

FEBRUARY 2006 NEWSLETTER

President's Report by Ann Braithwaite

Hi everyone, and welcome to another issue of the CWSA/ACEF newsletter. In this edition you'll find lots of information on our recently completed membership renewal drive – we're really growing, thanks to you all!, our upcoming conference – which is being magnificently organized by Rhiannon Bury and her program committee and Kate McPherson and her local committee, the annual national coordinators' meeting, a new members' dialogue column, and updates on a variety of ongoing activities and initiatives. Indeed, the rest of the Board is so well organized that I don't have much to report here – their reports here cover a lot of what I would say!

One major change that I do want to alert you all too... we are looking into automating our membership and providing online renewals using credit cards, rather than the more onerous physical paperwork that currently occupies too much of your time – to say nothing of that of our incredibly capable membership coordinator. And, we're redesigning our entire website, fixing the old and out of date links and information, and streamlining some of the information that is there now. We should have that up and running by the time the conference rolls around – and I'll certainly let you all know as soon as it's ready. I'm really excited by these initiatives – websites that are not kept scrupulously up to date are not very helpful; people don't use them and then they're not worth updating and then people don't go to them – a bit of a vicious circle, and one that I certainly want to see changed!

Sometime in the next few months, you'll also see a call go out for nominations for the next Board of Directors, elected annually at the AGM at the conference. (This year's AGM is on the last day of the conference, May 31, in the afternoon – mark your calendars now!) Please consider volunteering some of your time to the association... As someone who has been on the Board in some capacity now since 1999 (when I returned to Canada), I can say it's been some of the most gratifying work I've done in and for Women's Studies! And it's really made me think about this field in some wonderfully engaging and engaged ways.... We've got an incredible group of people involved, and many members are willing to step in and volunteer for various additional committees – as many of you did for the book award and essay prize competitions this year (and who knew people wanted to take on additional committee work J). You won't regret it... so stay tuned for that all important email – or, avoid the rush – nominate yourself now!

And this leads me to some very short updates, just so you all know we're right on track with a number of our annual initiatives... The book award committee (five people this year) has been studiously reading all the wonderful nominated books – and will have its decision made very soon. The two essay prize committees (five people on each of those committees too), are busily reading the range of essays submitted this year – and we'll know their decision soon also; and hopefully the winners of this year and last can make it to the conference to participate in a special session of just their papers. Our membership numbers continue to go up... in fact, as you know, our renewal season is just ending (if you haven't gotten your renewal in, do so now – or this will be your last newsletter and notice from us...), and we're really impressed by how much the association has grown in the past few years. And our financial situation gets better and better; gone are those days,

just a few short years ago, when we were in so much debt. In fact, one of the major issues to discuss at the AGM this year is what we can start to do now that we're financially solvent again—another great reason to come to the AGM!

As always, enjoy this issue, see what we've been up to ... and hope to see you all in Toronto in May!

Conference 2006 Report
By Rhiannon Bury, Program Chair

Preparations are well underway for this year's Congress meetings at York University, May 29-31 and we anticipate an exciting program of the highest calibre. Letters of notification have recently been sent out to those who submitted paper and panel proposals. We expect to upload the preliminary program to the CWSA/ACEF website by mid-March.

In addition to the concurrent sessions, we are very fortunate this year to have two renowned feminist scholars as keynote speakers. Dr. Jacqui Alexander, Professor of Women's Studies and Gender Studies, University of Toronto, will give the opening keynote. She is one of the most important theorists of transnational feminism today and her work has had a profound impact on feminist, queer, and critical race theories. We are hoping to also arrange a signing of her forthcoming collection of essays, *Pedagogies of Crossing* (Duke University Press), at the Congress Book fair.

The closing keynote will be given by Dr. Sherene Razack, Professor, Sociology and Equity Studies in Education, The Ontario Institute for Studies in Education of the University of Toronto. Her research and teaching interests lie in the area of race and gender issues in the law. Her most recent book *Dark Threats and White Knights: The Somalia Affair, Peacekeeping and the New Imperialism* (University of Toronto Press, 2004) is an examination of the violence of Canadian peacekeepers in Somalia and an exploration of the role of law in violence enacted on racialized bodies in the new world order.

In addition, we are very pleased to present two plenary panels. The "Urban Knowledges" panel will include Dr. Gerda Wekerle and Leslie Kern of York University and the "Transfeminisms" panel is being organized by Dr. Bobby Noble of the University of Victoria.

Finally, we are co-sponsoring the Drake lecture organized by CSHPS. The featured speaker is Dr. Elizabeth Lloyd, holder of the Arnold and Maxine Tanis Chair of History and Philosophy of Science at Indiana University. Her latest book, *The Case of the Female Orgasm: Bias in the Science of Evolution* (Harvard UP, 2005) has sparked a great deal of discussion and controversy. Dr Lloyd will show in her talk how such controversies are important to the body politic. Please note that the date listed in the Congress Registration Guide is incorrect. The lecture will take place Wednesday, May 31, 3-5 pm.

We look forward to seeing you all in May!

National Women's Studies Coordinators' Meeting at the 2006 Congress
By Darlene Juschka, Board Member

The dates for the CWSA/ACEF conference are scheduled for Monday, May 29th until Wednesday, May 31st, 2006, which means the coordinators' meeting will take place on Sunday, May 28th 2006.

This year's meeting we hope to have a lively conversation on the subject of interdisciplinary. We felt this subject required some examination particularly since funding agencies and universities have taken up a call for more interdisciplinary research and teaching. With this in mind, among other aspects of interdisciplinarity, we have entitled the meeting "Women's Studies and Interdisciplinarity: The Wave of the Future?" and we're organizing the various sessions to come up with do-able ideas and strategies for our various and different Women's Studies programs across Canada. Women's Studies has always defined itself as interdisciplinary, and in light of this we considered it necessary to return to what that term means/what it accomplishes: both for those inside Women's Studies, or self-identified practitioners of Women's Studies, and to administrations and students, particularly in light of the emphasis on it in terms of teaching and research.

Membership Dialogue

We are hoping that this section will stimulate some discussion among CWSA members about various issues important to the discipline of Women's Studies. Please email suggestions for questions you would like to see in this section in our next issue to Sikata Banerjee at sikatab@uvic.ca and/or Wendee Kubik at wendee.kubik@uregina.ca. For this issue we sent out the following questions:

Please email us a sentence or two that answers the one or both of the following questions:

1) What texts do people use when they teach "Introduction to Women's Studies? (Sample Response: I use Grewal and Kaplan's "An Introduction to Women's Studies" which gives a comprehensive tour of major issues in Women's Studies and has a nice international perspective, but can be unsatisfying or incomplete at times because the readings are excerpts from larger texts.")

- Caroline Viens from Bishops' University writes:

I recently used *Feminisms and Womanisms: A Woman's Studies Reader* edited by Althea Prince and Susan Silva Wayne. This book generated good debates among the students.

- Brenda Hattie from Mount St. Vincent University writes:

I use *Feminist Issues: Race, Class, and Sexuality* edited by Nancy Mandell for Introduction to Women's Studies.

2) What are some techniques people utilize to stimulate discussion in their introductory classes? (Sample: I have found that emailing discussion questions based on the reading the night before class and expecting students to have done the reading with these questions in mind, makes it more conducive for discussion the next day in class.)

- Darlene Juschka from the University of Regina writes:

In my introductory class I have one group activity, a critical reading assignment, that takes place over two class and ends with a final submission from the group. The exercise is designed to help them read more comprehensively and critically, to interact with each other, and to negotiate group work in and of itself.

In this class I also use film. I have the students view a film toward writing a film analysis. After viewing the film I hold a class discussion concerning the film and the assignment itself.

- Caroline Viens from Bishop's University writes:

I find short, weekly, reflection papers on the material provides an opportunity for

examining the issues and a selection of outspoken males provides a great catalyst.

- Brenda Hattie from Mount St. Vincent University writes:
To get discussion going, I put students in groups of 4-5, and give them a series of two or three questions based on their reading, or on the lecture.

Women's Studies Job Postings, Call for papers & Institutes

i) Queen's University, Department of Women's Studies seeks Sessional Adjuncts for the following 2006-2007 Continuing and Distance Studies courses:

WMNS-330* — "International Women" - Spring Term – 1 May - 12 June 2006

WMNS-211*S - "Historical Feminisms" (formerly History of Feminist Thought) – Fall Term – 11 September – 1 December 2006.

Consideration of applications will begin on December 15, 2005 and continue until successful candidates have been selected. For further information go to:
www.queensu.ca/wmns.

ii) The University of Winnipeg, Department of Women's Studies is seeking a qualified person for a tenure-track faculty position in Women's Studies who will also be the Academic Director of the University of Winnipeg Margaret Laurence Women's Studies Centre (MLWSC). The appointment is at the rank of Assistant Professor and is effective July 1, 2006. For further information go to:

www.universityaffairs.ca/careers/current/womensstudies.html.

iii) *Canadian Woman Studies/les cahiers de la femme (cws/cf)* Call for Papers, Canadian Feminism in Action (Vol. 25, No. 3)

DEADLINE: April 30th, 2006

Canadian Woman Studies/les cahiers de la femme

212 Founders, York University, 4700 Keele St. Toronto, ON M3J 1P3

Telephone: (416) 736-5356 Fax: (416) 736-5765 E-mail: cwscf@yorku.ca

iv) The Centre for Women's Studies in Education Ontario Institute for Studies in Education of the University of Toronto, Canada Presents An International Human Rights Education Institute on "Women's Human Rights: Building a Peaceful World in an Era of Globalization" May 1 – June 9, 2006. For more information:

www.oise.utoronto.ca/cwse/Human%20Rights%202006%20Poster.pdf

That's it for this issue. As always, feedback, comments, articles or ideas for articles, etc. are always welcome. Contact the Newsletter editors, Wendee Kubik or Sikata Banerjee for more info.