



Simone de Beauvoir  
Institute



Concordia University  
**Arts and Science**

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# eSimone

CONNECTING TO  
THE "FEMINIST" IN YOU...

## INSIDE



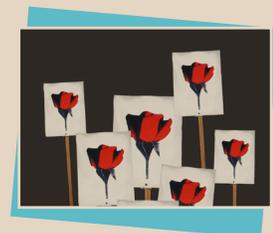
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## A New Way to "Like" the SdBI

To stay better connected with our ever-evolving community of feminist students, scholars and activists, the Simone de Beauvoir Institute has launched a Facebook page. This new tool is a much-anticipated complement to our already existing email communications and eSimone newsletter.

It is our hope that this new platform will expand our community and provide an accessible space for the constructive exchange of ideas and the promotion of events. If you have a Facebook account, I invite you to visit and "like"

our page so that the information we post appears in your newsfeed. I also encourage you to share the page within your networks so that others may join and communities can intersect.

- Michelle Lacombe  
Events Coordinator &  
Information Officer

<https://www.facebook.com/SimonedeBeauvoirInstitute>

## WSSA's New Look

This fall, the Women Studies Student Association (WSSA) launched a new logo. The change follows years of debate about WSSA's graphic identity within the association. Specifically, many students felt that the previous logo, which included a stylized image of a dancing figure in a dress, was limiting. In response, WSSA took up the challenge to propose a logo that better reflects current feminisms and the SdBI student body.

The new logo, commissioned by WSSA, was designed by Charline Bataille. Fresh, graphic and non-representational, it was an immediate hit with the students. Unconventionally, it also comes in a number of different color options. This playful characteristic is a nice reminder that the WSSA community

unites a diversity of feminisms that stand together, even when they are at their most oppositional.

In addition to a refreshed graphic look, WSSA has also announced a new website. Dynamic and easy to navigate, the platform is a student-dedicated space used to promote upcoming WSSA and SdBI events, as well as to share resources. Check it out!

<http://www.wssaconcordia.com>



WSSA's new logo

# NEWS

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Above: Dr. Jo Vellacott  
Below: white poppies for peace  
and commemoration



## Remembering Pacifists During Conflict Commemoration

Dr. Jo Vellacott, a feminist historian and expert in the anti-war movement, taught Women's Studies at the SdBI from 1982 to 1987. While at the Institute, she co-edited *Militarism versus Feminism: Writings on Women and War*, one of many books she published on the themes of pacifism and war.

This past July, as people around the world prepared to mark the 100th anniversary of the start of World War One, Dr. Vellacott attended the 83rd Anglo-American Conference of Historians in London (England) to remind us of the work of pacifists during the tragic conflict.

"We forget that there were those who sought to promote non-violent means to deal with international conflict," said Vellacott. "Opposition to militarism was, for some, based not only on the horror of sending young men out in [the] thousands to be killed but as much or more on a recognition of what it did – and still does – to humans to be forced to harm and kill others."

Her contributions at the conference, and more generally in the field of modern history, ensure that dissenting feminist voices are amongst those remembered during the commemoration of conflict.

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## SAWCC Takes Position

SdBI Research Associates Dr. Dolores Chew and Dr. Denise Nadeau are active members of The South Asian Women's Community Centre (SAWCC), an organization that offers services, support and advocacy for South Asian women (and their families) living in Québec and Canada. SAWCC is also an important and vocal group within feminist activism, protest marches and vigils.

Last spring, at the height of tensions triggered by the Parti Québécois' proposed Charter of Values (Bill 60), SAWCC presented a brief to the National Assembly opposing the proposed bill. In it, they spelled out an important intersectional feminist perspective is articulated. Specifically, their statement looks at the proposed bill through the lens of continued colonial practices and questions the government's prioritizing of religious freedom over the equality of women.

A few months later, SAWCC also published a public statement critiquing the Western world's focus on "honour killings" and "forced marriage". This powerful text reframes these distinct acts of violence against women as direct symptoms of patriarchy and calls out the damaging and racist trend to essentialize them as culturally specific. The statement can be read in its entirety on the Montreal Serai website:

<http://montrealserai.com/wp/wp-content/uploads/2014/04/SAWCC-statement-23-April-2014-HONOUR-KILLINGS.pdf>

The SdBI commends SAWCC for taking positions and demanding less damaging policies and practices. We are hopeful that their efforts will lead to real change within Québec and Canada!

## SdBI Constituents Publish!

### Feminist Shoes

In the spring of 2014, Kerry McElroy, a SdBI Research Associate and part-time documentalist at Simone's Library, was approached by Louise Morgan and Alyssa Tremblay to contribute to the spring edition of the Concordia University Magazine. In the issue, six Concordia scholars were asked to use shoes as the entry point to introduce their respective areas of research to new publics. Having taught a SdBI undergraduate class titled *The Politics of Fashion* in 2012, Kerry was an ideal candidate for the task!

Read her contribution here:

[http://www.concordia.ca/alumni-friends/magazine/2014-spring/cunews/offices/vpdersg/aar/2014/05/01/on-the-right-foot.html?utm\\_source=slide1&utm\\_medium=cqc-carousel-on-the-right-foot&utm\\_campaign=homepagebanner](http://www.concordia.ca/alumni-friends/magazine/2014-spring/cunews/offices/vpdersg/aar/2014/05/01/on-the-right-foot.html?utm_source=slide1&utm_medium=cqc-carousel-on-the-right-foot&utm_campaign=homepagebanner)

### Political Acrobats

Dr. Tracy Zhang, a Research Associate and part-time professor at the Simone de Beauvoir Institute recently published a research paper titled *Bending the Body for China: The uses of acrobatics in Sino-US diplomacy during the Cold War* in the International Journal of Cultural Policy. The paper examines how acrobatics was imbued with multiple meanings through the practices of nation-state building and international diplomacy. Drawing on oral history interviews and archival data, Zhang's study demonstrates how the relationship between acrobatics and the ideas of 'Chinese revolution' was established, strengthened, disrupted, and finally re-modified to facilitate China's relations with the West.

Read her paper here:

<http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/10286632.2014.956665#.VFfwhedetMY>

### Health Care Myths

Kathleen O'Grady, a SdBI Research Associate, recently co-authored a paper with Noralou Roos. Their piece, which debunks myths about Canada's health care system, was published in the *Globe and Mail*.

Read it here:

<http://www.theglobeandmail.com/globe-debate/five-things-canadians-get-wrong-about-the-health-system/article20360452/>

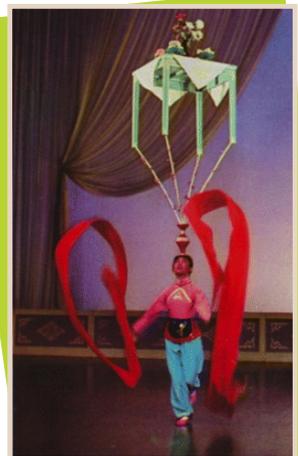
Images from Dr. Zhang's paper



The front cover of the Shenyang U.S. Souvenir Program, 1972. Source: NY Performing Arts Archive.



A revolutionary acrobatic play made in Shanghai. Source: Private Archive (1967).



A woman juggler performs yangge. Source: Chinese Acrobatics (1974).

# NEWS

## Congratulations!

### Dr. Moll Moves On

We are pleased to announce that Sorouja Moll was awarded her PHD!

While completing the doctoral program in Humanities, Moll taught the *Trauma and Feminist Media* class at the SdBI. She has since accepted a position as Lecturer in the Drama and Speech Communication Department at the University of Waterloo. We wish her continued success with her scholarly work!

### O'Grady, Newsmaker of the Week

The first week of August, Kathleen O'Grady, a SdBI Research Associate, was selected by University Communications Services as Concordia's Newsmaker of the Week. This recognition was awarded following the success of her essay *Strength in a Child's Voice*, a piece about her experience parenting an autistic child and the impacts it has had on her writing. Poetic and touching, the essay was originally published in *Medium* but was quickly picked up and reprinted in Vancouver's *Georgia Straight* as well as the *Montreal Gazette*. We want to thank Kathleen for so eloquently and generously discussing the difficult and continued learning her experiences as a mother have provided. We also want to congratulate her for the success of this piece!

Read the essay here:

<https://medium.com/on-parenting/strength-in-a-childs-voice-e4e5129e4654>

### Student Scholarships

Provost In-Course Scholarship  
Amanda Arella

Lillian Robinson Scholarship  
Molly Langill

Mair Verthuy Scholarship  
Michaela Holt

Provost Entrance Scholarship  
Cynthia Sabourin

Pia Wilkinson Memorial Scholarship  
Lindsay Nixon

SdBI Scholarship  
Alexandra Turski

Thérèse Casgrain Medal &  
Foundation Scholarship  
Sofia Guerrieri

### Dr. Zhang Awarded a Post-Doctoral Fellowship

Congratulations to SdBI Research Associate and part-time faculty Tracy Zhang for being awarded a one-year Post-Doctoral fellowship from the Université de Montréal!



Congratulations to the SdBI students who were awarded scholarships in early 2014. Keep up the good work!

Top: Alexandra Turski receives their scholarship certificate from SdBI Principal Dr. Rail; Right: Lindsay Nixon is glowing as she receives her scholarship certificate

## Concordia's Women's Caucus Continues to Honour

Early in the Fall semester, members of Concordia Women's Caucus met for their traditional annual brunch. The Concordia Women's Caucus is an informal group of women faculty, staff, and administrators who are interested in promoting women's issues at Concordia. While the Women's Caucus stopped most of its activities in 1996, when the Status of Women's Office was closed by the University, the group has continued its annual potluck brunch, this year at SdBI Principal Dr. Geneviève Rail's house.

The casual gathering was used to honor Dr. Rosemary Reilly, a tenure track professor in the Department of Applied Human Sciences. An active scholar in her field, Dr. Reilly has presented and published in the areas of social creativity, the development of learning communities, trauma, and qualitative changes in thinking patterns as a result of collaboration in groups. Congratulations Rosemary!



Rosemary Reilly is honored at the Women's Caucus and receives a fragrant bouquet

## Why Simone Became a Feminist

Open Culture recently published a radio interview with Simone de Beauvoir from 1960 in which she speaks, in English, about her relationship to feminism. The fabulous piece can be streamed online here:

<http://www.openculture.com/2014/11/simone-de-beauvoir-talks-with-studs-terkel-1960.html>

## Historical SdBI Spotlight



Carolyn Gammon

In the 1990's, Carolyn Gammon - one of the Institute's former students - lobbied the university to change the names of degrees granted at the University so that they would be gender neutral.

Gammon, a feminist scholar and activist now living in Berlin, did not wish to be conferred a degree with the title Master of Arts, arguing that this language was gendered.

Gammon's efforts finally paid off. Now, students from Concordia can elect to receive a degree with gender-neutral terminology: a baccalaureate, magistrariate or doctorate.

Thank you Carolyn Gammon, on behalf of all gender-conscious graduates of the SdBI and of Concordia University!

# PAST EVENTS

## Ginger Garden (AKA Chinese Tea Salon) Returns to the SdBI

Last August, the SdBI (in collaboration with Asian Canadian Wiki) hosted a fun potluck gathering called *Ginger Garden*. The second of a series, this annual event is a solidarity-building and networking opportunity that brings together artists, educators, students, and grassroots organizers from Montreal's Asian communities. The main organizers are Research Associate and part-time professor Dr. Tracy Zhang, and two community collaborators: sound artist Janet Lamb and Concordia graduate Miaoyun Zhou. Several volunteers also helped to decorate the venue, document the event, and set up a website.

During three hours, participants gave individual presentations, followed by a stimulating Q&A. Dr. Chantal Maillé and Dr. Elizabeth Henrik, two well-known SdBI community members, joined the discussions. A vast range of topics were covered including Quebec media representations of Asians, a photography project on cancer patients, and a social economy project that aims to create organic vegetable gardens in Chinatown. The presenters included Shuibo Wang, Kiran Ambwani, Xiaodan He, Jie Wu, Veena Gokhale, Sophie Gee, Satoshi Ikeda, Miaoyun Zhou, Chao Zheng, and Mi-jeong Lee.

For those who missed it, the presentations are available at the event website: [http://www.asiancanadianwiki.org/w/Ginger\\_Garden#Presenters\\_Descriptions\\_and\\_Bios](http://www.asiancanadianwiki.org/w/Ginger_Garden#Presenters_Descriptions_and_Bios)

You can also join Ginger Garden's facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/1442072516066869/?pnref=story>



Above: A colorful poster made for the event; Below: guests listen attentively to the presentations



## Pain and Prejudice at the Co-op Bookstore

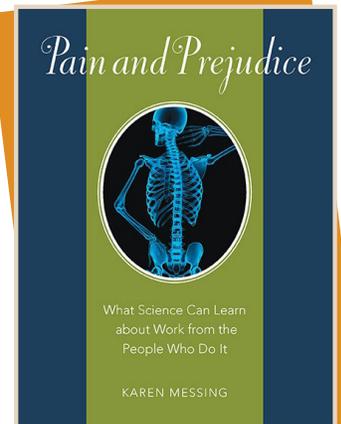
On October 23rd, Dr. Karen Messing, a longtime friend of the SdBI, launched her most recent publication, *Pain and Prejudice; What Science Can Learn About Work from the People Who Do It*. Published by Between the Lines, this non-fiction paperback tells the story of how Messing went from looking at test tubes to listening to workers and argues that the rules for scientific practice can make it hard to see what really makes workers sick. This publication, like many of her other professional accomplishments, is a testament to her innovative, critical and rigorous work in the field of health.

Karen Messing has worked for over 30 years with unions and women's groups

to promote equality for women in the work force. She is an activist as well as an award-winning and internationally recognized expert on occupational health. She is the author of more than 130 peer-reviewed scientific articles and the recipient of the Governor General of Canada Award (2009).

For those who were unable to attend the launch, we are pleased to announce that the book is now available at the Concordia Community Solidarity Co-op Bookstore (2150 Bishop). The publication can also be purchased online via the publisher's website.

<https://btbooks.com/book/pain-and-prejudice>



Dr. Messing's book is now at the Co-op Bookstore!

# PAST EVENTS

## Waniskâtân Celebrates Indigenous Feminist Resistance

Throughout the first half of 2014, the SdBI worked with the Indigenous Women and Two-Spirit Harm Reduction Coalition - a QPIRG working group - to organize a series of events that would mobilize Indigenous feminists to reflect on and share their experiences of active resistance. The project would also provide an important opportunity for settler feminists to learn from the social justice work being done by indigenous women across Canada.

Following the success of a spoken word workshop given by artist and activist Moe Clark in the early spring, the balance of the programming was finalized over the summer and announced as soon as students returned for the Fall semester. United under the title *waniskâtân; nîtisânitîk: Indigenous Feminist and Two-Spirit Resistance on Turtle Island*, the programming, which ran from October 26th to the 28th, included a keynote panel and a weekend of workshops, caucuses and screenings.

Over 100 people attended the opening panel, which brought together Indigenous feminist activists Jessica Danforth, Erin Konsmo and Naomi Sayers for a moderated discussion. Together, they spoke to the specific frameworks in which their community work is being realized, as well as the shared challenges which they face. Honest and unapologetic, their conversation was moving and inspiring to all those in attendance.

The weekend of activities that followed consisted of a series of workshops and a trip to the Kahnawake Youth Centre where two parallel caucuses were organized; one reserved for self-identified Indigenous peoples and another for settlers on the theme of solidarity. Before heading back to Montreal, the programming ended with

a screening of short films and a home-cooked feast.

The SdBI is proud to have been a part of this series of events and is confident that the initiative will continue to resonate within our community. For those interested, you can follow the Indigenous Women and Two-Spirit Harm Reduction Coalition on Facebook.

<https://www.facebook.com/ndnharmredux>



Clockwise from top left: Poster art for the event; Moe Clark leads workshop participants in a voice exercise; Keynote panelists discuss the difficult realities addressed by Indigenous feminists

## Trudeau Foundation Tackles LGBTQ Human Rights

This fall, the SdBI partnered with the Trudeau Foundation to present an international conference entitled *Imagining the Future of LGBTQ Human Rights*. On October 6th and 7th, scholars and activists from around the world - a number of whom have ties to the SdBI - gathered to highlight recent victories within the global LGBTQ human rights movement as well as to challenge problems with the "human rights" perspective.

Following the event, Radio Canada International published a French radio interview with Dr. Geneviève Rail, SdBI principal and member of the conference's Scientific Committee. The 18-minute piece can be streamed online:

<http://www.rcinet.ca/fr/2014/10/08/comment-se-porte-le-mouvement-mondial-des-lgbtq/>

# PAST & UP-COMING EVENTS

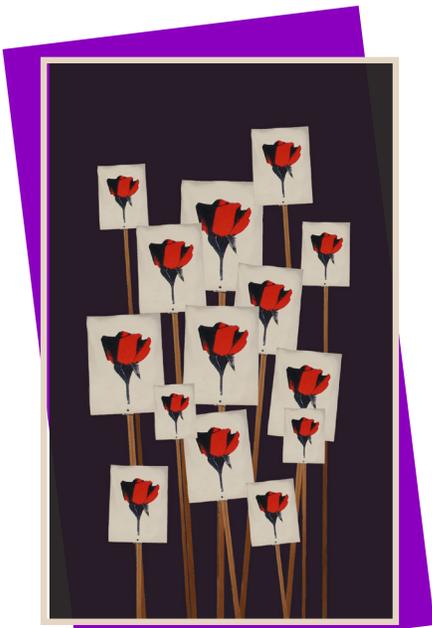
## 25 Years of Remembrance and Resistance

December 6, 2014 marked the 25th anniversary of the Polytechnique massacre, a mass murder at l'École Polytechnique de Montréal. During this horrific act of violence, female students were purposefully targeted and 14 women were killed. To mark this tragic milestone, many in the feminist community participated in a solemn day of remembrance and mourning.

This anniversary, however, also provided a genuine moment to reflect on the important work being done by feminists who continue to resist all forms of gendered violence. It with this in mind that the Fédération des

Femmes du Québec (FFQ) invited the public to a daylong event that paired commemoration with the celebration of ongoing resistance. *25 ans après Polytechnique; Contre l'effacement, créer sa place*, highlighted past and current feminists who have been refusing disappearance and creating safer spaces for women.

As a co-sponsor of the activities, the SdBI thanks all those who attended for their participation. It was a powerful day and an important reminder that young feminists are allied in their work to put an end to gendered violence, in all its form.



Event's poster art created by Michelle Lacombe

March  
13th!

## The SdBI celebrates the GIV

Groupe Intervention Vidéo (G.I.V.), a feminist artist-run centre dedicated to video production and distribution, is celebrating its 40th anniversary in 2015. In honour of the event, SdBI Professor Vivianne Namaste surveyed faculty of the Institute to select works in the G.I.V. collection that are personal favourites or that have been used as course material. The selected works, which include videos produced by Concordia alumni, will be screened during a public event on the evening of March 13. Don't miss it!

To find out more about G.I.V., please visit their website : <http://www.givideo.org/>



Stills taken from videos that will be screened as part of the event

## 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](mailto:sdbi.eventscordinator@concordia.ca)