

WISE WORDS

the first , but certainly not the last, word in women's studies . . .

Fall 2003

What is the Centre for Women's Studies?

. . . A Message from the Director

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It is hoped that the **WISE WORDS** Newsletter will provide a forum to: encourage students and friends of Women's Studies in the communities to come together (connect) for the purpose of discussing issues of importance in the region; and, to enhance existing relationships and generate new partnerships.



Sharon Abbey

The Centre for Women's Studies at Brock University was established in 1991 and offers an interdisciplinary, cross-cultural alternative to androcentric learning. The program includes a wide range of courses from the Social Sciences, Humanities, and Applied Health Science faculties. These courses encourage students to respect difference as they develop a critical awareness of how gender influences cultural expressions, human relations and scholarly production in the lives of women and men. Personal and political subjectivities become sites of redefinition,

resistance and new possibilities as marginalized voices and experiences are fore-grounded and deconstructed. In addition to its academic program (including co-major, minor and certificate course options), the Centre for Women's Studies provides service to the broader community both on and off the campus by organizing speakers and conferences, co-ordinating annual women's events and celebrations, sponsoring awards and scholarships, publishing a Women's Studies journal and newsletter, and collaborating with experiential learning in local businesses and organizations. Over the past twelve years, the Centre for Women's Studies has grown steadily and its success is largely due to the commitment, energy and creative vision of an amazing group of faculty, staff and students who dedicate their time, talents and expertise in order to keep the program pushing boundaries, challenging hegemonic viewpoints and exploring new terrain.

We welcome your involvement!



Prejudices, it is well known, are most difficult to eradicate from the heart whose soil has never been loosened or fertilized by education; they grow there, firm as weeds along rocks.

-- Charlotte Bronte

What's Inside . . .

- Page 2 ~ WISE Journal Info & Faculty Focus
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Please be sure to check the Faculty of Women's Studies Web site at www.brocku.ca/womensstudies/ for updated information and ongoing activities.

Brock Journal of Women's Studies

By Jill Macdonald

During my time at Brock University, I have been interested in the concept of "voice" and the importance of personal expression. Often within the Women's Studies courses at Brock, students are encouraged to use the first person to make a personal connection to academic discourse. However, in my fourth year I found that there was no venue available for undergraduate students who had an interest in Women's Studies or women's issues to have their work published. Therefore, in January 2002, I approached one of my professors with the idea of producing a student-organized publication. The WISE Editorial Board and I have been responsible for promoting the venue, designing promotional materials, recruiting the

editorial board, and for formatting the editorial guidelines for possible submissions. The primary goal of this project is to allow students:

~ To learn more about Women's Studies at Brock.

~ To have the opportunity to have their academic work published.

~ To learn from the written experiences of their fellow students.

Although the project involves an enormous amount of work, I am very proud of what we have accomplished with the production of this journal. Everyone has worked very hard on this project, and we plan to have the first issue available in the Fall 2003. Watch for further details of an exact release date. We are always taking submissions for future issues.

Faculty Focus:



Dianne Bergsma received both her BA and her MA from Brock University. She is currently a Ph.D candidate at the Institute for Christian Studies in Toronto

Dianne Bergsma, Part-time Educator

and she is also Coordinator at OPIRG (Ontario Public Interest Research Group) here at Brock. She will be leading both the Experiential Learning Course (WISE 3P95) and The Mythical Woman in Legend and Religion (WISE 2P97) in the Winter term. Bergsma also teaches WISE 1F90 in Spring evening. She was the Campus and Community Liaison last year.

Editorial/Submission Guidelines

- Materials submitted for publication **must**:
 - ▲ be no longer than 2500 words in length
 - ▲ not be published in any other journal, newspaper, book, etc.
 - ▲ be in APA format (for example, must include proper page numbers) if it is an academic paper or description of research
 - ▲ include a cover letter containing: name(s) of author(s), e-mail address, telephone number(s) where the author can be contacted and a biographical note
 - ▲ not be homophobic, racist, or sexist in nature
- Material may be submitted:
 - ▲ to the Journal of Women's Studies mailbox, located in **MC D332**
- Submissions cannot be accepted electronically, (i.e., through e-mail)
- The Editorial Board will review all submissions.

Work will be evaluated and reviewed according to overall quality, readability, interest, length, and relevance to Women's Studies as a discipline. Please include **three** copies of your submission for review. Edited submissions that will be included in an upcoming edition must then be submitted on disc (i.e., in Microsoft Word format). If a paper is not applicable to the current edition, a note will be attached to the submission indicating the reason(s) it has not been printed. The author will be notified as soon as possible about the results of the review. Submissions are not limited to academic research-based papers. First person narratives, visual artwork and poetry are encouraged as well. Artwork can be submitted in its original format on a digital file.

- All those who submit work that is accepted for publication will receive a complimentary copy of the issue of the journal in which their work has been published.
- Questions and/or concerns can be directed to members of the Editorial Board.
 - ▲ Sharon Abbey at ext. 3349
 - ▲ Jill McDonald at jillmac66@hotmail.com
 - ▲ Beatrix Prinsen at sensis@vaxxine.com

Faculty Profiles:

Joanne Wright (Women's Studies/History)

Professor Joanne Wright received her MA from the University of New Brunswick and her Ph.D from York University. While not entirely new to teaching at Brock, she is one of the first two professors to receive a half appointment in the Faculty of Women's Studies. She is teaching WISE 2P91, the first half of WISE 1F90, and in the second term she is offering a course on Women Thinkers in Western History, HIST 2P05.

Dr. Wright's research interests have always included a diverse examination of the position of women starting in political science with women in development, and from there she moved to political theory and feminist theory. Her book, *Origin Stories in Political Thought: Discourses on Gender, Power, and Citizenship* is forthcoming from the University of Toronto Press in early 2004. As a SSHRC Postdoctoral Fellow at Rutgers University, her research examined the politics and public discourse surrounding the issues of consent and sexual violence. Her current research on John Locke's medical and midwifery writings is a contribution to a series entitled *Re-Reading the Canon* by Penn State University Press and will be published in

their volume entitled *Feminist Interpretations of Locke*. Her work on Locke, which analyses the relationship between his ideas about midwifery and wet-nursing and the changing conceptions of the family in the late seventeenth century, reflects her active involvement with the Niagara Region Breastfeeding Coalition.



In addition to the above, Dr. Wright's publications include: "Consent and Sexual Violence in Canadian Public Discourse: Reflections on Ewanchuk," in the *Canadian Journal of Law and Society*; "Going Against the Grain: Hobbe's Case for Original Maternal Dominion," in the *Journal of Women's History*; and "Deconstructing Development Theory: Feminism, the Public/Private Dichotomy, and the Mexican Maquiladoras," in the *Canadian Journal of Sociology and Anthropology*.



Ana Isla (Women's Studies/Sociology)

Professor Ana Isla received her MA from Universidad Nacional Autonoma de Mexico and her Ph.D from the University of Toronto. She became active with feminism in 1985 in Mexico during the Latin American and Caribbean Feminist Encuentro, which is

a movement that began in 1979. It takes place every three years in different countries and she has presented a paper at every conference since attending her first conference.

Her research has always concentrated on ways to confront women's issues. Beginning in 1982 in Peru, she initiated studies on the debt crisis in Latin America focusing on "Popular Kitchens" for women to cook and eat together in order to survive. In Costa Rica, she studied a Women In Development Program that promotes women's equality

via micro-enterprise.

New to the Niagara Region, she is one of the first two professors to be homed in the Faculty of Women's Studies. She stresses the need to maintain locally, the natural Commons, and by using participatory research she wants others to be able to see the importance of the collective Commons. Professor Isla says that the challenge we face at this time is the expansion of the private property rights over the collective Commons.

Dr. Isla was the recipient of the Rockefeller Fellowship at the University of Kentucky, 2002, and of the SSHRC Post Doctoral Award at York University, 2001-2002. She is teaching WISE 2P90, and the second half of WISE 1F90.

Her most recent publications include: "The Abanico Medicinal Plant and Organic Agriculture Project – Case Study of a Microenterprise" in *Natural Capital: Valuing Ecosystems and Biodiversity*; and "Land Management and Ecotourism: A Flawed Approach to Conservation in Costa Rica" in *Natural Capital, Poverty and Development*.

The world is not moved only by the mighty shoves of the heroes, but also by the aggregate of the tiny pushes of each honest worker. -- Helen Keller

Women's Studies Campus and Community Liaison

The Centre for Women's Studies would like to welcome Beatrix Prinsen, the new Campus and Community Liaison. As a recent Brock WISE/PSYC Honours graduate, she looks forward to being involved in promoting various activities within the department.

She welcomes all WISE enthusiasts to join her on **Tuesday, Oct. 14**, between **10 a.m. and 12 noon in MC D333**, to learn more about the WISE program and its numerous activities. Some of the activities and areas of involvement include :

- ★ Hosting Brock Fall and Spring Open House - Oct. 19, and March 21.
- ★ Arranging the December 6, Memorial
- ★ Promoting WISE Society
- ★ Planning Speakers Series
- ★ Editing or submitting to the WISE Journal
- ★ Designing, editing, writing for the *WISE WORDS* Newsletter
- ★ Joining the International Women's Day Celebrations Committee

This is an excellent opportunity to find out how you can become involved promoting Women's Studies both on campus and within your community, as well as meet both WISE students and faculty.



Beatrix Prinsen

W I S E S O C I E T Y

By Beatrix Prinsen

Every WISE student learns that in order to effect change, the personal must become political. The "political" for me then is to bring to fruition a dream that I have had for a number of years, namely, a WISE Society. It is anticipated that the WISE Society will be a student run organization that has among its objectives a building of student community, as well as arranging, sponsoring, and creating events and functions that are designed to supplement the members' understanding and enjoyment of the Women's Studies discipline.

The WISE Society would be open to students, staff, and faculty members of the University regardless of discipline, as well as any interested members of the community. The events and functions that the WISE Society will create and sponsor can include, but are not limited to, the following:

- ★ socials for community building
- ★ thesis information sessions
- ★ undergraduate and graduate course information
- ★ information about available awards and bursaries

The Women's Studies Program is dedicated to the memory of 14 women of Ecole Polytechnique in Montreal whose deaths in 1989 dramatized the need for more understanding among women and men. That was more than 12 years ago. Please join us in not only making Brock's Women's Studies Program visible at Brock University, but also in creating a community of people who (as the Brock calendar states) "recognize the importance of gender as an essential factor in cultural expression, human relations, and scholarly production."

Women's Studies Options

- A **combined major** with another program in the humanities, sciences or social sciences.
- A **minor** with major in another program.
- **Elective** and **individual** courses.
- A **certificate** if you already have a degree in a different field or if you do not want to enter a degree program.

It is not our abilities that show what we truly are. It is our choices.

-- Professor Dumbledore to Harry in, Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets, by J.K. Rowling

This edition of WISE WORDS was created, designed and edited by Penni Lafleur, a fourth-year Women's Studies/ Communications co-major. To find out how you can assist with the creation of the Spring 2004 edition, please contact Beatrix Prinsen at sensis@vaxxine.com