

Contents

Congratulations Graduates!!

JUNE 2009	Karen Sisson
Jessica Barratt	Megan Stoudt
Rachelle Cayer	Kimberly Sunstrum
Megan Cramer	Courtney Symons
Holly Culhane	Rachel Warren
Daniella D'Alimonte	NOVEMBER 2009
Lindsey Fulford	Melissa Hancock
Kathleen Grantham	Jill Lewis
Samantha Graziano	Adedoyin Olatidoye
Kaitlin Haley	Lacey Robson
Alisha Merali	Zahira Sarwar
Alexandra Mitchell	Nana Yeboah
Jessica Ring	

PROFILE

RUTH BELL

**New Book for
Professor
Gentile**

The Canadian
War on
Queers

**Our
Scholarship
Winners**

Meet Crystal
Kuhn and Dawn
Harris our
Scholarship
Winners

**Our New
Administrator**

The Institute
has a new
Administrator –
Welcome
Claire Ryan

**RUTH BELL -- THE SECOND WAVE STORY
ANIMATING A NEW THIRD WAVE
SCHOLARSHIP**

BY SANDRA CAMPBELL

“[W]hen you ask her why education for women is so important to her, her eyes gleam a brighter turquoise and her chin comes up as she replies. "Why? -- Because I had a hell of a time getting an education.”

Ruth Bell 2009

There's a major new scholarship in Women's Studies. The Canadian Federation of University Women - Ottawa, which celebrates its hundredth birthday in 2010, has raised \$100,000 to endow The Ruth Bell Centennial Scholarship, honouring all members of the Ottawa Club since 1910. The scholarship will be awarded annually, beginning in

the 2009/2010 academic year, to an Honours student in Women's Studies, alternately at Carleton and the University of Ottawa, with the first award valued at \$5,000.00. Ruth Bell, a club member who has served as both its president and the CFUW's national president, spearheaded the fundraising by generously matching the amounts raised annually by the



Ruth Bell pursued her dream of her first degree, a B.A. in political science, through “... five universities in three countries on two continents [for] over a decade.”

Club over the last several years. Behind Ruth Bell's commitment lies a story of one woman's hunger for education and her resulting dedication to bettering women's opportunities in society.

Ruth Bell, who celebrates her 90th birthday in November, radiates her trademark energy and determination as she stands foursquare in her Ottawa condo, the sunlight glinting on her red hair, her two cats playing at her feet. But when you ask her why education for women is so important to her, her eyes gleam a brighter turquoise and her chin comes up as she replies. "Why? -- Because I had a hell of a time getting an education. There were so many obstacles in my way. Many people take getting a degree for granted: in my case, finally getting my B.A. was the proudest achievement of my life."

Obstacles indeed. As she puts it in her memoirs, Ruth Bell pursued her dream of her first degree, a B.A. in political science, through “five universities in three countries on two continents [for] over a decade.” She knows first hand the challenges for women in getting an education and winning recognition as equal partners in society. Born in Detroit to a Canadian mother and an American father, she experienced loss early when her father, Roy Cooper, died suddenly in 1929. Ruth was only ten. Olive O'Mulvenny Cooper took her daughter to live in Toronto where, to earn a living, Ruth's mother worked as an insurance agent, an unusual and challenging career for a woman of her era. But money was tight. In 1938, when Ruth graduated from St. Clement's School as Head Girl, she had no way to go to university to study languages without a scholarship. Instead,

she took shorthand and typing courses and worked as an immigration clerk at the U.S. Consulate.

Ruth's marriage in 1945 to a brilliant young Canadian historian, Bill Rolph, who was teaching at Western, did not extinguish her dream of a degree. Married women were not expected to earn degrees but she juggled work and university courses, only to find that faculty wives were disqualified from taking examinations. When her husband got a job at New York University, Ruth had to work. Work she did -- at New York University, in a job which at least made her eligible for free tuition. She crammed in four hours of classes four nights a week, making the Dean's list, even as she also edited and typed her husband's thesis

Continued on page 6

The Canadian War on Queers

New Book by Dr. Gentile – Article by Laura McLaughlin

The Pauline Jewett Institute of Women's and Gender Studies is occupied by academics who are devoted to teaching *and* researching important issues in the hope that their contribution will advance their field of study.

Dr. Patrizia Gentile, feminist historian and Assistant Professor at the Institute, applies an interdisciplinary perspective in her work. She and her co-author, Gary Kinsman, are celebrating the publication of their book *The Canadian War on Queers: National Security as Sexual Regulation*, fall of 2009.

The Canadian War on Queers is an in depth investigation of the surveillance and regulation of the queer community from the 1950s to the 1980s by the Canadian state. Documents declassified through the Access to Information Act and numerous interviews conducted by the authors reveal

how the Canadian state (government, police, and military) used interrogation and surveillance methods to vet homosexuals from the public service and military. The policies and security strategies undertaken were based on a national security discourse which labeled queer people as suffering from a "character weakness" making them disloyal and a security threat.

Dr. Gentile's interest and involvement in this project began before she started working for Dr. Kinsman as a research assistant while studying at the master's level in Carleton's Canadian Studies program in 1996. Upon learning that Dr. Kinsman was speaking on this very topic at the "Out of Archives" conference (the first conference on the history of sexuality held in Canada at that point), Dr. Gentile headed for Toronto, her research in tow. Her on-going passion, knowledge, and commitment to the topic led to an invitation to join Dr. Kinsman as a co-author.

The book documents the homosexual witch hunts conducted by the Canadian Government not only from an historical perspective but also ethnographic sociology. Kinsman and Gentile conducted interviews with individuals that were personally affected by the purges. She says of this work, "This information on queer communities has been silenced not only by the government but historians and sociologists. What we're doing is giving voice to those who have suffered through these purges, and also subverting the normative values perpetuated by mainstream sociologists and historians by documenting these cases that have been marginalized and silenced."

For Dr. Gentile this book has been a labour of love. "This was too important to cram out as a way to prove ourselves as great researchers. The subject matter is too important to allow the possibility of leaving any stone unturned." Professor Gentile considers this book as activism. "It is an institutional ethnography [of] individuals who were directly affected by these purges. Finally, these people are no longer silent." The documenting of their voices in *The Canadian War on Queers* ensures that their stories of resistance will be heard forever.



OUR SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS

Cyrstal Kuhn

When I found out that I had been chosen as the recipient of the 2009 Harriet Emma Empey Memorial Scholarship, I thought there had been some sort of mistake! When I look around me and see all the amazing, hardworking and passionate students of the Women's & Gender Studies Department, I feel very honoured to have been awarded with this scholarship. It has allowed me to focus more on my studies and dedicate more of my time to the Women's & Gender Studies Society.

Since my first term at Carleton three years ago, The Women's & Gender Studies Department has been like my family away from home. I may belong to one of the smallest department's on campus, but the last three years have convinced me that the Women's & Gender Studies Department has the biggest heart on campus! Receiving the scholarship, for me, was an affirmation that I really belong in this department and I am overjoyed that I am able to represent the Carleton Women's & Gender Studies

2009 Harriet Emma
Empey Memorial
Scholarship Recipient:

Crystal Kuhn

The Harriet Emma Empey Memorial Scholarship is awarded annually to an outstanding student proceeding from one year to another in the Bachelor of Arts program at Carleton University with a major or minor in Women's Studies. Donor: G. Elaine Empey and the Bufton Family. Endowed in 2001.

2009 Pauline Jewett
Institute Of Women's &
Gender Studies
Scholarship Recipient:

DAWN HARRIS

Awarded annually, on the recommendation of the Director of the Pauline Jewett Institute of Women's and Gender Studies, to an outstanding student proceeding from third to fourth year in the BA (Honours) in Women's & Gender Studies program at Carleton University.

Donors: Faculty and Staff associated with the Pauline Jewett Institute of Women's and Gender Studies.

Dawn Harris

As I was slogging through another summer of full-time courses, I received a letter from Carleton's Awards Office informing me that I'd been selected as the recipient of the Pauline Jewett Institute of Women's and Gender Studies (PJIWGS) Scholarship. I was stunned! For at least a week I kept thinking someone had made a mistake. I even dropped into the department occasionally to try and verify but no one was there. Gradually I accepted that I had indeed won this award and I was absolutely thrilled!

It had been a dream to do my degree for about 25 years. In fact, when people asked me as they were want to do from time to time, "What would you do if you won a million dollars?" my immediate response was always, "Go to school." I didn't win a million dollars. Instead, I found myself separated after a nineteen year marriage without a permanent job and with two teenage daughters. In my job-hunting frenzy, I decided to apply to Carleton on a whim. My daughters were with me the day I received the admissions package accepting me into a double major in Honours Psychology and Women's Studies. They were so

“This summer, I was feeling particularly discouraged and exhausted ... It was into this milieu that I received news of the PJIWGS scholarship. It gave me such a boost.”

excited; I was terrified. How could I possibly do this – financially, emotionally, and intellectually?

My passion for feminism and women’s studies started in the late nineties when I took a ‘Women in Christianity’ course at Carleton. It entirely changed the direction of my life interests and yearnings. I eventually had the privilege (and challenge) of working as Executive Director of Harmony House, a second stage shelter for women and children fleeing abuse. Working in a feminist organization such as this was exhilarating, but I also realized that I

was missing a lot of the theoretical background. I wanted to know so much more to ground my work so that I could be more effective.

Now I’m a fourth year student at Carleton and there isn’t a week that goes by when I don’t drive past the entrance sign and feel a sense of awe that I’m here. I had very serious doubts about my ability to do this, and I still struggle with trusting my brain and my voice, despite getting many signs to the contrary. I absolutely love the opportunity to learn about things I am passionate about, but also find the constant grind incredibly difficult and anxiety-provoking. This summer, I was feeling particularly discouraged and exhausted wondering why I was putting myself and my daughters through this.

It was into this milieu that I received news of the PJIWGS scholarship. It gave me such a boost. I am very honoured and proud to have received this award. It has given me a lot of encouragement, and more importantly, has affirmed my abilities and my directions toward post-graduate work. I am inspired with hope for the exciting opportunities ahead. I am very thankful!

MEET CLAIRE RYAN OUR NEW ADMINISTRATOR

Interview by Laura McLaughlin

The PJIWGS is thrilled to welcome our new Administrator Claire Ryan. Claire came to us in September from the School of Computer Science. She has been busy for the past three months learning the ropes, helping build our new website (coming soon) and setting the Institute in good working order.

Claire has been a Carleton employee since June of 2000 and has an undergrad degree in French Canadian Literature. After completing her degree, Claire broadened her academic scope by taking accounting classes. Claire is also active on campus volunteering with the Health and Wellness Committee.



We here at the Pauline Jewett Institute of Women’s and Gender Studies extend our warm welcome to Claire. Please stop by and get acquainted. FYI Claire likes tea and decaf coffee - just make sure it’s not instant! ☺

"It's so vital for women students -- and all students -- to know about Canadian history and politics, and to get a university degree."

PROFILE: RUTH BELL (cont'd)

manuscript. Ruth continued to take courses towards a degree as the couple moved first to Tulane in New Orleans and then in 1952 to Australia, where Bill was a research fellow at the new Australian National University in Canberra. Refused credit for her American courses, Ruth worked -- and started studying all over again.

Tragedy struck when her young husband died suddenly in 1953 of a malarial infection. Ruth remembers her lonely ocean voyage back to Canada: "I had so little money that after paying the fare, I only had eighteen Australian shillings to my name -- not even enough to tip the staff." Always intrepid, she learned to play poker, and won enough to pay tips and other expenses. Working as a don at St. Hilda's College to support herself, she was at last awarded her B.A. -- in Political Economy from the University of Toronto in 1955. But her dream of postgraduate studies there was frustrated when she was rejected for a University Women's Club scholarship because at 34, she was considered an older woman unlikely to achieve anything. After winning a research job in Ottawa, she joined the Ottawa club that very year and started to work for change. At Carleton, we now have the Dr. Ruth Bell Scholarship, donated by CFUW-Ottawa to help support deserving women students in the midst of part-time studies.

In fact, Carleton helped Ruth's dreams of graduate studies come true. After working in Montreal and as a Dean and political science lecturer at Renison College in Waterloo, Ruth was able to do an M.A. at Carleton after her marriage to Ottawa lawyer and Conservative federal cabinet minister Dick Bell in 1963. She juggled the roles of politician's wife and part-time student. Countering some scepticism about female graduate students, Ruth finished an M.A. in political science with a thesis on Conservative Party conventions in 1965, and taught courses at Carleton and elsewhere for several years. It's a topic about which Ruth is passionate: "It's so vital for women students -- and all students -- to know about Canadian history and politics, and to get a university degree."

What has she done about it? At Carleton, she has recently endowed the Honourable Dick and Ruth Bell Chair for the Study of Canadian Parliamentary Democracy, having earlier funded the annual Dick, Ruth, and Judy Bell Lecture on political topics, which now honours the memory of both her husband and her stepdaughter. Ontario Supreme Court Justice Judy Bell was a pioneering woman jurist who in 1993 made the precedent-setting ruling that a common-law wife was entitled to half her husband's government pension.

Ruth Bell's life has brought her face-to-face with other women's issues -- sexual harassment on the job, inadequate pensions for women and the glass ceiling in the workplace. The title of her autobiography, *Be A "Nice" Girl*, refers to an infamous occasion in 1974 when Royal Bank President Earle McLaughlin patronized her as a shareholder as she began spearheading a campaign to get women directors appointed to bank boards. She's worked through a wide variety of organizations to make things better for women -- including the Canadian Federation of University Women, the YMCA National Council, Match International, the Canadian Commission of UNESCO, the National Action Committee on the Status of Women. She's received many honours -- honorary doctorates (including one jointly with her husband from Carleton in 1994, a first for the university), the Governor General's Award in Commemoration of the Persons Case, the Order of

Canada and a Lifetime Achievement Award at the 2007 YMCA-YWCA Women of Distinction awards, to celebrate her work to improve the place of women in society. Her record of major philanthropy is lengthy, embracing Carleton University, Trinity at University of Toronto, the National Arts Centre, the donation of the historic Bell homestead in Nepean to the city and much else.

Here at the Pauline Jewett Institute of Women's and Gender Studies, the Ruth Bell Centennial Scholarship will be a recurring biennial link between young third wave feminists and an intrepid second wave activist -- who through the Scholarship is empowering young women to keep on breaking barriers and making advances -- just as fearlessly as she has. Ruth Bell declares herself "passionate about women's abilities to contribute to society, in politics, in business, in the community and in the home." No stereotypical "nice girl" she, but a dynamic woman reaching out to a new generation of women as she enters her tenth decade.

WOMEN'S & GENDER STUDIES SOCIETY

Crystal Kuhn - President

Jessica Azevedo - Vice President

Laura McLaughlin - Treasurer

Renee Chan – Secretary

e-mail contact: crystalkuhn@gmail.com

Creative Women Speakers Series 2009/10

Flora MacDonald – “Leadership in a Destitute Country (Afghanistan) - Monday January 25th at 11:30 in 302 Azrieli

Denise Chong On her recent book *Egg on Mao*
Thursday, February 4th at 1430 in C164 Loeb



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Gender Studies*