

Chimo



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Chimo (Chee'mo) greetings [inuit]**Editor: Neil ten Kortenaar****Book Reviews Editor: Julia Emberley**

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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 \$50.00, Part-time Sessional and Post Docs \$20.00, Student or Unwaged \$20.00. Please address membership correspondence to Susan Spearey, Department of English Language and Literature, Brock University, 500 Glenridge Avenue, St Catharines ON L2S 3A1 or by e-mail at sspearey@brocku.ca.

On the cover: *Three Birds*, 2003, ink on paper. Damon Badger-Heit graduated from the Saskatchewan Indian Federated College at the University of Regina in 2003 with a B.A. in English and Indian Art. Since then he has developed as a practising artist with works displayed at Saskatchewan galleries, including the 5th Parallel, Otherside, Exchange, and Wanuskêwin. Damon is also a freelance writer with contracts from a number of organizations, including the First Nations University of Canada, the Regina Leader Post, and the OSAC. In 2003, the Saskatchewan Arts Board awarded Damon an Individual Assistance Grant to develop his play *Broken Bones*. Having recently completed an eighteen-month contract as an art instructor at the MacKenzie Art Gallery of Regina, Damon has accepted a position as Project Manager for Common Weal Community Arts Inc., an arts organization dedicated to achieving social justice by connecting artists and their art with the community. Damon Badger-Heit is a member of the Mistawasis First Nation of Saskatchewan.

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The Canadian Association for Commonwealth Literature and Language Studies

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FROM THE PRESIDENT

Greetings,

In May CACLALS held its annual conference at Carleton University in Ottawa. It was a great success and so good to see so many of you there. There is a report by Joshua Prescott in this issue of *Chimo*.

There are two big events next year to look forward to: the annual CACLALS conference to be held at Congress at Concordia in Montreal, May 28-30 (see the Call for Papers on page 6 in this issue) , and the ACLALS triennial, held a week later in Cyprus. These promise to be big ACLALS get-togethers. We will see a lot of each other next year! Should be great! Let me say that, given the proximity of the two conferences, it is perfectly acceptable to present the same paper at both.

At the CACLALS AGM we must elect a new executive, including a president and secretary-treasurer. We will also need regional representatives. If you have any interest in serving, let me know. There is a notice of election as required by the constitution in this issue.

Neil ten Kortenaar, President

FROM THE SECRETARY-TREASURER

Greetings from the Secretary Treasurer,

The “Spectres and Speculations” conference held at Carleton University in May 2009 featured a lively and engaging array of events, including well-attended keynote addresses by Tejumola Olaniyan (University of Wisconsin at Madison) and Sherene H Razack (Sociology and Equity Studies, OISE); a compelling panel on the still-in-hiatus Indian Residential Schools Truth and Reconciliation Commission; the 10th annual Aboriginal Roundtable (a standing-room-only event despite the large venue); poetry readings and a multi-media performance; the launch of five books authored by CACLALS members as well as the Fortieth-Anniversary Special Issue of *Ariel* (many thanks to Pamela McCallum and *Ariel* for the sumptuous catering); another successful Author-Meets-Critics event; and a diverse program of academic papers that focused on poetry, novels, world cinema, popular culture and mass media, and significant theoretical debates in the field. The keynote speakers were particularly gracious in their engagement with our questions and comments, and both talks invited us in generative ways to (re)consider the scope and purview of post-colonial studies.

The executive was very pleased to be able to accommodate all eleven of the graduate stu-

dents, postdoctoral candidates and “unwaged” presenters who applied for SSHRC Travel Assistance Funding for Conferences, and many applicants received 100% of the expenses they claimed. I greatly appreciated the efforts that so many applicants made to keep their travel expenses to a minimum by, for example, sharing costs with other conference delegates, or claiming assistance from additional sources. Because funding is limited, and it is our aim to disburse the grant as widely and equitably as possible, efforts such as these help us to make the most of the moneys we are apportioned, and to provide fairly substantial assistance to delegates who are required to travel long distances and have no choice but to take more expensive forms of transportation. It may be worth noting for future reference that funding is for travel in the first instance; CACALS cannot cover expenses such as membership or conference registration fees; and assistance with expenses such as parking, meals and accommodation is only possible if and when the transportation costs of all eligible applicants have been met. Furthermore, mileage (currently 47 cents per kilometer) is only covered up to a distance of 500 km; the rationale being that after this point, costs of other forms of transportation become more economical. Perhaps this information will help those of you planning to attend the 2010 conference at Concordia University this coming May as you make your travel arrangements. I hope that we will again be able to assist a number of you, and to cover a substantial portion of the costs incurred in travel to Montreal.

A quick note on membership renewals: when I took over as Secretary/Treasurer of CACALS, the IATS/Leverus organization that handles our on-line registration process took several months to transfer the correspondence to my e-mail address, so although I could see the amounts of membership fees that had been deposited to the CACALS account on each monthly statement, I could not until recently tell *who* had renewed, and so refrained from sending out reminder notices. As a result, I have been scrambling to get our records up to date since the situation was remedied. I have contacted many of you in the last two months about membership renewal when in fact your renewal date may have come up quite a bit earlier. This means that when your renewal date approaches again, you will receive a reminder that may seem to have come up very quickly. Because keeping healthy membership numbers is key to our success as an organization, I encourage you to keep your membership current. I have also taken this opportunity to contact former members and to invite them to renew their affiliation with CACALS. Please note that if you are planning to submit a proposal for the 2010 conference, your membership must be up to date. At our AGM, the CFHSS representative informed us that the Federation is looking to mount an online platform for member organizations to manage their membership renewals, and this service would be available at no cost. When eventually this service is implemented, it will save us the fees we currently pay to IATS/Leverus (a flat fee of \$16.80 per month, plus a percentage of each membership handled). We hope this will help us to serve you better.

I wish everyone a happy and productive academic term.

Susan Spearey

FINANCIAL REPORT

April 1, 2009 – September 30, 2009

Balance (March 31, 2009) 13,186

Income

CFHSS Grant—

International Keynote Speakers' Support Fund	1000
Memberships	1400
Bank interest	2
SSHRC Travel Assistance for Conference Presenters Grant	3480
Ariel (catering at Congress)	900

Total Income 6782

Expenditures

2009 Conference ¹	7995
Travel Assistance to Conference Presenters ²	3344
IATS fees	101
Leverus, Inc. ³	20
Contribution to Roy Miki event St John's College UBC	\$200

Total Expenditures 11,660

Balance (September 30, 2009) 8,308

**Susan Spearey
Secretary-treasurer,**

¹Tejumola Olaniyan \$2041 (travel; accommodation; per diem; honorarium); Sherene Razack \$1483 (travel, accommodation, per diem, honorarium); honoraria for 4 Author-Meets-Critics panelists \$400 (\$100 each); honoraria for 2 poets \$500 (\$250 each); COHSS catering, AV and conference services \$1243; CFHSS membership fees \$1567; roundtable \$250; program design \$250; poster printing \$34; program printing \$227.

²one cheque of \$136.20 still to be cashed from the funds allocated through the \$3480 SSHRC Travel Assistance Grants for Conference Presenters.

³ maintains online registration form

Notice of Elections

In accordance with the CACLALS Constitution, the executive of the organization calls for nominations for the executive committee of CACLALS. In particular we need to elect a president, secretary-treasurer, and regional representatives. The current president is coming to the end of his three-year mandate and most of the other members of the executive have served longer than that. If you are interested in any of these positions and would like to know more information or would like to nominate someone or to be nominated, please contact Neil ten Kortenaar.

The election will occur at the AGM to be held at the May conference in Montreal. A full slate of nominees will be published in the Spring issue of *Chimo*.

Call for Papers

Connected Understanding, Understanding Connections

The Canadian Association for Commonwealth Literature and Language Studies (CACLALS) hosts its annual conference, May 28 to 30, 2010, at Concordia University in Montreal in conjunction with the annual Congress of the Canadian Federation for the Humanities and Social Sciences. The theme of this year's conference is "Connected Understanding, Understanding Connections."

The digital age and the forces of globalization are making new connections and new kinds of connections. They are also making us rethink connections (part of that rethinking is the very notion of globalization). We invite papers dealing with postcolonial literary texts and the connections that link them to each other and to the world outside the text. We also invite papers dealing with how these connections and others (e.g. between production and consumption, between near and far, between the individual and the society, be-

tween people and the planet) are imagined in literature.. We welcome papers that establish new or hidden connections, that examine how connections are imagined (e.g. as linear cause to effect, as rhizomatic network, or as organic interdependence), and that explode accepted connections (e.g. national histories, identities, Marxist or psychoanalytic accounts of deep causes).

Areas of interest include but are not limited to:

The consumer economy: literary texts must be marketed and so must their authors, but literary texts also reflect on their imbrication in the economy.

the semiotic system: the way texts pick up images and words with an ideological charge that circulate in other texts and other discourses and then work to defuse, deflect, or accelerate them

the political system: where texts function to represent groups, to represent social conditions, and to advocate causes. How are public policy and artistic production connected?

aesthetics: literary texts create meaning through their relation to other texts by genre, intertextuality, and tradition

the medium: the ways in which art moves across media; the effect media has on the connections between artists and audiences, intermediality

connections of the present to the past (and to various pasts and to accounts of the past)

inherited connections and freely chosen connections (filiation and affiliation)

problematizing connections

The conference will feature the participation of two keynote speakers: **Diana Brydon**, FRSC, is Canada Research Chair in Globalization and Cultural Studies at the University of Manitoba where she directs the Centre for Globalization and Cultural Studies. A former President of CACLALS, she has published books on Australian author Christina Stead and Canadian writer Timothy Findley, edited the 5 volume *Postcolonialism: Critical Concepts in Literary and Cultural Studies* (Routledge 2000) and co-edited *Shake-*

speare in Canada (UTP 2002). In 2008, she published *Renegotiating Community: Interdisciplinary Perspectives, Global Contexts* (UBC Press), co-edited with W.D. Coleman. She currently serves as a member of the international convening group for a project on “Building Global Democracy” (www.buildingglobaldemocracy.org) and is conducting individual research on global and national imaginaries. This project explores representations of home, diaspora, planetarity, and change.

Carole Boyce-Davies is professor of Africana Studies at Cornell University. She is the author of *Black Women, Writing and Identity: Migrations of the Subject* (Routledge, 1994) and *Left of Karl Marx: The Political Life of Black Communist Claudia Jones* (Duke University Press, 2008). In addition to numerous scholarly articles, Boyce-Davies has also published the following critical anthologies: *Ngambika: Studies of Women in African Literature* (Africa World Press, 1986); *Out of the Kumbula. Caribbean Women and Literature* (Africa World Press, 1990); and a two-volume collection of critical and creative writing entitled *Moving Beyond Boundaries* (New York University Press, 1995): *International Dimensions of Black Women's Writing* (volume 1), and *Black Women's Diasporas* (volume 2). She is co-editor with Ali Mazrui and Isidore Okpewho of *The African Diaspora: African Origins and New World Identities* (Indiana University Press, 1999) and *Decolonizing the Academy. African Diaspora Studies* (Africa World Press, 2003). She is general editor of *The Encyclopedia of the African Diaspora* (Oxford: ABC-CLIO, 2007), a three-volume encyclopedia. Currently, Dr. Boyce Davies is writing a series of personal reflections called *Caribbean Spaces. Between the Twilight Zone and the Underground Railroad*, dealing with the issue of transnational Caribbean/American black identity, and is preparing an edition of the writings of Claudia Jones entitled *Beyond Containment: Claudia Jones, Activism, Clarity and Vision*.

Abstracts of approximately 300 words for talks of 20 minutes' duration, engaged at any level with connections and disconnections are due **December 15, 2009**. They must be submitted electronically via the conference submission webpage: Connected Understanding, Understanding Connections (http://www.chass.utoronto.ca/caclals/myforms/conference2010_submission.php). Proposals for panels and special sessions should follow the same procedures. Abstracts will be double blind-vetted. Please note that only proposals from paid members will be considered.

Minutes of the CACLALS AGM

Monday 25 May 2009, 4:30 pm.

Carleton University SA 402

Attended by: John Ball (UNB); Azalea Barrieeses (U of Sask); Guy Beauregard (National Tsing Hua University); Prasad Bidaye (U of T); Georgie Columbus (ICE Canada); Julia Emberley (Western); Susan Gingell (U of Sask); Neil ten Kortenaar (U of T); Ranjini Mendis (Kwantlen); Laura Moss (UBC); Joshua Prescott (UNB); Susan Spearey (Brock); Cynthia Sugars (Ottawa U)

Kel Morin from CFHSS addressed the meeting

asked for feedback about 2009 Congress

some confusion about where to pick up conference programs for CACLALS and other organizations for delegates not arriving at beginning of conference

discussed CFHSS's "asks" from parliament

\$50,000,000 in support of new researchers

\$25,000,000 to enhance the competitiveness of Canadian scholars and to foster international collaborations

\$25,000,000 for "knowledge mobilization" in the Humanities and Social Sciences

point was raised that assistance for mid-career scholars would be extremely helpful in addition to assistance for new scholars

dates, places and themes given for upcoming Congresses

2010 Concordia (theme "Connected Understanding"); CACLALS meetings Friday, 28 May, Saturday 29 May, Sunday 30 May, 2010

2011 University of New Brunswick

2012 Wilfrid Laurier/Waterloo Universities

2013 University of Victoria

2014 either Brock, Windsor, or University of Western Ontario

Travel Grants

assistance for travel to the 2009 conference will be available to those presenters who sub-

mit receipts to Susan Spearey (sspearey@brocku.ca; or Department of English, Brock University, St Catharines ON L2S 3A1) by 30 June, 2009. The SSHRC grant to assist travel to scholarly gatherings is for \$3480, and in keeping with SSHRC policy, priority will be given to graduate students and members who do not have permanent jobs, and therefore do not have access to professional development and research funds.

President's Report

New developments in 2009-10. This year we introduced a web page program that enables conference applicants to upload conference proposals and abstracts electronically. This program worked well, and its use will be continued.

Cambridge Scholars Press approached CACLALS about the possibility of publishing the conference proceedings from Spectres and Speculations. Initially Neil turned down the offer to pursue this proposal, on the grounds that it is an annual conference rather than a special topic conference, and because nobody on the executive was available to undertake the editorial position. However, interest was expressed at the meeting in revisiting this possibility, given the cohesiveness of the program, and the recurrence of certain theoretical problems, themes and points of focus. The suggestion was put forward that Neil contact Cambridge Scholars Press to see if this option were still possible, and if it is, that a CFP be sent out for supplementary papers, and a team of co-editors be established to make selections, organize peer review, and undertake the editing of the volume. Joshua Prescott and Prasad Bidaye volunteered to be involved in this editorial process.

The web page needs to be updated and potentially made more user-friendly. Neil cited the example of the Postcolonial Studies Association web page (a UK-based association), which includes a constantly updated calendar of events, conferences, proposal deadlines, etc. Laura Moss, who has recently updated the Canadian Studies web page with the assistance of a web designer, suggested that \$200 be allocated for this designer to look at our web page, at the Postcolonial Studies Association web page and the MLA web page (mla.org), and to come up with a proposal and a budget for updating/enhancing our own web page. It was also suggested that a Facebook page could be mounted alongside the CACLALS web page, but this would be supplemental because it would require everybody to be a Facebook subscriber, which we can't assume or "legislate".

Secretary-Treasurer's Report

The Secretary-Treasurer reiterated the request that presenters submit receipts by 30 June, 2009 in order to be considered for assistance with travel and conference expenses. An updated financial report was posted detailing the budget since 31 March, 2009 that was printed in the last issue of CHIMO. The balance on 24 May, 2009 was **\$15,180**. This balance does not include the second installment of the grant from the Commonwealth Foundation, which we are still awaiting, or the expenses for the 2009 Congress (printing of pro-

grams, and honoraria and expenses for keynote speakers, rental charges for audio equipment, or wages for Congress assistants), nor does it include the \$200 designated for the redesign of the web page.

Election of Student Representative

Azalea Barriese's term as Student Representative (2007-2009) is coming to a conclusion, and she will need to be replaced. Joshua Prescott was nominated by John Ball (seconded, Susan Gingell). A call for further nominations will be sent out on the list-serve, and elections held thereafter among members.

Nominations for New Executive

The CACLALS executive will change in June 2010, and nominations are being sought for a President and Secretary/Treasurer, and for all the regional representatives (Prairies, Atlantic, BC and Northern Territories, Quebec, Colleges). One incentive for the incoming President is that she or he will go to ACLALS in Cyprus as the CACLALS representative. No nominations were made at the AGM, so the current executive will continue to approach potential candidates and to solicit nominations. Nominations will be called for in the Fall Issue of Chimo; the executive will propose a slate of candidates in Spring issue to be approved at AGM. If there is an election, it can be held before the AGM by e-mail ballot.

2010 CACLALS Conference at Concordia

suggestions for next year's CACLALS meeting include

Programs:

- print more copies of the conference program (appreciation was expressed for having the program, with correct locations, up on the web site in advance of the conference, a practice which should be continued);
- post a laminated copy of the program at the registration table, and if the rooms we are assigned are in close proximity, somewhere in the hallway near those rooms;
- see if CFHSS would go back to printing shared programs with meetings of several associations (especially ACCUTE and ACQL) listed according to date and time;
- failing the above, co-ordinate with ACCUTE and ACQL in fall 2009, perhaps by beginning with the same template when scheduling sessions;
- try to co-ordinate session times with ACCUTE and ACQL so that it is easier to move between sessions organised by each;
- perhaps plan joint sessions for the keynote speakers in collaboration with ACCUTE and/or ACQL.

AGM:

perhaps schedule AGM on first or second day rather than at the end of conference;
 emphasise to graduate students in particular the value of attending the AGM and shaping the direction in which the organization develops;
 provide refreshments;
 mention attendance at the AGM in letters from the President and from the Secretary-Treasurer in CHIMO (one member mentioned that when she was a graduate student she hadn't realized she *could* attend the AGM);
 more "plugs" during conference; have session chairs mention it; remind members at keynote talks and book launches;
 make sure it doesn't overlap with AGMs of related associations.

Events

keynote speakers

suggestions included Ian Baucom, Michael Buchner, Taikaiake Alfred, or consulting Pamela McCallum about a Chinese area specialist (as discussed in her launch of the 40th anniversary edition of *Ariel*); other suggestions welcome;

interview with a writer

some Montréal-based writers suggested included Anita Rau Badami, Rawi Hage, Marwan Hassan (suggestion to post excerpts of this interview on You Tube)

author meets critics

follow-up to IRSTRC panel

lunch with one of the book launches or with the AGM (cost this year \$900)

Montréal-specific events

include in the program spoken-word artists such as Kaie Kellough, Victoria Stanton and Vincent Tinguely (authors of *Impure: Reinventing the World: The Theory, Practice and Oral History of "Spoken Word" in Montreal*);

plan conference meal at a Lebanese restaurant (Julia Emberley to make enquiries);
 perhaps organize an event that taps into the Montréal music scene

2010 ACLALS Conference in Cyprus

The next ACLALS conference is to be held in Cyprus from 6-14 June, 2010 (so only a week after the CACLALS meeting).

Some of the suggestions above about having joint keynote addresses with other associations at the Montréal CACLAS conference have been made in case the close proximity of these conferences impacts negatively on CACLALS attendance and scheduling, and therefore on funding available from SSHRC. We want to ensure good attendance for all speakers, but it is especially important to have a critical mass at the keynote talks.

It was made clear that members were welcome to present the same paper at both conferences (and so would not be expected to write 2 papers for conferences only 1 week apart)

Other Business

Georgie Columbus from ICE Canada addressed the meeting

ICE is the International Corpus of English (<http://www.ucl.ac.uk/english-usage/ice/icecan.htm>) and ICE Canada is based at the University of Alberta.

Georgie wished to alert our members to the project, and to provide contact details for herself (georgie.columbus@ualberta.ca) and for John Newman (john.newman@ualberta.ca).

Links to the ICE web site will be added to the CACLALS web page. Our members may find this a valuable resource, as it covers English in Australia, East Africa, Canada, Fiji, Ghana, Great Britain, Hong Kong, India, Ireland, Jamaica, Malaysia, Malta, New Zealand, Nigeria, Pakistan, the Philipines, Singapore, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Trinidad and Tobago and the United States.

Conference Report: 2009 CACLALS
Joshua Prescott, University of New Brunswick

This year's CACLALS conference, convened at Carleton University in Ottawa between May 23-May 25, took as its theme "Spectres and Speculations: Capital, Nations, Texts."

The conference's opening roundtable discussion on the first morning focused on the Indian Residential School Truth and Reconciliation Council (TRC) and established what would become common threads of engagement throughout the conference – the benefits and limitations of the TRC, explorations of Aboriginality, questions of guilt and responsibility in terms of public history, the relationship between creative arts and "healing", and how to both define and understand the very notion of reconciliation. Following Guy Beauregard's introduction, Jonathan Dewar opened the discussion by describing the work of the Aboriginal Healing Foundation and its role in the process of reconciliation. Jo-Ann Episkenew outlined the history of the residential school system in Canada. Using United Nations protocols as a benchmark, she rightly named the residential school system and its ongoing fallout as genocide and asked why Canada remains unwilling to consider the extent to which whiteness dominates a collective national self-image. Ashok Mathur questioned the extent to which non-white, non-Aboriginal citizens would recognize the importance of the TRC, urging that artistic creativity be used as an act of radical intervention. Julie McGonegal looked at how a lack of broad public knowledge about the TRC could be a substantive limitation of the commission, and emphasized the need for a large-scale dissemination of education about residential schools among civil society. Roger Simon spoke of how the TRC risks garnering responses of pity rather than understanding, suggesting the need to balance narratives of personal struggle with those of institutional blame. We cannot, he argued, fall prey to a "too bad, so sad" kind of mentality because such a response, while obstructing any possibility of movement forward, also leads to a severing of the relationship between guilt and responsibility. Finally, Pauline Wakeman took-up Derrida's phrase the "globalization of forgiveness" as a conceptual frame and suggested the importance of not allowing the TRC to be co-opted by media biases, interpersonal conflict, or the idea of "leaving the past behind," thereby stressing the prioritizing of diverse Aboriginal needs.

This engaging panel discussion was followed by the first keynote address, delivered by Tejumola Olaniyan and titled, "Of Travel, Accents, and Epistemologies." Olaniyan began by discussing the imprint of place and location on both theory and literature of the postcolonial world. Using Wole Soyinka, Chinweizu, and Kwame Appiah as examples, he explored criticism of African literature through the lens of movement and migration, suggesting that culture becomes a defining factor of what he named the writer's "accent." Olaniyan named this intimate relationship between culture and movement the "travel-induced clash of postcolonial engagements," outlining two accents of postcoloniality: affirmative and interstitial. The affirmative accent views the West as militaristic and antagonistic, and almost always speaks from a position of national affiliation. The interstitial accent, on the other hand, made popular by Homi Bhabha, Gayatri Spivak, and others,

explores postcoloniality by deconstructing personal, cultural, and social differences. As a result, the interstitial creates spaces of social and political engagement that exist in between fixed, demarcated theoretical lines and national affiliations. While it is the interstitial that dominates scholarly, academic, and creative thought, whether consciously or otherwise, Olaniyan proposed that what is most needed is active, multidirectional cultural exchange. Since an accent cannot escape its context, as Edward Said notes, Olaniyan argued that successful theoretical and political engagement can occur only when both individuals and collective group resolve to fight for their own accent in the name of equality and justice.

The afternoon four-paper session called “Multicultural Canada” examined representations of Canada in relation to questions of identity, imagining, nostalgia, and writing as cultural production. Heidi Butler explored the role of the imagination and the retelling of story in Yann Martel’s *Life of Pi*. Butler suggested that the novel highlights the need to challenge master narratives without creating new narratives in their place, thus signaling a position of “in-betweenness” that forces a rethinking, or reimagining, of the nation. Jennifer Williams and Susan Holloway considered Suzette Mayr’s *Venous Hum* as a critique of multicultural society, paying particular attention to how immigration functions as performance in the novel. Jennifer Delisle used Madeleine Thien’s novel *Certainty* to articulate what she called her own “genealogical nostalgia” for Newfoundland – home to her parents but a place she has never lived. Using the idea of post-memory, or the notion that one’s own subjectivity can be shaped by memories from individuals of a previous generation, Delisle positioned herself as a rootless, second-generation subject, nostalgic for a “homeland” defined by stories, photographs, and others’ remembrances. Finally, Gabrielle Etcheverry traced the publication history of Gonzalo Millan’s poem *La ciudad* in order to comment on the idea of textual history and the need to preserve non-English writing in Canada.

The afternoon of the first day was highlighted by readings by Armand Ruffo, an Objibwe poet, playwright, and scholar, and Cyril Dabydeen, a writer and poet originally from Guyana who lives and works in Ottawa. Ruffo read a brief selection of poems, but he devoted the majority of his time to reading from his newest book project, a creative biography called *Noral Morrisseau: Man Changing Into Thunderbird*. A renowned Objibwe painter credited with over three thousand works, Morrisseau’s life is detailed in episodic style, shedding light on both his personal struggles and his capturing of Aboriginal culture in art. Dabydeen, on the other hand, read a wide selection of poems, including “Streets,” “Lady Icarus,” and “Multiculturalism,” and he also read from his most recent novel, *Drums of my Flesh* – a work that explores questions of roots, origins, integration, and identity on both a personal and national level.

During one of the two opening paper sessions on the morning of the second day, “Images of Africa,” Madelaine Hron looked at literature from/of Rwanda post 1994, questioning how African authors can write of the horrors of genocide without turning off Western readers. Hron expressed the need for more writing from Rwandans, particularly

testimonial accounts, as a window into both the personal and political side of genocide. Cheryl Lousley's paper considered responses to the 1984 Ethiopian famine, including the now infamous support of Bob Geldof, among other celebrity personalities, with his *Live Aid* concerts. If the response to such a famine garners the label "fad", as it did in 1984 and did once again in 2005 with *Live 8*, then how must such an atrocity be remembered? Lousley's paper characterized the overwhelming response to famine as a purging of the domesticated space, a collapse of the sacred and profane in which viewers, empathetic of the situation but feeling helpless in front of their television, give in excess as a kind of penance, as an act of collective catharsis.

In the second session of papers, titled "Black Atlantics," Noon Park explored the transcendental power of memorial inheritance in Dionne Brand's *What We All Long For*, suggesting that the novel creates a teleology of ethical pain that may negate individual experience. Paul Barrett looked at the relationship between movement and stasis in Austin Clarke's fiction, particularly two novels – *More* and *The Polished Hoe*. He argued that Clarke's work often engages an anxiety of transnational movement in order to critique notions of fixed nationalism. Finally, John Ball's paper considered Lawrence Hill's *The Book of Negroes* and Thomas Wharton's *Salamander* as novels that construct an Atlantic-World paradigm in order to reenact the past. While divergent in scope, both novels, Ball argued, engage the idea of a global, transnational existence in their depictions of 18th-century slavery and its aftermath. Hill's novel affirms the idea of a local, rooted identity, while Wharton's text points to the idea of free-floating citizens, content and "at home" everywhere.

The afternoon began with the Tenth Annual Aboriginal Roundtable and focused on the topic "Art, Artist, and Reconciliation." The discussion took many forms, addressing diverse topics including the TRC, educational pedagogy, and questions of movement forward. The conversation began by thinking about the term reconciliation – what it means, how it can be defined, and the limits of its use. Bruce Sinclair queried the idea that reconciliation means to "make new" or to remake, questioning when there was ever a time of peace and harmony between Aboriginals and non-Aboriginals. One participant suggested that the use of humour provides one potential avenue for healing, but so does the integration of Aboriginal art and literature into already established curricula. While one contributor suggested that art should be universal and non-discriminatory, another argued that Aboriginal art should be culturally specific. As a conclusion, however, the discussion merged by suggesting that the key to movement forward is not the acquisition of another's perspective, but the ability to maintain consistently good relations.

The afternoon was brought to a close with paper session titled "Canada in the World." Laura Moss argued that national frameworks, when constructed from the perspective of what she named "oscillating circles of nationalism" or intersecting lines of nationalism, are vital in order to challenge the idea of a fixed, unchanging national identity. By asking, "What kind of country do 'we' want?", Moss emphasized the importance of the arts as a diverse but collective voice, arguing that arts funding must be a national priority.

David Jefferess considered both the benefits and limitations of benevolence in order to explore Canada's role as a model for other emerging, global nations. By suggesting that benevolence necessarily elicits responsibility for the Other, thereby transforming the boundaries of race, Jefferess argued that Canada must recognize its role as a national/transnational society, and the responsibility connected to such a position. Owen Percy examined Canadian culture through the lens of literary awards, particularly the Governor General's Literary Awards. Percy was particularly interested in the how the awarding of the GG's functions as a literary history unto itself, influencing diverse concerns including patronage, promotion, and canonicity. Finally, Brenna Clarke Gray argued that Douglas Coupland's *Hey Nostradamus* positions irony as a foundational tool for navigating the contemporary world post-9/11. The novel, Gray argued, explores the danger of a world without irony, and it thus proposes that irony can be used in order to protect individuals from what becomes a sought-after yet unattainable sense of idealism.

The third day opened with a paper session titled "Going Global." Aine McGlynn looked at the ways in which the year's most celebrated cinematic success story can be seen as a cultural product. In her examination of *Slumdog Millionaire*, originally based on the novel *Q&A* by Vikas Swarup, McGlynn considered the many incarnations of the novel's cover, and the film poster, and used Graham Huggan's thesis of the "postcolonial exotic" to question the extent to which the film merely satisfies Western viewers' conception of the slums of India. Max Haven explored the use of dams in three Hollywood films, and argued that the exploding of the dam suggests an inherent anxiety about global flows. Dams function as a figure of haunting, drawing attention to the displacement of peoples and the flooding of lands in exchange for the stimulation of economic growth. Thomas King's *Green Grass, Running Water*, Haven proposed, offers an alternate narrative to popular Hollywood stories of exploding dams, looking instead at the damming of the imagination as a further, and arguably more significant, project of Western imperialism. Jaime Denike considered representations of female subjectivity in Coetzee's *Waiting for the Barbarians*. Emphasizing a moment of intimacy between the novel's protagonist, the magistrate, and the "barbarian girl," Denike proposed that the figuring of her body as simply face and surface highlights the magistrate's ability to dictate her sense of subjectivity, thereby stressing the continued project of colonial domination.

The final day was undoubtedly highlighted by Sherene Razack's keynote address, "Death Worlds Where Bad Things Happen: Contemporary Settler Violence Against Aboriginal Peoples". Using the death of Frank Paul, an Aboriginal man from Vancouver who died as a result of police neglect in 1998, as a conceptual frame, Razack looked at the relationship between body and colonization and the violence of political inquests. Aboriginal bodies, she argued, threaten the idea of a peaceful, settled land; thus the state, invested in a rhetoric that Canada is a land of peace, social awareness, and acceptance, has an interest in dying and disappearing Aboriginal bodies. Colonization and settlement mark the body, leaving a reminder of occupation and the theft of land; and the state uses inquests as the preferred level of governance because they allow the excuse of systemic failure to remain at the forefront. Inquests, however, do not look at the colonizer, removing the personal

from scrutiny by suggesting Aboriginals ‘have’ been harmed rather than stating that ‘we’ have harmed Aboriginals. Thus, the problem consistently remains that North American society upholds two levels of society, and the only way to move forward is to emphasize human dignity within all social interaction.

Razack’s address offered a solid summation to the persistent threads of inquiry that surfaced throughout the conference proceedings. By looking at the death of Frank Paul, and the use of inquiries as the state-preferred mode of ‘healing’, Razack touched on many questions that had been raised in previous discussions throughout the course of the conference – how to define reconciliation, what reconciliation would look like, the role and importance of the TRC, questions of guilt and responsibility, and the need to recognize and eliminate the continued use of colonization, through both state and culture, as a means of discriminating against individuals who fail to conform to a delineated standard of whiteness. And, ever conscious of her role as an educator, Razack’s comments on the place of whiteness in contemporary society, and the privileging of human dignity, remain pertinent to all discussions of subjectivity, political engagement, and questions of postcoloniality.

News of Members

John C. Ball (New Brunswick) was a keynote speaker at a conference held in London in June entitled "Paris and London in Postcolonial Imagery." His address was entitled "'Two Simultaneous Centuries': Eighteenth-Century London in the Postcolonial Imaginary." His book *Satire & the Postcolonial Novel: V.S. Naipaul, Chinua Achebe, Salman Rushdie* (Routledge), has recently been reissued in paperback, and he is editor of the forthcoming *Blackwell Encyclopedia of Twentieth-Century World Fiction* (2010).

Diana Brydon (Manitoba) delivered a keynote address, "Difficult Forms of Knowing: Enquiry, Injury and Translocated Relations of Postcolonial Responsibility" at the ASNEL/GNEL conference in Muenster, Germany in May 2009 and another, "Developing New Literacies in Cross-Cultural Contexts," to launch a workshop on the national curriculum project in Sao Paulo, Brazil in August 2009, where she taught an intensive graduate course on "Globalization, Knowledge and Cross-cultural Engagements." She has published two refereed articles in the special issue of *Globalizations* dedicated to the SSHRC-funded MCRI on Globalization and Autonomy: the single authored, "Competing Autonomy Claims and the Changing Grammar of Global Politics." *Globalizations*. vol.6. no.3 (Sept 2009): 339-352 and the co-authored introduction to the issue: W.D. Coleman and Diana Brydon, "Globalization and Autonomy: An Overview." *Globalizations*. 6.3 (Sept 2009): 323-338. She will deliver the third Distinguished Edward Baugh Lecture at the University of the West Indies, Mona, Jamaica, in November 2009. Through the Centre for Globalization and Cultural Studies, she is pleased to be co-directing three visiting PhD students this fall: Ana Paula Duboc and Ruberval Maciel (USP students working on the national project on ELAP scholarships) and Aieka Smith (a UWI, Mona Politics student working on the global politics of diaspora).

Maria Casas is publishing *Multimodality in Canadian Black Feminist Writing: Orality and the Body in the Work of Harris, Philip, Allen, and Brand* this fall with Rodopi (Amsterdam/New York, NY).

Mariam Pirbhai (Wilfrid Laurier) has published *Mythologies of Migration, Vocabularies of Indenture: Novels of the South Asian Diaspora in Africa, the Caribbean, and Asia-Pacific* with University of Toronto Press.

Niigon Sinclair and **Renate Eigenbrod** guest co-edited a special issue of *The Canadian Journal of Native Studies* (29.1&2): "What We Do, What We Are: Responsible, Ethical, and Indigenous-Centred Literary Criticisms of Indigenous Literatures."

Postcolonial Text has published a new issue: Vol 4 No.4 (2008). You are invited to visit the journal's web site and enjoy this issue's interesting offering of articles, an interview, book reviews, and poetry - all freely available on an open access basis. <http://postcolonial.org>

In Memoriam Meenakshi Mukherjee

Meenakshi Mukherjee was one of the leading scholars of Indian literature written both in English and in Indian languages. She was based at Jawaharlal Nehru University in



Delhi and later at Hyderabad. For many of us, she and Harish Trivedi were the faces of Indian literary criticism. For we could not but notice that something happened in the Indian academy in the last two decades. While there had always been literary criticism in

India, it had made little impact outside the country, even, ironically, on the discussion of Indian or postcolonial literature. In North American academic circles, it was commonly assumed that only Indian critics in North America could have something to say to North Americans about Indian literature. That colonial relation changed, however, with Meenaksi and Harish, who successfully demanded to be recognized by North American academics, even as they remained based in India. Postcolonial literary criticism was radically altered once it was forced to acknowledge that criticism as well as literature could be written in India. Moreover, a virtue of Meenakshi's work was that it was able to be received by the North American academy without adopting that academy's technical jargon.

She was the author of many books, notably *The Twice-Born Fiction: Themes and Techniques of the Indian Novel in English* (1971), *Realism and Reality: the Novel and Society in India* (1985), and *The Perishable Empire* (2000). For the last-named book, she was awarded the Sahitya Akademi Prize for the best book of the year in English in India. She also wrote *Upanshye Atit: Itihash o Kalpoitihash* [*The Past in the Novel: History and Imagined History*] in Bengali.

Members of CACLALS are most likely to know her personally as the unflappable, supremely efficient, and keenly intelligent chairperson of IACLALS from 1993 to 2005 and of ACLALS from 2001 to 2004. She and Harish were responsible for organizing the tremendously successful conference in Hyderabad in August 2004, which many of us will remember as a highlight of our involvement in ACLALS.

Meenakshi collapsed suddenly and died September 16 at the age of 72. She was predeceased by her husband, the scholar Sujit Mukherjee, and is survived by two daughters.

-Neil ten Kortenaar

BOOK REVIEWS

Editors: Julia Emberley

David Jefferess. *Postcolonial Resistance*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2008. 240 pp.

Review by Christine Kim, Simon Fraser University

In May 2009, Tamil protestors demonstrated against the violence in Sri Lanka and the Canadian government's inaction in response to these acts by marching on Toronto's Gardiner Expressway and occupying the highway for five hours. The protestors called for the Canadian government to intervene in the situation overseas, and, as a byproduct, sparked a certain amount of discussion by the Canadian public as evidenced by comments left on the Internet sites of news stations such as the CBC and CTV. While many of the postings defended the right to protest on the part of the Tamil community, several others disparaged it, complaining bitterly about the ingratitude of immigrants, the disruption of people's commutes, and the illogic of these protests given the Canadian government's inability to effectively intervene in global violence. Indeed, many of these comments insisted that the conflict in Sri Lanka was one that Canada should have no part in. Among other things, this act of resistance and the debate that it sparked invite us to think carefully about relations between global spaces and the ethical and political possibilities and responsibilities available to those interested in changing both the everyday material realities of global violence and the social and cultural narratives about them.

These difficult kinds of questions about resistance and transformation are taken up in exciting ways by David Jefferess's *Postcolonial Resistance*. In this critical study, Jefferess uses the concept of resistance to move between the work of multiple postcolonial theorists and national contexts in order to rethink colonial power and imagine new ways of challenging it. This project is a necessary one because even though resistance is a key term in postcolonial studies, it is, as Jefferess points out, an underexamined one, and thus his interrogation of this concept carries considerable implications for the rest of the field. Moving away from the tendency to approach resistance in terms of either subversion or opposition, *Postcolonial Resistance* focuses on other forms of resistance, ones that can be read as transformative. The project's approach is to push for two kinds of change--discursive and material--simultaneously, and it argues that it is not enough to deconstruct the narratives that regulate how experiences are understood as this kind of critique needs to be paired with other kinds of changes, such as access to water and education and the alleviation of poverty. In this way, *Postcolonial Resistance* draws attention to a larger project of social change and the importance of addressing colonial violence from a number of different angles.

One of *Postcolonial Resistance*'s key contributions lies in its synthesis of three influential postcolonial theorists--Bhabha, Fanon, and Gandhi--and the new readings and

applications it offers of their work. Bhabha's discussions of hybridity and ambivalence are used to think through the kinds of political resistance that Gandhi organized while he was in South Africa, Fanon's theorization of liberation and understanding of "the collective identity of the colonized as a manifestation of struggle" (59) provides the basis of an analysis of Tsitsi Dangarembga's *Nervous Conditions* that reminds us that not all struggle can be considered resistance proper, and Gandhi's enormous body of writing is read in relation to Indian nationalism. By putting these different conceptualizations of resistance in dialogue, Jefferess complicates conventional ways of reading these critics and promotes new ways of theorizing resistance.

The other significant contribution that *Postcolonial Resistance* makes to the field of postcolonial studies is to further comparative work, specifically by bringing Indian and South African history and literature in conversation with each other. Gandhi, through his visit to South Africa and promotion of resistance in both places, acts as a visible link that sutures this study together. The tying together of Indian and South African contexts highlights the multiple and varied forms of resistance that were occurring in both places during the twentieth century, ones that complicate understandings of social relations, colonial power, and ongoing forms of violence and resistance. Gandhi's role in organizing the Indian community in South Africa reminds us that the social and political struggles in that space were not just limited to black and white participants and that the modes of resistance employed were also varied. At the same time, Gandhi's time in South Africa also prompted a change in his own understanding of how resistance operates, a shift that proved to be key for his later work in India. Jefferess notes that while Gandhi had initially believed that a demonstration of Indian loyalty (which he provided by establishing the Indian Ambulance Corps) would compel the British to give Indians equal legal status, Gandhi was quite disappointed when the government decided instead to pass the Transvaal Asiatic Ordinance which required all Indians to carry a pass. Far from translating into full citizenship rights, this particular performance of loyalty produced precisely the opposite effect for the Indian population as it, and other acts of resistance, resulted in even "more vociferous attempts by the state to control and subjugate them" (55). While Jefferess is careful to remind us of the inability of any example or case to act as a model for all contexts and historical moments, the particular instances he focuses on do open up additional ways of understanding the work of resistance taking place in other temporal moments and global places.

Jefferess' discussion of Gandhi and Gandhism in India is a particularly compelling section of his study given the way it theorizes resistance and agency. He begins by underscoring the difference between Gandhi's political vision and Gandhi as a cultural symbol, noting that the former was a threat to Indian nationalism but the latter embraced widely. *Postcolonial Resistance* argues that Gandhi was not a nationalist in the conventional sense as he did not believe that oppression would end simply with colonial rulers vacating India. Gandhi was instead adamant that considerable changes needed to be made to the economic, political, and cultural structures of the country and that India had to relinquish Western notions of modernity and civilization as these would only promote further op-

pression. Gandhi's political vision for India promoted a transformation of *swaraj* (self-rule) through *sarvodaya* (welfare for all) which was a way of pushing for complete emancipation from all oppressive structures and not just those that fall under the category of colonial. Jefferess notes that this in itself is not a new move as Fanon's work also argues for the need to rectify the material conditions of poverty, but suggests that what is unusual about Gandhi's approach is that he "focuses on the 'power' of the Indian masses to maintain or transform the various forms of oppression and achieve individual and collective 'self-rule'" (107). Gandhi's reworking of *swaraj* shifts the focus towards everyday practices and away from utopian ideals or the end goal of a revolution, and puts the emphasis on the ethics of individual behaviour by encouraging, for example, religious tolerance and self-control. This understanding of resistance is particularly useful because it shifts attention towards the oppressed rather than placing all agency with the oppressors. Moreover, this conceptualization of resistance and change manages to avoid the rhetoric of blame which has been particularly vexing for postcolonial studies.

Postcolonial Resistance undertakes the important work of rethinking core postcolonial concepts and argues for the need to enact discursive and material transformations. While the project focuses primarily on a handful of theorists and the relevance of their work to South Africa and India, it is clear how Jefferess' comparative approach might be expanded to incorporate other geographic areas and historical periods. For instance, Canadian critics working on the Aboriginal residential school TRC would find much of Jefferess' discussion of the South African TRC quite useful, especially its exploration of reconciliation as a complicated initiative that requires not just apology or forgiveness, but also structural change if cycles of violence are to end permanently. Here, Jefferess' reading of Sindiwe Magona's *Mother to Mother* is quite helpful as it moves away from a framework of victims and perpetrators and towards "acknowledg[ing] and foster[ing] connection and responsibility" (158). While much of the conversation about the South African TRC has been about the excavation of truth, *Mother to Mother* suggests that what is needed to promote reconciliation is "understanding rather than history" (160) and, according to Jefferess, the novel helps further this work by locating the murder of American graduate student Amy Biehl within the broader context of South African families and communities that have been subjected to various forms of physical and structural violence. The novel does not offer an apology from the fictitious mother of Biehl's murderer--and this is important--but instead helps us understand how such acts could have been committed and what they mean to those associated with them, focuses that might prove to be relevant as the Canadian TRC starts to get underway. With its careful theorizations of core postcolonial concepts and well-supported discussions of South African and Indian literature and history, *Postcolonial Resistance* will undoubtedly prove to be a valuable resource for critics working on postcolonial studies, comparative studies, and matters of resistance, transformation, and reconciliation.

McGonegal, Julie. *Imagining Justice: The Politics of Postcolonial Forgiveness and Reconciliation*. Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2009. 233 pages.

Review by Erica Kelly. PhD Candidate, University of Western Ontario

The United Nations declared 2009 the “International Year of Reconciliation.” In the resolution proclaiming this designation, the UN’s General Assembly noted the ways in which conflict resolution accords with the UN’s founding principles, and went on to suggest that “reconciliation processes are particularly necessary and urgent in countries and regions of the world which have suffered or are suffering situations of conflict.” The chronology suggested in the latter half of this phrase may catch some readers off guard. How could a country in the midst of conflict consider reconciliation? If injustice is ongoing, what would the reconciliation process mean?

Julie McGonegal’s *Imagining Justice* intervenes in a critical debate that too often dismisses reconciliation and forgiveness as hegemonic forces; her study instead suggests that we reconsider reconciliation’s emancipatory potential. She argues that those who would seek an end to conflict must address the possibility of reconciliation even in the midst of injustice. Though it “may seem outrageous and perhaps even contemptible” (189) to raise the possibility of reconciliation in answer to ongoing violence, to consider forgiveness when the material realities of power imbalances have not been resolved, beginning the process of dialogue and exchange may actually be transformative. She acknowledges that projects of reconciliation could be co-opted to serve state power or to reinforce social and economic inequity: Benita Parry, for example, argues that reconciliation necessitates a forgetting of the past and so serves colonizers’ interests, and that holding on to past wrongs might in fact be the best hope for winning material redistribution. In response to such criticism, McGonegal asks, “Must a politics of reconciliation necessarily exclude a critique of the contemporary condition?” (31). Reconciliation and change, in McGonegal’s reconfiguration, are not mutually exclusive; instead, each informs the other.

Critics distrustful of the process of reconciliation often point to the term’s prefix, which suggests a return to a prior state. McGonegal focuses instead on the advocacy and activism that reconciliation might inspire, and she relies on postcolonial frameworks to help her to overturn expected chronologies. Like reconciliation itself, postcolonialism is sometimes criticized for its implied temporality, which could fail to consider the ongoing legacy of colonial injustice. McGonegal builds on Stuart Hall’s definition of postcolonial; Hall uses the term to signal not the advancement beyond conditions of the colonial era, but instead the overturning of the binaries of before and after, colonized and colonizer, altogether. For Hall and McGonegal, then, the postcolonial moment marks neither the continuation of colonial frames of reference nor the premature celebration of triumph over colonialism’s legacy, but instead, a repositioning of historical frameworks and power rela-

tions that permits new relationships and new ways of seeing. This is not to disavow the contemporary injustice authorized by colonial pasts (postcolonialism need not be accompanied by “amnesia or euphoric utopianism” [7]) but instead, to consider historical and contemporary power relations from multiple perspectives. McGonegal argues that, like postcolonialism, reconciliation’s potential lies in its ability to challenge the past and the present, which may ultimately lead to a more equitable future. In reading the politics of reconciliation and forgiveness through the lens of postcoloniality, McGonegal seeks to “register the displacement and decentralization of power relations these politics enact” (4).

McGonegal interrogates more than just the chronology of reconciliation. Allowing the possibility of transformative reconciliation also necessitates a redefinition of justice, and a realization that conceptualizations of justice are multiple and culturally situated. Her attention to the claims of culture and circumstance prompt her engagement with numerous theories of forgiveness in addressing the (perhaps irresolvable) questions of the ethics of reconciliatory projects. She asks, for example, whether healing is responsible or even possible, whether to forgive means to forget, and what the responsibilities of the perpetrator, the victim, the witness, the inheritor, and the nation might be in discourses of forgiveness. In addressing these troubling questions, McGonegal reads Derrida, Kristeva, and Oliver in conversation with Gandhi and Tutu. In response to Western theorists’ insistence on the private, she considers as an alternative the commitment to community that both Gandhi and Tutu affirm. She insists that in today’s world of proliferating sites of reconciliation, we must reclaim forgiveness from the private and apolitical sphere to which it has been relegated though its association with religious narratives, but that this reclamation must be balanced with a concern for the individual voice. At the site of forgiveness might be staged both a reclamation of individual subjectivity and a new relationship to the collective, since reconciliation navigates between the private and public and between the real and the ideal.

McGonegal’s resistance to closed definitions of her key terms (forgiveness, reconciliation, justice) is related to her larger argument: the ongoing process of reconciliation, she claims, creates the possibility of dialogic space, within which new conditions and relations may develop. To define reconciliation before this process has begun would be to preempt its possibilities. Some of McGonegal’s language, however, seems to counter this gesture towards multiplicity: for example, she refers to reconciliation movements as “scripts” (3), a label that is left unpacked, though it suggests prescriptive power relations and would seem to deny the possibilities for real change that she celebrates elsewhere. The relationship between forgiveness and reconciliation remains unclear, and though this conceptual overlap may be intentional, it would have benefitted from direct address. While McGonegal claims that forgiveness and reconciliation are “often held to be conceptually very different” (38), part of her project seems to be to read these two terms as uniting the public and private and cooperatively creating the conditions of change.

The central chapters of *Imagining Justice* draw on literary texts as case studies for theorizing forgiveness and reconciliation since, McGonegal explains, literature enjoys the

unique proclivity to “imagining alternatives” (14). Each of the novels she has chosen allows her to explore a different complication of the reconciliation process: David Malouf’s *Remembering Babylon* reveals the dangers of state co-opted reconciliation, which threatens to silence victims and to reinforce rather than dismantle existing power relations; Michael Ondaatje’s *Anil’s Ghost* speaks to the difficulties of imagining reconciliation when it is impossible to imagine the end of conflict and when the search for truth leads nowhere; Joy Kogawa’s *Obasan* and *Itsuka* consider the relationship between remembrance and forgiveness and critique the binaristic thinking that suggests the two are mutually exclusive or that memory is true or false; and J.M. Coetzee’s *Disgrace* questions the possibilities and limits of truthful confession and deconstructs the discrepancy between the necessity and the impossibility of honest disclosure. Throughout this conversation about truth, reconciliation and forgiveness, McGonegal interrogates the relationship between humanism and postmodernism. Both positions, she contends, involve risk: avid postmodernists would disavow the possibility of a shared language of memory or truth, and humanists might insist that truth be accessed and recorded before the process of reconciliation continues. The novels she has selected, McGonegal claims, “simultaneously critique and defend an ethics of forgiveness and reconciliation” (181). This is also the accomplishment of *Imagining Justice*: McGonegal opens a space of critical but accepting, optimistic but pragmatic hope for reconciliation.

McGonegal’s other real achievement, not to be too quickly glossed, is her insistence on hope. There is a necessary tension and impossibility at the heart of reconciliation: “there can ultimately be no complete recovery, no absolute resolution of loss” (36). Yet McGonegal is hopeful, and her belief in the transformational, even salvational potential of the reconciliation process is confirmed in the clarity and commitment of her language. She insists that something can be—and indeed, must be—salvaged from the discourse of reconciliation, even while its limitations are justifiably critiqued. She promises “an interrogation of reconciliation movements and agendas that acknowledges their *capacity* to create real change—genuine transformation and thus reconciliation—without prematurely celebrating their successes or superficially rallying their feel-good sentiments” (xiv), and she reaffirms this intention throughout. In the process of recuperating reconciliation’s productive potential, however, McGonegal occasionally risks mitigating its potentially conservative elements. While her argument that forgiveness may serve as a generative site for agency encourages critics of reconciliation movements to refrain from dismissing them as apolitical or naive, the study could benefit from further engagement with the potential dangers of the process, and especially the possibility that reconciliation might provide a blanket solution, an overwriting that risks negating the crimes of the past in much the same way that blanket amnesty might. McGonegal does speak to such dangers, but not at length.

Both the hope that is so much a part of her project and her faith in literature’s ability to imagine justice are signalled in the book’s cover illustration. The image of the cracked vase, once broken but now reconstructed and displaying a visible scar, calls to mind Derek Walcott’s metaphor for poetry in a society scarred by the legacy of colonial

violence: “Break a vase, and the love that reassembles the fragments is stronger than that love which took its symmetry for granted when it was whole” (8-9). Ingrid de Kok elaborates, suggesting that “[t]he gluing together may be the key function of art and cultural education in a time of social change, but it involves seeing and feeling the fragmented, mutilating shards, before the white scar can be celebrated” (62). While literature may help to realign and reconfigure, it cannot erase the scar. McGonegal positions the texts she reads here as potential glue in the re-collected community, as providing space for the scars that testify to both injustice and reconciliation, to both pain and healing. *Imagining Justice* insists on the “ethical imperative” (16) to see both sides.

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