

# PROFESSOR FOCUS

--T.W.

Professor Annie Spears is presently a junior Economics professor at UPEI. Being a business major, I had the good fortune of having Professor Spears as my professor for Economics 271. Professor Spears brought life to the course and I soon found out that Economics could be quite interesting. I can safely say, to attest to my above statement, that it was also the first time I had not fallen asleep in an economics class. Well I guess I should focus on Professor Spears not just ramble on with my opinions.

Professor Spears received her Masters of Science in Economics with a specialization in Econometrics from the University of Paris at Pantheon-Sorbonne, France. As a graduate student in Economics, Professor Spears, while not a professor then, taught Spanish and beginners English to young children between the ages of 11 to 13. Simultaneously she was also taking course studies in Japanese at the Institute of Oriental Languages in Paris. Talk about a full course load to carry. After receiving her MSc. in Economics, Professor Spears had the opportunity to work with Unilever Bros., a multinational corporation in London, England as an Economist. Professor Spears also had the opportunity to work as an economist at the International Wool Secretariat in London, England which is a non-profit organization which is mainly funded by the Australian and New Zealand Governments. The International Wool Secretariat was the initiator of the "wool mark". While in England Professor Spears married an English Doctor.

In 1972 Professor Spears and her family emigrated to Ontario, Canada. But it wasn't until 1973, that she and her family moved to Prince Edward Island. When I asked her, if emigrating to PEI was planned, her reply was that it was all by chance. Professor Spears had stopped working full time in order to take care of her family. Just by listening to her voice and by observing her facial expressions you can tell that her family is very important to her. She has two sons, one in university and the other in high school.

Professor Spears started teaching at UPEI in 1989 as a sessional lecturer. She is very involved in research and has published several papers in the last four years. She had also assisted in a research project with Professor Nagarajan, a senior Economics professor, in 1988. Professor Spears is presently doing research

in the area of Developmental Macroeconomics which she will be presenting at the forthcoming Learned Societies Conference hosted by UPEI in June. In recent months, Professor Spears has been called upon to comment on current economics issues by various media institutions such as Compass and CBC radio.

Currently Professor Spears is a full time lecturer. Professor Spears enjoys teaching and she hopes to inspire in her students a desire to pursue economics, but more importantly, she encourages their intellectual development. Professor Spears further explains that it is not only important for student to develop their minds academically, but to also enrich their minds by learning how to think and how to judge and analyze various issues by themselves.

When I asked her how she felt about being the only female in a male dominated department, she replied by saying that she had never felt discriminated. Her colleagues are open and friendly. She further mentions that hopefully her presence as the only female professor in the Economics department would encourage female students to aspire not only to a profession in economics, but to other professions which were traditionally male-dominated.



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