

Inkshed

Newsletter of the Canadian Association for the Study of Language and Learning
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This issue was edited by Heather Graves and Roger Graves (University of Alberta). It is accessible through the Inkshed Web site, at <http://www.inkshed.ca>

About Inkshed . . .

This newsletter of the Canadian Association for the Study of Language and Learning (CASLL) provides a forum for its subscribers to explore relationships among research, theory, and practice in language acquisition and language use, particularly in the Canadian context. CASLL membership runs from January 1 to December 31 and includes a subscription to *Inkshed*. To subscribe, send a cheque, made out to "Inkshed," for \$40 [\$20 for students and the un(der)employed] to the following address:

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Subscribers are invited to submit items of interest related to the theory and practice of reading and writing. CASLL also has a website—www.stu.ca/inkshed—maintained by Russ Hunt.

Submissions

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From the Editors' Desktops

As of this writing (October 5) there is no call for papers or definite plans for another Inkshed conference next spring. The last Inkshed in Fredericton, NB drew about 20 people, down from the 45 who attended in London, ON and slightly fewer than the 20-25 who attended the Gimli, MB conference. It seemed appropriate to devote an issue of the newsletter to the future of the organization, and here it is.

Miriam Horne opens the discussion with “Changing needs: Revisioning Inkshed.” Miriam, a recent graduate of the PhD program in Education at McGill, took Inkshed as the subject of her dissertation and is perhaps best placed of any of us to comment on the future of the organization. Her conclusion, that the organization needs to transform itself to meet the current needs of teachers and scholars of writing in Canada, seems to us to be both a warranted conclusion and an urgent call for change. In a recent discussion on the CASLL list, however, that conclusion certainly did not meet with general agreement.

Sandy Dorley follows with “To ‘Inkshed’ or Not...that is the question.” Sandy gives voice to those for whom Inkshed has not, in fact, provided a welcome community. Sandy’s point that as a “conference” Inkshed needs revision is, to us, accurate, though she is short on specifics about what changes need to be made. In the end, Sandy argues that Inkshed should return to its roots as a writing workshop for academics. We’re not sure that Miriam would agree that the conference had its roots in such a vision, but we’ll let her and others respond to that point.

Susan Drain provides a third perspective, that of a long-time attendee and active contributor to the CASLL listserv. Susan argues that “in the trenches” and “wholeness” characterize her experience of Inkshed. She rejects the idea that Inkshed competes or should compete with other conferences, arguing the Inkshed is primarily a conference for teachers. She ends with a postscript that compares other conferences to dog shows, presidential television debates, and five-paragraph essays. As people who have organized conferences for both Inkshed and the Canadian Association for Teachers of Technical Writing (now the Canadian Association for the Study of Discourse and Writing), we can say that we don’t share her perspective.

We’ve included the Call for Papers for the next Canadian Association for the Study of Discourse and Writing (CASDW) conference as an information piece. Please send along any other news items or calls that you think might be of interest to our readers.

We’ve also included a call for contributions to the next issue. If you can spare 30 minutes to write up a page about a research or teaching project you are working on, we’d love to include it in the next issue. This might be a way in which the newsletter could facilitate exchange of ideas in process—a key component of what Inkshed has always been.

Roger Graves

Heather Graves

Changing Needs: Revisioning Inkshed

Miriam Horne

In the early 1980s Canadian teachers and researchers in writing studies found themselves in a challenging position. While colleagues in the United States benefited from organizations like NCTE that brought scholars together through CCCC and so on, Canadian scholars had no way of knowing what others in the field were doing in Canada (Reither, 1985). If they ran into each other at an American conference, it was a happy coincidence (Paré, personal interview, 12/5/2006). Scholars like Russ Hunt, Jim Reither and others recognized the need for a unifying structure for writing studies and pedagogy in Canada. As Reither wrote:

It was clear in 1982 that there were people in Canadian schools, colleges, and universities who were deeply interested in writing and reading theory and practice. Nearly all of us felt isolated, however, and we envied the lively, generative communities of scholars and teachers which nurtured our colleagues in the States and England. We wanted and needed a more hospitable, supportive context in which to work. To have such a community required that we know who we were and what we were studying, what we were teaching, what issues concerned us; but no effective way of finding these things out was available to us. What we needed was, at a minimum, a print forum—a newsletter—in which to exchange such information, through which to come together. (p. 3)

Since the first newsletter that sought to bring Canadian scholars in writing studies together, what we now know as Inkshed has continued to grow and has met the need to bring Canadian teachers and scholars of writing together in significant ways. That initial need for a print forum that Reither described has moved from a bi-monthly newsletter to an active listserv that continues the tradition of writing to learn, and to build and unite a community. In addition, annual conferences have not only provided opportunities to network and collaborate, but have also been the site of much laughter, fun, and building of friendships. Inkshed came about as a means to bring together Canadian scholars interested in language and learning (Focus group interview, 5/9/2005) and activity on the listserv would suggest that that need is being met. However, low attendance at recent conferences seems to suggest that there are other needs Inkshed needs to meet. Now that we have been brought together, know who we are, and have a variety of forums in which to exchange information, where do we go from here?

Although its original purpose has been met the Inkshed membership needs to do more than be brought together. We need, as well, to find forums that will now bring us together with the broader discipline of writing studies both in Canada and beyond. Members face professional pressures to participate in disciplinary conversations and as a scholarly association we have a responsibility to facilitate those members as well as to take an active role in shaping those conversations. Our needs today have changed from what Reither described over 20 years ago. We know who we are; now we need to reach out. So just like we ask our students to revise their papers with new ideas and

perspectives, it is time to revision our purpose in Inkshed as we decide how to address changing needs. My suggestions are not radical. Drawing on my five year ethnographic research in Inkshed in which I examined writing practices as entry to the community, I have come to believe that a new vision of Inkshed needs to see us as a more significant contributor to the larger community of writing studies. I am confident that if we are willing to evolve our perspectives and draw on what we do best, then we can make purposeful contributions to our discipline. Three of Inkshed's characteristics—writing practices, working conferences and zeal—if enhanced and developed, will contribute to Inkshed's revision.

Writing practices

It would seem fairly logical to suggest that a community interested in the teaching and research of reading and writing would both read and write. And yet, to my knowledge, Inkshed is the only community that writes together so purposefully. Inkshed writing practices set Inkshed apart from other communities with similar interests. The community first came together through the newsletter and within a year, at the first gathering, writing was integrated as a core element of the conference. In other words, in Inkshed we do not just teach or study or talk about writing, we write. We write together at annual conferences through the inkshedding activity—a practice through which all participants are given the opportunity to voice their thoughts (Hunt, 2004) and a practice in which we are often pushed out of our comfort zones in the process of creating meaningful dialogic interactions (Horne, 2007). We continue the tradition of the newsletter as a place to write to each other about the work we do and the things that are important to us—a practice that promotes collegiality and serves to strengthen the community as a community of like minded peers generating knowledge. And, perhaps most significantly, we also embrace the wonders of technology and write on the listserv to gain information, to pass on information, to congratulate and to collaborate—the strength of which was evidenced last spring when, led by Susan Drain, the community responded to misconceptions about teaching writing published in *University Affairs*. We have shown ourselves to be a community of writers and it is time to draw on these practices in even more substantial ways. We must take our writing practices beyond the Inkshed borders.

Just as the field of writing studies has grown over the past two decades (a phenomenon seen, for example, in the variety and number of conferences that have emerged like CASDW, CSSR and so on), Inkshed also needs to grow. It needs to do this not necessarily by growing its numbers, but by using its writing practices in the broader community of writing studies to grow out of its current boundaries. This is not, of course, to suggest that we should be advocating that CCCC or CASDW adopt the inkshedding activity. But it is to suggest that through our writing practices we have a particular perspective of writing (i.e., that writing is social, dialogic, situationally contextualized, risky, and knowledge generating (Horne, 2007)). Our practices have given us perspectives that should be used to enhance broader discussions in writing studies. This means that our perspectives and the great ideas that come out of inkshedding at conferences or discussions on the listserv need a place to continue to grow where they can be showcased to teachers, scholars and administrators alike outside of the

Inkshed community. While Inkshed Publications contributes somewhat to achieving this, it is limited to showcasing one or two authors or small collections at a time. Inkshed needs to contribute to the discipline of writing studies through meaningful writing in other ways. For example, at the 2005 Inkshed conference held in Gimli, Manitoba, the members present at the AGM passed a motion in support of starting a scholarly journal. This is an issue that has periodically been raised over the years but with no action (Smith, 2000). It is time to take action on this motion. A scholarly journal dedicated to traditional values of Inkshed (including, but not limited to, dialogism, risk-taking and collaboration) will provide a unique public written space in which Inkshedders can continue to write, but for a much broader audience. This will provide a means for members to participate in disciplinary conversations and a means by which to share Inkshed as the intense, thoughtful academic community it has always been, in the more global context of writing studies.

The anticonference

Inkshed's second strength, despite recent dwindling numbers, and despite recent conversations on the listserv about the form it should take next year, is the conference. The annual conference has evolved as a working conference and a conference that goes against the traditional talking head, agonistic model of academia. This difference has not happened on its own, but has been intentional in the desire to locate the creation of knowledge within the whole (Horne 2007). One of the outcomes of this anti-conference mentality has been that the conference is more fun than many academic conferences. While this may seem an odd characteristic to laud and is not a replacement for academic rigour, it cannot be dismissed because the weekend retreat, lack of concurrent sessions, the institute of a talent night and so on, have created a place in which graduate students can mingle with experts in the field, teachers interact with researchers, disciplines intersect, and other connections can be made. Networking happens, friendships grow, and community is established (Horne, 2007).

While low attendance in recent years may raise questions about the viability of a four day retreat when faced with budget constraints, time constraints and a multitude of conferences to attend (choices that were not readily available 25 years ago when Inkshed began), I would argue that, at the very least, the working model of the conference can continue to serve a valuable role in writing studies. The small intimate nature of the conference allows newcomers (in this case I refer primarily to newcomers to the field like graduate students and new scholars) to gain practical experiences associated with conference attendance and to become members of a disciplinary community. As I discovered in my autoethnographic experiences, because of the conference's intense participatory nature, it is impossible to leave an Inkshed conference without having made connections with others. Some people find this intensity intimidating and unpleasant, but it is this same intensity that, if one can bear with it, facilitates membership in the collective (Horne, in press). Entering a community through other conferences can be, for some, a greater challenge because community building practices are less demanding. The collaboration, collegiality, and fun of Inkshed, made possible through the conference format, needs to continue in order to continue knowledge building, but also to facilitate newcomers to not just the community but to the discipline.

Even as I write this, however, I can hear the uncomfortable voices of dissent that I heard during my research telling me that they will not be attending these conferences. I can hear them complaining that the conference is too self-promoting and weak in theory (personal communication, 12/15/2006) and that because it is so self-indulgent it is boring (personal communication, 12/14/2006). In the past, these kinds of attitudes and feelings have been dealt with by individuals self-selecting out of the community (focus group interview, 5/13/2005)—in other words, they simply do not come back. It is time, however, to address these concerns and examine how we might reach beyond what some see as an insular nature as we consider how to move the community forward. I would suggest that we begin by considering the remarks that Anthony Paré made as a keynote speaker at the 2007 CATTW conference (now CASDW). He spoke about interdisciplinarity and the need for rhetoricians to make a difference not just in writing studies but also across disciplines. At times, the intensity of an Inkshed conference can become so internal and self-fulfilling that the work of the conference fails to go beyond its own defining boundaries and make the significant contributions to writing studies that it could. We need instead to consider what we can do outside our Inkshed boundaries. Our themes, our calls for proposals, our presentations and so on need to reach out to the discipline of writing studies and find the things that both resonate with and challenge thought in writing studies in order to do as Anthony suggests and make a difference.

Zeal

The idea of reaching out and sharing what we have so that others can benefit from what we do leads to the third strength of Inkshed—its passion and zeal. Anthony described this best during one of our many conversations as he served as my thesis advisor. Talking about the early years of Inkshed and the culture that permeates the community today, he explained:

There was a lot of almost evangelical feel around some of this stuff—as I think continues around writing studies and writing teaching. People who are in teaching or working in this area have kind of an evangelical—a kind of zealotry that is energizing [and] very appealing at times. (Personal interview, 12/5/2006)

As a newcomer to Inkshed, it was easy for me to get caught up in this passion and zeal and I found that attending conferences energized me in such a way that I wanted to go home and spread the good news. The proselytizing image here is appropriate because through the course of my research, many people made reference to the religiosity of Inkshed and our conviction to the truth of our perspectives. Perhaps, it would not hurt to take a lesson from religion. When evangelicals feel passionate about their beliefs, they share; they proselyte. In order to continue forward, Inkshed cannot assume that those who are interested will naturally find and join us. We need to be more active in the way we share our views and beliefs in Inkshed. We need to proselyte so that even if other scholars are not converted, they know who we are, what we do, and what we believe. Part of this can be done simply by spreading the calls for conference proposals further. It can also be done through a scholarly journal that showcases what we do. But if we are to

really reach out beyond our own borders and share what we believe, we need a strong leadership to represent our voice in writing studies.

In the evolution of Inkshed, we declined a formal leadership. While we have a board of directors so that we can justify our position as an academic association, that board does not lead the community. We have no one to take charge (as evidenced in recent listserv discussions about the next conference). We need a strong purposeful leadership that will find ways to make Inkshed's presence felt in the discipline. While the lack of structured leadership may have emerged as part of the anticonference culture of Inkshed, as we struggle to determine the role of Inkshed in the future, it is time to move forward with a strong leadership. We need leadership empowered to make critical decisions, to lead us forward and direct us to our place in writing studies.

Conclusion

Inkshed evolved out of a particular set of needs which have since been met. Inkshed membership today continues to need support, but much of that support (beyond collegiality and collaboration) is needed to meet institutional demands for professional development. Inkshed can continue to foster the things that it does best, but only by looking outward rather than inward can Inkshed continue to meet the needs of its members. As these needs are met, Inkshed will also contribute to satisfying the growing demands of the discipline and thus establish itself as an active member of the writing studies community

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Editor's Note:

This article has undergone a blind peer review process and revised.

To “*Inkshed*” or Not . . . That is the question

Sandy Dorley 

The first professional conference I attended after arriving in Canada to teach was the *Inkshed* conference. Like many others, I was looking for a group of colleagues with whom I could share ideas. I had been told that this was a great conference and that I would really love it. I arrived, picked up my packet, and made my way to the patio where everyone was animatedly engaged in conversation and hugging each other. Failing to make eye contact, I sat alone at a table and realized that this was a group of people who already knew each other—seemingly quite well and for a long time. And I wondered what I had gotten into.

As it turns out, my first time was also the 20th anniversary of *Inkshed*. Many people had returned, and there was a lot of reminiscing and storytelling. No wonder I thought that I was on the outside looking in.

I attended my second *Inkshed* Conference just last year. By then, I had gotten to know several of my Canadian colleagues—not through *Inkshed* but from other conferences (ATTW, CATTW, and CCCC/CDN Caucus), so I hoped that my experience would be different. In a way, it was. I knew more people, to be sure, and had made friends of several. But the interesting thing that I found at this conference was that I still felt like an outsider. It’s not that people ignored me. They were kind and welcoming as before. But underneath that, I could sense that current of not-belonging, of not being one who had been there from the beginning and had embraced both inkshedding and *Inkshed*.

I have often referred to this conference as “in-bred,” and I still stand by that. I don’t blame the members—I, too, go to conferences and spend time with colleagues I’ve known for years. But those are big affairs—with hundreds even thousands of attendees. *Inkshed* is a small conference, and it is more obvious who is new...and who isn’t.

Since inadvertently opening this can of worms with a mis-stroke in my email response, I have received comments from several others who felt the same after attending *Inkshed*. They, too, felt isolated. Many have also wondered what the value was in attending—beyond participating in a very unique way of responding to papers. And what I realized that it’s not the people but the conference itself that causes such confusion.

There are actually two ‘Inksheds’—the conference (with a capital “I”) and the activity (little “i”). Initially, as I have been told, the purpose of *Inkshed* was to look at works in progress. And the purpose of inkshedding (little “i”) was to give feedback on those works in a way that not only provided response but also became text on its own.

The second *Inkshed* (with the capital “I”) is the conference for CASLL. As such, it feels the weight of being the academic vehicle for scholars. And as the body of scholars who teach writing in Canada grows, the conference should grow as well...or so you might think.

We all can list the many practical reasons for declining attendance: lack of institutional travel funds, high cost of gas/travel/lodgings, too busy with other things, etc. But I think a big reason is that *Inkshed* has turned into a conference without an identity. Is it “art or soup”—a workshop or a conference?

As a conference, it really doesn't deal with any different academic focus from that of CASDW, ATTW, or CCCC . And the rather insular feel it has is a bit off-putting to new attendees. It's like going to a party where everyone works for the same company...and you really have nothing to say. So if the intent is to grow into a big conference, some changes need to be made. The real question is: does it or SHOULD it really change?

I think there is a place for small, intimate conferences. We all lament the big ones where herds of attendees wander from one presentation to another in search of something that is really useful to their teaching or research. But for a small conference to be more than just an annual get-together of the old guard, some real effort has to be made. If your goal is to increase attendance in order to keep the conference as a viable scholarly entity, the conference needs to change. If your goal is to have a small, intimate gathering where people share works in progress, then you probably don't want to advertise extensively or even care if it grows beyond a certain number of attendees.

For my money, I think you should keep it as it was in the beginning—a writing workshop for scholars. AS such, I think it is one-of-a-kind. Where else can you bring academic papers and workshop them with like-minded and like-experienced colleagues? And if you keep it small, you keep both inksheds—the act and the getting together. Drop the ‘conference’ name and call it a ‘workshop’—with a finite number of spaces. Require that attendees bring real works in progress—writings on their way to publication. Break into even smaller groups of sub-disciplines for more focused writing feedback.

If you make the conference bigger, you may need to get rid of the act of inkshedding. Already, it's nearly impossible to get all of the responses typed up daily. Just think how daunting it would be if there were a hundred or more presentations! You'll also need to do more advertising, find bigger spaces to meet, and spend many more hours organizing everything.

Inkshed is a perfect vehicle for something that is missing in other conferences—that sense of intimacy and of working together on a project. I probably won't attend again—since I am looking for the bigger type of conference, and I get to see you all at those anyway. But if I was working on an academic paper, I can't think of any better group of people to help me with it. You're not soup—you're Art. And the best art is always one-of-a-kind.

Whither Inkshed?

Susan Drain ✍

When he solicited material for this newsletter, Roger posed the following question: “How should Inkshed market its ‘brand’ within the increasingly competitive academic writing associations within Canada (CASDW, CSSR, CWCA)?”

The question sticks in my craw, despite the disavowal implied by the scare quotes around “brand.” There are no scare-quotes around “market” or around “competitive.” And we’re not talking about an idealistic Olympic (*citius, altius, fortius*) competition, but a free market scramble for scarce resources and scant renown.

No thanks.

My observations about Inkshed have come to cluster around one phrase and one word: “in the trenches” and “wholeness.” Neither of those concepts has room for competition.

One of the things that Inkshed respects and makes room for is practice. Not only do we practice writing by shedding ink or rattling keyboards, but we are immersed in the practice – the praxis if you prefer – of teaching and learning writing. Around the room we have lots of people who think and study and research writing and rhetoric and genre and discourse analysis, but never far away is the classroom where those various plummy puddings are put to the proof. When we are at Inkshed, we are teachers first, I think, whether we teach in writing centres or tutorial services or explicit writing courses or in the disciplines. I don’t like the metaphor behind “in the trenches” (any more than I like the market competition one) and it’s not an analogy that will stretch very far. But Inksheddors are not armchair generals: what we talk about and do and take away is informed by the reality of students and thinking and writing and problem-solving. That’s why it is so powerful and immediate an experience. “Life changing” in fact, as many testimonials to Inkshed on its 25th anniversary affirmed.

Being in the trenches can be overwhelming, and people respond differently to the stress. Some desert altogether. Some distance themselves, retreating to the armchair or the desk for contemplation and study, with teaching becoming a matter of grooming officer cadets for their comprehensives and theses rather than a matter of mucking in with the infantry. Others suffer the psychological phenomenon of dissociation: compartmentalizing and rationing their intellectual and emotional energies. Women in the academy have been particularly familiar with this phenomenon: our pioneering foremothers could not have survived without it, to their great cost. Their feminist successors tried to integrate the academy: to remake it in a way that is not just woman friendly but human-being friendly, arguing that everyone gains when the personal and the academic, the human and the intellectual are not severed.

Inkshed is a place where that human-being friendly vision has been realized, where wholeness is valued. That's why Inkshed practice is lighted by research and theory, and vice versa; why Inkshed is social and collaborative in its structure and activities; and why we have Talent Night, celebrating the human wholeness behind the whole enterprise. Why Inkshedders are friends, not just colleagues.

Whither Inkshed? I think the real question is whither our universities? And the answer, I fear, is that they are going wrong. Perhaps Inkshed is the home of lost causes and eclipsed visions, and ambitious people who have seen the way of the future will do well to flee it. But perhaps it is the place where people desirous of a better way, one more engaged and more whole, can find one, not just spelled out, but lived out.

Postscript

One more observation. Inkshed is a working conference. Conventional conferences are a bit like dog shows: everyone gets a time to show his or her own best before retreating to the sidelines, either to fawn over the champion or to accept the accolades of others. It occurs to me that the conventional academic conference is to Inkshed as a debate between US presidential candidates is to real argument. Or, to change similes yet again, as the five-paragraph essay is to rhetoric. It is a structure we accept without question (though often with grumbling) rather than a response to a problem and a situation; it is a form whose fundamental purpose is evaluative rather than communicative. That's a fair enough purpose, given the competition we are apparently waging with one another. But if we want to survive that competition as human beings, we need a place where we can fully engage and be engaged. Right now, the only people who can afford to step outside the competition to do that are the elders who don't have to prove themselves any more or the marginal who aren't considered real competitors.

Conference

The Territoire/Places of Writing Studies in Higher Education: Canadian and International Perspectives

Carleton University, Ottawa, Canada
May 24-26, 2009

Keynote Speakers:

Judy Segal, University of British Columbia

Chris Thaiss, University of California at Davis

Kay O'Halloran, National University of Singapore

The Canadian Association for the Study of Discourse and Writing/Association canadienne de rédaction (CASDW/ACR; formerly Canadian Association of Teachers of Technical Writing (CATTW)/L'Association canadienne de professeurs de rédaction technique et scientifique (ACPRTS)) invites proposals for its interdisciplinary international conference "The Territoire/Places of Writing Studies in Higher Education: Canadian and International Perspectives," to be held in Ottawa, Ontario, Canada, from May 24-26, 2009 in collaboration with the 2009 Congress of the Federation for the Humanities and Social Sciences (FHSS).

Rationale for the Conference

In line with the Congress theme of "Capital Connections: nation, terroir, territoire," the CASDW/ACR conference seeks to identify, interrogate, and illuminate the various locations—physical, administrative, and intellectual—that form our identities as instructors, tutors, and researchers in writing studies.

This theme is particularly apt because of the change in name of our organization. The old name—Canadian Association of Teachers of Technical Writing (CATTW)/L'Association canadienne de professeurs de rédaction technique et scientifique (ACPRTS)—signified a territory or place for our activities limited to one location in the academy—technical writing—that ultimately proved insufficient as the group's intellectual territory expanded. The new name claims a broader section of the academic map: genre studies, rhetorical theory, composition studies, engineering communication, writing centre theory and practice, and, of course, professional and technical writing research and practice.

At the same time that CATTW/ACPRTS became CASDW/ACR, writing studies researchers and teachers located in writing centres, learning commons, and academic support divisions have formed a new organization—the Canadian Writing Centre Association—that identifies the "territoire" they work in. We invite presentations that investigate the nature of this territory: its administrative aspects, its intellectual locations, and its professional aspirations.

Conference Objectives

For this purpose, the conference organizers invite proposals for papers, panels, roundtables, or workshops that examine writing practices in varying academic, workplace, and global communities. Proposals are also encouraged to examine the implications of these changes for the study and teaching of academic writing, professional writing, and communication.

While we encourage presenters to propose papers from all of these locations in the academy, we are particularly interested in presentations that investigate the conference theme:

- How has CATTW/ACPRTS changed over time as it expanded beyond the original “territoire” of technical writing?
- How does your academic territory or place construct or constrict your teaching or research activities?
- If you teach or research in a writing centre, how does that “territoire” frame your ideas about what writing is and how best to teach it?
- If you teach or research outside of Canada, what territory do you occupy in your institution and to what extent does that reflect a national expression of what it means to teach writing in your country?
- To what extent does your teaching and research reflect the “territoire” where you obtained your academic training (MA, PhD)? If your academic training is in a field different from the department you teach in, how has that cross-disciplinary shift affected your research, teaching, or perspective on writing studies?
- How can learning about current research in other countries spark new ideas or perspectives on research currently being done in Canada? Conversely, in what ways can research conducted in Canada contribute to the development of writing studies in the global community?
- How can the Canadian community of scholars involved in writing studies collaborate with scholars from other nations?
- What is or should be the role of writing studies in the discourse that surrounds global issues, such as environmental issues, war, poverty, economic development?

Presentation and Proposal Formats

The conference organizers value diversity in approaches, perspectives and presentation formats, including 15-20 minute individual papers, 90-minute panels of 3 - 5 speakers, roundtables, or 90-minute workshops.

For individual presentations and panels, we are interested in both research reports and state-of-the-art papers that engage the literature and theories to derive new research questions, agendas, and directions. In either case, proposals should include the research question to be addressed, its significance for advancing research in the field, the conceptual framework and methods or approach used to address the question, and key findings or directions as well as their implications for practice, teaching, or future research. While the proposal itself can be up to 500 words, proposals for individual papers must include a summary of 150 words (+references).

Panel proposals must include a brief (<100 words) description of the panel, its rationale and objectives, as well as brief descriptions of up to 150 words (+ references) of each paper to be presented and discussed on the panel.

Roundtable proposals must raise a provocative, but critical question for the study and teaching of writing, specify the names and contributions of at least 5 individuals who have agreed to participate in the roundtable. Proposals should also outline the rationale for the roundtable, its objectives, and the suggested discussion points. Proposals should not exceed 150 words (+references).

Workshop proposals should provide a 150-word description (+references) of the workshop, its rationale, objectives, research base, facilitators, procedures, and logistical requirements (e.g., computer labs, software, hardware, etc.).

Opportunities for submitting papers to peer-reviewed scholarly publications will be available (more information to follow).

Call for Papers: Next Issue of this Newsletter

New Research Profiles

We would like to invite all graduate students, instructors, untenured assistant professors and researchers new to the field of writing studies to submit one-page profiles of their research interests. If you have a continuing research project underway, we'd also be interested in publishing that, of course, but we'd particularly like to encourage the sharing of new projects by people new to the field.

In the spirit of *Inkshed* as an incubator of new ideas, we think that the publication of these areas of research interest might encourage networking among people doing similar or related research projects, large and small, funded or funding-free. This networking might result in making it easier for people to connect and propose panels for conference presentations and might lead to collaborative work.

So if you have a project on the go, we encourage—no, implore—you to write a profile of the project. If you need a heuristic to get you started, consider the following headings as a way to get started:

- Title of the project/area of investigation
- Research team (if others are already involved)
- Research questions/abstract/scope
- Topics you want to know more about
- How you can be contacted

Deadline: December 1, 2008