

St. Thomas University

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Dr. Marlene Brant Castellano

Dr. Marlene Brant Castellano was appointed to the position of Co-director of Research for the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples in January 1992. She is currently on secondment from Trent University in Peterborough, Ontario, where she is Associate Professor in the Department of Native Studies. She also holds the appointment of Associate Professor in the Faculty of Education at Queen's University, since 1990.

Marlene Castellano is a member of the Mohawk Nation, and maintains a permanent residence in Tyendinaga Mohawk Territory on the Bay of Quinte with her husband Vincent. She raised four sons, who each have professional careers and are spread across the world in Washington, Toronto, and Tokyo.

Dr. Castellano has had a long and very distinguished academic career. She completed her BA degree at Queen's University in 1955, and her Bachelor of Social Work degree at the University of Toronto in 1956. During 1956-58 she began her career as a caseworker in the Children's Aid Society, and over the next twelve years she worked as a social worker in Family and Children's Services in Winnipeg, Toronto, and Belleville, Ontario. Between 1958-59 she took time out to complete a Masters degree in Social Work at the University of Toronto.

Throughout the 1970s Dr. Castellano turned her attention to adult education, with a special concern for the needs of First Nations Peoples. She became extensively involved in research and programme development in continuing education and summer session courses for teachers of Indian children. In 1973 she was appointed Assistant Professor in the Department of Native Studies, Trent University, and promoted to Associate Professor in 1977. In 1981 she completed a Doctorate in Education Theory at the University of Toronto. In 1991 she was awarded the degree of Doctor of Laws Honouris Causa at Queen's University.

Marlene Castellano has had a long and very productive career as a social worker, teacher, and researcher:

She has been actively involved for many years in curriculum development in the relatively new field of Native Studies in Canadian Universities. She developed and taught a series of courses in Native Studies, including Law and Native Peoples, Indian Metaphysics, and Courses in Social Services and Identity Development among Native Peoples.

She has served as a visiting professor in a number of universities; the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, the universities of Queens, Manitoba, and Laurentian. She has been in high demand for her special expertise in Native Cultures and spirituality, and in social work and continuing education.

She has been involved in extensive consultation work in adult education. She helped to develop pilot projects in Native economic development and small business management. She has also organized a host of conferences and workshops for personnel working in Native community services.

Since the mid-1970s her research work has focussed on adult education. Its quality has been recognized in numerous research grants from both government and private foundations.

Currently, Dr. Castellano's work as a teacher is centred in the areas of social services and Native peoples, culture and community, community-based research methodology, and senior seminars on Indigenous Knowledge. She remains very active as a consultant on Native issues, involved in a task force on multicultural and multiracial education, health administration, and social work education for Native Students. It is this special expertise that she brings to her most recent appointment as Co-director of Research for the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples.

She has served extensively on Boards and Committees over the last four years, in addition to acting as a regular consultant to the government, and a consultant for community workshops and conferences focussing on Native community needs. Her own extensive conference presentations have focussed on education for community services, and on the development of culturally appropriate curriculum for Native post-secondary education.

Her work as a consultant to the government shows the breadth of her expertise. She has been involved in planning medical services, establishing funding priorities in training for Native community health, developing research methods for better beginnings and better futures, longitudinal research and demonstration projects on prevention of emotional and behavioural disorders in children.

She has served on the task force on training for National Native alcohol and drug abuse programs with Health and Welfare Canada, and as a member of the Native Inquiry team concerned with suicides at the Prison for Women in Kingston, and as a facilitator for initiatives on Native family violence. She has directed special projects on education for Native management, Native perspectives on community and on mental health, and cultural strategies for rehabilitation of Native women offenders. She was also involved in public forums on the Oka crisis, and forums concerned with building bridges of understanding between First Nations peoples and other Canadians.

In conclusion, I present to you Dr. Marlene Brant Castellano, a Mohawk woman, an academic, an educator, a teacher, a social worker, a community activist: a person who has dedicated her life to creating better beginnings and better futures for her people. She is one for whom a Doctorate of Laws, *Honoris Causa*, is richly deserved.