French composition book leads students to success

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As an expert in second language acquisition and second language teaching, de Moras has read many books and manuals to learn four foreign languages. She brought her expertise in linguistics and 25 years of teaching experience to the project. “Students’ success is a tool to help them. I want my students to succeed. If I can’t find the tool to help them, I’ll create it for them,” de Moras said. She is well-positioned to develop a book to help students excel in French language comprehension and writing. She received her education in France up to a B.A., completed her graduate work in Canada, and earned degrees in English as Foreign Language, and applied linguistics, with a specialization in French as a Second Language. While the book is written in French, with the more difficult words translated into English, it is relevant beyond French communication with advice on researching an essay and improving argumentation.

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This guide helps students develop skills that are expected but rarely taught in classes

Gender nationalism has been a hot topic in the last 10 years, but Indigenous nationalism has essentially been left out of the discussion. Being Again of One Mind by Dr. Lina Sunseri, assistant professor of Sociology, is a book that fills the knowledge gap with analysis of the concept of nationalism among Oneida women.

Sunseri’s research was inspired by her personal experience, as a member of the Oneida nation, and by her graduate studies at York University, where she discovered that a lot of the discussions and readings were not reflective of her experiences. “It’s not that I completely rejected other theories, but a lot of feminist theories don’t really reflect the experiences of Oneida women. My research critiques and fills a gap for Indigenous nations. I am adding to that knowledge.” Sunseri’s research was qualitative, via interviews with 20 Oneida women of various generations, and archival. “The main theme of the book is the Oneida women’s struggles for decolonization in their community. My main argument, based on the interviews, is that Indigenous women want to restore gender balance and well-being to their own lives and communities. For them it’s a way to bring back some of the traditional ways of governing – also changing as we have changed – and to bring back the empowering role they had once. They want to do that in ways that tie in with nationalism.”

Funded by a Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC) program for newly published work, the book is the result of four years of research and writing for her PhD dissertation, and then another year of writing for the book, which will be available from UBC Press in November 2010.

Canada’s indigenous women are given a voice in the discussion of nationalism

The book challenges mainstream feminist critiques of nation and nationalism, especially as they pertain – or don’t apply – to Indigenous women. Sunseri’s research was qualitative, via interviews with 20 Oneida women of various generations, and...
Dr. Sharareh Hekmat, associate professor in the Division of Food and Nutritional Sciences and one of the original members of the Western Heads East (WHE) steering committee, is excited about the opening of a new site in Kenya where women are empowered to produce and sell a probiotic yoghurt.

The yogurt developed by Hekmat, in collaboration with scientists at the University of Western Ontario (Western) and the Canadian Centre for Probiotic Research at the Lawson Health Institute in London, contains micro-organisms effective in treating and preventing urogenital infections in women and in improving the nutritional status of people living with HIV/AIDS.

The Kenya site is the second started by the WHE team in Africa to produce and distribute the probiotic yoghurt. Hekmat’s recipe has been introduced to African women via the “yoghurt mamas” project, and she has trained more than 25 interns (from Brescia and Western) who also helped to create a sustainable mini-dairy plant in Mwanza, Tanzania.

“The women in Tanzania are feeling empowered and have taken ownership of this project. They are producing the yoghurt, distributing it, and community members are either purchasing the yoghurt or receiving it free of charge,” Hekmat said.

Hekmat is pleased to know that a product that was developed at Brescia is being used to empower women’s groups and build capacity in communities in Africa while helping to alleviate pain and suffering in those communities.

Hekmat has been working on the development of probiotic dairy products for more than 20 years. She continues to modify the probiotic yogurt recipe at Brescia to enhance its nutritional status and adjust its sensory characteristics to the needs of various communities as the project is being expanded to other African countries.

Brescia’s commitment to education and research about women in leadership was supported with an internal grant to Melissa Jean, Management and Organizational Studies professor, so that she could examine ‘momprenuers’, or entrepreneurial mothers, to open people’s eyes to the possibilities and realities of entrepreneurship for women.

“The majority of women interviewed identified challenge and achievement as the most important factors in their decision to become mompreneurs. A significant number felt drawn or ‘called’ to entrepreneurship; some have an entrepreneurial history and others were dissatisfied with corporate life. Another large group chose this path to do something for themselves that was separate from their role as mom and caregiver.”

Jean’s exploratory study of mompreneurs compares the expectations with the reality of running a business while raising a family. She has completed 15 of 20 planned interviews and will then develop a method to reach a larger group.

In addition to sharing the new knowledge with her classes, she hopes to publish her findings and expand the literature on the subject. “There’s been a lot of research on women entrepreneurs, specifically on motivators and access to capital. A lot of studies identify the age or length of the business, but they don’t identify those who have families. And, there hasn’t been a lot of literature about mompreneurs outside of home-based businesses.”

“I want to share information that would better prepare mompreneurs or would-be mompreneurs. A lot of the women didn’t have business plans and are having difficulty coming up with tools to address and advance growth.”

Jean brings her students and mompreneurs together with mutually beneficial results. Students provide services to mompreneurs as part of their course work, such as writing business plans and researching growth options and potential.

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“Business ownership draws mothers seeking professional challenge and achievement

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This publication highlights a small sample of the ongoing research in each of the academic divisions at Brescia. For information about other research, please contact any of the following:

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