

Inkshed

Newsletter of the Canadian Association for the Study of Writing and Reading
Volume 4, number 5. November 1985.

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Imagine that you enter a parlor. You come late. When you arrive, others have long preceded you, and they are engaged in a heated discussion, a discussion too heated for them to pause and tell you exactly what it is about. In fact, the discussion had already begun long before any of them got there, so that no one present is qualified to retrace for you all the steps that had gone before. You listen for a while, until you decide that you have caught the tenor of the argument; then you put in your oar. Someone answers; you answer him; another comes to your defense; another aligns himself against you. . . . However, the discussion is interminable. The hour grows late, you must depart. And you do depart, with the discussion still vigorously in progress.

Kenneth Burke, *The Philosophy of Literary Form: Studies in Symbolic Action*, 3rd ed. (Berkeley: U of California P, 1973) 110–111.

Inkshed

45. November 1985.

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Inkshed is published six times during the academic year, supported financially by St. Thomas University and the voluntary contributions of subscribers. As far as possible, its subscribers have free access to its pages. The following is a schedule of approximate submissions deadlines and publication dates:

20 January, for 1 February
5 March, for 15 March
20 April, for 1 May

5 September, for 15 September
20 October, for 1 November
5 December, for 15 December

A primary objective of this newsletter is to intensify relationships among research, theory, and practice relating to language, language acquisition, and language use—mainly (but by no means exclusively) at post-secondary levels. Striving to serve both informative and polemical functions, *Inkshed* publishes news, announcements, notices, reports and reviews (of articles, journals, books, textbooks, conferences, workshops); commentaries, discussions of events, issues, problems, and questions of concern to academics in Canada interested in writing and reading theory and practice.

Send materials, inquiries, subscription requests and payments to

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Second Call for Proposals

The Social Contexts of Writing and Reading

(The Third *Inkshed* Working Conference)

McGill University
Montreal, Quebec
Friday, 9 May - Sunday, 11 May 1986

Deadline for proposals: 15 January 1986. 7-8 sessions, plus inksheddings and Inklings.

AIMS

To consider the social contexts within which reading and writing occur, the influence of those contexts, and the extent to which they are taken account of in our research and our practice.

The following questions are offered as a means to focus proposals:

The classroom as context for reading and writing: What is the nature of the classroom context for reading and writing? Why and for whom do our students read and write? What roles do classroom contexts offer students and teachers? How does evaluation fit into the social contexts of reading and writing? From which contexts do we derive evaluation criteria?

Research contexts: To what extent does our research into reading and writing take account of "real" language contexts? Can it? Must it?

Contexts beyond the school: Where, why, and how will our students be reading and writing after they've left us? How much do we, can we, should we prepare our students for the reading and writing contexts they will find themselves in outside school? What are the politics of reading and writing?

METHODS

As with previous *Inkshed* conferences, sessions employing a wide range of modes of presentation are welcome—demonstrations, workshops, informal reports on work in progress, formal papers. We also encourage people to propose co-presentations.

In addition to some variation on the now traditional Inksheddings (periods during which all participants write), we will be introducing "Inklings"—periods during which participants will read brief excerpts or wholes (from any source) which illuminate or exemplify issues relevant to the conference theme. Examples of student writing are especially welcome.

Finally, we are introducing yet *more* work to our all-too-brief working conference: a pre-conference annotated list of "Suggested Readings for Inkshed III." We invite *Inkshed* readers to send along to Jim briefly-annotated references for any readings they believe will allow participants to benefit more fully from the conference. This cumulative annotated bibliography will be published periodically in *Inkshed*; we are certain everyone who has ever attended a conference will recognize the value of such a gently-required reading list.

Proposals should include name(s), address(es), phone number(s); title of proposed session, brief (200 words) description or abstract, brief description of method, and a statement of the aim or purpose of the session. Write to:

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More Inksheddings, Collaborative and Otherwise (from the Wyoming Conference on Freshman and Sophomore English)

I described the Inkshedding process in *Inkshed 4.4* (see "Collaborative Inksheddings" from *Inkshed II*, pp. 3-7). Inkshedding is not just writing at conferences (and other situations in which oral language is the norm). It is *embedding* writing and reading into conferences. Conferees write, individually, producing unedited "freewritings," drafts; and then select, *ad hoc*, from what has been written, publish what is selected, and read, collectively, what has been selected. Normally, *Inkshedding* refers first of all to the private act of writing in response to a conference session or to a previous Inkshedding, and second to those private writings that are selected for publication. In that selection process every Inkshedding gets read by at least as many people as make up an "editorial board." Those selected or excerpted are read by all.

Collaborative Inkshedding differs from "regular" Inkshedding in that (normally) the writing situation is rather more tightly focused. A question or set of questions (which might well have been collaboratively generated) is posed to provide focus for small group discussion and writing. Each group is asked to produce, jointly (and in an hour or so), a more extended "position statement" to be presented (unedited) to the conference as a whole.

Because this writing-reading-excerpting-publishing-reading sequence is repeated several times during a conference, the Inksheddings become part of the ongoing conversation of the conference. In that way the conference is radically redefined and reconstituted—transformed, democratized—if only through the simple act of giving a voice to many who would normally remain silent.

What follows is a sampling of Inksheddings produced during three sessions of an extended workshop I conducted at the Wyoming Conference on Freshman and Sophomore English last June 24-28.

/// Jim Reither

Inksheddings from the first session (24th June):

Burke's [Kenneth Burke was one of the conference's "major consultants"] language was at times incomprehensible but he is clearly revered. Like the seer, he seems different from us, looks wizened, speaks in tongues, but we want to believe that upon reflection he will let us see the world whole.

That's how anthropologists define the seer. Informants said they "understood" him, but when pressed, could not remember what he said, but believed that when they consulted their notes, they would find his ideas made things "connect." Two informants said they felt he was looking directly at them. One said he felt he ought to help Burke say what he wanted to say because Burke held him in his gaze. He felt this meant he venerated and respected Burke even if not fully understanding him. (Linda Robertson)

[Burke's] appetite for knowledge and his digestion of his material are the created structure out of which the questions arise. Few of us—still fewer of our young students because of sheer lack of time for exposure—can turn to the massive knowledge that forms the questions and gives form to them.

How can we set assignments that will draw the students into their own minds, since they cannot bring a large reference to the task? Surely the questions that touch them must come from the only body of experience they have at this point: their own experience. . . . The question I would like to see followed up is the how of the movement from the personal

experience to a connection with the wider world that will allow their concerns to touch more universal concerns. (Anon.)

K. Burke: My grandfather used to sit in the chair they bought when they were first married and stare at the spot where my grandmother's rocker used to be. He would have a house full of relatives all making racket and talking and running around him. He would stare there, and suddenly in a raspy voice full of whistles and false starts, he would tell about one day when he was a brakeman on the Chicago line, there was this derailment. And eventually he would be up digging in a drawer, trying to find that old clipping, hold on to that old thought, old memory. And I was the only one who listened all the way through. I learned a lot about railroads. (Barbara Smith)

Inksheddings from the second session (25th June):

Perhaps we are afraid to make our voices public, tell our stories to the world, because we realize, as [James] Raymond [another major consultant] pointed out, that our stories are only our creations; our imagined lives blur into our real ones, and we can say little that the "world" can respect because it respects Raymond's box of verifiable physical facts. So rhetoric is "the study of misunderstanding and its remedies"—also based on need for identification. Seems there's something here about that bridge from the private world to the public that one of yesterday's writers was searching for.

Can't do this today—no voice coming through, no flow, perhaps because of overload or distance. Copious notes all day, many interesting ideas, but they remain in my head whereas yesterday I laughed in delight at Burke's vitality, cried when [Don] Murray [another major consultant] spoke of his daughter's death, the dirt hitting the coffin. No visceral reactions today—do I make meaning only from my guts? My head feels de-constructed. I'm ready for the cowbar bar. (Anon.)

There was Raymond, discussing Burke's new rhetoric. And there was Burke, listening, who 35 years earlier announced in a speech entitled "Rhetoric: Old and New"—to the first 4 Cs—that a new rhetoric had come into being. (Susan Wyche-Smith)

In response to Rick Coe—yesterday's writings. We need new ways of reading Burke. This makes me think of the new feminist (French) rhetoric—Helene Cixous in a crazy way reminds me of Burke. I read, and am enthralled and exhilarated, my brain is racing, and then I have to tell someone in a coherent (logical? linear?) fashion what I have just read. It seems impossible, (and I know if I could relate it the experience would be gone) and yet I know I have absorbed and my thoughts have been changed slightly. So I have been changed without being able to verbalize it. Which means I am having thoughts without words—and the reason for that is the way the original words were presented. That is mind boggling to me.

But what if there are other ways to read? Do we read Cixous and Burke as performances—like fiction—open only to individual interpretation? Do we go for plot—line, ignoring the texture? I think even if Burke was writing on purpose without a plot line we would create one we could tell others—simply because of the force of his brilliance and energy. We want to be near that, to show it is now a part of us by explaining it to someone else.

Which means we are using Burke—using our ability to summarize (thus charm) Burke as a means of identification. Just as you claim a rebel flag or a big truck, we claim Burke. But Burke just either doesn't want us to—or something—but he makes identification through him difficult. So—we are stuck as dumb admirers? It feels that way sometimes. I wonder if he ever meant to make it hard for that reason. His texts are so personal/individual—to claim

them (and ignore our personal exploration?) in a generic, shared way is hard. But we get around that by claiming to be one of those who has shared the experience of being confused by Burke. Identification occurs no matter how many obstacles, it seems. (Anon.)

Another Reeling and Writing assignment at the end of the day. What struck me today especially were the joys and sorrows of our trying to create among ourselves a community of discourse. . . . Raymond's talk was great—stimulating, entertaining, thought provoking. But it was clear from some of what he said and from some of our questions to him that we do not share a common body of knowledge about rhetoric, especially Classical Rhetoric. So what do we do? What can we do? If person A knows about Aristotle and person B doesn't, and person C thinks he or she does, but doesn't, how does discourse proceed?

We need our diversity—we'd be moribund without it. But we need commonalities, too, shared knowledge if we are to have a community of discourse. . . . If discourse creates our Reality, what reality are we creating? Do we have a common vision of our past, our traditions, our rituals? Do we have a common sense of solidarity? of what we wish to sing about and celebrate? Do we know what our wish is for our future? Do we even agree we ought to articulate our past, our present, our future? Wherein resides our "identification?" (Linda Robertson)

A Collaborative Inkshedding from the final session (27th June):

The Buddha as Composition Teacher; Or, The No-Self in Order to Become Self

Those who do not seek to understand are those who understand the most. Some Inkshedders sought confirmation of their own vision. Some said they liked a presenter because he or she confirmed what the writer was already doing; resented others because they lacked the same style (and in some cases, gender) as the writer. Some were motivated to criticize out of jealousy or spite. Others "graded" the sessions like "schoolteachers," assuming their evaluative standards are absolute and universal, and that this "community" of teachers would agree with them.

Others seemed not to seek to "understand" as much as to experience. They often began with an image or a description, and did not seem eager for "closure" or to draw conclusions, but seemed willing to explore, question, and wait for understanding to come. They were writing to let dissonances resonate and seemed comfortable simply noting them. Some compared themselves as writers with the presenters, and worked through their dissonances as writers to clearer visions of their own fears and potentials. As a group, they were also more aware of the community.

The second group seemed more receptive and more comfortable; they had more fun, and seemed to welcome the possibility of self-transformation. (Connie Jo Hale, Nancy Lucas, Linda Robertson, and Susan Wyche-Smith)

* * * * *

Because history "is a 'dramatic' process, involving dialectical oppositions," "every document bequeathed us by history must be treated as a *strategy for encompassing a situation*."

Kenneth Burke, *The Philosophy of Literary Form: Studies in Symbolic Action*, 3rd ed. (Berkeley: U of California P, 1973) 109.

Review: *Protocol Analysis: Verbal Reports as Data*, by K. Anders Ericsson and Herbert A. Simon. Cambridge, MA: MIT/Bradford, 1984. 426 pp.

As Inksheddors are well aware, the concept of "process"—whatever we mean by it—has for some years been one of the hottest items on the writing and reading agenda. Although there are signs that the reign of process may be coming to an end, whatever happens, there is sure to be continued interest among teachers and researchers in having not a buzzword but a detailed picture of what people do when they write and read. "Process-tracing" techniques, of which protocol analysis is perhaps the most prominent member, will therefore continue to be widely used, because, as Flower and Hayes (among others) have suggested, they offer a window on cognitive processes.

Despite the popularity of protocol analysis, those who use the technique have so far received little or no published help in doing it "properly." The title of this book, *Protocol Analysis*, seems to promise such help. Help it does, even though, strangely, the book is not mainly about protocol analysis. What it is mainly about—and here it is worth remembering that the authors are cognitive psychologists in the information-processing tradition—is an attempt to show that verbal responses are a valid source of data for uncovering cognitive processes. Thus the first five chapters of *Protocol Analysis* are more accurately represented by the book's sub-title, *Verbal Reports as Data*. The final two chapters, however, do contain useful suggestions for conducting think-aloud tasks and using protocol analysis. Although Ericsson and Simon limit themselves to problem-solving and memory tasks, I believe much of their advice is applicable, *mutatis mutandis*, to the kinds of writing and reading situations of concern to readers of this newsletter—hence this review. Before presenting some of these suggestions, though, I will briefly consider the first five chapters.

Imagine the following scene in a classroom or research laboratory:

Investigator: Multiply 34×76 in your head, and say aloud what you're thinking about.

Participant: Well, 6 times 4 is 24, put the 4 and carry the 2. Let's see, 6 times 3 is 18, now add the 2 that makes 20 so we have 204....

To make a long story short, what Ericsson and Simon do in the first five chapters of this book is to demonstrate, by means of extremely comprehensive literature reviews, that what the investigator and participant are doing here is a valid way of finding out about cognitive processes. That may not seem like a controversial statement, and yet for most of this century the prevailing opinion among psychologists was that verbal reports were, at best, a waste of time. Even now, verbal reports are regarded with suspicion in many quarters, on the grounds that people are not aware of how they perform tasks, and that the act of reporting thoughts must somehow change them.

There is a grain of truth in both arguments. However, Ericsson and Simon are making the more modest claim that think-aloud procedures (if done properly) allow you to infer *what information is heeded* in a given task. This in turn gives you a valid source of data for inferring the cognitive processes involved in that task. Notice, though, that it is the *investigator* who must make the inferences about which cognitive processes are involved. Participants are not usually aware of their own processes, so asking them to report, for instance, how they do the task, is inviting them to attend to something that would not normally be heeded. This kind of verbal report would be invalid, because it could change the very cognitive processes it was designed to investigate. The moral is, ask participants to report only the information that they are heeding—no more and no less.

In support of their ideas about verbalization, Ericsson and Simon review considerable

evidence from the cognitive psychology literature (the bibliography contains over 600 items). It seems that not only can people report, veridically, what information they are heeding, but such information can be reported at almost the same rate it is heeded. Consequently verbal reports offer a nearly complete record of the information that is attended. "Verbally reported information," the authors conclude, "is as regular and valid as other types of data" (62). Given the thoroughness of their review, it is hard to imagine anyone ever again saying otherwise.

The first five chapters are an impressive accomplishment, but they do not make very exciting reading. And, of course, they say very little about protocol analysis as such. What's worse, although the authors are clear about *what* they are talking about (for example, when describing a particular study), they often fail to remind the reader *why*. None of this is helped any by Ericsson and Simon's writing style (I found it dry and humorless), or by the fact that the book itself was photographed from the authors' word-processed copy—meaning that you keep wanting to adjust the focus knob. (On the other hand, Ericsson and Simon dedicated the book to their parents, "who taught us not to be afraid to voice our thoughts"—so they can't be *all* bad.)

In the final two chapters Ericsson and Simon discuss procedures for coding and interpreting protocol data. Even here, though, they don't exactly let their hair down. They maintain a rigorous, theoretical approach—for instance, by stressing that *protocol* analysis goes hand in hand with *task* analysis: careful consideration of a given task allows one to make theory-based judgments as to what information is relevant to that task. Then, coding categories are developed, and it is decided, in advance, what kinds of statements will be taken as evidence for each category.

For those of us who would prefer to conduct protocol analysis in a looser, less theoretically-motivated way—just wade in and see what you can find—Ericsson and Simon have a stern warning:

It is still the case that protocols are often collected and analysed in the absence of a cognitive model defining what verbalizations would constitute evidence for each coding category. We believe that this procedure will be used less and less as the need for a theoretical base for encoding is understood (309).

Most of the examples of protocol analysis in these chapters involve problem-solving tasks (e.g., Tower of Hanoi, anagrams) which the authors and their colleagues at Carnegie-Mellon University have been investigating for many years. It seems to me, however, that not only is their advice sound (see inset), but it is generally applicable to less well-defined tasks, such as writing and reading, as well. Many of their suggestions are even applicable—and for me, this was the real value of the book—in situations in which one is trying to code responses that are not obtained under true think-aloud conditions. For example, working with written and oral responses to literary texts, Garry Hansen and I have recently found Ericsson and Simon's suggestions quite helpful in learning how to divide the statements into shorter, scorable segments that can then be sorted into Purves-like categories.

In summary, the painstaking literature review provided by the authors in the first five chapters should be a useful reference source for psychologists (and others?) interested in theoretical and historical aspects of verbal responding. I imagine, though, that the book will be read mainly because the final two chapters offer teachers and researchers who are using or considering using protocol analysis a rigorous—if idealized—set of procedures for conducting such studies. There is clearly still a need for a manual devoted to protocol analysis in writing and reading situations, but meanwhile, Ericsson and Simon—chapters 6 and 7—may be the best available.

Some practical suggestions for think-aloud tasks and protocol analysis:

- * Obtain fuller think-aloud protocols by using a warm-up task, reminders to keep talking, and shorter stimulus segments (e.g., for a reading task, present text one sentence at a time).
- * Divide protocol data into two, developing data analysis scheme on one half, and testing it on the other.
- * Divide protocols into fairly short units (speech bursts), then code in random order, with minimum context, and preferably automatically (i.e., by computer).
- * Don't try to encode processes directly; encode information.
- * Assess reliability of coding for each category as well as overall.
- * For added reliability, use retrospective as well as concurrent think-aloud tasks in the same study.

Douglas Vipond
St. Thomas University

NEMLA-Types

/// Susan Drain

The larger American conferences are not usually to my taste: I much prefer 'Inksheds'. Nevertheless, their major advantage is that they can afford to take under their capacious wing a flock of unusual interests. Thus it is that I betook myself to Hartford, CT, in March to meet with the small but devoted band of fellow hymnologists who meet regularly at NEMLA.

Even I can't talk (or sing) hymns for three whole days, however, and that left plenty of time to attend the composition sessions that were also on the program. The interesting question of identity was soon raised. "That's what a NEMLA-type would say," one participant might comment. What is not clear is whether this label marks a growing rift between composition and literature people, the latter being more likely to be "NEMLA-types", or whether people who attend NEMLA are a type different from, say, those who go to MLA or 4 Cs or even Inkshed. There may be a third possibility—that there is a NEMLA-type of composition person, full of good intentions, fairly traditional in approach and probably product-oriented, though familiar by now with the jargon of process and venturing with some timidity out of the safe fields of grammar instruction, linguistics, or literary criticism into the rich but hazardous marshlands of writing theory.

It may be, of course, that I missed the radical sessions, but those I attended were fairly conservative. The word-processing section, for example, had progressed from last year's "What *is* word-processing?" to "Tales from the Word-Processing Woods; or, How Our Writing Program Took the Computer Plunge and Survived." Every program reported on was concerned with writing clinic or lab use, or with upgrading courses. The emphasis was more on what we did and how than on what it achieved. That this section was scheduled opposite the Teaching Composition section leads one to suspect that the conference organizers, at least, had not yet put two and two together.

The Composition and Rhetoric section presented what seemed to be primers on critical

theory for composition teachers: William Stull (Hartford) sketched a life of Barthes and handed out a miscellany of quotations under the title "Roland Barthes' Contribution to Composition Theory"; Patricia Donahue (UCLA) discussed the meaning of 'paradigm' in "The Discourse of Paradigms: Kuhn, Foucault, and Composition."

The liveliest section was Linguistics and Writing, where the tone ranged from calm reasonableness through precious self-consciousness to downright combative. The self-consciousness was evident in Robert Boenig's (Rutgers) "Zen and the Art of Making Writers: Silence and Discourse in Freshman Composition," which urged us to encourage more silence and more waiting for inspiration and insight, and accused the 'noisy' discovery techniques and co-operative activities encouraged by Elbow and others of being counterproductive. Making allowances for the emphasis necessary to make the point, common sense has to agree that enthusiasm for one approach ought not to preclude others.

The combative attitude was that of Terence Hoagwood (West Virginia), who claimed to be unashamed that he taught grammar and argued that studies on the relationship of grammar instruction and writing suffered from problems in their theoretical framework and inadequate criteria for judgment. He called for more investigation of how grammar instruction affects reading comprehension and logical inference, arguing that words are prior to thinking and that only by understanding the patterns and limitations of our language can we understand the patterns of our thought. (I suspect there is an equivocation here: when he pronounces himself one who dares to teach grammar, Hoagwood implies that grammar is rules of standard usage; when he argues for students' understanding how their language works and how it differs from the workings of other languages, he means something quite different.)

The voice of calm reasonableness belonged to Rebecca Howard (Colgate), whose careful differentiation of language acquisition and language use went a long way toward clarifying the purposes of language teaching. However, her suggestion that composition courses might cease trying to develop both simultaneously (to clarify teaching goals and separate prescriptive from exploratory teaching) seemed to founder on a rock she herself acknowledged--that it is in using language that we most genuinely acquired it.

These summaries of conference papers are brief, but I hope not unrepresentative. My most important observation is that there are in writing classrooms many good people whose intentions are good and whose anxiety is high. They are not well served by colleagues who concentrate solely on either technique-and-technology or allusive theory. Like student writers, their understanding, competence, and self-confidence grow as they encounter and engage, under sympathetic guidance, with what they know and experience.

* * * * *

[Human thought's] natural habitat is the house yard, the marketplace, and the town square. Thinking consists not of "happenings in the head" (though happenings there and elsewhere are necessary for it to occur) but of a traffic in . . . significant symbols--words for the most part but also gestures, drawings, musical sounds, mechanical devices like clocks, or natural objects like jewels--anything, in fact, that is disengaged from its mere actuality and used to impose meaning upon experience. From the point of view of any particular individual, such symbols are largely given. He finds them already current in the community when he is born, and they remain, with some additions, subtractions, and partial alterations . . . , in circulation after he dies. While he lives he uses them . . . to put a construction upon the events through which he lives. . . .

Clifford Geertz, *The Interpretation of Cultures* (NY: Basic Books, 1973) 45.

New Orleans 4 Cs—Announcements

/// Jim Reither

Three items relating to the Conference on College Composition and Communication, New Orleans, 13–15 March 1986.

First, this welcome announcement from Nan Johnson (UBC):

The Canadian Caucus will sponsor a panel, "Writing Programs in Canada," at the 1986 CCCC in New Orleans. The session is scheduled for 11:45am–1:00pm on Saturday, 15th March. (No doubt many of us who will not be dashing off to catch planes will be getting together for lunch after.) The program will run as follows:

Chair: **Nan Johnson**, "Major Points of Interest about the History of Composition in Canada" (5 minutes).

10–15 minute presentations by:

Anthony Paré, "McGill's Centre for the Study and Teaching of Writing"
Susan Drain, "English Composition at Mount Saint Vincent University"
Kent Walker, "An Overview of English Composition at Humber College"
Jane Flick, "English Composition at the University of British Columbia"
Peter Myers, "Technical Writing at Seneca College"

These presentations will be followed by a response from **Judith Segal** (British Columbia Technological Institute) and by questions and discussion in whatever directions develop.

It is our hope that this program will draw together those Canadians who usually go to 4 Cs and go some small way in the direction of developing some kind of professional profile, both for our own benefit and for the education of our American colleagues who know little to nothing about Canadian Studies in Composition. We hope to see you there. Tell your friends!

Second, the Canadian Caucus will meet on Thursday afternoon, 13th March, 5:30–6:45pm. I'm looking for agenda suggestions. If you'd like to do something, or if you'd like to make sure a special question, problem, or issue gets discussed, *please get in touch with me*.

Third, I will be arranging an informal gathering of some kind for the evening of Wednesday, 12th March, probably in a small restaurant, lounge, or bar close by the conference hotel. Such a gathering will allow us to get acquainted before the conference begins and before the Canadian Caucus session. Watch for notices on these pages. Plan to attend.

* * * * *

[I wish to underscore the need] for comparative study of the corresponding communities in other fields. How does one elect and how is one elected to membership in a particular community, scientific or not? What is the process and what are the stages of socialization to the group? What does the group collectively see as its goals; what deviations, individual or collective, will it tolerate; and how does it control the impermissible aberration?

Thomas S. Kuhn, Postscript to *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*,
2nd ed., Enlarged (Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1970) 209.

Suggested Readings for Inkshed III

Andrew Wilkinson, *Language and Education*, Oxford Studies in Education (Oxford UP, 1975).

... if we do not set our expectations absurdly high, the study of language and communication would seem to have value in education, not to give the teacher a body of information to teach, but to heighten his awareness of the nature of relationships between human beings, and between language, learning and thought.

Wilkinson looks at communication models, paralinguistics, language functions, and non-verbal as well as verbal communication in Part 1 of the book; in Part 2 we are provided with a series of abstracts and excerpts from various sources (some infuriating, some as comfortable as an old shirt) taken from Halliday, Sapir, Chomsky, Whorf, Britton, Vygotsky, and Labov, and supplied with cogent commentary. There is a good bibliography as well.

Linda Shaw Finlay and Valerie Faith, "Illiteracy and Alienation in American Colleges: Is Paulo Freire's Pedagogy Relevant?", *Radical Teacher* no. 16 (Dec. 1979).

The authors argue that upper-middle-class American college students share the same sense of isolation from the world of ideas and words as Freire's Third World students, and that his philosophy and methodology can be applied to a program of self-realization in a North American educational context. The core propositions are that cultural alienation takes linguistic form and that, as their students recognized that their own attitudes to cultural institutions as a whole "made them complicit in what they perceived as their cultural destruction, they began to struggle to gain control of language" (32). Vygotsky, Freire, and Berger and Luckmann figure prominently in the body of the paper, which outlines a course of study based upon their works and records the responses and reactions of the authors and their students over the duration of the course. The article has a stimulating qualitative bias: no graphs, no statistical tirades, no comparative tables—just a serious attempt to record the process of educating teachers and students in a mutual endeavour.

Rick Monaghan (Dawson College, Montreal)

Cohort Report—Recommended Reading

/// Rick Monaghan

William Wresch, ed. *The Computer in Composition Instruction: A Writer's Tool*. Urbana, IL: NCTE, 1984. Pp vi + 221. (Not a review, just a notice.)

This book examines thirteen projects under way in the U.S. It is both an excellent resource for those already involved in using computers in writing programs and a superb introduction to the use of this technology in teaching and learning. (Not convinced that writing is a technology? Try writing without a tool on something not manufactured.) The thirteen chapters all follow a format that allows readers to leap about with confidence. There are three chapters on using computers to foster pre-writing, three on editing and grammar, three on using word-processors, and four on integrated programs that encompass the specific functions of the first three major divisions of the text—each ending with information about where programs can be got and what they need to run. There is an ample bibliography and a helpful glossary of terms.

It is perhaps time that CCTE undertake a parallel project, if only to provide a list of colleagues engaged in the use of computers to help students learn to write.