

## Editorial and Call for Papers

In this general issue readers will discover a rich gathering of women's knowledge contributed from across the globe and from multiple locations within Canada. The growing volume and diversity of submissions since Volume 21 when we became editors promises well for the future of *Atlantis: A Women's Studies Journal*. And because we are eager to encourage this increasing participation in the journal, we share our plans until the year 2000 as an invitation to our readers. We will be continuing to publish both general and special issues, and we invite suggestions for future topics and submissions for either format.

Following the two general issues of Volume 22, we will publish two special issues in Volume 23: "Sexualities and Feminisms," guest edited by Janice Ristock and Catherine Taylor in Manitoba, and "Sexual Economics," guest edited by Marjorie Cohen in British Columbia, and dedicated to the life and work of feminist economist Michèle Pujol. Volume 24 will consist of a general issue and a special issue, the latter guest edited by Franca Iacovetta and Tania Das Gupta of Ontario, and entitled: "Whose Canada is It? Immigrant Women, Women of Colour, Citizenship and Multiculturalism." Volume 25 will begin with a special issue dedicated to feminism and history and celebrating a quarter century of *Atlantis* publication, an issue that will be guest edited by one of the journal's earliest editors, Margaret Conrad, who will be joined in that project by Linda Kealey, both from Atlantic Canada. With the exception of 23.1 - the Sexualities and Feminisms issue already well into production and due out this fall - all future issues await your submissions.

This issue also marks Christine St. Peter's last as the coeditor of a general issue - and after the next issue, 23.1, she steps down as editor. The intention is that Marilyn Porter will stay on for another three years, working with Christine's replacement, and will then retire as the editorial succession establishes itself. While we want both the editorial panel and the two editors to reflect the

diversity of Canadian feminist knowledge, it is also important to recognize *Atlantis'* "home" at Mount Saint Vincent University. For this reason, one editor will always come from the Atlantic region.

Before introducing you to the range of feminist knowledge contained in this issue of *Atlantis*, we would like to reflect on what these past three years have meant to us as editors and to articulate what we are trying to accomplish in and with *Atlantis*. When we took over as editors in the winter of 1995, we were well aware of the rich twenty-year history of the journal and of its deep roots in the Atlantic Region - and we were eager to explore its huge potential to participate in the dynamic growth of feminist knowledge in Canada. Soon, of course, we were also aware of the inevitable tensions between past and possible futures, as well as the gap between aspiration and reality. The process we have gone through as we have produced the last four issues has been fascinating and invigorating and - to an extent - successful. We can point with some pride to the growing number of subscriptions, to both the number and quality of submissions to the journal and to other indications that *Atlantis* will continue its central role in Canadian feminist thought and activity.

This reflects two separate but connected processes. One is working out how to produce a feminist journal in a feminist way in a real world composed (largely) of constraints and limitations. This is the practical side of the work. We have tried to develop procedures and guidelines that facilitate the work of contributors, editors, and reviewers, and of our very competent and resourceful managing editor, Cecily Barrie. We have attempted frequent and full communication, usually in cyber-space across a vast country, among the women actually involved in the production of any particular issue, as well as between editors and editorial panel, our readers and the feminist world at large. We have tried to demystify the process of journal production, abandoning hierarchy and

"secret" knowledge. We have had to learn to be ready to confess to mistakes and to hear criticism. We have some distance still to go, but we aim to make involvement with *Atlantis* a pleasurable experience.

While this process has, itself, entailed thinking things through from a feminist perspective, establishing the precise values by which we wish to work has involved a great deal of discussion and careful analysis. These are what we think of as the key values of *Atlantis*. We offer them here in the hopes they will provoke you to respond with your reflections on the key values that inform your feminist work:

1. First, we believe that we should reflect in our structures (that is, the composition of the editorial panel and the selection of reviewers), and in the content of the journal itself the full range of feminist scholars active in Canada today. This means recognizing and then attempting to incorporate into each issue the diversity of region, age, religion, race and ethnicity, sexual orientation and abilities that contribute to the richness of feminism today.

2. In our view this does not mean abandoning the journal's roots in the Atlantic region, but rather using that rootedness to anchor our respect for and desire to share in other identities. In the same spirit we have welcomed contributions from other parts of the world, especially from women sharing their knowledge of the economic south.

3. This recognition of diversity has led to a growing insistence on reflecting as much as possible the diverse ways of producing and reflecting feminist knowledge in Canada today. Indeed, we have begun to use the phrase "feminist knowledge" rather than "feminist scholarship" as a more precise way of designating the diversity of our understandings and the forms in which they are expressed. This is why we have been proud to welcome contributions from creative artists; to publish interviews with notable feminists in different areas of activity; and to encourage community "voices" in various forms.

4. We are, however, also aware of the rapid and dynamic growth of Women's Studies as a discipline and the place of teaching and research

in the colleges and universities. We want *Atlantis* to continue to publish the very best in the more traditional forms of scholarly writing, and to that end we have developed a rigorous process of peer reviewing and editing. But we also wish to reflect the innovative pedagogy and research that is going on within Women's Studies, and we are proud of our new "Women's Studies in Focus" feature that reflects those activities.

5. Our final "value" is harder to pin down. We have been fortunate that we have so enjoyed working with each other, and with Cecily Barrie and the editorial panel, and with the various editors of the Special Issues. Feminists so often crush themselves and each other under a weight of stress and strain, obligations and guilt. Our lives leave little time for reflection and even less for fun. When we have ensured time for both in our editorial lives and work, we have gained the energy and vision we needed to go forward.

In this issue we have tried to reflect all of that. On our cover you will find a drawing commissioned for this issue from the Tobique, New Brunswick activist, artist and First Nations shaman, Shirley Bear, who has also contributed a poem to these pages. In the opening article Krishna Ahooja-Patel, a scholar and long time practitioner of international law and development, compares the different situations of women in two of the world's largest and oldest cultures, India and China, and draws conclusions from the different ways those governments and societies have treated women. This study is followed by one from Canadian legal history by Constance Backhouse who recounts a lost part of Canada's history of institutionalized racism in her analysis of a 1942 Nova Scotia case brought against a New Glasgow theatre by African-Canadian Dr. Carrie Best in a thwarted attempt to pursue racial equality through the court system.

From 1940s Canada the focus shifts to the present. Jean Lock Kunz and Augie Fleras revisit an earlier study of *Maclean's* magazine advertising published in this journal, an article that had examined the representation of visible minority women from 1954-84. The authors were concerned to see if the "striking transformations" in the "social, political, demographic and cultural

contexts" of Canada in the period 1984-94 would be represented in the advertising copy of Canada's prominent weekly news magazine, and they discover some surprising shifts and discouraging continuities. Back in Atlantic Canada, the issue moves to an animated and wide-ranging interview with a group of four Newfoundland creative writers in conversation with Marilyn Porter. Their conversation is illuminated by the poetry of three other Atlantic writers, Janet Fraser, Jeanette Lynes and Anna Nibby Woods.

One of the emerging feminist strategies in global feminism has been an increasing use of arguments to forward women's liberation by arguing that "women's rights" must be treated under the international covenants governing "human rights." Joan McFarland considers the major voices in the debate and offers an analysis of, and some cautions about, this development. From this international debate we turn to an analysis of historical events in Quebec during the years 1975-92. During this period, Quebec feminists undertook a revolutionary struggle over women's health issues when they established women's health centres throughout the province as a way of challenging Quebec and Canadian law. Examining how the two aims of "auto-santé et avortement" often came into conflict within this political struggle, Jacinthe Michaud suggests ways of revisiting and renewing the discourse on women's health.

In Joy Mohamed's contribution, we are offered a treasure of women's oral creativity from Guyana. This performance piece is followed by another creative form, an autobiographical narrative by Leanne Kelly who recounts the experience of growing up Métis in Canada, where Indigenous people suffer external and internal colonization within a society that actively and systemically discriminates against them.

Two contributions from Africans follow. In the first, Bertha Z. Osei-Hwedie has undertaken a careful analysis of the way in which Zambian women have participated in politics under two contrasting governmental regimes, coming to the reluctant conclusion that without a real will to change on the part of male governments, women will continue to be excluded from vital

decision-making processes. Comfort Adesuwa Ero, a new political immigrant to Canada, offers poems in two of her languages on aspects of experiences in Nigeria and Canada.

Marie Hammond Callaghan recounts a fascinating discovery of a long lost Irish portrait by Margaret Clarke that resurfaced at Mount Saint Vincent University, then locates its creator and its various levels of iconography in the cultural and political contexts of the newly formed Irish Republic of the 1920s. From Irish art to Canadian technology, we learn how Ellen Balka has worked in the male dominated world of technological change for many years, struggling to introduce a feminist perspective to it. In this paper she documents and discusses three projects in which she attempted to make use of technology assessment in the context of working towards feminist social change.

In the final pages of this issue we turn to questions and debates about the value of women-centred, and Native-centred educational models. Carole Leclair, now teaching in McMaster University's Indigenous Studies program, recounts the process whereby she dared as a graduate student to use her inherited Métis wisdom to "interrupt academic norms," and offers readers an analysis of the features involved in this way of learning and teaching across cultures. In a challenging interview between Patricia Baker of Women's Studies at Mount Saint Vincent University and Jadwiga Sebrechts, president of the American Women's College Coalition, readers will discover what great things have happened when women's education and needs have been taken seriously within women-centred institutions. Finally, five members of the York University Graduate Women's Studies program - graduate students Eva C. Karpinski, Jennifer Harris and Marie-Lison Fougère, in papers introduced by professors Ann B. Shteir and Jane Couchman - discuss in theoretical and practical terms the possibility of creating both a "transgressive epistemology" and a "politics of democratic relations" when individuals and groups are willing to engage creatively with the conflict that emerges across the differences within Women's Studies.

*Marilyn Porter and Christine St. Peter*