

From the Director



As the academic year of 2003-2004 comes to an end, so does *Stepping-Up: 2004-2010*, the major academic planning process of the University

of Toronto. The IWSGS's final seven-page document -- the product of many hours of meetings, consultation, collaborative writing and editing -- was submitted at the end of April to the Faculty of Arts and Sciences. Undoubtedly the preparation of this short document absorbed a lot of intellectual and administrative time and energy from all of us. Was it a worthwhile exercise? I would certainly claim that it was - though I will be quick to add that it was hard to hold on to this perspective all the way through! The planning exercise pushed the core faculty group to be clear about and commit ourselves to the intellectual directions in which we are moving. It got us to think through our strengths and our priority needs, and frame those within the format and constraints of the language of "planning".

As a novice in the process of academic planning, I should admit that it was a great learning

experience. My scholarly background in the areas of race and gender hierarchies in the workplace, equity and diversity issues, and analysis of institutional power was put to daily practical use. I had to figure out and immerse myself in the wider institutional dynamics of the University of Toronto in order to ensure our visibility and recognition.

The planning process has given rise to many reflections that I think have relevance for all of us. It has highlighted the challenges we face in striving to ensure a democratic institutional practice in the context of fiscal restraint and an unyielding power hierarchy like the U of T. How do we practice an inclusive governance? How do we reward 'inclusivity,' 'equity,' and 'diversity'? How can we effectively plan for expanding and developing our program in the light of looming budget cuts? In the prevailing culture of competition and an environment where it is assumed that knowledge should generate revenue, in what terms should we rationalize and assert our resource requests? I am, as Linzi Manicom observed, very 'fond' of our academic plan. My purpose in raising these questions is to remain sensible to institutional possibilities and limitations yet retain a firm dedication to change.

As the Director of the Institute, it

is inspiring to have a blue-print for expanding and strengthening women's and gender studies, one that is visionary, intellectually rigorous, and politically engaging. I believe we have collectively delivered a plan, which if implemented, will allow the Institute, by the end of the first decade of the 21st century, to confirm its place as a leading international site for transnational feminist scholarship.

The spirit of "planning" that

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Editor: Linzi Manicom

Design: Angela Fleury

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characterized the year continued through to an all day Institute retreat which took place off-campus in mid-May. This was the occasion to take stock of the activities of our past year, rationalize and allocate responsibilities for the next year. A Curriculum Transformation Committee was struck to ensure that this important initiative was re-centred in our program of work for 2004-5. It was also confirmed that now, with the consolidation of a healthy faculty complement, both undergraduate program coordination and the teaching of large core courses should be done by tenured faculty members.

There is much to celebrate in the achievements of the Institute over this past year. Firstly, we were privileged to confer honorary IWSGS membership on Aboriginal community leader, Sylvia Maracle, and welcome her to join the illustrious group of honorary members. Second, after many months of negotiation we are delighted to have secured the "opportunity hire" of Jacqui Alexander, leading transnational feminist scholar and activist. Jacqui, who will be joining us later this year, brings with her an extensive experience in curriculum transformation.

A milestone achievement for the Institute has been the acceptance of our preliminary proposed Women's Studies MA Program by the School of Graduate Studies. The work toward an MA program began under the former Director, Margrit Eichler, and Graduate Coordinator, Sheila Neysmith. Tara Goldstein picked up the project and was rewarded, right at the end of her term, by getting word of the agreement to go ahead. The detailed preparation of the official document now falls on our incoming Graduate Program Coordinator, Alison Keith. We welcome Alison into this position and onto the Administrative Team.

We have also diversified the IWSGS Advisory Board, to include representatives from the OISE/UT-based Centre for Integrative Anti-racism Studies (CIARS) and the U of T Black Faculty Group. Now that the Institute is well-established, the function of the advisory board has shifted from consultation to being more one of information sharing, networking, and mutual support amongst the units involved.

The IWSGS-University-community Knowledge Alliance has successfully hosted four

events over the past academic year. This initiative underscores the commitment of the IWSGS to learn and contribute to women's knowledge beyond the University and thus we hope to organize mutually enriching events in the coming academic year.

The interest in our newly and modestly funded Visiting Scholars Program was affirmed by the many applications received from around the world. There has been gratifying public acknowledgement of the quality of our undergraduate teaching and of the research expertise based at the Institute.

With mixed emotion, two of our staff members, Angela Fleury and Laura Cunningham are leaving. Angela has been accepted to the prestigious Pre-service teaching program at OISE/UT, following her goal of being in the classroom, and Laura is joining the Blackwood Gallery at UTM, to give herself more time to pursue her art. I am delighted that Angela has accepted to assist us on a part-time basis for one more year. This means that we are in the process of reconfiguring our excellent support staff.

In sum, this was a successful and challenging year; I have been fortunate to work with a team of committed colleagues, students, and staff who shared similar vision for the future of the IWSGS. I am certainly looking forward to the challenges the next phase will bring.



**Shahrzad Mojab and Sylvia Maracle,
IWSGS's new Honorary Member at a
Reception in her honour on March 8, 2004**

S. Mojab

THE CENTRE FOR RESEARCH IN WOMEN'S HEALTH (CRWH)

The Centre for Research in Women's Health (CRWH) is taking on a new role as an Extra-Department Unit (EDU) of the University of Toronto. CRWH now has more opportunities to conduct and promote women's health research within the Faculty of Medicine and at its affiliated health sciences faculties and health care institutions. The immediate goal for the new EDU is to draw together the talented women's health researchers already at the University, facilitating interdisciplinary collaboration and promoting existing endeavours. The longer term goal is to nurture new women's health researchers, develop graduate and postdoctoral training programs and develop additional student awards.

This process of building research collaborations is already beginning. A collaboration spearheaded by CRWH has been awarded funding for two Tier 2 **Canada Research Chairs** in women's health research. The Chairs will focus on unravelling the cellular and molecular mechanisms underlying the effects of gonadal steroids, such as estrogens, on mental and neuropsychiatric health. As well, CRWH researchers continue to break new ground in a number of areas. A participatory action research project based at the Ontario Breast Cancer Community Research Initiative has completed its final report describing the experiences of lesbians with breast cancer. Led by researcher **Chris Sinding**, the project team launched the report at a community event at the Buddies in Bad Times Theatre. Advocacy efforts are ongoing to increase the supports available for lesbians living with cancer in Ontario.

Another team of CRWH researchers from the Osteoporosis Research Program is also working to improve care for women in Ontario. **Susan Jaglal** and her team hope to show that their model for a more integrated system of post-fracture care will reduce disability by helping to ensure that women who experience fractures are screened and treated for osteoporosis. This strategy for integrating care is now being implemented in several Ontario communities as a demonstration project. The efforts of another group of CRWH researchers are also being felt at the community level. Researchers from the Violence and Health Research Program, **Ilene Hyman (PI)**, **Hiwot Teffera**, and **Girma Mekonnen** are currently presenting their findings on changing gender relations in the Ethiopian community to their community partners and to care providers across the city. Their work looks at the influence of life in Canada on gender relations within Ethiopian couples. It includes a series of service

recommendations for the project's community partners.

CRWH is also looking to the future with several new research projects: **Sarah Romans**, the Shirley Brown Chair in Women's Mental Health Research, and **Marsha Cohen**, Senior Research Scientist, have received funding for a re-analysis of data from the Community Health Survey looking at gender issues in depression and anxiety for Canadians less than 65 years of age. The Canadian Community Health Survey was conducted in 2002 collecting national and provincial level data for a selection of major mental illnesses, addictions and problems. **Gillian Hawker**, Director of the Osteoporosis Research Program has assembled a multi-disciplinary team to examine women's experiences of pain and fatigue when living with osteoarthritis (OA). Lastly, CRWH is focusing on the future of women's health research with its annual **Graduate Student Research Day**. Held this year on May 20, the full-day event featured researchers-in-training from across the University of Toronto exchanging research findings, innovative methodologies and theoretical insights about women's health.

CENTRE FOR WOMEN'S STUDIES IN EDUCATION, OISE/UT

Our 7th Dame Nita Barrow Distinguished Visitor, **Alda Facio** of Costa Rica, had a standing-room only audience on November 4, 2003 at George Ignatieff Theatre for her lecture *The Empire Strikes Back: Feminist Strategies for Peace*. The event included welcoming remarks by OISE/UT's Dean **Jane Gaskell**; acknowledgement by **Paula Bourne**, Head, Centre for Women's Studies in Education; introduction by **Joanna Kerr**, Executive Director, Association for Women's Rights in Development (AWID); and closing remarks by **Michele Landsberg**. Capping the evening was a gala reception at Massey College with refreshments and background music from Latin America.

The next Dame Nita Barrow Visitor – our 8th - is **Indai Sajor**, an internationally known activist and educator in the field of women in conflict zones, particularly those in Asia. She will be teaching a course, *Women and War and Human Rights: Monitoring Women's Human Rights Violations in Situations of Armed Conflict* in the Fall term.

2003-04 was CWSE's 20th season of Popular Feminism lectures; it was special in many ways, not least being the large and enthusiastic audiences that showed up for each of the five panel lectures in the Dean's Conference Room on the 12th floor at OISE. The February presentation resulted in our publishing of *Integrative Anti-Racism and Feminism*, a paper by panelists **Nora Gold**, **Roxana Ng** and **Njoki Wane**. The season's last lecture on April 1 became An Evening of Feminist Celebration, with launches of three journal issues, music and refreshments before the

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Updates from IWSGS Partners (Continued)

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presentation. The journals featured were *Orbit*, 'Girls, Boys and Schooling,' edited by **Paula Bourne** and **Cecilia Reynolds**, Vol. 34, No. 1, 2004; *Canadian Woman Studies/les cahiers de la femme*, 'Women and Sustainability: From Rio de Janeiro (1992) to Johannesburg (2002),' Vol. 23, No. 1, 2003; and *Resources for Feminist Research/Documentation sur la Recherche Féministe*, 'New Feminist Research,' Vol. 30, Nos. 1 & 2, 2003.

In addition to the scheduled lectures of the 2003-04 season, CWSE was proud to host Brown Bag lunch hour lectures by **Rekha Pande** of India, **Ailbe Smyth** of Ireland, and **Kirti Singh** of India. We were also happy to co-sponsor with AWID (Association of Women's Rights in Development) a round table discussion with **Palwasha Hassan**, women's representative to Afghanistan's historic constitutional talks, in January 2004.

The Centre presented a table with three-panel display at OISE/UT's annual Research Celebration in February 2004. Showcased were current research projects of Dr. Nora Gold, Growing Up Jewish, Female and Canadian: A Longitudinal Study of Girls Aged 10-18, and Paula Bourne's research on Promoting Female Student Participation in Skilled Trades.

The CWSE and the Transformative Learning Centre at the OISE/UT co-sponsored a new, six-week Summer Institute from May 3 through June 15 on *Women, Human Rights and Peacebuilding in an Era of Globalization*. This year's "pilot" is proving to be successful, with capacity enrollment for all

courses offered. Another institute is being planned for May/June 2005. For further information and copies of publications, see: <http://www1.oise.utoronto.ca/cwse>

STATUS OF WOMEN OFFICE

The Status of Women Office celebrated the 120th anniversary of women's admission to the University of Toronto and the 20th anniversary of the Status of Women Office from February 23 – March 13, 2004. Earlier in the year, the Office encouraged units and groups across all three campuses to plan events to include in the anniversary and over 100 events did take place during the 20 day celebration. The Status of Women Office organized a few events, but the bulk of the events were hosted by different units and groups across campus ranging from academic departments, colleges, campus women's centres, to student and staff-focused units and individually committed staff, students and faculty. The events were diverse in scope and outreach. They included academic lectures, informal panel discussions, a formal debate, an art exhibit, musical performances, cabarets, athletic activities, a fashion show, comedy, networking opportunities, a reception, open houses, workshops and a heart clinic. Many events were open to the public, while some were limited to a particular constituency or group.

One of the long term highlights is the establishment, by **John Challis**, Vice-President Research and Associate Provost, of a new lecture series entitled *Changing the World: Outstanding Women Scholars at the University of Toronto*.

This year the Status of Women Office established Advisory Councils on the UTM and UTSC campuses, and is working toward creating a comprehensive profile of women at the university.

CENTRE FOR GIRLS' AND WOMEN'S HEALTH AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY (CGWHPA)

"Feminist *movement*" is a phrase that signifies political, intellectual and physical activity at the Centre for Girls' and Women's Health and Physical Activity. The CGWHPA is a small but vibrant interdisciplinary centre for scholarly research, debate and community inter/action. It is situated in the Faculty of Physical Education and Health and is funded by the Rosenstadt Foundation.

Faculty and graduate students are currently pursuing research investigations into the following: sexual harassment in sport and fitness; ethno-cultural diversity and girls' understandings of health; health education curriculum and ideologies of healthism; mentoring activity among marginalized girls; gendered media representations of sport; media discourses of active health in fundraising for breast cancer; excessive exercise and implications for menstruation and bone health; concussions in women's sport; HRT and women's cardiovascular health; and stigma, risk and

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IWSGS SPEAKERS SERIES, 2003-04

This series of talks featuring Toronto-based feminist scholars, took place in the IWSGS Lounge.

January 21, 2004 – **Caroline Fusco**:

"Know(ing) your Place: Working Out/Up the Discourses of Respectable Citizenship in Physical Education, Recreation and Health Space/s"

February 11, 2004 – **Bonnie McElhinny**:

"Kissing a Baby is Not at All Good For Him: Child Rearing and Colonialism in the American Occupied Philippines"

March 17, 2004 – **Shahrazad Mojab**:

"The Gender of Diaspora: Emerging Ideological Tensions Among Kurdish Feminists"

Updates from IWSGS Partners (Continued)

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the 'epidemic' of obesity.

Community partnerships with the Centre include ongoing collaborations with OPHEA's *Living Schools Initiative* and their *Go Girls* mentoring program, with CAAWS's *On the Move Program*, and with the *Edusport HIV/AIDS Prevention* program in Zambia. Over the past year, the CGWHPA has also become a founding partner in the *SPRINT* Research Consortium of health and sport policy research centres across Canada, the USA and Britain.

Lynda Mainwaring, an expert in health psychology, dance injuries and sport concussions, was awarded tenure in the FPE&H. Two M.Sc. students in the Interdisciplinary Women Studies Program are affiliated with the Centre: **Nikki Kumar** and **Lindsay Shane**. Nikki is currently in Geneva on a three month apprenticeship with the World Health Organization and is completing her thesis about activity experiences of Indo-Canadian girls. Lindsay Shane is examining the cycling body and transgressions in city spaces. **Caroline Fusco** completed her Ph.D. last year and has remained on campus as a SSHRC post doctoral fellow with the IWSGS. Dr. **Claire Hooker**, an expert on risk and health scares, has recently arrived from the University of Sydney as a post-doctoral fellow to work with our Centre and Public Health Sciences.

In addition to these research projects and partnerships, key activities of the centre include hosting an annual research conference, the *Gender Matters Seminar Series*, and facilitating a variety of journal clubs. The *Girls In/Action Conference* in June 2003 was a roaring success. **Valerie Hepburn**, the president of the World Breast Cancer Association, and performance artist **Maggie Murphy** collaborated to provide a keynote for the conference. This interdisciplinary conference brought together researchers from socio-cultural, behavioural and bio-physical areas of science addressing activity and the health of females. High school artists and the dance group *Vibe* were woven between the research presentations to offer unique visions of movement to give voice to young females at this event. Presenters in the *Gender Matters Seminar Series* and the *Active Women's Week* to commemorate 120 years of women at UT included: **M.J. DeSouza** (UT), **Helen Gurney** (a pioneer in women's sports leadership, Vic College), **Helen Lenskyj** (OISE/UT), **Yuka Nakamura** (UT), and **Stella Volpe** (U. Penn.).

On May 14 we hosted *The Bone Health Summit: Females, Physical In/Activity Research & Interventions* in which top biophysical researchers from across North America presented. The CHWHPA will be hosting the "*Politics of Obesity*" research roundtable on campus from September 7 to 8, 2004. The keynote speaker will be **Jan Wright** from the University of Wollongong, Australia.

FACULTY AWARDS AND PRIZES

RESEARCH

June Larkin (with **Claudia Mitchell**) received a Canadian Foundation for AIDS Research grant for a project on "Gendering HIV/AIDS Prevention: Exploring Gender as a Risk Factor in Rural and Aboriginal Youth in Ontario"

Shahrzad Mojab (Applicant) and **Rachel Gorman** (Co-applicant) were awarded a new SSHRC project entitled "Role of Women's Organizing in Post-war Reconstruction: Diaspora-homeland Relations in the Kurdish 'Safe Haven,' 1991-2003. (See page 11)

Kerry Rittich has a Jean Monnet Fellowship at the European University Institute in Florence, Italy for 2004-2005. This fall, she will also be holding the Mackenzie King Chair in Canadian Studies at Harvard Law School and the Weatherhead Centre for International Affairs at Harvard University.

Judith Taylor received an Arts and Science Teaching Initiative Grant of \$1000 for the Women's Studies Practicum, NEW470. She is also the recipient of a Sociology Department SSHRC Institutional Grant (SIG) for \$3,000 to hire a research assistant to work on her research project on women's organizations in Toronto.

Kathryn Morgan has received a new SSHRC grant entitled "Geneticizing gender: the techno-social eradication of gender disabilities."

Cynthia Wright, heading up a team of university and community researchers, was awarded a research grant for \$10,000 from the Joint Centre of Excellence for Research on Immigration and Settlement - Toronto (CERIS). The project, based at the IWSGS, is entitled "Non-Status Immigrants: Exploring Models of Regularization."

TEACHING

June Larkin and **Linzi Manicom** were named as amongst the "popular profs" at University of Toronto in Maclean's Magazine's annual survey of Canadian Universities.

Joan Simalchik and **Jasmine Zine**, who have been sessional instructors here, received awards for their teaching at Women's/Gender Studies, UTM.

Graduate Collaborative Women's Studies Program (GCWS)

REPORT FROM THE COORDINATOR, TARA GOLDSTEIN

As this newsletter goes to press, I have come to end of my term as the GCWS Coordinator and am passing on the role to my wonderful colleague **Alison Keith**. Dr. Keith is a full professor in the Classics Department and has been teaching the Women and Psychoanalysis course in the Women's Studies undergraduate program. I wish Alison best of luck in her new role.

Faculty and students associated with the GCWS program have been busy this winter and spring. On December 3, 2003, we held the annual GCWS Symposium. Entitled *Hearts and Heads: Feminist Interventions*, the symposium was planned by the 18 doctoral students enrolled in the GCWS Research Methodology course and attracted 23 graduate student presenters. In addition to the student presentations, the symposium featured an excellent opening talk by panel **June Larkin, Phil Masters and Kathryn Morgan** entitled *Publish, Not Perish* and an equally excellent closing talk by the IWSGS postdoctoral fellowship holder **Carolyn Fusco**. Carolyn's talk was entitled *Theoretically Sound, Methodologically Coherent: The Details Matter* and discussed the ins and outs of how to write a successful postdoctoral fellowship proposal. The Symposium ended with a social put on by the GWSSU.



GWSSA Coordinators:
Nadia Mohammed and Marie Vander Kloet



Kathryn Morgan and Tara Goldstein
at the Graduate Student Symposium, December 2003

In the spring, a small committee of faculty from IWSGS met with **Sandra Acker**, the Associate Dean of Division II at the School of Graduate Studies, and was given the go-ahead to pursue a free-standing MA program. IWSGS has been working on this MA program for a number of years so this news was very exciting. I would like to acknowledge the work of **David Clandfield, Margrit Eichler, Angela Fleury, Shahrzad Mojab, Kathryn Morgan, Sheila Neysmith, Marian Reed** and the 2003-04 MA subcommittee (**Alison Keith, June Larkin and Judith Taylor**) whose expertise and commitment brought us to this moment. Thanks also go out to the 2004-05 IWSGS Core Faculty whose feedback helped us create a first-rate proposal for the MA program.

My two years with the GCWS program have been extraordinarily rich. I have met some wonderful administrators, wonderful faculty, and wonderful students. I have had the opportunity to meet many new people and I have learned much about effective graduate programming, effective thesis supervision, effective proposal writing and effective leadership. I am indebted to all the people who reached out to support the GCWS program and its students. I wish you all the very best.

STUDENT AWARDS AND PRIZES

Jennifer Bailey was the recipient of this year's prestigious City of Toronto Undergraduate Scholarship in Women's Studies.

The City of Toronto Graduate Scholarship went to OISE student, **Roberta Timothy**. Roberta was a TA in the Intro Women's Studies course this year/

The Janka Seydegart Scholarship in Feminist Studies went this year to **Mary Ann Angeles**.

Rachel Gorman received a post-graduate fellowship, based at the IWSGS.

Jaime Crossan, WSSU Committee member, received a Gordon Cressy Student Leadership Award.

Undergraduate Women's Studies at U of T

WOMEN'S STUDIES AT ST. GEORGE

The demands of the *Stepping Up* planning process meant that the curriculum revision was put on the back burner this term. However, there have been some useful benefits of this planning for the program. As part of the "self-study" requirement of the academic plan, a questionnaire was drawn up to solicit student opinions on positive and negative aspects of the program. Most frequently mentioned in the students' responses were the high quality of teaching, enthusiastic and encouraging faculty, the unique and challenging approach of women's studies and its inclusionary content. Some students experienced and valued a strong sense of student community. Students also complained about not being able to get into the courses of choice and wanted a more diverse course selection. This feedback is proving helpful as we embark upon rethinking and reorganizing our undergraduate curriculum in the light of transnationality, our major focus for the next academic year.

The Women's Studies Student Union (WSSU) has played a significant role in the planning process. They had ongoing representation on the Academic Planning Committee; they distributed the student questionnaire to all of our undergrad classes and were also involved in processing the information. Volunteers from the WSSU participated actively in the U of T Options Day on March 18. They were enthusiastic and effective in



Michelle St. John, IWD Speaker 2003

communicating to prospective women's studies students.

Michelle St. John, well-known actor and member of the Turtle Gals Performing Ensemble, gave the annual International Women's Day lecture. The lecture, entitled "Creating to Shift the Paradigm" took place in the William Doo Auditorium on March 9. Interspersed with fragments of performance, Michelle spoke engagingly about the forms of discrimination and stereotyping she had experienced as a Native woman actor.

Students from the Advanced Research Seminar

course made presentations on their independent study projects in the annual undergraduate student colloquium on March 19. Although there were only three students this year, the quality of the talks was exceptional. (See p.12)

The annual Careers Workshop took place on March 31, organized this year by **Judith Taylor**. Approximately 20 students attended. **Mary Giamos**, an expert from Career Services, worked with participants on cover letters and resumes. Members of the NEW470 Research Practicum course (taught by Judith) gave small reports on their experiences in women's organizations (a major aspect of the course). They shared their insights on different kinds of organizations, mentoring, skill-building, feminist ideologies, and life after graduation.

Program Coordinator, **June Larkin**, was on sabbatical leave this term. **Linzi Manicom** took over as Acting-Coordinator expertly assisted by **Marian Reed**, Program assistant.

WOMEN'S/GENDER STUDIES AT UTM

The Women's Gender Program at UTM has sponsored two events in second term. The first was an Open House on January 26 which drew about 30 faculty, staff and students to hear information about the program and next year's courses. The second was an event for which we would like to thank the Institute's Community Knowledge Alliance. On March 9 we held an outreach conference entitled Newcomers and Healthcare Occupations. (See page 9).

Some good news is that the UTM ENGLISH department has hired, for a Critical Theory position, the current Assistant Director of the Women's Studies Program at Harvard, and some of her teaching each year has been pledged to the WGS program. Though we have the smallest WS program at U of T, she says our 57 majors and minors constitute a bigger program than Harvard has. The administration there is evidently not very supportive, and the instructor (**Mari Ruti**) is coming to us partly because they have allocated few or no permanent positions to the WS program there. So even if we don't surpass Harvard in ALL respects, U of T seems to compare well in Women's Studies!

The VP-Academic, **Cheryl Misak**, is enthusiastic about the proposal to share a tri-campus lectureship with UTSC and we are hoping that this arrangement will come about, to strengthen both the suburban campus programs.

WOMEN'S STUDIES, UTS, SCARBOROUGH

In an attempt to bring faculty members, women's studies and interested students together to discuss the Women's Studies program, **Shaneeva Yassin**, UTSC's

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Women's Studies Undergraduate Student Reports

WOMEN'S STUDIES STUDENT UNION (WSSU), ST. GEORGE CAMPUS

The undergraduate Women's Studies Student Union has had a very successful and exciting semester filled with student events. This year, WSSU representatives have tried to create a sense of community for Women's Studies students and also create more of a presence on campus as a whole. We have not only enjoyed hosting student events, but also enjoyed supporting the IWSGS through participating in the Academic Planning Committee, and representing the Women's Studies program at U of T Options day for high school students. The annual WSSU Retreat, held on January 16, addressed the theme of women's health. Over 40 students participated in the full-day event which consisted of educational and interactive workshops. **Linda Muraca**, a public health nurse from Mount Sinai presented a seminar on breast self-examination and healthy living; **Tara McKee**, from the Harbord Street store Good for Her, presented a workshop on healthy female sexuality; and **Barbara Mainguy** presented an art therapy relaxation workshop. The information and insights presented by these guest speakers were well received by all. As was the free lunch!

The WSSU held a film night on March 31, screening the comedy "But I'm a Cheerleader". Attendance was disappointing – perhaps due to the time of year – but those who did participate thoroughly enjoyed the hilarious film. On April 5, the WSSU hosted a free social lunch for students, staff and faculty in the IWSGS lounge, a relaxed event which gave students the chance to chat informally with the faculty and staff who came along. The WSSU would like to thank students and faculty for their support and participation this year!

By **Andrea Macerollo**, President, WSSU



WSSU Executive at St. George Campus:
**Julia Weisser, Jaime Crosson, &
Andrea Macerollo**

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WST Student Representative, along with Professor **Connie Guberman**, organised a WST gathering. The event, which took place on March 2, produced some useful feedback for the program. For instance, participants felt that the UTSC women's studies program needs a more diverse selection of courses and more focus on equity. They also requested a wider variety of courses for the summer session. After the gathering, Shaneeva sent surveys, similar to those circulated at the St. George campus, out to women's studies students through the WST listserv. Responses were positive about the approachability and knowledge of the faculty, with an appreciation of the critical engagement with material and ideas that women's studies encourages. There was a perceived need for more teachers and courses that dealt with cultural diversity amongst women and which would encourage men to enrol.

Michelle Davis, who is teaching for UTSC for the first time, has been the instructor for "Current Research" this past term.

UTSC WOMEN'S STUDIES STUDENT REPORT

The Women's Centre at UTSC, which works closely with the Women's Studies Program, is a big part of the UTSC community. Co-coordinators for the 2003-2004 year, **Lisa Girard**, **Jessica Mustachi**, and **Anna-Lee Chow-Lin-On**, organised a number of events this term. On November 27, "Bend It Like Beckham" was shown in a successful movie night. The film "Whale Rider" was the feature film at a second movie night on Thursday March 25. As part of the GRRRLfest Theme there was GRRRLfair. Organizations from UTSC's campus community and the local community set up information booths as well as videos, women's music and a mural. Homemade buttons and stickers were handed out; GRRRLfest t-shirts were available for a suggested donation. There were workshops from GRRRLfest, including one by Professor **Zoe Newman** on "Grrrlz, Media, and Sexuality" and another by **Allison Drew** on "Relationships from Hell: A Workshop on Criminal Harassment". In all, the event was a major success.

There was a Wen-Do Women's Self-Defense class on Saturday March 20, and UTSC's Cancer Awareness Event was organized by **Sanna Szeto** on April 1. This event was held in connection with the Health and Wellness Centre at UTSC. The Co-coordinators for the 2004-2005 year are: **Jessica Mustachi**, **Anna-Lee Chow-Lin-On**, and **Gillian Reiss**.

By **Shaneeva Yassin**, UTSC Student Representative to IWSGS

IWSGS Community Knowledge Alliance Events

The IWSGS Community Knowledge Alliance has the objective of making links and exchanging knowledge between the Institute and local community organizations. Three events were held in this period.

Afghan Women Organising

Those who attended the first event in this annual series on December 4, 2003 were privileged to hear the presentations of **Adeena Niazi**, the founder of the Toronto-based Afghan Women's Organisation (AWO), and **Maliha Chisti**, currently a graduate student at OISE/UT who has worked with Afghani women refugees in Pakistan and been involved in developing gender inclusive international peace-keeping protocols. The event was organised to coincide with Prof. Linzi Manicom's class on 'Gender and Violence in an International Frame', for the 400-level seminar on Women and Issues of International Development. We were also joined by Prof. Amir Hassanpour and his students from Near and Middle Eastern Civilizations.

Adeena Niazi has been much honoured for her many and significant contributions to women's human rights in Afghanistan. She was one of two Afghan Canadians elected to the Loya Jirga (Grand Assembly) to vote on the Transitional Government in Kabul where, as the sole woman member, she persistently raised questions of gender equality. Adeena talked about and showed some video footage of the plight of Afghani women in conditions of war and reconstruction. She outlined the kind of support work being done by the Afghan Women's Organization. Maliha spoke more analytically about the ways in which the work of the non-governmental organizations working with Afghani women in the region was being disciplined according to particular notions of gender and international relations. She noted the challenge of getting the perspectives and agency of Afghan women themselves acknowledged and respected in this post-war context.

The Women's Studies and NMC students and other members of the audience came away with a sense of the complexity of the gender politics of post-war reconstruction in the matrix of international forces. At the reception which followed, we were able to enjoy some of the food from the region, catered by the Afghan Women's Organization.



Adeena Niazi and Maliha Chisti

Toronto Based Community Organizations

The Women's Studies Practicum course held its community alliance event on March 25. Students in the class invited representatives of the various organizations at which they served as interns to come and speak about their careers in feminist organizations. The event was well attended and elucidating.

These staff members represented were a diverse number of organizations such as the Toronto Women's Bookstore, the YWCA, New Experiences for Women (specializing in settlement and other services for immigrant and refugee women) and Food Share, among others. Students found it very helpful to hear how these individuals had made the transition from university to organizational life, and learned several skills that would be useful to them when looking for non-profit social change work, such as web design, accounting, organizational management, and grant writing. The staff members also shared very useful perspectives on the tensions created by Boards of Directors, the challenges created by 'resource trends' and ever shifting state definitions of social problems, and how to avoid 'burn out' in direct service work..

The discussion at the event will inform the way the Practicum course is structured in the future, and helped Professor Judith Taylor, who facilitates the practicum, develop new ideas for conducting research on women's organizations in Toronto that will be of use to these organizations.

Newcomers and Healthcare Occupations

The IWSGS Community Knowledge Alliance sponsored a conference on the topic Newcomers and Healthcare Occupations at the University of Toronto at Mississauga on March 9, 2004. There were representatives from organizations such as ACCES Employment services, Victorian Order of Nurses (Peel), Brampton neighbourhood Resource Centre, Catholic Community Services, the Region of Peel local government and a former MPP. Half a dozen academics attended, from U of T and McMaster.

Financial support from the Knowledge Alliance allowed us to provide honoraria for the seven speakers from agencies and academia, including a student reporting on her survey of immigrant employment experiences in Mississauga. The funding also covered publicity and refreshments. The conference was organized by a committee consisting of our gender librarian Paula Hannaford, academic skills centre director Cleo Boyd, student Edna Toth and WGS Coordinator Jan Noel. With a full room (55 attendees) and some good discussion, we are declaring the day a success. We hope it will be the beginning of further community-campus links, including possible practicum assignments for our WGS students.

Research Profile: Tara Goldstein



Tara Goldstein is Associate Professor and the Associate Chair in the Department of Curriculum, Teaching, and Learning at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education of the University of Toronto (OISE/UT). She was Co-ordinator of the Graduate Women's Studies Program (GCWS) from July 2002- 2004. Tara is an enthusiastic and committed critical researcher and educator who is well-known and respected for her innovative use of ethnographic playwriting as a research methodology. Tara has written three ethnographic plays: "Hong Kong Canada" (2001), which tells the story of Hong Kong students' experiences of racism in a Toronto high school; "Satellite Kids" (2003), about the politics of educating transnational students from postcolonial contexts; and "Snakes and Ladders" (2004), Tara's first performed ethnography on anti-homophobia.

'Performed Ethnography' as research methodology and pedagogical tool

Sherry (*high-school student*): I don't want to introduce the people from TEACH.ⁱ

Anne (*English high-school teacher*): Why not?

Sherry: People will think (*emphasizing*) I'm gay.

Anne: In your introduction, you can tell people that you are a member of STARⁱⁱ who is there as a straight ally to fight homophobia....

Sherry: But what if I don't want to be a straight ally?

Anne: What's the problem with being an ally?

Sherry: It means that I agree that it's okay.

Anne: That what's okay?

Sherry: That (*looking down*) it's okay to be a fag - to be gay.

Anne: I think what we're saying as straight allies is that we should respect other people's differences.

Sherry: But if I don't agree that it's okay to be gay, then shouldn't my opinion be respected?

ⁱ Teens Educating and Confronting Homophobia (TEACH), a peer-based anti-homophobia education program of the Toronto District School Board.

ⁱⁱ Students and Teachers Against Racism (STAR), a fictional student-teacher anti-racism group.

(Excerpt from *Snakes and Ladders*)

Sherry and *Anne* reveal one of many issues that can arise when schools embark on anti-homophobia education initiatives. The play tells of a fictional Toronto high school's staff and students as they prepare for the school's first combined Anti-Racism and Gay Pride Week. While *Snakes and Ladders* (*S&L*) may sound like 'just another play,' it is definitely more than that. In Tara Goldstein's hands, it becomes a creative, innovative and rigorous qualitative research methodology as well as a critical pedagogical tool.

'Performed ethnography' involves turning ethnographic data into play scripts that are read and performed before audiences. Tara is one of the first to use this form in the field of teacher education. Unlike many traditional approaches to research methodology, performed ethnography allows Tara to involve research participants and co-researchers in data collection and analysis, and in the dissemination of research findings by being the readers and performers in her ethnographic plays. Performed ethnography appeals particularly to scholars interested in critical, arts-based, postmodern and postcolonial approaches to qualitative research methodology for it provides an alternative way in which to represent ethnographic data.

S&L is the result of the second stage of a three-year SSHRCC grant Tara received to study the ways in which this pedagogical approach can disrupt and challenge homophobia and heterosexism

in teacher education contexts. Tara wrote the script based on the ethnographic data that she and her research team collected. The team is currently exploring ways in which *S&L* can assist teacher education students to better understand their own homophobia and ways they can challenge homophobia and heterosexism in schools. *S&L* has thus far been performed by students for their classmates in six of OISE/UT's teacher education courses, and by OISE/UT student-teachers at the "Resolutions and Ruptures: Sexual and Gender Diversity and the Spaces In-Between" Conference at the University of British Columbia in March, 2004. *S&L* was put on for the Equity Studies Undergraduate Program at U of T in February, 2004 and also performed at OISE/UT on June 23, 2004 in celebration of Pride Week.

According to Tara, the commitment and preparedness of teachers and teachers-in-training "to deal with different kinds of diversity and equity issues vary. Some teachers do not hold an equity philosophy at all, while others may generally hold strong social justice philosophies, but shift their positions in relation to particular equity issues, such as the issue of homophobia." Tara suggests that there are two ways in which performed ethnography allows teacher educators to work with different and shifting equity positions of student-teachers. First, the reading or performing of ethnographic scripts allows for a variety of discriminatory and anti-discriminatory ideas or discourses to be raised by a set of characters in the play rather than by the students themselves. Second, the reading of ethnographic scripts allows those students performing to momentarily consider discourses that may be different from those within which they generally position themselves.

As Tara reminds us, "teachers are in a powerful position to positively intervene in and

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Research Profile: Shahrzad Mojab

Shahrzad Mojab, the current Director of the IWSGS, is an Associate Professor in the Department of Adult Education and Counselling Psychology, OISE/UT. Her areas of teaching include comparative adult education; women, war and learning; anti-racist education; and nationalism and transnationalism. Shahrzad spent four years in post-revolution Iran where she became active in the women's movement and the nationalist movement of the Kurds. She remains active in Middle Eastern diasporic and solidarity politics, working closely with the Kurdish community in Canada and Europe. She has researched, written and published widely on women, nationalism and conflict in the Middle East, authoring several bibliographies on Iranian and Kurdish women; a book "Women of a Non-State-Nation: The Kurds"; and co-editing (with Himani Bannerji and Judith Whitehead) "Of Property and Propriety: The Role of Gender and Class in Imperialism and Nationalism".



Role of women's organizations in post-war reconstruction: Diaspora-homeland relations in the Kurdish "Safe Haven," 1991-2003

Shahrzad Mojab's latest SSHRC-funded project is timely and pertinent. This research (with co-applicant Rachel Gorman) takes on pressing transnational feminist questions, both political and theoretical, and bears important policy implications for gender equity and inclusivity in processes of political reconstruction in post-war contexts, such as Iraq and Afghanistan. Specifically, the study will trace the participation of Kurdish women in the short-lived experiment to create the foundations of a modern nation-state in Northern Iraq, between 1991 and 2003. Shahrzad's research assumes a transnational perspective, looking at the forms of participation both of women in the region itself and of women exiled in Kurdish diasporic communities in Canada, Sweden and Britain. She will analyse the mechanisms and impact of the organizing initiatives of these differently located Kurdish women on the state-building process and will consider how political developments in the Kurdish region have shaped diasporic Kurdish women's politics.

As often noted women have generally been excluded from active or formal participation in peace and reconciliation processes, interim governance and policy making, and post-war reconstruction. It is this exclusion which has been highlighted as a human rights issue and prompted the passing of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 (2000) which affirmed the important role that women can and should play in war prevention and peace-building. Women's contribution is constrained not only by masculinist assumptions about their roles, but also by the continuing conditions of war that limit women's civic and political rights and often subject them to more hardship and gender-based violence. But, as Shahrzad notes, while women in war-torn societies might not be able or allowed to actively participate in reconstruction, 'the women of the diaspora find themselves in a position to contribute to the effort. While these new diasporas are themselves products of armed conflicts in the Middle Eastern war zone, exiled or diasporan women in the West have

acquired a diversity of skills, which empowers them to make significant contributions to reconstruction and democratization.'

The research will involve interviews with women activists and analysis of Kurdish women's organizations in the diaspora and in the Kurdish region, as well as archival searches on gender-related policies and practices of the Kurdish Regional Government and of UN agencies operating in the region between 1991-2003. Work for this project both builds on and is made feasible by Shahrzad's deep knowledge of Kurdish history, politics and culture, her fluency in the languages of the region and years of previous research and activist work with Kurdish women's organizations. Shahrzad is also a founder of the International Kurdish Women's Studies Network. Previous SSHRC-funded projects have allowed her and Rachel to map and make connections with Kurdish women's organizations within the region and abroad. Together, they have prepared a volume, provisionally titled *Gender, Nation and Diaspora: Kurdish Women, War, and Transnational Struggle*, that sets out the foundational work for this new study.

Given the formation of politically-invested diasporic communities in sites around the world as people are forced to flee conflict zones, the question of the effect of political initiatives that operate extra- and trans-nationally is one that has broad resonance. The contribution of exiled Kurdish women to the state-building project provides a succinct and focused case study that will allow for detailed exploration of this particular form of transnational politics. Shahrzad's political commitment and established ties to community and policy-makers ensure that the results of her research and analysis will be effectively disseminated and deployed. The study also promises an important contribution to the burgeoning theorizing of nation and state, nationalist and feminist politics in conditions of transnationality.

IWSGS Events

UNDERGRADUATE STUDENT'S COLLOQUIUM—MARCH 19, 2004. *Geographies of Power: Navigating Gender in Political and Imaginary Spaces*

Ana Cisneros “*Beyond Neo-liberal participation: Salvadoran women, local development and post-war reconstruction.*”

Ayasha Handel “*Positive Spaces: Informality and Access to HIV Services for women. A Case Study.*”

Emma Lind “*Staging Survival: Neo-colonialism in Reality TV.*”



Emma Lind, Ayasha Handel,
Linzi Manicom & Ana Cisneros

CO-SPONSORED EVENTS

January 16, 2004 WSSU Annual One day Student Retreat

January 27, 2004—**Janine Fuller** “*Little Sister’s Vs. Big Brother*” A talk on Little Sister’s Book and Art Emporium’s 16 year old struggle against censorship

January 29, 2004—Talismanic Virtues Workshop with **Natalie Wood**

February 6 & 7—Conference: “*Three Canadian Proto-Feminists*”

February 13 & 14—Conference: “*Reflections on the Iranian Revolution: A Quarter Century After*”

February 20, 2004—**Hot Seat 5: Black and Queer Black Women’s Film and Video Festival**

March 4, 2004—**Susan Stanford Friedman**, “*Bodies in Motion: Reflections on a Poetics of Home and Displacement*”

March 9, 2004—**An East-West Dialogue on Feminist Pedagogy: A CD ROM Launch**

March 20, 2004—Conference: “*Written in Colour: People of Colour & Native People in Publishing*”

April 2, 2004—**Anne Stoler** “*Imperial Formations: On the Fictions of Clarity*”

April 29-May 1, 2004—Conference: “*Race Racism and Empire: The Local and the Global*”

May 10, 2004—**Zahira Kamal** “*Palestinian Women Facing the Wall: The Impact of the Construction of the Wall in the Occupied Territories*”.

Research Profile: Tara Goldstein
(Continued from page 10)

counteract much of the discriminatory violence that occurs in schools.” Through her enthusiastic approach and unique performed ethnography work, Tara is providing her students with critical tools and analyses to take into classrooms in order to begin the work necessary to effect this change.

Prepared by Jennifer Hales

THEORISING TRANSNATIONALITY, & GENDER SPRING EVENTS 2004

January 21, 2004—Workshop: **Hilary Cunningham**
“From Nations Unbound to Nations on the Rebound: Recasting Transnational Practices in the Context of Evolving Sovereignties”

May 11, 2004—Public Lecture: **Aihwa Ong**
“An Exception to the Good Life: Foreign Maids, Feminist NGO’s and Bio-Legitimacy”