PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE:
WALKING TOGETHER, WORKING TOGETHER

GREGORY BETTS

The Latin root of Congress means to walk (gradi) together (con). In a typical year, around this time, the ACCUTE Board and membership would be wrapping up the winter term and gearing up for that mutual hike at our annual conference. ACCUTE was formed in 1957 and had its first conference in 1958 in Edmonton at the University of Alberta, the host of this year’s event. Membership fees were $1 and there were no concurrent sessions in the one-day event. Despite those modest beginnings, it is worth remembering that our association was formed specifically in order for English faculty and students to participate in the Learned Societies, now called the Federation for the Humanities and Social Sciences. Beyond presenting original research, ACCUTE was established to fulfill what Heather Murray describes as “its most important task, that of networking teachers and students of English (however we might define that term) across our many research fields and institutional affiliations.” We come together as an association in the midst of many overlapping associations to meet, talk, discuss, learn, and, indeed in a normal year, dance.

ACCUTE’S 2021 CONFERENCE PROGRAM IS NOW AVAILABLE. CLICK HERE FOR YOUR COPY.
We are gearing up for that annual walking together again, virtually, of course, but certain recent events have caused us (me, the ACCUTE Executive, Board, and likely you) to wonder about the limits of inclusion of our gathering. In particular, the Black Canadian Studies Association has withdrawn from Congress this year, citing the ongoing pandemic (disproportionately affecting Black and Indigenous communities), the technological burdens of the moment, and a dispute with the Federation about conference fees and the overarching theme of future conferences. The Federation responded by waiving fees for Black and Indigenous students and committing to a Black Studies theme for Congress in the near future, as the BCSA requested in their 9 February 2021 statement. The BCSA had already withdrawn by that point, however, and their subsequent statements invited other associations “to discuss the issues we have raised and positions we have taken, and to make decisions for themselves” (20 February 2021). Many associations, including ACCUTE, have interpreted this invitation to be a call for a referendum on their membership inside the Federation, and have committed to such a discussion either inside or outside Congress. Some associations (12 of 70 Federation members) have withdrawn from Congress in the hopes that it will provoke concrete action by the Federation.

ACCUTE has opted to stay in Congress and walk together, work together with the Federation in the hopes of guiding them (who are not separate from us) towards the new policy and governance that this moment requires. As one of the largest associations in the Federation, with one of the smallest Executives and Boards, we do not have the physical or financial capacity to move such a large event to a different venue in such a short timeframe. Furthermore, I feel a burden of responsibility to the 200+ presentations that were submitted back in Fall 2019 and accepted for last year’s Congress that have already been ported forward to this year’s event. As stated in our own Statement in Support of the BCSA on 18 February, our participation in Congress does not, however, imply that we are satisfied with the Federation’s response to combating anti-Black racism, nor does it preclude our own desire to assess and evaluate our membership in the Federation.

The situation has raised an important structural observation about ACCUTE and how it (we) conducts its (our) business. Beyond our journal, ESC: English Studies in Canada, which is a largely independent operation, the association is almost entirely built around delivering the annual conference for which it was formed. Communication with members is almost entirely confined to our Annual General Meeting, held at Congress each year. Vice President Ronald Cummings and I have been working hard to develop the quarterly newsletter, now called The Angle (edited by Erin Knight and Eric Schmaltz), into a viable hub for member engagement and dialogue. We have also created the pandemic webinar series as a forum for engagement and exchange around special topics. These forums have been remarkably successful, if I am permitted to say as much, but yet still do not permit the kind of all-member discussion that this moment invites.
Consequently, the ACCUTE Board has agreed to host an all-member virtual retreat to take up the call issued by the BCSA. The retreat will be largely focused around three central questions: 1) What is our relationship to the Federation? 2) Is it good? i.e. does it still reflect the values that we, the members of ACCUTE, hold and share?, and 3) Where do we go from here? Where we go might include changes to ACCUTE, and how we conduct and define our normal association business, as well. Further details of the retreat will be shared as they become available.

In the meantime, the ACCUTE Board is proposing two and possibly three structural changes to ACCUTE this year. The first is the adoption of an Equity Statement, included in this issue of *The Angle*. Please have a look and email your thoughts and comments to info.accute@gmail.com. We will be discussing, amending, and voting on the adoption of the Statement at our AGM. The second structural change is the creation of a Creative Writing Caucus to reflect the rapid growth of that constituency in English Departments across Canada. That, too, will be presented and discussed in a devoted forum at our annual conference, and (depending on the outcome of those discussions) presented at the AGM. The third change is more speculative at this point, but Ronald and I have started discussions with community members about the possibility of developing a BIPOC forum and possibly establishing a new caucus. Ronald will be hosting a closed meeting for BIPOC faculty and students on Tuesday 27 April at 2pm. We invite all BIPOC members to register here.

All narratives begin with a disruption of the normal state of affairs, including the story of ACCUTE and our relationship with the Federation. Whether the current inciting incident be the withdrawal of the BCSA, the global pandemic, or the wider context of the Indigenous renaissance, many of the conversations I have been having over the past month all suggest that a major plot shift is long overdue. I have been meeting and conversing with the Federation and the leadership of other associations almost daily to discuss deep structural changes to the organization to make it more transparent and accountable to the entire membership. After an incident of racial profiling at the 2019 Congress at UBC, the Federation established an arms-length EDID committee that has produced an extensive forensic assessment of the organization, including many recommended actions. With the recent release of that report, the Federation will articulate how they intend to respond to each of those recommended changes. It remains to be seen if their response will be sufficient to meet the needs of the moment. ACCUTE will gather as a community to make our own assessment at our retreat.

There is much work that needs to be done, but work of a particular kind that must be handled carefully and collectively. Back in 2008, Smaro Kamboureli responded to Heather Murray by writing that “ACCUTE has evolved, and continues to do so, out of the very tensions that characterize the different perspectives of what constitutes English
literature and the critical act but also out of the need to address how to profess being academics in a continuously changing political and academic environment.” The world has, again, impinged upon the work we do in this field, also creating the opportunity for a significant re-evaluation of our work. I believe that the questions we now face, that are crucial to the very legitimacy of literary studies in English, highlight the importance of having a robust forum for that conversation. Kamboureli concluded her essay with words that speak to this point and still resonate today:

“ACCUTE’s raison d’etre is not simply to work together with the CFHSS, remain vigilant to what happens at SSHRC, or create a forum for its members to disseminate their research but also to maintain, and when necessary to re-envision, the sense of community it has created. This is something ACCUTE has always performed well, and it is not a role it should ever consider relinquishing.”

With that in mind, I invite you to come work together, to come walk together, and to relinquish nothing, even as we re-envision the very ground of the path forward.

Works Cited
Black Canadian Studies Association. Statement. 20 February 2021
We are inviting BIPOC members of ACCUTE to a closed session of and with other BIPOC association members, to take place on Tuesday, April 27th at 2 p.m. EDT. We envision this as a space of gathering where colleagues might meet, get to know each other as well as reflect on the specificities of their experiences within the academy particularly at this time. We want to create a space that will generate discussion about the ways in which ACCUTE might be better accountable to BIPOC English faculty members and students across Canada and examine the work of advocacy that still needs to be done. We envision this as an opening towards the creation of ongoing BIPOC meeting spaces as part of the work of the Association.

ADVANCE REGISTRATION HERE.
The Association for Canadian College and University Teachers of English welcomes nominations for the position of President of ACCUTE. The term of the position is two-years, commencing 1 July 2022 through to 30 June 2024. Nominations must be received no later than 4:30 P.M. (PDT) Friday 21 May 2021 and must be submitted by a member of ACCUTE in good standing. Candidates may nominate themselves. The current nomination is for the office of the President of ACCUTE from July 2022 through to the end of June 2024.

The Executive, in consultation with the ACCUTE Board of Directors, carries out the day-to-day affairs of the Association. Anyone who is considering allowing their name to stand for election as President is encouraged to discuss this matter with the current President, Gregory Betts (gbetts@brocku.ca). You can also review the duties of the President set out in the ACCUTE By-Laws.

The nomination form can be found on our website.

Candidate(s) nominated for election will be invited to address the membership and respond to questions at the 2021 Annual General Meeting on Tuesday 1 June 2021. This meeting will provide members with an opportunity to become acquainted with the views of the candidate(s) prior to the election. Voting of the officers will take place via electronic ballot following the meeting.

**CONSULTATION WITH CHAIR/DEAN**

The elected position of ACCUTE President is one that requires a serious commitment of time and effort. Consequently, the position requires the support of the candidate’s Department Chair and Faculty Dean for the customary two course releases, office space, and other resources necessary for the President to carry out their duties. The President is responsible for establishing an Executive consisting of a Vice-President, who customarily receives a course release, and an Office Coordinator, who is paid by ACCUTE.
CALL FOR NOMINATIONS FOR ACCUTE BOARD MEMBER-AT-LARGE: AWARDS AND PRIZES

You are invited to submit nominations (including self-nominations) for the position of Member-at-Large: Awards and Prizes. The position commences 1 July 2021 for a period of two years lasting until 30 June 2023. We are now seeking nominations for the position to be elected (if necessary) at the Annual General Meeting on 1 June 2021. In the case of an election, nominees will have the opportunity to articulate their interest to the membership and respond to questions at the AGM.

To address ACCUTE’s commitment to equity, diversity and inclusivity, and in recognition of the underrepresentation of members of historically and currently marginalized groups, and pursuant to our provisional Equity Statement, preference will be given to applicants who self-identify as one or more of any of the following: diversity of gender identity, 2SLGBTQ+, Indigenous peoples, racialized persons, or persons with disabilities.

To nominate yourself or another for the position, please submit this form. For questions, please contact Erin Knight at info.accute@gmail.com.

GRADUATE STUDENT CONFERENCE PAPER PRIZE

FIRST PRIZE: $300
SECOND PRIZE: $200

We are accepting submissions from graduate student members of ACCUTE for our Graduate Student Conference Paper Prize. Papers must be presented at Congress 2021.

Deadline: 30 June, 2021

Adjudication: Essays will be judged by three faculty members selected by the ACCUTE Board. The jury will select the winning essay based on originality, overall excellence of scholarship, quality of writing, level of professionalism, and suitability for conference presentation.

Winners will be announced in the Fall issue of The Angle and celebrated at the 2022 AGM.

Submit: info.accute@gmail.com
**UCHE PETER UM EZURIKE**

*Uche Peter Umezurike* is a PhD Candidate and Vanier Scholar in the English and Film Studies department of the University of Alberta. An alumnus of the International Writing Program (USA), his critical writing has appeared or is forthcoming in the Canadian Journal of African Studies, Journal of Postcolonial Writing, Cambridge Journal of Postcolonial Literary Inquiry, African Literature Today, Postcolonial Text, Journal of African Cultural Studies, Cultural Studies, Journal of African Literature Association, and *Tydskrif vir Letterkunde*. His research focuses on postcolonial and Black diaspora literatures, gender and sexuality studies, cultural and critical studies. Umezurike is a co-editor of *Wreaths for a Wayfarer*, an anthology of poems, and will host the final session of ACCUTE's Pandemic Webinar series on the same subject on Thursday, April 29th. Find more details [here](#).

**KINSHIP**

you sit on the bench, the sun arched over your back, the air thin & clear, dew on the skin, & out there at the hospital entrance, one can easily miss you, while the world retrieves its rhythm, & the building stirs with intent — familiar uniforms flit about, familiar smells haunt the gleaming corridors, across the humming road, trains trundle crosswise, a boy wraps his arms around his girl on the platform, but there you sit, under the vast beige awning, not browsing a daily or your cellphone, but gazing off into the blueing sky — your posture, slow, languorous, the price of oil, the prime rate, the futures, nothing unsettles you, as if there's no terror at hand, no deficiency, no inevitability, & I stare at you, craving to ask what brings you here, what loss you've borne, what love you've known, what memories still tug at you, & what hurt clasps your gut, but you never once catch my eye, & I'm silent as usual, but behind you, quiet companions, clustered & so rare, burst upon my sight with bloodshot petals, & I dream of hills undulating into the moonlight, goosebumps on my arms, but only for a second, only a second, & I move on, nimbly, an ordinary thought impressing my mind.
2021 WEBINAR SERIES
SESSION FOUR

RAPHAEL D’ABDON
AKUA LEZLI HOPE
LEBOGANG DISELE
NDUKA OTIONO
UCHECHUKWU UMEZURIKE

WREATHS FOR A WAYFARER: POETRY AND IMPERMANENCE

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NO MORE MUFFINS:
EXPERIMENTS IN DIVERSIFYING
AND DECOLONIZING THE
CREATIVE WRITING CLASSROOM

HEATHER JESSUP

Heather Jessup is an Assistant Professor of Creative Writing and English at Dalhousie University in K’jipuktuk, Mi’kma’ki. She is the author of two books: The Lightning Field and This Is Not A Hoax: Unsettling Truth in Canadian Culture, and is co-moderating a collaborative panel at this year’s ACCUTE conference entitled “Make-Believe,” which discusses a museum project Heather co-curated with Claire Battershill that features the work of over 100 artists and academics across Canada. Featured panelists will speak on the role of imagination and failure in scholarship, making motherhood work in academic and creative practice, friendship and collaboration, and decolonizing the museum. Come say hi!

The writer Eric Bennet describes his experiences in the Iowa Writers Program as “a muffin tin you poured the batter of your dreams into. You entered with something undefined and tantalizingly protean and left with muffins.” He also describes the program as “a culture of norms.”

On this land currently called Canada, all of our creative writing programs in colleges and universities have pedagogically modelled themselves on Iowa’s workshop culture. Many of us who now teach in Creative Writing programs were taught by professors influenced and inspired by Iowa’s methodology when it was imported — first to the University of New Brunswick in 1940 (offering its creative writing stream MA in 1968), and then to Earle Birney’s workshops in the English Department at the University of British Columbia in 1948 (followed by his founding of the first Creative Writing Department in the country in 1965, granting MFAs). These professors then taught our professors, or our professors’ professors. In other words, our institutions’ educational ancestors directly descend from a pedagogical model that began eighty years ago and continues to employ primarily the same tools and the same lineage of professors.
These tools include blind-read portfolio-based applications, craft talks, the practice of workshopping near-complete work, and teaching from anthologized texts. A central pedagogical inheritance is the “gag rule”: a practice in workshops where a writer remains in silence — sometimes for upwards of an hour — as a workshop of peers and a professor dissect their work in front of them, usually with an acute focus on craft over cultural or personal context, and without establishing the intent of the author or the intended audience for their work, an audience that may very well be completely different than those of us sitting around the table.

Traditionally, norms in a culture are often unarticulated or unacknowledged expectations that best serve the most dominant or powerful members of a group. In Craft in the Real World: Rethinking Fiction Writing and Workshopping, Matthew Salesses, who is also a graduate of Iowa, writes: “What we call craft is in fact nothing more or less than a set of expectations. Those expectations are shaped by workshop, by reading, by awards and gatekeepers, by biases about whose stories matter and how they should be told.” He reminds readers that “These expectations are never neutral. They represent the values of the culturally dominant population” and identifies that in America the dominant population “means (straight, cis, able, upper-middle-class) white males.” When we eliminate conversations around context, culture, intended readership, and non-dominant forms of craft, when we are unreflexive about our pedagogy and limited in our understanding of what constitutes canon, Salesses notes that a writing workshop stops inspiring innovation and “reinforces narrow ideas about whose stories are important and what makes a story beautiful, moving, or good.”

Because I’m sure none of us wants to exclusively consume a single batch of clumpy dry muffins, nor violently homogenize the glorious weirdness and unique haecceity of writers, we who now teach creative writing must acknowledge that the creative writing pedagogy we have inherited, whether intentionally or not, has practices that are biased, creatively limiting, exclusive, racist, sexist, colonial, discriminatory, and potentially damaging to the imaginative potential of emerging writers. Not to mention, after eighty years of repetition, sometimes these methods are super boring. How then do we urgently and radically diversify and decolonize our creative writing pedagogy toward innovation, inclusion and lessened harm?

If you feel truly unequipped to begin, Felicia Rose Chavez gives 202 pages of brilliant practical suggestions in The Anti-Racist Writing Workshop: How to Decolonize the Creative Classroom. Implementing just one of her suggestions could radically transform your workshop. But, until your order of Chavez’s and Salesses's books comes into your local independent bookstore, here are eleven practices of play, mistake-making, questioning, learning, and pedagogical experimentation that have accompanied me and my students as we work together to diversify and decolonize our workshops:
For a whole year, do not teach a single work written by a white, cis, straight, able, upper-middle-class author. Then, after your year of experimentation and reading is done, perhaps consider sprinkling only a few utterly beloved pieces from this category back into your reading list. Why? Representation matters. Your students deserve to hear the voices of El Jones, jaye simpson, Sachiko Murakami, Vivek Shraya, Julie Flett, Amanda Parris, Isabella Wang, and Shauntay Grant. Honestly, with this company, none of your students will care or notice that Ernest Hemingway is missing for a minute.

Think of ways to teach the structure of stories that is not an arc, a three-act structure, a hero’s journey, or Freytag’s triangle, but instead a wave, a colour, a texture, a light source that throws some parts of the story into illumination and keeps others in shadow, the slow pull and quick plunge of an insulin needle, a basket, a boat. Read Jane Alison’s *Meander, Spiral, Explode: Design and Pattern in Narrative* and *Shapes of Native Nonfiction* edited by Elissa Washuta and Theresa Warburton. Ask students to consider the tools of other disciplines and métiers, and how those tools might metaphorically re-charge their making with language.

Give writers prompts that take them outside. Observe an other-than-human phenomenon as part of a written practice: the moon, a fir cone, a peony, a potato. Assign walks. Consider a durational study to one specific living non-human object, such as poet Sue Goyette did when she daily visited an agave in the Halifax Public Gardens that flowered after one hundred years, despite the city gardeners’ certainty that it was dead. What can be learned in language from attending to quiet things? How does repetitive devotion to a single entity manifest in words? What happens when we take our practice of writing away from producing an end product and turn toward cultivating process, away from writing for commerce toward writing as an act of witness?

Stop any form of punitive pedagogy. Do not have late penalties. Do not have word counts. See what happens. If you think this is impossible and it will totally not work for you, try it anyway. If it ends up being the worst idea ever, blame me and then change your policy again next term.

Be curious about your own personal and pedagogical history. What are your ancestors’ stories? In what pedagogies of creative writing were you raised? What, through habit and hazing, have you become comfortable with in your teaching that may need questioning? How have you benefited from complying with current systems? What exclusion and harm do these systems cause and how can you break cycles of harm and discrimination in your own classrooms, and, working in community, with your Program, Department, Faculty, recruitment office, alumni, and University?
Let's stop saying “the reader” and talk about readers. Let students tell the workshop about the audiences for whom they write.

Play. Research and experiment with pedagogical models designed for the most imaginative of humans: children. Think about how you could teach plot through gross motor movement. Imagine how “loose parts learning” inspired by Reggio Emilia could work to teach students sentence, stanza, paragraph, or scene. When your students walk in the classroom door, leave invitations of clay, leaves, colours, images, music, scents, and textures for them to discover character, metaphor, and theme with their hands, eyes, noses, mouths, and fingers.

Stop using the gag-rule. Let writers speak when they want to speak. It's their workshop. Even better, give writers choices in how they want to be workshopped. Why should you decide? Matthew Salesses' book has an entire chapter “Alternative Workshops” with multiple models you can try. In her chapter “Teaching Writers to Workshop,” Felicia Rose Chavez outlines her foundation in the Liz Lerman Critical Response Process (an alternative model of critical feedback for creative practices). Even simply asking the writer what they need most from the workshop for a particular piece can lead to more engaged and constructive conversations that have room and movement to consider personal and cultural context beyond that disembodied “text on the page.”

Learn how to correctly pronounce your students’ names before the first “roll call” of class. Google pronunciations. Watch videos. Practice.

Acknowledge the traditional territory on which you teach. Acknowledge that acknowledgements are only a beginning. Learn about the work of two Indigenous artists, dancers, storytellers, or writers from where you live and share their work with your students.

If asked to write about diversity and decolonization for your professional organization, do not automatically assume this task belongs to someone else. It should not always be the job of BIPOC, LGBTQIA2S+, and colleagues and students with disabilities to do the dismantling, decolonizing, and repairing work of making classrooms and our educational institutions less racist, less discriminatory, and more accessible. Educate yourself, read, have respectful conversations, learn and recognize that you must take up this work and that it will feel uncomfortable, that you will make mistakes, that you will need to do better, that you are learning. By doing this work as an ally, you are creating more time for your colleagues and students to tell their stories and to write.
Asha Jeffers is a scholar and creative writer originally from Toronto who lives and works in Halifax. Her chapbook Mundane, Majestic was published by Anstruther Press in 2021. Her academic and creative writing appears in the Journal of Commonwealth Literature, South Asian Review, Critical Insights, and The Puritan. Her poetry was selected for the Nova Scotia Writers’ Federation’s Poetry in Motion public poetry project. She is an Assistant Professor of English and Gender and Women’s Studies at Dalhousie University.

Bund Me Baby One More Time
For Stef Cheung

Shanghai is like sedimentary rock
Layers on layers of times.
On the Bund
I look across the water
At the futuristic skyline
Jagged, bright,
Glass and metal thrusting
Into the hazy air,
Facing off
With huge, white Victorian edifices
Looming and intricate architecture
of past commerce.
Remnants of Britain,
Accomplished international drug dealer.
Remnants of its lust
For tea and territory.
There’s also a charming statue
Of Chairman Mao.
It looks like he’s wearing a cape.

We walk down the wide boulevard
Into the old part of the city
Where we go to gorge ourselves
At the new Häagen-Dazs restaurant.
As a creative writing teacher, I build reading lists designed to introduce students to various generic forms. Yet, when I teach Claudia Rankine’s essay, “I wanted to Know what White Men thought of their Privilege: So I Asked,” my aim is not just to show students how they might construct a personal essay, but to get them to consider how ‘whiteness’ is a racial construct around privilege. The same reason I bring Rankine’s article into the classroom determines my selection of literature by Indigenous and queer people, women, people of colour, LGBTQ and questioning, as well as writers of various religions and abilities. Yes, I am building reading lists honouring EDID objectives, but not to obscure my white, settler privilege in the classroom. The classroom is not mine. The room doesn’t even belong to the institution. The classroom belongs to the students.

The demographic of my classes reflects a variety social, religious or identity backgrounds, including white, privileged men. Driven by that long-standing complaint, “I can’t find myself in the readings,” the readings are there to speak to that variety. In the readings, students have opportunities to find themselves, and in the process meet their neighbours, their colleagues, and so negotiate the complicated set of communities with which they share social and political space inside the classroom and outside.

Last year, for example, I had students in my creative non-fiction course read an excerpt of Tanya Talaga’s Seven Fallen Feathers. Two students self-identified as First Nations and were politically active in their communities. This text gave these students a chance to see themselves; they were so involved in the reading that they took over the discussion. That ownership of their reading was brilliant to watch. Many students responded with
interest, some with their own writing and research projects, and there were those who silently digested the discussion for some future day. There were multiple opportunities for each student to re-negotiate their relationship to a topic that remains contentious, or even troubling, in their own communities, on the news, among friends and colleagues.

In my creative non-fiction class this winter, the atmosphere has been slightly different. I introduced questions of Black politics with a reading of an excerpt of Ta-Nehisi Coates’s *Between the World and Me*. Two racially Black students dominated the discussion while the other students remained silent. I noticed this silence and wondered why. It was only on reading an assignment by one of the taciturn students that I understood. Writing a piece on privilege, this student confessed that [they] did not know how to speak about Black politics; they didn’t want to be insensitive and they don’t want to be stupid—two very good objectives—so they kept silent. Exposure to texts that bring up difficult and current issues gives students a chance to find themselves, even in their ignorance.

The students in my class are there ostensibly to figure out how to write with focus, construct arguments, become facile with metaphors and allusions, or even build complicated essay structures, such as the “weave” pattern exemplified by Joan Didion’s work. Beyond being examples of generic formulas, though, the class readings give student’s material with which to start and ideally participate in the debate of current issues, or the *zeitgeist* of their time. I am here to facilitate the environment that belongs to the students: the classroom is theirs. They are decolonizing the academy.

**Concetta Principe** is a sessional professor of English literature, creative writing, and theory at Trent University-Durham and York University. Her latest book, *Stars Need Counting: Essays on Suicide*, has just been published by Gordon Hill Press.

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**OPTIONAL OPT-IN TO CONGRESS 2021 MEDIA OUTREACH PROGRAM**

Congress presenters who wish to opt-in to the Media Outreach Program should submit this form before May 3, 2021. Submissions will be reviewed and submitted to journalists and news outlets leading up to the event.
Interview with Joshua Whitehead

Joshua Whitehead is a two-spirit, Oji-nêhiyaw (Oji-Cree), Indigiqueer member of the Pegius First Nation, poet, author, and scholar whose works explore two-spirit and Indigiqueer life and thought, mental health, and popular culture, among many other themes. Between the time of interviewing and publication, Whitehead's 2018 novel, Jonny Appleseed (Arsenal Pulp Press), won CBCBooks’ Canada Reads 2021, championed by Mohawk actor and filmmaker Kawennáhere Devery Jacobs. Likewise, the anthology he recently edited, Love After the End: An Anthology of Two-Spirit and Indigiqueer Speculative Fiction (Arsenal Pulp Press), is a finalist for the 2021 Lambda Literary Awards in the LGBTQ anthology category. His forthcoming non-fiction book, Making Love with the Land, will be published in Spring 2022 by Knopf Canada.

I spoke to Whitehead on February 12th over Zoom from my home in Lincoln, ON, on the traditional territories of the Haudenosaunee and Anishinaabe peoples, and Whitehead called in from his in Calgary, AB, on Treaty Seven Territory. In the interview, we discuss Jonny Appleseed, his 2017 book of poetry, full-metal indigiqueer (Talonbooks), and Love After the End.

Kostyn Petrunick: Thank you for making time and agreeing to talk a bit about your work with me today. Specifically, I wanted to discuss the anthology you’ve just recently edited, Love After the End, as well as how it relates to your previous creative works. So, to begin, could you tell me a little bit about how the anthology came about?

Joshua Whitehead: Yeah so, Love After the End was a sequel to Beyond Space and Time, initially, which was a book published by the now foreclosed Bedside Press. The person who was running Bedside Press at that time approached me to be the editor for the sequel, and after much discussion and putting my own creative input into it, I wanted to slant it towards utopian stories. Just because I feel like dystopia: we already did that. It wasn't the right affective mode for the stories that I wanted to hear and we wanted to tell. And thinking with two-spiritedness queer Indigeneity, it's like, we've already survived many a dystopia, many an apocalypse, to the point that I'm asking myself, how do you pluralize apocalypse? And I thought it was a more interesting/political move to think about...
joy rather than degradation and pain and trauma, although those are in the stories. ... I'm thinking about what [Billy-Ray Belcourt] calls the conspiracy of Indian joy. That was really in the back of my mind running full gears. So, we wanted to make it joyful, we wanted to have futures that were messy, complicated, but were futures, nonetheless.

... [Eventually,] it was released during a pandemic, which none of us saw coming, but I think it came when it was needed. And — this is a weird thing to say — but I'm very happy that it came out in a pandemic because it seemed more relevant than ever to be talking about apocalypse and dystopia and ends of worlds, but also finding joy in those moments too.

KP: Yeah, thank you very much. I'm interested in that part that you have in the introduction, where you say that you made a very conscious choice to queer toward utopia(s), and I wondered if you might talk a little bit more about that as political project?

JW: Yeah, again, I owe a lot of my thinking about it to a dear friend of mine, Billy-Ray Belcourt. In his first book of poetry, [This Wound Is a World], he has this line in which he notes that he wants to live in a multiplicity of worlds, and only one kind of static, stagnant world doesn't exist, and I think that's been proven, specifically in COVID-19. There is a multiplicity of worlds we house and that we participate in.

And primarily when we think about speculative fiction, dystopian fiction, it's always predicated upon the survival of the individual rather than the communal. And the multiplicity of worlds or utopias is because, I think we, the specific contributors, all have a different vision of what utopia looks like. Sometimes that [means] fleeing the earth, or sometimes it means staying on a dying planet, but all of it is about reciprocity and community and caretaking formulations in which this planet that we house and live upon, Earth, is also a kin, or mother that we take care of even in her dying wishes and her dying arms. Caused again by, you know, political climates, ecological climates, capitalism, settler colonialism. ...

But [the multiplicity of written worlds] also speaks to the plethora of Indigeneity across Turtle Island, where all the writers are coming from different spaces and different places and different identities.

KP: The stories do a splendid job of that. And I'm wondering too about young adult readership and the utopian thinking. In the introduction, you talk about the expanding body of queer young adult literature and you reflect on the relationship between that legacy and two-spirit and Indigiqueer literature and storytelling. How do you picture a young adult reader approaching this text, and did you have such a reader in mind when you were formulating things?

JW: I mean, I think that a lot of Indigenous, but primarily trans,
nonbinary, queer Indigenous folks and Indigenous women are in a space right now in this project we call Canadian literature, whereupon we're focusing in on ourselves and our communities.

I think a lot of our writing is for the youth because those would be [some] of the most vulnerable folks because there's rampant youth Indigenous suicides across Turtle Island, many of whom are queer or trans or nonbinary. The stories are always, at least from my perspective, first and foremost for the youth to see themselves, to know themselves, and to have images of representation — very much akin to what Frantz Fanon says — that are powerful, and necessary, and contemporary, and beautiful, and removed from the stereotypical idea of what an Indigenous person looks like as popularized by mass media.

I do this because eight or nine years ago, I was in Manitoba and I worked for the friendship centre there, and I worked with the youth. ... And we had this one youth who was 14, I think, at the time, who during the summer came into the space and had an overdose on our desk. He was fine, we called ambulance. And then he came back like a week or two later when everything was kind of settled and he was back to feeling 100%, and we asked him what happened. And he told us that he just thought it was a natural part of growing up, or maturing into Indigenous adulthood to have to go through the tribulation of moving through this kind of nonstop closing and opening belated movement into life. He thought that was normal. And I just rem-

ember asking myself, like what type of pain does a 14-year-old boy have to be in to be addicted to painkillers? And that's like always stuck with me, specifically in the writing projects that I move through now and move into. It's like always for the youth first and foremost because representation is one of the most powerful tools we have. ... I would say almost all of my work; like Jonny too was written as YA originally. Arsenal picked it up and was like, maybe this is a little too rated ‘R’, but the aesthetics, the font choices, everything in that is geared towards hopefully having youth pick it up and read it and be interested. And then, letting the stories fill their belly and taking what they need, and transforming them in either the grandest or the most minute ways.

KP: I'm wondering as well about how this work with two-spirit and Indigiqueer utopias and utopianism has affected or influenced how you think about writing?

JW: ... There's a line in Jonny Appleseed wherein his grandmother, or his kokum, teaches him that humility is just the humiliation you loved so much it transformed. And that was like the seed that I needed to carry into the next book in thinking about mental health, whereupon some of it was also influenced by that story that I shared about the 14-year-old, in thinking about mental health, as taboo or negative affects as something that should not be discussed. In kind of a Cree fashion — we don't have genders in our language, we
have animations, and we animate things like sky, the land, the Earth itself, and then we're always in relations so, we're accountable; we practice reciprocity with these relations — I was interested to see, okay, if I'm going to think about joy or this kind of utopian blueprint, how do we animate pain? And if we do, does it become something material if it's bound on a page? And in that, can we also like, make love to it and transform it? Like, can pain and love be humility and humiliation too? … Thinking about them simultaneously: Indigeneity is not its trauma, but that trauma is also an informant and in using it correctly, ethically and respectfully, it transforms into powerful orality. So, Love After the End was like the testing grounds for that — again, not that I wrote these stories, I just kind of guided them in that fashion — and what was produced was, I think, exactly what was needed, and this pain was transformed, I would say, into love. Dystopia becomes utopian when it's met with that same type of accountability.

This interview has been edited for clarity and abridged.

Kostyn Petrunick is a graduate student in English at Brock University in St. Catharines, ON. His SSHRC-funded masters research focuses on contemporary poetry in and of the so-called “Anthropocene.” He reads, writes, worries, organizes, and sometimes remembers how to sing and play guitar before soon forgetting again.
It was as though we could see the wave coming—something tidal—but it was in the distance. So far away, we thought, that it would settle or die out before it reached us, as it had before. Not this time.

Theatres shuttered, schools closed, highways emptied, flights grounded, borders shut. You probably remember where you were when you got news that your workplace would close. As the doomsday numbers rose around the world, and travel bans were issued, suddenly every snuffle and cough seemed perilous, and students scrambled to get back home, wherever that was. The meaning of home transformed as people looked at empty store shelves, wondered whether they had accumulated that 2-week emergency supply, whether the WiFi infrastructure was solid enough, and adjusted to more time there. Coyotes and foxes, emboldened by the onslaught of a human “garrison mentality” caused by the Covid-19 Coronavirus took back the cities. And maybe this Great Pause was the time to channel our inner Susanna Moodie, and stay put in our homes, baking new things (ballpark pretzels, anyone?), completing puzzles, exercising online.

Initially, during the hesitant billowing, there was a slight reprieve. From work as we had known it. From commuting. From the everyday hustle and bustle of kids’ sports schedules piled on the end of hectic work and school days. We’d been too busy. If the numbers were to be believed, the world would change, the population decrease, all of us would be affected maybe directly, certainly peripherally as we hunkered down and waited.
What happened to teaching; or, why did we come to hate the word ‘pivot’?

Online platforms for classes already existed, but now we would rely on them for everything. There were webinars and Zoom calls about how to run better online courses. One year later, we are used to these platforms and their quirks, but in those early weeks, they were new frontiers. We had to get used to hearing our students as disembodied voices, being caught off-guard by frozen screen faces, the falsehood of non-eye-contact, and of watching our own head as it taught (ghoulish), all while monitoring the chat. Asynchronous teaching was suddenly encouraged after years of strict class schedules. Not all decisions worked out, in hindsight. Regrets, as the saying goes, I’ve had a few.

Asynchronous teaching seemed like the right decision at first for so many reasons: equity, accessibility, WiFi, time zones, students who moonlight as essential workers. But students craved connection. Somehow, recorded lectures and posted PowerPoints with audio were not the same as teaching in person, although some of the time they are a welcome hiatus amidst a busy semester. The evaluations reflected the students’ collective befuddlement. They fretted that faculty no longer wanted to teach. In fact, creating all that content takes time and commitment, and profs are often sitting there all class waiting for any student email that might pop up with a question. But the human touch sometimes seems too far away to make the connection apparent. Maybe we hate the word “pivot” because we’re continuously stretching to make the save.

What happened to reading and writing?

As spring moved into fall, and fall gave way to winter, all of us—faculty and students alike—got better at it. A new problem cropped up. While some revelled in the escape provided by reading, many felt that it was a task they didn’t have the attention span for anymore. I shortened some of my class readings to try to meet my students where they were. Even when we meet in person, it can be a struggle to get students to complete the readings.

Certain things were harder to address in class now. Assignments—painstakingly outlined, rewritten, discussed in the online classroom—can be met with a troll-like, “So, what's the assignment?” It’s as though the enormity of having to figure out your research and writing are incongruous when moving from your duvet to your desk to complete a course. And with only Discord Chats among students to bounce ideas around, their connection to one another is tenuous. Once understood or undertaken, though, I’m not the only one reporting that my students’ imaginations and writing are intact, maybe improved. Also, how many of us have noticed the rise of the introverted student—suddenly dynamic in the online classroom “chat”? While some things may not translate from in-person to online, in other ways, some students are thriving.
Are we on “mute”?

You have probably experienced an idiosyncratic faux-pas on air when someone’s child came in and changed their background mid-meeting, or your dog started barking so much that one of your students wrote “d-o-g” in the chat. The strict boundaries between home and work were now blurred, but we were all in it together, and that made it, well, if not endearing then at least palatable. Let us see your pet, Prof. Does your kid need your attention, sir? It was okay.

There have been barriers to teaching all along: schedules, training, hiring, stringent deadlines, copyright laws. Without the meeting-place of campus, and the face-to-face community of classes, we have managed to teach, write, and learn online together. It’s harder than it sounds without in-person eye contact, real-time facial expressions, groans or giggles or immediate feedback to get a sense that what you are saying is getting through. It can feel like airing a podcast for listeners you aren’t sure are there. (I think you’re on mute. Leave your camera on, if you’re able.)

Teaching is a caring profession. By the time we hit Week 9 of the semester (mine is typically 13-14 weeks), the care work picks up in the form of student emails increasing with the stress and needs. Resilient teaching tells us to assign more responsibilities to students, and to respond with inclusivity, accessibility, and kindness. But of course.

Groundhog Day

We have passed day 365 of teaching in a pandemic, with the end only vaguely on the horizon. As we emerge from this hibernation, we wonder, will it go back to the way it was? Will it morph into a hybrid of online and in-class learning? We’ve learned that even in waiting, the rhythm of our days changes. It is the yin-and-yang: oppressed and resilient, obedient and rebellious, painstaking and restorative. In all those ways, it fuels story.

Jennifer Chambers is a Professor of Creative Writing and Literary Studies in the Creative Writing and Publishing Program at Sheridan College.
In their filthy joy, the upstairs neighbours laugh through the vents. Meanwhile, I am virtually teaching Elie Wiesel’s Night. Some students have faces, others are little black boxes on the screen. During the question period, when I say, ask anything, one of the students says, how do we deal with this grief? I should have said, anything but that. I stumble through an answer: I think it’s okay to be sad. It’s okay to align yourself with sorrow. Then I turn the question (this mouth weapon) back at them: How do others deal with the grief? Some students speak of sharing their thoughts with loved ones, others of writing or drawing. What helps me, I finally say, is being able to hold the book and let it go simultaneously (Never mind I don’t do this very well). As we say our goodbyes, the boxes dwindling, I add (maybe stupidly), when you rejoin the world, don’t forget about the laughter.

Anna Veprinska is a poet and scholar. She has published the books Empathy in Contemporary Poetry after Crisis (Palgrave Macmillan, 2020), which was shortlisted for the MSA First Book Award, and Sew with Butterflies: poems (Steel Bananas, 2014), as well as the poetry chapbook, Spirit-clenched (Gap Riot Press, 2020). She holds a SSHRC-funded Ph.D. in English from York University, where she was awarded the Dissertation Prize, and is a current SSHRC Postdoctoral Fellow at the University of Toronto. She will be presenting a paper on poetry in oral Holocaust testimonies at the upcoming ACCUTE conference.

LESSONS DURING A PANDEMIC
One river’s story:
on the western coast of Ontario, a river named

*Penewobecong* — meaning *smooth rock*,
meaning *sloping* — was renamed *Blind River*

by the men who judged its mouth difficult
to see. The many-eyed river witnessed

its renaming. History-nicked, it pulsed onward
(a river has work to do, after all).

Gurgling

in the throat of the river’s rewritten history
is its initial name, refusing to be spit out.

In such a country, a parting of lips
is a translation away from one another.

Not silence but the empty saucer of sound,
a sloping mouth thirsts, continues thirsting.
In her recent essay for *The Typescript*, Black Canadian Studies Association co-President Rosalind Hampton outlines why the BCSA will not be participating in Congress 2021, and why the BCSA has called on all associations within the Humanities and Social Sciences Federation of Canada to discuss the issues and decide on a course of action. It’s a fierce, hopeful and beautiful essay which asks all of us in the Canadian academy to commit to working shoulder-to-shoulder in solidarity and to being *solidaire*, firm in a commitment to anti-racism and to ending colonialism that connects us all to larger movements for justice, in the past and for the future.

I doubt that most ACCUTE members disagree with those principles in general. The leadership of ACCUTE issued a statement broadly in support of the BCSA in February. And I was generously invited by leadership to discuss this issue in *The Angle*. But has ACCUTE done what the BCSA has asked associations to do?

Not yet. And we need to.

To be *solidaire* and make a Congress and a Federation which are truly equitable and open, we need to listen to our colleagues at the BCSA. In its February 8, 2021 statement, the BCSA explained its position. And in its February 20, 2021 statement, it clarified its position and asked other associations “to discuss the issues we have raised and the positions we have taken, and to make decisions for themselves.” BIPOC people are asking the rest of us to do something. We should do it.

To have those conversations and make decisions, we the members of ACCUTE could do the following:

1. Educate ourselves about the BCSA’s position and the Federation’s responses from 2019 to 2021.
2. Discuss with the whole membership, BEFORE Congress 2021, what the issues are and how ACCUTE should respond.
3. Act.
(1) Educate Ourselves

If you are not on Twitter, you may not know what happened to cause the BCSA to withdraw from Congress 2021. Dr. Hampton's article provides that backstory, which begins when one of its members at Congress 2019 was falsely accused of theft and racially profiled. As part of its response, the BCSA initially worked with the Federation to make a special Congress 2020 theme, but when Congress was cancelled last year, no provision was made for the work the BCSA had already done. The BCSA pulled out of Congress 2021 when it became clear that its two requests were denied: the sponsorship of an anti-racism theme as the BCSA designed it, and the waiving of fees for BIPOC students for Congress 2021. The Federation's responses included waiving fees for BIPOC students after the BCSA left, reminding members of its own upcoming EDID report, and promoting its own Big Thinking series. Most of these initiatives were not what the BCSA asked for. Recently, the HSSFC Board of Directors Chair released a statement that centred her own experiences as a response.

(2) Discuss with the whole membership

In asking associations to discuss the issues and make a decision, the BCSA's request has revealed a serious set of problems with communication in ACCUTE. How are we supposed to talk together when it isn’t the AGM? We have no listserv. We have a newsletter but that’s one-way communication. Our Twitter account promotes events. The membership list is not on our website any more so there’s no way to know who the members are. This isn’t good enough. We are in an online environment where we have the tools (Zoom, online document portals, online surveys, even email) to at least educate our membership about what is happening and ask for feedback. The leadership of ACCUTE should facilitate this conversation and ask the membership for feedback about whether to withdraw from Congress 2021. Leaving important decisions like this up to the conscience of individual members blunts the ability of ACCUTE to call the Federation to account and ask for different lines of communication to open about anti-racist work.

(3) Act

As I write this, many associations have engaged in these conversations, as the BCSA has requested. Some have pulled out of Congress 2021. For an up-to-date total, please see this document. So far, sixteen associations and one press have withdrawn from Congress 2021 in acts of solidaire. They are: The Film Studies Association of Canada (FSAC/ACEC), The Bibliographical Society of Canada (BSC/SBC), The Indigenous Literary Studies Association (ILSA), The Sexuality Studies Association (SSA), The Association for Canadian and Quebec Literatures (ACQL/ALCQ), The Canadian Association of Commonwealth Literature and Language Studies (CACLALS), The Society for Socialist
Studies, The Canadian Games Studies Association (CGSA-ACEV), Wilfrid Laurier University Press, The Canadian Society for the Study of Comics, The Canadian Historical Association (CHA), Women’s and Gender Studies et Recherches Féministes (WGRF), The Canadian Association for the Study of International Development (CASID), The Canadian Society for Digital Humanities (CSDH/SCHN), The Canadian Association of African Studies (CAAS), The Canadian Association for Leisure Studies (CALS), and The Canadian Disability Studies Association (CDSA-ACÉH). Some are waiving fees for BIPOC students this year and in future. Some are running anti-racist programming. Some are moving their conferences online for this year.

In addition, individuals (including me) have returned their Congress fees and donated the money to the BCSA to help them organize their own events. If you wish to do this, you can e-transfer the money you would have paid to bcsamembers@gmail.com and put DONATION in the comments.

But individual gestures don’t mean as much as what associations do, and we might have student or early-career members who feel they have to present at ACCUTE and can’t individually protest. Let’s stand together. Write to the ACCUTE leadership to show your support for the conversation that we need, before Congress 2021 begins. And, as a member of associations that have already pulled out, I urge you all to ask ACCUTE to sit out Congress 2021, hold our own short-form online conference this year, decide how else we can support the call to end racism at Congress, and call on the Federation to do better, with a timeline for results.

*Solidaire*. Let’s act.

*Julie Rak* is a Professor and H.M. Tory Chair in the Department of English and Film Studies at the University of Alberta. She has been a member of ACCUTE since 1997.
To all voting members of ACCUTE, please find below a Draft Version of ACCUTE’s EQUITY STATEMENT. The ACCUTE Board will be presenting this statement to the membership at the Annual General Meeting on 1 June 2021, where it will be discussed and considered for adoption. We invite you to review the following document in advance of that meeting.

Understanding Equity
We welcome you to this statement of ACCUTE's vision and understanding of Equity. We hope this document will clarify our understanding and commitment to relationality and social justice both to ourselves and to the wider communities with which we are associated and engaged. We have taken instruction from the model developed by the Edmonton Community Foundation, who define equity as: “an approach whereby all people — including those who bear the burden of historic and contemporary forms of marginalization, whether intentional or unintentional — have equal access to opportunities to define and achieve goals. Equity is more than an outcome; it is an ongoing process that seeks to correct systemic barriers and create a more just and fair society for all. [...] Equity acknowledges unequal starting places and addresses unequal needs, conditions, and positions of people and communities that are created by institutional and structural barriers.”

Why is an equity statement important?
As a large network of scholars and students at all stages of an academic career in English Studies, ACCUTE includes many groups who experience oppression and marginalization by societal structures, and who often experience a history of social and financial disadvantages as a result of systems of oppression including (but not limited to) racism, sexism, colonialism, heterosexism, and ableism. The students and teachers of English that comprise ACCUTE bear essential knowledge and are full of creativity, vibrancy, and resiliency. At the same time, many of their insights, knowledge, and practices are not fully realized because of inequality. Solving these problems requires shifting the status quo and creating a better future for all of our constituents. The Board of Directors for a professional academic association must strive to be strategic and responsive to the changing needs of all its members. ACCUTE recognizes that associations have access to forms of power, such as capital, networks, and influence. As such, it is important for us to be explicit in our commitment to equity, representation and dialogue. We hope this statement will:

- be a tool for change; inspire conversations about equity; keep our organization accountable; and invite others to consider their own equity processes.

While ACCUTE has a track record of addressing inequality, we also recognize there is more to do both within our institution, within our discipline, and within the wider academy where calls for decolonization have been urgent. We are a learning organization and this is a living document. We invite you to share your thoughts, feedback, concerns, and questions about our journey to equity, and your own. Please send any comments to info.accute@gmail.com.
ACCUTE EQUITY STATEMENT (DRAFT)

This Equity Statement is meant to reflect the collective values and vision of all all members of the Association of Canadian College and University Teachers of English, recognizing that the Board of Directors has a special responsibility within that community to ensure that the values and ideals of this statement are upheld, advanced, and communicated clearly to all members.

ACCUTE will be responsive to the changing needs of students and teachers of English and to the many people and socio-cultural communities that define the vibrancy and resiliency of our discipline. We acknowledge that systemic barriers to equity exist. As Equity has no terminal point, it can only be achieved insomuch as it is actively pursued as an ongoing goal and ongoing process.

ACCUTE will strive to support and create an inclusive and equitable community.

ACCUTE will value diversity and inclusion and commit to helping achieve equity.

ACCUTE will recognize that prioritizing some groups is a necessary step in equity.

ACCUTE will recognize that such prioritizing might create discomfort, but acknowledges and accepts that change is rarely comfortable.

ACCUTE will continue to review policies and processes (formal and informal) through an equity lens and will review processes to identify unconscious bias.

ACCUTE will continue to honour and ensure engagement with and between diverse people and communities. We seek to establish and recognize shared goals, while engaging diverse voices to ensure that all communities within ACCUTE see themselves reflected in the work of the association.

We see committing to making meaningful space for diverse communities as a key way we can help achieve equity. We want to ensure that people can thrive and reach their full potential by amplifying community voice and opportunity.

The ACCUTE Board shall regularly report back and communicate the successes and challenges in our equity journey.
**ACTIONS**

**Action 1:** ACCUTE will continue to make space available in our events and publications for a wide range of community purposes, to be able to respond to needs as they emerge. We will consider how we can best address systemic barriers.

**Action 2:** ACCUTE will provide or promote equity-training opportunities for association members through such venues as workshops, webinars, panels, and resources. We will seek ways to provide additional supports to communities that will benefit from experience with professionalization processes in English literary studies. We will commit resources to supporting equity as a process and outcome.

**Action 3:** ACCUTE will prioritize panel and publication submissions from historically under-represented communities and will determine whether to take additional action to reach these communities or prioritize these proposals. We will encourage people of all backgrounds to submit panel proposals and apply for other opportunities at all levels in our work and operations.

**Action 4:** ACCUTE will actively recruit so that our board, staff, and volunteers are broadly reflective of the community, and will strive to engage similarly diverse participants in our conference events and publications. Working with equity-seeking communities, we will together consider whether to establish new programs or support new professional opportunities that situate the decision-making power within those communities. We will review and adapt our communication processes to ensure equitable promotion of our programs, opportunities, and events and to engage diverse voices in telling our shared stories.

**Action 5:** The ACCUTE Board of Directors will seek community feedback on the equity statement and release a yearly report on our progress prior to our Annual General Meeting towards increasing equity. ACCUTE, as a whole, will review this statement annually.

**Acknowledgement:** This statement has been developed from the Equity Statement of the Edmonton Community Foundation with their consent. Access the Edmonton Community Foundation statement [here](#).
Annual General Meeting Agenda
(Virtual Meeting)
2:30-4:00 pm MDT, Tuesday 1 June 2021

- Virtual AGM

Motion: Given the extraordinary circumstances of the current pandemic, the closure of provincial and national borders, and the cancellation of Congress 2020, the Chair moves that the ACCUTE 2021 Annual General Meeting be held virtually with the assistance of the Federation of the Social Sciences and Humanities to ensure fair and responsible governance of the association.

- Approval of Agenda

Motion: The Chair moves that the 2021 Agenda as circulated and projected at the AGM be approved.

- Approval of Minutes (2020 AGM)

Motion: The Chair moves that the Minutes of the 2020 AGM as circulated in the ACCUTE program be approved.

- Matters Arising

- President’s Report (Gregory Betts)
  a. ACCUTE Board of Directors
  b. Congress 2020 Cancellation
  c. Federation Relations and BCSA Support
  d. ACCUTE Member Communications and Discussion Pertaining to upcoming ACCUTE Retreat

- Vice President’s Report (Ronald Cummings)
  a. Membership Report

- Financial Report (Ronald Cummings)
  a. Statement of Revenues and Expenses for fiscal year
  b. Conference expenses
  c. Financial position
  d. ACCUTE/ESC transfers
  e. Membership dues
  f. Donations and sponsorship 2021

Motion: The Chair moves that the Financial Report for the fiscal year ending 30 June 2020 as presented at the 2021 ACCUTE AGM be received.
Annual General Meeting Agenda - p. 2

- Report of Editor of ESC: English Studies in Canada (Allan Pero)
- Report of the Committee for Professional Concerns (Kit Dobson)
- Report of the Contract Academic Faculty (CAF) Representative (Concetta Principe)
- Report of the Graduate Student Caucus (Meghan Burry)
- Report of F. E. L. Priestley Prize Committee (Hannah McGregor)
- Report of the President of the Canadian Association of Chairs of English (CACE) (James Allard)
- Election/Confirmation/Welcoming of New Members to the ACCUTE Board of Directors

- President, Graduate Student Caucus
- Member-at-large (CPC Committee)
- Member-at-large (Priestly Prize Chair)

- Other Business
  - ACCUTE's Celebration of Research up next!

- Adjourn

Motion: The Chair moves to adjourn the meeting.

For the complete Draft Program for ACCUTE's 2021 Conference, visit accute.ca
We are pleased to announce the publication of *Stars Need Counting: Essays on Suicide*, by Concetta Principe (Trent & York University), Contract Academic Faculty Representative for ACCUTE. *Stars Need Counting* meditates on questions of suicide in the mode of A. Alvarez, when he says, in *A Savage God*, that there are no answers to these questions, because suicide is a “closed world” – so closed that it’s not our place to judge or cast shame. These essays explore the quality of what is closed about this world, bring it close enough to scrape the shame off the act, and for those who have passed, and for those who survive, offer peace. Don Gillmor describes her latest book as “a lyrical, unflinching exploration of love, mortality and suicide. With *Stars Need Counting*, Concetta Principe has shed a welcome and necessary ray of light on the mystery and heartbreak of suicide.”

*Stars Need Counting: Essays on Suicide*, is forthcoming from Gordon Hill Press in Spring 2021. Visit the [publisher's website](https://example.com) for more details.
Asha Jeffers (Dalhousie University), whose poetry appears in this issue of *The Angle*, has just published a new poetry chapbook of poetry with Anstruther Press. *Mundane, Majestic* is now available. Asha is a scholar and creative writer originally from Toronto who lives and works in Halifax. Her short story “The Scar” can be found in *The Puritan*. Her poem “I” was selected for the 2020 Poetry in Motion public poetry project in Nova Scotia. She is the fortunate daughter of immigrants who raised her to be at home in the world.

For more information, please visit the publisher’s website.

When I move through the world,
I often feel myself to be
A large floating eye
Seeing and seeing and seeing
And barely aware of being seen.

Mildly surprised
when I’m proved wrong.
The Canada Milton Seminar is an annual event designed to bring together Canadian and international scholars working not only on Milton but on early modern literature and culture in general. This year’s seminar will be held as a virtual event on May 15th, 2021. For more information, please visit the Centre for Renaissance and Reformation Studies.

Narrative Art and the Politics of Health, edited by Neil Brooks (Huron University College) and Sarah Blanchette (Western University) is an intersectional collection of essays that considers how literature, film, and narrative, more broadly, take up the complexities of health, demonstrating the pivotal role of storytelling in health politics.

For more information, please visit Anthem Press.
ACCUTE’s mission is to promote the interests of those teaching and researching in the various fields of English Studies in Canadian colleges and universities. Your membership is more important today than ever.

Visit accute.ca to renew.

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The Angle is produced by Erin Knight and Eric Schmaltz

The Angle is a forum to make your voice heard. If you wish to contribute to this newsletter or submit Letters to the Editor, please contact info.accute@gmail.com.