INKSHED

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for the Study of Writing and Reading
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SPECIAL ISSUE: CONFERENCE REPORT
Marginalia and Other Rhetorics

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9.1 September 1990

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Inkshed provides a forum for its subscribers to explore relationships among research, theory, and practice in language acquisition and language use. Subscribers are invited to submit informative pieces such as notices, reports, and reviews of articles, journals, books, textbooks, conferences, and workshops, as well as polemical discussions of events, issues, problems, and questions of concern to teachers in Canada interested in writing and reading theory and practice.

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1 September, for 15 September
1 November, for 15 November
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INKSHED VII: Marginalia and Other Rhetorics

HALIFAX, N.S. MAY 12-14, 1990

Thanks to the efforts of conference organizers Susan Drain, Kenna Manos, Lorri and Allan Neilsen, and their assistants, as well as presenters' willingness to facilitate group participation, Inkshed VII provided a stimulating forum for examining issues of marginalization.

To give Inkshedders who were not able to attend this year's conference an opportunity to enter into the dialogue, I have given abstracts of each talk and inksheddings written as part of or in response to most sessions. The abstracts are from the conference program, with silent emendations where presenters changed titles or focus. I have used only signed inksheddings and have tried to represent the full range of points of view. As the conference progressed, fewer inksheddings were turned in, and thus there are fewer responses to those sessions. Each session, however, provoked lively, thoughtful, and sometimes heated discussion. If you would like to add your voice to the dialogue, send me your comments by November 1.

SESSION I: Exploring Literacy—A Workshop

JAMIE MACKINNON, *Bank of Canada*
LORRI NEILSEN, *Mount Saint Vincent University*

An invitation to conference participants to explore literacy through 1) mapping their own development as students, teachers, researchers, and writers and 2) writing about the process by which they learned/are learning to be literate in a particular area, and formulating a general question/proposition about literacy from this experience.

Responses

RUSS HUNT
English Department, St. Thomas University

Because the traditional literacies seem for me to have developed in mostly imperceptible ways I want to look at a non-traditional one. I don't "read music," but I come a great deal closer to it now than I did when my wife gave me a guitar as a birthday present 23 years ago. The process whereby I began to feel comfortable—or a little less uncomfortable— with the musical notations is a long one but I think I can pick some moments of development.

One particular one: I came by abstract understanding to see that every fret on the guitar is one half-step in pitch, *and* that each line and space on the staff is a step in a scale. My ability to put my finger on the right fret came almost simultaneously with that understanding and would never had happened, never, if I hadn't been making real music for real people. I sang bedtime songs for my kids and had I not been doing that nothing would ever have brought me to the intellectual or physical position to be able to play an A.

Question: why do we persist in thinking people can learn in order to learn, other than to get something done?

PAT SADOWY
English Department, University of Manitoba

I am in the process of writing my master's thesis. It's difficult because it's something most people only do once so we don't get better and better at it. I try to ask other students for help but mostly all I get are litanies of their difficulties. The process is so personal—for our topics are so attached to who we are at the core of ourselves and the process is so impersonal—for the form is so structured. To overcome problems I read other theses. I talk to my advisor. I give him a chapter and hang above the abyss of not knowing till he pronounces judgement. This is not a reflection of him—it's a reflection of me. I need to be told if it's "good" or not. "Teacher, is this good?" I don't think I even dared to whine in school. But I did wonder.

Literacy only has value in a community.

How might institutions break away from old forms, or should they?

ROGER GRAVES
English Department, The Ohio State University

It felt good to learn how to write an academic paper—I should say to write a paper that was publishable—but it wasn't easy, it took months, and it took compassionate response from peers and teachers to learn. So how did it feel "inside"? It didn't "feel" inside—or, what it felt inside at least partly depended—no it took place outside in the transaction with others. "It", this development, didn't take place inside but in social transactions of all sorts. These other people helped me overcome problems with writing—"I" didn't do it. I felt confident at times, blocked at other times, but generally I felt excited to be writing something that mattered to me and to other people.

Proposition: Development doesn't happen "inside" so much as outside (in social transaction).

DEANNE BOGDAN
Department of History and Philosophy,
Ontario Institute for Studies in Education

I have to say that I am becoming more comfortable about "development" though it has taken a long time to divest myself of what I think of as a high-school mentality of the dread of failure. Now I anticipate more tranquilly the expected state of unfamiliarity or alienation—perhaps even seek out that place on the margin of a new experience—knowing that it will move into something else more safe, more familiar than I have undergone before. I wonder if it has to do with belief that one is already all right—and not that one is going to be all right—and where that comes from. Is it different for women than for men? The relinquishing of control, as has already been voiced, is important, but my guess is that the ability to do that may be coincident with the worst that can happen as already having happened. Does this resonate with anyone else's view?

Question:
How does empowerment come about and how might we theorize how the empowerer affects the empoweree?

SESSION II: Defining and Defying Margins

PHYLLIS ARTISS
Memorial University

The post-structuralist view of margins as permeable, variable, and constantly fluctuating provides a theoretical perspective but little pedagogical guidance on how the politics of definition affects composition instruction. This session raises questions about the possible "marginalization" of the instructor by students' sexist, racist, or otherwise intimidating writing or behaviour.

ALLAN NEILSEN
Faculty of Education, Mount Saint Vincent University

For me the issue of what is a margin is still rather unclear. Ironically, perhaps, the examples Phyllis gave about life on the margins not always being that bad after all did help me to clarify the conceptual basis of margin. Those who play it safe on the margins, sniping at those on the centre or those who belong to groups on the fringe or cutting edge really have little to lose and everything to gain in terms of recognition, voice, power. Minimally, they have nothing to lose. This suggests very strongly that real margins are grounds or states in which individuals are without recognition, voice or power. A productive question to ask perhaps is "What are the signs of marginalization?" Also is marginality a relative state (eg. teachers are usually in the centre of power in their own classrooms but very much on the margins of decision making/influence in their own profession).

ANTHONY PARÉ
Faculty of Education, McGill University

Two points come to mind immediately. First, we should be talking about margin[1], margin[2], margin[3], etc. Some margins are always bad, some change by situation, some are always good. We will be toying too loosely with the metaphor to suggest that all margins share any particular quality. Second, like Pat Dias, I am very concerned that our political position, made explicit at the beginning of the course, will silence our students. We have come to believe one thing powerfully over the past little while—that writing can promote thought, can create knowledge, can encourage exploration and discovery. The student who expresses the sexist opinion may not even have had a chance to "hear" himself explain this opinion; in other words, he may not have explored it. The discourse of our classrooms obviously must be above the grunts of the locker room. By requiring (or engineering or stage-managing) an authentic discourse—a conversation or dialogue or debate—we expose the sexist student's ideas both

to himself *and* to the classroom community. The very act of articulation may allow the student to discover the paucity of his ideas, the shortage of examples, the failure of logic. Furthermore, the public exposure and ensuing discussion will lead to the revising, reconsidering, rethinking that is the *only* way our students will change their opinions. We know knowledge in a social act—a real social act—not a packaged opinion or ideology passed on by the teacher. If the sexist knowledge that student expresses is not put to the social test, the social dynamic, it will not change.

TREVOR GAMBLE
College of Education, University of Saskatchewan

Patrick is on the right track here. Students need to have the personal freedom of expression even if it is offensive to a teacher or peers or any other community. Likewise the teacher and peers must have the personal freedom of response to those writings. Although the teacher is indeed the one with the (ultimate) authority through her responsibility to grade—and it is a responsibility; we cannot abrogate it, nor delegate it to another or others—she can defer the act of grading until a paper is acceptable to the community to which it is addressed. How can we as teachers talk about our self-armoured responsibility to empower students by giving them voice and yet act as self-imposed censors of their own voices, be it under the guise of racism, anti-Semitism, sexism, or other?

JUDITH MILLEN
Ontario Institute for Studies in Education

Students do not come to a classroom as agents for "moral" discourse. They are historical, gendered, raced, classed, etc., etc. subjects. What are the chances that they will miraculously become the voices of "tolerance and reason"? What classroom is this that presupposes (theoretically?) that the students will somehow come up with the understanding and insights that (against their overwhelmingly contexted lives) will be the voice of negativity against/to racist, sexist, classist, agist, homophobic, anti-semitic etc. etc. discourse. The chances are very small. Students tend to "know" what they come to the classroom with. So. Whose opinions—from whose locations are we privileging—the middle class liberal position? The working class—the racist—the anti-semite? WHOSE VOICE? Inevitably it would have to come down to some position of the students which is not separate from their "lives" and does not generally have a fully open vision.

HEATHER GRAVES
English Department, The Ohio State University

I've never felt marginalized in a classroom—I haven't taught that much. But I have felt marginalized in the community ("real life"?). Like when (male) neighbours assume that because a) I am a mother, b) I don't (or didn't) have a job outside the house for which I get paid, that I shouldn't object to babysitting (for no money) his kids while I also watch my own while he does something important like mow his lawn. Or how about when people from the

university assume that because I stay home with my own small children that I am not an appropriate individual for conversation beyond mashed peas and toilet training. Why do people assume that "stay-at-home" moms have no brains or "useful" skills beyond cooking and laundry? Either one endures such "marginalization" or one "gets a job" in order to also gain some respect in our society. Why aren't people respected for raising their own children? Why must someone else raise our children while we teach their children how to write?

SESSION III

The Feminization of Literacy

ELSPETH STUCKEY
Rural Education Alliance for Collaborative Humanities, South Carolina

This paper argues that literacy in schools and in entry-level college composition is dominated by white middle-class women, who, in order to maintain such power as they have achieved, reinforce barriers to literacy as men have enforced barriers to equal opportunity. In order to transform the outcomes of literacy education, they need to "unskin" themselves, to recognize their bonds with minority women and with certain majority and minority men.

Writing on the Margins: The Sessional Lecturer in the Academic Discourse Community

HILARY CLARK
S.F.U., University of Saskatchewan

The purpose of this paper is to draw some connections between the experience of a university sessional lecturer and the experience of a writer. The marginality of a sessional lecturer in the academic profession for which s/he has trained extends to a marginality as a writer in the academic discourse community. Whether this marginality is real or only sensed, it has an effect on writing practice. Just as, professionally, the sessional seeks entry into the inner sanctum of tenured faculty, so, as a writer, s/he seeks a responsive audience, a community of shared concern.

Responses

ALICE PITT
O.I.S.E.

I have one foot in the door of Continuing Studies at U of T. I and almost every other Ph.D. student I know supplement whatever funding (if any) we have by teaching E.S.L. We *are* an army of part-time, transient, insecure teachers with little sense of either continuity or collegiality. We have no office spaces or even mailboxes. We are unionized by the same union that serves the TAs at U of T, but this does little to address us as a community. Textbooks are assigned; classes are awarded according to seniority, not experience or expertise; and, as the whole program is cost recovery, even those who have been teaching for

fifteen years have little sense of security. This seems to be what E.S.L. teaching is all about—at the college level, at adult learning centres, even within the school system. It speaks loudly and clearly about how what we teach is perceived. It speaks to how our students are perceived. I have also noted that, while the majority of E.S.L. teachers at all levels are women, the men who are in the field (classroom) *do* not stay there—they become the academics, the directors of programs, etc. (not to say there aren't women in leadership roles, but to remember that there is a large population of women who stay in the classrooms under the above conditions). Complicity plays a role—I'd like to know more about how these teachers and other sessionals think about their choices, roles, decisions.

KATHERINE MCMANUS
Writing Centre, Memorial

I have been a sessional all of my academic life. I still am. I'm now a sessional with status because I work from year-to-year rather than semester-to-semester, and I have a title. I cannot write or talk about this without bitterness toward those within the institution who do not understand, or do not care, about how destructive this is to my self-esteem or how this destroys my ability to have goals. I no longer see myself as a part of the institution that pays my salary and for my own self-preservation have come to think of myself as a free-agent who chooses to stay because I love the work I do—but can and will leave on my own terms, when I choose to. As a result of this attitude that I feel I have to have, I regard the assignments students have to do as assignments by "they" and my work with the students is the work of "we"—not to suggest that I interfere with the writing, but I am clarifying—where necessary—what "their" rules are.

JACK ROBINSON
Grant MacEwan Community College

My experience is similar to Hilary's. I was a sessional and could not get *enough* academic publishing done to move up the ladder, and so dropped out of the university and into college. Since then, I've explored new ways of feeling at home in my language and teaching by being more self-conscious about both and doing fresh "quasi-academic" (?) publishing, which actually fits with my previous study of journalism.

I do feel that being asked to provide the account of my personal experience which will fit the analytical structure of the "presenter" is something I've done far too often in my own assignments to students, and I've realized today and yesterday what a patronizing process that is—it puts me on a margin, out there in the experimental hinterland, providing the raw material for the central event, building the floats for the parade.

CORALIE BRYANT
Winnipeg School District

I have a whole group of friends who are in the kinds of jobs described by Hilary—part of the reason I have chosen to remain outside *that* academy. But the cost to me (that Elspeth talked

of) is the lack of a discursive community, that forum for conversation, that has left me feeling very marginalized (at times at least) in my present context. These five "papers" this morning have raised again for me the central personal question: "How can I best subvert the academy? In what *context*?" and why is it necessary to depend so heavily on *this* displaced academic community, CE, and CCTE, for the conversation that keeps me honest and nourished?

I recognize that much of the reason these are such compelling questions at my age is that I am a woman.

NANCY CARLMAN
consultant, Vancouver

In precise terms, I was marginalized for eight years at UBC,

1. Four years as a sessional lecturer in the Faculty of Education (preparing secondary English teachers)
2. Two years' term appointment in the Department of English (first-year English)
3. Two years as a part-time sessional at the Department of English (Technical Writing, Intermediate Comp.)

Each time (except for the two-year appointment) I was hired in September and fired in May.

During the eight years, I finished my Ph.D. at SFU, but UBC had a 5-year hiring freeze. Then, I realized that I was marginalized in the English Department because my degree, although a university degree under special arrangements, was in Assessment of Writing, a quasi-empirical study in the Faculty of Education. Although I was a very successful teacher of composition (I was evaluated as such by professors and students), I could never join the mainstream there.

Therefore, I "sold my soul to the private sector" and now teach business communication within companies. I do *not* feel marginalized at *Inkshed*!

PATRICK DIAS
Faculty of Education, McGill

Being involved in the education of teachers, I am continually faced with the victims of the kind of exploitation both Elspeth and Hilary describe. My question concerns the role of those who employ teachers of writing—the mostly female teachers of writing. The choice is between refusing to cooperate in their exploitation or working to ameliorate their situations.

It is not enough for me to say that sessional lecturers walk into these situations fully aware of the conditions of their exploitation—they are not free to choose. If I can work towards developing a more humane and just situation, I would hope that our Centre will develop the power, the economic clout to be able to define and provide fairer and more equitable working conditions and rewards. We are *slowly* acquiring the means for asserting ourselves.

RUSS HUNT
English Department, St. Thomas University

The problem at the centre of this whole issue is an economic and structural one. For the past 15 years at least my tiny English department has exploited women (and men too) by hiring people on one-year terminals and part-time by-the-course appointments in spite of the fact that everyone knows it's exploitive. The department has done it because it can't get funding for permanent positions—but also because that way the local people who couldn't take a permanent position can have some crumbs from the academic table. This is of course a transparent rationalization...but the people who are being exploited share it. Why do we all deceive ourselves? Because in fact there's no real choice. Economically the university could not fund the five or six (that'd be an 80% increase in the size of the department) full-time permanent positions that would change this situation. Why not? Well, of course, because the university's underfunded. Why is the university underfunded? What are the social priorities which support the overfunding of automobiles and highways and name-brand clothes and mammoth power generation projects to support the lighting of shopping malls in New England?

SESSION IV: Writing Instruction Inside/Outside Canadian University English Departments

ROGER GRAVES
Ohio State

This presentation will report the results of two surveys to identify sites of writing instruction in a broad cross-section of various faculties in the country's universities. The major questions it will address are these: Who teaches writing? To what extent? What value is placed on this instruction?

Responses

FRED HOLTZ
Halifax School District

Some of Roger's quotations from university spokespersons who were hostile to the idea of writing programs were memorable and made me think of how much more work there is for *Inkshed* to do in bringing these people into dialogues about their own experience with writing and the implications of that experience for pedagogy. The spread of knowledge about writing processes might be regarded as an important political act in Inkshedders' own personal political agendas—and collectively for *Inkshed* as well.

As a high school teacher I watched "Writing Across the Curriculum" become an entrenched value in Nova Scotia school guidelines (I forget the official reference) in 1980, be nodded to here and there and be forgotten during the latter part of the 80s. Rather than

despair, I've felt (and this discussion supports that) a renewal of spirit to push more actively for the implementation of those guidelines.

KENNA MANOS
English Department, Nova Scotia College of Art & Design

Queen's University prohibits English majors from taking a writing course. This restriction exemplifies what most pisses me off about the standard English Department response to writing courses. There seems no possibility of changing the attitude whereby teaching composition is seen as the endless and dreary correction of surface errors. Why can literature teachers not see that this view of composition is analogous to regarding teaching literature as nothing but studying rhyme schemes? If poetry is about the power of words, then why can't it be acknowledged that rhetoric and composition are also about the power of words?

The view of composition as dealing with surface errors also bespeaks the view that writing is a learning-to-ride-a-bicycle sort of skill. Why can't those who teach poetry as a way of making sense of the world, of coming to new or shifted perceptions also see composition in this way? Why can't they extend their view of composition from surface errors? Where is the block to understanding, as George Whalley said, that "writing is not so much a means of expression as an instrument of enquiry"?

DOUG VIPOND
Psychology Department, St. Thomas University

Roger was critical of the response that went, "We do this at the level of the faculty, not the students." However, I think that is exactly the correct level to be working at—you have to change the faculties' practices. So I wouldn't have been critical of this remark.

Roger's survey assumes that writing is something you can or should be instructed in. As Jim Reither said at 4Cs, "Writing is something you learn when you're busy doing something else" (or something like that). The survey catches what deans and other administrators think of as "writing courses," but misses entirely what some teachers are actually doing—using writing extensively in their teaching, and making no distinction between "writing to learn" and "learning to write." A false dichotomy!

Anyhow, Roger said this is just the "administrators' survey." And later he'll get the teachers' perspective. So maybe what this is telling me is that administrators don't necessarily know what's going on (surprise, surprise). At our university, the administrator who received this questionnaire would look down the calendar and identify "Effective Writing" (Writing 100) as the only "writing instruction" that goes on. Agreeing with Jim, I would say that there can be NO writing "instruction"—yet students can learn to write, when they are doing something else. Now, making a stab at coherence with one of my earlier 'sheddings, I would suggest that this can happen only when they have somebody to write *to*. (And who writes back.) OK?

ROY GRAHAM
Faculty of Education, University of Manitoba

From outside an English department:

The assumption which drives writing instruction in the Department I'm connected to in the Faculty of Education is that writing is a tool for learning and that, consequently, all would-be teachers from whatever subject area must begin to explore that connection. The idea seems to be to have teachers experience the messiness of the writing process from the inside as it were, so that the still pervasive linear model will thereby stand a better chance of being subverted. This experience is also designed to impact on pedagogy to the extent that the kinds of typical writing tasks regularly required of students can be the subject of critique and re-conceptualization. (Example: at the close of a poetry lesson, in the last ten minutes, many teachers still say, "Write a poem now, hand it in tomorrow." Or: "Summarize in your own words [of course] the section on continental drift for tomorrow.") If one is to judge by the responses of students from the subject areas, it is liberating for them to finally have their own sense of how writers actually write things—tentative, messy, recursive—confirmed. Creative suggestions for re-conceptualizing the place of writing in their own subject areas come thick and fast from the students themselves *and* it's a joy to read their own experiments in their own folders.

GRAHAM SMART
Bank of Canada

Can we expect people in other disciplines, i.e. other communities, to have somehow organically come to conversations/understandings about literacy that we as a community are just beginning to articulate? We ourselves have just begun the process of constructing a conversation/knowledge about the possibilities of writing and reading—we shouldn't be dismissive of the gropings of people in other disciplines. Neither should we dismiss as trivial the early satisfaction a student writer can feel in learning some of the superficial trappings of writing in a discipline. While this may seem a rather empty triumph to us, it may well be an important step for a student writer—the first experience of affiliation, a milestone of a kind.

DEBORAH KENNEDY
English Department, Mount Saint Vincent University

Why teach writing?

They bring me their stories of being unable to write, of the embarrassments they face when their bosses cannot understand their reports. Their difficulties with writing keep them trapped in uncertainty, and they feel left out. Left out from what? Left out from the mainstream where the jobs are and the recognition is. Left out from the place where people say something and others listen. They want a voice. They want to wear themselves proudly (to echo Maxine Tynes). Or as one of my students said (an uneducated but determined mother of two) "I want an articulate tongue [and hand]."

PHYLLIS ARTISS
English Department, Memorial

Roger: (and all of us:)

Why are pedagogy and research kept separate in Canada? SSHRC, for example, specifically denies funding to any grant proposals (from doctoral fellowship, research fellowship, conference funding) that include pedagogy. When I applied for SSHRC funding for Inkshed V in Newfoundland, Stan and others cautioned me to exclude any references to pedagogy. Vast grants have been awarded this year to literacy research projects, but only those that specifically *exclude* pedagogy. We have nothing in this country comparable to FIPSE in the US. If we want to change the structures of power in this country within our discipline, and the academy, we really need to tackle this problem. Where? From the top down (e.g. starting with concerns of students, especially [thinking of Elspeth's presentation] the realities of lives of women students) and the recognition that pedagogy can't be factored out of anything—we can't deal with subject matter, professional skills, cognition or anything else separately from awareness of how people learn, and what the functions of this learning may be.

SESSION V

Valuing Otherness, Teaching Sameness?

WILLIAM BOSWELL
McGill University

In recent years we as teachers have come to believe in the importance of valuing what students bring to the classroom with them—their various ethnic and cultural backgrounds and the different ways in which they view the world and use language. In fact, we consider that one of our main responsibilities is to assist our students in developing their own authentic voices. At the same time, however, we and our students recognize that in order to be "successful" they must learn the languages, and often the value systems, of discourse communities other than their own, and that often these other languages discourage the use of individual voices. How can we overcome the dilemma of encouraging uniqueness in writing, while at the same time teaching certain standard techniques of rhetoric, and also the particular jargons of discourse communities?

Self and Other in Teaching Writing: A Modified Rogerian Approach

JACK ROBINSON
Grant MacEwan Community College

This presentation will provide one answer to the question posed above and examine the bridging of the gap between writer and reader in two writing assignments which demonstrate advantages to the use of a modified or neo-Rogerian approach to otherness. The paper will take the position that the Rogerian approach creates a beneficial learning atmosphere by reducing the communal awareness of differences between the "powerful" and "powerless" (or empowerers and empowerees), but that it cannot nullify them. The boundaries must be

constantly recrossed and redrawn, and this can best be done by framing writing assignments and using pedagogical techniques which follow generally Rogerian precepts while not enshrining them as an ideal or ideology.

SESSION VI: Teachers Silencing Texts: Texts Silencing Students

The Pedagogy of Engagement and Identification: Marginalizing Non-Mainstream Literature

STAN STRAW
University of Manitoba

The Rhetoric of Silence

ROBERT GRAHAM
University of Manitoba

This session will present two related points of view on the general issue of censorship: that is, how teachers and texts, on the one hand, can marginalize and trivialize the response of students by their choice of texts; how teachers' pedagogy, on the other hand, can limit their choices of texts so that particular points of view can become "unteachable" and, therefore, marginalized.

Responses

KAY STEWART
English Department, University of Alberta

None of my schooling, including graduate schooling, taught/encouraged/opened up for me the possibility of reading against the grain. I was encouraged to apprehend texts, not to question their assumptions or to consider them as sites of conflicting readings. If it has taken me forty-odd years and some acquaintance with contemporary critical theories—as well as life experience and consciousness-raising—to recognize and reject some authors' portraits of women, blacks, gays, working people—how can I expect/be confident that all my students will be resisting readers?

DEANNE BOGDAN
Department of History & Philosophy, O.I.S.E.

Does reading against the grain mean ultimately that we have to read, in Rosenblatt's terms, efferently, or can the false dichotomy between engagement and detachment be overcome through the process of living through the experience? If it can, then that still doesn't resolve the central paradox presented by Roy which is that we embrace the Other before we decide as readers whether to accept the Other. It's here, I think, that the epistemology of transactional theories cannot cope with the ethical and political beyond the somewhat vague notion of self-development and understanding. What *is* the nature of the pedagogical/transformational reading moment?

SESSION VII

Writing, computers, and "quiet voices": What happens to minority students in the computer-assisted writing class?

ANN BEER
McGill University

Are we working in an environment where computer use is gender-neutral and ethically neutral? Recent research in Canada, the U.S.A., and Britain responds to that question with an emphatic "no." As more and more teachers of writing move their classes into computer labs (or expect students to use word processors), an important new dimension is added to their courses. Instead of simply tackling different writing strategies, students must now become proficient in handling the new technology, or at least comfortable when using it for their work. What happens to students whose socialization (through a combination of gender and ethnic or economic pressures) has not prepared them well for this new challenge? The goal of this presentation is to explore this issue with Inkshedders.

Women and Schooling

KATHERINE MCMANUS
Memorial University

The part of the session explores the gap between the free and equal access to education we believe exists in Canada and the forces that deny that access to women who grow up on the margins of the middle class. Through their written and speaking voices, we will hear adult women students recall experiences in school which prompted their own withdrawal from the system. These women's experiences add a human factor to the figures, generalizations, and estimates about women's participation in their own education and their career aspirations.

Responses

LYNN HOLMES
English Department, Seneca College

Maxell advertisement [of robots sitting around a conference table in a luxurious corporate office, with an ornately framed picture of a computer on the oak-panelled wall]

If I saw this in an art gallery, I'd be inhibited. Squelched. If contemporary art is a kind of brutalism, so be it. If I whine, I'm reactionary. A literalist. Surfaces aren't supposed to *mean*, for God's sake.

Post-modernism.

In *this* case, I read the picture as representational art, as subversive, as a cheap shot by some commercial artists against the technology that oppresses them.

Business people's self-contempt? Not likely, but I suspect there's some playful irony, self-mockery.

Bypassing the matter of gender politics, I'm concerned with the whole question of Art in the Service of Commerce (etc.). Art including literature.

What are the implications of Post-Modernism, as a movement, not just literary texts, styles?

KENNA MANOS
English Department, Nova Scotia College of Art & Design

Response to computer ad—dehumanizing—even the life of the imagination is reduced to a machine, as the ornate frame on the wall elevates the computer to the status of an artistic masterpiece.

I don't use a computer in my own writing, and there are clear reasons for this, but I often feel attacked and defensive, like I'm accused of being some hopeless dinosaur because I don't. People don't seem to want to hear, or understand why using a computer regularly doesn't work for me at the moment. I write mostly short poems, with lines carried around in my head or noted on scraps of paper because—for the past 19 years—having kids meant that I wanted to be able to move around with them, wanted to write in a way that didn't require uninterrupted time sitting down in front of a screen or even a typewriter. I still have a 6 year old, so I still carry around scraps of paper because this way I can, for example, sit with him on my knee watching T.V. while I'm writing.

But people seem not to accept that, to assume that because I don't use a computer that I'm computer hostile and need to be harangued until I'm persuaded to "see the light" and do all my writing on the computer. Why isn't how I choose to be with my kids, and how my kids have influenced how and what I write at the moment, considered to be an okay explanation?

SESSION VIII

Women's Voices: Gender and Writing

HEATHER GRAVES
Ohio State University

What have women said about how their gender has affected their writings? Heather Graves' presentation will illustrate the widely differing factors that women writers mention when they consider how their gender impinges on their writing. It will explore the personal writings of women from Canada, Britain, the U.S.A., Latin America, South Africa, and India to discover how economics, as well as cultural and social values, may marginalize members of these societies. In some cases, these factors limit who may gain even the rudimentary skills for reading and writing and thereby determine whether an individual gains a voice at all.

One Woman's Voice: Laura Goodman Salverson—Singing out her song in a strange land

BARBARA POWELL
University of Regina

This portion of the session on women's voices will explore the strategies of accommodation in the fictional and autobiographical works of Laura Goodman Salverson (1890-1970) as a way of understanding the effects of both gender and ethnicity on linguistic patterns. Salverson was the daughter of Icelandic immigrants to Canada, and, like many second-generation foreigners,

she struggled to define herself in two conflicting cultural traditions. She struggled also with the notion of gender in what she called "book-making"; to her, writing was often man's work, a work which she nonetheless wanted to perform. This session attempts to explain the ways in which women's language is different from men's language, if at all, and asks how women use linguistic patterns as well as how they perceive themselves as doing so.

Responses

ANN BEER
Faculty of Education, McGill University

All pertinent—especially: 1) time to write; 2) space to write; 3) overcoming guilt and idea that it's selfish to *want* to write; 4) paradox that having a child or children can *make* it happen because the threat of being silenced and dragged down is suddenly so strong. The role of children and child care is *so* important. Even now it is inadequately represented in social consciousness, though everyone who has done it full-time (male or female) knows how incredibly time-consuming, energy-consuming, *self*-consuming it can be. What annoys me most about the traditional professional world (law, medicine, academia, etc.) is that it is still run, overall, on the assumption that there is someone else "out there" looking after all that menial domestic stuff. "Career-profiles" have not yet shifted, and women who want to perform professionally *and* maintain links with the women they know who are outside the profession, have a really hard time—they often go one way or the other because it's almost impossible to integrate successfully. Women writers in the arts may be, these days, a little more able to make choices—the recommendation "one child—no more" is an interesting one. It allows both paths, perhaps....

BETTY HOLMES
English Department, Seneca College

Several concerns: 1) women's lives are a tapestry *but* 2) I don't know whether I really believe this, and 3) I *love* baseball (I've been a fan since 1948, so it's not a new fad).

Well, so much depends on dinner. I can think about women and women's writing only in terms of Judy Chicago's "Dinner Party." Women provide food, women *are* food, women's lives are devoured. I think that's why I cook so little now—only when I choose to make a gift to family or friends.

But I have a choice.

Writing is more than words on the page. Writing is speech, especially for women—it's lullabies and stories and coaxing down the broccoli and "How was your day, dear" and days of our lives and *lies*—good lies, social lies, white lies, necessary lies, face-saving lies—stories to make life beautiful or bearable.

Women's writing is other-directed, often when it seems most self-absorbed—a woman reflecting on her own condition usually is reflecting on that of her sisters as well.

ESLPETH STUCKEY
R.E.A.C.H., South Carolina

The female writer who is praised for her masculine prose and is advised to be masculine in order to sell books successfully reminds me of the time when I discovered the secret of Frank Yerby. Yerby wrote neo-gothic &/or decadent—southern novels—sort of romance novels of the later fifties and always with the good parts—the girl getting "took" by the boy—and often some rape. These were the first adult books to which I graduated after the Bobbsey twins, Nancy Drew, Nurse serials, and biographies of people like Magellan and Abe Lincoln. My mother actually read these books, and I distinctly remember going to the shelves in the library where she went to find these books. I read probably 3-4; the guy is still alive and still writes.

The deal is that Frank Yerby is a black man whose identify was guarded by his publishers. Only in the last few years has that secret become known—in fact, today the damn secret is capitalized upon, his photos now appear on the dust covers for Yerby still writes hard bound soft porn. The conflicts—plus the phenomenon—represented by this case astound me. It is, to be more literary than I tend to be, what Kenneth Burke might call a "representation metaphor," yet it is a metaphor of every kind of dominance, the exploitation of dominance doubled trebled, mixed, mashed, and bashed, that I know about.

SESSION IX

Beyond (Dis)Identification:
Feminist Approaches to Teaching "A&P"

DEANNE BOGDAN, ALICE PITT,
JUDITH MILLEN, *O.I.S.E.*

This presentation expounds and illustrates three feminist approaches to teaching a male-authored text. Each of the three proposed approaches to feminist literary criticism (the Anglo-American school, the theories of Julia Kristeva and those of Michel Foucault) incorporates the identification/disidentification process into an active feminist critical reading *praxis* for both male and female readers.

Responses

SUSAN DRAIN
English Department, Mount Saint Vincent University

What assumptions are you making in deciding whether to use this story (what goals would you have in mind for using it). Under what conditions and how would you use it?

I think I would not use it in a woman-only class (we have better/other things to talk about!?) and I don't usually teach mixed classes but I think that's where I might use it.

An assumption—or something to be aware of—the impact of the first person pronoun.

I think I would ask people to rewrite the story from the perspective of one of the women. Maybe let people choose, maybe assign—how structured?

I'd be wanting to get people past the huge male bogey in the foreground—or at least, to *see* the huge male bogey for what it is.

HILARY CLARK
English Department, University of Saskatchewan

When or why teach "A & P"? I think one *should* teach it, and teach it *critically*. Students should learn to take these social artifacts apart. They should see how the male eye/I works in this story, how it objectifies the girls, making them objects of a desiring gaze. The story could be looked at along with advertising images of women—or even soft porn images—showing the operation of the travelling, lascivious, dehumanizing, male gaze. But, as Susan Drain has pointed out at our table, it's important to supplement this analysis with new constructions—letting students—men *and* women—rewrite the story from the point of view of one of the girls—or of the abused older shopper.

EDITORIAL INKSHEDDING / / / KAY STEWART

Changes or possible changes in the structure of CCTE and its publications prompted discussion at Inkshed VII about the need for a more formal structure for Inkshed and the desirability of starting a new journal. The consensus was that, having a name (the Canadian Association for the Study of Writing and Reading), we should embody it in an organization. I would therefore like to ask for volunteers willing to draft a constitution and bylaws (or whatever it takes) for ratification at Inkshed VIII. The organizers will set aside time for discussion and for the election of officers. Some of the money left over from Inkshed VI will be used for formalizing the organization.

I see one of the first duties of the executive as that of selecting a new editor for *Inkshed*. I have very much enjoyed putting out the newsletter, but four years seems long enough. Two people have expressed interest in taking over; others of you who weren't at the conference may also want the opportunity. I don't believe that I should make an ad hoc decision about my successor. So I would like to invite everyone who is interested to send me a proposal by March 15. I will be happy to reply to queries about the position, such as the amount of time and financial backing required. All the proposals will be turned over to the newly-elected executive for a speedy decision.

* * *

Coralie Bryant has suggested a special issue on collaborative writing, focusing on our own experiences as collaborative writers. Send your contribution by November 1.

February will bring the long-delayed special issue on reading.

Pieces I've held for lack of space will also appear in these two issues.

* * *

Several subscribers have asked for a directory of members' research interests and E-mail addresses. Unless I hear objections, I will start compiling such a list. If you would like to add to the information on your subscription form, please send a brief description of your current project (teaching or research) (200 words or less) and/or your computer address as soon as possible.

INKSHED 8 **Montréal, April 12-14**

In this issue of *Inkshed* you will find a Call for Proposals and a Registration Form for Inkshed 8, to be held in the Montréal area April 12-14, 1991. Please circulate the Call and the Form to friends and colleagues who might be interested. We will not be advertising this conference widely and count on *Inkshed* readers to spread the word.

You will see that the deadline for registration is January 4, 1991. The early date of Inkshed 8 makes it impossible to book college or university residence facilities, since they will still be in use in April. As a result, we have reserved a block of rooms at Auberge Handfield, a small inn south of Montréal. We have agreed to let the people at the Auberge know the *exact* number of rooms required by no later than the beginning of January. While rooms may be available after that date, we cannot be sure.

We realize that Inkshedders are interested in intellectual matters only and can sustain themselves on the nutrition provided by rich and heady discourse. However, for those few who are interested in worldly matters, the Auberge has an excellent dining room and a pleasant location on the banks of the Richelieu River, close to Mont Sainte Hilaire. We have managed to keep the costs close to those of Inkshed VII, thanks to the profit made at that conference and forwarded to us by Susan Drain.

A chartered bus will leave from McGill to go to the Auberge on Friday, April 12, following the CCTE conference. The bus will return to Montréal on Sunday afternoon. Exact times will be determined later. The cost of the bus is included in the conference fee. We strongly encourage local participants to stay at the Auberge, rather than commuting, since the one-way drive takes approximately one hour from downtown Montréal. Those who cannot stay at the Auberge can pay a fee for the conference only; however, they will have to pay for whatever meals they eat. The cost of individual meals has not been determined, but we expect it will not be exorbitant.

More details to follow...

Patrick Dias
Anthony Paré

Call for Proposals **INKSHED 8**

Schooling and Other Cultures

April 12-14, 1991
Montréal, Québec

The theme of this conference invites two readings. The first points to the school itself as a culture; the second places the school in relation to other cultures. Both readings suggest broad anthropological or sociological perspectives, but we encourage a specific focus on writing and reading and their relationship to culture. The following questions are offered for reflection:

- What values, myths, texts, activities, rituals, and structures form the culture of the school?
- Is there cultural continuity or conflict between levels of schooling, from day care through adult education?
- Do students cross cultural boundaries when they move from one academic discipline to another?
- Are there sub- or anti-cultures in the schools?
- How are aspects of culture reflected or embedded in the discourse of the school?
- How will increasing multi-culturalism affect schools and schooling?
- In what ways do discourse communities and the cultures they promote affect the writing and reading done in schools?
- To what extent are elements of the mainstream culture in conflict/collusion with school culture?
- What effect does popular culture have on the school?

We seek presentations of varying length and format: 10-minute informal reports on research and pedagogy, 20-minute papers or formal talks, 45-minute workshops or interactive demonstrations. Please consider your presentation a contribution that raises questions rather than a statement that settles matters.

We encourage unusual, even experimental presentations, but we would like to offer two guidelines: first, all proposals should include plans for involving conference participants in some talking, writing, or both. Second, we believe that papers should be written for listeners rather than for readers.

Proposals should have a covering page with the title of the presentation, presenter's name, address, and phone numbers. The proposal itself should include a title, a brief description or abstract (200 words or so), a very brief description of the method of presentation, and a statement of aim or purpose.

Deadline: December 14, 1990

Send proposals to: Patrick Dias, Inkshed 8, Centre for the Study and Teaching of Writing, McGill University, 3700 McTavish Street, Montréal, PQ H3A 1Y2
Telephone: (514) 398-6960 Fax: (514) 398-4679

Registration Form **INKSHED 8**

Schooling and Other Cultures

April 12-14, 1991
Montréal, Québec

Name: _____

Address: _____

Telephone (home): _____

(work): _____

Please enclose your cheque payable to Inkshed 8 and check off the appropriate box below.

____ Conference fee, meals, and single room lodging: $200

____ Conference fee, meals, and double room lodging: $100

——> I wish to share a room with _____

____ Conference fee: $45

****

We might be able to reduce the registration and accommodation costs for full-time graduate students and part-time teachers. Please let us know if you think you might need such assistance.

****

Deadline for registration: January 4, 1991

Send cheque and registration form to:

Anthony Paré
Inkshed 8
Centre for the Study and Teaching of Writing
McGill University
3700 McTavish Street
Montréal, PQ H3A 1Y2

PLEASE POST

DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH, UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

ONE TENURABLE POSITION

The Department of English, University of Alberta, invites applications for a tenurable position at the Assistant Professor level, in **rhetoric and composition**, effective July 1, 1991. The salary at the floor of Assistant Professor in 1989-90 was $34 970. Availability of the position is subject to budgetary approval. Applicants should have a completed Ph.D. or be close to finishing it by the time of appointment; teaching experience is essential, and publications are preferred. Applicants should be able to teach graduate courses in the history and theories of rhetoric (traditional and contemporary), and should also be able to teach some literature courses at the undergraduate level. Some additional expertise in modern language studies would be beneficial. Candidates should ask three referees to send letters directly to

Dr. Maurice Legris, Chair
Department of English
University of Alberta
Edmonton, Alberta, Canada
T6G 2E5

Candidates should also send to the Chair a letter of application, a complete curriculum vitae, and the names of the referees, and arrange for the Chair to receive graduate and undergraduate transcripts. Deadline for the applications is October 15, 1990. Only complete applications received by the deadline will be considered; candidates are responsible for ensuring that transcripts and letters of reference are received by the Department. The University of Alberta is committed to the principle of equity in employment, but, in accordance with Canadian Immigration requirements, priority will be given to Canadian citizens and permanent residents of Canada; citizenship or residence status should be indicated in the application.

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Telephone Numbers: (home) _____ (office) _____

Research/teaching interests: _____

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K-6_____7-12_____College_____University_____Adult_____Teacher Education_____

Research in progress (including theses—descriptions up to 200 words will appear in the newsletter periodically). Attach sheet if necessary _____

_____

Material you would like to see in the newsletter: _____

_____

Material you are willing to contribute: _____

_____

Reviews_____Selected bibliographies_____Testing_____

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