

First women's studies graduate

Barbara Doran came to university at 33. She was a single parent (divorced, two children) and, as she says today, "came with a tremendous amount of fear and a tremendous amount of expectation".

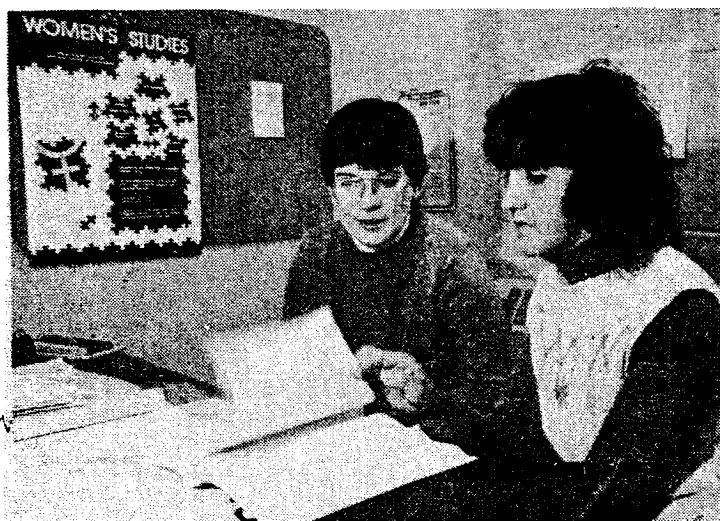
During Memorial's fall convocation, Barbara Doran was one of over a hundred students who received their bachelor of arts degrees. She was also the first student from Memorial to graduate with a minor in women's studies; her major was sociology.

Since women's studies became a part of Memorial's curriculum, interest in the courses, many of them interdisciplinary ones, has mushroomed.

"The majority of the courses offered draw substantial numbers of people," says Dr. Linda Kealey, co-ordinator, women's studies. "Fall semester, 1983 Psych. 3533 and Psych. 2540, had waiting lists."

Popular also have been two courses given on women writers and feminism, taught by Dr. Roberta Buchanan, English. One course was offered for credit; the second for Extension Service, without credit.

Barbara Doran too taught an extension course, part of the same series as the above-mentioned English class. Barbara's was titled: "Contemporary Issues: Sex and Society". Among other topics, it dealt with unresolved issues: sexual stratification in the workplace,



violence against women etc.; explored changes brought about (locally and nationally) through demands for equality on social, political and economic levels.

Barbara Doran brought to the course the experience and learning of her ten-year involvement with the women's movement in Newfoundland. A member of the first consciousness-raising group in Newfoundland, she worked with transition houses and served as, first, a founding member and then a vice-president of the Newfoundland Status of Women Council.

But she felt that she was not making the best use of her efforts on the council.

cont. on p. 12

(L-R) Pam Hiscock extension, and Barbara Doran, fall convocation graduate in women's studies/sociology, check final details for a course given by Barbara Doran part of an extension series on women's studies.

Women's studies

cont. from p. 6

"I had worked at the grass-roots level," she said, "and the grass-roots level is where I get fired up."

Some of the women she met and interacted with during the first years of the women's movement in St. John's, had been raised to be independent and self-starters, as she was not, she remembers. "It was an exciting time," she says in retrospect. Women were not yet allowed to sit on juries; there was no matrimonial property law yet on the books. Together with three other women, she recounts, they went lobbying an MHA in his office. "He sat back in his chair and looked at the four of us and said: 'Do you mean to tell me that it says on that piece of paper you've got, that I should give half of MY house to my wife at the time of a divorce? Is that what you're trying to tell me?' We said: 'Yes, Mr. Minister'. He said: 'What, MY Wife, who sits home looking at the story all day long or talking on the phone? GET OUT.' And he threw the four of us out into the hall!"

"Of course, biases are more subtle now," says Barbara. "We'd be given a

Barbara's lasting gift from the women's movement is the sense she was instrumental in some of the changes that have taken place since then.

She's long ago lost the awe she first felt of universities. "If you've never been a student (she had married early and with no chance of university) the university looms large. You think that everyone in there has much more intelligence and knowledge than you do," she says.

"My last memory of high school had been that you stood by the side of your desk and spilled out everything that came to your head. At university, initially I found many of the profs very supportive. I could actually talk to them as human beings; it was a great relief. But after ten years in the women's movement, it was disillusioning that many professors never touched on women at all in their lectures. History, literature, whatever, women were invisible."

After receiving her degree this fall semester, she hopes for further study in the future, eventually a master's in women's studies; such a program is available at Carleton. And she's hopeful