

In Memoriam Barbara Godard (1941-2010)

The loss of Barbara Godard, on May 17, 2010, resonates beyond the York University community, where she taught English, French, Social and Political Thought, and Women's Studies, and extends to other academic circles in Canada and abroad. She has influenced several generations of students and colleagues through her innovative scholarship situated at the intersection of literary, cultural, and arts criticism, semiotics, translation studies, memorializing and archives, as well as social and institutional analysis. The significance and impact of her work is only beginning to be fully acknowledged, through an outpouring of honours, awards, and symposia organized in her name, including a recent posthumous induction in the Royal Society of Canada, a forthcoming special issue of *Open Letter*, and a festschrift of essays dedicated to her.

Reading her sixty-page long academic résumé (available at <http://www.yorku.ca/yorkspace> in the Barbara Godard Collection), one is struck with a realization that during her almost forty years at York she averaged five published articles per year, in addition to eight books and numerous edited collections, special issues, book translations, reviews, reports, and catalogues. All this is eloquent testimony to her stature as a scholar, her intellectual passion and curiosity, and her formidable work ethic. Although she has been acclaimed as a pioneer in comparative studies of Canadian and Quebec literatures and the interdisciplinary field of Canadian Cultural Studies, and one of the first mainstream academics to study First Nations writing in the early 1980s, I want to highlight here the aspect of her career that pertains to her contributions to Canadian feminism and women's studies. The majority of her published texts deal with women's writing, feminist literary theory, feminist translation studies, and feminist cultural production.

As early as her undergraduate years at the University of Toronto, Barbara fought for inclusion of Canadian women writers in the curriculum. Beginning in the 1970s, she started to make available in English the works of Nicole Brossard, Antonine Maillet, France Théoret, Louky Bersianik, and other Quebec authors. Since 1979 she taught courses on women for English and Women's Studies at Glendon. She helped to establish the field of feminist literary theory and criticism in Canada, organizing Writers in Dialogue Conference in Toronto (1981) and participating in Women and Words Conference in Vancouver (1983), which inspired her groundbreaking collection *Gynocritics/Gynocritiques* (1987). She tirelessly promoted French and Quebec

feminist writing, and even acted as interpreter for Luce Irigaray during her visit in Toronto.

Barbara is internationally celebrated for her pioneering work in feminist translation studies. Her concept of feminist translation as "rewriting in the feminine" has become a classic. She tested her translation theory and practice on the pages of *Tessera*, a bilingual feminist journal that she co-founded in 1982. It published experimental writing and established critical dialogue between women from Quebec and English Canada. She was also involved in editorial work for other feminist journals, including *Fireweed* and *Resources for Feminist Research*. Known for her collaborative spirit, she fostered truly egalitarian and collegial relationships among women, making no distinction of status, age, or tenure.

Throughout the 1980s, she was involved in developing both undergraduate and graduate women's studies programs at York. Until 2009, she offered seminars on French feminism, the role of humanities in WS, and issues of feminist theory, pedagogy, and methodology for graduate WS students. Concerned about the difference in male and female graduate experience, in 1992 she prepared a report on the status of women graduate students, commenting on the phenomenon of the glass ceiling and employment difficulties. Her dedication to mentoring was recognized by prestigious teaching awards.

Barbara was interested in investigating the impact of stress linked to systemic sexism and racism on women in academic settings. Thinking about her two late colleagues, Lorraine Gauthier and Kathleen Martindale, who both died of cancer, she noted a high level of illnesses related to the immune system among women at York. She believed that the institutional chilly climate and the constant burden to prove themselves compromised their health. One must inevitably think about the breathtaking pace of Barbara's own work, in response to her own institutional struggles for long-denied tenure and promotion to the rank of full professor.

Barbara agreed to be on our Editorial Board and used her superb research skills so as to stay on the cutting edge of knowledge about nutrition, mindfulness, genetic testing, new drugs, and cancer research. As a companion on her cancer journey, I was privileged to witness her courage and determination that helped her to defeat ovarian cancer and remain productive until the end. We dedicate this issue to her.

—Eva C. Karpinski

In Memoriam Patricia (Trish) Monture (1958-2010)

Trish Monture: Haudenosaunee woman, Mohawk woman, mother, sister, auntie, cousin and kinswoman, friend, ally, thinker, scholar, writer, advocate, orator, lawyer, mentor, adviser, athlete, woman of integrity and courage, and, of course, schemer par excellence, passed away on November 17, 2010, taken by the cancer that she had battled for over three years. She was only 52 years old.

Into those 52 years, she packed more experience and accomplishments than might be considered humanly possible. Despite being discouraged from university studies by a so-called “guidance” counsellor, Trish excelled in her undergraduate degree in sociology at the University of Western Ontario, and earned her first law degree at Queen’s. There, she began her work with women and men in prison which continued throughout her life. Her next degree from Queen’s would be an honorary doctorate, one of two she received from Canadian universities.

Trish was called to the bar of Ontario in 1994, after the Law Society made optional the requirement that candidates for the bar swear allegiance to the Crown. As a member of a sovereign nation, she had contended that she should not have to swear allegiance to a foreign monarch. She was quoted at the time as saying that if she lost that battle, she would not practise law. Though she won the battle, she chose not to practise anyway. After earning her Master’s in law at Osgoode Hall on full scholarship, Trish became a law professor at Dalhousie and then Ottawa University.

Trish described her decision to leave law teaching to join the Native Studies Department at the University of Saskatchewan as a conscious choice and a personal act of resistance that followed her realization that the law contains no answers but is in fact a very large and very real part of the problem Aboriginal people continue to face. Law is one of the instruments, she wrote, through which colonization continues to flow. Trish later became a full Professor in the Department of Sociology at the University of Saskatchewan. Though she had turned her back on teaching and practising law, Trish never stopped her quest for justice. Reflecting her view of justice, she was one of the founders of the newsletter, *Justice as Healing*, published through the Native Law Centre at the University of Saskatchewan.

Trish is remembered as a beloved colleague and an inspiring teacher. Throughout her university career,

Trish was also a steadfast ally of other women and members of minority groups seeking tenure and promotion, a commitment recognized in 2007, with the Sarah Shorten Award from the Canadian Association of University Teachers.

When she was a little girl, Trish wanted to be writer when she grew up. Writing, she tells us in *Thunder in My Soul*, has always been “soul comfort” to her. But with the complexity of vision that characterizes her work, Trish also tells us that her impressive body of academic writing was both a source of pride, and also a source of bittersweet feelings: “as I have always written for my people, it seems ironic that they have the least access to what I have published.” *Thunder in My Soul* and its successor, *Journeying Forward*, changed that. She would recount with satisfaction hearing from students, incarcerated women, activists, or friends, how her work inspired them to make and take their place in the world. The influence of her ideas was felt worldwide, not only in the domain of policy-making, but more important to Trish, in the lives of ordinary people seeking to reclaim their voice, their dignity and assert their equality.

This is not to say that Trish avoided the world of policy-making. To the contrary. A key member of the Task Force on Federally Sentenced Women in the early 1990s, she ensured that the voices of Indigenous women were central to the process. Her guidance strongly influenced the Task Force final report and the subsequent establishment of the Okimaw Ohci Healing Lodge for Aboriginal women. Trish was a vital expert witness at the Commission of Inquiry into Certain Events at the Prison for Women in Kingston (the Harbour Commission), which investigated the unlawful stripping and shackling of women, imposition on women of lengthy segregation, and their involuntary movement to a men’s prison. Nor did her contribution end with the completion of the Task Force and Commission. Trish did not hesitate to bring attention to government shortcomings in realizing the vision of the Task Force and the Harbour inquiry. She was one of the staunchest critics of Correctional Services’ divergence from the original inspiration for the Healing Lodge. She worked with the Canadian Association of Elizabeth Fry Societies and was a trusted advisor and friend to Kim Pate, when they launched a complaint to the Canadian Human Rights Commission against the Government of Canada on behalf of all women serving two years or more. Supported by 27 national and



international women's, Aboriginal, and social justice groups, the complaint called for a systemic review and remedy for the discriminatory treatment of women in prisons and the criminal justice system generally.

Trish's work on self-government took her into many partnerships: she was part of the Assembly of First Nations constitutional process in the early 1980s, and advised both the Law Reform Commission and the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples. Her assertion of the inherent right, in her own writing and in collaboration with Mary Ellen Turpel, was trenchant and insightful. She continued to explore these ideas in her later work, with a sense of urgency. As an advisor to the President of the Native Women's Association of Canada, Beverley Jacobs, she emphasized the need for women and men to work together on governance initiatives, insisting on resistance to the government strategy of divide and conquer. "Where are the women?" she asked in a recent article, decrying the tendency of contemporary scholars and politicians to overlook the centrality of women in Indigenous law-making and governance. She was planning a detailed program of work on women in governance at the time of her final illness.

In recent years, Trish was an advisor to the Canadian Museum for Human Rights, scheduled to open in 2012, on the content of its exhibits and programs. She made it clear that she was not a token, but would expect the institution to embrace a vision of equality and human rights deeply rooted in Indigenous knowledges, and truly able to encompass Indigenous experience in Canada and the world. While facilitating contact between Museum officials and Indigenous peoples, she was just as often a challenging voice, calmly but implacably asking officials

and other advisors to recognize where their thinking and practice were based on colonialism, stereotype, and ignorance.

Without doubt, Trish was one of the most authoritative and respected voices for transformation and equality, in Canada and internationally. Her advocacy, research, writing, teaching, public speaking, legislative and policy development, and mentoring of Indigenous and non-Indigenous students and scholars have had a profound impact on Canadian

law, the criminal and corrections systems, education, and Indigenous communities, and will continue to do so for years to come.

But while her name echoes across the pages of legal and constitutional history, we also remember the informal Trish. At home, that warm and welcoming place, where the door was always open, and the only rule was make yourself at home. Where her splendid children, Brandon, Mike, Kate and Jack displayed their achievements on the wall of honour, and brought their friends to hang out, share Trish's delicious cooking, and strategize over upcoming sports competitions, and projects. Where other children became her children and where they found a loving, safe and supportive home. Where Trish's favourite coffee was always on offer. We remember her on the road, meeting her on the road, travelling with other women and their children, putting human rights into action in Saskatchewan prisons, seeking justice, or watching with great pride and enormous knowledge the kids' activities at powwows, hockey and lacrosse arenas, soccer fields, or concert halls. We remember her scheming and "schmoking," laughing, and cooking up new ways to thwart the colonizer or defeat the machinations of injustice.

Trish rests now in London's Mt. Pleasant Cemetery, with her parents and her beloved daughter Kate, who passed before her. Their earth walks are finished in this lifetime, but Trish and Kate live on, inspiring us with the love of mother and daughter, and the dreams they held for a time when there would be justice, and more than justice ... the chance to celebrate.

—Mary Eberts, Beverley Jacobs and Kim Pate