Inkshed

Newsletter of the Canadian Association for the Study of Language and Learning

Volume 19, Number 2, Autumn 2001

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This issue was edited by Jane Milton, Nova Scotia College of Art and Design

Reflections on Inkshed 18

Doug Brent

This May, Canmore Alberta was the site for the 18th Annual Working Conference of the Canadian Association for the Study of Language and Learning, better known as Inkshed 18. For three days, we wrestled with the theme "Reading Contexts," a theme designed to encompass questions such as

- how students read (or learn to read) academic texts and assignments;
- how we can help students "read" the contexts in which their writing will be taken up by
- audiences real and imagined;
- how we create contexts for reading in our classrooms;
- how we read student papers and how they "read" our responses to their writing;
- how professional writers "read" contexts and how their documents are read;
- how genre affects reading and writers' reading of context.

How much progress did we make on these momentous questions? Well, for me it's a bit hard to say. As usual for a member of the organizing committee, my memories of Inkshed 18 are something of a blur. In my mind, the scholarly interchange of Inkshed 18 is so inseparably mixed with memories of the more mundane matters of conference engineering (Will the bus arrive on time? Will there be enough doughnuts?) that in many ways I'm one of the worst people to reflect on what it all really meant.

But if pressed for a comment, I would say that one of the most outstanding aspects of this particular Inkshed was its reflexivity. Inkshed has always tried to avoid the default mode of academic conferences - three papers, a couple of questions, move on to the next session - by foregrounding a more workshop-oriented program as reflected in the official title, "The 18th *Working* Conference" Every Inkshed has adopted a different spin on this theme, always anchored by the activity of inkshedding as a means of providing a small shared space for reflection, writing, reading, more writing, and sharing of ideas in print as well as orally.

This year, however, the opportunity to share this activity with Peter Elbow gave us an unusual opportunity to step back a few paces and re-evaluate this activity that we have made a particular hallmark of our conferences. Though officially billed as a "Keynote Speaker," Peter majestically subverted the usual definition of keynote speaker as "big-shot-flown-in-for-headline-appeal." From his opening address to the last day of the conference, Peter joined in the activities of the group, talking, writing, inkshedding, and most important, reflecting with us on what this activity really means.

As one of the first champions of freewriting when it appeared on the composition scene in the seventies, and as a continuing and tireless investigator into the meaning of various kinds of writing activities, Peter was well positioned to help us think about what inkshedding means and how it differs from freewriting in its original conception. Inkshedding, he pointed out, differs from freewriting not only in its form but in its purpose. Freewriting is primarily designed as a preliminary activity. The student who may have little confidence in her writing ability is freed by freewriting precisely in its lack of a formal audience. By being able to write without worrying about the product, the freewriter can be encouraged to write gradually more and more text, gradually unfolding the ability latent in us all to fill page after page with *copia* - text that seeks its meaning simply by existing. The more familiar types of transactional text can be built on this base as the writer, now more able to trust in text, learns to mould it for others.

Inkshedding is more transactional at its core. Although similar in form to freewriting, to the extent that it is produced quickly with little regard for the niceties of scholarly prose, inkshedding is different in that its reason for being is already audience. To publish freewriting in any form would be to undermine its essence - it works largely because the writer knows that it is unlikely to be seen by others, much less judged or interpreted. Inkshedding is designed to be shared, first among the others sitting at the table who exchange the tattered bits of paper, mark them up, annotate them, write exclamation marks and "me too's" in the margin, and later among the entire conference or classroom, whether by being edited and photocopied or merely by being stapled to the wall.

It is this on-the-wallness that marks a fundamental difference between inkshedding and freewriting. The purpose of

inkshedding is to make sure that all voices are heard, in ways that are not possible in a group in which only one can speak at a time and the strongest and most confident voices are generally the ones that get to speak. Inkshedding takes advantage of the asynchronicity of text - the fact that all can write simultaneously, and next morning when the inksheds appear at breakfast, all can simultaneously read.

Participating in this activity with Peter gave us the opportunity to reflect on the tradeoffs that are inevitably made when audience walks in. However spontaneous the hurried production of inksheds may appear, they are always composed in the knowledge that they may appear beside the muffins and coffee the next morning. This gives us, as people used to valuing vicarious contact with others through text, an added incentive to say something insightful, meaningful, worthy of being read by others before being packed in a suitcase with three days' worth of dirty socks. For us this is liberating, a chance to pursue in yet another way the dialogic imperative that brings people together in conferences in the first place.

For the beginning writer, however, the dialogic imperative may be less pressing than the need to avoid being humiliated, yet again, for the lack of ideas worthy of appearing beside the morning muffins, let alone being handed to a teacher or even, unthinkably, published in "real" print. The result is often the crabbed, pseudo-scholarly prose produced by the writer trying desperately to fit into a genre box that he has not yet figured out, marked by superficial and often failing attempts to produce that strange thing called an "essay." Or worse, the production of nothing at all. This is where the strange, copious magic of freewriting, the threatless wonder of being told to write more and more and more without worrying about a reader for an instant, can give a freedom that the inkshedder, always (even if usually subconsciously) writing for an editor and a set of readers, cannot enjoy. Of course these forms are not mutually exclusive, and the ongoing discussion of the weekend helped clarify what purposes each serves, and when each might be appropriate with various types of student.

It was a privilege to be able to reflect on the merits of this particular adaptation of freewriting with one of the masters of the art of teaching literacy - the man who pointed out many years ago how writers working together need less to be "taught" in a formal sense, and more to be freed to unfold the magic of text in the company of other writers.

Many thanks to Peter, a thoroughly kind and passionate teacher of writing who was sufficiently intrigued by the concept of inkshedding that he agreed to come and participate with us. Thanks also to Betsy Sargent, for getting him intrigued and helping to get him to Alberta, and to the rest of the organizing committee - Jo-Anne Andre, Barbara Schneider, Geoff Cragg, and our unfathomably valuable administrative assistant, Jo-Anne Kabeary. Thanks to Angela Barclay, Jen Medlock and Jan Henderson, graduate students in the Communications Studies program at the University of Calgary, for editing and typing those inksheds so that they could appear beside the muffins. And of course, thanks to everyone, new folks and grizzled veterans, who came to speak, listen, read, writing, and contemplate the mysteries of teaching and learning literacy.

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About Inkshed . . .

This newsletter of the *Canadian Association for the Study of Language and Learning* (CASLL) provides a forum for its subscribers to explore relationships among research, theory, and practice in language acquisition and language use, particularly in the Canadian context. CASLL membership runs from January 1 to December 31 and includes a subscription to Inkshed. To subscribe, send a cheque, made out to "Inkshed at NSCAD," for $20 ($10 for students and the un(der)employed to the following address: Kenna Manos, Nova Scotia College of Art and Design, 5162 Duke Stree, Halifax, NS, B3J 3J6, Canada.

Subscribers are invited to submit items of interest related to the theory and practice of reading and writing. CASLL also has a website (www.StThomasU.ca/~hunt/casll.htm) maintained by Russ Hunt.

Please submit newsletter contributions (preferably via email in APA format) to the editor:

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Inskshed editors and editorial consultants, past and present, include the following:

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From the Editor's Notepad

This newsletter is primarily a post-conference issue. It comes to you a little later than intended, but perhaps its arrival after the madness of early semester will mean that you have time to read it, respond, make suggestions for topics to be addressed in future issues, or inspire you to write a piece for the next issue.

This issue wraps up Inkshed 18 through Doug Brent's reflection; Russ Hunt's review of *Worlds Apart* -- the new book from Aviva Freedman, Patrick Dias, and Anthony Paré which several Inkshedders were reading and discussing during the conference breaks; the minutes from the Annual General Meeting; a few photographs from Canmore; and the excerpt from talent night.

This issue also marks some changes for the newsletter. The editorship has moved to me, with help from Kenna Manos and Russ Hunt, and the publication format is about to change. This will be the last paper version mailed out to the entire membership. The next Inkshed newsletter will appear in electronic form. You will be alerted to its publication via the Inkshed list and can then read it on line or download a printable version to your own computer. Those who do not have easy access to a computer can still receive the print version if you fill out the form in the print version form and send it to me at NSCAD (mailing and email addresses here). Only those members who have dues paid and who have made the specific request can receive a paper version.

We also look forward in this issue to **Inkshed 19,** to be held in Prince Edward Island, at Stanhope by the Sea. The first call for proposals appears in this issue.

I hope to have the next issue of the *Inkshed Newsletter* on your screens by the end of January, 2002. Deadline for submissions is January 15. The complexity of issues surrounding language and audience on the list that became apparent in the responses to the events of September 11 seems to have given many contributors pause. Perhaps the newsletter is a good place for something on one or more of the issues raised? Perhaps someone who attended the CCCC's last Spring could give us an overview? Is there someone who would put together an updated compilation of the bibliography that grows on the list? If you have something to contribute or a suggestion for something you'd like to see, please don't hesitate to send it my way.

A special thank-you goes from me to Russ Hunt for his technological wizardry, which is making my editorship possible.

Jane Milton

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Russ Hunt

Between Planets: What's Between the Worlds of *Worlds Apart*

Inkshedders will not be surprised to learn that the likes of Aviva Freedman, Patrick Dias, and Anthony Paré (and a number of other inkshedders and associates, who collectively pursued the tangled relationships among school learning and workplace learning, and explicit and implicit instruction, through two mammoth SSHRC grants over a period of years at Carleton and McGill Universities) can do amazing work, and are full of powerful, useful ideas.

The report on that long project, titled *Worlds Apart: Acting and Writing in Academic and Workplace Contexts*, is in many ways a kind of culmination of a paradigm shift in the study of how advanced literacy skills get learned. Before this watershed, "normal science," to use Thomas Kuhn's phrase, generally assumed that workplace writing was hardly worth study. Not only was it smeared with toil and bleared with trade, it was so obviously simple as to be unworthy of serious attention. Compared with what literary scholars and critics might find to say about a sonnet or an essay, it seemed clear there was almost nothing of interest to be said about an insurance case report, a memorandum of agreement, a call for proposals or a letter of intent. Once you'd pointed out how clichéd and uncreative the language was, and how conventional and formulaic the organization of the text, the work of analysis and understanding seemed to be over.

It was in the early eighties that the work of Lee Odell and Dixie Goswami (1981) and others first broke down the comfortable wall between the writing we could take seriously and the writing we could ignore. But it has taken a couple of decades for this insight to be so widely accepted that it no longer needs to be apologized for, or prefaced with explanations and excuses. That the change has happened can be clearly seen in *Worlds Apar*t, which in many ways represents the culmination of all that attention to kinds of writing activity that once passed utterly undetected under the academic radar screen.

The book's most important contribution to our understanding of writing and literacy generally may be the way it allows us to see how Russian-based "activity theory" and North American "genre theory" afford us a rich, binocular understanding of the nature of writing and the contexts in which it's learned. The book shows us how considering writing as a contextualized "activity" rather than a linguistic object allows us to see that, in the almost complete absence of direct, explicit instruction, social workers (for example) learn, on the job, how to write the kinds of reports that actually benefit their clients by persuading someone to take appropriate action, and to suggest some of the reasons that that kind of learning is so effective. The authors show us how this process is rooted in the relations among the people and texts engaged in a human activity, and how that understanding of patterns of activity allows us in turn to understand in a richer way the patterned linguistic actions that evolve typically out of repeated rhetorical exigencies and produce the forms of discourse we have (following, among others, Carolyn Miller) come to call genres.

Worlds Apart is organized into four sections: an extremely important introductory one on method, one reporting investigations of "university writing" (by which is meant writing done in connection with formal classes and explicit learning situations), one reporting on investigations of workplace writing (in contexts such as a children's hospital social services department, the Bank of Canada, or an architectural firm), and a final section titled "Transitions," which addresses the question "How can students move successfully from the academic writing described in Part II . . . to the complex rhetorical environments of the workplace?" The central insight of the book is embodied in its title: the world of school writing is utterly different and apart from the world of workplace writing, where texts have functions and serve purposes beyond the "epistemic" ones of learning, evaluation and grading.

In one sense, of course, this seems obvious (this is "just school"; that's "the real world") but the implications of this sort of exploration of these differences at this level are crucial for our understanding of the nature of texts, text production, and learning about texts. And though it may seem obvious, it hardly goes without saying. Among English departments, for example, models of text are, in general, profoundly and radically unhooked from action. Not only all student essays, but most professional scholarly texts, have as their central function not participating in a task by means of what they say, but rather demonstrating the author's expertise or skill so that others will judge the work and its author positively. It is, in fact, often very difficult to make clear the distinction between writing which has, and writing which does not have, what the authors of *Worlds Apart* call "authenticity" or "rhetorical reality" to people who have

spent their careers working almost exclusively with either aesthetic texts or texts that exist primarily to exhibit their authors' skill or knowledge (or betray their lack of them).

The authors make this distinction very clear in Chapter 11, "Contexts for Writing: University and Work Compared." There they say, among other things:

> Because most of the purposes and necessities of work are absent from the classroom, there are numerous functions that academic writing is never called on to serve. First, students have no need to produce legally valid records, nor occasion to perform acts for which they will be held to account. . . . Nor do their texts have performativity, in the sense of realizing speech acts such as orders or requests. (226)

They are aware that many readers, especially in English departments, will say that students *are*, in fact, "held to account" for their writing, or argue that comments on student papers are not, as the authors say they are, merely rationalizations for grades, but are -- or can be -- dialogic responses to what students are saying. Thus they are at pains to make the radical differences in the two situations apparent, and to make the implications of these differences for learning as explicit as possible. Students who have been taught to write in traditional ways, they demonstrate through case study after case study, are not only not helped to learn how to write in authentic professional contexts, they are often seriously handicapped by their expectation that there is only one way to learn, and that it is by being told explicitly.

In fact, one of the salient characteristics of the workplace learning situation as described in this book is that learning is *not* an explicit goal; they report that both novices and experienced mentors regularly deny that it is a goal at all. Consequently, many novices do not recognize the opportunities for learning implicit, for example, in having a text rejected or edited. The authors point out, for example, the common occurrence of the inference from their previous learning patterns that suggests that "anything written in response to a draft by a grader is evaluative and final. For these novices entering the workplace, then, the comments written on their drafts often meant negative evaluation and evoked resistance, rather than being recognized as opportunities for learning (and further collaborative performance)" (196).

One of many reasons to welcome the publication of *Worlds Apart* is that we no longer have to mount the argument that there are profound differences between writing in these two situations: we can simply refer people to the book, as we can refer people who really want to know what we mean when we say marks and evaluation are poisonous to learning to Alfie Kohn's *Punished by Rewards*.

There are also, though, some ways in which the book is a disappointment for me. There's a kind of narrowness involved in seeing the central issue as "the performance of universities in preparing their graduates for the changed writing demands of professional workplaces." I'm concerned that the audience whom I think most directly needs to hear what this book has to say will find themselves alienated from reading it -- not only because of its professional context (how many English professors regularly read Erlbaum books?), but, more seriously, because its focus on the consequences of education for futures in the workplace, for careers, is not of much interest to them. A specialist in eighteenth century literature (of which I am one) will find it difficult to see how her interest in deepening students' literary understanding should be judged by its relevance to their possible futures in investment analysis or social work.

The authors' characterization of the classroom situation makes it clear how it differs from situations where writing actually functions. But writing which isn't done in the workplace *can* serve such authentic functions as creating community, influencing others, establishing a record, furthering mutual tasks, and so forth, and can do so even in classrooms. I was disappointed that the authors' methodology allowed a phenomenon like inkshedding -- which they are certainly aware of in other contexts -- to fall through the cracks.

I would, that is to say, have appreciated more attention to the specific processes by which implicit learning occurs in those workplace contexts (and in situations where transactionally embedded written discourse is used in classrooms). It would seem to me, for instance, that discourse-based interviews (cf. Odell and Goswami, 1981) with newcomers and apprentices should have brought to the level of conscious attention some of the processes by focusing on the contextualized rhetorical choosing. Such a strategy might have illuminated the role of making learning the explicit goal (as opposed to making the joint accomplishment of a task the explicit goal). What difference does that make to a learner's growing -- or not growing -- ability to make rhetorical choices, for example? It seems to me that the

assumption, that there's nothing out there in the space between the worlds, makes it difficult for the authors to attend to such issues.

Perhaps when I say that what I want is not just a delineation of how the “communication relations that contextualize writing in the workplace” are “far richer” (235) but a further exploration of how that richness actually works to facilitate learning and explanation of just how that richness might be brought into higher education contexts, I'm asking for another, deeper cut into the data this valuable work was built on. Well, folks? Maybe it could be titled *Between Planets*.

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Travelling Phrases

Greece

I

My lexicon says the word for "contractor"
Can also mean "a beau" and "a kind of macaroon."
So too the word for "an undeserved fine or loss"
Spreads to "a lazy man" and "a vicious horse."
Always easy to browse the curiosities
In someone else's language.

II

In Santorini, the address is "156 steps."
We lose count, but add up on the third try.
In Wuhan, our taxi driver wanders
Between an address (in characters)
And a grid marked on an English map,
Few signs that might bisect our languages.
Perhaps no different from the boy in Merigomish
Who tells us to turn right at the corner
Where Harry's store used to be.

III

Must have been some Inkshedder
Bouncing over ranch country (Mary Louise?)
Who constructed this translation
For the sign in our hotel:
"No use of appliances in rooms,
Such as irony or cattles."

IV

There is no generic word for "blue,"
Distinctions are necessary.
But the words for "much" and "too much"
Are the same. Extravagance is expected.

-- Kenna Manos

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The Great Canadian Regional Novel Search

(Inkshed 18 tells you how it ought to have been written)

Shortly before the Inkshed 18 conference in Canmore, Marcy Bauman posted a request on the CASLL list that generated great discussions and efforts in creative writing. Marcy wanted suggestions for reading material, specifically a novel set in Alberta to read on the plane.

The suggestions she received were several and can be found in the CASLL archives for May (Search for "Alberta Novel"). The creative writing came as a short course in the literature of the Canadian provinces, delivered by a motley crew on talent night. Printed here, for the first time, and by request, are the quintessential short novels of Canada written in Canmore for Marcy. Thanks to Leslie Sanders for the idea conceived in a hilarious conversation on the plane.

The novel of British Columbia, by Anne Hungerford and Wendy Strachan:

Unfortunately, the new BC novel entitled *The Adventures of Lavender Land*, by Betty Treehugger, who wrote this book while in prison after being arrested for hugging a tree a few minutes longer than the RCMP deemed appropriate, is unavailable as only half the text is extant.

An Alberta Story, by Doug Brent

When he woke up that Spring, Gonzo the Bear was hungry and grumpy. At bedtime the previous Fall, all he had been able to find to eat was the last remaining group of socialists in Alberta - a meagre meal indeed.

In search of more substantial fare, Gonzo cashed in some of his oil company shares and bought a bus ticket to Edmonton. However, he was still sleepy and got on the wrong bus.

After three days on the road, he got off the bus in Ottawa. Everyone ran in terror from such a hulking example of Western alienation - everyone except a group of Canadian Alliance caucus members who were looking for a more powerful leader.

Considering Gonzo's inability to speak French irrelevant, and his inability to speak English even more of a plus, the caucus members immediately acclaimed Gonzo as leader. After eating the previous leader, Gonzo returned to hibernation for the rest of his life, and lived happily ever after.

The Saskatchewan novel, by Nanci White, was in fact a one-woman play delivered extemporaneously and with marvelous acting skills. You should have been there to see this one.

As For Me and My House .Essentially it's a woman, covering her nose and coughing(sand) and monologuing, in front of her husband's closed study door. Growing increasingly agitated and deranged, she mutters imprecations against wind, drought, Eastern superiority in art (Group of Seven) and culture generally. She says HE fears going to Hell but SHE knows Hell is Saskatchewan (laughs maniacally).

The quintessential Manitoba novel is represented by a poetic synopsis of *Larry's Party*, by Amanda Goldrick-Jones and Janice Freeman.

> This is the story of Larry Weller
> An extraordinary Winnipeg feller

Who fumbles through life, lost in a maze
Unable to think or to find his ways.

See Larry walk in the wind all alone
He's wearing a jacket that isn't his own.
When he notices the fabric so fine -- he can't pay
His guilt is so strong that he throws it away.

See Larry married to Dorrie, so young.
Their honeymoon journey to England is fun
Except she is pregnant, three months gone.
In their Winnipeg house, they pretend to belong.

See Larry's mum and her small misdemean-
She poisoned her mother-in-law with some beans;
His Dad remains silent; his sister's got angst,
Dorrie's convinced the whole family are cranks.

See Larry dig; gone are garden and drive
To carve out mazes that keep him alive
Wife and babe are neglected, and Dorrie's revenge?
To bulldoze the borders of Larry's henge.

See Larry divorced, in Chicago he dwells;
Builds mazes for corporate magnates and swells,
Living with Beth, in whose dissertation
Are women of saintly imagination.

See Larry at forty. Mars with Venus,
He could be wild, if not for his penis,
Lying low for a long time, not to be found.
Larry's lost soul also struggles for ground.

See Beth wave goodbye; see little boy growing,
Larry and Ryan share few words of knowing.
Dorrie's successful but hollow inside,
Larry's old dad has just up and died.

See Larry move to Toronto, and there
Meet Charlotte, a kinder and gentler affair.
Imagine the shock, in the midst of this peace
When Larry goes into a coma for weeks.

This story does end, and a part occurs
When ironically, present and past are unfurled.
The truth is that Larry at last must resign
To unravel a maze of his own design.

This was the story of Larry Weller
An extraordinary Winnipeg feller
Who fumbles through life, lost in a maze,
Yet surprisingly able to find his ways.

(With thanks and apologies to Carol Shields)

The Ontario Novel, by Leslie Sanders (read in a doleful monotone).

I was an edible Woman,
Surfacing, I became a
Lady Oracle who
Took the Handmaid's
Tale to Bluebeard's Egg
Where I found a
Cat's Eye giving Wilderness
Tips to a Blind Assassin
To save her from Bodily
Harm.
Alias Grace!
Only the Robber Bride,
who is the real author
Of The Journals of Susannah Moodie is
Happy
(Are you?)
She is playing Power
Politics for Survival.
In Her Life Before Man
(and with the Animals in
That Country)
I am Margaret
I am Canadian
Literature.

The Quebec Story, or history revised, by Sharron Wall and Jean Mason.

Le Chandail de Hockey, a play.

Characters: Mme Carrier, son Roch
Props: string-and-brown-paper-wrapped box, labelled "Eaton's," pad of paper, pencil.

Scene 1
Roch is writing intently in the corner; Mme Carrier picks up a package and calls her son.

Mme. C: Roch …..Roch ……Roch ….. ton chandail!

Roch is oblivious, lost in his writing.

Mme C.: waves package at him, finally taps him with the box.
Roch, ton chandail de hockey est arrivé.

Roch opens the package excitedly, lifts out a Canadiens hockey sweater, and tosses his pencil and paper away.

End.

A Nunavut Novel, by Linda McCloud-Bondoc
(missing - sorry folks but this one was time-based art)

On the Right Side of the Causeway, a Cape Breton Story, by Jane Milton.

The laundry snapped in the breeze behind Mary Sean MacDonald as she looked down at Billy Joe and Jimmy Dan throwing rocks at the gulls on the beach below. Michael was thumping about in the kitchen like a moose with a sore head. The byes had been into the shine last night and Big Francis Xavier Gillis had played the spoons until Mary Sean thought she'd go crazy.

Michael stumbled into the yard.

"Yer friggin' cut off," said Mary Sean.

"Ah," he said. "An' you've got a face on yer like a wet Monday."

He turned and slunk back inside.

Mary Sean went back into the kitchen and checked on the boiled dinner bubbling on the stove. The smell of cooked cabbage and laundry soap filled the small house.

"I'm going down to Tim's to see the picture of the Holy Virgin that's appeared on the wall," she said.

"Judas Priest," Michael mumbled. "Why would the Virgin want to show up in this jeezley place? There's enough young maids up the pole without her adding to it."

"You'd better get cleaned up by the time I get back," said Mary Sean. "We're to be at the church for Mary MacIsaac's lunch at noon. She was a lovely woman. Wouldn't a put up wi' the likes o' you. And don't touch the asparagus and cheeze whiz roll-ups I made."

Mary Sean pulled on her coat and headed down to Tim Horton's. The sky was darkening and the wind whipped at her hair. I should have brought the wash in, she thought.

At Timmy's a small crowd had gathered.

"That's never the Virgin," said Willy McInnes. "It's only the bricks."

"An' yer a tool," said Annie MacLean. "She's there, and Father Murphy is coming by to splash the holy water." Annie turned to Mary Sean, "Mrs from across the way is after asking for some tinned milk for the lunch teas."

"I'll bring a drop," said Mary Sean.

"Did ya hear Murdoch's girl, young Maggie, has a bun in the oven?" asked Annie.

"Yeah. Big Angus caught her and that stunned bugger, Lochie McDermott, doin' it under a dorey down on the wharf," replied Mary Sean.

"Ah well, she'll be getting the cheque now. Aye, and Lochie'll be heading down north before you know it," said Annie.

Mary Sean opened the kitchen door. Nan was lolling in the tin tub, her arms like dried sticks hanging over the edge. The kids gave her roman therapy bath beads for Mother's Day. Now the kitchen stunk like a cat house on Sunday morning.

"Get outa there, Nan; you'll be late for the lunch," said Mary Sean.

Michael walked in. "Those lawyers from Halifax have been back up to Johnny The Boot's place. They want the mineral rights on his land. He'll be richer 'n the pope if 'e plays 'is cards right," he said.

"Ah, don't fool yerself," said Mary Sean; "Those fella's are so sharp they can cut hailstones wid their neckties."

As Mary Sean, Michael, Nan, and the kids all trooped down to the church hall carrying trays of sandwiches and squares, the rain began.

"The angels are crying," said Nan. "Mary MacIsaac was a lovely woman."

At the church, Mary was laid out in her best dress, a splashy red number she'd bought at the Woolco before it closed and had been saving for a special occasion. This was it. Everybody from miles around was there. Young Maggie and Lochie McDermott were snuggled up against the wall. Father Murphy came in and made his way straight through the crowd to Lochie.

"Young Lochie," he said, "You have the burden of desire on your soul. You'd better fall on your knees and make an honest woman of this New Waterford girl."

"Ah," said Murdoch. "It's no great mischief; there's more 'n one merrybegot around here."

The Prince Edward Island Story, a musical, By Linda Meggs with backup vocals from the Inkshed participants.

Sung to the tune of "Mame":

You came right across the strait to us,
Anne
Those Nova Scotians mistreated y's,
Anne
You joined a non-traditional family and a phenomenon began,
We know you're not a lesbian
You're just a flaming thespian,
We think you're quite the Aryan,
Anne
You charmed the spuds right out of the field,
Anne
Your kindred spirit makes you so real,
Anne
Your red pigtails and your pinafore look so sweet on all the girls from Japan,
Why they all love you, we don't know,
But keep them coming Tokyo,
We think their yen's sensational,
Anne.

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Minutes from Annual General Meeting, May 13, 2001 of the Canadian Association for the Study of Language and Literacy (Inkshed 18, Canmore, Alberta)

Present: Jo-Anne André, Doug Brent, Diana Brent, Geoff Cragg, Susan Drain, Janice G. Freeman, Amanda Goldrick-Jones, Anne Hungerford, Russ Hunt, Theresa Hyland, Victoria Littman, W. Brock MacDonald, Kenna Manos, Linda Meggs, Jane Milton, Patricia Patchet-Golubev, Margaret Procter, J. Barbara Rose, Leslie Sanders, Barbara Schneider, Wendy Strachan, Kathy Voltan, Sharron Wall, Nanci White.

Doug Brent served as chair.

1. The group approved the Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of May 2000.

2. Kenna Manos presented the Treasurer's Report:

INCOME:

Balance from May 15, 2000 $2349.85
Reimbursement for Inkshed 2000 startup costs (SFU) 600.00
Annual subscriptions to May 10 340.50

Total 3290.35

EXPENSES:

None (Inkshed 2000 paid our usual expenses for graduate students/unemployed/underemployed to attend last year's conference out of its own operating surplus)

BALANCE: $3290.35

The group discussed ways to make the best use of this considerable surplus for encouraging graduate students and the unemployed, underemployed, and retired to attend Inkshed conferences. The organizers of Inkshed 19 noted that they had received $1,000 from the organizers of Inkshed 18 to subsidize participants this year. After discussion about ways of apportioning subsidies, Kenna Manos moved, seconded by Jo-Anne André, that the Association allocate up to $2500 for travel subsidies for Inkshed 19. In further discussion, the group agreed that in order to attract people needing such subsidies, the call for papers should indicate that the Association would attempt to support some portion of the travel costs for graduate students and unemployed, underemployed and retired members as resources allow.

3. Five new board members were unanimously elected to replace those whose terms expire in 2001: Geoff Cragg, Victoria Littman, Brock MacDonald, Linda Meggs, and Wendy Strachan.

4. Jo-Anne André and Barbara Schneider, who have produced the Inkshed newsletter for two years, called for new editors to take it over. They noted that the University of Calgary had paid the cost of mailing, about $60 for postage per mailing plus printing and secretarial time. Some members suggested that it was time to put the newsletter completely online except for those who requested it in hard copy. There was general agreement that the next editors could decide whether to take this step.

Jane Milton and Kenna Manos volunteered to take over as editors, with Russ Hunt handling mailing costs through St. Thomas University. Geoff Cragg moved to accept the offer of these editors, seconded by Kathy Voltan. The present editors will send them the mailing list for culling and updating. A round of applause thanked Jo-Anne André and Barbara Schneider for their two years' work as editors.

4.5 The group read and discussed a letter dated 10 May 2001 sent by Pat Sadowy and Stan Straw, managing co-editors of Inkshed Publications Initiative. Pat and Stan stated that the bank balance for IPI as of March 31, 2001 was $4,563.49, and that the five books published so far (all before 1996) continued to sell regularly though slowly, bringing in further income. They pointed out that the bank balance was enough to publish a further "slim volume," but

that neither of them, nor Sandy Baardman nor Laura Atkinson, could at present put time into the work this would require. They requested that the members consider the possibility of moving the Inkshed Publications Initiative to another location, with new editors and a new liaison with another press. The new editors could then decide which, if any, of the currently received projects would proceed to publication. A further alternative would be to delay the idea of publishing anything for a further 18 to 24 months, when Pat and Stan would consider taking up the work again.

After discussion of possible new projects and new liaisons with other presses, Amanda Goldrick-Jones moved, seconded by Brock MacDonald, that the CASLL board issue a call for another editorial team to produce proposals for the board about the future of Inkshed Publications.

5. Linda Meggs of the University of Prince Edward Island offered to organize the Inkshed 19 conference in 2002, with help from other CASLL members in the Maritime provinces. Doug Brent moved grateful acceptance of this offer, seconded by Susan Drain.

After discussion, the group agreed on a conference theme of "Literacy, Technology, and Pedagogy." Members discussed the possibility of obtaining help from within UPEI and from a three-university Maritimes consortium on Instructional Technology.

6. Before adjourning, the meeting offered an enthusiastic vote of thanks to the organizers of the Inkshed 18 conference.

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CALL FOR PROPOSALS

Inkshed Working Conference 19: Literacies, Technologies, Pedagogies

May 9-12, 2002
Prince Edward Island
(STANHOPE BY THE SEA)

What "Literacies, Technologies, Pedagogies" means

Those attending Inkshed 18 proposed that Inkshed 19 focus on “Literacy, Technology, Pedagogy." They suggested thinking about the intersections among three abstractions, and attending to ways in which the three affect each other in our practices of teaching, scholarship, and research. The Inkshed 19 Program Committee took the liberty of pluralizing all three nouns. This change, we think, reflects the fact that there is no one thing we agree to call "literacy," no one thing we all agree is appropriately called "technology," and certainly no one thing we all agree is "pedagogy."

We invite, therefore, proposals which deal with a broad range of issues under this umbrella -- and, of course, if there is a particular bee in your bonnet that you'd like to share with other inkshedders, and can't see what it has to do with those terms, we'll be perfectly happy to fit your proposal in. We want, in the tradition of Inkshed conferences past, to engage in reflective and committed dialogue, on anything that has to do with language and learning. Perhaps especially, the committee was interested in issues like these:

- What kinds of pedagogies (or technologies, or literacies) foster, or inhibit, dialogue?
- What kinds of literacies, technologies, and pedagogies are found in workplaces, schools and homes?
- What happens when we talk back to books? to computers? to teachers?

More generally, what are the implications of our choices among pedagogies, technologies, or literacies for our understanding of language and learning?

What kinds of proposals are we looking for?

You probably know that the Inkshed working conference has consistently explored new ways of constructing "a conference." Inkshed 19 will be no exception. We need to give you some sense of what we anticipate the conference will be like, so that you have some sense of the range of proposals that would fit -- not only in terms of ideas, but of the range of forms a presentation might take.

For instance, you might remember that silent reading was successfully incorporated into the Orillia conference five years ago. Thus, for next spring, we're imagining a conference where whole-group activities (presentations, inkshedding, Talent Night, you name it) punctuate extended periods of what the organizers of Inkshed 14 called "well . . . Sustained Silent Reading." Conference participants will have a chance to read texts prepared by other conference participants, as well as texts written by people not in attendance. There will be substantial amounts of time to sit in comfortable chairs reading. As at Orillia, if you attend, we expect you to "bring your fuzzy slippers and your favourite coffee mug . . ."

We'd also like, as far as we can, to promote methods of sharing and discussing ideas other than the stand-and-deliver paper (which is, of course, perfectly appropriate for some things -- but we'd like to make sure that alternatives like posters, pre-read texts and discussions, enactments, and other strategies we haven't thought of are at least considered).