

## **Brief Remarks for the Arts and Science 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Reunion, 24 Sept. 2011**

**Dr. Kathy Garay**

As my students are well aware, being asked to speak for no more than 5 minutes constitutes an impossible burden. They all know that I can take longer than this to say “good morning”!

What are my credentials? As a “newbie” to the Programme, I am honoured to be asked to speak. I have taught Technology and Society in the programme since 2002 after decades of teaching in History and Women’s Studies. I love teaching and I have done my stint in the trenches – the first class I ever taught at McMaster was huge 1<sup>st</sup> year humanities course of 150 students. For many years I cast envious glances at the Arts and Science Programme, having heard tales of the smallness of its classes and the high quality of its students. However, I was strictly forbidden from making my availability known while I had a daughter in the Programme. Fortunately she graduated in 1993, after which the coast was clear. But it still took some time to get my toe in the Arts and Science door. Faculty members, understandably, tend not to want to leave, making suitable vacancies infrequent.

I was finally hired by Dr Gary Warner, having been invited by Bob Hudspith to assist him with teaching “Tech” and I took over the first “historical” half of what had been a 6 unit third year course. The experience has been everything I expected and I deeply value the privilege of working with McMaster’s best students in an imaginative, interdisciplinary environment.

I might add also that I am now an Arts and Science grandmother; both my daughter and her spouse are graduates of the programme and it is surely only a matter of time before my granddaughter prolongs the dynasty!

Turning to the Programme itself, its achievements are prominently positioned in Presidents Deane’s recent thoughtful “Forward with Integrity” look at the state of the academy and its future development. This document appeared on September 21st – perfectly timed for this celebration.

The Programme’s multidisciplinary approach has always felt very familiar to me, not only from my own undergraduate experience at what was then a new university – I graduated with a boldly interdisciplinary degree, combining literature, history and philosophy! - but also from my later academic training as a medievalist. As many of you will know, education at the medieval university consisted of the trivium and the quadrivium, the first combining grammar, rhetoric and logic and the quadrivium consisting of arithmetic, geometry, astronomy and music. The very word, from the Latin *universitas*, denotes community – a gathering of teachers and scholars.

C.P. Snow's 1959 Rede Lecture, entitled *The Two Cultures*, refers to "a gulf of mutual incomprehension" between the arts and the sciences<sup>1</sup> and speaks of the need to look at education with fresh eyes.<sup>2</sup> Our Programme's founders, including Herb Jenkins, our first Director who is with us tonight, looked with those fresh eyes. Inspired Programme Directors Barbara Ferrier and Gary Warner safeguarded and developed the programme. Under current Director Jean Wilson's guidance we can confidently look forward to reenergizing and renewal.

And finally, let me observe that one of the questions Ursula Franklin poses in *The Real World of Technology*, discussing the separated worlds of technology, science, and the arts, is "how do we speak to one another?" She stresses the need to find shared spaces for conversation in order to serve the higher purpose of global fairness, justice and equality.<sup>3</sup> Our Programme has provided and continues to provide that space – a *universitas* of students and teachers – civil, supportive, and constructive. As amply demonstrated at this gathering, for 30 years the Arts and Science Programme at McMaster has served as an incubator of world citizens on whom we can count to work for an enlightened future. Long may we continue to speak to one another about the things that matter.

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<sup>1</sup> C.P. Snow, *The Two Cultures* (1959).

[http://books.google.ca/books?id=OyHm4sc6IPoC&pg=PA1&source=gbs\\_toc\\_r&cad=4#v=onepage&q&f=false](http://books.google.ca/books?id=OyHm4sc6IPoC&pg=PA1&source=gbs_toc_r&cad=4#v=onepage&q&f=false), p.4.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p.50.

<sup>3</sup> Ursula Franklin, *The Real World of Technology*, Toronto: Anansi, 1999, 122-125.