

# ACCUTE

ASSOCIATION OF CANADIAN COLLEGE AND UNIVERSITY TEACHERS OF ENGLISH

SPRING/  
SUMMER  
2024

## THE ANGLE



### IN THIS ISSUE:

[President's Message](#)

[In Memoriam: Dr. Michael Keefer](#)

[Award Announcements](#)

[CWC Writing Prize: First Place & Honourable Mentions](#)

[A Roundtable of Poets](#)

[BIPOC ACCUTE First Person Interview Series](#)

[Member News](#)

[AGM 2024 Minutes](#)



## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

### DOUGLAS IVISON

This is my last column as ACCUTE President, one in which I'd hoped that I'd be reflecting on a successful conference. Instead, as you all know by now, on June 7 the Board decided to essentially cancel the conference, except for a few scattered sessions, in response to the events that took place on the McGill campus on June 6 and the many withdrawals and calls to cancel that came from conference participants.

I want to emphasize that the Board worked extremely hard over the six weeks leading up to the conference to respond to the changing situation at McGill and make adjustments that we thought would allow us to continue to hold the conference, even if it ended up being a scaled-down version of our initial plans. We spent a substantial amount of money moving key events to Concordia (but unfortunately couldn't afford the cost of moving the entire conference there). Ultimately, however, after the events of June 6, only a few days before the start of the conference, we felt we no longer had a viable option to continue.

Did we make the right decision? To be honest, I don't know. I know that some of you agree with it and others do not. I know that other associations made similar last-minute decisions while others stuck it out at McGill. Ultimately, I'll leave it up to you to judge whether we made the right call for ACCUTE and for you.

I know and deeply regret that the decision disrupted your plans and had financial consequences for those of you unable to cancel your tickets or reservations. We will do what we can to reimburse conference participants, particularly graduate students and the precariously employed.

I also deeply regret the missed opportunities for our members to share their work and to network. We had organized what I felt was going to be a great conference, with exciting keynotes and readings, and many excellent papers and panels devoted to scholarly research, creative writing, pedagogy, and professional concerns. I hope that many of you will choose to share your work at next year's conference in Toronto.

Despite our decision to cancel at McGill, I still believe that it's better to be present and engage than it is to stay home, and I hope in future we'll find ways to be present even in difficult situations. I hope that ACCUTE will continue to participate in Congress, at least next year, and I look forward to hearing the results of discussions that the Federation for the Humanities and Social Sciences has promised about the future of Congress and the role of associations like ACCUTE. I hope that productive change will be one result of this year's chaos. We'll have to wait and see.

In the end, we were able to hold only a few events. I want to thank our five winners of the Congress Graduate Merit Award for sharing their papers in an online panel on June 12 (and thanks to all of you who attended and listened to a great set of papers). I was also pleased that Caroline Levine was able to give an excellent keynote on June 13. Thanks to all who joined us in person at Concordia or online. Finally, I encourage you to read in this issue the description of the poets' roundtable that took place at Concordia on June 15, co-sponsored by ACCUTE, ACQL/ALCQ and APFUCC (one of the many collaborations we had planned for this year's conference). I'm pleased to be able to inform you that Erín Moure, who was scheduled to be one of our keynote speakers, has agreed to give her keynote at next year's conference in Toronto. I know I'm looking forward to it.

I want to take the opportunity to recognize the exceptional work of ACCUTE's Office Coordinator, Erin Knight, not just during the past couple of months but over the four years she's served in this role. ACCUTE owes a great deal of thanks to Erin, who has ably supported ACCUTE's Executive, Board, and its members through many challenges. This year's Board, too, has been a great source of guidance and support, and I thank all of them for their wisdom and hard work. Our Local Arrangements Coordinator, Allan Hepburn from McGill, has also been extremely helpful. Over the past few weeks, our President Elect, Jason Camlot became a second Local Arrangements Coordinator as we worked to find space at Concordia for some of our events, and then to accommodate presenters looking for a venue to share their work. I'm grateful to Jason for being so willing to help out at a very challenging time.

Thanks to Jason and Cynthia Quarrie, both from Concordia, for agreeing to serve as ACCUTE's President and Vice-President respectively for 2024-26. I wish the entire executive team at Concordia all the best, and I know that ACCUTE is lucky to have Jason and Cynthia leading us over the next two years. I'd also like to welcome our new Board members: Megan Arnott (Lakehead), Contract Academic Faculty rep; Rajarshi Banerjee (Western), President of the Graduate Student Caucus; and Jessi MacEachern (Dawson), Colleges rep. Thanks for your willingness to serve.

Finally, I want to recognize ACCUTE's members. Your scholarly and creative work is inspiring, as is your commitment to our discipline and the profession. These are challenging days for Canadian universities, particularly the Humanities, but there is so much amazing work being done by all of you, from graduate students to full professors. I hope to see many of you next year.

## IN MEMORIAM: DR. MICHAEL KEEFER

UNIVERSITY OF GUELPH,  
ACCUTE PAST PRESIDENT



ACCUTE acknowledges and mourns the passing of Dr. Michael Keefer earlier this academic year. Michael was a past president of ACCUTE (1992-1994), a professor at the University of Guelph, a scholar of early modern literature, and an overall wonderful person. His work on early modern magic was unmatched in the academy, and his editorial and scholarly work on Christopher Marlowe's *Doctor Faustus* remains essential to anyone working in the field and on this play. Everyone who worked with Michael quickly learned that he was a fountain of knowledge, good advice, and kindness. In the later part of his career, Michael focused on contemporary political issues, among which included Canadian responses to the conflict between Israel and Palestine. In all facets of his career, Michael was supportive of students and brought a contagious enthusiasm about literature to the room, whether it was in conversation during an individual graduate student's directed reading course or by riding a hobby horse into an undergraduate classroom. Michael will be missed, though never forgotten. Michael is survived by his loving partner, the novelist Janice Kulyk Keefer, and his sons Chris and Tom.

—contributed by Mark Kaethler (Medicine Hat),  
ACCUTE Colleges Representative

## CONGRATULATIONS TO THE 2024 WINNERS OF THE CONGRESS GRADUATE STUDENT MERIT AWARD

Each year the FHSS provides participating associations with a limited number of Congress Graduate Student Merit Awards, which serve to recognize and celebrate the academic excellence of deserving graduate students who present their work at Congress. To help offset costs associated with participating, each award carries a prize of \$500.

Our awards recognize student members who have shown not only academic merit but also who have made significant contributions to their communities and to ACCUTE. Our CGMA winners presented their papers in an online panel on June 12, 2024.

### The 2024 winners are:

- Rajarshi Banerjee (Western)
- Zara Diab (Western)
- Waed Hasan (Guelph)
- Ryanne Kap (Calgary)
- Sarah Rewega (Guelph)

## CONGRATULATIONS TO THE 2024 WINNERS OF THE F.E.L. PRIESTLEY PRIZE

The F. E. L. Priestley Prize recognizes and acknowledges the best essay published in the scholarly journal *English Studies in Canada* over the past year.

### The 2024 winners are:

- Winners: Erin Akerman (Brock) and Kristina Bidwell (Saskatchewan), for their essay "(Re)mapping Métis Relationships in Cherie Dimaline's *Empire of Wild*" (ESC 47.1)
- Honourable Mention: Isaac Thornley (York), for his essay "Cracks, Gaps, and Oil Spills in the Settler-Colonial Symbolic Order: Confronting Socio-Ecological Antagonism in Canada" (ESC 47.2-3)

# CWC: Sustainable Futures Writing Contest Winners

Student members of ACCUTE were invited to submit a poem or short story responding to the Congress 2024 theme of “Sustainable Futures.”

## Winner (Fiction)

“The Porcelain Vase” by Vivian (Xiao Wen) Li

## Honourable Mention (Fiction)

“Ninety Seven Point Five Percent” by Zara Diab

## Winner (Poetry)

“wound maintenance” by Mary V. Johnson

## Honourable Mention (Poetry)

“The Little Ghost Nebula is eleven thousand seven hundred and sixty trillion miles away”  
by Meghan Kemp-Gee

## Honourable Mention (Poetry)

“Ocean” by Vivian (Xiao Wen) Li

With thanks to English Studies in Canada  
for supporting this award



# **FREEDOM AND POWER: CELEBRATING THE CWC WRITING CONTEST WINNERS**

## **SARAH OLUTOLA**

What is academia for? And especially at this inflection point in history, what should academia be to its students? These are the questions I considered as I proposed what has become The Creative Writing Collective's inaugural Graduate Student Creative Writing Contest, collecting short stories and poetry from all across Canada. Many students go to universities and colleges in hopes of degrees and access to jobs and livelihoods. But we cannot forget or dismiss academic spaces as sites for radical change and transformative thinking.

In an interview, award-winning American novelist and professor, Toni Morrison once spoke of the advice she would give to her own students: "When you get these jobs that you have been so brilliantly trained for, just remember that your real job is that if you are free, you need to free somebody else. If you have some power, then your job is to empower somebody else." Power is being able to tell stories and frame narratives. Power is being allowed to use your voice and to have your voice counted. Creative writing empowers. It exposes buried histories. It sheds light on hidden plights. And I hope that through this contest, more students will feel the freedom to hone and share their voices.

Below are the winning entries to the short story and poetry prizes, judged by the CWC executive committee. "The Porcelain Vase," a short story by Vivian (Xiao Wen) Li of The University of British Columbia, provides a look into the everyday lived reality of generational mental illness, self-harm, and loss, intertwining grief with the hope that can come with just one forward step.

Also, on behalf of the CWC, I would like to thank Juno Award Winning Canadian Dub Poet Lillian Allen, who so graciously helped to choose the final winner of the poetry prize. The winning poem is titled "wound maintenance," by Mary V. Johnson of Queen's University. Lillian notes that the poem "touches on the granularity of both the physical and the existential wound we live in from industrial damage...nature's magic and hope emerge in the beauty of a sunset or the formation of geese in flight that is as fierce as industrial destruction. The poem beautifully asserts why we have survived and why we will and must survive."

As you read these pieces of writing, I encourage you to ponder the meaning of survival and sustainable futurity. Especially consider, with the aims of the university in mind, how our students are engaging with this topic in trying times, and what academia can do to further foster their power and freedom.

## FIRST PRIZE, POETRY: MARY V. JOHNSON

### WOUND MAINTENANCE

you vivisect the sky with an exacto knife  
 a kiss-sharp caress  
 tracing new cartographies between  
 factory belches, black lung breaths, cumulonimbus  
 icebergs  
 rebillowing themselves into shapes  
 you remember from a childhood picnic  
     before the atmosphere  
     became  
     a haunted place.

the wound weeps           fiercely

oozing forth oilsweet rain, toxins like tree rings  
 spelling a story chokeholded  
 by perpetual ends.

but also—and yet—  
 there are gods here       thousands of them  
 a migratory arrow of wild-dark geese  
 stars named after lovers  
 masked by numbers, by myths, by unknowing  
 and sometimes the sunset bleeds  
 oh    so beautifully.

despair all you like  
 but I have noticed  
 when considering your ancient dead you always  
 look skyward

wonderstruck & tender-eyed

invisible roots beneath your soles  
 reaching       grasping       embracing  
 an underground stratosphere  
 of ancestral bones.



**Mary V. Johnson** is a PhD candidate in English at Queen's University, where she researches intersections of children's literature and ecocriticism. She has a BA from the University of Victoria and an MPhil from the University of Cambridge. Her poetry and short fiction have appeared in *ROOM* and *FreeFall Magazine*, among others. Under the pseudonym *Mary Averling*, she writes middle-grade novels with Putnam / Penguin Random House); *The Curse of Eelgrass Bog* released January 2024, and *The Ghosts of Bitterfly Bay* will follow in February 2025.

**HONOURABLE MENTION, POETRY: MEGHAN KEMP-GEE****THE LITTLE GHOST NEBULA IS ELEVEN THOUSAND SEVEN HUNDRED AND SIXTY TRILLION MILES AWAY**

You were lying on your back. You were watching the angels painted on the ceiling, or you were dreaming of the taste of strawberries. You

had fallen asleep, or we were holding hands across mountainous horizons of beetle-eaten pinetrees and towering cosmic cliffs.

You were lying on your back. We were standing in the sky. We were holding hands and counting out the zeroes in its shadow, the pale pink

and turquoise little ghost lying on your back and painting angels on the ceiling, smiling for the photographs and dressed in paris green.

You were lying on your back. I was painting you a picture. You were not the little ghost. You were not dreaming it. We were holding hands.



***Meghan Kemp-Gee*** is the author of *The Animal in the Room* (Coach House Books, 2023), as well as three poetry chapbooks (*What I Meant to Ask*, *Things to Buy* in New Brunswick, and *More*). She also co-created the graphic novel *One More Year*. She is a PhD candidate at the University of New Brunswick.

## **FIRST PRIZE, FICTION: VIVIAN (XIAO WEN) LI**

### **THE PORCELAIN VASE**

When she was in the middle of gathering her white roses beside the china vase, a sky-blue porcelain lip with hawks flying above watercolour peaks, she realized she'd forgotten to buy a lily for her mother's anniversary. The basket crinkled as she picked it up—the tulips, violets, and petunias sighed when the heavy gold-trimmed door behind her opened and clicked shut. Wind gathered her skirts and lifted them above her well-fashioned, sturdy red heels. The embroidery on her bottom skirts resembled words, or something else her father had scribbled in a feverish dream. She was like him that way—deep and introspective, submerged in mind-water.

The thread had come from her great-grandmother's black box, the one she'd brought with her across borders, hidden within the folds of a baggy shirt and above a few loops of a knotted leather belt. Within the box's other treacherous compartments was a blunt needle the size of a finger, vanishing baby towels, and a pair of opal earrings with encrusted feathers. Eventually, most of her great-grandmother's treasures were discovered by officers at the edge of a country with the power to make others pay for their differences.

A soft crunch woke her from her reverie. The glass door, opening into a road with busy click-clacks and sombre dums had let in a deer with deep brown eyes and large antlers. Her fingers longed to run down its back, wondering if the creature would duck its head or gaze at her steadily, unmoving.

She opened her fingers gingerly, waved them up and down in the air. The deer knelt as if to drink, then brushed its nose, soft as knitted mittens, tracing along the side of her hand. She shivered, the scar along her flesh throbbing and pinching at her skin.

Then the deer went on, its brown tail bobbing around the corner of the flower shop, brushing past the paper bag brimming with potato seeds and other vegetables. A few flakes of dust settled onto the ground, and, rising, she plucked a red lily from its stand, dusted it off, and followed her counterpart to the front desk.

It had nearly been invisible to her the first time she saw the counter—but as she approached, more objects emerged in the mist. Below the marble white tops was a glistening sculpture of Virgin Mary resting at the front of the desk. She was curled over a slender weeping willow tree, its leaves occasionally brushing against a tiny fir. The cash register was on the other side, heat emanating from its slate surface, the dust piling onto its keys from an unknown wind until some had to be blown off by a young man with brown hair and soft eyes. He'd been humming a song she vaguely remembered when she approached the counter for the second time.

"I came to purchase another flower," she announced. She stopped close to him, and saw that he had just taken off his gloves to brush the dust off. Her shoulders, which had been slumped forward when following the deer, were now straight and steady. "For my mother's anniversary."

"Twenty cents," the man responded. He opened his palm as she leaned to pass the coins to him. She saw the lines in them, the jagged corners where scars didn't heal, where they still remained, digging deeper. He felt her stare, and flipped his hand over, pulling it back to his chest. "I—"

"What song were you humming?" she interrupted.

He shrugged, and ducked his head, but she saw a bright fire flash in his eyes. "It's an old one."

"I love the classics."

"Mad world," he responded. The words that thrummed were soft but steady, like the rain drumming into a deep pool. "All around me are familiar faces. Worn out places, worn out faces..."

She smiled as she listened, waited until he stopped before she joined in: "Bright and early for their daily races. Going nowhere, going nowhere." She paused, glanced at her own delicately curled fingers on the counter.

"You have a beautiful voice," he offered.

She nodded. "Thank you."

He opened his palm. "These were... accidents."

She nodded again.

They tried exchanging flower for coin again. He smiled as he tucked the silver into the cash register, where they wouldn't be harmed. "You're a good daughter," he said. "No one buys flowers for their mothers anymore."

"I wasn't always," she whispered. She'd never been good enough to anyone, for anyone, including herself. Her limbs were sinking, her heart churning, like water at the bottom of a whirlpool. If only she could resurface for a moment, if only she could breathe—

She suddenly remembered her mother, a pious woman who always wore dark dresses covering her arms even under the sun. One night, she left behind her daughter and a pair of knitting needles by sea-salted conch chairs. *Hush, Merna*, her mother said, as she rested her hand on her child's head. The mermaids were calling her into the ocean, and she needed to know if they would accept her. *I will be back soon.*

*It runs in the family*, her uncle had said, as he closed his spectacles and inched them back into his black suitcase with the remains of her mother's thin hand-writing. He coughed twice to force the bad luck out his lungs. *You're bound to [REDACTED] like her too.*

"It's been hard," the young man said.

"Yes."

"It gets better, or so they say," he said. His eyes were dark and glistened like dew. She resisted the temptation to touch his nose, to embrace his neck.

"Yes." She knew he would understand, somehow. It was as if they could see the same colours—hers, thick black strokes tinged with blue—his, black, blue, and reds intertwined. It was hard to say why she thought this way. Maybe because he had looked at her steadily, unflinching, at the scars that ran across her hands. She knew he'd seen them the first time she came to pay—her shawl couldn't cover the threads that ran across her wrists, back and forth in rows of perfect incisions. She had felt blood and pain, but in the heat of the shop, with the sun at her back and combing through her long dark hair, she was strong. Present.

"Thank you," she smiled. "For the flowers."

"You're welcome," he responded, with a joy that reminded her of the moment the hawks flew over the mountains in her childhood—how their wings connected with the wind and held it for as long as possible before they made another incision, another push, another break in the air.

She closed her eyes and took a deep breath, levitating the flavourful perfumes of the shop onto her tongue. The basket was light, its two knotted braids connected with her hands. Flowers brushed against her scars, coaxing them, reminding her of another future. "It's beautiful," she said as she revealed the world to herself again.

The young man was leaning slightly backward with his arms spread out, his eyes closed. The counter shone as the sun from the open long-sided windows pulled its magic through the shimmering mist.

She waited a moment for his eyes to open, dark and precious like marbles. She picked up her basket and tucked the red lily into her braid, then reached across the table and asked for a heavy roll of white bandages. Her hands full of blooming red, faded black, and protective white, she turned back to the door. She could see a perky brown ear poking out from behind one of the pots, nibbling away. She smiled at the thought of its nose touching her skin.

The door was fresh and light against her hand, the gold glistening. Perhaps the sun was setting; she didn't know.

She opened the door and left it all behind.

***Vivian (Xiao Wen) Li also received an Honourable Mention in the poetry category of the CWC Graduate Student Creative Writing Contest for her poem "Ocean."***



***Vivian (Xiao Wen) Li*** is a queer and neurodivergent writer and interdisciplinary artist, with works published in *The Fiddlehead*, *The Massachusetts Review* and *The New Quarterly*, among others. The author of *Someday I Promise, I'll Love You* (845 Press), she is the writer and director of a video poem, as well as two other short films that have premiered internationally in film festivals. A Banff Centre alumnus in poetry, she was Longlisted for the 2024 CBC Short Story Prize and is a recent MFA graduate from the UBC School of Creative Writing. She can be reached @vivianlicreates, and will be looking for a home for her debut experimental novel.

## HONOURABLE MENTION, FICTION: ZARA DIAB

### NINETY SEVEN POINT FIVE PERCENT (EXCERPT)

Soon, it feels too far into the conversation to back out politely. I think about going to the washroom, but suddenly become aware of how open my drink is. Instead, I down it and slide off the barstool. It's late, anyway.

You offer to walk me home. Had I let it slip that Jo is away tonight? It's dark out, and I don't mind the escort — you seem harmless enough. Before we leave, I tell you that I'm not interested in anything physical. I mean sexual, but I know you understand that. You ask me a few times if I won't change my mind. Your tone is playful. I say no again but smile to cushion your feelings. You laugh and sweep that lock of hair over your forehead.

\* \* \*

The next morning, you're there. You roll out of my bed and stick two fingers between the plastic blinds shielding my window. It crackles too loudly as you spread them apart, and I watch the sunlight bleed across my bed.

"My ride's here. That was fun. Call me sometime." And then you're gone.

\* \* \*

"Is there anything you can point to that would prove the incident was actually your fault?" When I don't respond, the officer adds: "I'm just trying to play devil's advocate."

"I said 'no,'" I say. "Isn't that enough?" The officer sits across from me. A cold, grey table between us.

"Well, was alcohol involved? Did you invite this person home with you? Did you maybe say or do anything at all that implied you might have wanted it? These are the kinds of things they'd bring up in court."

This is the third time I've had to exhume my story, after Jo, after the therapist. "Actually," I say, standing up, "I don't want to do anything about it."

On the bus ride back, the sun reflects sharply off of something colourful in my periphery; a few rows ahead and across the aisle, an 'I BELIEVE YOU' pin ornaments someone's backpack.



**Zara Diab** is a PhD candidate in the department of English and Writing Studies at Western University. She completed her BAH and MA in English literature and psychology at Queen's University. Zara also works as a Gender-Based Sexual Violence education and prevention training facilitator. Her current research looks at how 20th century U.S. literature reflects and perpetuates sexual scripts that contributed to the birth of violent Incel extremism.

## A ROUNDTABLE OF POETS:

### MONTREAL 2024

In the wake of the cancellation of ACCUTE's conference at Congress this year, a session that gathered 15 poets and writers took place at Concordia University on June 15. This one-of-a-kind event was the occasion for participants to discuss and explore their preoccupations, thoughts, or writerly practices in a communal setting. The session, dedicated to celebration and exchange, was self-directed and based on topics that participants had selected in anticipation of the discussion. As moderators, we regrouped the various topics as thematic constellations that created paths of discussion while allowing for exploration and digression. This free-flowing approach made room for contribution, silence, and reflection.

Participants included Oana Avasilichioaei, DM Bradford, Nicole Brossard, Daniel Canty, Lenny/Lou/Moyna Pam Dick et al., Simon Dumas, Klara Du Plessis, Liz Howard, Annie Lafleur, Jessi MacEachern, Erín Moure, Chantal Neveu, Faith Paré, Gail Scott, and Jacob Wren. The conversation continued at Rumi on Hutchinson where we shared dinner, ideas, and laughter. In creating this gathering, our intent was to open academic doors to writers for a discussion that would unfold on their terms. Academic members and other poets joined the session in a tightly packed room buzzing with a dynamic that writers enjoyed and are still talking about.

We wish to thank the people who made it possible to hold this memorable event on the margins of the university and in the midst of political duress: Doug Ivison, President of ACCUTE, who through thick and thin took care of the logistics—material and financial. Thanks for your persistence, patience, and calm; Jason Camlot, who came in at the last minute to save the event by offering us a room and technical support at Concordia: many, many thanks; Erín Moure, who helped us create an inclusive list of participants; Soundouss El Kettani, President of APFUCC, who not only helped with registration and programming but also financial support; Heather Milne, Vice-President of ACQL, who was a staunch supporter of the event from the start, and who offered sponsoring; and Acadia University for its financial support. Finally, we are grateful to all the writers who responded so generously to our invitation. Thank you all for your trust and enthusiasm.

*—contributed by Anne Quéma (Acadia), Jane Malcolm (Montréal),  
and Geneviève Robichaud (Moncton)*

## BIPOC/ACCUTE INTERVIEWS: FIRST PERSON WITH SARAH OLUTOLA

*The BIPOC/ACCUTE First Person Interviews series captures the stories and perspectives of BIPOC members of ACCUTE from different parts of Canada at different stages of their teaching, research, or graduate student careers. If you are interested in participating, please contact [info.accute@gmail.com](mailto:info.accute@gmail.com). We hope you enjoy reading our members' stories and we look forward to hearing from you. —Chinelo Ezenwa*

To read the full interview with Sarah Olutola, please [click here](#).



**Sarah Olutola:** I am an Assistant Professor of Writing at Lakehead University's English Department. I work in Black, African, and African diasporic Anglophone literature and pop culture, but I'm specifically looking at North American Children's Literature, which I write.

**Chinelo Ezenwa:** From your perspective, what does it mean to be "BIPOC" and "BIPOC" ACCUTE? Is "BIPOC" an identity you would normally assume — why or why not?

**SO:** There are so many different ways to think about these questions, and this is part of the reason why I like pop cultures. Through pop culture, you can get an understanding of how people are feeling about things and thinking about larger issues. I don't know if you know about the Afro Beats artist Tyla; she recently won a Grammy for the song "Water," which is very catchy. I love that song. But it's so interesting because when she started to really explode and that song started to explode, there was discourse online about African Americans calling her Black. Through the American lens, they were having discussions about colourism, and the ways in which Blackness is defined by these Eurocentric standards. But Tyla herself actually said, I'm not Black, which made a lot of people upset. She said, I'm coloured (she is from South Africa). This got me thinking about the ways in which names and labels embrace. They are so contextually situated in different places. And they are always historically, socially, regionally, politically situated and inflected.

I think that in North America, we created this term BIPOC which stands for Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour. First of all, why Black and Indigenous? Why point those two out? I think it's an understanding that within a North American capitalist society in the global North, Black and Indigenous people receive much of the burden of racism and of these racist systems.

There are times when I wonder about whether the term is useful because understanding ourselves as not white, I think, still centralizes whiteness. Also, I think, the word "BIPOC" already gives a sense of the kinds of hierarchies and the differential relationships that we have with each other. I think it's still a useful term, but it's very politically situated.

**CE:** Going back to your example of how a university might hire a “Black” faculty member who does not identify as Black, what would be ACCUTE’s biggest contribution in this regard, in terms of helping to understand some of the complexities you highlighted within “BIPOC” communities?

**SO:** I think definitely having more courses that speak to “BIPOC” experiences and that can really break down those complexities that I talked about would definitely help. That would require hiring more “BIPOC” faculty members and having more “BIPOC” people in higher positions. But who’s being fostered and encouraged to enter into these positions, or even to enter into that educational space to be able to get their Master’s and PhD? These have to do with larger political, sociopolitical, societal institutions and hierarchies. So, how does ACCUTE want to step outside of just academia? Because it does require stepping outside of academia and taking a look at all of that, all of those people out there who are not white, who aren’t really given the kinds of privileges that allow them to enter into this field. How can we enter into these communities and foster that kind of love for education and foster the opportunities that will allow people to eventually be hired in these positions?

And then how can ACCUTE advocate for its professors? You know, I wrote a piece for *The Conversation* about what universities need to do to protect their racialized faculty. And we did a Lakehead webinar on the series. I wrote the piece because I was so intrigued by something that happened to a professor of Nigerian origin named Uju Anya, who critiqued Queen Elizabeth. Uju Anya talked about British colonialism in Nigeria, and she was reprimanded, first of all by Jeff Bezos, which I thought was just so strange, but also by her university, Carnegie Mellon. And the students had to create this petition to try to protect her and protect her job. But I think we’ve seen situations like that in Canada where you know Black professors or Black people within academia who may not be protected when they speak truth to power. What happens if a “BIPOC” professor spoke out in favour of Palestine? What would that mean? So, what can the institutions do to protect their racialized workers and employees and faculty members so that these faculty members can do what we’re supposed to do, which is to foster real change within academia? ACCUTE could think about what it means to have a university as a creative space and a space for a social change.

**CE:** I also think that universities, supported by associations like ACCUTE, are the right spaces to train for having potentially divisive conversations, mindful of other viewpoints and histories. Universities are microcosms of the “real world,” so understanding how to deal with each other respectfully could be a big part of university education. I will now ask one of our “fun” questions. If you could write a book, another book, or direct a movie, what would be the title?

**SO:** I thought that question was so interesting because I can’t imagine myself directing anything. I don’t even know what goes into directing, but it’s kind of like, what would I want to see on screen or in print? I love Black kid’s literature (Black kidlit) that takes African experiences across the diaspora. The kind of stuff that Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie writes is largely, I think, for an adult audience. As somebody who was born in Canada, you know, and raised in Canada, I would love these kinds of books, but more of it in kidlit (children’s literature). I would have loved to have Black kidlit middle grade books. When I was growing up it was largely white books available. I would love to see something for younger audiences, like picture books, chapter books, middle grade books, because I think that’s an important age where kids need to see themselves in the books they read.

## BIPOC/ACCUTE INTERVIEWS: FIRST PERSON WITH MO SHARIFI

*The BIPOC/ACCUTE First Person Interviews series captures the stories and perspectives of BIPOC members of ACCUTE from different parts of Canada at different stages of their teaching, research, or graduate student careers. If you are interested in participating, please contact [info.accute@gmail.com](mailto:info.accute@gmail.com). We hope you enjoy reading our members' stories and we look forward to hearing from you. —Chinelo Ezenwa*

*To read the full interview with Mo Sharifi, please [click here](#).*



**Mo Sharifi:** Thank you for thinking of me, Chinelo, for this interview. I think it's important for racialized people to speak their truths and to be heard. My name is Mo Sharifi. My pronouns are he and him. I am Persian Canadian. I am a PhD candidate at Western in the Department of English and Writing Studies. I am faculty at the School of Language and Liberal Studies at Fanshawe College. I currently teach Reason and Writing, and Professional Communication courses. I am also a member of the EDI and Anti-Oppression Task Force at Fanshawe College.

**Chinelo Ezenwa:** My first question is: what are your biggest concerns about academia and English studies, as they relate to BIPOC members?

**MS:** One big problem that I have found is that whether we are being invited to the table or we are excluded, we are usually cast as the "unresolved Other." One of the controversial things about inclusion is that if we think of it as including the Other, it still assumes the otherization of, for example, racialized folx. That mindset and that barrier seems to be embedded not only in our systems but also in our minds. And because we are the ultimate Other, we are constantly trying to break down walls that feel like very thick, glass walls that are invisible to people who don't have to deal with them, but are very real for us.

Secondly, there's also this tendency to tokenize the racialized folx when it comes to boosting the brand of the institution and making the institution look good. So, we become the sacrificial lamb in that way. We get tokenized by institutions, for example, for EDI related positions. In those types of roles, it feels like we are punished by the system if we try to change the system, and at the same time we get criticized by our communities because it doesn't seem like we're doing enough. This takes such a toll on racialized academics. It impacts their mental health, performance, and productivity. The turnover rate is just mind-blowing because people burn out.

There are a lot of events, a lot of talks, books, articles, statements about EDI. But I keep wondering how and when we are going to move from words, beautiful words, to actual action. Within institutions, we talk about complicated things, like "cognitive imperialism," EDI in theory, Eurocentrism, and so on and so forth. We talk about big oppressive systems, right? But is that enough?

**CE:** Thank you so much for sharing these insightful observations. From a “BIPOC” perspective, if you could pick one area of focus for ACCUTE to work on, what would it be? And what has been ACCUTE’s biggest contribution?

**MS:** ACCUTE has so much potential, and one is in bringing people together and fostering a sense of community. And I find that happening to some extent during Congress every year. I see that the association takes care of registration fees for Indigenous and Black people, and that’s awesome. That said, I think there’s still a lot more that can be done. For instance, colleges, where many “BIPOC” happen to work, also have such a palpable presence in today’s educational scope. Colleges train thousands of students who go right into society after training, some of them to universities. But within ACCUTE, I see an under-representation of college teachers, and that is a missed opportunity for the association for sure. Teaching, as the focus of most colleges, is the very practical side of academia, and that is also not emphasized enough. In the coming years, I think it’s important to have panels and papers that focus on what we actually do/should be doing as teachers. Examining how we impact people’s lives in the classroom is as important as our theoretical studies. Teaching is so important because education could save lives, but it could also take lives—see the case of the residential schools in Canada. We must focus on teaching as well because we’re dealing with people’s lives. And the people we teach are going to impact other people as well. So, the amount of power that we mobilize as a teacher is immense. That’s one area that ACCUTE and English Studies can pay more attention to.

**CE:** For one of our fun questions, you opted to respond to this one: “what’s the most fun and/or the most critically relevant (“BIPOC”) book/movie you have read/seen recently?”

**MS:** There’s a TV series that I’ve been watching, and I’m absolutely in love with this. It’s called *Reservation Dogs*. It is about an Indigenous community, and the main characters are Indigenous teenagers. The series is about their hardships and how they go through life and redefine their relationships with their elders. What I particularly like about this show is that it shows their everyday lives, love, pain, relationships, and bigger questions. They laugh and cry and persist, make mistakes, fail, and get up again. They are okay to be who they are. I like that, because sometimes you watch movies or shows about racialized folx or Indigenous peoples that are all about suffering. And that’s legitimate—I recognize the importance of that. But we have to be careful not to define these peoples just in terms of pain, trauma, and shock. With these people in *Reservation Dogs*, you can see how their sense of humour and joy and resilience comes through even during hardships.

**CE:** Thanks very much for the recommendation, Mo. I will make a point of watching the series. This takes us to the final question. Do you have any words of wisdom for BIPOC graduate students, emerging scholars, or other members of ACCUTE?

**MS:** What I’m going to say will be from my experience. The first thing is to prioritize your health (especially mental health) and practise self-care. I’m sure you’ve heard this before and it sounds cliché, but it’s very true. Self-care is the first line of resistance. It is a radical act of advocacy. We racialized folx work and live in environments everyday where we take hits from different directions. So, we need not to forget to take care of ourselves. We need to have survival strategies. Don’t burn out to just prove yourself.

## BIPOC/ACCUTE INTERVIEWS: FIRST PERSON WITH LILY CHO

*The BIPOC/ACCUTE First Person Interviews series captures the stories and perspectives of BIPOC members of ACCUTE from different parts of Canada at different stages of their teaching, research, or graduate student careers. If you are interested in participating, please contact [info.accute@gmail.com](mailto:info.accute@gmail.com). We hope you enjoy reading our members' stories and we look forward to hearing from you. —Chinelo Ezenwa*

To read the full interview with Lily Cho, please [click here](#).



**Lily Cho:** My name is Lily Cho, and I am a professor of English in the Department of English and Writing Studies at Western University. I also serve as Vice Provost and Associate Vice President International at Western University. I am a researcher and have been serving in administrative leadership positions since 2012. And I talk about this partly because the administrative work hasn't been separated from my research, even though my research isn't, you know, directly about university leadership. I think that sometimes there's a perception that when you do administrative work, you're no longer really connected to the research side of the profession. And I want to gently push back against that. I have found administrative work within the university to provide a space that helps to address unique research challenges.

I trained as a postcolonial literary critic and theorist. And certainly, I have found that work to be incredibly important in my role. As an administrator and as a leader, I can bring to my conversations with counterparts around the world an understanding of how to relate to universities around the world in a way that is deeply multilateral, that is about mutual benefit, and that isn't extractive. In order for us to be competitive, isolation is not the answer. And true forms of collaboration across national borders remain deeply, deeply important.

**CE:** And that leads us to my second question about what it means to you to be "BIPOC" and a BIPOC member of ACCUTE? Are these identities you ascribe to yourself?

**LC:** I did my graduate training in the 90s and there were not a lot of "BIPOC" people in English studying in Canada at a graduate level. There were no courses in Asian Canadian literature. Yet one of the things that I value about the study of English literature in Canada, and that's very personal to me, was that the mentors and colleagues I've had have remained profoundly curious about the boundaries of English and the study of English.

My dissertation was on Chinese restaurants in Canada and their cultural significance. I think it's a testament to the capaciousness of the field that I was awarded a doctorate in the study of English based on that dissertation. Looking back on it, I think that my mentors, my supervisor, my committee all tried to find ways to bring the questions that I had to the study of English.

I didn't explicitly identify as a person of colour in the academy for a long time. Because I didn't want to be. I wanted my scholarship to stand on its own. And I will say that it was not until I became a university administrator that I began to talk really openly about being a person of colour, about being someone who enters the university from a family where English was not the first language, and about being someone who entered the university from a family where her parents hadn't gone to university. And I found that I could give myself permission to do that because I saw how much it mattered to students to hear that, and to be able to share that experience with them was so meaningful.

When I was invited to apply for the position at Western, as a standard part of the application package I was asked to submit an EDID statement, which is totally pro forma. I spoke candidly and honestly in that statement about how some of the worst experiences that I've had with racism and discrimination happened when I lived and worked at Western from 2003 to 2010. And that my hope was to recognize that experience, have it recognized, and to be given the capacity and resources and leadership to address some of those ongoing fundamental issues that had shaped some of those experiences for me in my work here in an earlier part of my career. I think it's a credit to this university and to the search committee that they took that really seriously. But I do think, and again I speak as an administrator, that there are many parts of higher education that need decolonizing.

In terms of being "BIPOC" ACCUTE, I'll just say that I've been a member of ACCUTE since I was a graduate student in 1990, and that's a long time to have been part of an organization. I'm incredibly grateful to ACCUTE and think that it's one of the best scholarly organizations in the country. I think ACCUTE has always led in ways that are really important around issues that are important. And I would say to graduate students and junior faculty members that your scholarly associations matter more than you think. These are the places where we create community and where we change the conversations around our field and our discipline.

Not that long ago, one of my students defended her dissertation on Korean Canadian literature. I think it's fair to say she identifies as Korean, Korean Canadian, Asian Canadian. At the end of the defence, the external examiner, who herself is Asian Canadian, pointed out that we were in a room where almost every member of the committee was an Asian and an Asian woman, and the candidate was an Asian woman. And then we all cried. Because when she and I were in grad school, imagining that a room like that would exist was impossible—that we would have that much expertise at a senior level where you could have an entire graduate examining committee composed of Asian women in our field. It was not something we could imagine. So, yes, it could have happened sooner, but it certainly happened in the time it took for me to go from graduate student to full professor. I think that ACCUTE has had a really important role in such things, even down to having a BIPOC committee within ACCUTE.

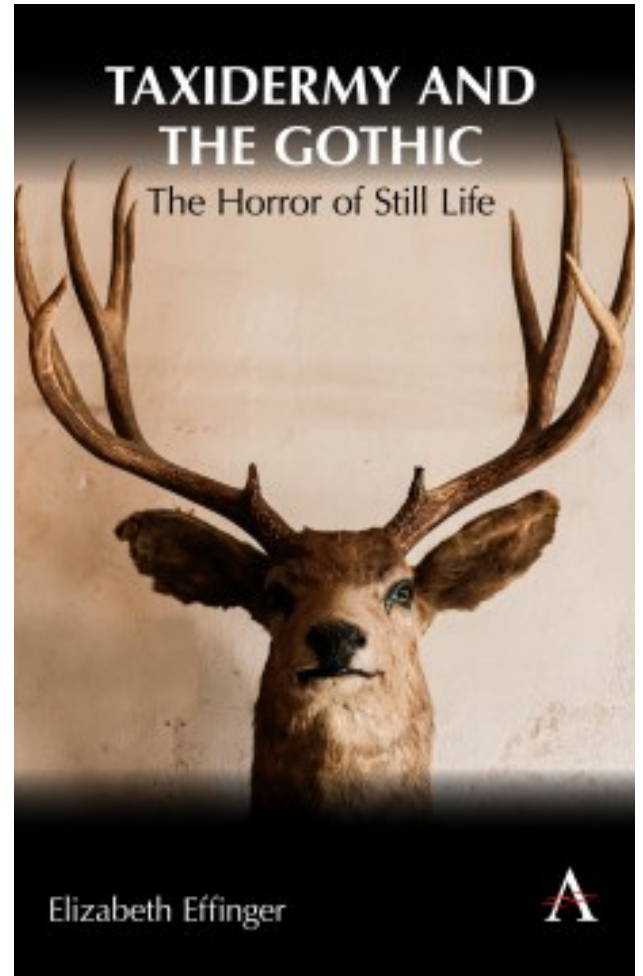
**CE:** Thank you so much for sharing these deeply personal experiences! Like you, I have found the space of *English Studies in Canada* and ACCUTE quite intersectional. To explore one of our more "fun" questions, I am going to ask what's the most fun or most critically relevant "BIPOC" book or movie you have seen or read recently.

**LC:** For me, it would be *Everything Everywhere All at Once*. One of the things that has stayed with me so deeply is that complexity of grief and rage within racialized families and how we metabolize those effects, how we carry them forward, and what we do with that inheritance. These really moved me, and I still think about them.

## MEMBER NEWS

### ***Taxidermy and the Gothic: The Horror of Still Life*** by Elizabeth Effinger (Anthem Press)

**From the publisher:** *Taxidermy and the Gothic: The Horror of Still Life* is the first extended study of the Gothic's collusion with taxidermy. It tells the story of the emergence in the long nineteenth century of the twin golden ages of the Gothic genre and the practice of taxidermy, and their shared rhetorical and narratological strategies, anxieties, and sensibilities. It follows the thread into twentieth- and twenty-first-century culture, including recent horror film, fiction, television, and visual arts. Moving beyond the well-worn path that treats taxidermy as a sentimental art or art of mourning, this book takes readers down a new dark trail, finding an overlooked but rich tradition in the Gothic that aligns it with the affective and corporeal work of horror (e.g., anxiety, hesitation, disgust) and the unsettling aesthetics, experiences, and pleasures that come with it. Taxidermy's imbrication with the Gothic is more than skin deep: these are rich discourses stuffed by affinities for corporeal transgressions, the uncanny, and the counterfeit.



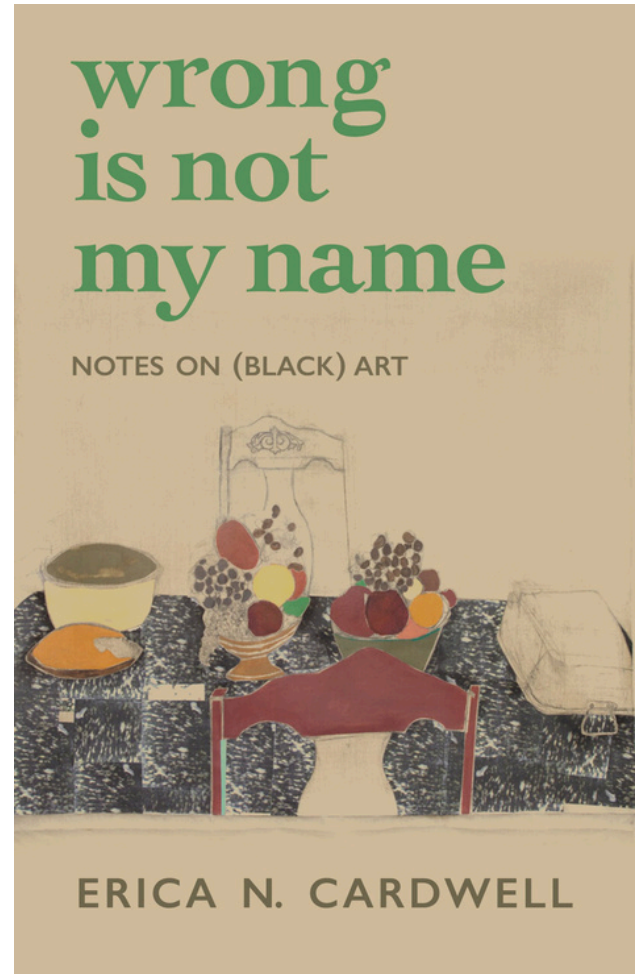
Elizabeth Effinger (ACCUTE VP 2018-2020) is an associate professor of English at the University of New Brunswick. She is the co-editor of *William Blake's Gothic Imagination: Bodies of Horror*.

For more information about *Taxidermy and the Gothic*, please visit [Anthem Press](https://www.anthempress.com/).

## MEMBER NEWS

### ***Wrong is Not My Name: Notes on (Black) Art*** by Erica N. Cardwell (The Feminist Press)

**From the publisher:** A dazzling hybrid of personal memoir and criticism, considering the work of Black visual artists as a means to explore loss, legacy, and the reclamation of life through art. At the age of twenty-one, Erica Cardwell finds herself in New York City, reeling from the loss of her mother and numb to the world around her. She turns inward instead, reading books and composing poetry, eventually falling into the work of artists such as Blondell Cummings, Lorna Simpson, Lorraine O’Grady, and Kara Walker. Through them, she communes with her mother’s spirit and legacy, and finds new ways to interrogate her writing and identity. *Wrong Is Not My Name* weaves together autobiography, criticism, and theory, and considers how Black women create alternative, queer, and “hysterical” lives through visual culture and performance. In poetic, interdisciplinary essays—combining analytical and lyrical stream-of-consciousness—Cardwell examines archetypes such as the lascivious Jezebel, the caretaking Mammy, and the elusive Sapphire to formulate new and inventive ways to write about art.



Erica N. Cardwell is a writer, critic, and educator based in Brooklyn and Toronto.

For more information about *Wrong Is Not My Name*, please visit [The Feminist Press](https://www.thefeministpress.com/).

## MEMBER NEWS

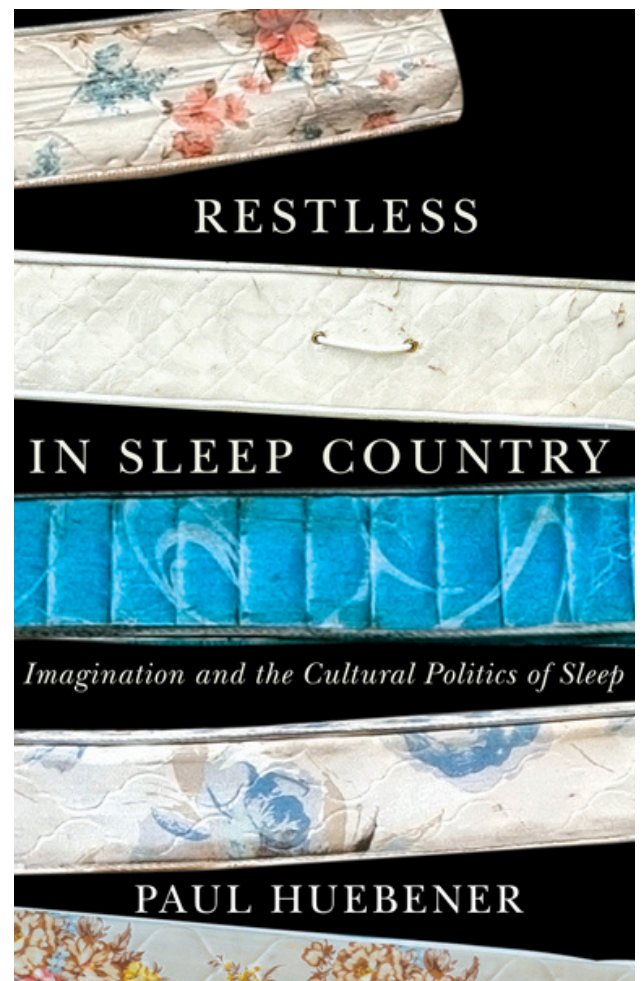
### *Restless in Sleep Country:*

### *Imagination and the Cultural Politics of Sleep*

by Paul Huebener (McGill Queen's University Press)

**From the publisher:** Sleep, and the lack of it, is a public obsession and an enormous everyday quandary. Troubled sleep tends to be seen as an individual problem and personal responsibility, to be fixed by better habits and tracking gadgets, but the reality is more complicated. Sleep is a site of politics, culture, and power.

In *Restless in Sleep Country*, Paul Huebener pulls back the covers on cultural representations of sleep to show how they are entangled with issues of colonialism, homelessness, consumer culture, technology and privacy, the exploitation of labour, and the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic. Even though it evades direct experience, sleep is the subject of a variety of potent narratives, each of which can serve to clarify and shape its role in our lives. In Canada, cultural visions of slumber circulate through such diverse forms as mattress commercials, billboards, comic books, memoirs, experimental poetry, and bedtime story phone apps. By guiding us through this imaginative landscape, Huebener shows us how to develop a critical literacy of sleep.



Paul Huebener is professor of English at Athabasca University and the author of *Timing Canada: The Shifting Politics of Time in Canadian Literary Culture*.

For more information about *Restless in Sleep Country*, please visit [McGill-Queen's UP](https://mcgill-queen.upress.com/).

# MEMBER NEWS

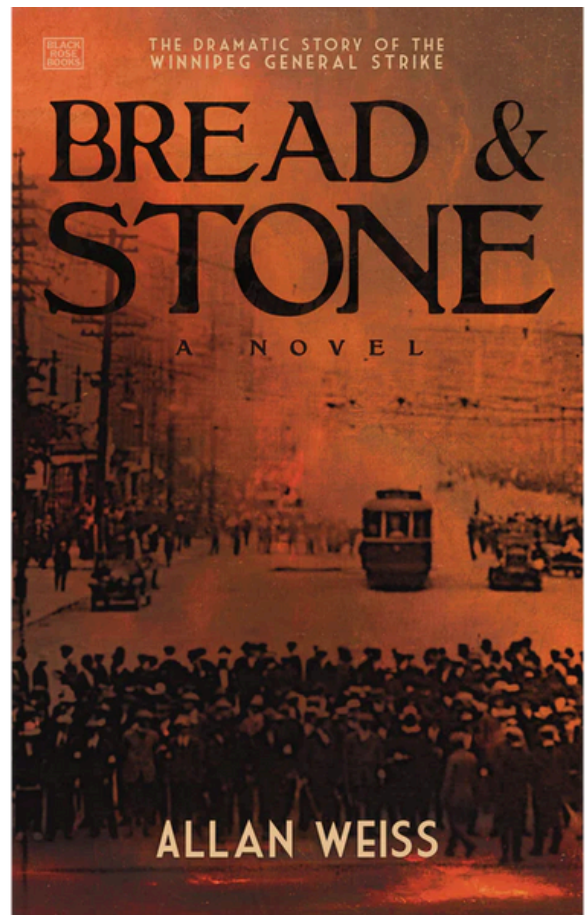
## ***Bread & Stone***

by Allan Weiss (*Black Rose Books*)

**From the publisher:** William McLean is an Alberta farm boy seeking the work that he believes God has put him on Earth to do. Returning from World War I in a crisis of conscience, he finds his calling when he is drawn into Winnipeg's labour movement by his army buddy Daniel Eckersley. As unrest mounts and the authorities respond with force, William finds himself in the midst of an upheaval that could mean freedom – or destitution – for all.

In *Bread and Stone*, Allan Weiss skillfully combines the story of one of the most dramatic real events in Canadian history, the Winnipeg General Strike, with the spiritual journey of a young man growing to understand who he is, who he is becoming, and what it is that he must do.

Allan Weiss is a Toronto fiction writer and Professor of English at York University. He is the author of three story cycles: *Living Room* (2001), *Making the Rounds* (2016), and *Telescope* (2019). His latest story, “A Tartan of Many Colors,” was published recently in the anthology *Other Covenants: Alternate Histories of the Jewish People*.



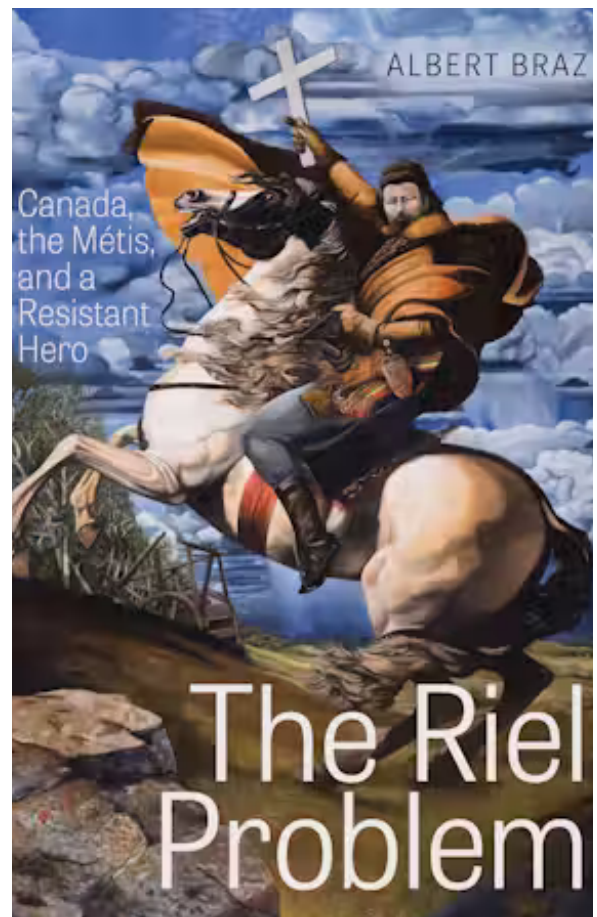
For more information about *Bread & Stone*, please visit [Black Rose Books](#).

## MEMBER NEWS

### ***The Riel Problem: Canada, the Métis, and a Resistant Hero*, by Albert Braz (University of Alberta Press)**

From the publisher: Tracing Louis Riel's metamorphosis from traitor to hero, Braz argues that, through his writing, Riel resists his portrayal as both a Canadian patriot and a pan-Indigenous leader. After being hanged for high treason in 1885, the Métis politician, poet, and mystic has emerged as a quintessential Canadian champion. *The Riel Problem* maps this representational shift by examining a series of cultural and scholarly commemorations of Riel since 1967, from a large-scale opera about his life, through the publication of his extant writings, to statues erected in his honour. Braz also probes how aspects of Riel's life and writing can be problematic for many contemporary Métis artists, scholars, and civic leaders. Analyzing representations of Riel in light of his own writings, the author exposes both the constructedness of the Canadian nation-state and the magnitude of the current historical revisionism when dealing with Riel.

For more information about *The Riel Problem*, please visit [University of Alberta Press](https://www.ualberta.ca/press/).



Albert Braz is Professor Emeritus of Comparative Literature and English at the University of Alberta. He is the author of *The False Traitor: Louis Riel in Canadian Culture* (2003) and *Apostate Englishman: Grey Owl the Writer and the Myths* (2015) and the co-editor, with Paul D. Morris, of *National Literature in Multinational States* (2022).

*ACCUTE provides a place to garner support, talk through challenging professional and personal issues, and to find a sense of community. - Jennifer Andrews*

# JOIN

# ACCUTE

ASSOCIATION OF CANADIAN COLLEGE AND UNIVERSITY TEACHERS OF ENGLISH

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**Committed to equity, diversity, inclusivity and decolonization in our profession**



## ACCUTE Annual General Meeting 2024

Tuesday, June 18, 2024, 2:00 pm EDT via Zoom

### MINUTES

Present: Douglas Ivison, Carellin Brooks, Erin Knight (minutes), Marc Lynch, Adam Dickinson, Allan Pero, Anna Guttman, Cheryl Lousley, Chinelo Ezenwa, Cynthia Quarrie, Jason Camlot, Krista Collier-Jarvis, Lorraine York, Mark Kaethler, Megan Arnott, Raj Banerjee, Veronica Austen

Regrets: Neta Gordon

1. Land Acknowledgement (Douglas Ivison)

Douglas Ivison acknowledged the role ACCUTE has played in the erasure of Indigenous cultures and languages, and he shared his hope that the work we are doing today will contribute to ongoing efforts at reconciliation.

**Call to order: 2:03 p.m.**

Douglas Ivison welcomed all gathered ACCUTE members to the virtual AGM.

2. In Memoriam: Dr. Michael Keefer – A moment of silence was observed for Dr. Michael Keefer, Past President of ACCUTE (1992-94)

3. Approval of Agenda

**Motion:** Moved that the 2024 Agenda as circulated be approved.

Moved, Mark Kaethler; Seconded, Veronica Austen

**Carried.**

4. Approval of the Minutes of the 2023 AGM (May 30, 2023)

**Motion:** Moved that the Minutes of the 2023 AGM as circulated on the ACCUTE website be approved.

Moved, Cheryl Lousley; Seconded, Mark Kaethler

**Carried.**

5. Matters Arising from the Minutes: None

6. President's Report (Douglas Ivison, Lakehead University)

Please see [Appendix A](#) for the President's 2024 Report, which addresses:

- Online events held by ACCUTE 2023-2024
- EDID Initiatives Fund awarded to ACCUTE by FHSS: \$3000 in matching funds to be used by November 2025
- ACCUTE lobbying recommendation to FHSS: Research support for CAF
- Launch of CWC Graduate Student Award
- Conference planning; attempts to navigate challenges presented by AMPL strike and call to boycott Congress from McGill chapter of SPHR; ultimate decision to cancel all concurrent sessions
- Conference events that proceeded: Caroline Levine keynote presentation, CGMA winners panel online; co-sponsorship of Poet's roundtable
- Equity Report 2024 (see [Appendix B](#))
- Acknowledgement of conference sponsors
- Review of conference expenses & revenues
- Preview of Congress 2025: George Brown College, May 30-June 6

7. Vice-President's Report (Cheryl Lousley, Lakehead University)

- Membership Report: ACCUTE reports 323 active members as of 17 June 2024
- Membership management system has resolved technical difficulties of the previous year; duplicate entries have been addressed
- Membership base shows good distribution across career levels

8. Financial Report (Cheryl Lousley, Lakehead University)

- Based on the 2023 Financial Statement prepared by Famme & Co; available to ACCUTE members upon request
- Balance Sheet: 2022 was anomalous (solo conference at Alt Hotel, Montreal), 2024 will also be anomalous (conference cancelation)
- Statement of surplus: Solid financial position, thanks to excellence of ESC
- Revenue over expenditures: Note the difference in expenses between 2022 (solo conference) and 2023 (conference within Congress)
- Membership dues are not sufficient to cover expenses
- Not all 2023 conference revenues and expenses will be covered in this report as fiscal year ended June 30, 2023 before Congress accounts were reconciled
- Statement of Cash Flows: Stable

**Motion:** That the Financial Report for the fiscal year ending 30 June 2023 as presented at the 2024 ACCUTE AGM be received.

Moved, Cheryl Lousley; Seconded, Carellin Brooks.

**Carried.**

9. Reappointment of Public Accountant (Cheryl Lousley, Lakehead University)

**Motion:** That Famme and Co. Professional Corporation be reappointed as Public Accountant for 2024-25.

Moved, Cheryl Lousley; Seconded, Veronica Austen.

**Carried.**

10. Report of the Contract Academic Faculty Caucus (Carellin Brooks, University of British Columbia)

Please see [Appendix C](#) for the Contract Academic Faculty Report

- Shared summary of CAF meeting held this week: precarity, uneven workloads, tenuous benefits and seniority
- Some positives: flexibility, time for creative work, incremental improvements
- Policy recommendation: research support for CAF
- Welcomed Megan Arnott as CAF representative, 2024-2026
- DI thanked CB for her contributions to ACCUTE

11. Report of the Graduate Student Caucus (Marc Lynch, University of Calgary)

- Presented the results of the 2023-2024 GSC Survey; for full presentation of the GSC Survey, [click here](#)
- Welcomed Rajarshi Banarjee (Western) as GSC President

- Summarized results of 2023-2024 GSC Survey: ACCUTE is becoming more visible to students; there remains minimal diversity among faculty; few hires
- Some universities are moving away from traditional course descriptions
- Some universities are changing the degree pathway in response to diminished funding, increased external pressures
- Students could be better informed about their rights as students and employees
- CE thanked ML for this information and suggested that statistics on admissions might be a useful addition
- DI thanked ML for his contributions and welcomed RB as incoming GSC President

#### 12. Report of the Creative Writing Collective Caucus (Adam Dickinson, Brock University)

- Reported a 50% increase of CW panels planned for the conference; webinar success; establishment of Graduate Student Creative Writing Contest.
- Announced winners of CWC Contest: Fiction: Vivian (Xiao Wen) Li (UBC), honourable mention: Zara Diab (Queen's); Poetry: Mary Johnson (Queen's), honourable mention: Vivian (Xiao Wen) Li (UBC), Meghan Kemp-Gee (UNB)
- Allan Pero offered ESC's continued support of the prize for the coming year
- Sarah Olutola and Robert McGill have stepped down; Maria Cichosz is Awards Officer; VP position is vacant
- DI thanked AD for his work this year

#### 13. Report of the BIPOC Caucus (Chinelo Ezenwa, Western University)

- Reported on the introduction of BIPOC Coffee Hour and First Person interview series; organization of conference panels: "Japa-ing" to Freedom or/and Slavery; EDI and the Excellence Dilemma
- Acknowledged contributions of 2023-2024 volunteers: Richard Douglass-Chin (Windsor), Basmah Rahman (Queen's), Titi Aiyegbusi (Toronto)
- Summarized ongoing concerns of BIPOC Caucus: hiring of and support for BIPOC faculty in English Departments; support for BIPOC ACCUTE student members
- Asked for follow-up on Lily Cho's suggestion from 2023 AGM: ACCUTE "toolkit" for BIPOC action and solidarity. How can ACCUTE help with mentoring members or directing them to relevant support systems?
- Expressed caucus concern that ACCUTE does not sufficiently acknowledge "BIPOC" perspectives and experiences in decision making

- Reported on EDID Initiatives Fund: \$6000 to be carried forward
- Previewed focus areas for 2024/2025: 3 sessions of BIPOC Coffee Hour; CFP on Decolonizing the Language of AI; CFP on Decolonizing the teaching of Shakespeare in high schools; emphasis on teaching; decolonizing the OED definition of “Black(ness)”; identify an ACCUTE BIPOC rep in every partner institution; solicit a journal publication of short papers/work in other mediums on BIPOC (ACCUTE) related issues
- Emphasized that hybrid options for Congress 2025 will be essential for the BIPOC caucus participation
- Thanked ACCUTE for their support during 2024-2025
- CL suggested ACCUTE introduce a mentorship program such as ALECC has implemented
- DI offered *The Angle* as a venue for BIPOC voices
- DI thanked CE for her work this year

14. Report of the Colleges Representative (Mark Kaethler, Medicine Hat College)

- See [Appendix D](#) for the Report of the Colleges representative
- DI thanked MK for his contributions to ACCUTE

15. Report of the Committee for Professional Concerns (Neta Gordon, Brock University)

- See [Appendix E](#) for the Report of the CPC
- DI thanked NG for her work this year

16. Report of the F. E. L. Priestley Prize Committee (Lorraine York, McMaster University)

- Acknowledged Joel Deshayé for taking on the role of Chair during her bereavement leave
- Announced winners of the 2024 Priestley Prize: Erin Akerman and Kristina Bidwell, “(Re)mapping Métis Relationships in Cherie Dimaline’s *Empire of Wild*,” (ESC 47.1); Honourable Mention: Isaac Thornley, “Cracks, Gaps, and Oil Spills in the Settler-Colonial Symbolic Order: Confronting Socio-Ecological Antagonism in Canada,” (ESC 47.2-3)
- Thanked committee members Sarah Jensen, Karis Shearer, Sarah Olutola
- DI thanked LY for her work this year

17. Report of ESC: *English Studies in Canada* (Allan Pero, Western University)

- Reported that ESC is in excellent financial health (\$293,000 in bank account)

- Explained that although Institutional subscriber numbers have gone down, in many cases it is because ESC has been bundled into in a larger subscription package
- Provided financial support to the 2024 ACCUTE keynote speakers and commits to contributing the necessary funds to compensate members for non-refundable travel
- Outlined global reach of ESC: Project Muse, Cengage, and other databases across 99 countries; downloaded from the top universities in the world; ESC article is downloaded every 4 min 39 sec
- Invited ideas for special issues in advance of ESC's upcoming anniversary
- DI thanked Allan for the ongoing support of ESC

18. Report of the Canadian Association of Chairs of English (Anna Guttman, Lakehead University)

- a. See [Appendix F](#) for the Report from CACE

19. Election of New Members of the Board of Directors

- Member-at Large, Colleges: Candidate, Jessi MacEachern (Dawson College)  
Nominated: Cheryl Lousley; Seconded; Allan Pero  
***Jessi MacEachern acclaimed as College Representative***

20. Welcoming of the new ACCUTE Executive and 2024-25 Board

- DI welcomed new ACCUTE Board Members: Megan Arnott (Colleges), Rajarshi Banerjee (GSC)
- DI welcomed 2024-2026 ACCUTE Executive: Jason Camlot (President), Cynthia Quarrie, (Vice President)

21. Other Business

- a. AP thanked the outgoing ACCUTE Executive, all Board members and AGM attendees

***Adjourned:*** 4:17 p.m.

## Appendix A: President's Report

Prepared by Douglas Ivison

Thanks to all who contributed to ACCUTE over the past year, whether you served on the Board or a committee; contributed to *The Angle*; organized, participated in, and/or attended one of our events; submitted conferences or organized panels or other conference events; or even just sent me an email to make suggestions or raise concerns. Without all of your work there would be no ACCUTE.

As usual, much of the focus this year was on conference planning and publishing *The Angle*, but we were also pleased to host two webinars organized by the Creative Writing Collective and a Zoom coffee hour organized by the BIPOC caucus featuring George Elliott Clarke. ACCUTE was awarded a \$3000 grant from the Federation for the Humanities and Social Sciences' EDID Initiatives Fund to support the development of ACCUTE's BIPOC Caucus. This money must be spent by November 2025 – it provides matching funds, so this also represents a commitment of \$3000 from ACCUTE.

The Federation also identified one of our suggestions – research support for contract lecturers – as a topic for further exploration by the Federation, one that they will build into their lobbying initiatives.

The Creative Writing Collective launched a Graduate Student Creative Writing Contest this year. More details about the winners will follow later in this meeting.

But, of course, our main focus, particularly in the last few months, was on planning for this year's conference at McGill. In addition to the normal conference-planning activities, throughout the month of May our focus was on trying to navigate the challenges posed by the strike of the Association of McGill Professors of Law and then the call to boycott Congress from the McGill chapter of Solidarity for Palestinian Human Rights. Through it all, the goal of the ACCUTE Board was to be present and provide opportunities for conference participants to network and share their work while supporting the union and the right of students to protest. We felt that our presence at Congress and on the McGill campus would provide opportunities for engagement and to amplify the messages of both groups. Although a number of participants withdrew in the weeks leading up to the conference, with less than a week to go I was confident we would be able to put on a viable if scaled-down conference largely at McGill. As you all know, however, after the protesters' occupation of the James Administration Building and the police response on June 6, the Board felt it was untenable to continue to

meet at McGill, and there was not sufficient time or resources to move all our concurrent sessions online or to another venue. (We had previously explored the possibility of moving the entire conference to Concordia, but it was not financially viable). So, we reluctantly cancelled our sessions at McGill. In the few days that followed, other associations cancelled their conferences or moved nearly entirely online. I certainly regret the disruption that this decision caused many participants, and with the support of ESC we're doing what we can to mitigate the impact on conference participants.

In the aftermath of this year's Congress, the Federation has agreed to meet with member associations to discuss potential changes to Congress in order to meet the concerns that were raised by many associations, including ACCUTE, over the last six weeks or so. Hopefully, the result will be a more responsive Federation and a better Congress in the years to come. Despite everything, we were still able to feature a hybrid keynote address by Caroline Levine from Cornell University, author of *The Activist Humanist*, as well as an online session featuring our five winners of the Congress Graduate Merit Awards. We also co-sponsored a roundtable discussion of experimental poets that took place at Concordia on June 15. Thanks to all who participated and attended any of these events.

I want to thank all who contributed to the planning of this year's conference, including everyone on the Board. I particularly want to acknowledge the work of our Local Arrangements Coordinator at McGill, Allan Hepburn, as well as Jason Camlot, who became our de facto Local Arrangements Coordinator at Concordia over the last few weeks. A special thank you must go to our Office Coordinator, Erin Knight, not only for managing a nearly overwhelming workload as we constantly reworked our program and conference plans over the last few weeks, but for all that she's contributed to ACCUTE over the past four years. Thank you, Erin. I've been exceptionally lucky to have your support during my term as ACCUTE President.

Finally, a thanks to our incoming President, Jason Camlot, and Vice-President, Cynthia Quarrie, from Concordia University. ACCUTE is in good hands, and I look forward to how ACCUTE will develop over the next few years under their leadership.

## Appendix B: ACCUTE Equity Report 2024

Prepared by Douglas Ivison, ACCUTE President

ACCUTE's commitment to equity is reflected in the [Equity Statement](#) adopted at our 2021 Annual General Meeting. As the statement notes, equity "can only be achieved inasmuch as it is actively pursued as an ongoing goal and ongoing process." The incorporation of the Equity Statement in our by-laws affirms that the pursuit of equity is central to our mission as an association and as a community, and this report is an opportunity for us all to reflect on the work we've done and what needs to be done.

One of our priorities this year was the development of ACCUTE's BIPOC caucus. At the 2023 AGM, Dr. Chinelo Ezenwa (Western) was elected to a two-year term on ACCUTE's Board of Directors as a representative of the BIPOC Caucus, and in November ACCUTE received a \$3000 grant from the Federation for the Humanities and Social Sciences EDID Initiatives Fund to support the development of the BIPOC caucus. ACCUTE is committing \$3000 in matching funds, meaning that the BIPOC caucus will have \$6000 to support its activities at our annual conferences in 2024 and 2025 and to support other events and initiatives (the funds must be used by November 2025).

Dr. Ezenwa published a report on the BIPOC members meeting at the 2023 conference in the Fall 2023 issue of *The Angle*, ACCUTE's newsletter, and she has conducted a series of interviews with BIPOC ACCUTE members, which are featured in the Spring 2024 issue of *The Angle*.

As part of this year's conference, the BIPOC caucus organized a panel on "EDID and the Excellence Dilemma" as well as a caucus meeting. Thanks to Dr. Ezenwa and to Dr. Richard Douglass-Chin (Windsor) for their work in planning the BIPOC caucus events. In February, the BIPOC caucus held its first virtual BIPOC Coffee Hour featuring a conversation with Dr. George Elliott Clarke (Toronto). As Titi Aiyegbusi (Toronto), the organizer of the event, reported to the ACCUTE Board, ACCUTE needs to improve its visibility among BIPOC scholars, as well as among scholars more generally. ACCUTE is committed to doing so and will continue working to support the BIPOC caucus as it formalizes its structure, and to work toward formally adding a BIPOC caucus representative to the ACCUTE Board.

ACCUTE was pleased to host a webinar on "Poetic Witnessing: Exploring the Black Mediterranean" as part of this year's Creative Writing Collective Webinar series. This event, held in March, featured Dr. Cornel Bogle (Simon Fraser), Shazi Hafiz Ramji (Calgary), and Dr. Uchechukwu Peter Umezurike (Calgary) reading original poetry responding to the archives of the Black Mediterranean followed by a discussion of the creative processes, sources of inspiration, and challenges faced while engaging with the Black Mediterranean through poetry. In planning this year's conference, we worked with our partner associations to centre the voices, knowledges, and experiences of equity-deserving groups, by co-sponsoring a keynote

address by prominent Anishinaabe writer, scholar, and public intellectual Dr. Niigaan Sinclair (Manitoba); a reading by Cree/Métis poet Duncan Mercredi, a former Poet Laureate for the City of Winnipeg; and a keynote address by award-winning queer writer and editor Sina Queyras (Concordia). Unfortunately, all three speakers canceled their participation in the conference.

We are excited to be featuring a keynote by the award-winning Canadian feminist lesbian poet and translator Erín Moure. In addition, this year's conference features a diverse array of Member-organized panels and papers on a wide array of topics, including Indigenous, Black, racialized, and global writing and cultural production, decolonization, disability studies, and diverse genders and sexualities.

Less than three weeks prior to the beginning of this year's conference, the McGill chapter of Solidarity for Palestinian Human Rights (SPHR) called for a boycott of this year's Congress of the Humanities and Social Sciences, which is being held at McGill University, the site of a Palestinian solidarity encampment. Prior to the boycott call, ACCUTE had publicly and privately urged the McGill administration to refrain from using force to clear the encampment and silence the protesters. ACCUTE strongly supports the right of students, faculty, and staff members to protest and demand change from their institutions and to seek action in response to horrific violence and suffering. After consideration of the SPHR's call, the ACCUTE Board decided not to boycott Congress. ACCUTE has a responsibility to those who have made financial commitments to attend our conference (many of them graduate students from equity-deserving groups) and to provide a space where scholars, particularly early-career scholars, can share their research and make valuable connections. The ACCUTE Board feels that we contribute more through engagement and dialogue than by staying home.

In response to the boycott, and in solidarity with the strike by the Association of McGill Professors of Law, we have significantly reduced our financial commitment to McGill by canceling most of our catering and moving (at significant expense) key events to Concordia. We encourage those participating in the conference who wish to do so to express their solidarity with the protesters in the encampment, and are providing space in our schedule for participants to do so. We respect and understand the decisions taken by some participants, including Sina Queyras, one of our keynote speakers, to withdraw from Congress in response to the call to boycott. ACCUTE will continue to advocate that Congress refund the full registration fees for those who withdraw.

As was the case in 2023, this year's conference is planned to be an entirely in-person conference, in part due to the limited technical support and equipment available at McGill. We recognize that this renders the conference inaccessible for some, and we regret that. We understand that the cost of attending Congress is prohibitive for some members, particularly as many universities continue to reduce their support for conference travel and faculty members, and we are committed to doing what we can to make the conference accessible to as many as possible. Along with Congress, we are providing free registration for Black and Indigenous students, and we prioritized students from equity-deserving groups in allocating the \$500

Congress Graduate Merit Awards we receive from Congress. Thanks to the generosity of *English Studies in Canada* and a number of English Departments, journals, and publishers, we are pleased to be able to once again offer a travel subsidy to graduate students and contract academic faculty participating in the conference. We will continue to work to reduce barriers to participation in our conference, including by continuing to lobby the Federation to extend free registration to all racialized students.

Increasing the diversity of the Board and its various caucuses and committees is a guiding principle as we recruit new Directors and committee members, but we remain cognizant of ensuring that we acknowledge the inequitable service burden borne by many members from equity-deserving groups, and that we do not further add to it. In searching for ACCUTE's next President, I first contacted BIPOC members and members from other equity-deserving groups. In doing so I identified many members who expressed an interest in taking on a leadership role in ACCUTE in future years.

There will be an opportunity to discuss this Equity Report and ACCUTE's Equity Statement at the ACCUTE AGM on June 15, but I also encourage you to contact me with any questions, concerns, or feedback on this report or broader issues related to equity within ACCUTE. You can email me at [divison@lakeheadu.ca](mailto:divison@lakeheadu.ca) or, if you prefer, at [info.accute@gmail.com](mailto:info.accute@gmail.com). I look forward to your thoughts on how we've done this year or how the new ACCUTE executive can do better in 2024-25.

## Appendix C: Contract Academic Faculty Report – 2024 AGM

Prepared by Carellin Brooks

Our concerns remain systemic and they are familiar. Mentioned by contract faculty ACCUTE members at our most recent caucus meeting were lack of permanence, a lack of congruence between our training and our current work, regular work subject to availability, pay fluctuation, loss of extended health benefits depending on our workload, loss of seniority with leaves, such as maternity leave, and a lack of diversity in departments where racialized contract faculty are “last hired/first fired.”

These systemic issues in turn lead to personal issues with lack of stability, “hustle culture,” exhaustion, unwanted competition with other CAF, and a fear (or the reality) of being told we’re “not a team player” if we turn down courses. CAF have to be “magicians” to cobble together a livelihood out of different departments, institutions, and subjects. One thing that would really help is more money – at the individual, institutional, provincial and federal levels.

It’s not all bad. Contract work gives us the flexibility to pursue creative work, and some of us are able to develop our own courses. One program with a new head has been seeing small incremental improvements. And we know that when it comes to bargaining, we have a moral argument for any improvements based on our precarious status and relatively low pay.

In 2023, our President proposed that the Federation of the Social Sciences and the Humanities policy be updated to support contract faculty research. Specifically, improvements to employment stability would help contract faculty access funding and support our research. The Federation’s decision to lobby for this change underscores ACCUTE’s attention to CAF concerns.

This year I planned to co-chair a panel with Anna Veprinska and two other writers on “Precarity and Creativity.” Even wrote my paper. As one of my contract faculty colleagues remarked of his own panel contribution, he’s never been so far ahead in his work. Me neither. See you in 2025.

I’ve saved the best news for last. Megan Arnott of Lakehead University’s English Department has kindly agreed to step into the role of Contract Academic Faculty representative on the Board. Welcome, Megan!

## Appendix D: Colleges Report – 2024 AGM

Prepared by Mark Kaethler

As my two-year term as Member at Large, Colleges, concludes, I want to express my gratitude to my fellow Board members, past and present, especially Doug, Cheryl, Jason, and Erin for all the extra work they did at various stages this year.

Because we were unable to elect a new Member at Large, Colleges, at the online College Members Meeting on Monday June 17, Jessi MacEachern (Dawson College) will continue to let her name stand for this position and, if necessary, an election can be held at the AGM.

This past year I worked with Neta Gordon on a special roundtable session on College faculty. I want to thank Neta for all her work on this session, and I hope it is able to continue either in a new format or as it was when Congress is held at George Brown College next year. The panel derived from conversations at last year's College members' meeting, so it would be nice to see it continue.

It's been a pleasure serving on the ACCUTE Board.

## Appendix E: Report from the Committee for Professional Concerns – 2024 AGM

Prepared by Neta Gordon

I organized only one panel, in consultation with Mark Kaethler, our Colleges Representative. This invitation went out folks who had already been accepted to present at the conference and who were College Professors:

Dear [name],

I am writing on behalf of myself and Mark Kaethler in our capacities as the ACCUTE Board Members focused, respectively, on Professional Concerns and on Colleges. We would like to invite you to participate in a roundtable discussion tentatively titled "Amplifying the 'And': Relationships between College and University Teachers of English." The roundtable will take place at the upcoming meeting of ACCUTE taking place at McGill University, at which - we understand - you will already be presenting; for this reason, we do not want to ask too much of invitees - a 5-7 minute presentation, followed by participation in a Q+A, is what we are hoping for.

The goal of this discussion is to inquire of College professors how members across our discipline might think in more complex terms about the relationships between those working at different types of academic institutions. Though the acronym ACCUTE references both "College" and "University" Teachers of English, it has long been the case that the Association - and indeed the discipline - seems to centre those working at Universities. Part of the idea in putting together this panel is to invert that arrangement, inviting those working at Colleges to share their distinct institutional practices, knowledges, and proposals for a better integrated professoriate.

And while it is true that, at the administrative level, various Colleges and Universities have established transfer and/or integrated programs, our interest here is not so much the links among institutions (those it may be useful to describe some of those, if they are particularly productive), but more the flow of scholarly work and professional development across the wider professoriate, focusing especially on how the source of that flow might emerge from College faculty. For example: are there innovations in pedagogy being practiced in Colleges that might be practiced across different types of institutions? Is there potential for collaborative research projects that draw on the resources and expertise of scholars across

different types of institutions? How might better, more mutually supportive relations among College and University professors serve their local and/or research communities? These questions are just possible directions your presentation might take: we are more than happy for you to explore other ideas or concerns.

Thank you for your attention to this invitation, and we look forward to hearing if you would be interested in participating in this roundtable.

We had a good number of responses to our invitation, and the final roster of presenters/topics looked like this:

Ryan Cox, Keyano College: "Linking innovating pedagogy and serving the local community"

Laura Davis, Red Deer College: "Potential research collaborations between English faculty at colleges and universities"

David Fleming, Marianopolis College: "Obstacles and Opportunities: My Experience of Research and Professional Development in Quebec's Colleges"

Kate Sheckler, Marianopolis College: "Clear writing produces clear thinking: changing the relationship between English studies and many other fields"

As per the Executive's decision re: next year's conference, Mark and I communicated with this group to let them know that they will be invited to present their material at next year's ACCUTE conference.

Thanks to Mark for his excellent partnership in putting together this panel.

## Appendix F: CACE Report for ACCUTE AGM

During this past academic year, CACE held two online panels.

On Oct. 22, we addressed the challenges that students and faculty are facing in this post-pandemic era, in a session entitled, “After? Covid: Building Community and Defining Student Success” with panellists Philip Mingay (King's U, Edmonton), Tim Conley (Brock U) and Mark Kaethler (Medicine Hat College).

On Feb 8, we discussed curriculum review in a session entitled, “The English Major: Future Directions” and welcomed panellists Joel Baetz (Trent U), Sarah Banting (Mount Royal U), Pam Farvolden (Grant MacEwan U) and Diane Piccitto (Mount Saint Vincent U). I want to thank all of our panellists from both events.

This year was not without its bumps. Erin Hurley at McGill was instrumental in setting up our initial planned event and thanks are due to her. But, just as the participation of other associations in Congress at McGill was impacted by the ongoing strike by colleagues in the Faculty of Law, so was CACE. I want to especially thank Jason for making it possible for us to make a late move to Concordia, and then for understanding when we had to pivot again. I also want to thank everyone for their flexibility and understanding as we have negotiated a challenging year.

CACE held its annual meeting via zoom on June 11. We had two main panels. The first was entitled: Internationalization and International Students: Challenges and Opportunities. The second was entitled: What does it mean to 'take a class'? Classroom Teaching and Student Accommodations.

Thanks to Carolyn Lesjak (SFU), Alice Ridout (Algoma), Stephen Woodward (Bishop's), Sheila Christie (Cape Breton U), Jay Dolmage (U Waterloo) and Robert Stacey (U Ottawa) for sharing their insights.

Our next event is a new chair's workshop that is coming up on June 26. At that event, we're inviting brand new, and not as new chairs to join us to discuss 4 key chairing topics: managing expectations, committee work, communications and scheduling and assigning teach.

I want to thank this year's executive: Karin Beeler (UNBC), Sheila Christie (CBU), Susie O'Brien (McMaster), Doug Ivison (Lakehead U) and Robert Stacey (U of O). I also want to congratulate

Sheila, Susie, Doug and Karin for completing their terms as chair, and wish them all the best as they move on to other things.

On June 11, the 2024-2025 board of CACE was also acclaimed:

Anna Guttman (Lakehead University) – President

Robert Stacey (University of Ottawa) - Secretary

Joel Baetz (Trent University) – Member at Large

Kristine Kerins (Camosun College) – Member at Large

Erin Wunker (Dalhousie University) – Member at Large

Jason Camlot (Concordia University) – ACCUTE President Elect (ex-officio)

Thanks to all who have agreed to serve this coming year.

Respectfully submitted,

Anna Guttman, CACE President



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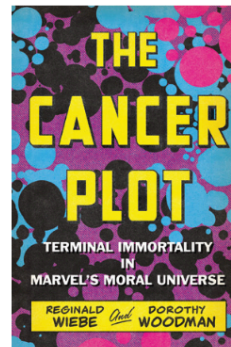
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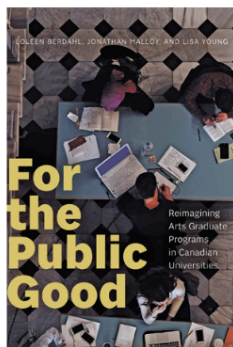
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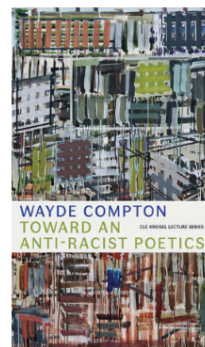
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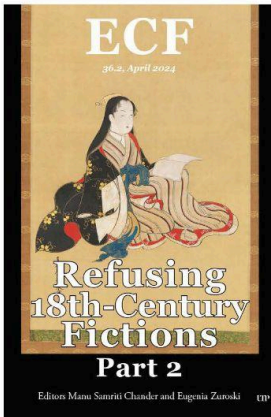


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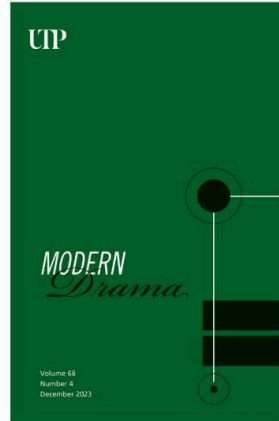
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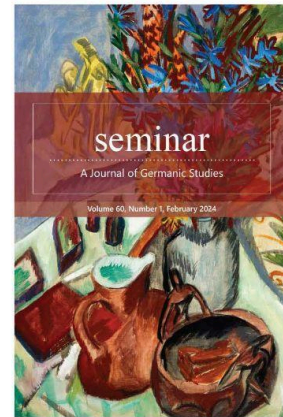
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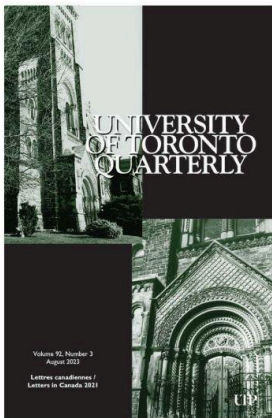
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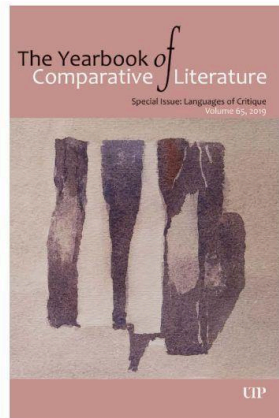
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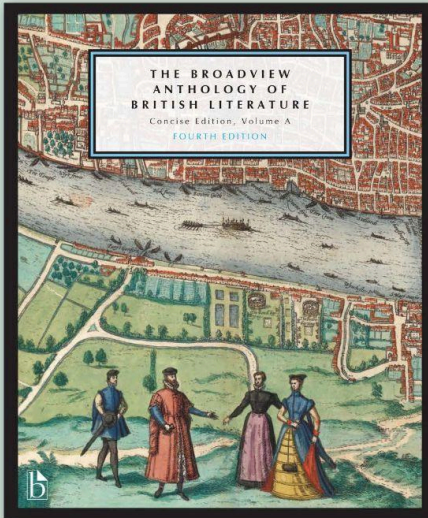


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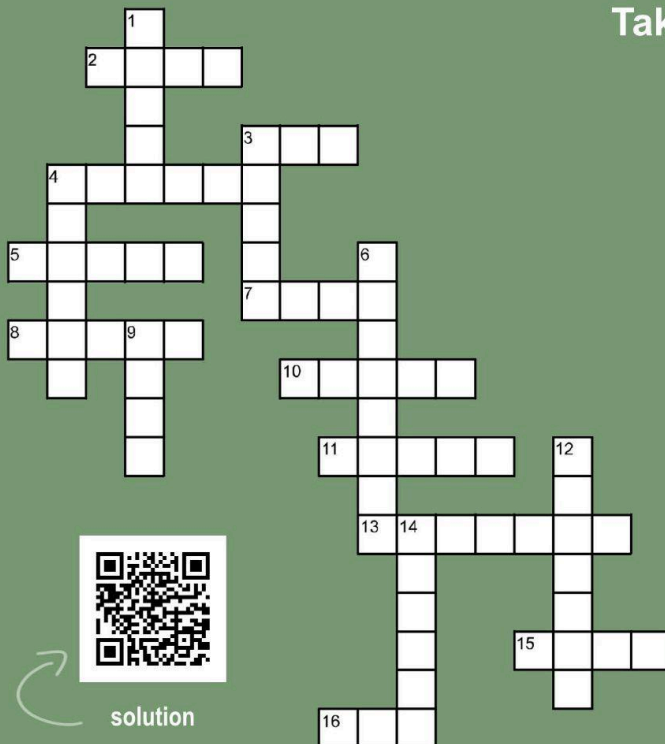
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table of contents



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### Across

- 2 Saint known as “the Venerable”
- 3 English of *Beowulf*
- 4 Spiritual term used to describe Margery Kempe
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- 7 Utopian 16th-century lawyer
- 8 “Dream of the Rood” perspective
- 10 Color of Gawain’s challenger
- 11 Rising 18th-century literary genre
- 13 “Miller’s Tale” genre
- 15 City from which Chaucer’s “wife” hails
- 16 *Faerie Queene* heroine

### Down

- 1 Diarist of 1666 London fires
- 3 Mohegan preacher and author Samson
- 4 *Morte Darthur* author
- 6 Bisclavret translation
- 9 Mode of transport in Equiano’s *Narrative*
- 12 Sheridan: *School for* \_\_\_\_\_
- 14 Wheatley: “On Being Brought from \_\_\_\_\_ to America”



solution

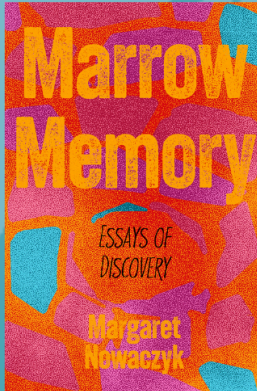


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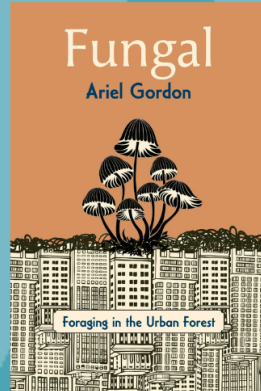
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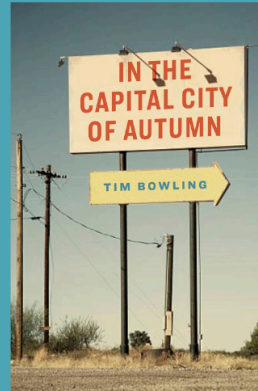
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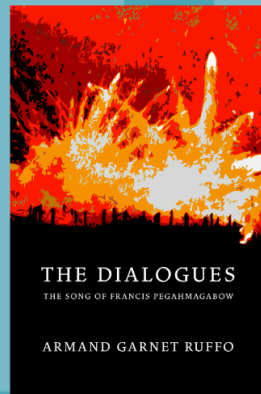
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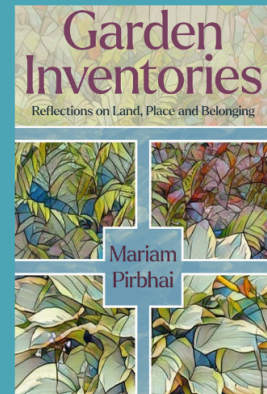
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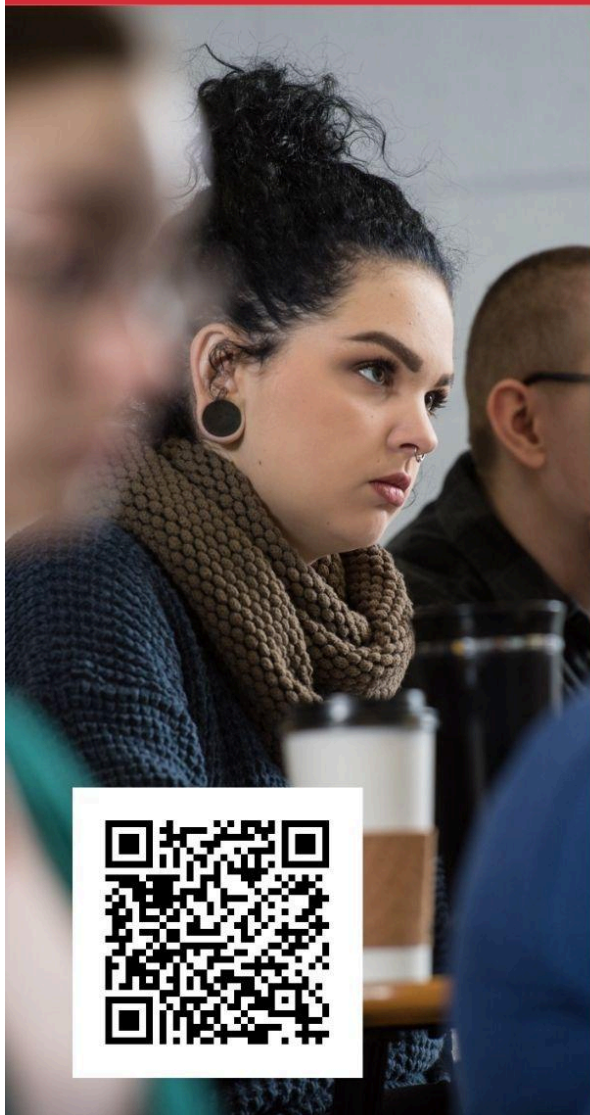
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