

## JULY 2004 NEWSLETTER

### **President's Report by Ann Braithwaite**

So my first report as the new president of the CWSA/ACEF – a job I'm really looking forward to! We're already busily at work on a number of projects, some continuing or being set up for next year – such as the conference and other new ones we are taking on as we work at making this a bigger and better association for all of us. I'm really gratified to have such an engaged, committed and active Board of Directors to work with, and look forward to getting a lot done with them! And having a great time doing it...

As many of you know, we just recently completed another really successful annual conference, held this year in Winnipeg (more on that later in this newsletter). But I wanted to extend kudos and formal thanks to all those who worked so hard to put it all together, on both the local organizing and program committees. As always, we're all incredibly grateful for how much time and effort people put into making Women's Studies such a vibrant and exciting place to hang one's intellectual hat. And we've already started thinking about next year's conference in London, Ontario...If you're interested in volunteering to be on the program committee, or if you live in or know something about London and want to volunteer to be part of the local organizing team, just let me know – I'll be sure to put you in touch with the right people! (I'm going to be suggesting a lot of volunteering in this newsletter...). Our book award winner of this year, Aysan Sev'er, has already agreed to give a talk at next year's conference, and one theme for the conference has already been suggested – "Teaching Women's Studies". It is great to see so much enthusiasm so soon for a conference that is still 11 months away. But there is always lots more to do, and the more people are involved, the more we can offer to all members at the conference.

The major project we're working on this summer is the membership of the association, under the new and newly dedicated auspices of our membership coordinator, Beth McAuley. Beth took over responsibility for the membership last year, and has been working hard on bringing the list up to date and giving it – and all of you – the care and attention you haven't had for the last few years. We fully recognize that the membership is central to the association – there wouldn't be an association without all of you! For a number of reasons, membership fell into disarray a few years ago, and we lost people because of that. So now we are asking everyone to please remind or tell your friends and colleagues about CWSA/ACEF, direct them to the webpage, and invite them to (re)join – we are at a really exciting time in the association's growth and look forward to lots of input and ideas from all of you about the possibilities and opportunities for Women's Studies and feminisms in the academy! On the webpage you will (very soon) find a reformatted membership form, and this summer we are also exploring how to make paying your membership fees online easier. We will keep you notified.

We have also started what promises to be a long and mutually beneficial relationship with the journal Atlantis, now designated the CWSA/ACEF "journal of choice"; you will notice a new box on the membership form where you can now indicate you want to subscribe and we will send your info onto the folks at Atlantis. And they also invite us to submit articles to them...For more information about the journal, check out their website at <http://www.msvu.ca/atlantis>

At this year's AGM, we also voted to implement two new prizes to go along with our

already very successful book prize. Starting this year, we are going to be giving out an undergraduate essay prize and a graduate essay prize. Announcements and details about these two new awards will be forthcoming soon. And of course, we will be looking for volunteers to be on both of these committees...e-mail me if you are interested.

And, as always, the more people we have interested, the more ideas we get, the more we can do. So think about the CWSA/ACEF as part of your activities for this year! And if that is not possible, stay in touch – and we will see you all again soon.

### **A Message from the Membership Coordinator by Beth McAuley**

Greetings! Over the past 2 or 3 years, the CWSA/ACEF has been rebuilding its membership list and re-establishing its financial well-being. We had experienced a rough period during which time the membership list did not receive adequate attention and many of our members were inadvertently lost because they hadn't been notified that their memberships had expired. I am happy to report that the membership list is now under better management, and we continue to actively recruit memberships from our former members as well as new members to help us continue rebuilding the Association. As part of the membership upgrade, I have carefully gone over the membership list to ensure that everyone who is a paid member is on the mailing list. I have discovered that some of our members were missing from our mailing list, which means that these individuals may not have heard from us on a regular basis. This has now been corrected, and we are deeply apologetic for this error.

Membership rebuilding efforts will continue over the summer. I will be contacting those Women's Studies departments and faculty that are not yet members to invite their participation and membership. If you have a colleague who would like to join us, please direct them to our website for the membership form, or ask them to contact me directly. Please remember that our membership year runs from January 1 to December 31. Memberships received up until November 2004 are considered to be 2004 memberships.

In the fall, I will report back on how our renewal campaign is coming along as well as with information about automating the membership renewal system. We are hoping that before too long you will have the option of renewing online and paying by credit card. Until then, have a great summer and thank you for supporting CWSA/ACEF.

### **Members sought for 2005 Programming committee**

Interested in shaping next year's CWSA/ACEF conference? Join the programming committee! The programming committee, in conjunction with the local organizers, puts together the conference; the work includes writing the call for papers, circulating the call, vetting abstracts, scheduling sessions and keynotes, and much more.

One theme for next year's conference will concern Teaching Women's Studies; other themes are yet to be developed by the programming committee. For further inquiries about the programming committee and to sign up, please email Susanne Luhmann: sluhmann@laurentian.ca

### **2004 Conference News**

As you know, our recent conference, held in Winnipeg, was a resounding success with

three days of exciting presentations and lots of fun. The conference was well attended and it was particularly gratifying to see the high level of involvement and enthusiasm from graduate students. The plenary address, by Sedef Arat Koc, was very well received. Aysan Sev'er, this year's book award recipient, has already committed to providing a plenary presentation next year, and more such sessions will also be included. The hardest part of the conference was deciding which of many exciting talks to attend during the multi-session time periods. It has been recommended that we reduce the number of simultaneous sessions to a maximum of three for next year to ensure that all sessions are well attended, and to prevent the kinds of frustrations that we all felt when we wanted to be in two or more places at once!!! The planning committee will keep this in mind for next year. We wish to thank all presenters, and all participants, for making the environment so intellectually stimulating!!! Attending the conference each year provides an important reminder that we are engaged in a dynamic discipline. Thanks too to the program committee for all the work involved in organizing such an exciting event.

The local organizing committee also needs to be commended. The activities were fabulous: films, walking tours, the book award ceremony, and, perhaps most of all, the innovation of having a meeting space to facilitate on-going discussion of the issues raised in the conference papers, the renewal of old friendships, and the making of new ones!!! The social aspects of this conference are wonderful; particularly perhaps for those of us in small departments and small institutions, the opportunity to meet with those 'of like mind' is a most welcome break from the usual politics of university existence and academe.

The meeting for chairs of departments and programs was well attended, and we thank the organizers. We urge those of you who were unable to be present this year to make this meeting a priority in 2005. The meeting provides a tremendous opportunity to share strategies, challenges and successes. We already have a working committee in place to make next year's meeting even better, so please make the effort to spend the extra day in London (the day before the official opening of the conference).

### **Annual General Meeting**

The annual general meeting was well attended and considerable business was dealt with. The treasurer reported that we are now out of debt (hooray) and can begin to think about how we wish to use our surplus.....since Ann is at a small institution, and does not have administrative support, some of this will undoubtedly be spent to ensure that she is able to do her new job as president!! The membership coordinator reported on her activities (as reported above) and the membership voted to initiate graduate and undergraduate essay prizes, starting this year. More details to follow in the next newsletter....The book award committee reported on the process and on concerns that no French language books were submitted for consideration. The announcement of the award has been translated and will be forwarded to all the relevant French language presses in the hope that this will stimulate participation. The committee will be expected to be functionally bilingual; Aysan Sev'er, this year's book award recipient, has agreed to serve on the committee for 2005 along with Lori Chambers and Meg Luxton. More volunteers will be necessary in the future, so keep this in mind. Also, we are already accepting nominations for the 2005 award!!!

The final item to report from the AGM is that Barbara Crow has completed her term as president and delivered her final report in this capacity. She will continue to serve in the coming year as past-president. The Board of Directors, as well as the membership, wish to

offer Barbara our heartfelt thanks for her tremendous efforts and enthusiasm in renewing and revitalizing the Association. Without you, Barbara, we would not be in such great shape. Thank-you. Also, welcome to Ann Braithwaite, our new president (former president-elect, and previously secretary). We look forward to working with you.

### **Junior Faculty Meets at Congress**

This year's meeting of CWSA/ACEF again offered a lunchtime meeting point for Junior Faculty. A small but very engaged group of (mainly) pre-tenure faculty came together for this session to brainstorm and network about issues specific to their institutional position. Issues discussed included how to negotiate the demands associated with cross-appointments and much more. The session concluded with the consensus that more time and opportunity was needed to network with junior faculty members from coast to coast. Pre-tenure faculty members interested in joining the CWSA/ACEF online discussion group please email Susanne Luhmann (sluhmann@laurentian.ca).

### **CWSA/ACEF Annual Student Caucus Meeting Student Rep: Anne Wagner**

This year's student caucus meeting at the Manitoba Congress was a spirited one. The meeting was a chance for students from across Canada to get together, network and discuss issues relevant to the discipline of Women's Studies. A focus of this year's meeting was how the CWSA/ACEF may better meet the needs of students. One of the suggestions of our brainstorming session was to hold a student reception at the beginning of the conference to offer students a chance to get acquainted. Students also felt it would be useful to raise the profile of the association, as not everyone interested in feminist scholarship is aware of what the CWSA/ACEF has to offer. The board has already begun discussing next year's conference, so check out the website in the coming months to keep abreast of all the exciting opportunities for students! If you have any suggestions or questions for the association, I can be reached at awagner@oise.utoronto.ca.

### **Coordinators' Meeting at 2004 Meeting in Winnipeg**

As in previous years, this year's annual meeting was preceded by a one-day workshop for program coordinators. The morning session was spent in break out sessions according to program size and level (small, large and graduate programs). The break out sessions in the afternoon addressed topics pertinent to program and curriculum development. A session entitled "'Bums in Seats': Growth and Hiring in Women's Studies" sought to tackle the problem of attracting students to women's studies. Suggested strategies included insuring that the first year course, in the words of one participant, "is really good", which means carefully selecting faculty for this course, keeping numbers small and working with innovative ideas.

Some programs have good experience with creating promotional materials including posters, brochures, videos or distributing student produced 'zines around campus. Other programs reported about their success in working closely with university recruitment services or with offering women's studies as a university credit in high-school. One program experienced significant increase in student numbers after renaming the program. The Ontario-based coordinators of women's studies are working on making women's studies a teachable subject for teacher education and thus more attractive to the large numbers of teacher education students.

It was suggested that CWSA/ACEF develop a database of films and exercises that faculty use in their teaching but also to make access to courses offered across the country easier. Also, CWSA/ACEF should begin collect and make available to all of our programs promotional materials developed by individual programs. Another suggestion was to seek out Federation funding to look at these and other institutional issues that women's studies faces.

Regarding the question of the relationship between Ph.D. programs in women's studies and who programs hire, the suggestion was made that CWSA/ACEF put together a list of arguments in favour of hiring Ph.D.s in women's studies which hiring committees could then use in order to make arguments in support of women's studies trained candidates.

Other sessions at the meeting looked at problems and strategies related to the tension between "(Inter)Disciplinary vs. the Social Science and Humanities Split" and ways to accomplish both the "Internationalizing and Regionalizing of Women's Studies." A fourth session revisited tensions surrounding the "Activist/Academic Agenda of Women's Studies." Participants in each of these sessions were concerned with how to move particular agendas forward and to take on doable projects as opposed to trying to be everything to everyone.

At the conclusion of this year's meeting the agenda and topic for next year's meeting at the University of Western Ontario begun to emerge: a pointed and carefully facilitated focus on developing ideas and doable goals for the future of women's studies programs in Canada. Invitations for that meeting will go out early to all coordinators so that the discussion about the field can continue. Look to hear more about this from Ann Braithwaite sometime in September.

### **CWSA/ACEF Book Award Announcement for 2005**

Just to remind you all again... the deadline has been extended!

The Canadian Women's Studies Association / L'association canadienne des études sur les femmes invites nominations for the 2004-2005 CWSA/ACEF BOOK PRIZE. This yearly prize acknowledges the important contributions scholars of Women's Studies have made to the field in a monograph. Their book must make a contribution to Women's Studies and/or feminist scholarship and must have been published between January and December 2003. Nominees must be a member of the CWSA/ACEF.\* To make a nomination, please send a letter of nomination and arrange for the publisher to send five copies of the book to CWSA/ACEF. The winner will be announced at the 2005 CWSA/ACEF annual general meeting at the University of Western Ontario. The winner will receive a gift subscription to Atlantis: A Women's Studies Journal and be invited to give a public talk at our annual general meeting.

\* CWSA/ACEF membership forms are available at <http://www.yorku.ca/cwsaacef>.

Send nominations by AUGUST 16, 2004, to:

Dr. Barbara Crow Canadian Women's Studies Association / L'association canadienne des études sur les femmes 704 Spadina Avenue Stn. P, Box #432 Toronto, ON M5S 2S9

For now, that's the news from CWSA/ACEF. Another newsletter, with updates on all of the issues discussed here...and more exciting news and views...will arrive in September. In the meantime, have a great summer and think about how you can benefit from and provide

support to CWSA/ACEF!