

Introduction to the 2026 AMI Working Papers

by Emily Fevens and Jennifer Garagan

Authors:

Emily Fevens graduated from Mount Saint Vincent University in May 2026 with a Bachelor of Arts with Honours, majoring in English with a minor in Writing. She has a keen interest in the modernist period (c. 1900–1940)—particularly in Imagist poetry and Cubist painting—which she explored in her Honours thesis. Emily currently works in her hometown as a hotel clerk, where she has the opportunity to meet visitors from around the world. Her goal is to become an editor, and she has worked with *Atlantis* since October 2025 as a copyediting intern, a student in a directed study, and as a copyeditor and editorial assistant. She plans to start freelance editing, eventually get her certification from the Editor's Association of Canada, and hopes to someday work for a publishing house as an editor for book manuscripts.

Jennifer Garagan is a lawyer who advocates for disabled and injured Maritimers in Atlantic Canada. She received both her undergraduate and law degrees from Dalhousie University, graduating from law school in 2009. Jennifer has worked in private practice throughout her legal career, focusing on injury and disability law for well over a decade. She became a partner of the regional firm CLG Injury Law in 2019. She is also appointed to several provincial and federal administrative tribunals, including as the acting chair of the Involuntary Psychiatric Treatment Act Review Board of Nova Scotia. She is the chair of a not-for-profit feminist theatre company, LunaSea, that focuses on the stories of underrepresented genders. Jennifer is currently a part-time graduate student of the Women and Gender Studies program at Mount Saint Vincent University, which is another avenue for her to focus on her passions including social justice, access to justice, disability rights (including mental health), and socioeconomic rights. Outside-work, Jennifer enjoys the arts, hiking, and exploring the various corners of our beautiful region with her partner, three children, and their dogs.

The following group of writings, “AMI Working Papers,” is an annual section that presents innovative essays, interviews, and creative writing from speakers hosted by Mount Saint Vincent University’s (MSVU) Alexa McDonough Institute for Women, Gender, and Social Justice (AMI) throughout the current or previous year. Both co-authors of this introduction took a directed study in feminist publishing with *Atlantis* in early 2026, not long after this year’s selection of Working Papers were developed and presented. The Papers—a keynote speech, two interviews, and two poems—include a focus on recentring the voices that are often marked as politically subversive when they challenge “spaces of access and privilege” (Tiffe and Hoffmann 2016, 116) traditionally dominated by the white, male colonial-settler perspective. One of the co-authors of this introduction, Emily Fevens, is a recent graduate with an English degree from MSVU, and she can attest that her area of study continues to be oversaturated with the works of white men who write little about anything outside of their own culture, or with an exoticized lens that Others the non-white subject. She therefore recognizes the radical disruptions that these Papers offer. The pieces also discuss feminist theory, historical and political contexts and modern realities. The other co-author, Jennifer Garagan, is a legal advocate for fair and equal treatment, and welcomes the calls to action within the Papers to address current issues in our sociolegal systems.

As postcolonial literary scholar Gugu Hlongwane argues in her essay, “You Strike a Woman, You Strike a Rock’: Challenges in the ‘Good Talk’ of Transnational Feminism,” the centring of Western epistemologies in transnational feminism colonizes a movement which by its name demands diversity of experience and inclusion of difference, for transnational feminism examines the “interacting forces that have an impact on gendered relations and experiences in a geopolitical context” (Enns et al. 2020, 11). By drawing on historical figures such as the Combahee River Collective, Josephine St. Pierre Ruffin, and Winnie Madikizela-Mandela, Hlongwane asserts that the voices of women in the Black diaspora and Global South have been—and continue to be—necessary and meaningful in the fight against global inequality under colonialism. As Hlongwane points out, the West has attempted to marginalize and silence the voices of women of colour; her essay thus turns the critical “eye” onto feminism and asks whether feminist scholars have perpetuated the same kind of systemic violence the discipline seeks to dismantle.

One of the interview pieces in this issue is between Tracey Raney, a professor of politics and public administration at Toronto Metropolitan University, and Adebola Esther Osegboun, the 2024 Fellow of the AMI at MSVU. The interview draws, in part, on Raney’s 2024 co-edited book *Gender-Based Violence in Canadian Politics in the #MeToo Era*. In providing a detailed discussion of what gender-based violence is and where it is found, Raney demonstrates that it is multi-faceted and pervasive in many contexts. In addition to identifying and defining gender-based violence, the interview highlights positive measures already in place to address the issue. Importantly, it also centres stories of resilience by women who experienced such violence while working in Canadian politics. The interview includes a discussion of the gaps in policies intended to address this violence and provides an impetus for further measures to be taken.

The second interview in the AMI Working Papers is between Tawany Aguiar, *Atlantis’s* media coordinator, and the co-editors of *Unmasking Academia*, Dr. Irene Shankar and Dr. Corinne L. Mason of Mount Royal University in Calgary, Alberta. Dr. Shankar is a professor in the Department of English, Languages, and Cultures, and Dr. Mason is an associate professor in the Department of Communication, Media, and Film. The interview provides a contemporary discussion of structural inequalities within post-secondary institutions, including how those have developed during and in the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic and the Black Lives Matter movement. The discussion is rooted in the works of such feminist theorists as Sarah Ahmed, Patricia Hill-Collins, bell hooks, and Audre Lorde and uses these frameworks to ground further theoretical insights into the current state of (in)equality within academia. This includes discussions that provide practical resources to advocate for change in the context of specific institutional practices. In so doing, the interviewees point out that changemaking can be a disproportionate burden on historically disadvantaged communities, thereby perpetrating further inequality. The piece provides both a call to action for individuals in academia, as well as the opportunity for further reflection and analysis.

The final selection in the Working Papers are two poems by Asha Abdosh, the 2025 Halifax Youth Poet Laureate. The canonization of literature—in the Western “literary culture of categorization, factionalism, and exclusion” (Parmar 2018, 1)—helps publishers to define literature “against a white male ‘norm’” (Parmar 2018, 1) so as to clearly delineate that which is Other. Abdosh’s poetry is a distinct act of resistance, for it makes manifest the voice of a young, Ethiopian woman and her inner world. In “Over It,” she grapples with and astutely articulates the downward spiral of overthinking; in “Proof,” she uses a patchwork of mathematics puns to articulate the speaker’s utter devotion to their partner. Abdosh pushes back against the poetic canon which insists upon the expression of the white, male perspective. Instead, her poetry is politically charged in its insistence upon the significance of the inner lives of women of colour.

This year’s AMI Working Papers represent a growing body of metafeminist scholarship that shift the voice in political and academic discussions. They also promote critical reflections on the ways that feminist praxis—as it pertains to politics, the university, and the literary canon—has proven unjust and inequitable to women of colour. These Papers provide a space for alternative, intersectional methodologies and inclusive practices that advocate for and reflect the complexity of gender and lived experiences.

Works Cited

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