

# MSLA JOURNAL

Volume 44, Number 2  
Spring 2017



## Our Love of Reading

Photo of Harriet Zaidman, MSLA Teacher-Librarian of the Year with her MYRCA Students

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# President's Message

By Jo-Anne Gibson

I recently had a colleague of mine ask me whether we'll continue to have school libraries in the future. I must admit to be rather taken aback by this question as it's something I have never thought about or at least never let myself think about given the work I do every day in a school library. My colleague insisted that it was a fair question given the fact that there have been reports in the media of some libraries discarding all their physical books in favour of digital books, and of course, those ill-informed reports that with Mr. Google, libraries and librarians are no longer necessary.

After getting over my initial shock, I let my colleague know that all libraries, especially school libraries, are needed now more than ever. Although what goes on in school libraries will, as it should, change over time, our core principles including equitable access to information and services, confidentiality/privacy, diversity, life-long learning, intellectual freedom, social responsibility, leadership, creativity, collaboration, student engagement, student success and safety will never change. These are the fundamental principles that we hold dear and regardless of the ever-changing political, social and economic climate, we will always fight to protect.

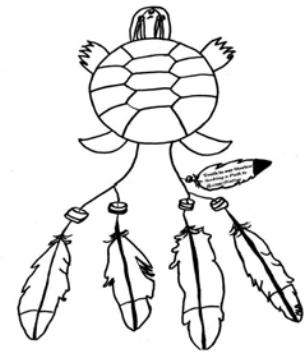
Any school board or educational institution must know that what school libraries have to offer are paramount for preparing students for living in the 21st century. The research on this topic is difficult to miss. Preparing students to think for themselves, problem solve, spot "fake news," write code, convey information in an engaging manner, use information and technology ethically and responsibly, read for enjoyment and knowledge, design and build, respect those that are different from themselves are all part of the myriad of lessons we teach and model in the library on a daily basis.

Sadly, however, all of the wonderful

teaching that goes on in school libraries today does not guarantee that school libraries will be around for future generations. We must continue to educate ourselves to keep moving with "the times" and educate those around us about how we are affecting student success and helping them to become positive, contributing members of a democratic society.

I believe that one of the most cost-effective ways to keep school library employees up-to-date and to educate others about the importance of school libraries is to join a professional organization. If you are reading this, I know that you understand the value of being a part of such an organization since you are already a member of the Manitoba School Library Association. Please help us to spread the word to your colleagues that the board of the MSLA strives to provide its members with quality, low cost professional development opportunities and information throughout the year. These include our annual SAGE Conference in October, the L.I.T. Forum in March, our fall and spring editions of the MSLA Journal and our website. We strive to highlight our member's school libraries by offering them a chance to nominate teacher-librarians, school library support staff and administrators for special awards at our AGM in May. We further support member's school library programs by providing monetary awards such as I Love to Read and Seed Grants. Congratulations to all our award and grant winners for 2016-17 who have been featured in this edition of the MSLA Journal!

The 2017 SAGE planning committee has already been hard at work planning next year's conference. We hope that you will join us for Truth in our Stories: Seeking a Path to Reconciliation. This year's conference will allow you to reflect on the stories of our all Indigenous presenters through text, music, art, film and spoken word. Keynote



speaker will be author Melanie Florence, winner of the 2016 TD Children's Literature Award for her book, *Missing Nimama*.

We are thrilled that this year instead of just one conference in October you will have the opportunity to participate in a second national school library symposium being held for the first time in Winnipeg – Treasure Mountain Canada 5. This symposium kicks off Friday evening of SAGE with keynote speaker, Karen Boyd, Assistant Superintendent of Educational Programming in the River East Transcona School Division, and runs through Saturday. The theme of TMC5: Culturally Relevant and Responsive School Library Learning Commons will support and enhance the learning of the SAGE Conference. We hope that you will consider attending this unique learning opportunity and better yet, consider writing a paper to be shared at the symposium.

More details about this symposium and the 2017 SAGE Conference can be found in this Journal and on the Manitoba School Libraries website.

Before I sign off, I would like to thank our dedicated MSLA Executive and Liaisons who have met once a month all year to provide the school library community with support and professional development opportunities. These are truly amazing individuals who have freely given of their time to make the lives of students in Manitoba all the richer. If it takes a village to raise a child, it certainly takes selfless individuals such as our board members to keep the good work of the Manitoba School Library Association going. In 2018, the MSLA will be celebrating their 80th anniversary. Stay tuned for further details as we celebrate this milestone!

# Editor's Message

By Mona-Lynne Ayotte, Journal Editor

We have a full Spring Journal that we hope provides you with information about our upcoming SAGE Professional MTS Learning day, Truth in Our Stories: Seeking a Path to Reconciliation in October of 2017 along with a number of articles to stimulate your thinking and to assist you in classroom planning. From here to our conference, you might want to read one of the books on the Indigenous suggested reading list so you can learn more about Indigenous experiences and perspectives.

One of the articles I asked permission to reprint is entitled Kill Me Now by Brad Fraser, a playwright, whose piece appeared in the Royal Manitoba Theatre Centre's playbill for Bittersweet. Brad Fraser helps

us to see another viewpoint about those who write about experiences from other cultures. You may or may not agree with him, however, his viewpoint may possibly help writers and readers who write for a living and whose topics contain a wide berth of human experience.

Congratulations to our award winners this year: Harriet Zaidman, Denise Desrosiers and Kim Marr. We will certainly miss Harriet's book columns and wish her well in her new journey as she retires at the end of this school year. Cassandra Murphy shares with us a great I Love To Read Activity with Robert Munsch's So Much Snow.

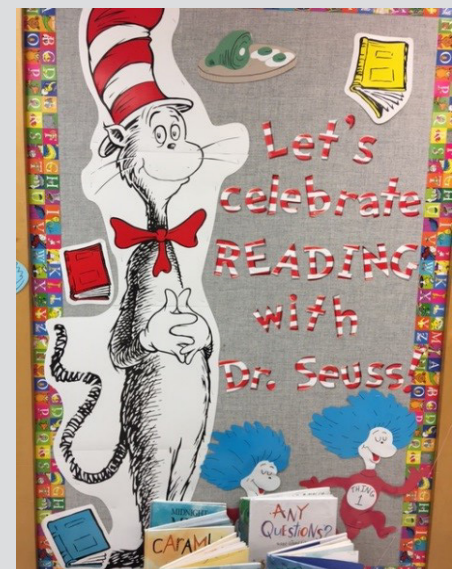
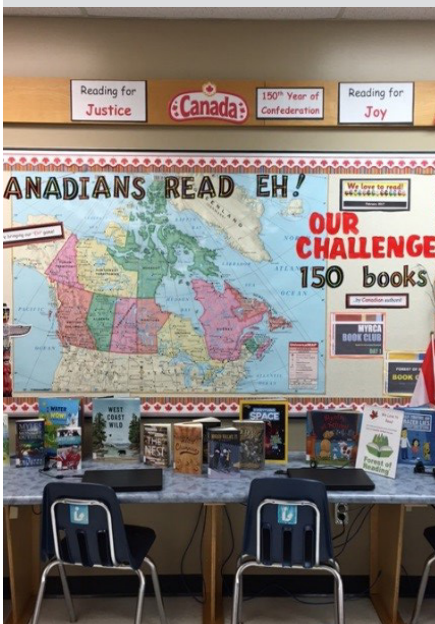
Gerald Brown provides for us an excellent summary of the latest University of Manitoba's Graduate Student Research Symposium and Nancy Girardin shares the Manitoba Curriculum Support Centre resources for Canada 150. We included author and former teacher Carol Szuminsky's article on her writing and publishing experiences of such books as Why Penny Loves Peanut.

And lastly I included a resume of the First Nations Schools 1st conference that Jo-Anne Gibson, Vivianne Fogarty and myself attended last fall. You will find an article I wrote about Emma Donoghue's recent visit to McNally Robinson Booksellers and all of the little writing nuances we learned about her writing work.

Vous trouveriez aussi deux articles en français – un qui a été écrit de la part de Martine Gagnon, éducatrice à l'École Bonaventure au sujet des ateliers Makerspaces, des ateliers qui ne coûtent pas chers car ils

se servent des produits recyclables. Heather Brydon, coordonnatrice à la DREF, nous parle de la liste de ressources pédagogiques des Coups de poing.

This will be my last MSLA journal as Publications Editor. I have enjoyed my experience working with so many of you that offered up articles over the years. As well, I want to thank Rose Pallone and Matea Tuhtar of the Manitoba Teachers' Society for their expertise in crafting the journal so professionally. Their skill set made the journal a pleasure to read. I also want to thank Cathrine Wall and Gonzague Wrobel of Vincent Massey Collegiate for editing my writing every time I asked for her assistance and also Jonine and Jo-Anne for perusing the journal one last time before I sent it out to MTS for final formatting. After seven journal publications, I have decided to give this opportunity over and Lisa Ferguson of Louis Riel School Division has gratefully accepted to be your next Publications Editor.



# MSLA AWARDS

## MSLA Outstanding Teacher-Librarian of the Year

Heather Zaidman - Teacher-Librarian

Niakwa Place School Itinerant: Darwin, Minnetonka and Windsor Schools



*Photographer: Heather Eby*

Harriet Zaidman's career as a teacher-librarian and her unwavering commitment to school libraries in Manitoba are distinguished in every respect. Harriet has always embraced her role as a teacher-librarian with enthusiasm and purpose. The pure joy she draws from her work is heartfelt, and that authenticity has fostered trusting relationships with all who have had the good fortune to know and work with her. Harriet has nurtured and mentored future generations of learners in many different communities. Her exemplary practise is testament to her instructional role as a teacher-librarian in the schools she supports, and in the process, she has gained the esteem and admiration of numerous students, col-

leagues and administrators.

In the early 1970s, Harriet began her career as a library assistant at Radisson School in Transcona. Working in the school system inspired Harriet to return to university to acquire her Bachelor of Education. She began her teacher career in 1992 as the teacher-librarian at Niakwa Place School where she has remained to today. From 2011 to 2014, Harriet held a term position providing mentorship to classroom teachers transitioning to the new role as a teacher-librarian. Harriet resumed working full-time in 2015, when she added the permanent half-time role of itinerant teacher-librarian to her accomplishments. In this role, she serves the staff and students of three small

schools in Louis Riel School Division: Darwin, Minnetonka and Windsor Schools, and as well, continues in her half-time role as teacher-librarian at Niakwa Place School.

As an itinerant teacher-librarian, Harriet is reviving a culture of curiosity and inquiry in the library learning commons of three small school library learning commons this year. She is dedicated to re-imagining the collections in each of the schools she supports – carefully evaluating the existing resources, removing old, dodgy materials, and making truly inspired recommendations that will nurture new generations of readers.

Harriet knows that when students are encouraged to explore personal interests and passions, they are more motivated to read and their depth of understanding increases. Harriet has made the art of the book talk a top priority. It is astounding to watch Harriet book talk a stack of new titles and watch circulation stats climb – reshelving the leftover titles is rarely required! She also organizes author visits and ties them to special events. Harriet is also introducing new, extra-curricular activities for students in small school libraries over the noon hour. Chess and knitting have always been well attended student clubs at Niakwa Place School, but this year, Harriet is now organizing knitting clubs in all four of her schools, attracting the participation of both girls and boys, and even staff.

Harriet is also encouraging staff and students in small schools to share and celebrate their love of reading with new events like the Bookie Awards. Borrowed from an annual favorite I Love to Read activity originating at Niakwa Place School. Students participate in the Bookie Awards by choosing a favourite book and dressing up like the author or a character from the story. The Bookie Awards program sparks many energetic conversations about great books, authors and literature in general, as students become quite passionate in defending particular titles as contenders for a variety of different awards.

Harriet is a founding member of an LRSD Professional Learning Network (PLN) that promotes the Manitoba Young Readers' Choice Award (MYRCA) for middle years readers. In collaboration with other teacher-

librarians, Harriet co-plans and organizes an annual division-wide celebration for students and staff – fondly dubbed the “MOSCARS” – a literary version of the Academy Awards. This special event gives students who have participated in the MYRCA reading program an opportunity to come together from all over the division, and share their experiences as readers with others who have read the same titles. Last year, approximately 150 students in Grades 5-8, from 10 schools, participated in this event.

Harriet is dedicated to professional learning for teachers and teacher-librarians, both formally and informally. She participates in many professional learning networks and school-based committees within the Louis Riel School Division. Harriet is also a well-respected and sought-after conference presenter, both locally within LRSD, provincially at the MTS PD Day and even at the OLA Super Conference in Toronto. She is always very generous in sharing her expertise, and regularly delivers professional development sessions on a variety of topics. In her itinerant role, Harriet has also supported site-based professional learning in small schools. She is often called upon to speak on the inquiry process, the selection and evaluation of learning resources, evaluating web sites, and information technology.

Irene Nordheim, Assistant Superintendent in Louis Riel School Division praises Harriet's long years of service in the Division when she wrote:

***Harriet's work as a teacher-librarian has been a demonstration of professionalism and team commitment at its finest. The***

***greatest compliment that educators give to one another is to continually seek help from those who are busiest. Harriet has received more than her fair share of kudos. She has taken the time to consult, listen and collaborate with those who are equally invested in libraries and its value to the students of Manitoba. Ms. Zaidman is always seeking to improve the manner in which we conduct business in the “heart of the school”; our libraries. Whether it is mentoring new teacher-librarians, advocating for infusing technology into instruction way before it became expected or modeling an appreciation for literature by becoming a highly respected book reviewer.***

Harriet is the ultimate co-teacher, collaborator and team member – who not only values learning with and from others, but also contributes to the learning of others in so many wonderful ways. Needless to say, her genuine willingness to share her expertise, try new ideas, and provide constructive feedback make her our favourite teacher-librarian mentor in Louis Riel School Division. We respect her common sense and good advice – classroom teachers, support staff, teacher-librarians, library assistants, school communities, coordinators, and administrators – we all count on Harriet!

After 25 years working as a teacher-librarian, Harriet Zaidman will retire from Louis Riel School Division on June 30th, 2017.

## MSLA Library Support Staff of the Year

Denise Desrosiers, Library Technician

John W. Gunn Middle School

Denise has been a Library Technician for seventeen years. During that time she has worked at a variety of school libraries including Park Circle School, Radisson Elementary School, Joseph Teres Elementary, Donwood Elementary and finally at John W. Gunn Middle School. Throughout her career she has served as Divisional Union Treasurer, Vice President and Steward. She has served on countless committees such as the Divisional Amalgamation Committee, Library Technician Professional Development Committee as well as the Library Guidelines Committee.

Although all Denise's nominators praised her work ethic and strong technical background, it is her passion for literacy, her love for her students, and her advocacy efforts that make her an exemplary role model. As Denise's principal, Dean Finlay explains, "She is constantly pumping me for the funds in order to keep our collection current. I know that if Denise makes the trip down to my office from the library, there is a good chance that she is coming for more money. That is one of the qualities that I admire most about Denise. She has always had a clear vision of what she wants in the library and has respectfully and relentlessly gone about making it happen. Her vision has led to the development of a learning space that kids want to be a part of. Our library is an inviting space that encourages students to invest in their own learning by reading. Denise's role in promoting literacy within the school cannot be overstated. Denise is a constant in the library, someone that staff and students have come to count on."

Denise understands the important role libraries and library staff can have on the lives of students. Because of her efforts, according to teacher, Wayne Paton, "The students and staff at John Gunn want to access the library. Denise has built strong relationships with students. Whether it be academically inclined students or students who present challenges, Denise will find a way to make them want to return. Denise likes them and she likes her voca-



*Photographer: Heather Eby*

tion, and they get that. The acquisition of library skills, procedures and expectations are acquired in a seamless fashion."

Margo Gerus, Teacher Librarian at John W. Gunn Middle school continues, "Every year Denise takes several students under her wing in the role of Library Helpers and encourages their love of reading through conversation and collaboration." Miles Pomaranski concurs. As he explains, "Denise is the master of the book world as it pertains to adolescent literature. Her thirst for knowledge goes unquestioned. But it's more than just about the books. Thanks to Denise, life in our library has become about creating and fostering a supportive, nurturing environment for all students who access the space. It's about making a connection and feeling welcome, whether it be about helping solve or resolve the troubles of the world or the spine of a damaged book. Throughout the day and over the years our library continues to remain current, vibrant and growing thanks to efforts and hard work of Denise."

Finally, Chelsea Bretecher expresses the importance of the small acts Denise performs that make her so special. "It is in the simple things like decorating the

library to ensure that it is a peaceful retreat in a hectic building. It is in the community building things like managing the book orders each month, running reading contests and guiding the MYRCA Club. It's in the blatant acts of literacy love that can only come from someone whose heart is in the library – printing a blank book cover for each person in our school to share their favourite book and proudly putting them on display throughout the school; growing a reading tree where readers are encouraged to add a leaf reflecting their current favourite book; challenging kids to participate in making the longest reading worm ever by adding discs with book recommendations when they check in their library books during circulation."

Denise epitomizes why the Manitoba School Library Association created this new award in 2017. Denise, as her colleagues have so eloquently explained, has a passion for libraries and actively supports her library, Teacher Librarian, faculty, and her students. As Principal, Dean Finlay, relates, "Through Denise's efforts, in concert with those of the Teacher Librarian, Margo Gerus, the library has evolved into being one of the most popular spots in the school."



## MSLA Distinguished Service Award

Kim Marr, Library Technician  
Linden Christian School

Kim Marr has a “connector” personality. She epitomizes what libraries do every day; she connects people with people, and people with resources; she facilitates learning and encourages personal growth and community development. Her passion for libraries and her extraordinary ability to work quietly behind the scenes has enriched school libraries in the province for two decades.

Kim graduated from the Library and Information Technology program in 1980. She has worked at the RRCC Library, the Legislative Library and the Millennium Library (Centennial at that time) before finding her passion in school libraries. Kim has dedicated herself to the library at Linden Christian School since 1998. During Kim’s time at Linden Christian School, the library has evolved from a temporary space for the K-Grade 8 school to a literary rich, visually beautiful, well equipped and stimulating learning commons for students K to 12. Early years students are immersed in literature as library staff dress in character for the Book Fair. Students are supported in creative programming with a video creation room in the library equipped with green screens, cameras and sound equipment in the Makerspace area. Library staff collaborate with teaching staff to develop their students’ digital literacy skills by providing library computer access using digital subscription resources for content and NoodleTools.

Principal Lorraine Kehler explains how Kim exemplifies a life-long learner, “It is a pleasure to have Kim Marr as a librarian as she works from a lifelong learner context for herself and encourages it in others. She has a “can do” approach to her work and connects with students, parents and staff in a way that builds our community and makes our



*Photographer: Heather Eby*

library one of the “hubs” of our school.” Throughout her time at Linden Christian, Kim has researched, planned and consulted with architects to create the blueprints for the new library; she automated the library system, advocated and planned the expansion of the library with a view to developing a Makerspace, and genrifed the fiction collection. As Kim researches the latest library trends she engages with the greater library community and invites colleagues to join her in her quest for knowledge. She strongly believes that all libraries can be stronger when everyone supports, encourages, and learns together.

Kim has been extremely active in the greater library community in Manitoba where she shares her knowledge and expertise. These include serving on the Boards of the MSLA, AIMSL, SLAM, the RDA Working Group and MLCI. Kim has willingly volunteered for these various organizations because she believes in their cause and understands that various libraries working together (school, public, academic and special libraries) makes them all stronger and

saves money, too. As part of the MSLA Board, Kim has advocated for school libraries - both public and private - across the province. She has been the voice for many library technicians who are members of MSLA which has helped bring the entire school library community together.

Kim served on the MSLA Executive as the Membership Committee Chair from 2009 - 2012, as the AIMSL Liaison to MSLA from 2012 - 2016, and as the MLCI Liaison to MSLA from 2015 - 2016. She has also served on the MSLA’s SAGE Conference planning committee. She has presented several times at MSLA’s SAGE Conference including in 2013 (“Roundtable on RDA”), in 2015 (“RDA Working Group document”) and in 2016 (“School Library Learning Commons and Makerspace Tours”).

Kim was one of the driving forces behind the establishment of the Association of Independent Manitoba School Libraries (AIMSL) in 2010. AIMSL was developed to support library staffs in Independent schools by developing a network for sharing expertise and

knowledge. After spearheading the development of AIMS, Kim took on the role of Membership Coordinator to continue her role in building the membership of the Association.

The RDA Working Group was established to update the provincial document, *Accessing Information: Cataloguing Guidelines for Manitoba and Saskatchewan School Library Personnel*, which was published in Manitoba in 2013. Kim was one of the individuals who worked behind the scenes advocating for a committee to update the guidelines based on the new RDA guidelines. The underlying principle behind the development of the RDA Working Group was to support all school library staffs, regardless of training, to ensure that core requirements were established for school library cataloguing practices. Her work on the RDA Cataloguing Working Group continues and her efforts to disseminate the document to all provincial libraries is commendable.

Kim is currently serving her fourth year (second year of a two year term) on the board of the Manitoba Library Consortium Inc. (MLCI). On MLCI, Kim has been a voice for school libraries when discussing MLCI's evolving mandate, database subscriptions, and other issues that impact libraries across the province.

Kim Marr always steps away from the spotlight but her quiet enthusiasm is infused in all of the Associations she has served and in her day-to-day practice at Linden Christian School. The greater school library community has benefited greatly for all the work she has done on behalf of school libraries in Manitoba. Thank you, Kim.

## 2017 SAGE Conference: Truth in Our Stories: Seeking a Path to Reconciliation

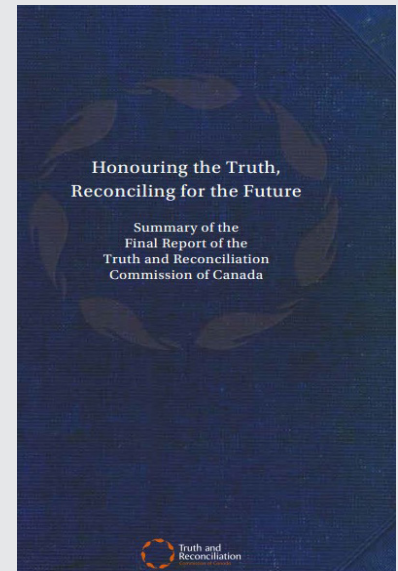
*Jo-Anne Gibson*

What is the truth about the history of Indigenous people in Canada? What does reconciliation mean to you? What can you do to redress the legacy of residential schools and the wrongs that have been committed against Canada's first peoples? These are just three of the many questions the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada challenges all Canadians to learn more about, contemplate and act upon in their final TRC report, *Honouring the Truth, Reconciling for the Future* (2015).

As educators, we all have a tremendous role to play in the reshaping of the Indigenous narrative in this country. What we say and do in our schools on a daily basis has an incredible impact on how our Indigenous students feel about themselves and how others perceive them. Regardless of whether you teach or work in a general classroom or library, you are a specialist, an information specialist, a technology coordinator or a school administrator, the Manitoba School Library Association invites you to learn more about our first peoples - their history, culture, language, spirituality and the legacy effects of residential schools in Canada - at the MSLA's annual SAGE conference on Friday, October 20, 2017 at Fort Richmond Collegiate.

The MSLA's SAGE planning committee has brought together an all Indigenous list of presenters who will tell their stories through text, speech, music, art, storytelling, dance and film. Keynote speaker is author, Melanie Florence, winner of the 2016 TD Children's Literature Award for her book, *Missing Nimama*, a picture book that speaks to the tragedy of missing and murdered Indigenous women. Melanie is also the author of several books for middle school students with Indigenous themes including *He Who Dreams* and one non-fiction book, *Righting Canada's Wrongs: Residential Schools*.

Regardless of where you are on your reconciliation journey, this conference will challenge you to think deeply and help you to connect or reconnect with the Indigenous peoples of Canada.



*Melanie Florence*  
AUTHOR


 The text 'Melanie Florence' is written in a cursive font, and 'AUTHOR' is in a simple sans-serif font below it. To the right of the text are two decorative feathers, one larger and one smaller, both with blue and white patterns.



## Treasure Mountain Canada 5 School Library Learning Commons Symposium

The MSLA is also pleased to announce that in addition to our annual SAGE conference we will be hosting a national school library symposium, Treasure Mountain 5 (TMC5) which begins immediately after the SAGE conference and runs through to Saturday, October 21st. Participants can register to attend either event but we hope that you will consider registering for both. Anyone registering for both events will receive a free tour of the Canadian Museum for Human Rights.

TMC5 is an opportunity for teacher-librarians, school library support staff and administrators to reflect on the latest in school library learning commons research as it pertains to cultivating culturally responsive spaces in schools across Canada. Previous Treasure Mountain events in Canada have been held in Edmonton, Ottawa, Victoria and Toronto.

Keynote speaker for the Winnipeg event is Karen Boyd, Assistant Superintendent for Educational Programming in the River East Transcona School Division. Topics to be explored include the learning environment, instructional approaches, learning partnerships and leveraging technology to create culturally reflective and responsive school library learning commons. An invitation to write and present papers for TMC5 will be made soon.

## Schedule of Events

- Friday, October 20 - MSLA SAGE Conference: Truth in Our Stories: Seeking a Path to Reconciliation, 8:45 am to 3:00 pm, Fort Richmond Collegiate, 99 Killarney Ave., Winnipeg (lunch provided to those who register before Oct. 15)
- Friday, October 20 — Tour of CMHR 5:00 pm to 6:30 pm (transportation provided)
- Friday, October 20 — TMC5 Kick-off Dinner and Keynote, 7:00 pm to 9:00 pm, Canad Inns Fort Garry, 1824 Pembina Hwy., Winnipeg
- Saturday, October 21 - TMC5 Symposium: Culturally Relevant and Responsive School Library Learning Commons, 8:30 am to 3:00 pm, Canad Inns Fort Garry, 1824 Pembina Hwy., Winnipeg (breakfast and lunch provided)

*Watch for upcoming details on how to register for one or both events on the Manitoba School Libraries website, the Canadian School Libraries website and/or the Manitoba Teachers' Society's website (you do not need to be a teacher to attend). Early bird rates expire October 1, 2017 so don't delay.*



**TMC**  
Treasure Mountain Canada

**The 5<sup>th</sup> Treasure Mountain Canada Research Symposium and Think Tank is coming! Mark your calendar now and plan to participate.**

## CALL FOR PAPERS

Canadian Scholarly Research and Profession Writing Regarding School Libraries in Canada

Treasure Mountain Canada is pleased to announce the fourth biennial TMC symposium to be held in partnership with the Manitoba School Library Association (MSLA) in Winnipeg during the SAGE Conference in October 2017. Full information regarding rates and registration will be available on the TMC website.

Treasure Mountain Canada is a participatory learning experience designed to bring researchers and practitioners together to discuss and debate current Canadian research and scholarly writing which has an impact on the role of school libraries vis-à-vis educational strategy and transformation. Papers and work from previous TMC experiences are archived for viewing and study at <http://tmc.canadian-schoollibraries.ca/>.

The first Treasure Mountain Canada, held in Edmonton in 2010, focused on “Transforming Canadian School Libraries to Meet the Needs of 21st Century Learners”. In Ottawa in 2012 the focus became Learning for the Future: Working Towards Revised National Standards for School Libraries in Canada. In Victoria in 2014 the focus was the launch of the CLA document Leading Learning: Standards of Practice for School Library Learning Commons in Canada. TMC4 in Toronto focused on deeper implementation of the National Standards, and evidence that the standards are making an impact on teaching and learning in Canada.

The goal of TM Canada is to make the school library a key area of academic debate. At this time, the TMC5 planning committee is pleased to extend an invitation to teacher-librarians and educators across the country for papers for the fifth publication, which will be one of the essential resources for the symposium. To complement the timely SAGE conference theme, Truth in Our Stories: Seeking a Path to Reconciliation, we invite exploration and research papers on issues in school library learning commons practice that speak to Indigenous education, human rights, diversity and inclusiveness.

We suggest either teacher-research and/or academic research related to the theme and strands:

### **Symposium Theme: Culturally Relevant and Responsive School Library Learning Commons**

- Learning Environment
- Instructional Approaches
- Learning Partnerships
- Leveraging Technology



**MSLA SAGE Conference**  
Truth in Our Stories:  
Seeking a Path to Reconciliation

**TMCanada Symposium**  
Culturally Relevant and Responsive  
School Library Learning Commons

**TMC**  
Treasure Mountain Canada

**School Library Learning Commons  
Research Symposium  
and Think Tank**

**A Canadian School Libraries Project**

**October 20 – 21, 2017** **Winnipeg, Manitoba**

We recognize the outstanding contributions so many of you are making to teaching and learning in Canada. Your work needs to be recognized by the greater education community – and documented, so that it can become part of the debate. Papers will be peer reviewed and posted online for study prior to the symposium. A checklist of specific requirements for papers is included below, and a handy guide for teacher-librarians new to action research is attached. Papers are required by October 1, 2017: please send to Carol Koechlin koechlin@sympatico.ca

For planning purposes, please let us know if you hope to submit a paper. If you have any questions or wish to discuss this initiative further contact Carol by email koechlin@sympatico.ca or by phone 416-751-0889, or contact any member of the planning committee. Watch for more details coming soon regarding the TMC5 program and registration information <http://tmc.canadianschoollibraries.ca/>

### Planning Committee for Treasure Mountain Canada TMC5

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- Carol Koechlin, CSL Vice-Chair - email [koechlin@sympatico.ca](mailto:koechlin@sympatico.ca)
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- Vivianne Fogarty, Teacher Librarian, Pembina Trails School Division - email [vfogarty@pembinatrails.ca](mailto:vfogarty@pembinatrails.ca)

### Checklist for TM Canada papers

- If print format:
- Approximately 1500-3000 words in length
- Digital MS Word document - Arial 12 point
- Single spaced and visuals (e.g. charts and graphs) embedded
- Alternative media formats such as websites and video are also welcome
- References in any standard format
- Short biography of writer, about 200 words plus a digital photo would be appreciated
- Permissions if previously published
- Permission to publish your paper in PDF on TM Canada Site
- Papers are needed by October 1, 2017.

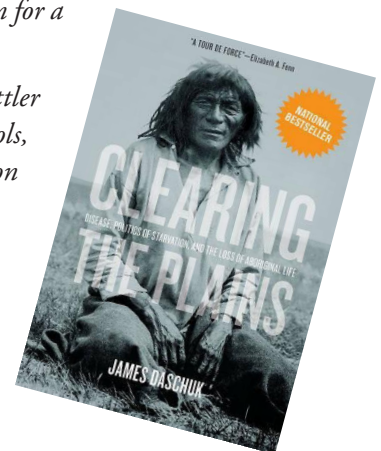
Note: Papers will be peer reviewed. Copyright to remain with the writer.

Questions about submissions should be directed to Carol Koechlin [koechlin@sympatico.ca](mailto:koechlin@sympatico.ca)

### Suggested Reading Lists –

**If you would like to learn more about Indigenous experiences the following book list was selected by the Teacher-Librarian Indigenous Learning Group with the Pembina Trails School Division:**

- Truth and Reconciliation Commission Report: Calls to Action on Education
- *Knock at the Door* by Phil Fontaine, Aimee Craft and the TRC of Canada
- *In This Together: 15 Stories of Truth and Reconciliation* by Danielle Metcalfe-Chenail
- *Residential Schools: With the Words and Images of Survivors* by Larry Loyie
- *Clearing the Plains* by James Daschuk
- *Truth About Stories* by Thomas King
- *The Break* by Katherina Vermette
- *Price Paid* by Bev Sellars
- *The Education of Augie Merasty: A Residential School Memoir* by Joseph Auguste Merasty
- *Indigenous Writes* by Chelsea Vowel
- *Lighting the Eighth Fire* Edited by Leanne Simpson
- *Unsettling Canada A National Wake-Up Call* by Arthur Manuel
- *Shannen and the Dream for a School* by Janet Wilson
- *Unsettling the Settler Within Indian Residential Schools, Truth Telling and Reconciliation in Canada* by Paulette Regan



# First Nations Schools 1st Conference Highlights: Sharing Successful Indigenous learning

Sponsored by the Canadian Education Association

Attended by Mona-Lynne Ayotte, Jo-Anne Gibson, Vivianne Fogarty, Pembina Trails School Division

Article reported on by M-L. Ayotte.

## First Nations Schools

### Sharing successful Indigenous learning

October 6-7, 2016 | Vancouver, B.C.

#FirstNations1st cea  ace



Last spring, Jo-Anne, Vivianne and myself applied for a grant from the Manitoba Teachers' Society to attend the First Nations Schools 1st Canadian Education Association conference which was to take place in Vancouver, BC at the Musqueam Cultural Centre in early October 2016. Terri Price from the Manitoba Teachers' Society also attended this conference and was in one of the many sessions we had registered to attend. What appealed to us as a conference selection was the fact we would be listening to educators who had developed programs and relationships that had inspired success amongst their indigenous students. Below are some of the highlights from the conference that encouraged us to continue our education towards truth and reconciliation.

### *Traditional Opening Prayer*

Prior to Paul Martin speaking, a traditional welcome acknowledging the long line of leaders on the Musqueam Land was made. Community members were acknowledged as educators

as many come over the winter months to learn more about their traditions in the longhouses. The Musqueam people value education and their goal is not only to be self-sufficient but to continue being successful people in their Vancouver community. Despite the betrayal of education in terms of residential schooling, it is evident the Musqueam people value education as it offers the best hope in rebuilding Indigenous society. Those of us who hear this and are there because our hearts and spirits are calling to be a part of the newer truths and reconciliation are touched deeply. This statement reminds me of the one I heard in my training with the TRCM: "We need you."

Marie Pointe welcomed us to the Musqueam Cultural Centre in her traditional language, the language of her ancestors. Her hands opened up silently towards the sky, signaling the sacredness of the event and the call to spirit to guide all of the presenters and attendees. The conference would focus on excellence in teaching and encourage others to see this as a road map for equitable education and access. Furthermore, we would be exposed to the concept that Indigenous

Education is valuable and all students should have indigenous teachers. We would be blessed with the wise experience of teachers, administrators, Aboriginal Educational Support Workers, Chiefs, young musical artists, and other educators.

Serge Beliveau introduced the Young Artists who would perform for us original songs created in their special Arts Concentration Program in his Quebec School. We listened with wide open hearts to Kim sing Bound and I am Broken. The words: "I loved you So, I let you Go," resonated on so many levels with the appreciative audience. Felicity played the guitar. As the last song played combining elements of folk and rap, the drum beat echoed: "Someday I will make my way home, I know there's love beyond my soul."

*Indigenous Education and the Martin Family Initiative: A Candid Conversation with the Right Honourable Paul Martin*

Paul Martin opens his address with a humorous anecdote from his director Dr. Carlana Lindeman. Apparently he is afraid of her given she is the Director of the Martin Aboriginal Education Initiative – she reminds him not to mess up his presentation! Of course, he doesn't.

Paul Martin is highly devoted along with his staff to the education of Indigenous and Non-Indigenous teachers who are devoted to helping Aboriginal Youth. Clearly this conference is a step in the right direction as it offers the strongest sign of hope for Canada. MSEI offers a number of programs to increase the financial literacy, marketing goals, literacy and school Principal's course (a program that has now a waiting list and may admit others in January of 2017). The Chiefs in Canada approached Mr. Martin to create this course as they could not depend on the Ministers of Education in the various project to begin this initiative. It is evident that in creating this program they called upon the top Indigenous educators from OISE, Alberta and the University of British Columbia so they could partner in its inception and development. He is clear that the control of any system must remain with First Nations.

The literacy course is an answer to the number of Aboriginals who may have problems reading and writing, problems that generally show up by grade three. This program teaches the teachers how to teach literacy assisting them to shift their practice to being supportive which is a special skill that comes with a certain type of understanding. Those involved in this program commit to a hundred minutes a day for four years; a program of this nature is expensive but the return is huge. With this program as an intervention at two Reserve High Schools in South Western Ontario, the literacy rate has jumped from 13% to between 67% and 81% percent improvement.

One of the members from the Reserve community said to him at one point: "You didn't think my students could do this. You give an Indigenous student education, and we will beat anyone anytime." With the success of this program, his next efforts will be in the area of Mathematics and Science hoping to replicate the same results.

He is clear that in order for these programs to work partnerships are required, partnerships which include parental involvement. Mr. Martin knows that the Chiefs welcome our help as teachers because they cannot do it alone. Those of us who are there are clearly called to be a part of this helping process. We want to help, but we also know that we need more information to better understand the effects residential schools as families and students move towards healing truth and reconciliation.

Some of us may not be able to speak the languages of the ancestors but we know the development of materials to bring this back is crucial to so many aspects of the cultural knowledge and experience. "No one should ever have to leave their culture at the school door in order to succeed." Mr. Martin also speaks to the inequality in funding formulas as one group of students in Canada gets more than another remarking that this makes a segment of the population suffers both in the areas of health and education. Young Canadians are not being treated equitably and we need to remedy this so that opportunities are presented equally to all



young Canadians. Mr. Martin has the passion of an educator and he encourages us to learn to: SPEAK WITH ONE VOICE! We need a united voice and education for a WHOLE country. He says there is currently a national will to do this as Canadian people can speak with one LOUD voice. It is not just the voice of Indigenous and Non-Indigenous people and the Federation of teachers that have to speak loudly, we have to get the universities and colleges on board as well.

Mr. Martin ends with a question typically asked of many students – who was your favourite teacher? In the case of Mr. Martin, it became a special elementary teacher who taught math.

As a young boy, Mr. Martin hated math. Apparently, he was no damn good at it! (We all chuckle!) Something changed when he met a special elementary math teacher, not only did he care, but he cared to teach and support young Paul in the process of grasping mathematical concepts. Imagine a Finance Minister believing this in his early educational life. No good at Math, but have we got a future

plan for you – you're going to be the Finance Minister of Canada one day, so take this opportunity right now, because you will need to love math.

For more information on these programs and the charitable organization, please go to <http://www.mael-ieam.ca>.

### *Damn be Honest. What we're doing isn't working. Abandoning pedagogy and doing indigagogy with Dr. John Akweniio-stha Hodson*

I need to be honest here. The information Dr. John was presenting had merit, however, I had a great deal of difficulty listening to him as he prefaced his talk with his delivery style as being harsh. I did not grow up with harsh parents or harsh teachers and so this approach is not one that makes me feel comfortable yet I keep listening offering my respect to Dr. John the professor.

Dr. John gave us an assignment to meet with our provincial colleagues and to record the initiatives happening our province. As we met amongst our various provincial attendees to share and record the initiatives which had been developed in Indigenous programming, we were involved actively in a dialogue of honest sharing. We learned new things from each other, and learned about other provincial and divisional programs. Dr. John took the tabulated sheets of information and dissected them to the point of being dismissive. Feelings of shame, guilt and not doing it right floated through the room. It took everything I had to listen further.

And when I chose to share a recent experience in the workshop with an Educational Assistant at my school who was working with an Indigenous student, one in which I was able to gentler

offer an Indigenous perspective rather than a colonized one, he said it was an anomaly and not something which could be researched and documented. I didn't need it to be documented to be successful. I knew that my approach not to shame my colleague at school was important. My Manitoba Catalyst Treaty Training had taught me how to approach other colleagues in helping them to see how colonization has affected the Indigenous world view and way of life. I have spent passionate years learning to help both teachers, educational assistants and students to see how Westernized practices are unsettling to Indigenous students and ourselves as Canadians. I suggest information quietly, and with great care as many teachers clearly don't want to present incorrect information. Many of them don't know where to start, but when we share a moment in time that opens that door to understanding, we move in the right direction together improving the knowledge of students and teachers.

And so Dr. John's style would not be one I could learn under – it would frighten me, demoralize me, and cause me to lose a great deal of confidence. I wonder if this is what it was like for children in residential schools. Luckily, a participant with whom I speak to later on stands up and speaks to the topic of being invited to the table. Dr. John wants us to know that Indigenous people want to be there, they don't want to be left out anymore. I like that and I agree. Relief sets in. He feels the speaker who happens to be the Assistant Deputy Minister from the Yukon isn't getting the message. He says she doesn't understand how the elder in the room wants to be invited. I disagree. The Assistant Deputy Minister is not one who would not invite you to her table. She has invited ten of her staff to join her at this conference, and

when I approach her to talk, she invites me openly to her table. Dr. John assumes she would not invite the elder, but I a total stranger from a faraway province am given the invitation. And we talk. She helps me to see that we have to be in this together, and that harshness is not a way to deliver the message. She helps me to reconcile the pain from that workshop. And I am thankful for the learning and the sharing as we are served the most beautiful traditional lunch.

### *Reconciliation in Action Continuing the Journey with the Elders School District Southeast Kootenay Aboriginal Education Team*

*Joe Pierre, Chris Kennedy, Debbie McPhee, Joan the Elder, Tracy.*

If there ever was an Indigenous practice that was modeled at this conference, it occurred in this workshop. It started with a circle of chairs, blankets on the floor, bare feet, storytelling and a sharing of who we were. Joe Pierre, EA Facilitator for Southeast Kootenay, would help moderate the session. He asked the presenters, Debbie, Elder and... to introduce themselves. Debbie who was seated next to me was the first to speak. She said it was important to the presenters to know who was in the circle because this exercise was about building relationships. After the other two presenters had introduced themselves, we began our sharing tale. We spoke of our own family history... Debbie had married into a Métis family, and I spoke of being adopted while being raised by wonderfully loving French Canadian Parents in Manitoba. I heard later from Debbie that one



of their colleagues had recently passed and his experience was one of being adopted. He was the one who spoke to that in their circles. Despite this man's passing, I felt connected to him via this circle. His story was my story, and I felt a bigger part of this circle by this sustainable exercise.

I loved hearing everyone's ancestral storylines – we could all relate as we had a history and this history was one Indigenous ancestors told over and over again in their circles. In that moment, I learned humbly yet in a powerful another way to make connect with strangers making us in that moment a circle of connected brothers and sisters. Our stories had commonalities; we could relate. We had more in common that was different in that moment. We became an unbroken circle feet gently connected to blankets that had flown all the way with our Kootenay messengers. We had come to learn about the successful Elder School District program in the SouthEast Kootenay District. And I left with the most valuable lesson based on a question, a simple question to support Indigenous students: "What if we had elders in school?" And they went to the local Métis Association where there were 9-10 elders identified. In the long run, only two stayed mainly because the others held full time jobs.

I learned that schools don't chose their elders. The elders are recognized by their communities and chosen by them. Inviting elders into their school meant the elders had to be treated with great respect. The students and elders met once a month. Students made sure the elders had rides to school, and they

offered them lunch, making sure to ask them what their favourite foods were. It cost \$2000.00 that year to fund the lunches, and Debbie found a way via grant writing. The elders often came from as far away as eighty-five miles, completely devoted to supporting the students they met with during the school year. They even came up with an Elder's-in-Residence job description. The elder said: "I invested in the community and they invested in me." The power of reciprocity and due recognition. In order to get to know each other, various activities were designed – one called the Mirror Question:

## *What do you see when you look in the mirror?*



This question really got everyone talking. And they concluded what you see in each other is not what you see in yourself. Lessons in life – old, young, experienced, wanting to experience.

Other questions were: what is your favourite music and do you dance? The students also interviewed the Elders created a natural genealogy project.

Finding a space was a challenge. At first they were given the size of a closet, no window. They worked to remind that space and place if important for people. They were afraid of always losing their space. Finally they got a space. That challenge solved and Joan the Elder said it well: "We had lived in a closet and had come out of the closet!" Elder humour....

And finally having a principal that supports this program. Elders are humble yet powerful. In order to relate to more of the students they started going to classes. The elders did the picking. Elders spoke and educated teachers about where they come from as survivors of residential schools. "Every journey and every story in residential schools are different." And reminds them even at her age that she is never one not to be afraid of a challenge. And as a result, all the elders were hired! Again, Elder humour.

Joe Pierre indicated he is the one to facilitate the enhancement agreements but all of the cultural teachings and activities are guided by the elders. The elders receive a small honorarium, however, in doing some research, I noted that we need to value the elder's knowledge. Their knowledge is equivalent to a Ph. D. yet we don't offer them honorariums that demonstrate clearly their real value. As elders enter in various educational institutions this discussion will evolve as the work of elders expand.

### *Student Leadership Development Case*

#### *Study: A Strength based approach to developing students' positive identity through their land and culture*

*Gloria Raphael and Gordon Powell*

As Gloria and Gordon presented the program Windspeaker: Indigenous Youth Leaders Shaping Our Future from Surrey Schools, it was clear they were looking for a different way to engage and keep their students in school. They recognized that the students "Indigineousness" is valuable and they have a lot to give and

contribute as Aboriginal Youth. They knew they had to approach creating a program differently and had to answer this question: what is it that you need? The answer was to understand my culture.

To do things differently, they decided students had to connect with the land and in order to do so had to build some skills as eventually they would participate in an Outdoor Excursion Programs. They designed this 21 day jam-packed program and structured it so that there was no down time for any of the students who attended. Gloria's niece, Lania attended such a program, and it helped her recover from debilitating anxiety to the point she shared with us her success at the end of this presentation.

As the team created this program with the help of Jeff Willis of Fireside Adventures, major ideas were promoted:

1. An environment would be created whereby it was expected the students would connect to self.
2. Students enrolled in the program would have to demonstrate a commitment to the program and would work with an enhancement agreement that would help to increase student achievement and a student's full potential.
3. How would helping the students to relate to the land help them as Indigenous Youth to also find a better sense of well-being?

A number of excursions were planned, some were 7 days, 10 days and 21 days. There is now a waiting list for the program. Surrey which has 3200 Urban Aboriginal learners are hoping this program increases a posi-

tive self-identity and can attract even more students.

Safety was one of the major concerns and they decided to look at each student applicant individually. Some which may have had former and recent behavioral issues were considered, however, those with suicidal tendencies were not as they did not want to put others including the adults at risk.

As weekends opened up, urban studies were offered. Outdoor leadership and wilderness training began, with some of these also taking place after school. Even 5 Day excursions had a positive benefits within a day – a sense of family and identity would form, and the staff always wanted to come and do the next session. Despite many of the students not being athletes, the gains were great. They got new skills through mentorship and modelling.

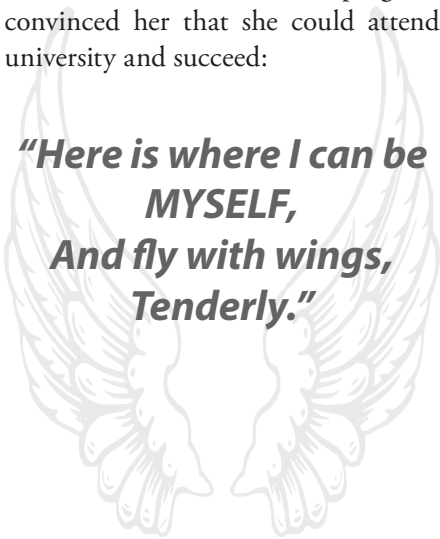
This program is not cheap. They used targeted dollars and targeted those learners in a specific way. They would apply for grants of \$60,000.00 - \$80,000.00. Students do not have the money for this program but their participation is the essential contribution. It was not an elite program and even students with whom there were barriers to attending school were considered. An elder accompanied them at retreats – “my hands are up to you!” It was never a fix-it program.

This program's success was also determinant on the positive relationship they had with the Superintendent. Their Senior Management team trusted the work and took on many points of shared responsibility. Front line workers who joined them were invaluable as they knew their students well.

Students did get credit for the 21 day excursion as an Independent Study, and one of the many conditions were to teach them to pay it forward. The 21 day excursion was not school-

ing but this program did connect to the curriculum in so many ways, some of which included core competencies like creative thinking, cultural identity and personal responsibility. This program helped student to develop their own potential and graduation rates improved as students found other ways scholastically to get credits. Basically the program helped them to connect back to the land and to find their place.

It was interesting to note that not all the Indigenous students belonged to the same local community. The team decided to expose the students to the local customs and embedded Indigenous traditions and their meanings. This approach helped feed the need in them to reconnect to the land and themselves as well as seeing possibilities. Many students who complete the program come back and are mentors (upon which they said looks good on a resume). Lania, Gloria's niece was one of them. She shared with us these beautiful words as to how the program convinced her that she could attend university and succeed:



***“Here is where I can be  
MYSELF,  
And fly with wings,  
Tenderly.”***

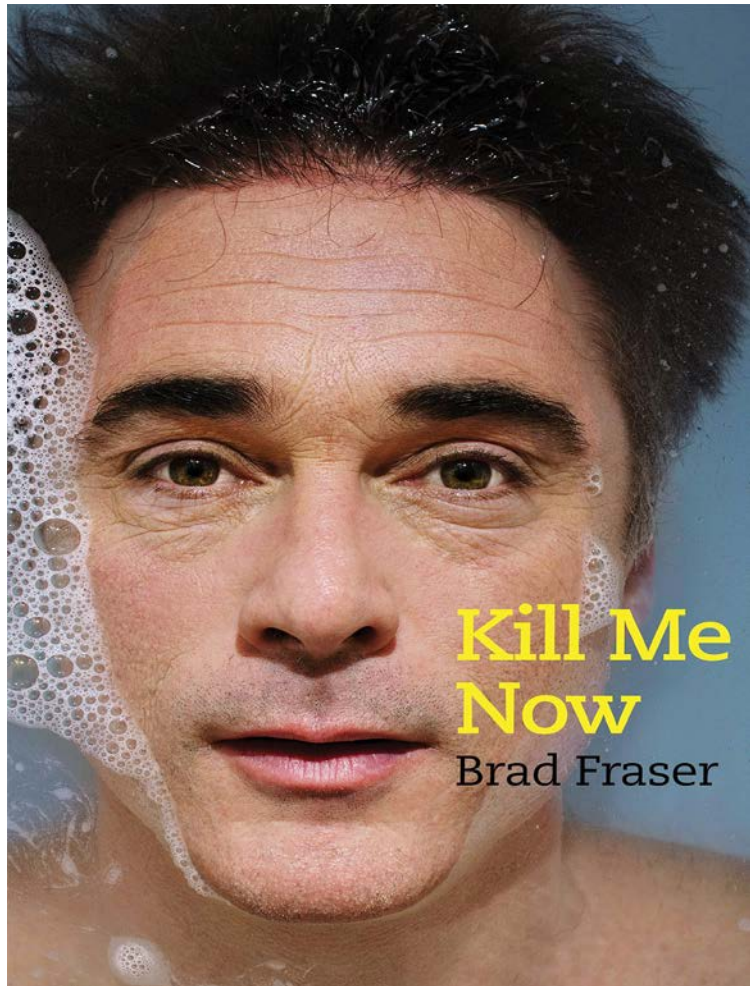
# Kill Me Now Playwright's Notes

Brad Fraser<sup>1</sup>

From the beginning of my career as a playwright I have done my best to put on the stage those people I didn't see represented, starting with myself. As a director I have always tried to cast people who vary greatly in size, shape, colour and age, because I believe the eye is more excited by variety than uniformity. Being queer and growing up in poverty led me to see the world from a much different perspective than many, and my desire to see that world reflected in the theatre led to the democracy of my characters- a repertoire that grows with each play I write, each attempt to stretch my imagination, to understand and portray things that are outside of my immediate realm of everyday experience. This is my obligation as an artist, to explore that which is not me. To find the concerns we all share in the traits that make us different.

There's a great deal of talk today about who has the "right" to tell a particular story, or depict a particular character, or explore a particular situation. These rather arbitrary and selectively applied condemnations, tellingly, are almost always based on race, and almost never on class. This allows those who can afford to attend university to let themselves off of the ethical hook when they argue so passionately, as they often do, on behalf of another group who has not necessarily requested their aid.

<sup>1</sup> Reprinted with permission from Author. As appeared in *Ovation*, Bittergirl The Musical Program, Royal Manitoba Theatre Centre, March/April 2017, pg. 30. (Kill Me Now played at the Tom Hendry Warehouse.)



My response to these people can be summed up in one question-

***Who has the right to ask anyone else to limit their imagination?***

Is this not the greatest form of censorship possible, to dictate to people what they are allowed to empathize with and what they are not, to tell them to limit their dreams, to squelch the very beginning of the process of understanding? Art that fails and offends is as important as art that succeeds and gains wide acceptance. How can we measure one without the other? The great thing about art is people are rarely required to experience if they don't want to. Voice your disapproval by your absence, rather than calling

for anything to be censored. We live in a democracy. Everyone has the right to free speech, even if it hurts your feelings or makes you angry.

This is not a play about disability. It is a play about courage and love, as all my plays are.

### **Synopsis – Kill Me Now**

*Widower Jake has been unwavering in his commitment to taking care of his disabled son Joey. AS Joey enters adolescence, Jake finds himself in a morally ambiguous position when it comes to charting his son's passage from a puberty-ravaged teenager to a self-assured young man.*

# « L'atelier Makerspace » Produits recyclables : c'est pas cher!

*Martine Gagnon, Bibliothécaire et « Makerspace » École Bonaventure, Selkirk, MB*

« L'atelier Makerspace » est une des nouveautés et mouvements dans certaines de nos écoles.

Avez-vous l'intention d'intégrer l'atelier Makerspace dans la vôtre, mais vous ne voulez pas dépenser tout votre budget? C'est possible. Nous l'avons fait! Nous n'allons pas vous faire l'éloge et vous expliquer d'où vient « Makerspace » mais plutôt vous expliquer comment nous l'avons adapté à notre école.

L'atelier Makerspace a débuté en septembre à notre école et nous avons décidé d'utiliser le plus possible des produits recyclés. Nous avons réalisé divers projets avec les élèves de différents niveaux sans que l'école ne débourse aucun sou. Nous avons demandé aux parents, étudiants et membres du personnel d'apporter divers produits recyclables à partir d'une liste de produits donc nous avons besoin pour nos créations.

Cette année, les étudiants ont confectionné<sup>1</sup> :

- des marionnettes avec des morceaux de tissus;
- des robots de 5 pieds de haut en carton et en plastique;
- des muffins;
- des fusées en papier qui volent vraiment;
- des coussins pour la bibliothèque;
- des affiches en français pour la biblio;
- Des mobiles en lien avec les couleurs de l'arc-en-ciel;
- Des robots/des marionnettes à ficelle avec des boîtes de conserve;
- de l'origami;
- des jeux de quilles avec des bouteilles de crème à café; et
- Des jeux d'anneaux.

Cela représente seulement une partie des activités que nous avons complétées avec aucune dépense. Il y a bien évidemment les Legos et K-Nex qui sont bien aimés par les élèves mais cela est plus dispendieux.

Cette année, nous avons eu 6 buts en commençant « L'atelier Makerspace » :

- S'amuser, créer et apprendre à connaître les élèves dans un contexte différent;
- Apprendre aux élèves à résoudre des problèmes en les encourageant à le faire entre eux;
- Développer et encourager le travail d'équipe;
- Développer leur imagination et leur autonomie;
- Apprendre du nouveau vocabulaire et parler en français; et
- Faire l'utilisation le plus possible de produits recyclables.

En terminant, voici les 3 mots que vous devriez retenir :

L'Imagination : choisir un thème avec les élèves.

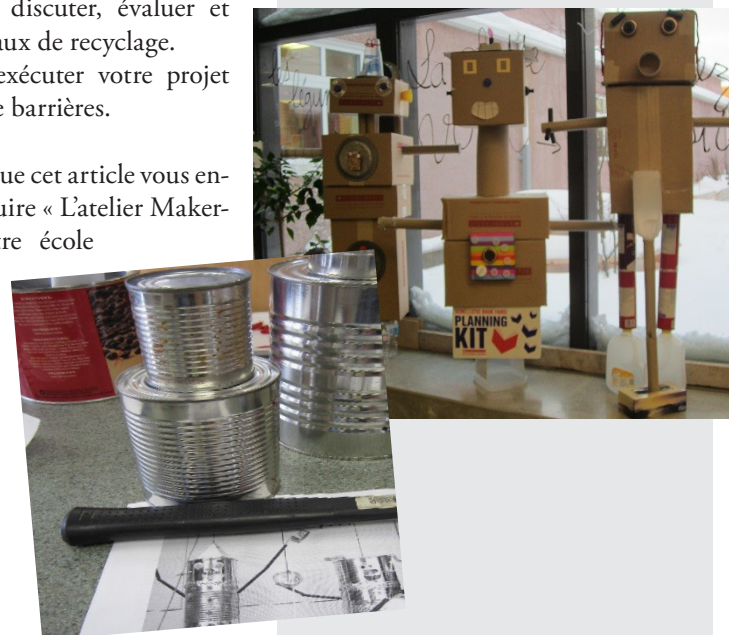
Le Recyclage : discuter, évaluer et trouver des matériaux de recyclage.

La Création : exécuter votre projet sans trop mettre de barrières.

Nous espérons que cet article vous encouragera à introduire « L'atelier Makerspace » dans votre école car c'est vraiment amusant et bénéfique pour l'apprentissage de nos étudiants.



***L'espace Makerspace est l'équivalent d'un atelier de bricolage pour les créations technologiques, artistiques et développement de projets créatifs ainsi qu'une place à jouer des jeux qui leurs faits penser. Il s'agit d'un mouvement mondial.***



<sup>1</sup> Julia Deering. How to Make a Tin Man. Apr. 2012. Adventures at Home: London, UK. JPEG.

## Book Chats

*Harriet Zaidman*

One of the pleasures of getting together with teacher-librarians at professional development events is the chance to have furtive book chats as wait for workshops to begin or line up for coffee, muffin in hand.

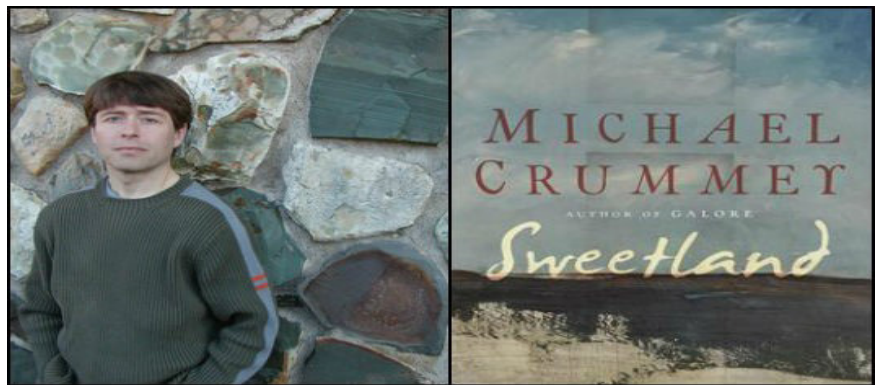
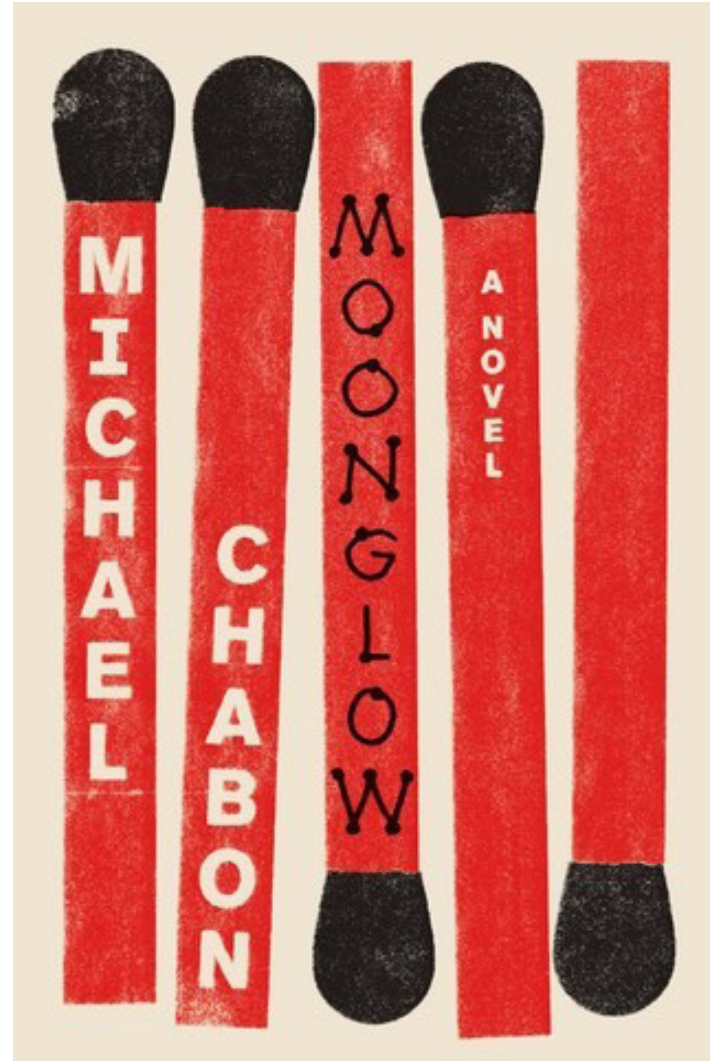
We don't always talk about children's literature. I've enjoyed many adult titles suggested by fellow book lovers. The quality of writing is so high these days; it seems impossible that one book can be held up as the best. Accordingly, I've decided to recommend several choices for consideration this summer:

Michael Chabon's latest brilliant offering is *Moonglow*, a memoir supposedly sparked by conversations held when his grandfather was on his deathbed. If you know Chabon's other novels, especially *The Adventures of Kavalier and Klay* and *The Yiddish Policeman's Union*, you'll know how Chabon weaves history and imagination so they're indistinguishable. In this story, Chabon (he narrates) uncovers the truth behind each of his grandparents' lives, delving back into trauma each experienced during World War II. It's a story of a family, its secrets, strengths and cracks.

Chabon is a meticulous researcher. In *Moonglow*, he connects the history of early rockets, the Nazi scientist Werner von Braun, France in World War II, Philadelphia in the 1930s, a Florida retirement home, the Everglades, psychiatry, recipes and more. As usual, each sentence is a stunner. *Moonglow* is one of those books you have to read again to appreciate the richness of the writing and the gravity of the events – and how they reverberated in the lives of not only Chabon's grandparents,

but his own as well.

*Sweetland* by Michael Crummey captures the essence of Newfoundland's history, culture and the personality of a people who scabbed out a living for generations. Poor as they were, limited by their physical circumstances of terrible locations and cruel weather, many people found it hard to give up what they had worked for when they



were offered the chance to leave.

Moses Sweetland is 70 years old, the only holdout to an offer by the provincial government to relocate his community from an island off the coast of Newfoundland in the early 2000s, a community barely hanging on since

the moratorium on the cod fishery. The offer of \$100,000 per person only stands if the entire population agrees, and everyone gangs up to pressure Moses to accept that his past has no future. It's a grim story, reflecting the challenges that life on *The Rock* presents. Crummey explores the human condition with sensitivity, a sense of

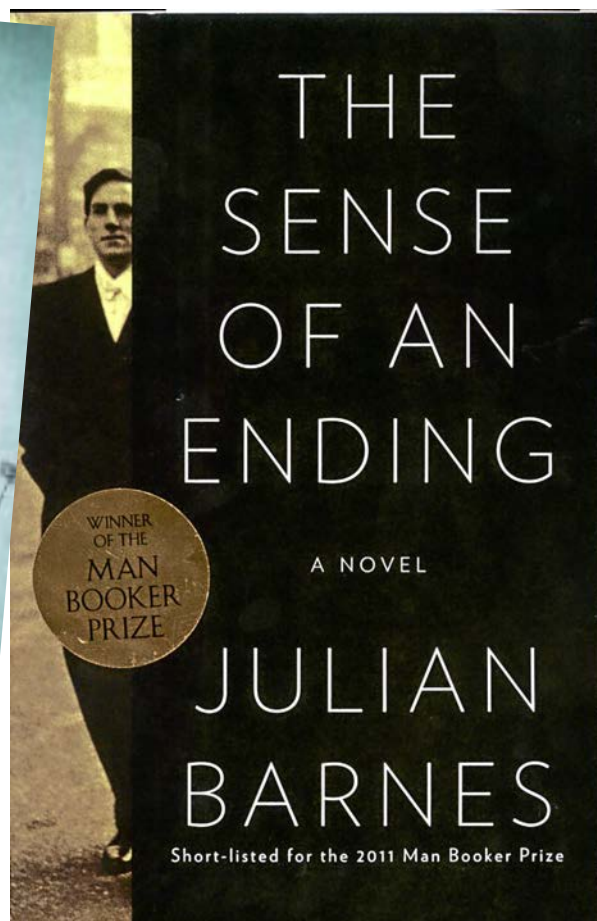
irony and humour in the face of tragedy. If you haven't read *The River Thieves* or *Galore*, add them to the pile on your night table, too. Micheal Crummey is one of Canada's best writers.

British novelist Rachel Joyce is a master talent. Her story, *Perfect*, has a quiet, seductive rhythm that leaves a reader gasping when the plot turns. In *Perfect*, Byron is a child who believes the world's clocks have two seconds added because of the earth's rotation. His festering over this detail causes an action that shatters the lives of his family and reverberates for decades.

Joyce creates characters whose exteriors hide vulnerabilities they are afraid to reveal, with tragic consequences. Separate stories blend together and rise to a climax that is exceptional. *Perfect* – the word describes not only the plotline, but Joyce's simple, skillful writing. Joyce was deservedly showered with accolades for *The Unlikely Pilgrimage of Harold Fry*, but *Perfect* is even better.

Julian Barnes received the Man Booker Prize for *The Sense of an Ending* in 2011. It's another finely-crafted tale about ghosts rising up years later to inhabit a character's consciousness.

Tony Webster is divorced, retired and lives alone. Out of the blue he receives a lawyer's letter informing him that he's been bequeathed a small sum of money and the diary of a school friend,



Adrian, who committed suicide decades earlier. The letter sends Tony on a journey back in time as he pieces together the events that led to the young man's death.

Adrian had been the philosophical member of the group of friends; he asserted that everyone has to examine their own lives and chose how to live or not to live. Tony is haunted by the sense that an irresponsible act he directed toward Adrian may have caused Adrian to kill himself. It's a meditation on responsibility and individual agency.

*The Sense of an Ending* has been made into a movie, released this year, starring Jim Broadbent and Charlotte Rampling. The details of the plot are changed somewhat, but it's beautifully written, superbly acted and well worth seeing. The only other book I have

read by Barnes is *Arthur and George*, so I have nearly 20 other titles to flip through this summer.

And that's the ending for me, at least the end of this column. I'm retiring and want to thank the editors for inviting me to contribute to the MSLA Journal since 2003. It's certainly kept me looking for good books to recommend, books with meaningful plots, complicated characters and significant ideas to ponder.

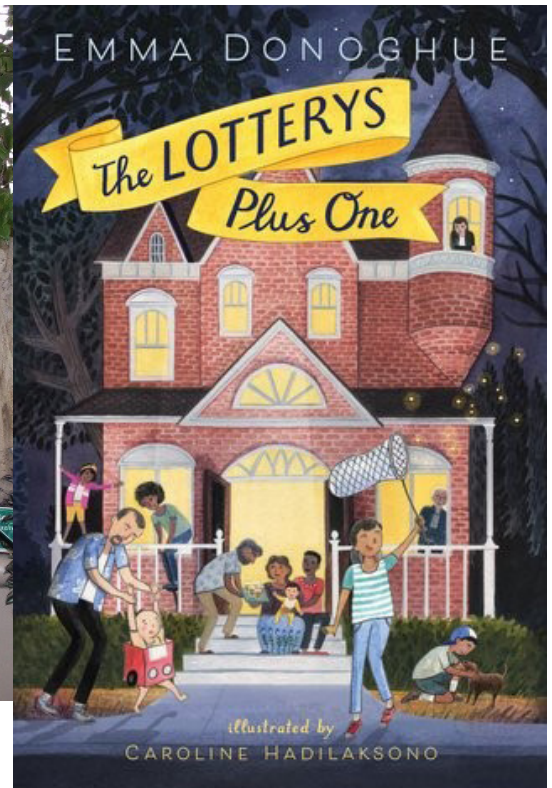
I wish you all the best in the valuable, life-changing work you do for the students in Manitoba, and happy reading.

# An Evening with Emma Donoghue and The Lotterys Plus One

*Mona-Lynne Ayotte, Teacher-Librarian, Institut collégial Vincent Massey Collegiate*



*The Lotterys Plus One is Emma's First YA Book.*



As part of the Winnipeg International Writers' Spring Festival, Charlene Diehl, Executive Director organized an evening which was held in McNally Robison's atrium with well-mannered on the surface author **Emma Donoghue**. As the evening progressed, we were highly entertained by Emma's natural sense of Irish humour, but mostly by her forthright ability to admit that her malicious characters are her favourites as she is able to experience them without the consequences. "If people only knew! Sweet and lovable characters are not the ones I am most fond of, it is the ones who give others trouble."

Charlene, who let the audience know she has the best job in the world because she gets to read stories, introduced the remarkable Emma Donoghue writer for radio, screen, adult and

YA novels. Charlene had prepared a number of questions based on reading Emma's latest book: *The Lotterys Plus One*, and later on she would open up the floor for the audience to ask questions.

*Charlene: How did the idea for Lotterys Plus One come about?*

Emma was in the middle of a dinner party, whereby, she was not doing the cooking when the hostess suggested she write a book about two mothers as this was no longer a big deal in Canadian society! Emma of course quick-wittedly mentioned to her friend: "So, if it's not a big deal, why write about it!" As she continued to consider the topic she decided that the two moth-

ers, who were in a relationship with each other, would live with the two fathers who were also in a relationship with each other and they would have a large brood of children and pets. In order to add some interest into the storyline, she borrowed from her own life as her mother had just been diagnosed with dementia. The older character she develops in this story is a grandfather with dementia who has been estranged from his family, and now needs to move into the house with his son as he can no longer manage on his own. Emma decides all of the children will be home-schooled, however, the key to this whole plot is that the adults win the lottery the night the first child is born. As a result, the adults all give up their day jobs.

## *The frontmatter or frontpiece – the family configuration*

Given this is a large family with five pets, Emma has included an illustrated front piece of the family which is illustrated at the front of the book just before the story begins. All of the children are named after trees and the pets are named after gemstone minerals. Originally, the animals also had names in reference to trees, however, given this was her first YA novel, she quickly realized the error which could cause readers to be confused, and aptly renamed the three-legged Dog, Diamond. When she changed the other pets' names, she had her daughters take the illustrations of those pets and possible new names to school, and they voted on the best names for the pets. Now that's a family and communal affair!

Emma loved being the youngest child in her own family of eight as being the baby meant she was utterly spoiled. To this day she struggles

with her R's as she was well known for asking her siblings to pick her up rather than walk: "MISS, Cawwwrry Me!" As she developed the children's age range, Emma decided to write in characters from the ages of one to sixteen, with the main character being the middle one of 9 years old, Sumac. Thus, Sumac is also pictured in the middle of the frontmatter as the protagonist in the storyline – the one who insists that she reads at the age level of a thirteen year old! Sumac also has a deep interior life, she is competent, very orderly and has ended up in this eccentric family. And the most useful character in any book, is the one who behaves badly. Is that Sumac or someone else?

## *The Setting*

Generally, the setting of a book should not specify an exact location, rather it should be generic so that it can be read around the world and readers can imagine the storyline applies to them as well. Emma who lives in London, ON, decided to set

the book in Toronto's Parkdale region which is located a little west of downtown Toronto. Although there are no ravines in Parkdale, she added one because everyone should have a ravine close by to play in at any given time. Currently, Parkdale is a gentrified community and is a hip place to live which is about twenty minutes from downtown and minutes away from a walking path on Lake Ontario (where my daughter lives).

## *The great equalizer – Lice!*

Apparently, it doesn't matter how rich you are, lice can become the elementary middle years equalizer as Emma herself has dealt with this issue personally. And so lice becomes an epic issue to deal with in the household.

Emma takes a pause from the questions and honours us with a reading from her book. As she begins reading she shows us the frontmatter page and talks about all of the characters so that we can understand the passage from which she will read. She

states she "clearly does not have the skills to summarize this part in a minute! She is an expressive reader and takes on the energy of the character at one point becoming very adolescent and loudly stating: "NO WAY!" She then switches to being Vanilla, and her voice becomes high pitched maintaining audience attention upon which there are two young primary boys who laugh accordingly. (Later on one of these boys would ask Emma if





she could teach his mother to write a book! And she would answer that everyone has a different book in them and his mom would need QUIET time to write it. Audience laughs.) The passage contains a lot of dialogue drama – a mini little crisis and conflict that recreates the dynamic in any real family. She refers to this as the rhythm of a home-schooled life which interlaces learning, family dynamics and everyday life.

*Charlene: The family issues in the book are quite challenging – how did you manage to incorporate these family topics?*

The biggest problem was the generational issue being faced with the grandfather's integration into the home. Having not lived or had much contact with his son, the grand-father is now faced with different traditions and this family is ecologically conscious so they don't always flush the yellow down the toilet but he does. There are many accommodations being made given his new stage in life and the grand-father lives in a state of confusion and finds himself wandering all over the 32 room house. This state is often translated to the reader who is at times confused by all of the children, the rooms, the pets etc... and so you can imagine how the grand-father feels.

The next issue revolves around the question about **"who your parents are?"** Canada is seen as a leader worldwide with its multicultural diversity and she approached this topic based on a 2007 court case in London, Ontario, whereby, 3 parents wanted to be declared as the legally recognized parents. An Ontario woman wanted to be legally recognized as a young boy's third parent and "after taking a leap

of faith embarked on the controversial journey to challenge the definition of family in Canada." The woman, who remained anonymous and was a lawyer, was told by her five-year old son once the case was won: "Actually I'm glad you won because I didn't want to lose any one of my mommies." Because to him, having two mommies and a daddy has never been a question in his life."<sup>1</sup> So for these home-schooled children having two dads and two moms is seen as everyday normal.

*How long did it take for you to write and publish the book?*

Emma plans books years ahead and this one took six years. It is part of a series and since she has all of the characters developed, the second book which she is working on now probably will take a shorter amount of time to write. Emma actually borrows ideas from everywhere and contrary to the belief that authors invent everything, she harvests details from friends or even her own life. When she has an idea she immediately grabs her phone and she makes a note of it. For example, one day in her own household the milk spilled on the counter and her young girls had a little family episode. She took out her phone, made a note to use later on in one of her books. She uses her phone to make notes all the time. She does have her phone backed up onto the Cloud and once she plugs her phone into her computer, she organizes her desktop to include right and left side folders.

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.theglobeandmail.com/news-national/the-ontario-court-of-appeal-ruled-tuesday-that-a-boy-has-three-legally-recognized-parents/article676275/> The Ontario Court of Appeal ruled Tuesday that a boy has three legally recognized parents. UNNATI GANDHI. From Saturday's Globe and Mail. Published Saturday, Jan. 06, 2007 12:00AM EST. Last updated Friday, Mar. 13, 2009 8:51PM EDT.

On the right side is all of the work she has completed and published, and on the left side are re-organized files she is working on at the time. Although her desk might be covered in chocolate wrappers and seemingly disorganized, she makes it clear to her audience that she is **"intellectually organized."** Finally, states that lots of authors work on one book intensely rather than on several at a time.

*Research, research, research*

Emma does a significant amount of research for her books. She spends many hours researching a point which involves a lot of reading. Often this results in her using just one little aspect from the research causing her to throw away all of the other parts she has read. She points out that in one of her research ventures she learned that whales who are not happy with their pod, go off and find another one, thus helping her with the thematic issue of families of choice. As my dear friend and author Margaret Shaw-MacKinnon and I sat contemplating the evening afterwards, Margaret remarked that it was interesting how much research she does before she sets forth to write her books. Margaret could easily relate to this as she was in the midst herself of researching Ukrainian life in the prairies during the Depression. As well, Emma shared with us that she has expert readers who point out possible historical discrepancies before the book goes to print and she is able to rewrite these sections prior to finalizing her book. Trying on the lives of others Emma grew up in an orderly household and she herself does not drink as she believes it to be



poison. Her parents had 8 children upon which these births were based on Catholicism's idea of birth control! As mentioned earlier, she was the baby of the family, and one of her wishes was to have had a different kind of life: "writing affords her the exploration of other lives" she is unable to live in this lifetime. As well, she loved reading fairy tales like Alice in Wonderland and the work of E. Nesbitt.

### *What is writing YA fiction like for you?*

Writing YA fiction for Emma was harder as she had to maintain the interest of her young readers. The vocabulary usage is limited. It doesn't mean she can't throw in a word or two that is more advanced than her reader, it simply means she has to keep the events moving along and that the vocabulary can't hinder the reader or the storyline. According to Emma, you can't short-change the richness of characters in YA fiction either. She has never done a series before and planning for those future books was a lot of work. Adults are as she says polite readers, they will continue reading a book even if it doesn't appeal to them. However, YA audiences know that after fifty pages if a book doesn't grab them,

it can be returned to the bookshelf! Children are pleasure-centered and so they will "drop a book and walk away from it!" without the guilt of the adult reader who probably says I signed it out so I HAVE to finish reading it!!!!

Charlene interjects at this point a cute little story about one of her children. They had been reading a book which they did not like, and the child made it clear: "This book cannot stay in my room as I cannot sleep!" Given I am enrolled in a Clutter Clearing Coaching course with Denise Linn, I started to internally laugh as this child knows this book does not positively increase his energy so out it goes! I wish that I had that skill set built in, however, I have to literally learn it.

### *When it came to your book Room, who wrote the script for the movie?*

Emma wrote the movie for Room as well. It was a WIN WIN for her. For the longest time in the film industry, it was believed that book writers could not be script writers. However, with the new programs like Celtx (<https://www.celtx.com/index.html>) available, whereby, your script is formatted, it

has made this kind of writing easier. Scripts have less words than your book does and directors tend to write in the directions themselves. As well, the visual aspects of movie making give more information and so less words are necessary to convey the same messages and feelings.

### *What other inspirations help you to develop the characters in your books?*

In terms of Room research, she watched her then 4 year old son play with cars and cardboard. He would make a friend of every object as if every object had a spirit of its own, a form of animism. In believing the object had an energy, Jack could not only connect to it, but he could cope with his life in the small space he had. It allowed Jack to inhabit a stream of consciousness and to survive.

### *In conclusion*

As for The Lottery, she borrowed traits from her children and the children of her friends. She once spent an entire afternoon speaking and listening to a fourteen year old boy talk about his "geeky hobby" of using metal detectors to find coins and other precious materials. She banked this information in her phone so she can use this detail possibly at a later date. And when a particular event, piece of information or trait is useful and does come from someone else, she asks

them permission to use it in her books with most obliging.

Finally, she lets us in on a secret that not every writer invents their characters, some writers do pull experiences from everyday life and use them successfully in their writing keeping their audience reading and in suspense.

*What advice would you give your younger self today?*

**"REVIEWS ALL AVERAGE OUT IN THE END! AND WHO CARES WHAT THEY THINK!"**

# Handed a Peanut

Carol Szuminsky



Through your role as a teacher-librarian or tech, you may have already heard of my company, Peanut Butter Press, and have at least some of our titles in your school library. I've been asked to share the experiences that lead me to becoming a children's picture book publisher.

For 32 years, I was a K-Gr. 2 teacher in the St. James-Assiniboia School Division. I started my career as a Grade 1 teacher and then had the fun of teaching Kindergarten for a couple of years. Then I found my place as a Grade 2 teacher, and for the next 21 years, I strove to instill in my students the confidence to "make the lightbulb go on" in reading and to express their ideas in writing. I was known for the challenging "star" words I included on our weekly spelling tests and for my success at encouraging reluctant writers to "pick up the pencil and try." The key was to figure out what

was stopping them. For many of the boys and girls, it was simply that I had to help them discover something they were so passionate about that they would want to write about it. Every year, there was always some students who found it a difficult task to acquire this desire and the confidence that goes along with it.

In 1985, I personally experienced a real desire to write, when I encountered the perfect topic at a science workshop, where I was handed a peanut and told to use my five senses to describe it. I suddenly had something to write about. Out of that enthusiasm came the draft of my first book *Why Penny Loved Peanut*, which was written when I was home on maternity leave with my daughter Kristin. When she was 15, she drew the illustrations and I proceeded to find out everything I could about self-publishing. My intention was that the book be

used as a supplementary resource for the Grade 1 My Senses science cluster.

I was pleased with this accomplishment and thought I was done. (There's a saying that "everyone has a book in them.") But then the mother of one student informed me that "Breanna wanted a dog, and they told she would have to first prove that she was responsible." That gave me the idea for *Penny Picks the Perfect Pet*, which I self-published in 2007 to accompany the Grade 2 science cluster Growth and Changes in Animals. At that point in time, I felt there was a missing gap between the picture books with a few lines of text and a chapter book with a gray picture every now and then. As a Grade 2 teacher, I knew it was hard for my weaker readers to make that jump to early chapter books. So I created a new genre – a chapter picture book. Because the story settings fit perfectly into four chapters, I had my illus-

trator/designer create full page coloured illustrations and embed the text, so beginning readers would still have picture cues to help them use context to decode the unfamiliar words. A chance encounter with a Manitoba Fisheries employee led to the co-writing of Andrew Goes Fishing in Manitoba with my nature-loving father. Around the same time, I decided to become a “real” publisher, and the “teacher in me” chose an educational and fun manuscript by Gwen Smid, a Winnipeg high school English and geography teacher, which led to Mary’s Atlas: Mary Meets Manitoba. It was published in May of 2008, around the same time as the children’s fishing book. December of 2008 brought my last self-published book Penny Visits Oak Hammock Marsh, plus Who Wants This Puppy?, written by a wonderful teacher named Pat Ternovetsky. The story started out as a class book, but then one of my artistically talented 7-year-old students Zane Belton wanted to illustrate the story himself. When I retired a few years later, I published the book with its detailed drawings so that teachers and parents could hold up the book and say to children, “You can be an illustrator. Just keep practising.”

Although Peanut Butter Press had its roots in self-publishing, we are now far beyond that. Since 2009, 18 more titles by other authors have been published, several by award-winning authors and illustrators. Some of these titles have been shortlisted and even won awards, both for writing and illustration. You may find it interesting that many of my authors are teachers, some retired. Harriet Zaidman is also one of my authors. There’s even a University of Manitoba children’s literature professor who co-wrote their story with his daughter when she was eight years old.

Some of our authors have developed educational resources to accompany their books, and these are available for free download at [www.peanutbutterpress.ca](http://www.peanutbutterpress.ca). Other titles have educational

content built right into them. The humorous books are more mainstream and mainly for fun, but the stories still contain themes for discussion.

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Ten new titles on a variety of topics will be available for purchase on **December 5**. Our niche has always been picture books, and it will remain that way. With the upcoming publication of a wordless picture book in graphic novel format, as well as an illustrated chapter book containing 10 chapters with over 12,000 words and 53 coloured pen and ink illustrations, our titles will now span the picture book spectrum.

The upcoming titles include:

**Monster Truck Buck** – Buck was written all in rhyme by first-time author Dan O’Dell. His unique sense of humour shines through. My award-winning cartoon animator Jason Doll used acrylics on mahogany boards to create the illustrations, who previously illustrated Freddie’s Problem and Would Someone Please Answer the Parrot! The layout was done by Dan’s designer friend Stan. Jason designed the remaining nine books.

*Gus is a boy, an ever-clever boy,  
And he has a favourite friends-forever  
toy.*

*A ginormously awesome red monster  
truck –*

*A truck of great fame named Monster  
Truck Buck!*

**Penny the Penguin Learns to Fly** – Gregory Bryan is the children’s literature professor who co-wrote this cute pattern book with his daughter Tegwen. Jennifer Bryan-Gates, their wife and mother, created the charming illustrations.

All Penny wanted was to fly.  
*“You can’t fly. You’re a penguin.”  
“I am going to fly,” said Penny.*

**Fabulous Feathers in Her Hair** – This story is very special and needed to be published, and I had the privilege of being the one to do it. By award-winning

author Laura Langston, who had one of her young adult books shortlisted for the 2015 Canadian Library Association Young Adult Book of the Year Award, as well as the OLA White Pine Award.

*Elly is the smartest, funnest, bestest  
friend I have ever had. We do everything  
together. We run and we play and we giggle  
and we dream. We dream about all the  
things we will do when we are all grown  
up.*

A gentle picture book that tackles a difficult subject, Fabulous Feathers in Her Hair is a wonderfully moving account of the friendship between two little girls. When one of them dies and goes away forever, the friend who is left behind cries because forever hurts her heart.

Ultimately positive and uplifting, Fabulous Feathers in Her Hair ends on a reassuring note and demonstrates how the love between two best friends lives on even when one of them is gone.

**Wilson, Do You Hear It?** – This book is a follow-up to Wilson, Do You See It?. The two main characters are back, but this time the author Diane Van Wart, a retired teacher, fills her story with a new cast of animals that she and illustrator Monika Hansen, a landscape painter, observed around their homes in East Selkirk, a rural community located just outside of Winnipeg, Manitoba.

It’s summer now, and Little Hare is eager to learn more about nature. In the first book, Wilson, Do You See It?, Little Hare asked his good friend Wilson to help him identify the animals he saw in winter that lived in their big backyard in the country. This time, he’s describing the animal sounds he’s hearing around him. Wilson makes the guessing game a little harder by giving Little Hare rhyming word clues.

The Wilson books provide an enjoyable challenge to young children as they use the clues to guess the animals. Little ones can listen, while beginning readers will gain confidence from the repeated patterns.

**Doxie Spider's Predicament** – This is the second nature book that Erna Michelow, a retired teacher and landscape painter, has written and illustrated for Peanut Butter Press. Her grandson's interest in spiders was the inspiration for this story.

Jon discovers a dock spider at the lake and places her in his bug-collecting box. In exchange for her freedom, this clever spider, named Doxie, provides Jon with information about his science fair project about spiders. She introduces him to some of her garden spider relatives and shares with him how each of their webs lead to a human invention.

Caroline Stellings, another award-winning author, wrote and illustrated the five remaining titles. She makes wonderful use of light in her watercolour illustrations. She has had several children's books and young adult novels published by some well-known publishers, and several of her titles have been shortlisted or won awards.

**Beans and Bamboo** – Elementary teachers should appreciate this wordless picture book in graphic novel format. Children will enjoy making up their own stories based on the pictures. Grade 3 teachers will find this book particularly useful for social studies. Caroline's use of pencil crayons makes these illustrations glow.

Beans, a raccoon, spends every night searching for food in the trash cans near his tree. One night in the back alley, he meets a panda who has escaped from the zoo. The panda won't eat anything Beans picks out of the garbage. What follows is a visit to the public library to research pandas. That leads to a trip to China.

Tag along with Beans and Bamboo as they make their way to the panda reserve in Chengdu. But the story doesn't end there. Caroline Stellings' s brilliant pencil crayon illustrations highlight China's landscape and attractions.

**Eighteen Wheels and a Dozen Roses** – The content of this book should be a favourite with any boys and their dads or anyone in their lives who love old cars and big rigs.

Matt and Ben are two dog mechanics who fix up old cars. But no sooner is a vehicle repaired than Matt comes across someone who needs it more than him. He discovers that when you find it in your heart to give to others, that kindness will find its way back to you. oth, that kindness will find its way back to you.

**The Spaghetti Did It!** – This "spaghetti western," with its unique brand of humour and an array of quirky characters, can best be described as a picture book with sophisticated content for older readers.

Frederico Zefferini is in Las Vegas to shoot his next western film, and Steve is hoping to star in it. His brother Eddie goes along for the ride so he can hear Wayne Newton perform his hit song ' Dank Schoen.' Nothing goes as planned until they cross paths with the Bandito Brothers, two squirrels wearing blue bandanas who are wreaking havoc in Vegas. Will Eddie's love of spaghetti save the day?

**It Must Be the Spaghetti!** – Here's another of Caroline's humorous dog stories. This time Steve, the brother with all the talents, wants to perform on stage, but it's Eddie who saves the day again.

Eddie loves spaghetti. He loves it so much that he eats it all the time, and that's why he's a bit chubby. His brother Steve wants to perform on stage and is delighted when he lands the role of Pirate King in a local production of Pirates of Penzance. Eddie tags along happily to every rehearsal because the theatre is right next door to Luigi's, his favourite Italian restaurant. When opening night arrives and Steve gets stage fright, Eddie is the only one who knows all the lines. And guess what? It turns out he can sing. Bravo, Eddie!

**Ben and the Colonel** – Out of all the stories Caroline has written, she says this is her favourite. This book is almost in a genre of its own, with the 8 ½" x 11" portrait layout that's typical for picture books, but requiring 64 pages instead of the standard 32, so her 53 beautifully detailed illustrations could be merged into the text.

This illustrated chapter book about a big orange cat who drops out of the sky in his hot-air balloon has other fun and unique characters, including a dog who wants to leave the dreary city behind, two rats who aspire to be fashion designers, a corgi who thinks she's related to the Queen of England, and 13 toads from Mexico.

If you would like to receive our email catalogue, which contains links that show the first 21 pages of interior content for all 32 Peanut Butter Press titles, please just send an email request to [info@peanutbutterpress.ca](mailto:info@peanutbutterpress.ca).

Having been a teacher and a self-published author, as well as a traditional publisher, has given me a unique and varied perspective. I like to share the knowledge I've acquired by visiting classrooms to talk about writing/publishing and to include the students in the editing process when I'm working on new titles. Since retiring from teaching in 2007, I've been in numerous K-Gr. 8 classrooms, in schools throughout Manitoba. There is no charge, and if any library personnel would like to invite me to visit their classrooms, I would happily accept the invitation.

*\*I recently had that wonderful experience of meeting one of my former Kindergarten students. I taught Jennifer in 1981. The reward was still there for me after so many years, as I could see in my mind the exact picture of what she looked like as a little girl way back then.*

## MSLA I Love to Read Grants

Jo-Anne Gibson

The **Manitoba School Library Association** is pleased to offer two different grant opportunities to Manitoba school libraries. We encourage you to watch for information on our website and via our Twitter account for more information on how and when you can apply.

The I Love to Read Grant encourages sharing of the amazing I Love to Read events and activities that happen in school library learning commons throughout Manitoba. The MSLA has set aside two, \$150.00 grants to be awarded by random draw to any school library in Manitoba who sends us an application describing what they are doing to promote I Love to Read Month.

This year the recipients of the I Love to Read grants were: Bernie Wolfe Community School (Nicole Ziemanski, Teacher-Librarian) and Pacific Junction School (Sandi Ferguson, Teacher-Librarian).

The MSLA Seed Grant allows for three, \$330.00 grants to be awarded to school libraries needing funds to improve their school library programs and collections. The purpose of these three grant amounts is to address inequities in school library funding and encourage school library staffs to increase the innovation of their programs and the diversity of their collections.

This year the recipients of the MSLA Seed Grant were: Westpark School (Sarah Coull, Teacher-Librarian), Prairie Mountain (Twyla Deblonde, Librarian) R.B. Russell (Katharine Thiessen).

## I Love to Read Open House

Cassandra Murphy

During “I love to Read” we had a month long celebration of literacy. In order to showcase all of our activities from the month, we held an “I Love to Read” Open House for families and friends. We set up pictures, documentation and products from our activities as well as showcased some musical literacy presentations. Parents and community members enjoy being able to feel connected to what is happening in our building and it was a new experience to be able to share literacy rich activities.

“So Much Snow” by Robert Munsch, students made a representation of what they would do if they were stuck in a blizzard.



## Stolen Cookies and I Love to Read Event

Darren Baker, Island Lakes Community School, Louis Riel School Division

At Island Lakes Community School we had a very successful I LOVE TO READ EVENT. Our theme this year was Mysteries. All of our events centered on that central theme.

The event that seemed to be most popular with the staff and students was our Cookie Mystery. On a Wednesday in February, staff and students were encouraged to wear their pyjamas to school. Each class was then invited to come down during the day to listen to a “bedtime story” and have a cookie snack. Unfortunately when they arrived at the library, they were informed that someone had stolen the cookies. Kids then had to follow a series of clues to solve the cookie mystery.

Kids had to move around the school solving clues, identifying finger prints, use their critical thinking skills and work together to find the cookies that had been taken from the library.

This was an activity that all classes at ILCS took part in. Students from Kindergarten to Grade 8 all came in to read and helped in solving the Mystery of the Missing Cookies. The kids had a blast doing solving the mystery and best yet, each of them got a cookie at the end! The principal had stolen them!



## Sandi Ferguson's I Love to Read in Pictures

Sandi Ferguson, Pacific Junction School, Pembina Trails School Division



### Canada 150

Manitoba Curriculum Support Centre  
Formerly Manitoba Education Library, Nancy Girardin

To celebrate the 150th Anniversary of Canada's Confederation, the Manitoba Curriculum Support Centre (Manitoba Education Library) is pleased to offer a collection of books, DVDs, kits and online resources that looks at Canada's past, present and future. Manitoba educators are welcome to explore these resources and use them with students to enhance their celebration.



In addition, educators can access **CBC Curio**, which includes a variety of educational streaming programs and collections created especially for the Canada 150 celebration. Topics include: Contemporary Indigenous Voices, Diversity and Inclusion, Icons, Key Events, Immigration, and Innovation, Science and Technology.

Visit the Library's site at: <http://library.edu.gov.mb.ca> and select the Canada 150 link to start exploring.

For even more resources, Manitoba Education and Training has created the Canada 150 plus site with links to many exciting events and resources: <http://www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/canada150/index.html>.

Enjoy celebrating!

Please note: The Manitoba Education Library has a new name. Starting in the fall we will be known as the **Manitoba Curriculum Support Centre**.

# Deux nouvelles collections à la DREF

*Heather Brydon,  
coordonnatrice à la DREF*

## Albums éducateurs

La DREF est fière de présenter deux nouvelles collections - les Albums éducateurs et la collection Coup de poing.

La collection d'albums pour éducateurs regroupe des histoires qui portent sur des thèmes et des moments parfois difficiles dans la vie des enfants, tels l'adoption, le deuil, le divorce, la séparation, les troubles d'apprentissage et autres. Avec près de 40 titres, ce regroupement de livres peut aider les enfants de tout âge à mieux comprendre et gérer leurs expériences, accompagnés par leur éducateur.

Vous pouvez facilement les retrouver au site de la DREF ([dref.mb.ca](http://dref.mb.ca)) à la Recherche avancée, en tapant Albums éducateurs à l'index Sujet ou Cote. En bibliothèque, ils sont classés à la fin de la section Albums.

## Collection Coup de poing

Inspirée directement du travail des bibliothécaires jeunesse des Biblio-

thèques de Montréal, la collection Coup de poing regroupe une sélection d'albums destinés aux enfants de la jeune enfance jusqu'aux élèves du secondaire. Avec chacun des albums, l'aspect visuel est tout aussi important que le texte et les deux doivent non seulement susciter une réflexion et des questions, mais aussi offrir un élément résistant. Ces albums abordent des sujets délicats comme l'affirmation de soi, la différence, le deuil, la guerre, les troubles mentaux, la violence, le racisme, la famille, etc. Ils favorisent l'échange et la réflexion et, par conséquent, requièrent une médiation entre l'enfant ou l'élève et l'adulte. Lire un album Coup de poing ou accompagner un jeune dans sa lecture facilite la prise en compte responsable d'un sujet sensible. C'est pourquoi chaque livre est accompagné d'une fiche proposant des pistes d'animation ou de réflexion permettant à l'accompagnateur d'amorcer une discussion avec le lecteur.

La collection Coup de poing de la DREF n'est pas aussi exhaustive que celle de Montréal, vu sa nouveauté, mais elle compte environ 130 titres dont la grande majorité ont des fiches. La DREF la tient à jour en consultation avec les Bibliothèques de Montréal.

Les thèmes suivants sont abordés : Affirmation de soi; Alcoolisme;

Amitié – Amour; Criminalité – Délinquance; Deuil – Mort; Dictature; Différence; Emprisonnement; Environnement; Famille; Guerre; Identité sexuelle; Liberté – Solidarité; Pauvreté – Itinérance; Philosophie; Préjugés – Discrimination; Racisme; Réfugiés – Immigrants; Santé mentale; Suicide; Violence.

Vous pouvez facilement les retrouver au site de la DREF ([dref.mb.ca](http://dref.mb.ca)) à la Recherche avancée, en tapant **Albums Coup de poing** à l'index Cote ou encore **Coup de poing** à l'index Collection. En bibliothèque, ils sont classés à la fin de la section Albums.

Pour en savoir plus sur la collection Coup de poing à Montréal, consultez <http://bibliomontreal.com/coupdepoing/>.

Afin de voir tous ces beaux livres, ou pour toute question en lien avec ces collections, n'hésitez pas de contacter la coordonnatrice à la DREF, Heather Brydon ([heather.brydon@gov.mb.ca](mailto:heather.brydon@gov.mb.ca) ou 204-945-4813)





## University of Manitoba. Faculty of Education. Graduate Student Research Symposium. March 3rd and 4th, 2017

Theme: Expanding Educational Conversations for Leadership and Learning.

Comments compiled by Gerald R. Brown

Representing Manitoba School Library Association & International Association of School Librarianship

This year's forum was very impressive. There were 23 presenters in various stages of M. Ed and Ph. D programs. The quality of the presentations was excellent. Their use of technology and good presentation techniques is improving each year. The content was stimulating and informative. It is always rewarding to hear from the young people who are entering the education profession, and about the research investigations they are exploring.

A new feature this year was the involvement of the Education Graduate Student Association, which was newly formed in June 2016, to provide a voice for grad students to the Faculty and through the University Graduate Students Association. It was good to see these students taking an active part in the chairing of sections, in the planning of the event, and in the follow-up activities. Now we can look to the future for their involvement in many aspects of academic life.

Since I was only able to attend the Saturday sessions, some of my comments are based on the program and the papers originally presented to the organizing committee. I had no way to collect direct data from the presenters. However, the proceedings from this symposium will be archived at:

[umanitoba.ca/faculties/education/archives/228.html](http://umanitoba.ca/faculties/education/archives/228.html)

**The Friday session on the theme: Conversations about Leadership featured four presenters.**

1. **Heather Krepiski**, M. Ed candi-

date reported on **Data-Driven Practices in the School Divisions in Manitoba**. Within this framework, she examined the value that is placed on data collected, the degree to which decisions are data-driven, and the implications for critical race theory.

2. **Barbara Lepp**, M. Ed candidate presented **Mentoring New Teacher Programs in Manitoba Public School Divisions**. Her goal was to collect baseline data on what is currently being done across the province to mentor and nurture new teachers in the system. Recommendations were presented.

3. **Stephen Rice**, M. Ed candidate investigated **Shifting Rationales: The Internationalization of Higher Education at University of Manitoba**. His findings indicate that initial rationales have shifted from a process which has traditionally encouraged international cooperation, capacity building, and the forging of mutually beneficial relationships to one that is increasingly characterized by competition, self-interest and commodification.

4. **Orest Kinasevych**, Ph. D candidate examined **Technology Freedom as Academic Freedom**. His concerns examined the academic freedom for teachers and students (especially in challenging the status quo); the erosion of freedoms in the shadow of state and corporate surveillance; how technology privileges certain values, cultures, languages, at the expense of alternative ways of being; and ways

to reclaim the public commons and public good for critical academic dialogue in technologically-mediated spaces.

**Section II: Inquiry into Practice followed the usual lovely reception, and the EdGSTA annual meeting. There were five students highlighted in this session.**

5. **Donna Barkman**, M. Ed candidate spoke on **Ways in Which Honouring Identity Enhances the Teaching and Learning of Writing** (in a mainstream Grade 8 LA class graced with multilingual and multicultural students). Her five key areas of identity were: Tension, Our multiple selves, Writing's complexity, Boundaries, and Relationships.

6. **Rhonda Hawthorne**, M. Ed candidate examined **A Teacher's Journey to Transform Her Math Identity**. Four themes emerged from the field text where the researcher worked with a teacher using observation, reflective conversation, and narratives. These themes were: relationship, trust, balance, and efficacy. As each theme evolved between teacher and researcher, the transformation slowly took place.

7. **Glenys MacLeod**, Ph. D candidate reported on experiences in **Expeditionary Learning for Inclusive Math Education**. This narrative inquiry involved an analysis of students' and teachers' reflections on an expeditionary math experience with their students. Learning stories provided

the lens through which actions and thinking were analyzed. The depth of knowledge was revealed, as was the processes through which each learner made sense of problematic situations. Social interactions between students and their understanding of the academic mathematical goals were examined.

8. **Todd Hunter**, Ph. D candidate shared findings on **Critical Mathematics and Critical Literacy for Indigenous Students in an Urban Alternative High School Program**. It was an Action Research Study involving seven (7) Indigenous adolescent mothers or mothers-to-be, in collaboration with the English LA teacher. The objective was to help the students develop a critical consciousness as the key component to their own personal transformative learning.

9. **Jordan Laidlaw**, M. Ed candidate presented **An Action Research Study of Creative Music Experiences with Grades 4 & 5 Students Using the Baritone Ukulele**. This is an interesting piece of research on creativity and individualized learning. Useful bibliography available.

#### **Saturday, session III: Sustainability and Well-Being revealed some fine papers.**

10. **Rosanne Massinon**, M. Ed candidate presented **Teaching Science Through the Lens of Sustainability and Well-being** using an autobiographical narrative inquiry methodology to examine the opportunities and surfacing tensions that arise when one moves toward teaching science through the lens of sustainability and well-being. The confidence she reported in her own transition could similarly provide encouragement to other teachers to shift to a focus on sustainability.

11. **Christy Miyanishi**, M. Ed candidate addressed **MBSR, Anxiety, Shame and Self-Compassion** in her

investigation. MSBR refers to Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction. In particular, she explored meditation as a tool to help address these emotional issues through a qualitative study of the experiences of three individuals involved in an 8-week MBSR program, with follow up interviews and analysis. Training in using these techniques is available to social workers, counsellors and teachers.

12. **Kazutoshi Yoshino**, Ph. D candidate is investigating **Reclaiming the Connective Responsibilities for a Sustainable Future**. The purpose of this research is to propose practical applications of those concepts that help learners develop knowledge, skills and attitudes of sustainable citizens. He hopes to apply his ideas in a summer program this year at UoM. Contact him through the UoM website for more details.

13. **Seonghwi Bang**, Ph. D candidate wanted to **Investigate the Effects of "Dohsa-hou" Parental Perspective**. She was not able to attend the symposium, but her working paper indicates that she is particularly interested in helping parents with children who have Autism Spectrum Disorders, through a different pedagogical approach which she discovered in Korea. She plans to explore this research with parents in the urban community, and to assess the success of the program in person-self development.

#### **Session IV: Conversations about Identity involved five presenters.**

14. **Kyegyung Song**, Ph. D candidate is investigating **Heritage Language Learning and Identity Construction of Linguistic Minorities**. This qualitative case study explores the interplay of linguistic minority students' identity, heritage language learning and their situated socio-cultural and political contexts by providing close examination of the lived experiences and perspectives of Korean Canadian

university students. The results of this study could have significant implications for the teaching of heritage languages at the post secondary level (as well as in public school and private settings).

15. **Hayato Nakabayashi**, M. Ed candidate's topic was a Literature Review on **Experiences of Sexual Minority Immigrants in the LGBT Community**. One of his suggestions is the use of the "Human Library" concept to provide an anti-oppressive pedagogy which could be useful in adult-educational settings, to enable people to become aware of their potential social and dynamic positions of power. Useful bibliography.

16. **Sajia Afrin**, M. Ed candidate examined **Labels and Identities: Ambivalence for the Language Learners**. She contends that initial labels or markers are helpful in getting students initiated into language development classes eg. L1, L2, SLL, FLL, etc. However, the labels can change to stereotyping, or power and control issues. Institutional use of markers can also handicap student progress in the system, or even limit access to the various levels of learning. In some cases, the markers may marginalize groups of learners who have not yet developed their own personal ID. Interesting concepts here which may merit investigation at both public and post-secondary institutions.

17. **Nataliya Kharchenko**, Ph. D candidate is examining **Home is where you speak your Mother Tongue** in a research project based on the collection of data from interviews with ten (10) immigrant parents of Ukrainian background. She is looking at the significant problems in maintaining Ukrainian among children from immigrant families. What are the specific strategies of HL maintenance among immigrant families of Ukrainian origin? And what is the role of macro-social factors in terms of HL maintenance? The results of

this rigorous investigation will have implications for many stakeholders.

18. **Liana Price**, M. Ed candidate is doing **An Appraisal of Online Support for Families Dealing with Deafness**. The crux of her work indicates a serious need for the province-wide universal newborn hearing screening as early identification of children with deafness characteristics, the investigation of ASL or other devices to help the children, and the role of the parent as linguistic gatekeepers for the children. Her current work at the School for the Deaf has given Ms Price a heads-up on the websites that are available to families with deafness as an issue. She also advocates for the Rights of the Deaf Child in our society.

**Session V: Alternative / Adult / Post Secondary Education with five presenters**

19. **Ben Akoh**, Ph. D candidate presented his **Findings from Bunbonibee Cree Nation: What Adult Post-Secondary Learners Are Saying about the Affordance of Mobile Learning**. His premise is based on how indigenous adult post-secondary learners adapt and orient themselves between Eurocentric and Traditional Indigenous cultural ways of learning. He used mobile technologies as a tool that could produce documentation for how students negotiated learning and adaptation between these world views. This study has produced the Techno-Culture Adaptive Framework to guide researchers, policy makers, educators and administrators in recognizing the determinants of mobile mediated learning that could be utilized for more effective technology programming in indigenous communities.

20. **Ezra Bogle**, M. Ed candidate reported on **Recognizing Indigenous Adult Education Potentials:**

**Northern Manitoba Promises.**

After providing his personal narrative as an adult educator in an Indigenous community, he explored (1) the understanding of shifts in human capital demands in our society, and (2) the transnational migrations and PLAR: Prior Learning Assessments & Recognitions to legitimize and take advantage of public prior learning and experiential learning. He expressed his appreciation for the rich and deep knowledge that the Aboriginal people have about their environment and ways to survive in it.

21. **Mahdi Rahimian**, Ph. D candidate's topic was **Is there a Way to Understand Them? Exploring Accent and Intelligibility Issues of International Instructors**. His research looks at the issues of Accent and Intelligibility of international teaching assistants (ITA). His seven (7) pieces of advice to all ITAs and other educators (with or without an accent) is to 1. Be intelligent in what you say; 2. Speak slowly; 3. Enunciate clearly while teaching and working with individuals; 4. Be organized in your presentations; 5. Be knowledgeable in your field ... do your homework; 6. Be willing to share related and personal knowledge and experiences; 7. Be confident with your knowledge. Wise words for all teachers.

22. **Stephanie Crook**, M. Ed candidate continued her **Exploring Novice Writers' Perceptions of Plagiarism**. She is working with novice students contending with university level writing experiences. Her data will be drawn from about 280 students in her various classes, who will be surveyed, and from whom 20 in-depth interviews will be done. The student's perceptions of what plagiarism is, and how it applies to them is usually very vague. Is there an implication for public school programs? The results of her research will likely be reported next symposium

23. **Adrian Deakin**, M. Ed candidate presented his material on **Enabling Schools and the Shifts Towards Transformational Leadership** (at an anonymous school). The last candidate has a double task – to present the findings well, and to hold the attention of an audience ready to bolt on a Saturday afternoon. Adrian did both very well, including very fine quality power point materials, and a lively enthusiastic presentation. He had interviewed two principals who have retired, and whose legacy initiatives have continued in the schools (with which he is familiar), namely: (1) Development of a Peer-Tutoring Program; (2) Articulation of school mission, vision and values statements, and (3) Institution of innovative sports and STEM programming. The focus of those initiatives was to increase student engagement, achievement and school climate. His findings suggested that these transformation leadership behaviours had produced more effective schools.

At the end of each session, the presenters were available to answer questions from the audience. In response to Adrian's presentation, an audience member asked him how his research had caused him to clarify his understanding of pedagogy, and how it had influenced him personally. All the other candidates in this session were invited to also respond to the same question. I think this was an excellent way to have the individuals think about the process and the product, and how it affected them personally. To have to enunciate their views requires them to integrate their learnings.

Special thanks to Dr. Charlotte Enns from the Faculty of Graduate Studies, the EdGSA representatives, and the many other people who collaborate to make this such an excellent forum on educational research at University of Manitoba.

MANITOBA SCHOOL LIBRARY ASSOCIATION INC.

Statement of Operations and Deficit

AS AT AUGUST 31, 2016

Revenue:	2016		2015
AGM		1,047	
Grants		1,400	1,400
Membership and professional development		3,550	2,470
MTS allocation			3,006
SAGE Revenue		9,792	8,705
	<b>15,798</b>	<b>15,581</b>	
<b>Other Income:</b>			
Interest		238	
Other Income		1,245	1,696
<b>Total Revenue</b>		<b>17,272</b>	<b>17,277</b>
<b>Expenditures:</b>			
Donations & gifts		900	900
Executive & annual meetings		3,170	1,748
Insurance		432	413
Interest and bank charges		1	
LITForum		47	59
Memberships & dues		408	558
Office		622	526
Professional Fees		579	1,978
Publications, public relations and website		152	116
SAGE expenses		8,668	8,218
Substitute Teachers		762	
	<b>15,740</b>	<b>14,516</b>	
		1,533	2,761
<b>Excess of revenue over expenditures for the year</b>			
<b>Unrestricted net assets, beginning of year</b>		18,798	16,037
<b>Unrestricted net assets, end of year</b>		20,331	18,798

**Statement of Cash Flows**  
**AS AT AUGUST 31, 2016**

Cash Flows from Operating Activities	2016	2015
Excess of revenue over expenditures for the year	1,533	2,761
Changes in non-cash working capital balances	(1,296)	(119)
		<b>2,642</b>
237		
<b>Increase (Decrease) in Cash Position</b>	237	2,642
<b>Cash Position, Beginning of Year</b>	19,955	17,313
<b>Cash Position, End of Year</b>	<b>20,192</b>	<b>19,955</b>

**Balance Sheet**  
**AS AT AUGUST 31, 2016**

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ASSETS	2016	2015
<b>Current Assets:</b>		
<b>Cash</b>	20,192	19,955
<b>Prepaid expenses</b>	523	343
	<b>20,715</b>	<b>20,298</b>
<b>LIABILITIES And Net Assets</b>		
<b>Current liabilities:</b>		
<b>Accounts payable and accrued liabilities</b>	384	1,500
<b>NET ASSETS</b>		
<b>Unrestricted net assets</b>	20,331	18,798
		<b>20,298</b>
<b>20,715</b>		

## MSLA Liaisons

Direction des ressources éducatives françaises (DREF)	<i>Heather Brydon</i>	heather.brydon@gov.mb.ca
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## MSLA Executive, 2016–2017

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