

Spring '97

# CWAG Newsletter

## LETTER FROM THE EDITORS

### Farewell

In preparing for our final issue as editors of the CWAG Newsletter, we have reflected on our lives as graduate students, women geographers, and future academics. The experience has exposed us to the multiple women's voices that permeate the geographic community. We have gained insights on the importance of support networks, teamwork, and communication. Our friendship has grown as a result.

The response for the Spring 1997 Newsletter has been encouraging, and we hope that the momentum continues for the new editors. We wish our colleagues at Queen's all the best in future issues. There are exciting prospects for the progress of CWAG, including a possible change from paper to electronic media.

With the experience of CWAG behind us, we look forward to seeing you at the CAG and putting faces to names. Good luck with your papers and posters.

Best wishes,

Paula, Alice and Kari

### Letter from Maureen Reed

As I reach mid-term burn-out, I feel that I do not want to write a formal letter as I have in the past. However, I do want to encourage all CWAG members to take part in the next national meeting. This year the meeting is in August in Newfoundland. This is a wonderful opportunity to visit a distinct part of Canada's culture and environment.

In addition, CWAG allocated monies from last year to encourage participation. First, there is \$500.00 allocated to help women graduate students to attend. All women graduate students who are members of CWAG who wish to apply for a travel subsidy to Newfoundland, please make a request to Audrey Kobayashi at Queen's University. Her email address is [kobayasi@knot.queensu.ca](mailto:kobayasi@knot.queensu.ca). The monies will be divided among the number of students who apply. Deadline for application will be May 15, 1997.



CWAG CREW: Alice, Paula, (friend Brenda) and Kari

Also, Kim England is organizing the special sessions to be sponsored by CWAG. She has already sent out notices, and the deadlines for abstracts has been relaxed a little. Already, there will be a special panel discussion about the report on Equity that has taken a lot of work of some of our members. Please write her at [england@cirque.geog.utoronto.ca](mailto:england@cirque.geog.utoronto.ca) if you want to add anything to her list.

Remember, we have a couple of people organizing a special social event, for which child care will also be available. If you have any suggestions on this count you can contact Nadine Schuurman at [nadinecs@unixg.ubc.ca](mailto:nadinecs@unixg.ubc.ca).

In addition, elections will be held for next year's executive. Fran Klodowsky has agreed to stand as Chair (unless there are other contenders), but we need to have nominations for other positions ranging from Treasurer/secretary, student representative, newsletter editors, special sessions co-ordinator, and regional representatives from Quebec, Ontario, Prairies, Atlantic Canada and B.C. Please, approach people who you might want to nominate or volunteer yourself. It would be helpful if you could email me the names and addresses of people by the end of June 1997. My email address is [mreed@geog.ubc.ca](mailto:mreed@geog.ubc.ca).

**FINALLY, please get involved. Bring a friend. Seek a convert. This is your association.**

Looking forward to Newfoundland,  
Maureen Reed, Chair

## In Memory of Glenda Laws (1959-1996)

Glenda Laws died on Sunday, June 23, 1996, at the Hershey Medical Centre in Pennsylvania, shortly after suffering a brain hemorrhage. She was 37 years old. Her sudden death has had a profound effect upon the geographical community in both Canada and the United States, and we share the sorrow of her husband, geographer Stephen Matthews, and her family in Australia: her mother Margaret Laws, and four brothers, Roger, Terry, Bruce and Warren. Her Father, Stan is deceased.

Glenda was a committed feminist who had made an unforgettable impact on Canadian geography. After completing her undergraduate degree at the University of Sydney, Australia, in 1981, she came to Canada in 1982 to undertake a Master's Degree, and subsequently a PhD, at McMaster University. By the time she completed her PhD in 1987, she was well recognized as a scholar in the field of community planning, health care and other social services, and had distinguished herself as a graduate student, teaching assistant and community volunteer.

In 1987, Glenda was appointed Assistant Professor of Geography at York University. There, she continued to work on issues concerning the local welfare state, and produced a flurry of articles on privatization and social services, the homeless and the mentally ill, and theories of the local state. She was active both as a community volunteer and as a geographer, and always attended and contributed to meetings of the CAG.

Glenda moved to Pennsylvania State University in 1989, and was an Associate Professor of Geography there when she died. She continued and expanded her productive research programme, which centred more and more on gender issues, including the struggles of immigrant women and especially elderly women. Perhaps her most notable contribution is a series of articles on women and the life course, chronicling the role of the state in affecting the quality of life for elderly women, and at the same time providing sensitive and richly detailed accounts of their lives. Recently, Glenda had begun to make links between her interests in the local state and processes of globalization. When she died, she was working on a book entitled *Social Justice in a Changing World*, a fitting title to reflect the culmination of her contribution to understanding complex social issues.

Glenda is remembered by her colleagues at Penn State as a 'tireless team player' with a 'wicked wit'. As an adjunct faculty member of the Women's Studies Center, she advanced women's studies and women's

issues, and contributed actively to the Women in Science and Engineering Institute (WISE). She was tireless not only in her contribution to a wide range of campus activities, but also in her commitment to community work as a member of local planning and lobbying associations.

To all her students, in Canada and the United States, Glenda's death has been a tremendous loss. She is especially remembered as a dedicated teacher who used the classroom as a forum for exploring issues of social justice. She received teaching grants to encourage diversity in the undergraduate curriculum, and encouraged and supported both graduate and undergraduate students to embark on a range of studies that also reflected her work on poverty, health, diversity and public participation in the city. To remember her commitment to her students, a project has been established in her name at Pennsylvania State University.

It is especially ironic that Glenda did not live to experience the ageing process she understood and documented so well, with such passion. We shall miss that passion, as well as her commitment to scholarship, her friendship, and her presence as a strong feminist geographer.

The Canadian Women and Geography Study Group has established a fund in memory of Glenda Laws, to recognize her importance among Canadian geographers, and to contribute to the needs of students about whom she cared deeply. The fund was established initially with a donation from CWAG, and further donations are now sought. Those wishing to contribute should make cheques payable to: "CWAG-Glenda Laws Memorial Fund", and send them to:

Prof. Audrey Kobayashi  
Department of Geography  
Queen's University  
Kingston, Ontario Canada K7L 3N6

### CWAG SYLLABI LIBRARY

Please note that the course CWAG syllabi library is still active. The responsibility for the library has been passed along to **Madeleine Wong** (Graduate Student in Geography, York University), as I have left to teach at Brock University. Madeleine's E-mail address is [mwong@yorku.ca](mailto:mwong@yorku.ca). Her mailing address is: 4700 Keele St., North York, Ontario M3J 1P3. Many thanks to all who continue to use and contribute to the library

*Allison Williams*

## Gender, Place and Culture:

a journal of feminist geography

### *New Editors and Book Review Editors*

As the journal enters its fourth year of publication, we are looking to the medium-term future. In an inclusive and participatory spirit, the Editorial Board have agreed that all positions should rotate every four or five years. We are, therefore, looking for two new Editors for the journal and two new Book Review Editors.

One of the new Editors would be expected to begin during the second half of 1997, preferable at the start of September 1997, shortly before the first issue of volume 5 goes to press. She or he would work with Liz Bondi through volume 5. The second new Editor would be expected to begin at the start of June 1998 in order to prepare for volume 6. Both new Book Review Editors would be expected to begin during the second half of 1997, preferably at the start of September 1997.

These four positions offer exciting opportunities to develop a young and flourishing journal. The Editorial Board is seeking people with vision and commitment. In particular, we are seeking people open to a wide range of ideas and willing to encourage authors from a wide range of backgrounds and perspectives.

If you would like to be considered for any of these positions, please send a short statement about yourself and about your vision for the journal to:

Liz Bondi, Department of Geography, University of Edinburgh, Drummond Street, Edinburgh EH8 9XP, UK. Email: [eab@geo.ed.ac.uk](mailto:eab@geo.ed.ac.uk) Further details of the work involved in these positions is available from Liz Bondi at the above address (email enquiries preferred).

All applications must be received by **30th April 1997**.

**CAG'97**

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## CWAG Night Out

Last May, during the CAG in Saskatoon, CWAG members agreed that they would like to schedule a dinner out for women in geography during the next CAG in St. John's. **Wednesday, the 20th of August** has tentatively been scheduled as the night for that occasion. It does fall on the same evening as the 'ice-breaker' which runs from 6-8 pm. We will use the ice-breaker as a preliminary to our own night on the town. At about **7:30**, CWAG members will surreptitiously meet in a corner of the 'ice-breaker' from where we will taxi forth to a suitably large establishment for drinks and dinner. The India Gate provides set (and most delicious) buffet meals for groups at about \$20 each. A spectacular array of curries and other delicacies will be waiting for our arrival in a cozy setting in the heart of downtown St. Johns. After dinner, we have the option of venturing into one of St. John's legendary pubs for further refreshment. Please plan to join CWAG for its inaugural women's night out. (Child-care will be arranged so you can really relax.). If you need more information please contact Nadine Schuurman at [nadinecs@unixg.ubc.ca](mailto:nadinecs@unixg.ubc.ca).

Hope to see you there!

**CAG'97**

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## The CAG Equity Report News

### CAG 1997:

#### Panel session on equity issues in Canadian geography:

*Organizers:* John Everitt, (Brandon University), Past President, CAG, and Damaris Rose (INRS-Urb.UQuebec), former Chair of CAG Equity Committee.

*Sponsors:* CAG and Canadian Women and Geography Study Group.

The aim of this panel is to stimulate discussion of issues raised in or arising from the CAG Equity Survey, recently released by the Association (see last CWAG Newsletter). If you have not yet read the Report, ask your Department Chair for a copy (note: Chairs were explicitly asked by the CAG to make the Report available to graduate students). Otherwise, the Report can be purchased from the CAG Office, at cost (a few \$). For the panel, we have tried to recruit a diverse range of participants (graduate students, recent PhDs, faculty, physical and human geographers, Chairs of large and small university geography departments). The planned line-up and themes are as follows:

- **Damaris Rose** (Damaris\_Rose@Inrs-Urb.UQuebec.CA) will present an overview of the Equity Survey, its rationale, context, methodology and key findings.

- **Bonnie Hallman** (University of Guelph; GRHALLMA@GeoNet.CSS.UoGuelph.Ca) plans to report on knowledge of the Equity Report and reactions to it among graduate students in her own department, as well as on responses she receives to a short series of questions addressed to graduate students elsewhere, which she has posted in this issue of the CWAG Newsletter.

Her aim is to gather and present some information on what the Report does/does not mean for geography graduate students, including men and women, and members of the designated groups.

- **Kari McLeod** (Carleton University; kmcleod@ccs.carleton.ca) will focus her presentation on the factors weighing into the decision to enter graduate school (particularly a PhD program), drawing in part on her personal experience.

- **Gisele Yasmeen** (who recently defended her Ph.D. at UBC - congratulations Gisele!; gisele@unixg.ubc.ca) will discuss how to market geography to potential graduate students in order to, ultimately, reach out to a wider audience. She believes Departments need to engage in outreach strategies to attract students from a wider variety of backgrounds, especially at the Ph.D. level. Sufficient attention must also be paid to employment possibilities after graduate level training (i.e. practical aspects).

- **Pamela Moss** (U. of Victoria; pmoss@office.geog.uvic.ca) will, within the context of the recommendations of the report, comment on implementation questions, that is, what strategies are needed to translate recommendations equity policies like this into action. She also plans to raise the issue of the collective experiences of exclusion and marginalisation and discuss how equity policies can go further in providing support to those people - be they faculty or graduate student - who are isolated or feel isolated because they are a lone woman, a lone person with a disability, a lone aboriginal person, or a lone visible minority in a Department.

- **John Everitt** (Brandon U.; EVERITT@BRANDONU.CA) will discuss issues arising from trying to implement equity policies in a small university.

- **Carl Amrhein** (U. of Toronto; AMRHEIN@GEOG.UTORONTO.CA) will offer a perspective from a large university and as Chair of a Department with a very large and diversified graduate program.

Panel members will undoubtedly also want to discuss how the present context of fiscal restraint affects the implementation of equity policies and support mechanisms.

We hope that many CWAG members and others will help us make this a lively and important session. We promise to allow time for open discussion!

NB: Your ideas or comments are also welcome before the conference - please email the appropriate panelist(s).

### **The CAG Equity Report: Implications for Graduate Students?**

This report (*Equity Issues in Geography Departments of Canadian Universities and Degree-Granting University Colleges: A Survey by the Canadian Association of Geographers*), which came out in June 1996, addresses many issues and makes several recommendations which directly affect graduate students in the discipline. As the CWAG student representative (I'm currently finishing my Ph.D. at Guelph), I felt a responsibility to address the way equity issues have been perceived and handled within the various departments, focusing on the experience of graduate students. Informal discussions in my own department and with colleagues in other universities have led me to the realization that many graduate students don't even know the Report exists, despite a clear directive to Chairs that students be made aware of the Report and its recommendations.

As part of a panel session to be held at this year's CAG meeting in St. John's, I would like to respond to the findings and recommendations in the Equity Report on behalf of graduate students in geography. To that end I have compiled this short set of questions, including the opportunity for open comments on the perception/attitude prevalent in your departments about equity issues and general feelings of equity/inequity you deal with in your academic lives. All information will be used in order to better represent a 'student perspective' on the Report, as well as more generally the position of women, persons of colour and persons with disabilities as geography graduate students.

If you would like to read the Report, every department received a copy, sent to the Chair. It should be on file and it is your right to see it.

Together we can widen the discussion and work toward ensuring equity for all geography grad students. Thank you.

**Please attend the panel session and join in the discussion!**

#### **QUESTIONS:**

1. Has the CAG Equity Report been made available to graduate students in your department? If yes, was there a discussion session or some other forum to discuss it??
2. Has your department held any sessions/seminars or other training workshops, or distributed written materials regarding equity issues and/or your department's/university's policies or positions with regard to equity issues?
3. Do you believe your department has the adequate mechanisms in place to deal with equity issues? Have such issues been adequately dealt with in the past? How? (Please elaborate without giving identities).
4. Does the under-representation of female and visible-minority faculty have any effect on your graduate experience, or that of a fellow graduate student?
5. ANY OTHER COMMENTS? This is your chance to openly speak your mind on these issues, on your experience as a graduate experience and issues of equity, and any recommendations you would like to make. Also - PLEASE address anything I may have missed!!! :)

**Please forward your responses to me as soon as possible either via mail or IUTS (address below)  
or email me at: [bhallman@uoguelph.ca](mailto:bhallman@uoguelph.ca).**

**Thank you**

**Bonnie C. Hallman**  
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ALL information is strictly CONFIDENTIAL.

## Grad Student News

### UVic feminist graduate students:

**Kathleen Gabelmann:** working with children of women who have been diagnosed with Chronic Fatigue Syndrome.

**Wanda Lawson:** working on the historical, social, and material construction of Chronic Fatigue Syndrome as a disease.

### CWAG student at Manchester

Congratulations to **Liisa Cormode** for successfully defending her Ph.D. at the University of Manchester in January. Her thesis, "The international circulation of highly-skilled workers: Japanese-affiliated companies in Canada," explored the migration channels and processes of labour market segmentation which structure the employment of expatriate and local Japanese-speaking personnel. It also highlighted the methodological challenges of studying a transnational/'global' elite, and the relationship between methodology and substantive findings.

### Women Grad Students at Carleton

**Abra Adamo:** is anxiously waiting for funding from CIDA to facilitate her field work in Africa.

**Brenda Adams:** is going up to the Yukon for field research in April.

**Paula Carty:** graduated in November 1996 with distinction for her thesis on environmental education and information.

**Michelle Driedger:** is completing her thesis on coping strategies of MS patients in Ottawa. She will be starting a PhD at McMaster this fall.

**Alice Hovorka:** very successfully defended her thesis in January 1997. Her thesis was titled: "Searching for an alternative discourse to 'development'; women heads-of-households access to adequate housing in Harare".

**Kari McLeod:** is finishing her thesis which is a re-examination of John Snow's map of cholera deaths in Soho in 1854. She will be starting a PhD at Carleton in the fall, focusing on biomedical definitions of disease and social constructions of health and illness.

**Brenda Sproule:** graduated in November 1996. Her thesis on "Topoclimate and agriculture in Takhini River Valley, Southern Yukon Territory" qualified her for a job with Yukon Agriculture in Whitehorse.

**Alette Willis:** plans to defend her thesis on "Role of space and place and formation of a sense of global identity: the case of Pearson College". We are proud to brag that she will be attending University College London in the fall on a Commonwealth Scholarship.

(we apologize for not including all of our women colleagues)

**SEE YOU IN NEWFOUNDLAND**