

Editorial

Atlantis, like many other journals, alternates between "Special" issues and "General" or "Open" issues. "Special" and "General" issue types each has its own strengths, and each is equally rewarding to produce. The "Special" issues address a particular subject, and enable the reader to develop a deeper and more informed understanding of the topic, of the debates among the scholars engaged in the research, and the new directions in research. The goal of "General" issues is to encompass a diversity of topics and feminist approaches and, in this way, to reflect the general shape of current research. The extent to which we accomplish this goal depends on the quality and breadth of submissions.

In this issue readers get the best of both worlds. The theme of the Special Issue on "Feminism and Canadian History" from the Fall 2000 issue, Volume 25.1, is carried forward as a special section to profile the excellent scholarship in this field. This section, which appears under its own banner, connects issues important to feminist historians with the interests of feminist researchers in other disciplines. Here is how the Editors of Volume 25.1 introduce this section.

In 1997 the editors of Atlantis asked Margaret Conrad and Linda Kealey to edit a special 25th anniversary edition on the impact of feminism on the writing of Canadian history. The response was so great that we ran out of space. As a result, several articles and all of the book reviews are published in a section of this issue. The editors chose two of the articles that address new directions in women's and gender studies to appear here. Wendy Mitchinson, who has done pioneering work on the topic of women's bodies, reflects on the impact feminism has had on the writing of medical history, while Jan Noel describes her experience of integrating men's studies into her women's studies courses. In many ways, men's studies is an outgrowth of feminist

thinking and is currently at the stage of development that women's history was a generation ago. The first issue of Atlantis was published in the fall of 1975, the brainchild of Donna Smyth, a professor of English at Acadia University, and the product of a dedicated collective, most of whose members were also based at Acadia. In this issue we publish a conversation between Donna Smyth and Margaret Conrad, a member of that collective, about the early days of Atlantis.

The articles in the main part of this issue cover a wide range of topics and geographical areas. We are always happy to receive submissions from feminist scholars overseas, especially from countries of the economic South, whether they are now based in Canada or not. Their contributions, rooted in other experiences, help us to understand those experiences and the ways they relate to our "reality" in Canada. We have several such articles in this issue.

Ananya Mukherjee Reed takes up the difficult and complex issue of the relationship of gender equity in the context of religion. In this case, she turns her attention to the relationship between Hinduism in India, especially in the form of the Hindu nationalist party (the BJP) and the Indian traditions of secularism and personal freedom enshrined in the legal system and constitution. The consequences for women when the two sets of ideals clash are profound and extremely complex. Nancy Cook's article takes up many of the same themes, but in the context of Islam and of Pakistan. While she does discuss the legal framework, including the impact of the ferocious *Hudood Ordinance*, her main focus is on the particular construction of patriarchy in the culture and society of Pakistan, and the ways in which Pakistani women are able to negotiate some resistance. Kerline Joseph's article examines the status of women in Rwanda and the perceptions of crimes of sexual violence in this country. She focuses on the position of women in Rwandan law and the law in

relation to crimes of sexual violence.

Both of the short Research Notes carry some of the same concerns forward. Maurice Akpan Okoji provides us with some detail about the extent and nature of poverty in Nigeria and its particular impact on women. Earl Hadley draws our attention to the relatively hidden fate of women lured into Western Europe, and into effective sexual slavery by various inducements. His note castigates all levels of government for their neglect of the issue.

This issue opens with an article by Susan Hart. She presents us with the work she has done with adolescent girls through the medium of poetry. Often dismissed as "teenage angst" poems, Hart shows us how these poems provide young women with a valid way of expressing deeply felt emotions. Hart's article allows us to explore another mode of scholarship, one that is often ignored.

Claire Polster's article takes us into the technical world of intellectual property rights. On the surface it appears to be an arid legal matter, but, as Polster demonstrates, one with clear relevance to women and to the feminist research project. Barbara Cottrell's article also seems to deal with something dry and formal. But as she argues cogently, research ethics are vitally important to an honest and accountable piece of community-based research. While university researchers are having to come to terms with the Tri-Council Ethics procedures, Cottrell points to the greater flexibility and relevance of advisory committees in community-based research.

The next issue of *Atlantis*, Volume 26.1, due out in the Fall of 2001, will also be a General Issue, but in this case, we are focusing on articles that deal with how women produce literature, and explore some aspects of women's writing.

Finally, we are delighted with the two issues of *Atlantis* (25.1 and 25.2) that celebrate the journal's 25th anniversary. They build on the historic strengths of the journal by providing a window on the past, present, and future issues facing women in Canada and around the world.

Marilyn Porter and June Corman