

at the same time. When we met briefly in her office just before the first class, I watched in awe as she tore a page from a small notebook, wrote down a few points, and then proceeded to deliver an hour-long lecture to the assembled group of students (with discussion, of course, interspersed). In the days when OISE was not smoke-free, Mary would settle back with her cup of tea and cigarette in the cafeteria during the class break and regale students with stories. She was fond of teasing me for my interest in sport and recreation: blowing smoke in my general direction, she would pronounce that I was so fit that a bit of smoke wouldn't hurt me.

In the March 1983, Mary did a television interview with Robert Fulford. Discussing feminism and the politics of reproduction with a less than sympathetic host, she was lively, accessible and relentless. This was Mary in her intellectual prime. A few short years later, I watched the video with great sadness, because in contrast to Mary's

current state, it was clear that the memory loss had already taken its toll. We are most fortunate to have, as a legacy, Mary's ground-breaking book, *The Politics of Reproduction* (1981), her collection of essays, *Reproducing the World* (1989), (skillfully assembled and edited by another former graduate student, Somer Brodribb), and many published journal articles. In 1989, a special issue of the OISE journal *Resources for Feminist Research* (Volume 18, Number 3) was dedicated to the work of Mary O'Brien, with articles by international scholars applying her theoretical insights and reflecting her influence.

And, on an individual note, some of us are fortunate enough to be able to hear, in our imaginations, Mary's wonderful Scottish voice, talking about feminist ideas, feminist politics, feminist friendship ... thank you, Mary.

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## MARY O'BRIEN

### VI

Once I thought  
That  
As I grew older  
Kids  
Would reproach me  
For  
My childlessness.

Poltergeists  
of those swarming  
sperms  
inhospitably routed  
at the portcullis  
of my cervix

Now it seems  
That  
Their reproach goes to  
Those  
Who bore them. Yes.  
Those,  
Rather than me.

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