular interest is Yip’s contention that “modern Taiwan, with its persistent uncertainty over the issue of national identity, presents a particularly provocative site for examining the complex problematics of the local, the national, and the global” (4). Yip accordingly fashions her book as an invitation for readers to learn more about how and why shifting representations of nationhood in Taiwan should matter for scholars working in postcolonial studies; why, in short, we should think of Taiwan as one site in which “broader cultural themes-the relation between popular culture and collective identity and tensions between local/global, national/international, identity/difference, and purity/hybridity-are played out in distinct and provocative ways” (11).

Yip supports this broad argument by investigating “the diverse and multiple ways in which the rhetoric of nation has been produced, manipulated, and transformed in the Taiwanese cultural imagination” (9), particularly in the *hsiang-t’u* (that is, regionalist or nativist) literary movement in the late 1960s and the 1970s and in the cinematic movement known as Taiwanese New Cinema that emerged in the 1980s. Yip pays particular attention to literary writing by Hwang Chun-ming and the films of Hou Hsiao-hsien to investigate what she calls “their common fascination with the sociohistorical specificities of the modern Taiwanese experience and their attempts to formulate a sense of Taiwanese cultural identity” (9). In doing so-and in working through topics such as remembering and forgetting, language and nationhood, the country and the city, and exile and displacement-Yip presents a sympathetic critique of *hsiang t’u* literature by recognizing that its attempt to resist the “organized forgetting” (69) in place during the martial law era of Chinese Nationalist rule nevertheless ended up drawing upon and reinscribing a series of binary oppositions, most prominently “a nativist narrative of nation to counterbalance the Kuomintang [i.e., Chinese Nationalist] rhetoric of Chinese homogeneity and coherence” (230).

By analyzing developments in literature and film, *Envisioning Taiwan* names and tracks a critical shift in representations of the nation from conceptions based on “unitary coherence and authenticity toward alternative models that emphasize multiplicity and fluidity” (11). This shift, Yip suggests, emerged along with changing structural conditions that enabled the film industry in

Taiwan to reinvent itself in the 1980s to consequently produce “alternative representations of modern Taiwanese history” (73). Yip argues that the films discussed in *Envisioning Taiwan*, most notably those directed by Hou Hsiao-hsien, have been deeply important in representing history in Taiwan as “an ongoing process”(100), particularly through representations of everyday life, and Yip brings commendable sympathy and attentiveness to her analysis of these resonant cultural texts.

While the heart of *Envisioning Taiwan* identifies and analyzes this shift from the 1970s to the 1980s in representing the nation in Taiwan, less impressive, to my mind, is its concluding attempt to bring the implications of this argument up to date into the 1990s and beyond. This attempt is hurt by its reliance on limited sources (the book does not refer to any Chinese-language sources published after 1995) and by its unhelpful general observations concerning “today's Taiwanese”—about whom, Yip tells us, “particularly the young people” are “increasingly hybrid creatures” (235)—who lack the historical density and critical edge of the analysis that precedes them. One might also add that the sense of “optimism and hope” in a “multicultural global future” (299) expressed toward the end of this study appears to run roughly aground when confronted with Taiwan's deeply polarized electorate and its current stand-off with the People's Republic of China (the PRC), which, at the time of writing, has over 700 missiles pointed at Taiwan and has never renounced the use of force to integrate the island into its political territory. Yip readily acknowledges that “[t]he cultural inventiveness of . . . alternative models of identity formation have less to do with liberating transgressions than with tactical strategies for survival in an increasingly complex world” (228). Clearly, these strategies are urgently necessary in Taiwan today as it is faced with the unenviable task, in the words of Andrew Morris, of needing “to justify continually why it should not be swallowed up by the PRC, a regime that has never administered an inch of Taiwan's territory” (31). So while the imaginative powers of the cultural texts analyzed by Yip continue to resonate, the project of envisioning a postcolonial Taiwan in these circumstances remains difficult, unfinished, and—for precisely these reasons—critically important.

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**ARE YOU INTERESTED IN REVIEWING FOR CHIMO?  
DO YOU HAVE SUGGESTIONS FOR MATERIALS FOR REVIEW?  
CONTACT DR. SUKESHI KAMRA, PRESIDENT:  
SUKESHIKAMARA@PIGEON.CARLETON.CA  
DR. MARIA CARIDAD CASAS, SECRETARY-TREASURER:  
MARICASA@CS.TORONTO.EDU**

## CALLS FOR PAPERS

### CACLALS at COSSH 2006 York University

#### **Congress Theme: "The City: A Festival of Knowledge"**

CACLALS invites proposals for papers and panels at our next annual conference to be held in May 2006 at York University. The Congress theme of "The City: A Festival of Knowledge" speaks to some major concerns in the field of postcolonial studies, such as those raised by notions of cosmopolitanism.

Dystopian, utopian, cosmopolitan, ghettoizing, liberating, multiethnic, colonizing, decolonizing are a few of the more prominent terms that appear in disciplinary engagements with the urban-this apparently constantly visible of spaces. Of particular interest is the increasingly globalized economy of the city. However, there are myriad other concerns, some indicated in the above terms and others that stretch from considering the implications of urban planning in the age of European expansion to the conditions and shape of the largest cities, that are in the South countries, many of which are also critically informed by their experience as colonial and postcolonial states.

Recently, Jane Jacobs has suggested that we pay attention to the particularities that make cities distinctive rather than reducing them to the generic that situates them as all alike in global flows of cultural and economic transactions. In response to the question "what should a city be like?" she replied, "it should be like itself." (*Reasononline*, June 2001). This seems as good a place as any to start. What is the "itself" of cities in literature with postcolonial interests? What does literature self-identified with social, cultural and political margins contribute or have to say about ongoing discussions of human and environmental conditions as they are situated in cities? Her comment also invites us to consider the issue at a meta-textual level and pay attention to the particular historical formations that shape an individual city. Thus, other questions of interest include questions about the economy of a given urban social space, its participation in and perpetuation of particular modes of production, its negotiation of inherited logic(s) on the one hand and the influence of global flows on the other and so on.

We invite papers on any one of the following or related aspects of the Congress theme:

- city and counterhistory
- the future metropolis
- the city and globalization, the role of the city in globalization
- the transnational city

- the diasporic metropolis
- culture and the city
- the indigene and the logic of the urban
- the colonial past and the contemporary city
- the politics of cosmopolitanism
- the cultural production of the city scape

Please forward inquiries and proposals (300-500 words) for papers, panels, workshops, or special sessions by **November 15th, 2005** to

Dr. Sukeshi Kamra

Department of English, 1812 Dunton Tower

Carleton University

1125 Colonel By Drive

Ottawa, Ontario, Canada

K1S 5B6

SukeshiKamra@pigeon.carleton.ca

Fax: (613) 520-3544

Proposals will be blind-vetted by a subcommittee of the CACALS Executive and you will be informed of acceptance early in the new year. Please note that only proposals from paid-up members of CACLALS will be considered. Forward membership inquiries to Dr. Maria Caridad Casas, Secretary-Treasurer, CACLALS: Department of English, The University of Toronto, 7 King's College Circle, Toronto, Ontario, Canada M5S 3K1  
maricasa@cs.toronto.edu

Please watch for a call for papers/participants at the Seventh Annual Aboriginal Roundtable.

### **Global Queeries: Sexualities, Globalities, Postcolonialities**

May 11-13, 2006

University of Western Ontario, London, Ontario, Canada

Sexuality and globalization are currently pressing sites of scholarly and creative inquiry. The crisis of AIDS in Africa, the complicated relations between the local and the global, between decolonization and sexual liberation struggles—these represent some key areas of interconnectedness. The organizers of the conference encourage a diversity of political, theoretical, cultural, and practical responses to these areas of critical inquiry. Key questions we hope to address include: Where and how do queer, postcolonial, and anti-racist representations, theories, and practices intersect and diverge? How is heteronormativity implicated in the history of imperialism and colonization, as well as in current neoliberal and global practices? How are sexuality and desire imagined and

queered across global spaces? Alternatively, how do sexualities destabilize or resist economic and political structures of globalization? How do lesbian and gay liberation struggles travel theoretically and politically across the globe?

The conference will include a range of presentation formats: panels and individual presentations; research workshops on specific themes or topics; performances, readings, screenings, and exhibits; and round-table discussions. Our primary interest is in generating spaces for dialogue and connections across geo-political contexts, and we welcome submissions and suggestions for these and other formats.

Possible topics may include: Sexualities, Nationalisms, Citizenship; Queer Diasporas; Queer Places, Spaces, and Geographies; Queering Urban, Suburban, and Rural Identities; Race- and Sexuality-based Activism and Coalition-Building; Queering Race, Gender, and Ethnicity; Intersections of Queer, Feminist, and Critical Race Theory; Queering Academic Disciplines and Interdisciplinarity; Sexuality and Colonial Histories, Practices, and Epistemologies; Sexuality, Aboriginality, and Decolonization; Indigenizing the Queer; Queering the Indigenous; Local Archives, Histories, and Testimonials of Homosexuality; Local/Global Queer Cultural Practices; International Policies, Pharmaceuticals, and Global AIDS; Queering Science and Medicine; Sexuality, Human Rights, and Foreign Aid; Queering Sex Work and Pornography; Censorship and Border Crossings; Religious Fundamentalisms, Sexualities, and Violence; Homophobia, Violence, Backlash and Blame; Hegemonic Practices of Heteronormativity; Normalizing Discourses of Gay, Lesbian, Queer, and Alternative Sexualities; Queering Representation: Literary, Media, and Cultural Studies of Sexualities.

Please send an abstract or project description and a brief biography to [global.queries@uwo.ca](mailto:global.queries@uwo.ca) by **September 1, 2005**.

Enquiries can be addressed to the Organizing Committee at [global.queries@uwo.ca](mailto:global.queries@uwo.ca) or you can visit our website at <http://www.uwo.ca/english/global>.

## ANNOUNCEMENTS AND NEWS OF MEMBERS

**CACLALS Website:** CACLALS is interested in keeping up-to-date its online list of graduate and undergraduate postcolonial courses. If you have created a new postcolonial course, or have come across one at another institution, please forward course descriptions and text lists to Heather Smyth at [hsmyth@watarts.uwaterloo.ca](mailto:hsmyth@watarts.uwaterloo.ca)

**Renate Eigenbrod** (University of Manitoba) was invited for a visit to India for the month of December 2004. At Jadavpur University in Kolkata she gave a public lecture on literary representations of genocide by Aboriginal writers in Canada and presented on the topic of deconstructions of the oral/written binary in Aboriginal texts at the conference on "Orality Today." She also presented a paper in Delhi at an international conference on conflict resolution and reconciliation at the Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts. She found central India particularly inspiring as it challenged her to re-envision her own search for finding ways of combining literary studies with community work and engagement with social justice issues.

### **Studies in Canadian Literature (SCL/ÉLC)**

SPECIAL 30TH ANNIVERSARY ISSUE (No. 30.1) "Canadian Poetry: Traditions/Counter-Traditions" "Poésie canadienne: Traditions/Contre-traditions" Look for it this fall! À paraître cet automne !... among the poets & subjects discussed are John Barton, J.R. Léveillé, Dionne Brand, Bertram Brooker, A.J.M. Smith and F.R. Scott, Tim Lilburn, P.K. Page, les jeunes poètes acadiens, Robert Service, Fred Wah ... parmi d'autres

**Robert Ross**, founder of the American Association of Australian Literary Studies and the first editor of its journal, *Antipodes*, died on 26 May 2005 at his home in Dallas, Texas. He was 70 years old. Robert's pioneering efforts have become his legacy, providing encouragement and opportunity to two generations of postcolonial scholars. For further news, please see the AAALS website, [www.australianliterature.org](http://www.australianliterature.org)

(John Scheckter, Long Island University)

**Condolences:** CACLALS extends our deepest sympathies to Renate Eigenbrod whose husband died on July 27, 2005. We hope that Renate will gain some comfort in knowing that the CACLALS community wishes her strength and healing of spirit in this time of sorrow.



ACLALS deeply regrets the passing of C.D. Narasimhaiah and Norman (Derry) Jeffares

**Closepet Dasappa (C. D.) Narasimhaiah** died of a heart attack in his sleep at his daughter's residence in Bangalore on 12 April 2005. He was 84. This early Leavisite was responsible for expanding the horizons of the syllabus of English studies in India. Thus he introduced Indian writing in English, Commonwealth Literatures, and also Indian literature in English translation. The doyen of Commonwealth literature in India, he was the one who shifted focus from English literature to literatures in English. Quite apart from his enormous personal contribution to the field, he will be fondly remembered for his exceptional generosity by the countless students and budding scholars whose research he encouraged and favoured. (Alastair Niven)

With the death of **Professor Alexander Norman (“Derry”) Jeffares** on June 1, 2005 ACLALS has lost one of its pioneers, indeed its founder, since the Association was created at the first Commonwealth Literature Conference which he organised at the University of Leeds in 1964. Derry also founded *The Journal of Commonwealth Literature* in the mid-sixties and *ARIEL* in 1970, two scholarly journals which have remained to this day essential reference tools for all those working in the field of Commonwealth and postcolonial literature. With his Rabelaisian humour and zest for life, he would not like us to cry over his death, but rather to follow the advice he put on one of his pagan drawings in his house in Provence : “ Eat, drink and be Derry.”  
(Jeanne Delbaere-Garant)

# CALL FOR PAPERS

## **The Association for Commonwealth Literature and Language Studies (ACLALS)**

### **14th Triennial Conference**

#### **Literature for Our Times**

August 2007, Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada

At the 2005 World Social Forum, held in Porto Alegre, Brazil, Booker Prize-winning author Arundhati Roy spoke about the function of literature for our times: "Our strategy should be not only to confront empire, but to lay siege to it... With our art, our music, our literature...- and our ability to tell our own stories." In an article, "The Arduous Conversation Will Continue," published in *The Guardian* on July 19, 2005, Hanif Kureishi voiced a similar opinion: "...the only patriotism possible is one that refuses the banality of taking either side, and continues the arduous conversation. That is why we have literature, the theatre, newspapers - a culture, in other words."

Are there other roles, besides the ones suggested by Kureishi and Roy, that literature has played in the era of colonialism and continues to fulfill now in this young Twenty First century of ours, amidst the upheavals of regime changes, wars for resources, loss of faith in elected representatives, genocide, suicide bombings, resistance struggles and environmental disasters? Is literature a force for reconciliation and cross-cultural understanding or only an instrument for aesthetic pleasure of the privileged? Does literature provide us, in the famous phrase of Kenneth Burke, with "equipment for living," or does it only obscure reality and deflect resistance?

Papers are invited to engage with all aspects of the above theme. They could address, by referring to the literary, critical and other kinds of cultural texts, the following questions:

Literature as an institution and ideologies of 'literature'

Commonwealth versus Postcolonial versus World literature

Literature as resistance

Literature as "arduous dialogue"

Literature as "equipment for living"

Literature as pedagogy; Pedagogy of literature

Literature of human survival (including issues of poverty and prosperity)

Literature of Human Rights (including the right to access knowledge and resources)

Literature of Apocalyptic and Utopic imaginings

Literature for promotion of Peace and Justice

Literature of real and imagined Ethnicities

Literature of cultural affiliations (Race, Gender and/or History)

Literature as a world language

Literature in a global cultural economy

Literature in translation

Literature of healing and reconciliation

Abstracts of approx. 300 words for papers of 20 minutes duration, and approx. 400 words for three-paper panels (with the names of the panelists) which engage with these and other relevant questions should be e-mailed, with a short bio-note (50 words) and contact address to [stpierr@sfu.ca](mailto:stpierr@sfu.ca) no later than **August 30, 2006**.

Address for regular mail:

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Check further details on the ACLALS website: <http://www.aclals.org>

### ***An Invitation to join “ACLALS 2007 Vancouver” Conference Committees***

You are warmly invited to join one or more of the '2007 conference' committees. (The chairs and committee members will be listed in the conference booklet.)

1. Program Committee:  
Vetting papers (with the help of the Online Conferencing Systems);  
Assisting with program details
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5. African participation Committee: Looking for ways to increase conference participation by African scholars, researchers, and practitioners
6. Indigenous and Dalit People's Participation Committee: Exploring ways to involve indigenous peoples of member countries of the Commonwealth in the conference.
7. Publishers' Displays: Contacting publishers and book stores regarding book displays; approaching various organizations who may want to set up booths

For these and any other committees you may wish to suggest please respond to [Ranjini.Mendis@kwantlen.ca](mailto:Ranjini.Mendis@kwantlen.ca) or [aclals@aclals.org](mailto:aclals@aclals.org)

### ***ACLALS Grouplist (Moderator: Diana Lobb, UWaterloo)***

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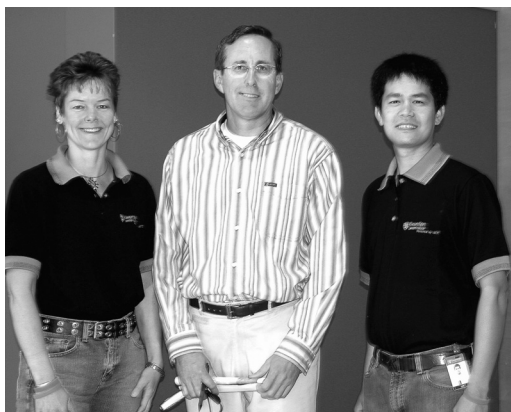
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