

# Arts Forum 1997

The fourth annual UNB Arts Forum, an event designed to inform the university and the general public about current research projects in the Faculty of Arts, took place on the evening of Tuesday 25 February. Dr. Peter Kent, Dean of Arts, presided, and the four speakers were Dr. Chris Lorey (Department of German and Russian), Dr. Lianne McTavish (Department of History), Dr. Heather Sears (Department of Psychology) and Dr. Melanie Wiber (Department of Anthropology). The audience included a group of four first-year Arts students, who wrote the following articles about what they heard. Dr. Mary Rimmer (Department of English) organized the Forum and edited the articles.

Dr. Melanie Wiber, Anthropology

## From cows to fish to manure, are quotas a successful solution?

Dr. Melanie Wiber concluded the Arts Forum with "Food for Thought: Who Owns the Right to Produce Our Food?" As governments throughout the world intervene in food production markets and other economic sectors, Dr. Wiber's research concerns the consequences of commodifying the rights to produce for the market.

Dr. Wiber first introduced her audience to Mr. Brown, a fictitious New Brunswick dairy farmer. When Mr. Brown began his milk production in the 1960s, dairy farmers would secure a contract with a local processor, or dairy. Under this contract, Mr. Brown had to keep up milk production during the winter months in order to qualify to sell milk during the spring and summer months. Cows however, are not as productive during the winter as they are during the spring, when they freshen due to calving. As several government studies pointed out, the dairy industry suffered from a disastrous cycle of over- and underproduction.

In an effort to help stabilize the market system, the Canadian government introduced supply management in the 1970s. By issuing a quota that limited the output of every individual in the dairy sector, the government hoped to keep the volume of milk entering the market at or near the level of local and national consumption. Dairy farmers were fined for overproduction; quota was taken away if they underproduced. Quota allowed Mr. Brown and approximately 1500 other dairy farmers to legally market the milk they produced.

At around the same time, the government passed legislation that imposed higher quality and safety standards for milk; this required dairy farmers to upgrade their milk operation. Some couldn't afford it. Some wanted to retire. Others did not want to invest the money when milk was only part of their farm operation. Still, others—like Mr. Brown—realized that they would have to expand their production considerably to cover the costs of the new upgrades. The regular, free

increases in quota were not enough to meet production and expansion costs. As Dr. Wiber put it, "a situation developed in which some farmers had quota and no longer wanted to produce, and others needed quota so that they could expand their production and remain viable."

The easiest solution was to allow quota, suddenly a hot item, to be bought and sold as if it were a form of property. The New Brunswick Milk Marketing Board facilitated the process by holding a monthly quota exchange. Dairy farmers submitted the prices and the amount of quota they wanted to sell, or their bids and the amount they wanted to buy. The Board issued a "going" or "set" price for every month that the exchange operated, and matched a pool of buyers and sellers.

This system worked very well. As the number of farmers decreased over the next ten years to less than 500, and quota prices rose—from \$49/L in 1982 to \$163/L in 1983 to \$ 276-365/L in 1991—dairy farmers were having to buy substantial amounts of quota to keep at a viable level of production. Mr. Brown had to mortgage his farm, since banks would not accept quota itself as a collateral. Put in a broader perspective, "the exchange value of all quota in the province in 1992 was \$128 million divided among less than 500 dairy farmers...[whose] total investment in buildings, land, equipment and animals was \$164 million."

A good investment, according to Mr. Brown: quota guaranteed a steady income, which allowed him to plan ahead, and quota seemed to be paying for itself.

The situation changed for the worse in the late 1980s, however. Consumption of dairy foods fell due to fear of cholesterol and dietary fat. The introduction of the GST sent many of the remaining consumers to shop across the border. For the first time in supply management's history in the province, farmers had to cut back production. Not only did the Board react more harshly to overproduction, but it also confiscated a small percentage of every farmer's quota, as well as a

percentage of all quota offered for sale, without any remuneration.

A heated debate between dairy farmers and the government arose as to who actually owned the quota. The government denied that quota was private property, and maintained instead that quota was an administrative tool which the government could appropriate from farmers.

"Could the government use quota as an administrative tool to control the volume of milk produced if farmers had secure rights, as in private property, in their quota holdings?" asked Dr. Wiber. When the issue was taken to court, all cases except one were decided in favor of the government. In the one exception Dr. Wiber found, a judge from Nova Scotia argued that if farmers were permitted to buy quota, sell it, pass it on as inheritance to their children, and have it seized in bankruptcy cases, surely it was private property.

Mr. Brown suffered another shock when, in 1993, Canada signed the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT). This agreement requires that Canada abandon supply management. The Canadian Prime Minister, the head of the government which forced dairy farmers to buy quota in order to stay in business, has stated that the government will not reimburse farmers when quota is eliminated. However, Mr. Brown and the rest of the dairy farmers will still owe the banks the money that they borrowed to buy quota.

The dairy industry's predicament, Dr. Wiber stressed, is not an isolated problem. Quota has been introduced to the Canadian fishing sector as a means to stop overfishing. As the prices of fishing quota rise even faster than those of milk quota did, fishermen are forced to borrow money. This has sometimes resulted in fishermen losing their boats to their financial backers, usually large corporations in the processing sector, and becoming their employees.

Similar situations exist in other countries. The Netherlands, for instance, is a tiny country with a large amount of livestock, and its

government is concerned that the high volume of manure being produced will result in the pollution of the groundwater system. Farmers are therefore required to purchase quotas for each unit of animal manure produced in their farm operation. Last year the government stated its intent of "unilaterally and dramatically reducing manure quotas

without financial compensation." The farmers responded with civil disobedience, dumping loads of manure on train tracks and taking manure into their local bank branches.

Dr. Wiber's research covers a range of disciplines, from the anthropology of rural population and property theory to

administrative law and public policy analysis. Her work sheds light on the effects of government policy concerning the market system, and poses the crucial question: "Who will end up owning the right to produce our food and to deliver it to the marketplace?"

Shirley Von Sychowski

Dr. Chris Lorey, German

## Silence, Voices and Screams

*I feel as if we were riding away on clouds, and my words are fading in the distance, but I have to call you. How I see you swimming in the sky's ocean, as if the winds have blown you up and me as well and as if your horse-clouds were flying away from me, there is nothing like love. People distinguish between love and friendship, but I don't. Do you?*

The voice of lesbianism in German literature is not something that most of us think about very often, if at all. However, Dr. Chris Lorey of the Department of German and Russian has put considerable thought into the subject.

Male homo-eroticism has influenced art and literature for some time, including German literature. Lesbianism and the concept of women loving women, however, were not evident in German literature before the 1800s. The period of silence that preceded this is directly related to the oppression of women in society.

During the Romantic era of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, female homo-eroticism began to emerge, although relationships between women were not written as explicitly sexual. More often they were portrayed as close friendships, in which the women were possessively devoted to each other. Passages such as the one quoted above were quite commonly labeled lesbian in that sense, and many sexual ambiguities are evident in their language, tone and imagery.

The love between women which began to emerge during the Romantic age became more problematic in the latter half of the century. The scientific community was beginning to notice how common this love between members of the same sex actually was. Many psychologists, the best known being Sigmund Freud, developed the idea of the "invert" (or, to use the later label, the homosexual).

With the commencement of the first gay activist movement at the turn of the century, German lesbian literature began to mirror the calls for the emancipation of women. Not all female writers took a stand on lesbianism, but many stepped forward for the sake of women's rights. During this time there were conflicting positive and negative images of lesbianism. Sexual expression became more open, and along with that, the right to homosexual expression began to be asserted.

Some views were quite radical, such as those of Helene von Druskowitz. A self-proclaimed "woman-loving-man-hater," she believed that all men should be executed—that they didn't deserve to be treated like human beings since they always acted like animals, especially in the presence of women. She was later imprisoned in a lunatic asylum, but she continued to write.

Some writers within the lesbian community began to see themselves as intellectually superior in some ways. Women gathered together to

discuss theories of lesbianism with wit and confidence. The literature reflected this new confidence.

In the 1920s homosexual magazines became quite popular, and an iconography of the typical lesbian emerged: a stylized figure with short cropped hair and long cigarettes, often flaunting casual nudity. Interestingly, these magazines covered many political and social issues of the day, not just lesbian subjects.

Hitler's reign sharpened the law which made homosexuality illegal, and gays and lesbians (although women were not covered under that law) were persecuted, imprisoned and killed. The severe stigmatization of homosexuality—it was 1968 before the law prohibiting it was amended and softened—and the slow progress of Germany's women's emancipation silenced the voices of lesbian literature once again until the 1970s.

Dr. Lorey, whose book entitled "Queering the Canon: Defying Sights in German Literatures and Culture" is coming out this fall, summed up his lecture with the phrase "from silence to voices to screams." This accurately describes the distinct progression of lesbian literature in Germany. It is interesting to note, however, that as far as we have progressed, many of the works and authors he mentioned are not listed in encyclopedias or histories of literature, and are hard to find in Canadian libraries. It is evident that the progression must continue.

David Ford

Dr. Lianne McTavish, History

## The struggle for Control of Childbirth in Early Modern France

In her presentation entitled "Picturing Midwifery in Seventeenth-Century France," Dr. Lianne McTavish of the Department of History traced back for her audience the long way that obstetrics has had to travel to be looked upon as a complex science deserving of respect.

The bulk of Dr. McTavish's research rests upon early modern obstetrical manuals, which were mostly written by male surgeons, although a few were produced by famous female midwives as well. Past studies have almost all focused only on the written text in these treatises, and this despite the fact that they are accompanied by many rich visual images, such as portraits of midwives and of the author of the manual, as well as representations of anatomical dissections, the surgical tools used for childbirth, distressed fetuses, and the birthing chamber. These vivid representations are overlooked, for the most part, because, as Dr. McTavish explained: "visual

images are considered medical illustrations. It is thought that they simply illustrate the text, that their meaning is self-evident and transparent." Dr. McTavish contends, however, that these visual images were an important factor in the development of the early modern knowledge of obstetrics, and helped it grow as a distinct field. Her study thus focuses on the plates found in these obstetrical manuals, and more specifically in French treatises, because they have not received much scholarly attention.

Dr. McTavish began with a brief description of the medical setting at the time, which explained how these treatises came about. In early modern France, surgeons were close to the bottom of the medical pyramid; they were higher up than midwives, who received their training from fellow midwives, but were below the physicians, who never touched the patient, and had received theoretical rather than practical training.

Surgeons of course wanted to climb the ladder of prestige, but they also wanted to get involved in the increasingly lucrative practice of childbirth. To combine the two, they had to prove that childbirth was a complex process that needed the surgeon's intellectual and medical skills. The most expedient way of accomplishing this was through the writing of treatises, in which, as Dr. McTavish put it, "male surgeons argue that if problems occurred during delivery, there should be a prompt and unquestioning deference to their surgical authority."

Female midwives were however already well established as the rulers of the birthing chamber in the sixteenth and seventeenth century. Male surgeons were only called upon in the case of a crisis, such as that of extracting a dead fetus from the mother's womb, a dreadful procedure accomplished by the use of hooks. It is thus no surprise that these men were associated with

sharp tools and death, and that there was a profound resistance to their desire to participate in the birthing process. Yet despite this opposition, there was a gradual increase in the acceptance of male midwives: Dr. McTavish contends that this phenomenon was fostered by the surgeons' striving to look (and succeeding in looking) more competent, as indicated by the portraits of themselves in their treatises.

In the beginning, these portraits were small representations of surgeons, but they later developed into elaborately symbolic works of art. The first slide shown by Dr. McTavish to illustrate this evolution was from the 1668 treatise of Francois Mauriceau. In it, he is portrayed as a scholarly-looking man, separated by a frame from an allegory of maternity: this symbolizes the division between the intellectual and maternal spheres. A baby reaching for Mauriceau links the two spheres by crossing the boundary between them: this

associates the surgeon with the practical experience of childbirth and delivery. Surgical tools in the frame of the plate are intended to show the reader Mauriceau's practical knowledge. In another slide, this one from the 1674 treatise of Cosme Viardel, an intelligent-looking surgeon touches with his finger a baby placed on a table before him: this symbolizes Viardel's rejection of the instruments usually used by surgeons, in favor of the hands-on methods of the female midwife.

Dr. McTavish noted that to earn the trust of women and midwives, surgeons had to show that they had an extensive knowledge of the woman's body, as well as practical experience: this resulted in the increased emphasis on hands in the portraits of the surgeons. She added, however, "At the same time, the representation of the fetus or newborn as a primary patient in the portraits of both Mauriceau and

Viardel negotiates their inability to embody maternity fully." Dr. McTavish pointed out that, in these visual representations, one can see the shifting of influence from the practical knowledge of the midwife to the intellectual knowledge of the male surgeon. Nevertheless, the maternal body remained a crucial source of knowledge throughout the early modern period.

Dr. McTavish concluded her presentation by explaining that the visual images in French obstetrical treatises lead to "a better understanding of the ways in which male surgeons and midwives constructed their professional identities." Her presentation shed light on the history of surgical intervention in childbirth, and on the ways in which males strove to infiltrate the once all-female process of childbirth.

Marie-Andrée Somers

Dr. Heather Sears, Psychology

## Symptoms of Depression in Adolescents

"Depression is one of the most common psychiatric disorders in the general population, and depression in adolescents is of particular concern because of its wide-ranging effects on adolescent health," says Dr. Heather Sears of the Department of Psychology. Depression in adolescents is not only distressing, but often co-occurs with other problems, is linked to suicidal acts and/or thoughts, and increases the likelihood of future depression. Unlike previous research showing that adolescents experience depression in the same way that adults experience depression, two recent empirical studies have suggested that depression in adolescents may have unique features of its own. The purpose of Dr. Sears' research is "to determine whether community-dwelling adolescents manifest or express their symptoms of depression in different ways."

A questionnaire was given during a class period to 379 students in a high school in rural Nova Scotia, ranging

from grades seven to twelve. Most of the students were living in two-parent families, with their parents who, on average, had completed a high school education and were employed in jobs associated with a lower or middle level of income. Using the results from the Revised Beck Depression Inventory (BDI) and the Millon Adolescent Personality Inventory (MAPI), only those who had definite symptoms of depression (scored more than 10 on the BDI) and had a valid MAPI profile were kept. These two conditions reduced the number of participants from 379 to 172.

Next, statistical analyses were done to group adolescents with similar personality profiles together. Instead of the anticipated result of two subgroups, the research revealed three subgroups. The first group, containing 34 females and 27 males, was labelled Isolated-Discontented; they were evaluated as of clinical concern and as posing a suicide risk. These students

were moody, pessimistic, irritable, sensitive to perceived criticism, and withdrawn from social activity. The second group was labelled Engaged-Intrusive; they were at risk for not being seen as depressed. These adolescents were angry, impulsive, and strong-willed. As Dr. Sears said, "These kids tend to be dominant and impatient when they're interacting with others. They're in your face and are not pleasant to be around."

This group contained 41 females and 18 males. The third group, labelled Inhibited-Insecure, contained 32 females and 20 males. These students expressed mild moodiness, sensitivity to perceived rejection, and uneasiness in social situations, but not to the point where it prevented them from interacting. This group was evaluated as having enough resources to deal with their depression at the present, but these students are at risk to develop more serious depressive symptoms in the future.

Dr. Sears is now working on a follow-up study to this preliminary research. She went back to the same high school two years later, to track symptom changes in the students by comparing results from their new questionnaires with their initial results. A secondary focus of this research is to study "help-seeking behaviour": to find out what resources adolescents in rural communities perceive are available to them, and what factors determine whether they will ask for help. Dr. Sears is also interested in the adjustment of teenagers whose parents are working in the fishery, because fishing is, of course, an important industry in rural Nova Scotia, where her research was done. Dr. Sears feels that the decline in the fishery may also have had an effect on the results of her research, and is a factor that merits further study.

Gina Bernard

Beaver Foods Limited  
University of New Brunswick

EASTER WEEKEND

Hours of operation: Retail Outlets

Harvey's

Closes at 7:00 p.m. on Thursday, March 27, 1997  
Re-opens at 4:30 p.m. on Monday, March 31, 1997

Subs2 Go Go • Second Cup

Closes at 1:00 p.m. on Thursday, March 27, 1997  
Re-opens Regular Hours on Tuesday, April 1, 1997

Marchall d'Avary • I.U.C. Roasters  
• Head Hall Roasters

Closes at 1:30 p.m. on Thursday, March 27, 1997  
Re-opens Regular Hours on Tuesday, April 1, 1997

Beaver Foods Ltd. Management and Staff  
Wish you all a Happy Easter and Good Luck on your Exams!