



# eSimone

CONNECTING TO  
THE "FEMINIST" IN YOU...

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## WELCOME BACK!

Although I have only had the pleasure of being at the Simone de Beauvoir Institute (SdBI) for a couple of months, I am already inspired by how active and engaged the SdBI community is. As the new Events Coordinator and Information Officer, I have had the privilege of closely following the numerous academic, political and cultural activities occurring within the Institution. In light of this, I am excited

to put together the first edition of the second volume of eSimone, a newsletter that will help students, staff, professors and friends keep up with SdBI activities. This academic year has already proven to be a dynamic one that will surely continue to further its contributions to our feminist culture!

-Michelle Lacombe

## A new staff at the SdBI

In October, I was hired as this year's Event Coordinator and Information Officer and I am thrilled to have joined the SdBI community. Although I have had the pleasure of meeting a number of you at our events, I feel that I should take the time and space to share a bit of myself to those of you I have not yet had the opportunity to introduce myself.

performance and body modification. Although I am affiliated with a number of local cultural organizations and wear many hats, my primary involvement has been with articule, an artist-run centre focused on experimental and socially engaged programming, and La Centrale, Quebec's only feminist artist-run centre.

I graduated from Concordia in 2006 with a major in Interdisciplinary Studies and a minor in Women and the Fine Arts. Since completing my BFA, I have been actively involved in Montreal's artist-run community and worked to support a wide range of artistic, discursive and pedagogical initiatives as both a practicing artist and cultural worker. Within my art practice, I am currently working to blur the boundaries between the body, language and landscape with the use of drawing,

As Events Coordinator and Information Officer, I help realize SdBI supported or initiated events and keep our community informed of the institutional accomplishments and local feminist programming that takes place. If you have an event to announce or a idea to share, please know that I will make myself available. I look forward to getting to know you all and working together to create an incredible year of feminist projects!

- Michelle Lacombe

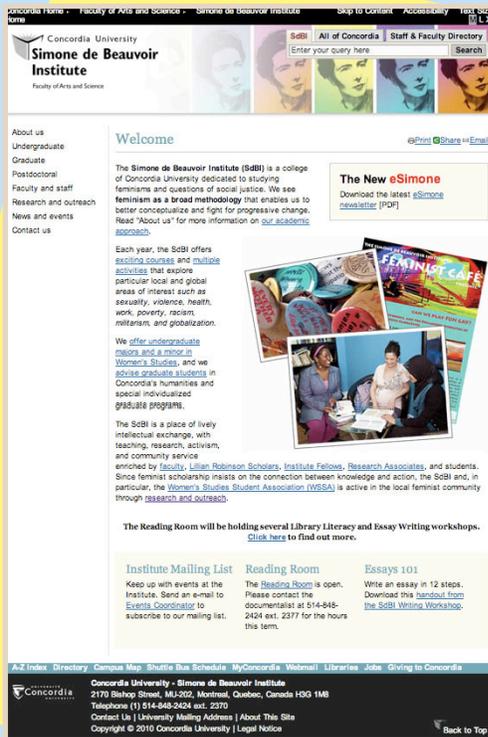
## The SdBI takes position!

In October 2010, Ontario Superior Court Judge Susan Himel made a ruling with regards to Canada's prostitution laws. The ruling argues that the current laws -- communicating for the purposes of prostitution, living off the avails of a prostitute, and the bawdy house laws -- create a context of increased danger for women, and as such violate Section 7 of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms, the right to the security of the person.

Some feminists, notably Québec's Conseil du Statut de la Femme (CSF), objected to the ruling, arguing that prostitution is violence against women. The SdBI prepared a position statement on the issue. The statement was presented at a press conference, alongside the voice of Stella, a local community agency by and for sex workers, as well as an ad hoc group of feminists who wrote an open letter to CSF. Together, the diverse voices represent an alternative feminist view of prostitution as work, and offer reasons why feminists need to support the decriminalization of prostitution.

The position statement on the Judge Himel decision can be found on our website:

[http://wsdb.concordia.ca/about-us/official-position-on-issues/documents/declaration\\_sexwork\\_final.pdf](http://wsdb.concordia.ca/about-us/official-position-on-issues/documents/declaration_sexwork_final.pdf)



## New website

The SdBI launched its new website!

<http://wsdb.concordia.ca/>

The site not only boasts a new fresh look, but also an updated user friendly navigation system and a more informative portrait of our community. You can now find individual profile pages containing bios for our faculty, Research Associates and institute Fellows, as well as for our postdoctoral fellows. Whether you are a student, a friend or a curious stranger, this dynamic new website is now the place for you to get up-to-date information regarding the SdBI academic programs, feminist events and community outreach.

As a tool developed for you, your feedback regarding the website is always welcome!



Dr. Viviane Namaste presenting the SdBI position statement to Montreal media

## Congratulations!

### Grand prix 2010 du conseil québécois des gais et lesbiennes

The SDBI would like to congratulate Dr. Viviane Namaste, professor and researcher at Concordia's Simone de Beauvoir Institute, for having been awarded the prestigious 2010 Grand Prize from the Quebec Council of Gays and Lesbians (CQGL). "Professor Namaste has been distinguished for her academic and research excellence, her support for minority rights, as well as her defense of transgendered and bisexual peoples' rights to healthcare," said Steve Foster, CQGL's President and CEO. She succeeds the Honorable Louise Arbour and M. Svend Robinson, previous recipients of the award.



Trophy ribbons by Marissa Falco  
<http://miss-sequential.blogspot.com/>

### New Scholar Award

In October, Dean Brian Lewis awarded SdBI Fellow Dr. Stephanie Paterson, who specializes in feminist policy studies in the Department of Political Science, the New Scholar Award. Presented as part of the Dean's Awards for Outstanding Achievement, the New Scholar Award recognizes outstanding achievement by a tenure-track faculty member. The SdBI congratulates Dr. Stephanie Paterson on her accomplishments!

### Dean's List

The SdBI would like to congratulate Kinneret Sheetreit, Sarah Fuchs and Margaret Anne Lietold for being placed on the Dean's list for their outstanding performance in the 2009/2010 academic year. It is an honor to see our students doing such incredible work at the Institute!

### Successful SdBI faculty members

The SdBI is delighted to announce the renewal of Dr. Gada Mahrouse as well as the promotion of Dr. Viviane Namaste to the rank of full Professor. Congratulations to both!

### spotlight



Esther Simmonds with her portrait of Craig Kielburger

Alumni Esther Simmonds graduated with distinctions in 2005 from the Simone de Beauvoir Institute. Since then, she has been actively working in her community and was recently profiled on Bravo's television series Star Portraits during which her feminist studies at Concordia were highlighted. The episode, which profiles three artists including Esther who create portraits of Free the Children founder Craig Kielburger, can be viewed on the BRAVO website at :

<http://watch.bravo.ca/#clip362706>

Find more of Esther's work on her website [www.estersm.com](http://www.estersm.com)

Bravo Esther!

# PAST EVENTS

## Colloque: Les femmes dans la vie culturelle de Montréal pendant les années 1960

As part of Women's History Month, Concordia University was proud to host a conference organized to highlight the presence of women in the arts. The conference, titled «Les femmes dans la vie culturelle de Montréal pendant les années 1960» was organized by the Montreal Council for Women's History Month. The conference brought together professors from Concordia and other universities to speak about women's art at the beginning of the quiet revolution.

Organized by a committee including Dr. Geneviève Rail, SdBI Principal, and Arpi Hamalian, Associate Professor at the Department of Education and SdBI honorary Fellow, the conference boasted a number of partners and collaborating organizations including the Conseil des Montréalaises, the Ministère de la culture, des communications et de la condition féminine, Concordia University, the Simone de Beauvoir Institute, the Fédération québécoise des professeures et professeurs d'université, the Centre de documentation pour l'éducation aux adultes et la condition féminine, and the City of Montreal.

Following the success of the event, the event's organizing committee was honored with an invitation to sign the Golden Book of the City of Montreal in the presence of Hélène Fotopoulos, member of the City's Executive Council.



Dr. Arpi Hamalian signs the Golden Book

## A second serving of Feminist Cafés

October 27th marked the return of the SdBI's Feminist Café events series. The first Café provided the opportunity to meet Lillian Robinson Visiting Scholar Dr. Emily Van der Meulen. The meet-and-greet with Emily provided the opportunity to gain a better understanding of her research on sex work and labour as well as the possible impacts the recent Judge Himel decision could have on Canadian sex workers, labour organizers and researchers. Like all Cafés, her presentation was followed by a small reception during which the public could discuss with Emily in a more informal manner. The success of the event suggests the beginning of another year of dynamic presentations by SdBI Lillian Robinson Visiting Scholars as well as feminist academics, activists and writers who wish to share their work with our community.

New Feminist Café posters: watch for them on campus!



Dr. Emily Van der Meulen looking radiant after her presentation

# PAST EVENTS

## La démocratie dévoilée/ Revealing Democracy

In March, 2010, Quebec's Minister of Justice introduced in the National Assembly Bill 94, An Act to establish guidelines governing accommodation requests within the Administration and certain institutions. It states that, "the practice whereby a personnel member of the Administration or an institution and a person to whom services are being provided by the Administration or the institution show their face during the delivery of services is a general practice, and that if an accommodation involves

an adaptation of that practice and reasons of security, communication or identification warrant it, the accommodation must be denied."

From November 18th to 20th, Concordia University hosted "Revealing Democracy: Bill 94 and the challenges of religious pluralism and ethnocultural diversity in Quebec," a conference that took the ongoing debates around Bill 94, reasonable accommodation and secularism as a point of departure to explore questions

that have arisen within society with a view to inform public debate and reflect on the nature of citizenship.

The conference featured scholars from Concordia and other universities, and included SdBI professors Chantal Maillé and Gada Mahrouse. A keynote lecture titled "Civilizational Delusions: Secularism, Tolerance and Equality" was given by Dr. Wendy Brown (University of California, Berkeley)

### SdBIs response to Bill 94

ON MARCH 25th, the government of Jean Charest announced Bill 94, an act that would prevent women wearing the niqab from accessing hospitals, daycares, schools, universities, and other public services, and would bar women in niqab from working in the public sector.

To read the SdBI full response to this bill, please visit our website : [wsdb.concordia.ca](http://wsdb.concordia.ca)



## Not to forget!

The SdBI partnered with a large number of departments, organisations and individuals throughout the semester. These partnerships and collaborations allow us to share important feminist research and knowledge, support important feminist practitioners and build a valuable and engaged community. We thank all of you for your solidarity and help in making the wide range of SdBI events and initiatives possible!

# UPCOMING EVENTS

## Keeping in touch

eSimone is a regular publication of the SdBI. Its purpose is to promote the organization 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:

[events.coordinator.sdbi@gmail.com](mailto:events.coordinator.sdbi@gmail.com)



Party  
Simone de Beauvoir Birthday!  
Friday January 14th



Book launch  
The Women of Anglo India  
Thursday January 27th