

Lettre de la présidente

Fall 2008

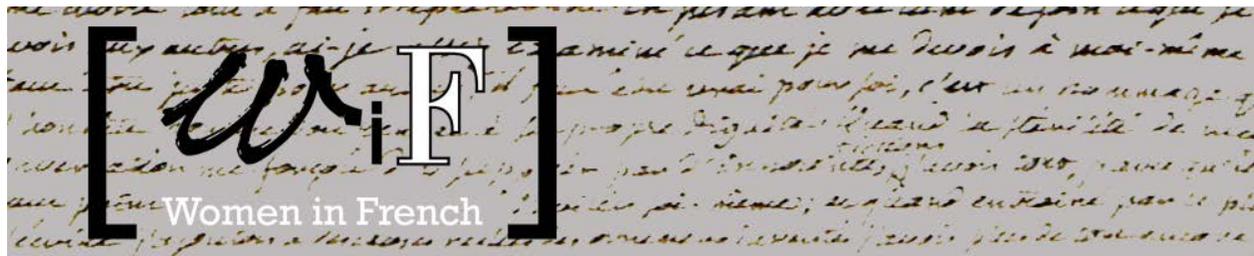
Dear Colleagues,

At the end of my first eight months as President of Women in French, I am exhilarated by the wonderful talents and efforts of so many in our organization. I was truly gratified at the tremendous success of the Fourth International Women in French Conference held in April in Dallas and organized by Marie-Christine Koop and Marijn Kaplan. Félicitations go to both for a fabulous meeting.

Although there were tornados spotted and many cancelled flights due to American Airlines' grounded planes, almost everyone had arrived by Friday afternoon's plenary speech, which featured WIF's own Perry Gethner. Perry gave a most entertaining and instructive talk on women writers of the heroic genre, concluding with a song brilliantly performed in his own voice! The adventurous organizers also scheduled a bus tour of the city of Dallas, with a guided visit of the amazing National Women's Museum on Friday afternoon. Many of us wished that we could bring our Women's Studies students there for a fieldtrip – alas, it is thousands of miles from some of our campuses. The second plenary speaker, Sihem Habchi, President of Ni Putes Ni Soumises, spoke both informally at a regular session on immigration and social issues organized by Marie-Christine Koop on Saturday afternoon, and at the Saturday evening banquet. We were able to take away valuable information and new inspiration from her talk, and I know that I used some of Habchi's materials in my French culture classes the very next week. Many thanks to these plenary speakers for widening our horizons and helping to shape the conference's theme, "Women in the Middle." WIF also gratefully acknowledges the generous support offered by the French Consulate of Houston and the Services Culturels of the French Embassy in Washington, as well as the Department of Foreign Languages and Literatures of the University of North Texas

Most of all, I want to thank all of the conference participants who made this event so unique, including those who gave papers, organized sessions, or agreed to chair sessions. I came away having learned new aspects about familiar texts, as well as discovering new texts and films, and new authors, too. It reminded me once again of the diversity of interests and superb research of our members. In addition, one of the most important features of WIF for me and for many of the participants that I spoke with at the conference is the open communication that our members share, regardless of rank or length of experience in the field.

To follow-up on this special event, a call for papers has gone out for a volume of selected essays based on papers presented at the conference, to be published in a special issue of WIF Studies, probably in 2010. For more information, please contact the editors Marijn Kaplan and Perry Gethner directly: Marijn.Kaplan@unt.edu and perry.gethner@okstate.edu. I am very pleased to announce that the volume of selected essays from the 2006 conference, edited by



Nadine Bérenguier, Catherine Montfort, and myself, is in proofs now, and should be in print by the end of this year.

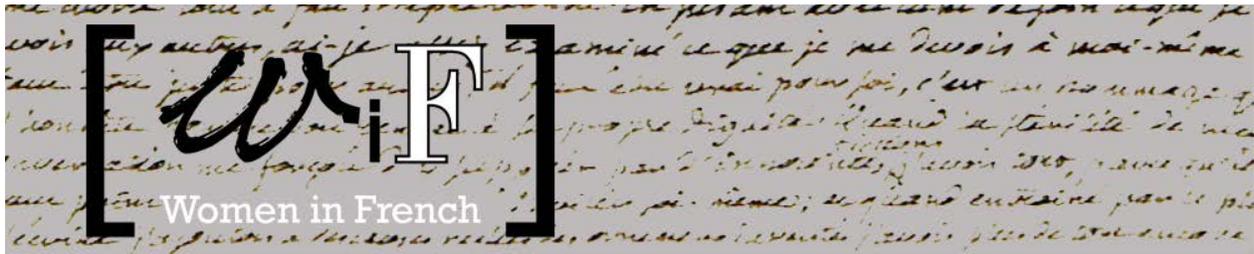
The WIF Executive Committee also discussed at the April conference the possibility of another WIF conference for spring 2011; we have received an offer from Sara Steinert Borella to host the conference in Lugano, Switzerland at Franklin College. Such a location would help with one of our goals for the next several years, and that is to reach out to include more international members in Women in French. Therefore we are seriously considering Switzerland as one of the possible locations for the fifth International WIF conference. However, we understand that some U.S.-based WIF members may not be able to travel to Europe, especially with such a weak U.S. dollar. We would like to receive input from as many of you as possible about the likelihood of your participation if we held our next WIF conference abroad.

The Executive Committee also discussed a number of items at the April meeting that we are now asking the entire membership to vote on. The first item is whether or not to move to an electronic Newsletter in the future. The switch to the electronic format, delivered via email, would of course save trees and mailing costs, but there are advantages to staying with the paper format, such as easier access to information in a “hard” copy. Our outstanding website manager, Nancy Virtue, has posted a sample of what the electronic Newsletter would look like, and you can see it at the WIF website: <http://users.ipfw.edu/virtue/WIF/default.htm>

A second option that we discussed was to continue with a paper Newsletter that would include bibliographies and conference reports, and then send an electronic update via email once a month for time-sensitive materials, such as deadlines for articles, conferences, and grant proposals. See Martine Guyot-Bender’s explanations of the different options later in this newsletter. There is also a ballot for voting for one of these options. We will follow whatever format the majority chooses, so please be sure to send in your opinion.

The WIF Executive Committee also discussed Nancy Virtue’s hard work to redesign and reorganize the WIF website. It will be ready for unveiling in the coming months, and we believe that the new look will be user friendly and a welcome revision of the 10-year-old website currently in use. In addition, she has created a selection of new logos for WIF, and we are asking all WIF members to please vote on the logo that you feel best represents our organization. You can see these designs in this newsletter or on the WIF website: <http://users.ipfw.edu/virtue/WIF-dev>

A third major change that the WIF Executive Committee discussed was the activities and responsibilities of the Regional Representatives to the Executive Committee. In order to help our valiant secretary Elizabeth Locey-Hampe with her heavy duties at the end of each year, the Regional Representatives will now be the main contact persons for any WIF members who need to know about their membership status. In the future, if you have a question about whether your



membership is still current or needs to be renewed, all you need to do is to contact your Regional Representative, who will have a complete list of all members in her region. The current Regional Reps and their email addresses are listed in this newsletter.

And speaking of Regional Representatives, WIF also needs your vote in the elections for representatives for the following regions: New England/Eastern Canada and New York State. Your elected representatives serve on the Executive Committee that plans the organization's future activities and decides on important organizational issues. Please let your voice be heard.

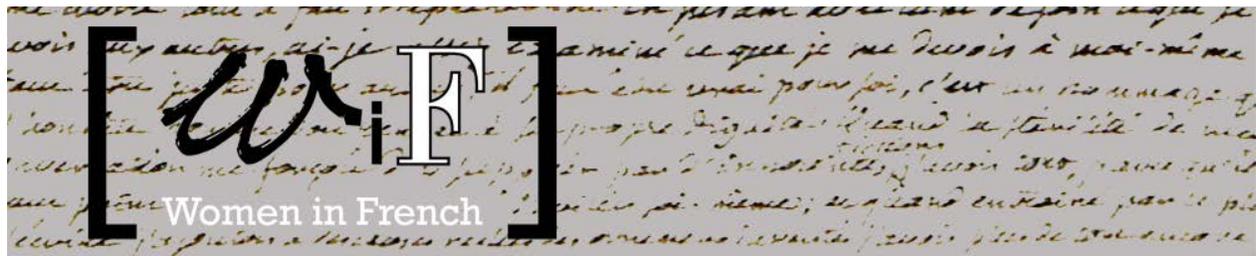
Finally, we ask you to express your choice among the proposed WIF sessions for the MLA Convention to be held in December 2009 in Philadelphia, PA. Although it seems early, the MLA needs this information by the first week in January 2009 in order to send calls for papers in a timely fashion. Please vote on these items by sending in the ballot or e-mailing the nominating committee, Colette Trout (ctrout@usinus.edu) and Annabelle Rea (rea@oxy.edu).

Thanks to Monique Manopoulos and Sylvie Reid-Blum for organizing the sessions for this year's MLA convention in San Francisco. Monique's session, *Le roman noir au féminin*, will be held at 3:30 on December 27, 2008 in the San Francisco Marriott. Participants at Monique's session include Lynn Kettler Penrod, Univ. of Alberta, Annik Doquire Kerszberg, Lock Haven Univ., Cheryl Ainley Morgan, Hamilton College, and Linda Kick, Univ. of California, Santa Barbara. Sylvie's session, *Francophone Women Directors*, will be held at 3:30 on December 29, 2008 in the San Francisco Marriott. Participants in Sylvie's session include Safoi Babana-Hampton, Michigan State Univ., Carine Bourget, Univ. of Arizona, Valérie K. Orlando, Univ. of Maryland, and Joëlle F. Vitiello, Macalester College.

Thanks also to Roseanna Dufault and Antoinette Sol for a wonderful job of updating the WIF Annuaire this summer. You will be able to find the latest version of the directory, which includes contact information for all current members, on the WIF website. An access code is required before you can download the directory; please contact the website manager Nancy Virtue: virtue@ipfw.edu

The results of your votes on these different subjects will be announced at our annual Business Meeting, to be held from 5-7 PM on December 29 at Two Restaurant, 22 Hawthorne Street (at Howard between Second and Third Streets), 3 blocks from the Marriott, tel. 415-777-9779. My thanks go to Vice-President Cathy Yandell for finding a place to host the meeting in such an expensive city. Venez nombreux et nombreuses ! It would be wonderful to see as many of us as possible.

You will also find in this Newsletter one bibliography by WIF members Simona Pruteanu and Karin Schwerdtner titled "*Endurance et énonciation au féminin: pistes bibliographiques.*" Cathy Yandell sent out a call for new bibliographies this summer, and if you are interested in



contributing one to a future issue of the Newsletter, please contact her directly: yandell@carleton.edu.

I am thankful to the many volunteers who have worked so hard this year so that WIF can continue being such a vital organization. Your involvement allows us to grow and to build our community of feminist scholars who contribute cutting-edge research on women in French.

Merci,

Juliette Rogers