

eSimone

CONNECTING TO
THE “FEMINIST” IN YOU...

INSIDE



News 2-5



Congratulations 5



Past Events 6-7

Word from the New Principal: The Feminist University

Happy New Year!

I am delighted and honoured to join the Simone de Beauvoir Institute community as Principal. The social justice ethos of the SDBI has played an important role in my intellectual, professional and personal development since I arrived at Concordia a little over ten years ago. To have the opportunity to work much more closely with the people who comprise this dynamic community thus feels like a dream come true.

I have long felt that the SDBI offers a transformational model of engagement that our university should strive to emulate. At this current moment of institutional change, I believe the social justice values that shape our learning, activism and research can offer much to the larger Concordia community. In particular, I believe SDBI should be at the forefront of imagining and realizing a “Feminist University”. In the coming weeks and months, I look forward to meeting with members of the SDBI community to hear about your hopes and dreams for the Institute, and how these hopes and dreams, in turn, may contribute to making our university (and city and world) a more dynamic site of progressive social change. While I have some thoughts on how we

might move forward, it is your ideas that will serve as the foundation of who we will aspire to be in the coming years.

There is already much to look forward to: working with the Dean’s office to help prepare the ground for the successful approval and implementation of a new major in Sexuality Studies (MISS), the ongoing work to realize a new master’s program in Critical Studies in Activism and, of course, the 40th Anniversary Celebrations to be held in 2018. In this regard, I am especially grateful to Genevève Rail and Linda Bowes, who have toiled so hard to get us where we are today. I am also grateful to Gada Mahrouse, who has served so ably as Interim Principal these past six months.

À bientôt,
Kimberley Manning



The SdBI’s new Principal
Dr. Kimberley Manning

NEWS

Thank You Dr. Rail, Outgoing SdBI Principal

In June 2015, Dr. Geneviève Rail completed her second term as SdBI Principal. Despite the numerous responsibilities that accompany this prestigious position, Dr. Rail remained an accessible teacher to students and developed a number of ambitious research projects in the field of health. Staff, students and faculty sincerely thank her for the time and energy she dedicated to overseeing the development of the SdBI from July 2010 to June 2015. While no longer principal, we are pleased to announce that Dr. Rail remains an engaged and vibrant member of the Simone de Beauvoir's full-time faculty.



Left to right: past SdBI principals Mair Verthuy, Arpi Hamalian and Geneviève Rail



Dr. Geneviève Rail



Left to right: Research Associate Haifa Tlili, Geneviève Rail and a colleague in Paris.

Simone's Library Welcomes a New Documentalist

This past fall, The Simone de Beauvoir Institute welcomed Isabelle Lamoureux as the new Simone's Library documentalist. Having already held the position prior to completing her PhD in Library Studies at McGill University, Isabelle brings to the job a wealth of experience and vision. She is a trained information specialist in feminism and she is present every afternoon to simplify student life at this university.

Simone's Library, located on the fourth floor of the

Institute, is an excellent place to study for all Women's Studies students. Open from noon to 6 p.m., Monday to Thursday, students are welcome to come up and eat their lunches while working. The library is equipped with two computers, Internet access, a noisy kettle and thousands of books and archives. Furthermore, students who have questions regarding their assignments are welcome to visit the library, where Isabelle will be happy to help them.

We sincerely wish to thank

the three library volunteers who gave their time during the fall 2015 semester: Tram Nghiem, Diana Nyoike and Holiday Easterbrook. Your dedication and your hard work are much appreciated!



A view of Simone's Library

NEWS

Decolonizing Our Solidarity Now Online

Co-authored by SdBI full-time faculty member Dr. Gada Mahrouse and Projet Accompagnement Solidarité Colombie (PASC), the publication *Decolonizing Our Solidarity* is now available online in both French and English.

This manual is one of two components of a collaborative project intended to develop steps toward “decolonizing” international solidarity work. The project, which also included workshops, was inspired by the challenges faced by members of PASC in their accompaniment work in Colombia, and by Dr. Mahrouse’s research on privilege, transnational activism, humanitarianism and political tourism.

In hopes of better understanding the power relations in which international solidarity interventions are embedded, *Decolonizing Our Solidarity* shares the experiences, inspirations, practices and ideals of feminists of colour across the world. As such, the project participates in building a “counter-discourse” that critiques practices of international solidarity from an anti-colonial, feminist perspective and grounds them in social struggles.

The *Decolonizing Our Solidarity* manual can be downloaded here:
<http://pasc.aegir.koumbit.net/files/u72/decolonizingoursolidarity.pdf>

The Sweet Sixteen Gets Translated

SdBI Fellow and Concordia Journalism Professor Linda Kay’s book *The Sweet Sixteen: The Journey That Inspired the Canadian Women’s Press Club* (2012) was recently published in French. The news is particularly relevant for this publication, which includes an exploration of the cultural divide between the Anglophone and Francophone members of this pioneering group of women reporters.

An excerpt from *Elles étaient seize*, the translated publication, can be read here:
<http://www.concordia.ca/cunews/main/stories/2015/03/03/linda-kay-extract.html>

Every Thursday
from
January 14
to
April 7

in MU-101
at the SdBI
(2170 Bishop)

Learning How to Scream

Initiated by SdBI undergraduate student Valérie Simon, *Learning How to Scream* is a free lecture series focused on lesbian lives, theory and activism. Located at the intersection of workshop and undergraduate seminar, this lecture series aims to confront lesbian history and to make sense of it in contemporary contexts.

For more information, or to register: learninghowtoscream@gmail.com



Celebrating SdBI Students!

The Simone de Beauvoir Institute & Women's Studies Convocation

At the 2015 Spring convocation, our graduating students and their families were glowing with pride! Congratulations to each one of them for their outstanding work!

Elodie Bruton-Cyr
Irene Dimopoulos
Candice Figueira
Micheala Holt
Emilie Jacob
Melissa Johnson
Molly Jeanne Seck Langill
Jennie MacPhee-Woodburn
Sophy Martin
Traci Nicole Silva
Alexandra Elizabeth Turski
Pamela Jaclyn Vrabel
Sayam Walia



Elodie Bruton-Cyr poses with members of her family



Left to right: Emilie Jacob and Molly Jeanne Seck Langill



Molly Jeanne Seck Langill celebrates with her parents



Dean André Roy hands out a certificate of accomplishment to an SdBI student

SdBI Students on the Dean's List

Congratulations to all SdBI students who made the Dean's List, an honour reserved for students who have a GPA of 3.75 or better. Keep up the good work!

Micheala Holt	Sarah Oliel
Alisha Mascarenhas	Adrienne Pan
Alanna Stewart	Sasha Simmons
Candice Boos	Valerie Simon
Ariane Charbonneau	



The SdBI Recruits

Dr. Gada Mahrouse, interim SdBI principal for the fall 2015 semester, and Women's Studies student Jasper Malacheck Rasmussin greeted potential students during Concordia's Open House last fall. In addition to distributing information about the SdBI's academic programs, copies of the student journal *Subversions* were also available for consultation. This proved to be a much-appreciated way for young feminists to encounter the excellent work produced by our current and past students.



NEWS

Congratulations!

Dean Recognizes Dr. Namaste's Excellence in Teaching

Congratulations to Dr. Viviane Namaste, who was chosen for a Dean's Award for Teaching Excellence. Dr. Namaste is an exemplary recipient of this important award, which was introduced to recognize superior performance in one or more areas of teaching. We are thrilled to see Dr. Namaste's professional excellence recognized and celebrated!



Dr. Viviane Namaste receives her award from Dean André Roy

O'Grady Receives Inaugural Award

This year, a new category was added to the President's Media Outreach Awards to recognize the top authors of opinion pieces published in newspapers. The inaugural award for Opinion Writer of the Year went to Kathleen O'Grady, an SdBI Research Associate. O'Grady is the author of numerous articles on health policy, women's issues and her experiences as the parent of an autistic child. Her opinion pieces have been published by a range of newspapers across Canada and the U.S., and are frequently reprinted. Congratulations to Kathleen O'Grady for her award and best wishes for her continued success!



Kathleen O'Grady, third from left, stands with other recipients of the President's Media Outreach Awards

Dr. Zhang Selected as FRQ Star Researcher

In May 2015, the Fonds de recherche du Québec (FRQ) selected one young star researcher for each of its three funds. Dr. Tracy Zhang, a post-doctoral fellow in Concordia's Department of Geography, Planning and Environment and an SdBI Research Associate, won the prestigious award for the Society and Culture Funds.

Dr. Zhang's research is situated in the fields of cultural development and feminist political economy,

focusing specifically on cultural industries. Currently funded by the Fonds de recherche du Québec—Société et culture (FRQSC), her postdoctoral project examines international recruitment practices in the North American entertainment industries, using the Cirque du Soleil as a case. Focusing on the employment of Chinese acrobats, her research aims to shed light on how the Cirque du Soleil recruits and manages such a culturally diverse labour force.

PAST EVENTS

Nothing to Lose but Our Fear Launched

This past October, the SdBI co-sponsored the launch of *Nothing to Lose but Our Fear: Resistance in Dangerous Times*. Published by Zed Books, the publication is a collection of conversations between Dr. Fiona Jeffries (Human Rights, Carleton University) and various critical scholars and activists from around the world. These exchanges confront the ways in which fear shapes subjectivity, and explore historical and contemporary instances of resistance to the political use of fear.

Following the format of the book, the event presented Fiona Jeffries in conversation with Norma Rantisi and Carrie Rentschler.

The event was co-presented with Concordia's Department of Geography, Planning and Environment.



Left to right: Dr. Fiona Jeffries, Dr. Norma Rantisi, Dr. Carrie Rentschler and moderator Dr. Rosemary-Clair Collard



Left to right: colloquium organizers Tess McClemon, Vanessa Meyer, Desirée de Jesus and Rachel Webb Jekanowski

Exploring How Feminist Humour Disrupts

Late August's Colloquium HUMOROUS > DISRUPTIONS: Laughter and Technologies of Disruption in Feminist Film and Media was an occasion for scholars to reflect on the polyvalent ways in which humour has functioned as a disruptive technology in feminist media theory

and practice. Organized by *Synoptique: An Online Journal of Film and Moving Image Studies* and Concordia's Mel Hoppenheim School of Cinema, this two-day event consisted of two roundtables of invited scholars and artists, and three panels of presentations selected from an open call for papers. Among the participants was Dr. Gada Mahrouse, full-time faculty at the SdBI and instructor for the undergraduate course "Selected Topics in WSDB: Feminism and Comedy." The colloquium also featured a curated media exhibition of feminist videos and online games. Contributed by local and international artists, these works collectively imagine affective and humorous engagements with race, gender, cybernetics and the body.

This colloquium was organized with the support of the SdBI, as well as the Feminist Media Lab, TAG, ARTHEMIS, the Global Emergent Media Lab, the Concordia University Small Grants Program and the Concordia University Alumni Association.

PAST EVENTS

RA Sessions Return



SdBI RAs Dr. Karin Doerr (left) and Dr. Sima Aprahamian (right) at the Congress of Humanities and Social Sciences

“My interest in Rosa Luxemburg began after the annual Congress of Humanities and Social Sciences of 2013. Fellow Research Associate Dr. Sima Aprahamian and I gave an introduction to Margarethe von Trotta’s film on Luxemburg for the Society for Socialist Studies. The next Congress, in 2014, also featured sessions on Luxemburg. I then began my own reading, which led me beyond the political persona of this famous revolutionary. Using an analysis of gender and race, my research explores the relationship between Rosa Luxemburg’s largely bourgeois lifestyle and her revolutionary stance.

I presented my preliminary study, entitled “Rosa Luxemburg’s ‘Life’s Little Ornaments’: Escaping Hostile Times?”, at this year’s Congress of Humanities and Social Sciences in a session called “Roxa Luxemburg: Personal and Political Aspects of a Revolutionary’s Life,” again for the Society for Socialist Studies. In November 2015, I shared my revised study at the Research Associates’ forum at the Simon de Beauvoir Institute under the new title “The Bourgeois Ways of the Revolutionary Rosa Luxemburg.”

—Dr. Karin Doerr

For a number of years, the SdBI Research Associates (RAs) have organized a casual lecture series that pepper the fall and winter semesters. This year’s series was initiated by Dr. Esmeralda Thornhill, an RA and tenured Full Professor at the Schulich School of Law at Dalhousie University in Halifax. Her lecture “Reading *R. v. RDS: A Key to Understanding the Dynamics of ‘Race’ and Gender Intersecting*” unpacked a landmark case in which the criminal trial of a Black youth in Family Court led to the Black female trial judge being “tried” by the legal, political, and social systems of our country.

The next session was given by Dr. Karin Doerr, an RA whose recent scholarly work on philosopher and activist Rosa Luxemburg is introduced in the adjacent text.

This largely self-organized platform offers a convivial context for our constituents to share their recent research and to discuss works-in-progress with a supportive community of peers. Each presentation is followed by a discussion period, which allows for feedback, inquiry and resource sharing. In this way, the series is an important occasion for our RAs to build community and develop their personal research through discursive exchanges.



Dr. Karin Doerr presents her research on Rosa Luxemburg during November’s RA Session

Submit to eSimone

eSimone is a regular publication of the SdBI. Its purpose is to promote the Institute and its activities in the community, as well as to provide information about issues related to scholarship, collective movements and opportunities rooted in and stemming from a pro-feminist perspective. If you wish to submit information, please email the Events Coordinator and Information Officer at:

sdbi.eventscordinator@concordia.ca