

From the Director



It is with great humility and honour that I have assumed the position of the Director of one of the finest women's studies and

gender studies programs in North America. I am lucky since my predecessor, Professor Margrit Eichler, the faculty, staff, with the support of the Principal of the New College, Professor David Clandfield, have laid a strong foundation for the Institute. The challenge is to enhance the research and teaching capacity of the Institute, to advance it towards an internationally reputable women's studies and gender studies program, and to contribute to the ongoing effort in diversifying and transforming curricula in an ever-changing local, national and global environment. As Professor Margrit Eichler has indicated in her 'Goodbye Message' (IWSGS Matters, Spring 2003, Vol. 2, Issue 2), it is only now that the Institute can 'engage in meaningful long-term planning.'

I am also assuming this position at a time when the University of Toronto is entering into a new cycle of

Academic Planning Exercise. This plan, well articulated in the White Paper document entitled *Stepping Up*, provides an opportunity for the Institute to put forward its long-term vision, mission and goal. Auspiciously, there is a convergence between the mission and goals of the White Paper Report and the visions of the Institute, especially in ideas of diversity, equity, interdisciplinarity and transnationality.

Twenty years ago when I began my graduate work in educational policy and women's studies, I could not imagine that one day I would manage and direct a women's studies program. Women's studies in the form of academic programs and departments had just emerged in North America. Feminist theoretical and methodological challenges to knowledge production and to relations of power constituted my intellectual engagement with the world around me. It helped me in gaining a new understanding of sexism, racism, classism and elitism. It made me conscious of the scope of inequality, exclusion, and injustice grounded in sexuality, disability, race, ethnicity, nationality and religion. It also showed me how to resist injustice and work for a better world. In the early 1980s while inequalities rooted in ancient cleavages of class, race, nation or empire were still far from being dismantled, feminist activists and academics of

my generation had much hope in the opening up of academia to "women's studies."

Today, however, I feel that, despite remarkable in-roads in challenging patriarchal gender relations, we have been taking one step forward and two steps backward. For quite a while, we have been warned about the "cooptation" or "institutionalization" of women's studies and struggles within academia. At the same time, women continue to bear the brunt of the rising ethnic, religious, racial and national conflicts; they are suffering in

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the context of ever widening gaps between the rich and the poor, nationally and internationally, the expansion of the machinery of war and militarization, unceasing ecocide, poverty, famine and genocide.

While there is much about which to be pessimistic, my attitude, without being Pollyana, is quite optimistic. The relationship between academic and activist women's struggles has always been a difficult one. It is one that will continue to evolve in unpredictable ways. Academic feminism has its own dynamics. It has been able to seriously challenge patriarchal knowledge. It is reshaping not only the social sciences and the humanities but is also challenging previously untouched domains such as exact sciences, engineering and medicine. There is, undeniably, a wide gulf between this feminist knowledge and public consciousness as well as public policy.

As I am writing these lines, the National Action Committee (NAC) in Canada is going through massive financial hardships. The UN-supported UNIFEM's future is at risk because the Netherlands is reducing its crucial financial contribution to this organization. This is happening while we are witnessing a rising backlash against feminism. Budget cuts leading

to ever-diminishing social services, the rising costs of education, housing, and health all have adversely affected women. The unceasing global trafficking of women, growing male violence, and femicide are some of the ugly features of gender relations in the early twenty-first century.

In the midst of this deteriorating situation, however, there is more interest in feminist consciousness throughout the world. There is a rising demand for feminist knowledge in much of the non-Western world, which actively contributes to the internationalization of women's studies. We, in Canada, can learn a lot from women of the world. The challenge for any university-based women's studies program is, among other questions, how to respond to this conflictual situation. What theoretical, methodological, and pedagogical approaches enable us to detect, document, theorize, and change the status quo? How can we promote feminist knowledge in the academy?

My goal in the next five years is to make the Institute an intellectual hub for rigorous research, debate, teaching and publishing. To achieve this goal, in this academic year we have established the Institute as one of the Social Science and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC) units at the University of Toronto. This status allows the

Institute to be the recipient and processor of research grants. Four SSHRC proposals were submitted by the Institute's faculty members for the October 2003 competition. Furthermore, we are in the process of developing proposals to be considered by other external funding sources. A significant one is an International Visiting Scholar Program which intends to attract high profile academic-activist scholars from the Majority World to the Institute. While awaiting the final results of our fund-raising effort, we have launched a modest Visiting Scholar Program which is open to both national and international scholars.

One of my goals has been to link the Institute with the diverse communities in Toronto and engage in a meaningful knowledge exchange with them. This has been done through the development of an initiative called the IWSGS-Community Knowledge Alliance. The goal of broadening our outreach is also reflected in the effort to diversify our Advisory Board membership, and to connect with the women's studies programs on the other two campuses. Equally, we have tried to expand membership in the honorary list of the Institute. It is a great honour for us that in 2004 the eminent Aboriginal woman activist and politician, Sylvia Maracle, will be the seventh honorary member of the Institute.

In closing, I should reiterate my commitment to make the Institute a welcoming, hospitable, encouraging and enabling work and study environment. It should be a place where we adhere to the principles of respect, equity and excellence, where our students excel, where our faculty members feel their research endeavors and pedagogical innovations are supported, and where our staff are respected and encouraged to participate and contribute to the intellectual and political life of the Institute. It is in such an environment and in the context of such relationships that I can see myself in the next five years.

SHAHRZAD MOJAB- A BIO SKETCH

Shahrzad Mojab, the new IWSGS Director, is Associate Professor, Dept of Adult Education and Counselling Psychology, Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, University of Toronto. She spent four years (1979-1983) in post-revolution Iran, where she became active in the women's movement and the nationalist movement of the Kurds.

Shahrzad's areas of research and teaching include anti-racist education; adult education in comparative perspective; women/feminism and ethnicity, nationalism, transnationalism, diaspora, globalization and citizenship; and women, war, violence and learning.

She has published widely on such topics as Islamic feminism; diversity and academic freedom in Canadian and Iranian universities; war, violence and state-building in the Middle East. She is the editor of the first scholarly collection on Kurdish women in the English Language: *Women of A Non-State Nation: The Kurds* and co-edited, with Himani Bannerji and Judy Whitehead, *Of Property and Propriety: The Role of Gender and Class in Imperialism and Nationalism*. She is the current President of the Canadian Association for the Studies in Adult Education and was the 2003 Distinguished Visitor at the University of Alberta.

EQUITY STUDIES PROGRAM, NEW COLLEGE

This year marks the fifth anniversary of the undergraduate Equity Studies Program at New College. Our enrolments have jumped from 11 majors in our inaugural year to 135 majors this fall. To accommodate the growing interest in the program we have opened up additional spaces in our introductory course. The current enrolment of 180 students in *NEW240Y: Introduction to Equity Studies* is a sharp increase from the 30 students enrolled in 1998. Clearly, the program is flourishing. We are entering the next planning process from a position of rapid growth.

We have hired three outstanding teaching assistants to work with our introductory students. **Erica Lawson** and **Cassandra Lord** are both graduate students in the Department of Sociology and Equity Studies in Education at OISE/UT; **Riyad Shahjahan** is in the Department of Theory and Policy Studies, also at OISE/UT. **Deborah Knott** of the New College Writing Center is a designated tutor for the course and works closely with students to develop their writing skills.

Last year we introduced a new course, *The Romani Diaspora in Canada*. This highly successful course (100% re-take!!!) included a Roma Speakers' Series open to the wider university community and was linked to a festival of Romani arts and culture held at New College April 18 & 19, 2003. Through these events and a number of media interviews with course instructor, **Ronald Lee**, equity issues facing the Roma have been given higher profile on the public agenda. The course will be offered again this spring, along with our senior research practicum on food security taught by **Wayne Roberts**.

To celebrate our anniversary we (along with the office of the Vice-President, Human Resources and Status of Women Office) organized a two day symposium on disability studies at New College. The event opened on November 13 with a keynote talk by internationally renowned disability scholar, **Simi Linton**, author of *Claiming Disability: Knowledge and Identity*. Dr. Linton's talk, delivered to an overflow crowd, was followed by commentary from a panel of scholars on the status and the possibilities for disability studies at the University of Toronto. On the morning of November 14, Dr. Linton conducted a workshop on ways to incorporate disability studies into the curriculum. The goal of this event was to promote disability studies at U of T and to work towards creating a focus on disability studies through the Equity Studies Program.

On October 25 and 26, the Equity Studies Program, along with IWSGS, Caribbean Studies, African Studies, the Faculty of Law and the Office of Race Rela-

tions, co-sponsored the second annual *Race and National Consciousness Conference* held at New College and coordinated by **Dr Arnold Itwaru**. The energy and enthusiasm for the conference last year was repeated in this two-day event with lively discussions and debates following the presentations of critical race scholars **Ward Churchill**, **Patricia Monture**, **Arnold Itwaru** (Director, Caribbean Studies), **Natasha Ksonzek**, **Robinder Sehdev**, **Shahzad Mojab** (IWSGS Director), and award winning documentary filmmaker, **Ali Kazimi**.

Zack Marquart was the 2002-03 winner of the Janet Lambert Book Prize in Equity Studies. The book prize, established in 2001, is awarded annually to a graduating student in Equity Studies who has contributed to the extra-curricular activities in the program and has maintained a strong academic standing. Zack, a tireless advocate for equity issues both within and beyond the university, has gone on to the Faculty of Education at OISE/UT. As an elementary school teacher, Zack will be well-positioned to apply his equity studies knowledge and praxis.

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

The Centre is celebrating its 20th Anniversary this academic year and is hosting a special series of Popular Feminism Lectures. We have invited back previous presenters to be part of a series of panels focusing on a variety of feminist topics/themes. Panelists will reflect upon how they have integrated their life and work as feminists and how being part of OISE and the larger feminist community has affected their work. The first panel on *Transformative Feminisms* with **Frieda Forman**, **Didi Khayatt** and **Bonnie Burstow** was held September 29. Future panels and presenters include: December 1 2003-*Feminist Research and Pedagogy* (**Margrit Eichler**, **Helen Lenskyj**, **Himani Bannerji**, **Paula Bourne**); February 2 2004-*Integrative Anti-Racism and Feminism* (**Roxana Ng**, **Sherene Razack**, **Nora Gold**, **Njoki Wane**); March 1 2004-*Theorization of Women's Resistance in International Contexts* (**Shahzad Mojab**, **Shahnaz Khan**, **Kiran Mirchandani**); April 1 2004-*Feminist Cultural Representation* (**Kathleen Gallagher**, **Pam Harris**, **Philinda Masters**, **Cynthia Wright**.)

On November 7, 2003, **Alda Facio**, international expert on women's human rights and gender violence, delivered the 7th Dame Nita Barrow Lecture to a capacity audience at the George Ignatieff Theatre. The lecture, entitled *The Empire Strikes Back: Feminist Strategies for Peace*, was presented in the form of an entertaining and insightful allegory about feminist struggles against Patriarchy. Alda was introduced by **Joanna Kerr**, Executive Director of The Association for Women's Rights in Development (AWID) and thanked by **Michelle Landsberg**. A reception was held in Massey Col-

Updates from IWSGS Partners (Continued)

lege after this highly successful event.

Alda, who is from Costa Rica, is the 2003-2004 *Dame Nita Barrow Distinguished Visitor in Women in Development and Community Transformation*. She is currently in residence at CWSE and is giving a graduate course, *Women's Human Rights and Peacemaking, Feminist Theory and Practice in Latin America and Around the World*, this Fall term (September-December.) Amongst many achievements, she has been Director of the Women, Gender and Justice Program at the United Nations Latin American Institute for Crime Prevention (ILANUD) in Costa Rica since 1990.

Recent publications from the Centre include the Dame Nita Barrow Lectures 5 and 6: **Moema Viezzer**, *Feminist Transformative Leadership: A Learning Experience with Peasant and Gatherer Women in Brazil*; **Rita Thapa**, *TEWA - Doing the Impossible: Feminist Action in Nepal (The Founder's Story)*.

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

The work of the CRWH and our network of collaborators continues to expand in Canada and around the world. **Gillian Einstein** (PhD, Neuroscience) will be joining CRWH as Associate Director, University of Toronto Partnerships in the coming months. Her research explores the bridge between our scientific understanding of the brain and larger concerns having to do with self, identity, feminism, and the nature of science.

New researchers are also joining the team at the Ontario Breast Cancer Community Research Initiative (OBC CRI). **Jennifer Nelson** and **Stephanie Austin** join as OBC CRI core researchers, while postdoctoral and doctoral fellowships will allow the OBC CRI to engage the talents of two other new members, **Karen Fergus** and **Pamela James**. The academic appointments of two core researchers prompted this OBC CRI expansion: **Chris Sinding**, PhD at McMaster University and **Terry Mitchell** at Wilfred Laurier. The OBC CRI continues to develop its areas of focus with a new study, *Investigating Cancer Patient Access to Disability Insurance Coverage: A Study from Multiple Perspectives*.

Dr Ilene Hyman is heading up the research project on *Gender, violence and health: The role of gender relations in the Ethiopian community*, a collaboration between CRWH, Sunnybrook & Women's College, the Women's Mental Health Program and the Ethiopian Association in Toronto, funded by Canadian Institutes of Health Research. **Judy Gould** has recently



IWSGS Administrative Team 2003-04 from left to right: Tara Goldstein, Angela Fleury, Shahrzad Mojab, Marian Reed & June Larkin. Missing: Laura Cunningham

joined the team. The project examines changing gender relations in the Ethiopian community in Toronto and the ways in which men and women adapt to their 'new' roles and spaces. Data from this project will combine with other CRWH initiatives to provide a better picture of the determinants of intimate partner violence in newcomer communities, and in turn to create effective support systems.

Other CRWH initiatives are also drawing together academics and clinicians to enhance research endeavours and the care that women receive. Dr. **Stephen Narod**'s international projects provide population-based insights into genetic cancers and build research capacity worldwide. International partners in the Philippines, Pakistan, Cuba, Poland, and Brazil, are now actively contributing to knowledge creation in this field. CRWH researchers from the Maternal, Infant and Reproductive Health Unit (MIRU) are creating a new research network dubbed **MIRACLE** (Maternal and Infant Research: ACTION and Leadership). Meeting via teleconference and through cyberspace, the group works together to overcome the difficulties encountered in the design, coordination and conduct of multicentre randomized clinical trials.

Mentorship and training continue to be key to CRWH's efforts to expand women's health research capacity. This year's Graduate Student Research Day (May 15) was a great success with over 100 students from a broad cross section of faculties and disciplines at the University of Toronto attending. Twenty-five presenters shared their interest in women's health, presenting current research projects on a range of topics such as *The Body Politic*, *Motherhood as a Risky Business* and *Weighing-in the Body*. **Susan Sicchia**, this year's winner of the *Carol Mitchell & Richard Venn Graduate Student Fellowship in Women's Health* presented her award-winning work in the area of health sector responses to woman abuse.

WOMEN'S MENTAL HEALTH PROGRAM, DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHIATRY

Over the past few years, the Women's Mental Health Program (WMHP) has made great strides in meeting the recommendations made by the Program and Planning Committee of the Department of Psychiatry in 1997. We have been very successful in attracting and retaining Fellows in the Program. Several former Fellows now have primary, joint, secondary or adjunct academic appointments within the WMHP including Drs. **Pier Bryden**, **Leora Pinhas**, **Noreen Stuckless**, **Mary Jane Esplen**, **Karen Abrams** and **Catherine Belitsky** (adjunct appointment pending). Through the generosity of Eli Lilly Canada, we have been able to offer five Fellowships in Women's Mental Health Research. Recipients include Drs. **Alisha Ali**, **Pier Bryden**, **Theresa Tallerico**, **Patricia Wiebe** and **Linda McLean**.

Dr. Sarah Romans was appointed to the newly established **Shirley A. Brown Chair** in Women's Mental Health Research in April 2002. Over the past several months Dr. Romans has successfully brought investigators from different hospital sites and university departments together to collaborate on various research proposals and research databases. The creation of this Chair will significantly increase our ability to expand research initiatives and further develop linkages between institutions and researchers interested in advancing our understanding of women's mental health issues.

Dr. Sarah Romans and **Professor Brenda Toner**, Head of the Women's Mental Health Program, hosted Women's Mental Health Day held on Oct 23 to address the question of building partnerships to create more effective support services for women. The Day drew researchers and clinicians from across Ontario representing a variety of clinical and academic institutions. Presentations addressed the development of safe and effective mental health services for women, the impact of chronic conditions on mental health, and the rapidly expanding field of reproductive mental health.

Finally, we have been successful in attracting new researchers, investigators and clinicians into the Program. Prior to 1997, there were 11 Faculty associated with the Women's Mental Health Program. We currently have a total of 41 Faculty associated with the Program. The Program has focused on 5 main areas: *Violence Against Women*; *Feminist Principles in the Understanding and Treatment of Women*; *Psychosocial Issues in Medical Disorders*; *Reproductive Health and Diversity Issues*.

THE SEXUAL DIVERSITY STUDIES PROGRAM, UNIVERSITY COLLEGE

The SDS Program continues to grow. Enrollments are up from 79 last year to 100 students registered in the minor, this academic year. We have put forth a proposal for a major in SDS to begin next semester. We are also offering a new Special Topics Course this year, *Sexual Identities/Urban Identities* (UNI 375S), which is being taught by **Angie Blake** from History. **Scott Rayter** is acting-director of the program while Maureen Fitzgerald is on sabbatical.

STATUS OF WOMEN OFFICE

By Connie Guberman, Status of Women Officer.

The Status of Women Mentoring Program, which was started as a pilot program 3 years ago, is proving to be highly successful. It now has 61 student mentees from a range of disciplines across the University. The Mentoring Program is designed to assist U of T women students negotiate their way through academia and beyond by pairing them up with a woman faculty member. The students, who are both undergraduates and graduates, identify with a range of experiences including English as a second language, cultural diversity, sexual diversity and disability among others.

The Status of Women Office has organized the annual December 6th Memorial at the University of Toronto, to take place at Hart House, at lunchtime, on Friday December 5, 2003. On this National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women students, staff and faculty gather to reflect on violence against women and honour the women killed in the Montreal Massacre. This event is one of several that form part of the U of T tri-campus commemoration of 16 Days of Activism Against Gender Violence, 2003. This campaign, which is linked to an internationally coordinated campaign, is being organized in partnership with the Office of the Community Safety Coordinator, the Assault Counselling/Education Program, Innis College, First Nations House and the Faculty of Applied Science and Engineering.

Next year, 2004, will be the 120th anniversary of women being admitted as students to the University of Toronto. Celebrations will be held over a three week period from February 23, 2004 to March 12, 2004. The aim of the campaign, *Twenty Days Celebrating 120 Years of Women at U of T*, is to recognize the challenges and achievements of women students, staff and faculty at the University of Toronto over the past 120 years.

Report from the Graduate Collaborative Women's Studies Program (GCWS)

By **Tara Goldstein**, GCWS Coordinator

The Graduate Collaborative Women's Studies (GCWS) Program is thriving. Our latest statistics show that there are approximately 100 students enrolled in the program, coming from 28 different units across the University. The students in the collaborative program had a chance to meet each other early in the year at the Graduate Student Orientation session held on September 24, 2003. At the orientation, the leadership of the Graduate Women's Studies Student Association (GWSSA) was passed on from **Nikki Kumar** and **Bianca Seaton** to **Marie Vander Kloet** and **Nadia Mohammed**.

Two 'coffee and networking' meetings have been planned for this year, one in the fall semester and one in the spring, to enable **Tara Goldstein**, the GCWS Program Coordinator, to meet as

many of the graduate students as possible. At the fall meeting held on November 12, 2003, students spoke about their work and career aspirations. Those who attended also had the opportunity to hear about the work of other GCWS students and exchange information about possible thesis supervisors.

The 2003-2004 Women's Studies Graduate Symposium is planned for December 3, 2003 in the IWSGS Lounge. The theme of this year's symposium is *Hearts and Heads: Feminist Interventions* and will include a plenary panel of invited speakers on the topic *Publish, not Perish*; a closing plenary on postgraduate research given by IWSGS Postdoctoral Fellow, **Caroline Fusco**; and presentations by students of thesis proposals, emerging analyses, or completed studies.

IWSGS TRI-CAMPUS STUDENT DIALOGUE

Shahrazad Mojab, IWSGS Director, **Tara Goldstein** (Graduate Women's Studies Director) and **June Larkin** (Undergrad Women's Studies Director) hosted an informal gathering of women's studies students from across the three campuses in the IWSGS lounge, on October 24, 2003.

The objective of this meeting, planned a couple of months ago, was to solicit the views of students about how Women's Studies programs, both undergraduate and graduate, and across the three campuses, might be developed to better address their interests. The consultation was made particularly timely by the publication, in early October, of *Stepping Up: 2004-2010*, the planning document issued by the University of Toronto Vice-President and Provost, **Shirley Neuman**.

Despite a disappointing attendance, the students' verbal reports provided the basis for a very informative and useful discussion. The suggestions made by the students constructively raised several important issues that need to be considered in the current planning cycle. These include the request for more comprehensive course offerings, for more coordination between the campuses, for tutorial and small-classroom learning on the one hand and the use of internet technology for reaching wider constituencies, on the other. Graduate students were interested in the prospect of a free-standing MA and PhD.

Amongst other faculty who attended were **Deborah James** (Coordinator of Women's Studies at UTS), **Jan Noel** (Coordinator of Gender/Women's Studies at UTM), **Connie Guberman** (Status of Women Officer and instructor at UTS) and **Linzi Manicom** (who will be Acting-Director of the St George Undergrad program in the Winter term).



Tara Goldstein, GCWS Coordinator

REPORT FROM THE GRADUATE COLLABORATIVE WOMEN'S STUDIES ASSOCIATION (GWSA)

The Graduate Women's Studies Student Association is getting into the swing of things with new representatives **Nadia Mohammed** and **Marie Vander Kloet**. We got started this year with a general meeting to brainstorm for future events. The GWSSA will also be organizing a short social following the December 3rd Graduate Students Symposium. We are looking forward to hearing about the work of graduate students both presenting and attending the symposium.

The GWSSA representatives are currently lacking funding for our activities, including future graduate symposia. One option we are considering is joining the GSU as an accredited student organization. In order to receive the benefits of this affiliation (a budget!) we have to undertake significant paper work and negotiations. We are looking for students, particularly those who have experience with the GSU, to help facilitate this process.

Finally, Marie is creating a Graduate Women's Studies Database to facilitate academic exchange between students. Please consider contributing your information. We can be contacted as follows:

mvander_kloet@oise.utoronto.ca & nmohammed000@sympatico.ca.

WOMEN'S STUDIES AT ST. GEORGE

This year we have doubled our pool of incoming students by adding an evening section of our introductory course. The expanded student population should mean a significant increase in the number of women's studies majors, minors and specialists over the next few years. Our summer section of the introductory course has been very popular with students looking for a year round academic program. By offering both an evening and day section in fall/winter session we are also attempting to accommodate students who have childcare and work responsibilities. **Nuzhat Amin** was the instructor for the summer section of the course, **Zoe Newman** is teaching the evening section of the fall/winter course and **Alissa Trotz** is teaching the day section. The course is also going high tech this year, thanks to Professor Trotz who was awarded a McGraw-Hill Ryerson Teaching Technology Integration Fund grant to develop a course website.

This year we are pleased to welcome **Bonnie McElhinny** as the anthropology instructor for *NEW 261Y: Scientific Perspectives on Sex and Gender*. Professor McElhinny is cross-appointed to Women's Studies and Anthropology and, fresh from a sabbatical, is joining us with much-needed energy and advice as we embark on the Program's planning process. We would also like to welcome **Meredith Cartwright** who will be teaching *NEW365: Gender Issues in the Law*. **Zoe Newman**, an instructor for the introductory course, will also be teaching *NEW 374S: Feminist Studies in Sexuality*. Our new teaching assistants this year are **Hijin Park**, **Kelly Holloway**, and **Roberta Timothy**.

Our annual *Going to Graduate School Workshop* was attended by about 30 students who shared their questions and anxieties about applying to graduate school. They received helpful tips from the graduate and undergraduate program coordinators but, undoubtedly, the most useful advice came from **Nikki Kumar**, a former undergraduate student who has mastered the bureaucratic nightmare of scholarship and graduate program applications.

Since the latter part of the last academic year and continuing through this year, the core faculty of the Undergraduate Program, including the IWSGS Director, has been engaged in the challenging process of revamping the curriculum to address the lacunae that have become apparent and to reflect the Institute's thematic focus on Transnationality.

WOMEN'S STUDIES AT UTS, SCARBOROUGH

At UT-Scarborough, we have seen a large increase in enrolment in our introductory course in Women's Studies this fall; 267 students are taking WSTA01, as compared to 184 last year. Enrolments in the Major and Minor Programs in Women's Studies have also increased; 36 students are enrolled in the Major Program and 59 in the Minor Program (up from 32 and 53 respectively last year). We are offering ten core half-courses in Women's Studies in total, including one new course, *Women, Community, and Policy Change (WSTC14)*, taught by **Lynda Lange** from Philosophy. We are also pleased to have **Deborah Clipperton**, **Cynthia Wright** and **Pam Sayne** with us as stipendiary instructors.

WOMEN'S/GENDER STUDIES AT UTM, ERINDALE

The Women's/Gender program at University of Toronto at Mississauga has seen some new and positive developments this year. A tenure-track member of faculty, **Jan Noel** (History) has been appointed coordinator, and the administration approved an arrangement whereby the coordinator receives a .5 course administrative release. Although our numbers of majors and minors do not appear to have increased (we have some 20 majors and 38 minors), the Introductory course has doubled in size to 93 students, which bodes well for the future. Teaching assistants have also been restored to the Intro course.

For the first time since the UTM program's 1996 inception, new courses have been introduced. The coordinator wishes to thank June Larkin, undergraduate coordinator of Women's Studies at St. George campus, for her assistance in facilitating UTM's hiring of **Joan Simalchik** and **Jasmin Zine**, two instructors who have taught very successfully at the downtown campus. We hope to continue this close cross-campus cooperation in the future. We offer the following designated courses in 2003-04:

The *Gender and Islam* course, initiated in response to student lobbying of our Administration for more Islamic content in the curriculum, is an innovation that is attracting considerable interest among UTM students (who have already formed a waiting list for a repeat offering). Regarding this and other matters, we are fortunate to have a supportive new VP Academic, **Cheryl Misak**, who herself has taught in the program. We count on this support as we seek interdisciplinary appointments, and perhaps tri-campus lectureships, in the new planning cycle. Thanks are also due to Status of Women Officer **Connie Guberman**, who has made several visits to UTM, and to current and former IWSGS directors **Shahzad Mojab** and **Margrit Eichler** for their advice and support.

Undergraduate Women's Studies (Continued)



Work Study Students: Motu Awogbade & Dena Nishizaki hard at work in the IWSGS copy room

A STUDENT PERSPECTIVE ON WOMEN'S/ GENDER STUDIES AT UT-MISSISSAUGA

By Edna Toth, Women's/Gender Studies.

In April this year, students in Women's/Gender Studies at University of Toronto - Mississauga, heard rumours that their program was on the chopping block. Though a sizable number of women had declared majors or minors in women's studies, there appeared to be little support for the program and no faculty member had responsibility for it. In fact, staff had turned over completely every year since the program began in 1995. This lack of continuity meant not only that the program did not expand with new courses and new ideas, but that small administrative details were never dealt with: for instance, WGS was listed under ERI (for Erindale) in the Course Calendar so students had to search to find the courses and sign up for them; Women's Studies had no listing in the public telephone directory; no booklet listed courses that "counted" for WGS. When sessional instructors for 2002-03 found better jobs elsewhere, continuity was lost for the ninth straight year. A group of us in the senior course exchanged e-mail addresses, dubbed ourselves the **WGS Action Group**, and sent e-mails to everybody in faculty or administration at UTM who was thought to be supportive of women's issues and women's studies.

The response to our e-mails was electric. Of about 30 e-mails sent out, almost every one was acknowledged, most accompanied by screeds of thoughtful advice. Faculty members suggested whom to complain to, how to phrase complaints, and exactly what to do to put Women's/Gender Studies on track. Encouraged by this display of interest from faculty, students met with **Michael Lettieri**, at that time Dean of Humanities. He immediately recognized the importance of our concerns and before our meeting was over had requested

IWSGS SPEAKERS SERIES, 2003-04

This new series of talks that features Toronto-based feminist scholars, takes place monthly in the IWSGS Lounge.

September 17 2003 – **Melanie Newton**: "The Contamination Of Colour: Amelioration, the State and Colonial Difference in Emancipation Era Barbados, 1823-1834"

October 15 2003 – **Marlene Goldman**: "The Politics and Aesthetics of Drifting in the work of Dionne Brand"

November 19 2003 – **Mariana Valverde**: "The Marginalized Inclusion of the Feminist Critiques of Criminology"

Coming up next year are talks by **Caroline Fusco**, **Bonnie McElhinney** and **Shahrazad Mojab**.

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changes in the Course Calendar, ordered a listing in the public phone book, and authorized printing a program brochure. That was a good beginning.

Meantime, other concerned students at UTM felt that they, too, were underserved in their areas of interest. A committee was formed for diversification of UTM courses supported by student organizations including the Student Administrative Council, Erindale College Students Union, Erindale Part-time Undergraduates, the Muslim Students Association, the Thaqalayn Muslim Association, the WGS Action Group and the Women's Centre. With more than 100 signatures on a petition, student representatives met with **Principal Ian Orchard** and **Vice-President Academic Cheryl Misak**, who tackled the problems of the various constituencies simultaneously.

The appointment of **Dr. Jan Noel**, who has always been supportive of W/GS and the Women's Centre through its faculty turnovers, was ideal. She has worked quickly to consolidate the women's program. The new course that resulted from our lobbying, *Gender in Islam*, was filled up immediately for the fall and spring.

What's next? Concerned students continue to lobby for courses that address issues that are important to them; WGS Action Group and the Women's Centre are discussing a women's issues library in the North Building; and all student groups will work together to bring in guest speakers on topics of interest, plus an ongoing publicity campaign for the Women's/Gender Studies program and for women's issues.

Undergraduate Women's Studies (Continued)

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

The Women's Studies Student Union has many exciting and informative events planned this semester for the student body. We held a Halloween Film night on October 29th held in the IWSGS lounge which was very successful! A Spanish film called *The Devil's Backbone* was shown for the 25 students who gathered to enjoy snacks and the company of peers outside the classroom environment.

The WSSU hosted a Sexual Assault and Harassment workshop on Friday, November 14 in the New College Boardroom. Presenters included **Emma** and **Ash** from METRAC's Young Women's Anti-Violence Speakers Bureau and **Cheryl Champagne** from the U of T Counselling and Learning Skills Services. This interactive workshop allowed students to learn and discuss issues of violence in everyday life involving strangers, acquaintances, or types of violence within relation-



Women's Studies Students Union—
St. George Campus Film Night

ships. The workshop was very effective and we were disappointed that not more students took advantage of this opportunity. Those who did participate were unanimous in their very positive response to the experience and hopefully future events along these lines will be better attended.

Planning is currently underway for our main event, the annual WSSU retreat, to be held on January 16, 2004. The theme for this year, *Women's Health: Physical, Mental, Spiritual*, builds on the success of previous retreats and will include a variety of guest speakers and workshops.

The WSSU Coordinating Committee this year comprises **Andrea Macerollo** (President), **Jaime Crossan** (Vice President), **Michelle Christie** (Events Coordinator) and **Julia Weisser** (Treasurer). We would like to thank the faculty and students for their continued support and participation in WSSU endeavors. We hope to organize a very inspiring year!

AWARDS AND PRIZES

Jenny Peto was awarded the **Elsie Gregory Macgill Prize** as the most outstanding student graduating with a specialist or major degree in women's studies for 2002-03.

In this same year, there were four students who all achieved the same extremely high grades in the *Introduction to Women's Studies* course or *Scientific Perspectives on Sex and Gender*. There are therefore four recipients of the **Helen Gregory Macgill Prize**: **Michelle den Hollander**, **Cheryl Mitchell**, **Ghazal Salmasi** and **Sabrina Akhtar**.

Ana Cisneros was awarded the **Toronto Women's Bookstore Prize** for her moving essay about her experience as a refugee from El Salvador.

Ruby Syal won the **Jewish Immigrant Mothers Prize** for her essay on immigrant women's experience of health care.

The first **Graduate Collaborative Women's Studies Entrance Prize**, set up by Kay Armatage a few years ago, was awarded to **Katie Larson**, who is in Literature and Women's Studies

Nikki Kumar and **Bianca Seaton** were jointly awarded the **Margrit Eichler Graduate Leadership Award** for their service to Graduate Women's Studies Association (see Social Endnotes).



Award Winners: Jenny Peto & Katie Larson

Research Profile: Caroline Fusco

Caroline Fusco is a post-doctoral fellow at the Institute for Women's Studies and Gender Studies of the University of Toronto. Before moving to Toronto for her doctoral studies, she worked as a high school Physical Education teacher in Ireland, as well as at the University of Manitoba's Faculty of Physical Education and Recreation Studies, where she also completed her master's of science degree. Caroline is a "recreational type" and avidly engages in walking, biking, running, and general use of the City of Toronto's recreational spaces. Recently she has become the proud owner of a golden retriever pup (named Finnegan) and thus is now investigating the recreational spaces open to dogs!

If, during your time at the University's athletic centre, you ever noticed a woman who appeared to be captivated with that space, you may have seen Caroline Fusco. An interdisciplinary scholar whose work combines women's studies, physical education, and cultural geography, Caroline is fascinated by questions about the production of recreational spaces. In her doctoral dissertation entitled *"There are a Lot of Eyes on this Space! The (Re) Production of Subjectivities in Cultures of Work and Working Out: A Postmodern, Inter-textual and Spatial Ethnography"* (2003), Caroline argues that there are links between physical education and recreational spaces and the articulation of political, social and cultural investments in the body, governance and knowledge, and the cultural representation of a healthy and hygienic citizenry. Through analysing architectural briefs, health and safety rules and regulations, as well as investigating the experiences of users, staff, caretakers, among others, Caroline examined how particular spaces, such as locker rooms, are legislated to reproduce and valorize respectable citizens who abide by, and even participate in administering, the dominant practices.

Caroline's current SSHRC-funded post-doctoral project entitled *"Active Living, Adolescent Girls and the Production of Physical Education and Recreation Spaces/Sites"* builds on this earlier work. She will examine the types of recreational spaces that are provided for them and how they use, interact with, and subvert these spaces. Specifically, Caroline is investigating the disjunctions between government concepts of active living and physical education on the one hand, and how diversely-situated adolescent girls produce their own 'spaces of meaning' in relation to dominant concepts on the other. As her doctoral research showed, recreational spaces are places embedded with modernist architectural concepts, and thus imbued with masculinist and rationalist perspectives. In Europe, there have been attempts to redefine recreational spaces to include different cultural and gendered realities. North America, however, lags behind. Caroline argues that it is essential to understand the way people, who are designated as outside the normative social body, use and understand recreational spaces if more inclusive areas for active and healthy living are to be created. Examining these questions with respect to adolescent girls is particularly

relevant considering that life long health and social behaviour patterns are formed at this stage in life.

Caroline will be using a range of research methodologies in this project. First, she will be closely examining relevant government internet sites and policies in order to analyse official discourses of active living with respect to adolescent girls' recreation practices. She will also be conducting and comparing spatial ethnographies of selected physical education sites, each representing a different view of active living. Preliminary consideration of the cultural context and building design of the sites will be followed by interviews with principals, teachers, and/or recreation providers as well as site architects in order to understand the pedagogical, curriculum, community, and fiscal choices that underpin recreational spaces.

A major component of the research will directly involve adolescent girls from diverse backgrounds and life experiences. Caroline feels it is important to engage the girls themselves as active participants in the research. Through multiple methods, which may include having girls photograph, write about, or discuss different spaces and how they interact with them, Caroline will engage young people in discussions of their own healthy living practices and health needs. In Caroline's words: *"These first hand accounts of girls' will are to play against the pathologizing cultural 'discourses of deficit' that often come to represent adolescent girls and will support girls' views of themselves as positive agents of their own social and active lives."*

Caroline's work builds connections between research that has examined notions of space and the consumption of health care, social agendas and women's health concerns, with those that explore girls and women's creativity and resistance towards dominant discourses of recreation and leisure. By focusing on youth and diverse adolescent girls, Caroline hopes to extend current critical approaches to address specific equity concerns for Canadian girls. In doing so, she hopes to contribute to an understanding of how to create and intervene in urban planning for recreational spaces that facilitates and supports alternative and diverse notions of health and active living.

*Prepared by Elinor Bray-Collins,
PhD. student, OISE/UT*

THEORISING TRANSNATIONALITY, GENDER AND CITIZENSHIP: THE INITIATIVE CONTINUES...

PUBLIC SPEAKER SERIES

This highly successful series of public lectures that took place throughout the 2002/2003 academic year, has been extended into the current year, but at a smaller scale. We have organized two public lectures by internationally renowned transnational feminist scholars, one in the fall and one in the spring term.

Despite threats of inclement weather, **Inderpal Grewal**, Director and Professor of Women's Studies University of California, Berkeley, drew a significant audience to her public talk on September 19, 2003 in the Earth Sciences Building auditorium. She spoke on the topic *Transnationality and Diaspora*. The Departments of South Asian Studies and English co-sponsored Inderpal's visit.

Aihwa Ong, Professor of Anthropology and Southeast Asian Studies at Berkeley, will be coming next term, at a date to be finalised.

WORKSHOP SERIES

We have also inaugurated a Theorising Transnationality and Gender Workshop Series, under the same rubric, providing for a smaller, more interactive setting in which Toronto-based feminist scholars working on questions of transnationality and gender might present their work.

Kerry Rittich of the Faculty of Law and IWSGS presents a paper on *Justice through markets: Distributive justice in international institutions* on Friday November 28, in the first of these workshops.

Early next term, **Hilary Cunningham**, of Anthropology, will present her paper, *From Nations Unbound to Nations on the Rebound: Recasting Transnational Practices in the Context of Evolving Sovereignties*.

IWSGS COMMUNITY-UNIVERSITY KNOWLEDGE ALLIANCE

The Community-University Knowledge Alliance is an initiative of the IWSGS aimed at strengthening intellectual and practical ties between communities of feminist scholars and feminist practitioners. The IWSGS recently received a budget to allow us to facilitate and concretise these links with community groups, organisations and activists who are engaged in applied service, advocacy and policy toward improving conditions of women's lives.

Four events are being planned for this year in consultation with students, faculty and staff at IWSGS and with representatives from community groups, particularly those which have traditionally been excluded from access to, and participation in, university-based activities. Two events are being organized by members of Women's Studies at the St George campus, and one each by the Women's Studies Programs at Mississauga and Scarborough.

The first event of this Community-University Knowledge Alliance is marking the IWSGS annual commemoration of the National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women. On December 4, two members of the Toronto-based **Afghan Women's Organisation**, Executive Director, **Adeena Niazi**, and graduate student, **Maliha Chishti** will give a presentation in the IWSGS Lounge on the *The Women's Movement in Afghanistan: Opportunities and Constraints*. This event forms part of the University of Toronto-coordinated *16 Days of Activism against Gender Violence* Campaign which is linked to the growing annual international campaign. The presentation by the Afghan Women's Organisation has been incorporated into the program of the IWSGS undergraduate seminar course *Women and Issues of International Development*.

IWSGS CO-SPONSORED EVENTS

September 15 2003 – **Valentina Napolitano Quayson**: "Notes on Migration and the Politics of Embodiment".

October 17 2003 – **Bell Hooks**: "Rock My Soul: Bell Hooks on Community, Education & Relationships", organized by A Different Booklist.

October 24-25 2003 – *Sisters in Cinema, A History of African-American Women Feature Film Directors*, a film by **Yvonne Welbon**.

October 25-26 2003 – *The Annual New College Conference on Racism and National Consciousness*.

November 3 2003 – **Valerie Hebert**: "Women's Experiences in the Holocaust", with Jewish Woman's Issues at Hillel

November 7 2003 – **Himani Bannerji**: "Home and the World: Women and Nationalism in the Novels of Rabindranath Tagore", Indo-Canadian Association Lecture 2003.

November 7 2003 – **Julie Nguyen**: "Without a Martial Choice: A Gender Perspective on Single Women in Vietnam", with the Asian Institute.

IWSGS Visiting Scholar Program 2004-05

The Institute for Women's Studies and Gender Studies (IWSGS) at the University of Toronto invites applications for our Visiting Scholar Program. IWSGS offers a thriving and intellectually stimulating environment for scholars to work.

The IWSGS will provide a shared office space with access to a computer (including internet and email), as well as access to other University of Toronto resources through the vast library system including access to the New College Library special collection on Women's Studies.

Visiting Scholars are encouraged to spend one or two academic terms at the IWSGS, attend the IWSGS Speakers Series and numerous other events being organized by the IWSGS. Visiting scholars will be expected to engage with the intellectual community of the IWSGS, give a public lecture and be available for a class presentation.

Recent doctoral graduates, independent scholars and both tenured and untenured faculty members who are engaged in critical work on gender and/or women are encouraged to apply.

Limited research funding of \$1000.00 is available from the IWSGS that can be used to develop a new research area, enhance an ongoing research program or to disseminate research findings. The University's academic year runs from September to April; therefore applicants are encouraged to schedule their time at the IWSGS during these months.

Applications must include:

- Curriculum vitae
- A one page research project description
- The length of stay proposed and the dates

Interested applicants should send a copy of their application to the following address:

Visiting Scholar Program
c/o Angela Fleury
Institute for Women's Studies and Gender Studies
40 Willcocks Street
University of Toronto
Toronto, ON
M5S 1C6

*The closing date for receipt of applications is February 27, 2004.
Late applications will not be considered.*

The annual IWSGS Party to Welcome New Faculty and honour the Women's Studies recipients of prizes and awards took place in the IWSGS Lounge on October 17, 2003. A record number of new faculty were invited this year – those women and men newly appointed who might have an interest becoming members of the Institute. There were too many to be introduced personally by members of the core faculty as in previous years, so people went around the room introducing themselves and making more informal connections.

The students who had been awarded prizes in the past were acknowledged for their achievement and given roses. Joining us for the first time this year was **Suzanne Johnson**, co-founder of the Canadian-based feminist donor-organisation, MATCH-International, in whose name a bursary was awarded to two students last year. IWSGS alumna and honoree, **Ceta Ramkhalawansingh**, now President of MATCH was also present.



Suzanne Johnson, MATCH & Linzi Manicom

A highlight of the evening was the surprise announcement of the establishment of a new award, the **Margrit Eichler Graduate Leadership Award**. Margrit Eichler, founding Director of the IWSGS, tearful with appreciation, made the presentation to award-winning feminist scholar, **Nikki Kumar**, and her co-organiser of the Graduate Women's Studies Association last year, **Bianca Seaton** (who was not present at the party).



Margrit Eichler presents Nikki Kumar with the first **Margrit Eichler Graduate Leadership Award**