

ACCUTE Newsletter

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Getting to Know the HSSFC
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PLEASE NOTE:

The Membership Form included in the June issue of the *ACCUTE Newsletter* contained incorrect amounts for membership dues. Dues for 1996 are \$75 for regular members, \$40 for student/underemployed/retired faculty. We regret any inconvenience this may have caused.

Update on the Merger of the Learned Societies

The business of the Canadian Federation for the Humanities (CFH) and the Social Science Federation of Canada (SSFC) does not normally produce the *Sturm un Drang* witnessed in the administrative turmoil of emerging nation states, but their imminent merger into a new Humanities and Social Sciences Federation of Canada (HSSFC) promises to have no little dramatic import on the way Canadian scholars conduct their academic lives.

In the wake of SSHRC's decision to eliminate core funding of the Federations by 1998, the Executives of both CFH and SSFC started (in March of 1995) to look at a possible sharing of resources. CFH has 32 societies; ACCUTE is the largest, with roughly 660 full and 450 student members. SSFC has 24 associations, 6 with more than 1000 full members. CFH has several societies with fewer than 100. For 1995-96, the CFH Budget is projected at \$509,610; for SSFC, the Budget figure is \$612,500.

Last March both Federations gave approval in principle for the establishment of a centrally-organized congress for the social sciences and humanities to replace the current Learned Societies Conference. The plan included the amalgamation of the two federations into a single more cost-effective body that would speak in a unified voice on behalf of the social sciences and humanities. A single newsletter, a single financial audit, and lower costs for telephone/postage, for example, would result from such a move, as well as the elimination of administrative overlap and duplication, and perhaps better lobbying and public awareness.

In October the Joint Advisory Committee issued its report. The Committee of six was chaired by Dr. Claude Corbo (rector, U of Québec à Montréal), and

included ACCUTE member Judith Scherer Herz of Concordia University. This report proposes a single mechanism for decision making and governance, one administrative structure, and one budget. Starting in 1998-99, HSSFC (FCEHSS in French) plans to operate on annual revenues of about \$400,000. The new organization plans to be fully operational as of 1 April 1996; membership will be limited to associations which have at least 100 members, but current associations under 100 will be protected by a grandfather clause.

HSSFC will have a General Assembly (meeting once a year in the fall, beginning 1996), a Board of Directors (meeting twice a year, once in winter and once at the time of the General Assembly), and an Executive Committee (meeting three times each year, once at the Learned Societies Conference). To the General Assembly each society will send one representative, as will each university; there will also be individual members (three elected each year). The Board will have twenty-four members, elected for two years, including four representatives from societies of 650+ members, four from those between 225 and 650, and three from societies with fewer than 225 members. There will be five university representatives.

This governing structure is to be reviewed in five years' time. The Aid to Scholarly Publications Programme will be kept and protected. There is in place a Transition Team, and Interim Board of Directors. In 1995-96, the combined revenues for CFH and SSFC total \$1.2 million (nearly \$650,000 of that is from SSHRC); starting in 1998-99, HSSFC plans to operate on annual revenues of about \$400,000. After 1998-99, the new organization could hope to obtain project funding through SSHRC.

The new organization is intent on advocating the concerns of both founding groups. It plans to assist in the formulation

of research policies and to facilitate the work of individual scholars and groups of scholars. As the fledgling HSSFC faces meaner and leaner times, it will clearly need, and value, the support and input of individuals and societies both.

Getting with the Programme

by Peter Babiak
York University

Friedrich Engels once said that the working class is constantly confronted with a "haunting fear of unemployment." No doubt the same can be said for those of us pursuing Ph.D.s in English. If the figures and forecasts are correct -- if, as Shirley Neuman reported in these pages last year, "by the early part of the century approximately 15% of current positions in the professoriate will have disappeared and only slightly over 50% of Canadian Ph.D. graduates will find full-time continuing appointments in Canadian colleges and universities" ("The Future of Canadian Graduate Studies in English: Ethics and Goals", December 1994) -- then we have good reason to be scared.

It has become a commonplace to concede that budgetary restraints and other economic pressures have reduced the number of jobs possible in the sector for which we are being trained. Of the proposed solutions in circulation, however, few aim to adjust the scope of graduate studies in English or extend the mandate of organizations like ACCUTE to keep step with economic conditions. And yet, these are good places to start addressing the job problem.

In order to make their students more competitive on the job market, most graduate programmes in Canada offer professional development seminars on matters like securing scholarships, writing effective

proposals, publishing essays, networking and professional etiquette, putting together a c.v., and interviewing. Theoretic objections to the cult of professionalism notwithstanding, in these tough times it would be highly unethical if a department were not doing everything in its power to equip its students with these occupational skills.

Nonetheless, a *caveat* needs to be entered against the idea that professionalization is a solution to the problem. Given the oversupply of English Ph.D.s and the falling demand for college and university teachers of English, schemes which merely increase the skills level of all graduate students are inflected with a brutal capitalist logic because they only serve to intensify an already crowded field of competition. Professionalization helps universities because it provides them with a large and therefore cheap supply of skilled labour, but it is small comfort to the large number of students who are statistically slated for unemployment.

Theoretically speaking, the best way for graduate departments to make a dent in the job problem would be to adopt a policy of full employment for all grad students. They could start by immediately reducing the number of candidates admitted into Ph.D. programmes, though this is perhaps not a viable policy option for administrators to pursue in a period of cutbacks, given that graduate admissions significantly boost university incomes. Alternatively, demand for English Ph.D.s could be increased by introducing work-reduction or work-sharing schemes. Perhaps departments could lobby universities to this end? Or perhaps they could promote early retirement packages, upgrade sessional and teaching-assistant workloads into new full-time positions, or -- more drastically -- make job security contingent on teaching and research

performance and thereby open jobs currently protected by tenure.

Of course, there are more modest steps that can be taken. To begin with, graduate programmes could institute a policy of informing all potential and incoming students about employment prospects in the field so students know exactly what they are getting themselves into before they sign themselves to half a decade of study. More importantly, departments could acknowledge for once and for all that an increasing number of their students will end up working in nonacademic jobs and adapt their curricula to address these new requirements. To this end, they could offer courses which provide marketable skills beyond the range of purely literary knowledge, perhaps something along the lines of the rhetoric and professional writing components available at the University of Waterloo, or a practical reorientation of existing course work in critical and cultural theory to fields like public administration, social and community services, or marketing, publishing and communications. Barring the introduction of a more useful curriculum, departments could at least offer consultation services on finding work outside the university. Along with job placement personnel they could facilitate long-term liaisons between students and prospective employers, market their students' skills to local industry, and arrange internships for those interested in teaching or researching at another academic level or finding gainful employment in the private sector.

Should a commitment to full employment take precedence over the commitment to maintaining the integrity of the discipline? Would students intent on careers teaching and researching, say Renaissance poetry or postcolonial literature want to share seminar space and department resources with students aiming for careers

as speech writers or copy editors? Granted, nobody wants to see graduate schools turned into work-training and job placement centres, especially if the purchase on job security is corporate sponsorship of the curriculum. On the other hand, by continuing to train half of their students for imagined careers as college and university teachers and literary critics, by operating under the assumption that structural employment is a natural effect of higher education, departments are shirking their responsibility to all but those who will be fortunate enough to land a job in the professoriate. In so doing they surrender to the right-wing habit of introducing *laissez-faire* into all manner of social relations. What kind of moral bankruptcy is at work here?

ACCUTE should also be doing more about the job crisis. To begin with, it should assume responsibility for preserving the ethical dimension of the profession and, to this end, actively prompt departments to better meet the career needs of their students, as well as publicly criticize those which do not. In the June 1995 issue of the *Newsletter*, Norman Feltes suggested that "[w]e should perhaps think a little bit about ACCUTE as a 'society.'" Though any proposal which champions collectivist thinking is sure to attract criticism for being some kind of antiquated socialist ideal, I think this is an excellent point. Conceived under the rubric of a "society" -- or better still, a social movement -- ACCUTE should extend its mandate beyond representing those who already have job security and advocate on behalf of its contract faculty and short-term graduate student membership. On this point, the association could take its cue from progressive sectors in the Canadian trade union movement which have initiated retraining and transition programmes to help unemployed and laid-off workers cope with the effects of downsizing and restructuring. For instance, it could help organize a national

information network for unemployed Ph.D.s or a peer-support group about to embark on job searches. It could provide time and space at annual meetings for grad students and faculty members to brainstorm about what can be done to increase our chances of getting jobs, or maybe it could take a lesson from the MLA convention and bring in advisers to counsel job seekers. Perhaps the *Newsletter* could even initiate a collective inquiry into the possibilities of alternative career choices for Ph.D.s. With over 1000 members, there must be lots of information out there that grad students would find helpful.

Is all of this too idealistic? Unreasonable? We all know that ACCUTE, like all scholarly associations in Canada, is in the process of losing its SSHRC funding. This is a huge problem. But so are the apprehensions that grad students live with every day. The fear of imminent unemployment, coupled with plunging levels of funding and inflating workloads: could anything be more dispiriting than the present state of affairs? Rather than display ataraxy in the face of seemingly unalterable economic cycles and demographic rifts, perhaps ACCUTE could show some leadership and start advocating for changes on behalf of those of us who are otherwise deprived of the political clout that comes from being seen and heard by others.

Grad Rep's Column

Grad Students: On to Brock

*by Jackie Heslop, Victoria
and Jason Potts, York*

While we understand the urge expressed by Stephen Bonnycastle to "revitalize the centre" of our association, we are worried about the exclusions master

narratives always necessitate. As has been pointed out, divisiveness, in this time of external threats to our preservation, leaves us vulnerable. However, if colonialism has taught us anything, it is that when we are forced to rally together we risk imposing on ourselves an exclusionary homogeneity. While we need to present a united front, let us not at the same time prematurely constrain ourselves to a false totality by effacing the differences that constitute our own community. While we want here to caution against the exclusionary gestures of grand narratives, we nevertheless recognize that working on the local or specialized level does not preclude our coming together to learn from one another. Moreover, if English Studies is itself becoming less "centred," more diverse, then it seems to us that a forum for sharing our special concerns is all the more vital. We are inspired by the promising discussion initiated by Norm Feltes and Len Findlay to confront what indeed seem to be different priorities for students and faculty in our organization. The concerns of Canadian college and university teachers of English are, given the "crises" well rehearsed elsewhere, bound to be different now than when ACCUTE was first instituted. The ACCUTE executive's recent intervention in the policy forming decisions of the B.C. University-Colleges is instructive. The tenuous place held by the faculty at these untried institutions is indicative of the kind of uncertainty we face as grad students. In short, the centre no longer holds. It is crucial, therefore, that we become not only aware of, but also an active part of, the mandate and activities of ACCUTE. We not only have much to learn from our more experienced members, but we need to be ready to intervene when confronted by contingencies none of us have yet had to face. Instead of denying our divergences in some totalizing narrative,

then, we need to see if we can work with, rather than against, our differences.

If there is any central concern we need rally around at this time, it seems to us, it would be this evident divisiveness itself. Professor Feltes wonders whether "our grad members doubt faculty commitment to alleviating their plight." To our knowledge, ACCUTE's committed responsiveness to grad student issues has never been in doubt; where our question lies is in the extent to which we -- all of us -- have fully identified our plight. The question we want to broadly address here is the extent to which graduate programmes in English, in this time of crisis, are making themselves "accountable," not to the public sphere, but to their students.

Looking back at the text of the annual grad students meeting we both attended in Montreal last summer we are struck by the fact that most of the points raised at the meeting are irrelevant to many of our fellow graduate students. Hiring practices, professional development and tenure will never be pertinent issues for many ACCUTE members. Even if every graduate student constructs the ideal C.V. and teaching dossier, according to our reading of the demographic survey conducted by Michael Keefer last year, somewhere around 50% to 65% can expect a tenure-track position. This is not to mention the fact that many of our student members are in M.A. programmes and have no intention of continuing on to the Ph.D.

We are encouraged by the call to graduate students to be part of the community that engages the "political, theoretical and professional struggles" which ACCUTE faces, but since most programmes recognize only one outcome as the goal of a graduate degree in English, we wonder how many of our colleagues might become equal participants in this discussion. If it is true, as Professor Findlay observes, that graduate students attend the annual conference more

for the "intellectual content" than for the "organizational form," then we need to examine how graduate programmes might make structural changes to accommodate individuals who share concerns similar to those held by the members of ACCUTE but who will not enter the tenure-track stream. In her summary of the CACE conference on graduate studies in the December, 1994 newsletter, Shirley Neuman suggested that only Waterloo had made structural changes which support "alternative" outcomes for graduate students; a year later this situation does not appear to have changed. Somewhere between relinquishing our programmes to the demands of a skills-based job market and our resistance to the rhetoric of instrumentality teeter an increasing glut of unemployed grad students. We have a responsibility to make some pragmatic responses to this situation. And if our community is to remain accessible at a time in which tuitions and the cost of living are on the rise, teaching assistantships remain constant and scholarship money runs scarce, the sacrifices involved in obtaining a grad degree must be made commensurate with outcomes. As our scholarly discourse becomes sensitive to questions of difference (race, class, sex, gender), our political and pragmatic metadiscourse needs to confront the ironic possibility that only the already privileged can afford the luxury of sitting in a grad classroom discussing "difference."

Let us then make Brock the forum in which we not only present our difficulties (now well known), but also begin to discuss the means by which alternative opportunities might be created and existing spaces strengthened. Perhaps then graduate students can participate in revitalizing the "centre." And we can do this without waiting for alleviation from "above," and without the sense of despair in evidence at the meeting in Montreal. We therefore encourage as many

graduate students as possible begin to make plans to attend this year's meetings in Brock or, for those who are unable to travel, to write to Jackie with their suggestions or concerns in order to begin what we hope will become an on-going discussion of graduate studies in English and its successes and failures in forging a community in which all members, their differences withstanding, can participate.

Meanwhile, we ask that campus grad reps forward any pertinent information about their graduate programme's commitment to "alternative" outcomes. A usenet group that's in the works will provide a place for open discussion of this and other issues pertinent to English graduate students in Canada. Your campus grad reps will soon be letting you know how to subscribe.

The 1996 Conference

ACCUTE will hold its annual conference from Thursday, May 23 to Sunday, May 26 at Brock University in St. Catharines. Located on the outskirts of town, Brock enjoys ultra-modern facilities and a beautiful, spacious setting, with lovely panoramic views, high on the Niagara Escarpment. Housing will be in on-campus residences or nearby motels. There will be two tours available -- "A Taste of Niagara" (to the Falls, and then to local vineyards/wineries), and a "Heritage Tour" (Fort George, Brock's Monument, etc.). Tickets for the Shaw Festival in Niagara-on-the-Lake will also be available. Toronto airport is 1 hour away. Details regarding ground transport, shuttlebuses, discount car rentals, etc. will follow soon in the package winging its way to you from the organizers of the Learned's.

President's Report

On November 10 in Vancouver I attended a meeting organized by the chair of our Committee on Professional Concerns, Herbert Rosengarten, to discuss the continuing problems in B.C.'s conversion of five community colleges into 'university colleges' which grant university-level degrees. In attendance were representatives from the English departments of all five colleges and the chairs of the three university English departments which have for the past few years been mentoring the new university college degree programs and awarding degrees to their graduates. Participating by means of a long-distance telephone connection was the chair of English at the recently established University of Northern British Columbia.

All of those present expressed, in their own ways, uneasiness or apprehension about how the present skills and labour-market emphases of the B.C. government could damage the humanities degree programs which the colleges had developed. All also had concern that the hastily and pragmatically assembled governance structures of the university colleges, with in some cases little role for faculty in the making of academic decisions, and in all cases no provision for external academic review of academic degree programs, could leave the colleges' academic programs vulnerable, once the colleges become autonomously degree-granting (possibly as early as next year), to short-sighted decisions by administrators who lack knowledge of

current North American academic standards and practices. But the university college faculty at the meeting were also very sensitive to the positive ways in which some of their departments differ from those at most universities – particularly in the combining of academic work with employment training, and in the offering of ‘applied’ degrees.

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What has been happening in B.C. government views of post-secondary education is in some ways not much different from what has been occurring in other provinces. As unemployment has risen among those with high school diplomas, and remained low among those with university degrees, a conviction has grown that more people need “access” to post-secondary education. As the technology sectors of the economy have become more visible, with employers complaining about shortages of technically skilled workers, a belief has grown that skills-training, closely coordinated with the needs of a “labour market,” may hold the key to future provincial prosperity. As provincial government incomes have shrunk, a belief also has grown that increases in the numbers of post-secondary students and a new emphasis on employment-focused post-secondary “training” should be both achievable with no increase (or even a cut) in provincial funding. Such things are to be achieved through the provincial expenditure of rhetoric rather than money: rhetoric designed to bring about ideological change in the postsecondary teacher. The teacher is to become someone who welcomes larger classes, “flexible learning formats,” and curricula that are “aligned with [the] economic, labour market, and social needs,” and who “focus[es] on teaching and learning as their principal endeavour.” Where B.C. differs from most other provinces is in the detail and elaborateness with which this vision of education is already being

articulated.

The quotations I’ve included in the preceding paragraph are all from a document entitled “Charting a Course: a Strategic Plan for the Future of British Columbia’s College, Institute, and Agency System,” issued last month by B.C.’s Ministry of Skills, Training, and Labour – the ministry responsible in B.C. since 1993 for all postsecondary education. The name of the Ministry, as Herbert Rosengarten remarks in a recent letter, “says it all.” In this document the Ministry is preoccupied with “more emphasis on relevance,” “a better blend of the benefits of a traditional liberal education and vocationally-oriented skills,” “greater input” by industry “into course and program development as well as greater involvement with faculty,” with eliminating what it sees as “the historic gap between ‘education’ and training’,” with education that meets “labour market demands,” and with “harmonization” of postsecondary institutions to provide “seamless learning” through “easy transition between institutions.” But the document also reveals the Ministry’s insecurity about its own attraction to skills education. It laments that specific skills currently go out of date after seven years. It reflects that in such rapidly changing circumstances many “higher-skill, higher-paying jobs” will go to “those who have the ability to solve problems, plan and use knowledge to further the goals [of their employer].” It comments that “Relevance in learning is more than simply job preparation. Relevance also relates to enabling learners to appreciate cultural differences, to interpret their place and purpose in life, to put their lives in context with others and preceding generations, to assess choices in life and ethical decisions in a complex world.” The overall discourse of the report, however, remains the can-do one of instrumentalism: charts, point-form summaries, italicized

thesis statements, and emphatic subtitles from business-world evangelism: "Meeting the Challenge," "Challenges we must face," "The Driving Forces of Change," "New Vision."

Both this document and a slightly earlier one (August 1995) from B.C.'s Centre for Curriculum and Professional Development, titled "Outcomes-Based Education" -- from which some of the language of the Ministry document appears to have been drawn -- combine the terms "Student-Centred Learning" and "Outcomes-based Education." The paradox both create by doing so is, to say the least, curious. "Student-centred learning" is presented as the old liberal concept of self-development -- the "Outcomes-based Education" pamphlet describes it as an "emphasis on student learning needs and how they can be met to maximize student success," as if these "needs" were intrinsic to the students. "Outcomes based education," however, is presented as resting on the assumption that the students' needs are external, that they are needs which have been defined by "Labour Market Information" and which an educational "system" can "produce" in its graduates. Both documents thus have profound problems and limitations in where they locate desire ("need") and agency. Is it in the student, who pre-existing needs are to be "met," and who is to be equipped to "solve problems" and interpret "purpose," or is it in the much larger "market forces" whose changing needs will define both the needs of the student and the "knowledge" the student should receive from the postsecondary institution? Is the student to become someone whose lifelong learning responds to desires for "personal development" or to what the Ministry document in the same sentence describes as "changing workplace needs." The writers of both documents are unable to

avoid contrasting these possibilities, or privileging the latter (both documents are unable conceive of other possibilities, or to imagine the learner becoming other than an employee whose knowledge "further[s] the goals of the organization").

It is hard to know whether one should be more distressed by the evidence that the documents' writers do not know what they are doing, or by the even stronger evidence that they are determined to act regardless of their limited knowledge. To support its case for "market-driven" educational change, the Ministry's "Charting a New Course" presents no statistics that show that such change results in increased employment. Instead, it marshalls statistics about increasing unemployment among those who lack postsecondary education, and about public opinion surveys in which respondents have indicated that they "see" or "believe" that an increasing of links between postsecondary curricula and the business community can help people find jobs. The Ministry's arguments thus rest finally only on public opinion, and on the *ex cathedra* pronouncements of Ministry writers: "The Ministry believes ...", "system-wide harmonization and compatibility is required ...", "a more explicit and integrated approach must ..." [my italics]. Effectively, this is an evangelist approach to education, built on faith in the Ministry's "new vision" and on the polling of public convictions.

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Perhaps the most troubling possibility evident in the Ministry's statistics is that the curriculum our universities presently teach may be for the most part an effective one -- one that is responsible for the relatively low (5.1%) unemployment rate in B.C. which the Ministry cites for those who hold Bachelor's degrees. Our colleagues at the November 10 meeting were especially concerned that a shift from their current focus on helping

students become producers of new knowledge toward one in which they would train students to be repositories of skills and techniques presently perceived to be valued by employers might make their students less employable on graduation than they are now -- as well as leaving them with narrower horizons as individuals. The English degree that our departments presently offer -- a degree that stimulates rhetorical skills, teaches the skeptical reading of texts, and develops abilities in research and critical analysis -- may be a much more appropriate foundation for working creatively in rapidly changing times than a training in specific technological skills. It may be the breadth and flexibility of such a degree that in part creates the relatively high employment rates of university graduates. For the most part, those at the meeting advised ACCUTE to take only limited comfort from the contradictions in Ministry pronouncements -- between its call for market-defined skills and nervousness that these could become obsolete unless accompanied by "generic" skills, or between its calls for both "Student-Centred" and "Outcomes-based" education. Some saw these as evidence that the Ministry staff and advisors were at least not an homogeneous group. Others noted how these calls for generic skills and for education in historical and cultural understandings were still ultimately subsumed within an affirmation of an "Outcome oriented" approach.

"Coming soon to a university near you" is how Shirley Neuman characterized similar government policies in an address to a University of Victoria English graduate students conference last fall. They have very much arrived in B.C. and seem likely to be going to be around for a while. Both the NDP and the provincial Liberal party have recently released policy statements on education that emphatically endorse market-driven

"outcomes" education. Such policies appeared in Manitoba last year, and briefly in an Ontario ministry venture last year.

What can an organization like ACCUTE do to ensure that such proposals meet with debate and analysis rather than with the passive acceptance their rhetoric seems to demand? Those at the meeting had a number of suggestions. One was that ACCUTE continue its efforts to persuade other learned societies to communicate with provincial ministries a concern about government educational policy -- and in particular to persuade other societies to speak out on the issues at B.C. university colleges. A second was that ACCUTE and other societies take a more public role in the discussion of provincial policies. There is strong media and public interest in educational issues, they advised, that learned societies could take advantage of by issuing press releases on government policy announcements. A third was that ACCUTE include such matters as the current difficulties at the B.C. university colleges in its conference programs and Committee for Professional Concerns mandate. The CPC will be trying to arrange a session on the B.C. situation for our Brock meetings.

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These developments in B.C. postsecondary education provide a larger context for ACCUTE's initial concerns about the university colleges. The Ministry's insistence on what it calls "easy transition between institutions," together with its establishment of a Council on Admissions and Transfer to assist in the transferability of credits among the province's colleges, university colleges, and universities, makes more urgent the establishing of regular external academic program reviews at the university colleges once they are no longer being watched and advised by the universities. ACCUTE will be writing to the

college presidents again about external review, and to the Council on Admissions and Transfer, whose credibility, it seems to me, will rest in part on how it deals with the external review issue.

The new developments also make more urgent the need to defend if not expand the importance of research and other forms of scholarly activity in postsecondary academic institutions. As several of the university college faculty insisted at the meeting, a university-level instructor can best pass on meaningful research and analytical skills if their own such skills are regularly engaged and tested by contact with the general academic research milieu. Academic skills are not abstractions -- they are material practices that exist contextually through engagement in and definition by an ongoing process of knowledge production.

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I hope as many of our members as possible will be attending our 1996 conference at Brock, where as well as a B.C. University College session, the Committee on Professional Concerns will be sponsoring up to three other sessions on matters influencing our profession's future. There will undoubtedly also be discussion of the last few weeks' events in postsecondary education in Quebec, where cutbacks are threatening the continued existence of an English department at the Université de Montréal, and in Ontario, where a provincial mini-budget has reduced university funding by approximately 15% while permitting tuition fee increases of up to 20%. Many of you will have received an urgent letter from Robert Martin, chair of English at Montréal (and ironically the president-elect of CACE) asking his colleagues to write to his dean (Madame Mireille Matheiu, Doyenne, Faculté des Arts et des Sciences) and ask her to oppose, in the light of the history and present importance of English at Montréal, the

current proposal to replace the department and several others with a general department of modern languages and literatures.

The Montréal crisis is a consequence of provincial university-funding cutbacks similar to those we have seen in Alberta and Nova Scotia and which last week arrived in Ontario. For most Ontario universities the latest Ontario mini-budget will result in an immediate budget cut of from 10 to 20%. Queen's University, for example, foresees having to reduce in one year full-time faculty by 85 positions and support staff by 135 positions. While Queen's and several other institutions appear to be planning to meet the cuts by early-retirement incentives, the cancelling of replacement appointments, and layoffs, others may decide to take advantage of soon-to-appear legal "tools" which the government has promised to introduce this spring to allow the re-opening of labour contracts. These Ontario moves which, unlike the B.C. developments, appear to be based on no educational goals or policies, may also soon be coming to a university near you. They will bring, in various combinations, increased class sizes and teaching loads, reduced research opportunities, even fewer entry-level positions, reduced salaries, reduced faculty and graduate student morale, and program closings. Some Ontario English departments could see their graduate programs disappear as retirement vacancies go unfilled and the departments' capability to teach in key areas vanishes.

The Ontario cutbacks also openly conflict with the increasing importance of postsecondary education in the lives of Canadian young people. At a time when a quality postsecondary degree appears to be becoming the minimum qualification for full-time employment in Canada, there will be fewer places and programs in Ontario postsecondary institutions and fewer students able to afford to enrol in them. If

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anything, postsecondary education tuition fees should be being reduced, with the goal of making colleges and universities as accessible as have been the high schools

whose social 'threshold' roles they appear to be taking over. But achieving that is going to be a long struggle. Come to Brock.

Important Membership Reminder

If the address label on this issue of the *Newsletter* or your latest issue of *ESC* indicates "(95)" after your name, **your membership will expire on 31 December 1995**. Maintaining our membership levels is essential for ACCUTE to continue to act as an influential body with the government and funding agencies that are deciding the future of our profession. Whether you are faculty, underemployed, or graduate student, your membership plays a crucial role in ACCUTE's initiatives. Please take a moment to complete and return the Membership Form included on the last pages of this newsletter and make your voice count. If you or your colleagues require additional copies of the membership form, feel free to photocopy as many as necessary. (**Please note:** if you have already renewed your membership for 1996, freely disregard the REMINDER stamped on the cover of this issue.)

Conferences/Calls for Papers

L.M. Montgomery and Canadian Culture: An International Conference

The L.M. Montgomery Institute will host an international conference entitled L.M. Montgomery and Canadian Culture, at the University of Prince Edward Island, Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island, from June 27-30, 1996. Montgomery's journals and letters as well as her fiction and poetry reflect and comment on the literature, events, ideas, and discoveries from the 1890's to the 1930's. Topics to be covered during the conference include: Canadian Ethnic Minorities in the Writings of L.M. Montgomery; L.M. Montgomery and the Politics of Female Pleasure in Canada; Canadian Women's Sport and Health through the Fiction of L.M. Montgomery; Women, War, and the Canadian Home Front in the Writings of L.M. Montgomery; L.M. Montgomery and the Female Canadian Bestseller Tradition; Fashion in L.M. Montgomery's Life and Writing; L.M. Montgomery and Canada through the eyes of Hollywood; L.M. Montgomery's Influence on

Japanese Images of Canada. For information about program and registration details, please contact:

L.M. Montgomery Institute,
ATTN: Anna MacDonald,
University of Prince Edward Island,
550 University Avenue,
Charlottetown, PE C1A 4P3;
phone: (902) 628-4346; fax: (902) 566-0420;
e-mail: LMMINST@UPEL.CA.

The **Association for Bibliotherapy in Canada (ABC)** will be holding a two-day conference in conjunction with the Learned Societies Meetings on Sunday and Monday, 26-27 May 1996. You are invited to submit a proposal for a paper or a workshop. The theme of our conference will be **Family Fictions, Family Frictions**. Submissions on other aspects of bibliotherapy and reader response will also be welcomed. Papers should not take more than twenty minutes to deliver, followed by about ten minutes of discussion. Workshops could take up to an hour. The program committee

will consist of Dr. Claudia Mitchell and Dr. Joseph Gold. You will be notified by 1 March if your paper has been accepted. Please send **two copies** of your proposal (300-800 words) or completed paper by **1 February 1996** to Dr. Claudia Mitchell, President, ABC, Faculty of Education, McGill University, Montreal, Quebec H3A 1Y2; fax: 514-398-4679; phone: 514-398-6963; email: cycm@musica.mcgill.ca.

The 1997 Malcolm Lowry Symposium: An International Celebration will take place at the University of Toronto, 11-15 June 1997. The conference will meet on the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of the publication of *Under the Volcano*; tentatively planned special events include a visit to Niagara-on-the-Lake, where Lowry completed the writing of his *Volcano* manuscript. Please send requests for more information or proposals for papers to Frederick Asals or Paul Tiessen
New College English Dept.
Univ. of Toronto Wilfrid Laurier Univ.
Toronto, ON Waterloo, ON
M5S 1A1 N2L 3C5.

The Christianity and Literature Study Group, which will meet concurrently with the ACCUTE meetings at the Learned's at Brock, invites papers of any length and on any period under the general rubric of "literature and religion." We particularly welcome submissions from doctoral students and contributions to a session on pedagogy. Contact: Barbara Pell,
Department of English,
Trinity Western University,
Langley, BC V2Y 1Y1.

Mosaic, a journal for the interdisciplinary study of literature invites submissions for a special issue on "Literature and Other Arts." Welcome are essays that explore any aspect of the dialogue, synergism, or rivalry between literature (as

verbal art) and other arts (painting/graphics, sculpture, architecture, music, dance, theatre, film, fashion, etc.). Essays may focus on specific works, or may theorize about the interaction. The use of illustrations is encouraged where appropriate. Submissions in French are welcome. Deadline for submissions is **15 December 1996**. For more information, including submission requirements and a list of sample areas/approaches, please write Dr. Evelyn J. Hinz, Editor, *Mosaic, a journal for the interdisciplinary study of literature*, Room 208 Tier Bldg., University of Manitoba, Winnipeg, MB R3T 2N2; phone: 204-474-9763; fax: 204-261-9086; email: ejhinz@bldgarts.lan1.umanitoba.ca.

Collection of Gay and Lesbian Studies of Postcolonial Literatures: I am preparing a collection of studies which employ gay and lesbian theory to consider postcolonial literatures. I am open to any submissions and intend to consider "literatures" in the widest possible sense. Priority, however, will be given to those articles which have the most general interest. As well, I would prefer submissions from those with significant experience of the cultures to be considered. There will be some attempt to achieve a reasonable gender balance. The deadline for submissions is **31 January 1996**. I would prefer to receive inquiries first. Please address all correspondence to Terry Goldie,
English Department, York University,
North York, ON M3J 1P3;
email tgoldie@yorku.ca.

The Canadian Society for Aesthetics invites papers or panel proposals for its 1996 Conference to take place during May-June 1996 as part of the Learned Societies Conference being held at Brock University in St. Catharines, Ontario. Papers can be on any aspect of aesthetics, broadly construed to include all

facets of human engagement with the literary, visual, performing, and other arts. Papers are especially welcome on the topic of "Aesthetics and Science." Detailed proposals for special sessions must include abstracts for individual papers, the names and affiliations of all prospective participants, and a general abstract making clear the objectives of each session as a whole. All papers and proposals must reach the Program Co-ordinators no later than 15 January 1996. Completed papers with abstracts, suitable for 20-25 minute delivery, should be sent to either of the CSA Program Co-ordinators:

Adam Muller	Gabrielle Schloesser
Dept. of English	Dépt des Arts Plastiques
McGill University	UQAM
Arts Building	CP 8888
853 Sherbrooke W.	Succ. Centre ville
Montréal, QC	Montréal, QC
H3A 2T6	H3C 3P8
email: cxln@musica.mcgill.ca	

News of Members

Elizabeth BREWSTER (Saskatchewan) was recently named a winner of the Saskatchewan Arts Board's Lifetime Award for Excellence in the Arts. Her most recent books, both published by Oberon Press in 1995, are *Footnotes to the Book of Job* (poetry) and *Away from Home* (autobiography).

Peter CUMMING (Western) has published "The Prick and Its Vagaries: Men, Reading, Kroetsch," winner of the George Wicken Prize in Canadian Literature, in *Essays on Canadian Writing* 55 (Spring 1995): 115-39. Forthcoming is "When Men Have Babies: The Good Father in *A Good Baby*" in *Textual Studies in Canada* 8 (Winter 1995), a special issue on "Masculinities in Canadian Literature."

Elizabeth JONES (unaffiliated) recently had her paper, "The Suburban School: Snobbery and Fear in the Attack on Keats," published in the *Times Literary Supplement* (27 October 1995). The paper was selected for publication from the conference proceedings of the John Keats Bicentennial Conference at Harvard University.

David KETTERER (Concordia) has recently published an edition of *A Family Memoir: The Autobiography of the American Humorist "Max Adeler"* (Charles Heber Clark) (NY: Peter Lang, 1995), which includes a facsimile of "Professor Baffin's Adventures," the tale which inspired Twain's *A Connecticut Yankee*. As a result of creating (with the support of a SSHRC Research Grant) the first transcriptions of the *Frankenstein* manuscripts in the Bodleian Library, he has published "The Corrected *Frankenstein*: Twelve Preferred Readings in the Last Draft," *English Language Notes* 33 (September 1995): 23-35; and has forthcoming "(De)Composing *Frankenstein*: The Import of Altered Character Names in the Last Draft," *Studies in Bibliography* (1996).

Martin KREISWIRTH (Western) has left the Directorship of the Centre for the Study of Theory and Criticism and has become Associate Dean, Graduate Studies (Arts and Social Sciences). He has recently co-edited (with Thomas Carmichael), *Constructive Criticism: The Human Sciences in the Age of Theory* (U of Toronto P), which includes his essay "Tell Me a Story: The Narrativist Turn in the Human Sciences."

Laurie KRUK (Nipissing) has had the following interviews with Canadian authors published or accepted for publication: "Alistair MacLeod: 'The World is Full of Exiles'" in *Studies in Canadian Literature* 20.1 (1995); "I Want Edge: An Interview with Timothy Findley" in *Canadian Literature* (forthcoming 1996, issue #148) and "I Don't Need Other People to Say What I Feel: Jane Rule" in *Canadian Fiction Magazine* (forthcoming, 1996).

1996 Membership Form

- New Member
 Renewal

Member's Name: _____

Academic Affiliation Information

Professional Designation: _____ Address (use home address *only* if you are without academic affiliation): _____

- Professor _____
 Assoc. Professor _____
 Asst. Professor _____
 Sessional Lecturer _____
 Instructor _____
 Retired Faculty _____
 Grad. Student / TA _____
 _____ Postal Code _____

Phone (wk): _____

Phone (hm): _____ Fax: _____

E-Mail: _____

Languages spoken (besides English): _____

I enclose (Please make cheque payable to ACCUTE - UWO and mail to Peter Auksi, Secretary-Treasurer, ACCUTE, Department of English, University of Western Ontario, London, ON N6A 3K7):

- The regular membership fee of \$75
 The reduced fee of \$40 (student / unemployed / underemployed / retired)
 The household membership fee of \$125 (2 memberships, one subscription to *ESC*)

Second householder's name: _____

Second householder's professional designation: _____

- The three-year membership fee (1996-98) of \$195

ACCUTE Membership Directory Information

Please complete the information on research interests found overleaf, for use in the 1996 ACCUTE *Directory*. The *Directory* is used mainly by colleagues seeking scholars to review books, prepare scholarly papers on special topics, and to evaluate manuscripts, grant applications, conference papers, and graduate student theses. In order to help colleagues locate specialists more easily, the 1996 *Directory* will list scholars categorically by *primary area of research interest* first. In addition, members may specify other categories in which they would feel comfortable performing professional tasks; these will be included in a secondary listing format.

Primary Listing (*List only 1 area of specialization*)

List specialization by Period / Nationality / Genre first; include other areas (Theoretical Methodology, Culture / Gender Studies; Authors / Works, etc.) if necessary.

Example: Modern British Drama; Feminist Theory, G.B. Shaw

If you are applying for a household membership, please differentiate clearly between research interests for each member.

Additional areas

Periods / Nationalities / Genres _____

Culture / Gender Studies _____

Criticism / Theory / Methodology _____

Language / Linguistics _____

Pedagogy _____

Authors / Works _____

Other _____
