

Inkshed

Newsletter of the Canadian Association for the Study of Language and Learning
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This newsletter of the Canadian Association for the Study of Language and Learning (CASLL) provides a forum for its subscribers to explore relationships among research, theory, and practice in language acquisition and language use, particularly in the Canadian context. CASLL membership runs from January 1 to December 31 and includes a subscription to Inkshed. To subscribe, send a cheque, made out to "Inkshed at NSCAD," for \$20 [\$10 for students and the un(der)employed] to the following address:

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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.

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From the Editors' Desktops

Fall isn't really over until you've had the first 50cm snowfall of the year, but since we had one a couple of weeks ago here in London we guess that means we're fully in the grips of Winter. And that makes this newsletter officially late.

As you can see, it is also a combined issue for the Summer and Fall. While it always seems to be a struggle to obtain manuscripts for the newsletter, we wonder if the discussion about the future of Inkshed that Miriam Horne initiated on the CASLL list last week may (ink)shed some light on the current dearth of manuscripts. Attendance at the Gimli conference was down last year; the previous year in Nova Scotia, however, it was quite good. Submissions of manuscripts to this newsletter have tapered off, and that leads us to wonder if this is just a cyclical event or a sign that the Newsletter has outlived its function. Much of the kind of news that the early versions of the newsletter conveyed is now shared on the CASLL list. While it is true that some of the longer pieces—such as Christina Halliday's review of *Personally Speaking* in this issue—would likely never see publication without the Newsletter, alternative publication vehicles (websites, blogs, emailed links) fill some of the functions of the earlier printed publication. The print version of the newsletter seems obsolete.

And yet Carolyn Greco, an instructor in the Writing Program here at Western, was moved to contest or write her own reaction to that when it came up in conversation this fall. Her piece is reprinted in this issue. For Carolyn, print is important, as others have argued in the past. Perhaps the lack of a print version showing up in mailboxes has caused Inksheddors to fail to engage the newsletter in a meaningful way just because it isn't sitting right there when you have a few moments to read it. The response to Miriam Horne's post to CASLL suggests that the community is alive and well and deeply engaged in writing in that medium. However, several posts indicated that the writers were only able to reply after a few days of reading and trying to find a moment to compose something suitable for the list. We wonder if the time demands on them as writing teachers makes it unlikely, if not impossible, that they would write for the newsletter.

Theresa Hyland reflects on another liminal space—the Writing Centre—in her reflective essay in this issue, another example of the kind of text we just don't see on the CASLL exchanges. Susan Drain, 3M Teaching Fellow for 2006, graciously allowed us to reprint her “Statement of Teaching Philosophy.” Carl Leggo names names and tames lines in two poems we are pleased to present.

We would like to extend an invitation to join another incarnation of that eminently liminal Inkshed community in London, ON from May 3-6. The call for papers and details about the conference appear in the last two pages of this issue.

Roger Graves

Heather Graves

Review

Christina Halliday ✉

Review of Spigelman, Candace. (2004). *Personally Speaking: Experience as Evidence in Academic Discourse*. Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Press.

Have you ever read a scholarly book about a scholarly subject and then wondered about the things in the author's past or present life that make them so invested in that subject? I have. Take Candace Spigelman's *Personally Speaking* for example. What about Candace Spigelman, the person, makes the problem of "the personal" in academic writing such a natural subject for her? She provides hints in the book, but not the full story.

I've always been interested in the relationship between personal experiences that take place outside of academic contexts and academic inquiry. How does one inform the other? Recently, I've become interested in how academics represent the relationship between their extra-academic and academic preoccupations in their writing. What are the possibilities for this kind of writing? What are the difficulties? Perhaps my own preoccupation with the personal/scholarly dilemma has to do with the fact that I've been a journal writer since I learned to write, and I've carried this practice into how I make meaning and write in my academic life. For years now I've had two journals: my "research journal" and my "personal journal." In the former I reflect on research ideas and books I've read that are relevant to my intellectual concerns. The latter is a pastiche of my frustrations, fears, questions, and expressions of joy. If you flipped through each journal, you would find that despite my best intentions, the two forms of writing and thinking are not so easily separated—each appears in the other as a momentary flight of expression.

Fascinated by the attraction between personal and academic writing forms, I have published academic articles that allow for their fuller expression, knowing that the end result would be more difficult to gauge as academic research. But despite this difficulty, I can't help myself. I actually find it hard to write academically without letting the personal in, mostly in the rough drafts. And so I search for ways to think about the relationship between these forms. *Personally Speaking: Experience as Evidence in Academic Discourse*, by Candace Spigelman of Pennsylvania State University, has been one pathway on this search.

Spigelman's objective in *Personally Speaking* is to offer a defense for the integration of personal writing as evidence in academic writing. As a result, *Personally Speaking* offers elaborate responses to critiques against the personal in academic writing and somewhat undeveloped rationales for when these forms of discourse should be combined, what the combinations look like, and how they should be evaluated. Given that the intended audience for *Personally Speaking* is higher education teachers, this might be the text's main weakness. Drawing on postmodern theories of the subject in discourse, feminist politicizations of the personal, perspectives on ethnographic methodology, and both ancient and contemporary scholarship in the field of rhetoric and narrative theory, Spigelman crafts elegant explorations of the value of personal writing to the goals of academic inquiry and writing to "reduce anxiety about" and "objections to" blending these discourses (p. 60). Although I learned much from Spigelman's book about the personal/academic writing debate—and how to intelligently think about it—my own vague anxieties didn't go away. In fact, some were made worse by the conclusions she draws.

Spigelman forwards two main arguments in the book to convince the reader that despite critiques against it, there is something to be gained by combining personal writing with academic writing

to form what she calls “personal academic discourse” (p. 3) or “surplus” (p. 92); that is, discourse that combines “different ways of knowing” to effect more challenging and more complex idea development. Both of Spigelman’s main arguments respond to concerns around what happens when university students are encouraged, without proper instruction, to include personal writing in academic writing. They write for personal catharsis, to express a personal opinion, or reveal their secrets (p. 6). Such writing can be read as inappropriately solipsistic or worse, exploitive (p. 17). More importantly for the higher education teacher, such writing is very tricky and maybe impossible to evaluate: “How do we grade a poorly executed essay about a brother killed by a drunk driver? How do we tell a rape victim that her scenic paragraph needs revising?” (p. 17). Writing that involves an instructor in these kinds of dilemmas is not what Spigelman means by personal academic discourse.

Just what does Spigelman mean then? Enter her main arguments for why personal academic discourse is of value and how one should approach formulating it. In Chapter 2, “The Personal is Rhetorical,” Spigelman addresses complaints that “the personal opposes the social” (p. 30) by arguing that the personal “I” in writing should be understood as a “rhetorically forceful construct” that is socially implicated, politically located, and therefore not autonomous and not private. According to Spigelman, writers of personal academic discourse should draw the reader’s attention to the narrating “I” as social construct by representing, in the writing, a process of self-conscious location. This process of self-conscious location should also reference subjectivity as a state of de-stabilization, non-wholeness, and multiplicity. It turns out that an authentic, stable “I” in writing “may be irrelevant to the agency of the rhetorical personal” (p. 49). A destabilized, politically located, complicatedly positioned subject in personal narrative allows readers to become emotionally invested and intellectually interested, because that’s what narrative allows for, without risking naïve identifications on the part of the reader of dangerous exploitations on the part of the writer.

Spigelman offers a seemingly tidy solution to the question of the first-person “I” in personal academic discourse but her solution strikes me as problematic in practice. I am thinking about the kinds of texts students write at the Ontario College of Art & Design and the times that I have seen students attempt to integrate personal writing into their arguments and idea developments. Not all of these instances lent themselves to a “politics of location.” In other words, I think that representing a process of self-conscious location works in a piece of writing that already, in some way, references the politics of representation and a subject’s position in discourse but would read as a contrivance—and as simply not fitting—in other writing forms. Spigelman doesn’t take up this concern because she doesn’t discuss the implications of diverse writing forms, across university disciplines, to her thinking about how personal writing should be combined with academic writing more generally.

In Chapter 3, “Constructing Experience,” Spigelman directs her attention to the dangers of writing “decontextualized,” “culturally unmediated,” “experiential truth” in personal academic discourse (p. 61). Similar to her approach in Chapter 2, Spigelman advocates guiding students to engage the “constructedness” of experience through the writing itself. This is an appropriate methodology because, on a fundamental level, we have no access to “real” experience or the “truth.” Every personal experience is already mediated by language and culture and every recounting of the experience is necessarily, and at least in part, fictive. Spigelman proposes that students should be mentored to think of personal writing in academic discourse as recent scholars think of autobiography “as both an art of memory and an art of imagination” (Paul Eakin as quoted in Spigelman, p. 67). This means allowing students to fictionalize, where it makes sense

to, their narratives of personal events. Spigelman includes the example of a student whom she coached to approach his own personal story as a kind of fiction:

I could help him develop his essay by asking questions about his fictive narrator rather than focusing on his actual experiences: What did the narrator think as he recounted his childhood in Spain and in America? What was the narrator implying about the loneliness of childhood and the man he had become? Because the narrator was not Robert, or perhaps a different version of Robert, we worked on the writer's stylistic project of fulfilling the narrator's purposes. (p. 71)

In this example, the student is being encouraged to give up some of his own emotional investment in the truth and authenticity of his personal story through disavowing his place as narrator and fictionalizing some of his experiences.

I have a number of concerns with this development in Spigelman's thesis. Spigelman is right to point out that acknowledging the constructedness of experience in personal writing allows students to formulate more detailed, more complex, and more interesting stories. But what are the limits and implications here? What of the student that creates personal writing that is all fiction for a personal academic writing assignment? Does such a student achieve the goal of presenting a non-solipsistic, thoughtfully contextualized, politicized, and scrutinized writing subject if the writing subject she presents is a complete fiction? And what is lost for students when they are detached from the personal stories they narrate in academic writing? What did Robert feel when Spigelman was guiding him in the way she describes in the above long quote from the book? I suspect he might have felt uncomfortable to have a teacher manipulate his sense of agency and authorship in that way. Spigelman doesn't adequately tackle these questions.

Nor does she successfully address another, more fundamental question that relates to her position in Chapter 2. Can we read a personal story without attributing some truth to the story itself and authenticity to the person recounting it? Is there danger in approaching personal stories as fictions? Yes, there is, and Spigelman refers to this very issue in Chapter 3 when she points out that "the survivors of the Holocaust have crucial reasons for fighting to preserve its events as real and not to allow them to lapse into legend or ... lie" (Douglas Hesse, as quoted in Spigelman, p. 75). Overall, the crucial question of readership, and the teacher-reader as evaluator, is missing from Spigelman's book. How can a postsecondary teacher think through the complexities of grading a student sample of personal academic writing when reading truth and authenticity into this writing might be inescapable, despite a politics of location and despite efforts to reveal experiential "constructedness"? What are the implications for a teacher's own subject position, within the classroom and within the institution, when he has sensitively evaluated an entirely fictional personal story in a piece of academic writing? These are practical problems with letting students write personally that needed further investigation in *Personally Speaking*.

In Chapter 4, "Valuing Personal Evidence," and Chapter 5, "Teaching Personal Academic Argument," Spigelman focuses more closely on the integrity of personal writing as argument and evidence in academic contexts and returns to some of the recommendations she puts forward in Chapters 2 and 3 to offer more practical teaching examples and therefore contextualize her already made assertions. In *Personally Speaking*, Spigelman courageously takes on a subject that is so utterly complex as to require a whole series of books on the subject, perhaps not just by an academic or academics in the field of rhetoric and writing, but also education, philosophy, and literature. For those interested in exploring the threshold where differences between the personal

and the intellectual both reveal themselves and elide, *Personally Speaking* is a good, if imperfect, introduction.

I'd relish their earthy, papery smell

Carolyn Greco ✍

Roger asked me to write this note regarding a conversation that he and I had in his office the other day re. the Inkshed newsletter.

I mailed my membership to Inkshed to receive the newsletter last February. To date I have not received the journal. I wrote to your membership chair after a move last summer to inquire why I hadn't gotten the journal *in the mail*.

I was informed it didn't come in the mail: It was an online journal. As of today's date, I have not read the journal.

I can't tell you how disappointed I am that a small, thin, coarse-papered publication has not been delivered to my home. I wanted to celebrate my name on the envelope, tear the brown wrapper off and dance with it in my living room. There was something about holding the paper journal in my hand that would have bequeathed my position (Part-time Writing Instructor at UWO) a sense of belonging.

The word I used in Roger's office was "legitimacy."

I don't feel like a prof. Seeing other instructors (and writing experts') articles in print would have helped me to think that I belonged. That we shared a camaraderie.

I'm not sure where my disappointment lies. Maybe because I'm late to enter the profession at almost 50-years. Maybe because I battle technology; it's a struggle for me to embrace WebCT or the internet. I don't *want* to read the journal off my screen. (Do I confess I don't have a TV or cable? I reward each day with a book before bed). Downloading and printing a copy was only an option a month ago when a friend gave me a new printer. Maybe I fight the technology and the age. Had I entered the profession 20 years ago, I'd have a stack of old Inksheds molding in my garage.

I'd relish their earthy, papery smell.

Life on the Fringe: The Writing Centre as a Liminal Space

Theresa Hyland ✍

I believe firmly in the value of the position of the Writing Centre (WC) as a liminal space—a space “in between” the academic world of professors, standards and marks and the world of students who are struggling and cooperating with each other in learning how to toe the academic line with their writing. When, occasionally, I have learned through our Writing Listserv, that some WCs have been threatened with cutbacks or closure, I have nodded in sage agreement that some administrators just don’t understand what a valuable service we perform. Until a few weeks ago, however, I never assumed that my WCs academic liminality would become physical liminality and how that would affect my view of this position within academia.

I am Director of a WC in a small Liberal Arts College with a total population of just over 1,000 students. I employ four student peer tutors and five professional writing tutors and together, we offer about 30 hours of writing instruction appointments per week along with occasional customized writing workshops. Last year the WC filled 496 appointments and saw another 196 students in customized workshops across a range of programmes: Philosophy, Political Science, Interdisciplinary Studies, International and Comparative Studies, English, and Chinese Literature.

It seems to me obvious, then, that the function we perform is a valuable one. A number of students come to the WC repeatedly over the course of the academic year. We know that students’ “aha” moments in the WC have been translated into well articulated insights when those students come back to us proudly proclaiming how well they have done in their submitted essays. The value of our service to the college is also reflected in the space we are allowed to use for the WC and the resources that have been funded by the college. When we ask the Dean to hire more tutors, she usually complies with the request. When we needed a dedicated room for the WC, we were given a large airy room with picture windows overlooking the university common area. It contains couches and two long tables at which we hold our writing appointments, a bookshelf full of handbooks, two computers and about 40 different handouts that we give to the students as needed. We have been funded to publish our own writing handbook and have numerous copies of that on hand at the Centre.


Yet, there is a fly in the ointment. The WC has been asked to share the space we use with other departments at the college when they wish to use it as an access area to a large function room next door. This is usually okay since functions take place on the weekend, and we are there from Monday to Friday. However, two weeks ago, on Monday morning, I arrived at the WC to find my tutor sitting in the midst of the leavings from a function that had occurred on Saturday afternoon and hadn’t yet been cleaned up. The tables we use for our appointments were covered in linen table clothes. There were used cups, saucers, and plates all over the place (on the floor and on sofas, as well as on the tables). There were plates of two-day old cakes, pitchers of soured milk, and half-full coffee carafes sharing the table with the written script that the student and tutor were working on. The smell was horrendous, and of course, there was nowhere to sit and write amid the mess. I was particularly concerned because people had entered the locked space where I had quite openly (and incorrectly) stored student records and performance sheets. I complained about the lack of warning about the use of the space, and the mess to the College Administrator, and was immediately admonished by my Principal. The gist of her rebuke was directed at the fact that I had permanently “co-opted” the space for the Writing Centre by not clearing it for use by other departments over the weekend, and that I had therefore violated the terms of our agreement for

use of that space. It was her position that I should not store ANYTHING in that space, and I had no right to ask for prior notice of alternate uses for the space because it wasn't mine to claim. After a bit of negotiation, a lockable cabinet was purchased, and we are allowed to store all of our books and papers in it when the space is not functioning as a Writing Centre.

A liminal space can be both a physical and mental space where change takes place. For many cultures, the liminal space is an area outside of the common space where candidates go to mark the rite of passage from childhood to adulthood. Time spent in that space may be marked by fear, frustration, and confusion as candidates undergo tests to prove their readiness to accept the responsibilities of adulthood. Vygotsky uses the metaphor of the liminal space to explore how people learn. He coined the term "Zone of Proximal Development" to describe that mental space between what a person has learned and what that person needs to learn in order to complete a particular task. He argued that a person can best bridge this zone through conversations with a mentor. To call the WC a liminal academic space is appropriate, I tell my tutors, because from this position (neither inside nor outside academia), we push the student writers we see to take risks with their writing, to explore their own assumptions which guide their choice of topics, and to question their position in the universe and within a particular course of study. We challenge them to gather evidence to support their opinions, no matter how unorthodox. We encourage them to confront the contradictions and frustrations that the process of writing to learn can entail. The first rule in writing, we tell them, is that there are no rules! From this position of freedom we can help them without grading or judging them. We have the best job in the world, I declare!

The key question, then, is this: is this physical liminality necessary as a statement of the function of the WC, or is it simply marginalization by another name? Perhaps the WC cannot enjoy the benefits of being liminal to the college's academic functions without being liminal physically too. We tell the students that we build obsolescence into our sessions because our ultimate goal is for students to learn how to write for themselves. If our space is permanent like a classroom, don't we become just another set of academic teachers? So it could be that the impermanence of the WC's physical location is its saving grace—it's why the students continue to come to us and use our services. When a student walks through those doors and asks, "Is this the Writing Centre?" perhaps the best answer we can give them is, "It is if you want it to be." On the other hand, liminality is not meant to be a permanent state. Children eventually become adults, and the Zone of Proximal Development is bridged when new understanding occurs. In both cases, the candidates know that the uncomfortable state will pass. Perhaps the permanence of the physical impermanence of our WC will lead to its eventual demise.

Statement of Teaching Philosophy

Susan Drain 
3M Teaching Fellow 2006

I am a teacher of writing, because the teaching of writing is the best teaching one can do. I am a teacher of writing, not because I don't love the literature I was first trained to study and teach, but because writing gets more radically at learning than even reading does. (I am a teacher of writing even when I am ostensibly teaching literature.) I am a teacher of writing, because I value language and its intricate relationships with thought, with personal expression, and with social context. I am a teacher of writing, not because I love red ink, but because I love precision, or the endless struggle to approximate it. I am a teacher of writing, even though it's damned hard work—no, perhaps because it is damned hard work. Teachers of writing may burn out, but if they have ever been any good, they never become dull automata. Every encounter with a student draft demands a different approach, involves a different challenge, presents a different engagement. I am teacher of writing because through writing, our students eventually learn to do without their teachers.

When I first went to university—the first generation of my family—I found everything exhilarating. Lectures were fascinating, as professors presented their structured theses in polished phrases. Tutorials were fascinating too: students struggled to articulate a view, and then the professor intervened and clarity was achieved, and I scribbled notes before the insight vanished. There seemed a huge gulf between what those professors did and what I might do: it seemed to me that the difficult was easy to them. Surely, I thought, they did not labour over their books the way I did my essays. Writing literature was hard work, that I knew. Yeats said it memorably:

I said, "A line will take us hours maybe;
Yet if it does not seem a moment's thought,
Our stitching and unstitching has been naught.
Better go down upon your marrow-bones
And scrub a kitchen pavement, or break stones
Like an old pauper, in all kinds of weather;
For to articulate sweet sounds together
Is to work harder than all these, and yet
Be thought an idler by the noisy set
Of bankers, schoolmasters, and clergymen
The martyrs call the world." ("Adam's Curse," p. 4-14)

That all serious writing demands such labour was not clear to me. It was not until my undergraduate degree was nearly over that I began to see critical ideas being worked out and worked through, sometimes on paper, sometimes in conversation that was by times tentative, by times argumentative, but still collaborative. The results were not always sweet sounds, but they were sound thoughts, and it was both reassuring and disappointing to know that stitching would always be accompanied by unstitching even ripping out.

I am glad when students still find university exhilarating, despite the burden of high fees and part-time work and career pressures of a sort that I don't remember. One of the reasons I love the Mount is that we have many mature students who seem more likely than traditional students these days to immerse themselves in the experience, to be "uncool" in their enthusiasm for what they

are encountering. They seem more ready to accept that it is going to cost them more than money to study at university: that they will need to knit their brows and stitch and unstitch their texts if they are really to learn. And they seem to grasp more quickly, perhaps because they have seen changes in their own lives, that education is more than acquiring a credential or a passport to employment, and that “lifelong learning” is more than a phrase.

Whether my students are keen or calculating in their approach to their work, I see my task as the same. Writing, I want them to see, is not just a means of delivering a message to a passive recipient nor just a method of evaluation. It is a means of developing and challenging and revising ideas, and understanding that knowledge is often contingent and tentative and constructed, rather than absolute and fixed and given. Writing is hard thinking, and I don’t want to disguise that fact. It makes my head ache, I confess. It makes me shout out loud when I get something, and groan aloud when I don’t. I (almost) never assign an exercise that I don’t do with my students. They need to see that real thinking is messy, even for professors. Hard, messy, exasperating, and (occasionally) exhilarating. I like to consult with students over their drafts, because they can see a different kind of struggle how a reader has to work to grasp a writer’s meaning, how many ways there are to misinterpret, to be misled or to be obtuse. We often encourage our students to take risks, while remaining comfortable ourselves, but to teach writing is to take risks. It’s bad enough to have your students see you struggle, but to have them see you stuck is worse. Yet that may be enough to get them to stretch a little further themselves, when they see that struggling and being stuck isn’t fatal to anything but vanity.

My philosophy of teaching is necessarily political. Whenever North American universities have become more democratic, that is, more accessible to students from more diverse backgrounds, universities express dismay about those students’ literacy. It pains me to see the means of learning becoming a means of gatekeeping, just as it pains me to see writing relegated to the academic periphery, its scholarship underappreciated, its work assigned more often than not to part-time faculty and undervalued in matters of tenure and promotion. It is difficult, too, to steer a course between “upholding” standard English—that is, white middle-class dialect—and “validating” other dialects as the rich and complex languages they are. Why should I insist that white middle-class English be the only language of intellectual discourse? But how can I deny someone who has traditionally been excluded from the socio-economic benefits of the middle class mastery of one of the means of “passing”? The answer I have found is the rhetorician’s: the more tools and strategies and languages we have at our command, the more choices we can make. We can choose to use non-standard dialect without embarrassment in contexts where it is appropriate, and we can use a standard dialect where failure to do so would impinge upon our effectiveness.

I had something to say about the politics of writing in my speech to the presidents of the Atlantic Universities when I accepted my regional award in 2003. I thought I stirred the air a little, but I deny that there was any connection between that speech and Hurricane Juan a few days later!

It sometimes seems to me that all my teaching comes down to two points, and that if I succeed in these, I have done all that one can reasonably hope to do.

First is a query—prompting a particular kind of curiosity. I help students to ask, as they read and write and interpret the world, “Is this a matter of description or prescription?” In writing, we call the first “exposition” (explaining what is) and the second “persuasion” (arguing for what should be). How easy it is, however, to take the former for the latter. Neoclassical critics did it when they took Aristotle’s description of the characteristics of effective drama, and turned it into the

rules of the unities—thus labeling Shakespeare a poor playwright for his repeated violation of those rules. Driving a wedge of inquiry between *what is* and *what should be*, between description and prescription, is a way to open up possibilities of what *might* be—now, that is good teaching!

The second point is a similar wedge of inquiry. Writing teachers often encourage students to ask “who, what, why, when, where and how?” as journalists do, but the most important question I think, is “So what?” My students both dread and enjoy this challenge—what is the significance of what you have just observed? What difference does it make?

I thank my nominator and my university for this opportunity to ask “So what?” of my own career.

... It's certain there is no fine thing

Since Adam's fall but needs much labouring.

(Yeats, “Adam's Curse,” p. 22-23)

Naming the Poet

Carl Leggo ✍

as a poet I seek to be
an anarchic author
babbling barbaric
cacophonous chorus
divine daemonic
ebullient eccentric
fragrant fiction
galvanic glossarist
heretic hermeneut
illegible iconoclast
jovial juggler
keening kazoo
ludic lunatic
mad mystic
narcissistic narrator
ontological obscurant
playful pedagogue
querulous questioner
rhetorical rudiment
splitting subject
textual tease
ubiquitous utterance
versatile verbalist
whining warbler
xenogenetic xylographer
yapping yodeller
zealous zany

A Tangle of Lines

Carl Leggo ✍

we need a poetic line, not a prosaic line,
a line that plays with possibilities of space,
draws attention to itself, contravenes convention,
will not parade from left to right margins,
back and forth, as if there is nowhere else
to explore, knows instead lived experience
knows little of linearity since the only linearity
we know is the linearity of the sentence which
waddles across the page like lines of penguins,
sentenced by the sentence to the lie of linearity,
chimeric sense of order, born of rhetoric, and so
instead the artist weaves her way in tangled lines,
knows wholeness in holes and gaps, in fragments
that refract light with fractal abandon, and savours
the possibilities of prepositions and conjunctions

Inkshed 24 Call for Papers ✍

Alternative Discourses and Disciplinary Codes: Challenging, Cataloguing, and Reflecting on Reading and Writing Practices

What is the place of alternative discourses in the academy? How do they contribute to learning? When and where do alternative discourses conflict with disciplinary codes and communities of practice? And when does this conflict become transgressive and a violation? Are one discipline's codes another discipline's transgressions?

We invite you to submit proposals for presentations that take these and other questions about writing and learning that is alternative to disciplinary codes, exemplary of disciplinary codes, or seen as transgressions against these codes. Presentations that help define just what constitutes disciplinary codes and practices would also help identify what counts as alternative and what counts as transgressive.

Inkshed has always been a “working” conference that encourages alternative, if not completely transgressive, presentations. We encourage group presentations; demonstrations; activities; and imaginative or creative readings. Participants are strongly encouraged to “Inkshed” or respond in writing to presentations and to share these responses.

Deadline for Proposals: February 15, 2007

For more information, contact the Inkshed 24 Organizing Committee (Heather Graves, Theresa Hyland, and Roger Graves) c/o Roger Graves (rgraves3@uwo.ca; 519-661-2111x85785).

Information about the Conference

Inkshed 24 will be held in London, ON May 3 – 6 at Huron University College at the University of Western Ontario. There will be a range of accommodations to choose from, including \$40/night for a single residence room at Huron University College (shared bathroom) and \$106/night at Windermere Manor (<http://www.windermere Manor.com/>), a stately hotel right on Western's campus and a 10 minute walk from the meeting rooms.

We will offer a one-day registration for Saturday with an optional evening banquet.

Attractions of the conference, in addition to the stimulating presentations, will include the following:

- key note speaker Peter Vandenburg of DePaul University, Chicago, IL, talking about his work with multicultural rhetorics and the rhetoric of graffiti;
- a reading by noted Canadian author, Joan Barfoot, writer-in-residence at the University of Western Ontario;
- a book exhibit featuring scholarly and textbook publications by Canadian academics
- a trip to a preview performance of ??? at the Stratford Festival

Send us your titles! ✍

In support of our plan to have a book exhibit at Inkshed 24, we are inviting all of you to send us publication information for any new (say, in the last four or five years) books that you have published: academic, instructional (i.e., textbooks), or others. We would like to display books by Inksheddors (and others) at the conference. We would also welcome suggestions you have for books written by others that will add to the display.

Please email us at hgraves@rogers.com or rgraves3@uwo.ca.