

---

# *Inkshed*

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

Volume 12, Number 5. June 1994

---

## **Inside *Inkshed***

Ann Beer Anthony Paré	Editorial Inkshedding	1
The New <i>Inkshed</i> Editors	York's <i>Inkshed</i> Vision Statement	2
Patrick Dias	<i>CASLL</i> Annual General Meeting Minutes	3
Doug Brent	A Forward Glance at <i>Inkshed</i> 12	6
Ann Beer <i>et al</i>	A Backward Glance at <i>Inkshed</i> 11	8
Renée Norman	Post-Modern WHAT-DID-YOU-CALL-IT (A Poem)	17

---

.....

12.5 June 1994

*Co-Editors*

Anthony Paré, Ann Beer

McGill University  
Centre for the Study and Teaching of Writing  
3700 McTavish Street, Montreal, QC, H3A 1Y2  
Fax: (514) 398-4679 – E-mail: INAP@MUSICB.McGill.CA

*Consulting Editors*

Phyllis Artiss  
Memorial University

Neil Besner  
University of Winnipeg

Coralie Bryant  
South Slave Divisional Board of Education  
N.W.T.

Wayne Lucey  
Assumption Catholic High School  
Burlington, ON

Susan Drain  
Mount Saint Vincent University

Richard M. Coe  
Simon Fraser University

Lester Faigley  
University of Texas

James A. Reither  
St. Thomas University

Judy Segal  
University of British Columbia

Graham Smart  
Bank of Canada

Russell A. Hunt  
St. Thomas University

.....

*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.

*Inkshed* is published five times during the academic year. The following is a schedule of submission deadlines and approximate publication dates:

15 September, for 1 October      1 February, for 15 February  
15 November, for 1 December      1 April, for 15 April  
Post-Conference: May - June

The newsletter is supported financially by the Department of Curriculum and Instruction, the Centre for the Study and Teaching of Writing, and the Faculty of Education, McGill University, and by its subscribers. Make cheques for \$25.00 payable to Faculty of Education, McGill University.

.....

86  
James Peck  
Jon Bullock  
Richard Coe  
Susan Drain  
Neil Besner

87 = 9  
94 = 13

86 = 6

87 Editor

---

# Editorial Inkshedding

This is the final McGill issue of *Inkshed*. The experience has been all we expected and more: challenging, exciting, hectic, occasionally frustrating, and profoundly collaborative. Although publishing deadlines and workload often prevented us from involving as many Inkshedders as we would have liked to, we are pleased with the extent of the cooperation that has helped produce *Inkshed* over the period of our mandate, and grateful for the effect the newsletter has had on our lives.

Here at McGill, ten of us have served as regular or occasional editors. That involvement has led a number of our Writing Centre colleagues to publish in the newsletter and to attend Inkshed and CCCC conferences. The practice of inkshedding has become common in our classrooms and meetings, and our teaching has been enriched by the contacts we have made through the newsletter. We are a better small community now, in the larger community of CASLL.

Our contacts with the larger *Inkshed* community have benefitted both us and the newsletter. We have been able to introduce many new voices and, in the process, have come to know something of the great diversity of Canadian composition studies. The one thing we will miss most about editing *Inkshed* is the frequent communication we have had with so many of you by fax, phone, e-mail, and surface mail.

We are delighted that *Inkshed* is going to be collaboratively edited by a dedicated group of Inkshedders at York University. On behalf of CASLL, we offer our thanks and best wishes to James Brown, Leslie Sanders, Mary-Louise Craven, Ron Sheese, Tom Greenwald, Gail Vanstone, and Jan Rehner. Their *Inkshed* Vision Statement (reprinted below) promises to continue the newsletter's traditional role and activities and to create new possibilities for interaction among CASLLers.

In closing, we thank all of the editors, consulting editors, writers, and readers who have made our job worthwhile. We would also like to acknowledge the generous contributions made by Deborah Metchette and Jim Harris of our Media Centre; their work has been consistently superb. For financial, secretarial, and moral support, thanks are due to David Dillon, Chairman of the Department of Curriculum and Instruction, and Dean A. E. Wall of the Faculty of Education. Finally, we offer our deepest gratitude to Louise Murphy, who has been essential to the production of all 15 McGill *Inkshed* issues. Sadly, Louise has decided to retire; we can only hope her experience with the newsletter did not drive her to that decision.

Have a pleasant, healthy summer.

Ann Beer  
Anthony Paré

---

## York's *Inkshed* Vision Statement

As the official newsletter of CASLL, *Inkshed* will remain devoted to promoting dialogue among the community of those involved in teaching and research related to writing instruction within Canada and elsewhere. It will continue to invite submissions both in the form of short, provocative articles and "inkshed" responses to those articles; it will, from time to time, also reproduce exchanges from the CASLL listserve, so that the electronic debate can reach the "hard-copy" audience in CASLL. It will further continue to serve as a forum for information about writing conferences, particularly the yearly *Inkshed* conference, whose proceedings and inkshedding will make up the summer issue. We will also continue the tradition of 5 issues a year on the current schedule.

James Brown, Leslie Sanders, Mary-Louise Craven, Ron Sheese, Tom Greenwald, Gail Vanstone, and Jan Rehner will act as a collaborative team on the editorial functions.

Mary-Louise will take care of the layout through her program, the Computer-Assisted Writing Centre. She's also interested in setting up an File Transfer Protocol (FTP) site as an optional way of getting *Inkshed*, as she's done with *Canadian Humanities Computing* - which she also edits. This would simply be an addition - not a replacement for mailing the hardcopy.

The mailing costs will be picked up by York's Faculty of Arts. The Centre for Academic Writing will make some time available from their Administrative Assistant to keep track of subscribers lists and addresses.

Our address:

*Inkshed* Newsletter  
c/o James Brown  
English Department  
York University  
4700 Keele St.  
Downsview, ON  
M3J 1P3

**The New *Inkshed* Editors**

---

# Minutes of the Inaugural General Meeting of *CASLL*

Held in Fredericton, May 9, 1994

Present: L. Atkinson, S. Baardman, M. Bauman, A. Beer, D. Brent, J. Brown, L. Cathro, M-L. Craven, P. Dias, S. Drain, A. Freedman, J. Horwood, H. Hubert, A. Hunt, R. A. Hunt, J. Ledwell-Brown, R. Lee, S. MacDonald, K. Manos, M. Mar, J. Milton, T. Parkhill, M. Procter, J. A. Reither, J. Sanborn, L. Sanders, R. Schuller, J. Siminutis, G. Smart, S. Straw, D. Vipond, S. Wall.

Regrets: L. Ouzgane, A. Paré.

The meeting was called to order at 1:25 p.m. Laura Atkinson was in the chair.

## Approval of Agenda

Susan MacDonald moved adoption of the agenda; seconded by Leslie Sanders.

## Announcements: New Directors and Terms of Office

Kenna Manos informed the meeting that five of the Directors attending Inkshed 11 (Amanda and Judy were unable to attend) had met and drawn lots to settle on their terms of office. The results were:

Laura Atkinson.....	three years
Judy Segal.....	three years
Doug Vipond .....	three years
Patrick Dias .....	two years
Kenna Manos .....	two years
Amanda Goldrick-Jones .....	one year
Anthony Paré.....	one year

The Board of Directors also elected Kenna Manos to serve as Treasurer and Patrick Dias to serve as Secretary during their terms of office.

## Appointments: Newsletter Editor

The next issue of the *Inkshed* Newsletter would be the last one under the editorship of Anthony Paré and co-editor Ann Beer. It was necessary then that the meeting consider the matter of appointing a new editor.

Stanley Straw, seconded by Doug Brent, moved that the Board of Directors be authorized to screen applications for and decide on the appointment of a Newsletter Editor for a three-year term.

## Minutes of the Inaugural General Meeting of CASLL

---

Ann Beer referred members to the announcement regarding this position in the current issue of the Newsletter (*Inkshed* 12.4). The meeting unanimously approved the motion.

### **Inkshed 12 - Location, Date, Conference Chair/s**

Doug Vipond introduced the discussion. The meeting was informed that the 1995 meeting of CCTELA would take place in Toronto during the month of October, a time that was not feasible for Inkshed meetings. Thus Inkshed would have to abandon its usual practice of linking its meetings with the annual meetings of CCTELA at least for the coming two years, since, according to Stanley Straw, the 1996 meeting was set to meet in October in Winnipeg.

While the Learned's are meeting in Montreal (late May/and June) in 1995, the Montrealers who have already hosted two Inkshed meetings were not expected to organize yet another. Doug Brent suggested Calgary could be a venue, even though it was not attached to either the Learned's or to the CCTELA meeting. He asked what might be an appropriate theme for such a meeting. Some of the suggestions were: The classroom as a safe environment for learning to write. The general crisis regarding writing centres. The need to develop arguments for institutions to fund the kind of educational opportunities discussed at this meeting and using the meeting (in the manner of Inkshed 11) to develop a policy paper to promote such developments. What kind of discourse is involved in instruction if classrooms adopted the collaborative writing procedures used during Inkshed 11?

The discussion seemed to coalesce around the need to leave the ultimate decision regarding the theme of Inkshed 12 to the organizer/s. Sharron Wall suggested that organizers of Inkshed meetings consider ways of encouraging newcomers to participate fully. Doug Brent agreed to place a statement summing up the discussion regarding Inkshed 12 in the coming *Inkshed* Newsletter. On Jim Reither's suggestion, Doug Brent agreed that the matter of the venue would still be left open in case other Inksheddors had suggestions and/or wished to volunteer to organize the meeting.

### **Membership Fees**

Doug Vipond provided a brief overview of the issues involved in the decision the meeting had to take on membership fees. There were three categories of membership: full, student, and institutional members. The book publishing venture initiative from Stan Straw, Sandy Baardman, Laura Atkinson, and Neil Besner necessitated a reconsideration of the fee structure, so that the meeting had to consider voting for one of two options:

Option A: full membership with Newsletter – \$10.00 per annum.

Option B: full membership with Newsletter and books – \$27.50 (students \$17.50).

Institutional membership would accordingly be either \$10.00 or \$27.50 p.a.

After some discussion, Henry Hubert, seconded by Stan Straw, moved that Option B be approved.

## **Minutes of the Inaugural General Meeting of CASLL**

---

There was some discussion on the motion. Members inquired about the commitment to provide two books made at Inkshed 10 after a fee increase to \$25.00 for 1993-94 had been approved. Stanley Straw assured the meeting that the second title would soon follow the now-available Roger Graves' *Writing Instruction in Canada*. There were several favourable comments on that book. Discussion on the motion focussed on the need to require members to purchase the books as part of their membership. Should not individual members be allowed a choice between Option A and Option B? Reference was made to the NCTE policy of making available two kinds of membership: regular and comprehensive (including all NCTE publications).

Some members pointed out that the availability of two books within this fee increase gave Inksheddors a real bargain. One member pointed out that the issue was not one of cost but one of disallowing individual choice; Inksheddors ought to be trusted to support such publications rather than be bound to purchasing the books as part of their membership.

Sandy Baardman and Stan Straw reminded members that the publication venture could only survive with guaranteed sales, that relying on voluntary sales presented a risk they were not willing to undertake. They also reminded members of the clause in the recently approved constitution that stated clearly that full membership in CASLL entitled members to "all of the publications of the association." Thus membership fees should reflect the cost of providing such publications. Responding to some members who suggested that such a clause could be changed, Susan Drain reminded the meeting that the constitution ought not to be taken so lightly.

Members were made aware that discussion could not proceed beyond the 3:00 p.m. closure time set for the meeting and the question was called on the motion to support Option B. The vote was taken by a show of hands: 20 for, 1 against, and 4 abstentions. The motion carried. Doug Brent moved that the executive be instructed to explore alternative measures of marketing and distributing CASLL publications. Motion carried.

### **Committee Chairs: Motion to Appoint**

After considerable discussion about motions to appoint Chairs to the Newsletter, Conference, and Publications committees, the meeting finally voted on a motion proposed by Leslie Sanders and James Brown that the Board of Directors be empowered to appoint for one year only the Chairs of the Newsletter, Conference, and Publications committees and that these Chairs be none other than those persons appointed to undertake those tasks for the coming year.

### **Correspondence**

Lack of time prevented discussion of this item.

## Additional Items

There being no additional items for discussion, the meeting closed with a vote of thanks to the organizers and helpers of Inkshed 11. Thanks Russ, Jim, Thom, Doug, Shawnda, Vanessa, and Jackie.

Patrick Dias  
Secretary - *CASLL*

---

## A Forward Glance at Inkshed 12

At Inkshed 11, we agreed that Inkshed 12 would be held in the Calgary area, not associated with either the Learneds or *CCTELA*. Dust off your white Stetsons and prepare your stomachs for Cowboy breakfasts.

As I have been up to the armpits in Learned Societies for the past few weeks, I have not yet prepared a formal prospectus for the conference, nor have I gotten my cadre of collaborators organized. However, I would like to take this opportunity to start people thinking, and perhaps writing or e-mailing suggestions, about Inkshed 12.

### Conference Format

Participants at Inkshed 11 seemed to be pretty well agreed that the collaborative working environment of that conference made it one of the best - certainly the least typical - conference ever. (Certainly nothing could be much farther from the fragmented paper-reading that goes on at the typical Learneds.) The problem is how to follow an experience like that.

My suggestion is that we take collaborative authorship to the next logical level. A comment that I heard repeatedly at Inkshed 11 was that collaboration typically begins with people naturally coming together around shared themes, interests and experiences. Texts arise out of talk, not the reverse.

Therefore, I suggest that people write very short proposals that consist merely of ideas that they would like to develop. I see this stage as "trolling for collaborators." I will publish these proposals in *Inkshed* (or mail them out separately if publishing schedules do not work out), and invite people to get in touch with one another to work out writing groups of three to five people focussed around proposals that seem complementary. This will be more interesting, in the usual Inkshed masochistic sense, if people work primarily with people who they have not worked with before, led by a sense of common interest rather than pre-established compatibility. These groups in turn will submit collaborative formal proposals

by early Fall (in time for the SSHRC applications). By the time Inkshed 12 rolls around, groups should aim to have a rough-and-ready working text ready for final face-to-face polishing and presentation to the assembled multitude.

This will introduce some interesting logistics. Groups will have to work together very early, and contributors who do not use e-mail are going to have to be prepared to do some heavy faxing and phoning. They will have to keep tinkering with their evolving text over the year without benefit of face-to-face contact. They will have to decide how to proceed. Divide up the task into mini-texts to be put together at the end? Hand one text around round-robin style for additions and amendments by each contributor? Parcel out research and have a permanent or rotating craftsperson to work up the actual text? The more diversity of method, the more interesting the results will be.

Theoretically, this would limit participants to those who submitted proposals, as with Inkshed 11. However, there is no reason that others could not climb on board later if they found a compatible group that could use their services. But everyone will participate directly in some aspect of the writing process as their admission ticket - no sitting back in the audience and taking in others' presentations à la CCCC's.

Shortly I will publish a formal call for proposals with attached dates. In the meantime, start thinking about areas you might like to explore and material you can contribute. What sort of ideas might attract collaborators? Put out your lines and start trolling...

## Place

There was some informal discussion of venue at Inkshed 11, but I would appreciate comments (e-mail, snail-mail, whatever) from others, including those who were not at Inkshed 11.

The last time Inkshed came to Calgary, we held it at Buffalo Mountain Lodge, a Banff resort that was a bit upscale as Inkshed hangouts go but very reasonable for the area - in fact, the best deal going at the time. For about \$450 single for the entire weekend (considerably less double), we were put up in chalets with woodburning fireplaces, stuffed with excellent food, and hot-tubbed after a hard day's inkshedding. Deer on the front lawn (not in bottles) were complementary, unlike the overpriced wooden Mounties in the souvenir shops.

Certainly Buffalo Mountain has a lot to recommend it, including the fact that it's a known quantity. However, some people have expressed concern over the price (especially for people who must come a long way to the conference). Given the lead time I have to work with, I can probably get the Banff Centre for the Performing Arts, which is also an excellent venue: same mountains, same deer, but more dormitory-style accommodations and more plebian, though quite respectable, food and no hot tub or bar. This would probably come in about \$100 less than Buffalo Mountain for the whole weekend and would have more small break-out rooms available for collaborative writing.

## A Forward Glance at Inkshed 12

---

If we really want to go in un-style, we can get the Kananaskas Forestry Centre, part way between Calgary and Banff. It features gender-segregated dorms with communal bathrooms down the hall and smaller mountains, but no shortage of picturesque scenery and an unbeatable price - under \$40.00 per day shared, including food. They may have an exchange arrangement with the Hugh John Flemming Forestry Centre regarding bottled deer, but I haven't looked into this. This could provide exactly the kind of spartan work environment appropriate to the Inkshed spirit, but I must warn you that it was originally built during WW II as a prisoner-of-war camp. They have removed the barbed wire but I'm not sure they've changed the cook. (Actually, I've eaten there and it's at least as good as Hugh John Flemming, though without the fiddleheads.)

I won't do anything precipitate until I've done more food testing, price comparing and bed-thumping, but I could use a general read on whether the majority want to go upper deck or steerage. I should book soon as everything in the area often gets booked a year or more in advance. Please write, phone or e-mail your ideas on venue, conference style, or anything else.

Collaboratively yours,

Doug Brent  
Faculty of General Studies  
University of Calgary  
T2N 1N4  
e-mail: dabrent@acs.ucalgary.ca

---

## A Backward Glance at Inkshed 11

The Inkshed 11 Conference, held in Fredericton's huge John Flemming Forestry Centre, was an extraordinary experience for all who attended. Its organizers, Jim Reither, Russ Hunt, Doug Vipond, and Thom Parkill, with the essential support of Jackie Reither and her assistants (Shawnda Cohen and Vanessa Goggin), provided a unique working conference. The work started late in 1993, when we submitted proposals for papers. Early in 1994 all participants received a set of all the anonymous proposals and chose among the set any that seemed close or complementary to their own proposal. Each participant then wrote a paper, at least in draft form, and arrived at the conference on a rainy Friday afternoon, "prepared for anything."

On the first night we set to work - but only after we had finished admiring the stuffed animals, rusty axes, and other Forestry Centre decorations. (The most notable, in our main conference room, was a baby deer, pickled in an enormous glass jar and christened "Bambi" by

those conference-goers who could bear to look at it.) Family groups were formed on the basis of the earlier proposal selections and other mysterious criteria known only to our beloved organizers. Within these large groups we then had to form small working groups whose papers would actually be blended. This proved to be a difficult task, and kept some of us working late into the evening.

Next morning, and for the remainder of the conference, the small groups of three to four people worked together to produce a collaboratively written paper from their drafts. There were detailed prompts for each stage of the process, and opportunities for reader response. At intervals all 36 of us came together to reflect and inkshed on the writing experiences we were engaged in. Computers, both desktop and laptop, were an integral part of the work: conversations about file conversion, disks, wordprocessing commands and printers mingled with cries of "What are we going to do about the introduction?" and "We can't leave that anecdote out - it's wonderful!" Some groups had a harmonious and happy collaborative experience; others learned just as much, if not more, by struggling with issues of incompatibility and formal dissonance. In brief, all of us shared the kind of experience that students in collaborative writing classes have to go through every semester. And though the experience could not be identical to that of students (who was grading us?), the process helped us to better understand the difficulties and pleasures of collaborative writing.

The conference has still not ended. Papers are being further revised and many may appear in a Conference Proceedings which will be available to all CASLL members. A special e-mail list has led to further conversations about the conference and plans for work. Some papers may be withdrawn and will revert to their individual voice; others will be sent out for publication elsewhere.

Inkshed 11 was unforgettable for many of us, among all our conference-going experiences, and we are grateful to the organizers for taking the risks this conference involved. The following excerpts from on-site inkshedding (some slightly edited) give a broader picture than I can provide.

Ann Beer

### **Inkshed #1**

One attitude shift: I went through different stages/stances vis à vis what I brought - Chiefly, "Do I have to show *anyone* this text? I'm a good editor, can I just work or alter people's stuff, I don't have anything to say of my own" to and "I really want you to read this, because I really want to tell you this." Great sense of permission because my text says "draft" in extra large font - and I deliberately didn't edit it to a high gloss - giving myself and others permission to work with it.

Susan Drain

I found the process of getting into family groups to be agonizing but then I found the process of selecting abstracts in the *first* place to be agonizing. I really didn't want anybody to be or feel left out. (Curiously, I didn't worry that *I* would be left out, and I'm not sure why.) I am surprised at the degree to which this process made me feel exposed, vulnerable, and responsible to everyone else. I *really* wanted somebody to decide this for me, or to have the process left to chance. As it turns out, I'm working with 2 people I wanted to work with - but I'm not working with 9 people I *did* want to work with!!! I felt a great sense of flux and things bubbling and percolating and ideas snapping back and forth, and I hope that we aren't going to rush to premature closure and lose that sense. I hope we keep getting scrambled (or scrambling ourselves). I'm amazed by that sense of vulnerability also because this inkshedding and collaboration are the kinds of thing I want my students to do. Do they feel this exposed? Or don't they - because they don't take what they do as seriously as I take what I do?

Marcy Bauman

It was also complicated by my sense that some people's ideas didn't connect as readily, and I didn't want to exclude them or have them feel excluded. I don't know why this should have complicated things so much, but it did. It wasn't, however, a *painful* sort of complication; it was just *difficult*. It didn't seem as if it were the ideas that were driving the process but a sort of memory of the ideas, or hazy reconstruction. On the other hand, dammit, we don't *know* what will make 2 groups work, however long we might spend negotiating it.

Russ Hunt

What a relief not to worry about presenting a finished product and simply to come with a rough draft, that will be transformed into something new. My main problem is that there are many papers I'd like to read - even in rough stage - just to see how everyone thinks about writing.

Joyce Simutis

I want to talk about my willingness to abandon my text. Why was I so willing? Perhaps because I carry the text with me, even without the words on the page. The real text is created in my discourse with others and what is on paper sustains or drives (at least helps) this happen. What I am committed to is my relations and interactions here at this conference. These are the real products and texts. Even if we manage to create some printed text by the end of this weekend, *it* will be ephemeral, *it* will be mutable, changeable fleeting, contingent. What would I rather be committed to?

Sandy Baardman

As I heard each member of our group speaking, I found myself distracted by the question: How does she/he fit in with *my* question? This was certainly not a productive way of listening. It was only as we discussed the formation of our smaller family groupings that I realized that I could be part of several different conversations - that there were productive tangents to every paper abstract I would want to pick up, flow out from, and be drawn back into. So I learned that voicing my own abstract (no longer *abstract*) had drawn me to people I wanted to converse with and write with - far too many of them.

Patrick Dias

## Inkshed #2

Stuffed heads, the antlers of deer, moose and caribou, stuffed birds and pickled embryos: what a curious atmosphere for thinking about how people learn to write.

Thom Parkhill

So there's my paper - which early this morning I hacked into gobbets and then shuffled into the pile of gobbets belonging to the other 2 members of my writing family. Then, there's a wonderful sense of collaboration as we sort and tape the pieces into what we perceive is an order. Then - there's the incredible downer after reading this new thing we've created.

Anon

I'll get some experience with this kind of collaboration and read at least 5 or 6 other papers. I'm certainly getting as much from this process as I would from presenting my own paper and listening to 10 others.

James Brown

I like the stories best. I realize more and more that I think that way. I need to connect theories and generalizations to real (or even hypothetical) people and their situations.

Pat Sadowy

The situation enabled collaboration for us. What interests us all, now, is why the situation did not (it seems) enable collaboration for others - and what might that teach us about (1) collaboration in general - its processes and its motives - and (2) what's going on when we

## A Backward Glance at Inkshed 11

---

force collaboration on students. What, in other words, can we learn from - and teach each other - in this?

**Jim Reither**

Writing classes also promote certain values, but which ones? In our classes, do we affirm or depersonalize students? To what do we challenge our students? To become efficient managers, critical thinkers, sensitive human beings? What is the goal of the educational enterprise we represent in our classes?

**Anon**

I was interested to observe how devastated (and indignant) we were to receive a very skimpy response - and how offended others seemed at too-elaborated comments. The process has been intense, if exhausting, and has stretched us, forcing us to rethink the limits of our own assumptions. So, refined thinking, good discussion, fertile territory for future writing.

**Aviva Freedman**

Autobiography is a risk, especially when attached to exploration of some academically unconventional aspects of our own past. By having taken that risk before we even came to the conference we had somehow predisposed ourselves (I think) to openness and a willingness to experiment.

**Anon**

I'm not sure how I feel about this: on the one hand, it was sort of nice thinking we'd been on the mark in what we need to do next, but on the other hand, I wish we could've had a more complete draft before we gave it to them. Actually *responding* to a draft was really fun. I wish I could read what *everybody* brought with them initially, as well as reading the group drafts, because I keep bumping into ideas and voices and people I want to know more about. I am so tired.

**Marcy Bauman**

I'm very pleased with the work we've done in our group so far. We had fallen nicely into an appreciation of each other's paper; we had shared a willingness to move toward a common product through a collaborative process. We have seen each others' skills in action and each others' thoughts in motion. The collaboration has been invigorating and exhausting.

Anon

I made the paper in one sort of dialogue, and now I'm finding it difficult to extract it from that dialogue in order to fit it into another context, a different set of voices. It's a bit like having four radios on at the same time, all on different channels.

Anthony Paré

The groups were/are an excellent idea, but what I remember most about today is the way in which some real differences between various people were being levelled, standardized into "we are all different." This is probably too sensitive an issue to write about publicly, but when we recognize difference, we need to ask what *kind* of difference it is. (More about this some other time.) I find that attempt to impose one model of "how people learn to write" on all of us negates or dilutes our private/particular/local stories. Related to this issue is that of trying to understand what it means for me to describe how *other* people write. Aren't I appropriating their "right" to speak? The days of the benevolent, neutral, objective, altruistic observer are - or should be - over. We are all subjective - at least I am; but I don't mean "subjective" in the sense of "private." This doesn't perhaps make sense.... So I'll stop. Another thread: is Inkshed a safe environment to unite in? What happens when you feel you *can't* say what you really think? I sometimes wish we could have a way of getting at what is never articulated. This is not an appeal for help. But I just want to speak - for bell hooks, the question is *not* to acquire a voice; the problem is to have a voice that is listened to. For the intellectual integrity of Inkshed we should some day be allowed to explore the politics of "collaboration", of working as a big happy family. And be honest about it - Or talk about what really bothers us - Obviously, a few things do bother me, but I can't talk about them. The last words: I am however pleased with some of the progress we made today.

Lahoucine Ouzgane

### Inkshed #3

As the groups reported, I know perfectly well which groups I would have felt comfortable with and which groups I would have been less comfortable with. This *isn't* a question of personality primarily (I like everybody here very much), but perhaps more of different kinds of readiness, context and - perhaps above all - different kinds of underlying belief systems. I want to call it this that rather than "theoretical models," or whatever, which

sounds clinical and external. I don't think it is an external matter - even for the people whose group adopted a particular "big name" theory - but a matter of deeply personal experience and values. There is a really big paradigm shift occurring (not just quantitative/qualitative or the equivalent in the disciplines) but differences on the status of personal knowledge, and on the way knowledge can be shared, developed, challenged - and by whom it can be shared, developed and challenged. I welcome this change. I can also see (partially through Inkshed's extraordinary degree of "difference" this time) how *intensely* conservative academic structures of knowledge are - academic practices. Even this conference, in previous years, couldn't fully throw off that set of influences, though it did a much better job than most conferences. This time it seemed to throw them to the winds in a way I found liberating, insightful - very courageous.

**Ann Beer**

I was running an errand so came in part way through the "Collaboration Anonymous" report. It was amazing! I found the painful honesty, the willingness to confront tough issues just about heroic. That this group was able to "fail" with this much grace, dignity and insight is a real triumph.... I am becoming aware that of all the myriad "components" of collaborative writing the most important cluster has to do with human caring. The cut-through-the-bullshit quality of autobiographical stories; grappling with the incongruity between what we know and what we do; the admission - public admission - of that grappling; the "surrendering" of individual texts for the good of the whole group text, all these are vital for collaborative writing. Without this caring dimension, I am convinced, there can not be the trust, openness, and generosity (let alone the sense of humour) for us to work together writing a "real text" (as opposed to a textoid). Sometimes you can start by establishing relationships. Sometimes you can build relationships with the creation of text as a vehicle. Just as I can build my self or cue in to who I am becoming by means of writing, so too (I am beginning to see/think/suggest) we can develop group identities.

**Pat Sadowy**

Can we allow our students the latitude implicit in what we heard and learned from the varied experiences we heard this morning (of people all committed to better writing and collaboration)? Do we give them enough time, enough latitude to regroup, to pull out and act alone, if necessary?

**Aviva Freedman**

The success or failure of the co-authored product might depend on how well the group can overcome their difficulties, find common ground, establish a framework for the writing,

develop respect for each other's expertise and skill, and, as individuals, come to a commitment to the task.... we extend ourselves together and separately.

Learning how so many other groups (of expert, skilled, literate writers) had worked both similarly and differently was part of what I came here to learn. Thanks to my team, the dysfunctional team, and all of you for sharing so honestly and generously.

**Sharron Wall**

I'm struck by the cohesiveness of this Inkshed group. Although we went off with our family groups, this larger family was a consistent presence - all working toward the same goal.

**Jane Ledwell-Brown**

It's been a painful experience. Fertile ground for growth I guess. In my autobiography as a writer, it'll be there. How it will be cast isn't too clear yet. I need more time for that to be determined. I learned how important it is to talk but I also needed to be listened to and that requires an atmosphere of trust and respect that I didn't always feel was there. I really need it. I can't write in a vacuum - I need to write in dialogue and somehow our group wasn't able to create the conditions for that to happen. Dialogue - 2-way communication - is *critical* to learning to write for me. Having a voice is important - yes, of course. But having a voice that isn't listened to is just as bad - no, worse - than having no voice at all.

**Mary Mar**

This morning was - amazing, interesting, moving, and so on and on. With 10 writing papers it sounds like 9 were able or partly able to come to an understanding of something, and in many cases a reasonable draft of something! The one group that wasn't was (for that very reason) possibly the most interesting of all. What happened there? Why did their group break down when others didn't? What can "unsuccessful" collaboration teach us about the "successful" kind? But - now that I've put them in these 2 categories, 9 successful, 1 not, I have to question the categories. Who's to say the 9 were really that successful? Maybe a lot of it is an illusion, a kind of expectancy effect in which we try to convince ourselves that we've done well in order to justify the effort we've put in. Maybe the "unsuccessful" group was not so unsuccessful. For one thing, they're the ones who exposed most clearly some of the difficulties in collaboration. What does "success" mean here? It can't mean having a readable draft, because at least one group, who identified themselves as "winners," said they had only one page of text and 10 pages of notes, and they'll continue working on it.

**Doug Vipond**

I was most impressed, in some ways, by the group that didn't work - grateful to them for the willingness to explore their difficulties and contradictions. I always tell students that we write in blood (our own) not pen or keyboard. Content, topic, and stage of career (sometimes) determine how much the blood - so we've "all been there" - and if we weren't in our groups - well so many factors made it otherwise.

**Leslie Sanders**

I find myself thinking of a streetscape - domestic dwellings built by and for individual families, showing in their additions and lean-to's and bump-outs and granny flats the alterations and adaptations and accommodations required to house the growing and changing families (to provide spaces for them to dwell. Just as domestic architecture used the vernacular-frame houses, in the Maritimes our stories have a certain harmonious effect for all their bump-outs and lumpiness.

**Henry Hubert**

As "academics" there seems to always be a shadow over us - the shadow of theory. I know my practise and theory blend, but I always find it difficult to explain that blend to others. In my group, it seemed that I did *not* have to justify or explain why practise is so important to me and why autobiography is a way of writing within and outside the academy.

**Lorraine Cathro**

Will I be aware of the dominant voice, or absence of voice, in the papers? Or will the "common" voice have texture? Do three or four voices flatten as they merge? Are there links between collaboration and appropriation?

**Kenna Manos**

It brought me back to what Leslie had said last night as we were talking about our "collective future" or the futures of our work. She had said it could be up to each group to continue or not, and if one group didn't want to join a volume, that choice would be up to them. I was disappointed to hear that because to me (as one member of a whole) it *did* matter. Like Quebec - can they go if they want or must we all agree? That means that an overall result of this conference has been a bonding with members of this community. It is hard to be part of a community without compassion for all of it.

**Rhonda Schuller**

---

# Post-Modern WHAT-DID-YOU-CALL-IT

- a response to *Post-Modern Education* by Giroux and Aronowitz -

Stanley.  
Henry.

Boys.

This is not your mother speaking.

BUT -

Did you learn to write in the Province of Impenetrable Paragraphs?

Were you schooled in the School of Obscurity?

Were you hall monitors mouthing multivocal mumbo-jumbo messages  
to mutants

Cruising down the corrugated corridors of crap,

Pausing to pee post-modern pomposity upon ponderous portentous  
poles now polluted by  
adynamic adversative adverbs  
neuropsychotic nouns  
and sexpartite sentences?

the voice-the voice-the voice-  
of-otherness-smothered-and-  
bordered-and-decentered-in-the-  
human-subject-of-meaningful-  
did-you-mean-meaning-full-  
curriculum-for-students-  
whose-social-political-  
cultural-gender-identity-

Oh, really?

This really cannot possibly mean to be identified here by me.

Not in those pauselesspretentiouspanderingparagraphs perused by this publicly  
unintellectual  
teacher-terror.

Renée Norman  
University of British Columbia