

## EDITORS' NOTE NOTE DE LA RÉDACTION

It's time for me to write another editorial and, again, I thought long and hard about a subject. And then, while conducting some research for work, I discovered that on 16 February 1967, Prime Minister Lester B. Pearson established the Royal Commission on the Status of Women. That's almost 45 years ago to the day of writing this piece. How fortuitous! It seems only right and proper that I acknowledge what was a landmark moment in Canada's history. A Commission that some thought would amount to nothing and that others outright mocked is now heralded as a major achievement of the Second Wave of feminism.

I was born not that long after the Commission was established and a couple of years before its report was tabled. I've always considered myself a feminist but have never been completely clear where I fit. Do I belong to the Second or Third Waves or somewhere in between? Maybe I belong to the 2 and one half wave! What I do know is that the work of Second Wave feminists—and of feminists of the First Wave, too, of course — has had a major impact on my life, the choices I've made, and the opportunities that I've been given. That impact has been felt in all aspects of my life but I'm going to focus briefly on my professional opportunities as a historian.

First of all, I was able to study the discipline, as an undergraduate and then as a graduate student. This is no small detail. As historians Alison Prentice and Don Wright have shown, as history became a "science" and a "profession," women weren't welcomed at all.

Second, I was able to study Women's history and what a privilege and a pleasure that was and continues to be. Guided and inspired by an amazing group of women historians, I learned about many

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Ce début d'année 2012 porte mon regard sur le débat initié par la commémoration de la guerre de 1812 et c'est avec curiosité que j'observe le déploiement des activités décidées par le gouvernement canadien. Pour le moment, le caractère anecdotique et un peu confus des commémorations permet difficilement d'identifier les objectifs poursuivis par celui-ci. Ceci, pour le plus grand bien des historiens qui seront invités, souhaitons-le, à clarifier et expliciter les tenants et les aboutissants de l'événement.

Parallèlement, il est intéressant de constater certaines retombées « bénéfiques » associées aux commémorations et à l'intérêt général qu'elles suscitent. Conséquemment, l'usage didactique des « célébrations » représente un véritable cadeau pour les professeurs. Ainsi, dans mon cours d'initiation à la méthode historique, j'aborde maintenant les questions de la distinction entre l'histoire et la mémoire et entre l'histoire académique et

amazing and interesting women as well as how to practice my profession.

Third, I'm able to work in my profession. This is no small detail, either! Although my skills as a historian were first considered relevant enough to be applicable to a non-history field, after a couple of years I was hired to work in a public history venue, the Canadian War Museum. And this former bastion of hardcore military history, that is the history of Canadian wars, battles, and soldiers, including women in uniform, of course, has welcomed my feminist and gendered lens. It now endeavours to present Canada's military history from a much broader perspective. Canada's wars and battles and soldiers have not lost their importance, and nor should they, but the implications of conflict on women and of women on conflict are now equally important. I get to contribute to the production and dissemination of some very important history.

Fourth, I earn a comfortable living doing what I love! A woman on my own, something else that feminism has given me the ability to accept and the right to choose, I'm not paid less because I'm female. I face the same expectations and have the same opportunities as my male colleagues.

So this is what Second Wave feminism has done for me as an historian. Am I privileged? Yes. Have all women benefited equally or as much? No. Is there work that remains to be done? Undoubtedly! So, feminists of today, myself included, let's keep working so that all women are able freely to choose to live and work the way they want to, and that includes continuing to flourish in the history profession.

*Amber Lloydlangston*

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l'histoire publique par le biais de la guerre de 1812. Qui plus est, cette fois dans mon cours sur l'histoire de l'Europe contemporaine, je peux aborder, par cet angle, la place de la Grande-Bretagne dans les relations internationales du début du XIX<sup>e</sup>. Dans chaque cas, l'utilisation didactique de l'événement permet de mettre en œuvre, avec mes étudiants, cet élément si cher aux historiens : l'esprit critique.

Il sera également intéressant d'observer la nature des activités aux États-Unis, où les commémorations ont également débuté. Finalement, alors que les appels à communications commencent à se multiplier en Amérique et en Europe, le renouvellement historiographique qui aboutira sans doute de l'exercice nous proposera peut-être de nouvelles perspectives sur cet événement?

*À bientôt. Martin Laberge*