



# Department of Women's Studies

## Alumnae Newsletter

### Fall 2009

#### Welcome!

This is the second Alumnae Newsletter from the Master of Women's Studies, Department of Women's Studies, Memorial University. Like the first newsletter, it is a tremendous reflection on the accomplishments of programme graduates!

In the first issue of the Alumnae Newsletter, we outlined our plans - to distribute a newsletter once a year to help you to share news about the various paths you have taken since completing your MWS degree, to facilitate your ability to keep in touch with one another and build social and professional networks, and to maintain your connections with the Department of Women's Studies at Memorial University of Newfoundland.

The contributors to this issue span over a decade of association with Women's Studies at Memorial University. In this issue, Nori Andriyani (1996) shares news from Indonesia, where she has worked as a gender specialist in development and cooperative projects and from where she is currently writing. Vicki Hallett (2004) provides an update, although she has never really 'left' the programme. When she moved away to complete her PhD in Women's Studies, she returned frequently to Newfoundland to carry out her research and always stopped in to say hello. Having completed her PhD, she teaches courses in the Department of Women's Studies and is completing a Post-Doctoral Fellowship, Institute for Social and Economic Research, Memorial University. Lynn Hartery (2002) writes from Mexico City, where she works at the Canadian Embassy as a Foreign Services Officer (Political). Rowen (Xiangrong) Huang (2007) writes from

Dafur, via Montréal and Nepal, where she is now employed with the Gender Advisory Unit, United Nations – African Union Hybrid Operation in Darfur. And, the programme's most recent graduate, Chantal Cardinal (2009), writes from Ottawa, where she works with the Senate and maintains connections to Africa through her involvement with Grandmothers for Grandmothers in Africa. These are incredibly rich and varied paths.

We invite you all to stay connected with us. If you know of others who would like to receive this newsletter, please pass a copy along to them. Check out the Department of Women's Studies web site. If you are in St. John's, or are going to be, please stop by, visit us, join in our many activities and events, or even better, if you would be willing to speak with current students during your visit, we can arrange this.

Best wishes,  
Katherine Side  
Head, Department of Women's Studies

**Master of Women's Studies**  
**Alumnae**

## Lynn Hartery, MWS, 2002

Lynn Hartery is currently in Mexico City, working at the Canadian Embassy as a Foreign Service Officer (Political)



I never thought about working for the Foreign Service before I went to Asia in 2004. After graduating from the MWS program in 2002, I worked several jobs in St. John's both at Memorial and in the community. The truth is, I've never really had a master plan about what I wanted to do, but when I heard about the Young Professionals International Internship Program offered by Dept. of Foreign Affairs that gave "young" (I was 30 at the time) Canadians an opportunity to work overseas, I jumped at it. After working in Thailand for 6 months, I moved to Cambodia, where, over drinks one evening, a friend mentioned that you could write the exam for the Foreign Service in Cambodia the following week. I didn't know much about the FS but the prospect of representing Canada and living and working overseas was very attractive. It was only after being accepted and starting my work in the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade (DFAIT) did I really understand the role of the FS.

The beauty of the recruitment process for FS is that they don't just look for Political Science grads, rather they take into consideration a

variety of factors including: education; experience abroad; policy work (my work on the Labor-Management committee at Iris Kirby House, for example) as well as aptitude tests for language. When I tell colleagues that I studied Psychology and Women's Studies, I do get some strange looks, but in the same recruitment, there were people who majored in Biology, Genetics, Business, and Law. Together, I think it means we bring a varied perspective to policy analysis and policy-making at the international level.

I believe my MWS has prepared me well for this work. The critical thinking skills are key; the willingness to put accepted doctrine on the table and ask people to examine it once again to see if we really have the whole story, or whether the story has changed since it was developed; a respect for diversity and experience.

When I started at DFAIT, I worked on bilateral relations with South American countries. I learned a lot about the federal government and the tensions between foreign policy and domestic considerations. I am now in Mexico City on my first posting, which is very exciting, and while our focus here is on our bilateral relations with Mexico, I'm also responsible for the human rights file, which means our government is interested to know the situation of human rights in this country, what Mexico is doing to promote and protect human rights of its citizens and how we can work together both bilaterally and multilaterally to promote respect for human rights.

I think the Foreign Service benefits from having me in this position and benefits from my education and experience as a feminist and a MWS graduate. The people in the political section here pay close attention to concerns of local and international NGOs and civil society and we continue to learn from activists, academics, and local communities. Sometimes I felt, as I did my MWS, and worked in NGO and women's rights organizations outside of university, that I was in a rather insulated environment where we all knew at least what MWS is, and what we were doing there. Now I'm

out in the real world where I have to explain those kinds of concepts again. But at the same time, I think it's good that MWS are 'mainstreaming' out, spreading the feminist roots all over the damned place! It would be great to have feminists, activists, WS grads in each department at all levels of government – just imagine what we could do!

### **Vicki Hallett, MWS, 2004**

I completed my MWS at Memorial in 2004 under the supervision of Dr. Ursula Kelly and Dr. Elizabeth Yeoman. I was accepted into the PhD program in Women's Studies at York University the same year. I spent 4 years in Toronto, where I was busy with my studies. While at York, I also had the privilege of travelling to national and international conferences to present papers on a variety of research subjects from Women's Studies Methodology to Life Writing Studies and Newfoundland Identity. I moved back to Newfoundland in 2008 to complete my degree. During the 2008/09 year I also taught two introductory level Women's Studies courses while finishing my dissertation.

The 2008/09 year also saw the inception of 'The Blue Castle' Salon, an interactive showcase of women's myriad roles in cultural production throughout history. My colleague Dr. Sonja Boon and I designed this series of monthly dialogues and presentations so that we might bring together varied community members in a public space of the imagination. The series continues this year, with monthly (free) meetings at the Ship Pub on Duckworth Street. Updates and information can be found on our blog at [www.bluestockingsalon.blogspot.com](http://www.bluestockingsalon.blogspot.com).

I completed my PhD in June of 2009 under the supervision of Dr. Marlene Kadar, Dr. Douglas Freake, and Dr. Susan Ehrlich at York. I am currently a Post-Doctoral Research Fellow with the Institute for Social and Economic Research at MUN. My research project is an archival life-writing study entitled "A Writing Life: Phebe

Florence Miller, the Poet and Postmistress of Topsail". I am also privileged to enjoy a continued affiliation with the Department of Women's Studies for the duration of my Post-Doctoral appointment, and I will be teaching an online section of WMST 1000 in the Winter 2010 term.

My experience in the MWS program at Memorial gave me a solid foundation on which to build my academic career. It not only allowed me to study with brilliant scholars, but also instilled a sense of community partnership that I carry with me today. I am proud to be a graduate of the MSW program and delighted to witness its continued growth and development.

### **Rowen (Xiangrong) Huang, MWS, 2007**

When I left Newfoundland for the internship in New York in September 2006, I was more worried about my thesis than excited about the chance to see the UN headquarters. After three months of internship, which gave me good exposure to how the international organization works, I rushed back to Montreal to try to finish my thesis and also to learn French.

I did several short-term jobs in Montréal before getting the chance to work for UN Mission in Nepal as Gender Affairs Officer in 2008. Nepal was in the transitional period of abolishing monarchy and establishing a democratic system. It was exciting to witness this historical process and even more exciting to be involved in the mandate of ensuring 33% of representation of Nepalese women in the new constituent assembly. A few months later, the mission fulfilled its mandate and was dismissed.

This July, I was deployed to Darfur to work for the Gender Advisory Unit in UNAMID (United Nations - African Union Hybrid Operation in Darfur). Living conditions here are harsh, and the security situation even more severe. There have been two cases of kidnapping of international

civilian staff and two cases of ambushes against UN military and police in the past 2 months. But it is a good learning experience to work in this, the biggest mission in the UN which has everything a mission is supposed to have. It is also exciting to be able to use what has been learned in our Program to make changes in the world. So far, I enjoy it!

### **Chantal Cardinal, MWS, 2009**

When I arrived at Memorial in September 2007, I had plans of writing a thesis but was unsure of the specifics of my topic. A few months into the program I soon realised that I was better suited for an internship as I did not believe I was able to write about a topic such as the situation of women living with HIV/AIDS in Eastern Africa without having any first hand interactions with them. I was thankful that Memorial offered such a unique opportunity. I was able to obtain sponsorship and make my way to Africa for the most incredible journey of my life. I was blessed with great professors and supervisors and managed to write something that was true to my values and knowledge.

Since my departure from Memorial and St. John's, I have returned to Ottawa and am working at the Senate of Canada. Although the position I hold is not related to my field of interest, I hope to develop professional skills during my time here, which will contribute to my future goals of working with a Non-Governmental Organisation overseas. In the meantime I am trying to have my Master's report published into an article and getting involved with the *Stephen Lewis Foundation*. A co-worker and I have touched based with *Grandmothers for Grandmothers in Africa* and are hosting a few informal fundraisers. We have obtained a shipment of jewellery called Kazuri (in Swahili this mean small and beautiful) which are ceramic bracelets, necklaces and earrings handcrafted by



grandmothers in Kenya. At each event we will be displaying the jewellery and hope to sell as many as possible. All the profits go the Stephen Lewis Foundation in helping grandmothers in Africa.

What next? I am looking into internship that will take me back to Africa...

### **Nori Andriyani, MWS 1996**

I entered the Women's Studies Program at Memorial University in the Fall of 1994. I was part of a program between Memorial and the Women's Studies Graduate School, University of Indonesia. I submitted my thesis in the spring of 1996 and returned to Indonesia. I received my certificate from Memorial in May 1997.

Since returning to Indonesia, I started to work part time with the Women's Studies Graduate School, University of Indonesia. I also had my second child, a boy who was born in May 1997.

My work for the Women's Studies included teaching the subjects of feminist theory, assisting students' theses and for some time producing the newsletter. My work for the Women's Studies ended in 2006.

Indonesia was hit by the economic crisis in late 1997 which also led to the downfall of the dictator regime of Suharto in May 1998. I had to find work aside from my work at the Women's Studies. Since 1998 I worked at various development projects in Indonesia. I work in various sectors. I work as a gender specialist in a Canadian funded cooperative project. I was in a civil society development project in building democracy and good governance. Then finally, in June 2009, I just finished my work as part of the monitoring and evaluation team of the CIDA (Canadian International Development Agency) funded projects in Aceh, the tsunami-affected province.

I have not been working in any paid job since June 2009. I find myself exhausted with juggling

between the domestic and public work and I have chosen to only do the domestic work for now. Being a feminist, what I find to be the hardest is that you are experiencing the things that have been studied in the classroom. Recently I have been trying to write. Currently I'm writing on the sex trade in Jakarta. Hopefully that book will be finished by end of 2009. Unfortunately, it is not in English. But who knows there may be a chance to publish the English version, maybe becoming a writer could be my next profession. I will keep my alumni updated.

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If you would like to be included in a future Alumnae Newsletter, please contact Joan Butler ([joanb@mun.ca](mailto:joanb@mun.ca)) or Katherine Side ([kside@mun.ca](mailto:kside@mun.ca)).

If, in addition to the Alumnae newsletter, you are also interested in receiving a semi-annual electronic copy of E-News! please send us your e-mail address.

Please view the Alumni Affairs and Development web page for information concerning Memorial University alumni, [www.mun.ca/alumni](http://www.mun.ca/alumni).