

Lettre de la Présidente

Fall 2009

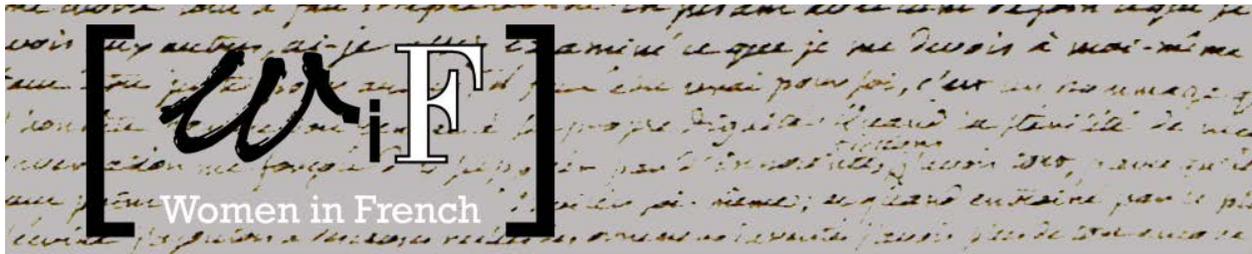
Dear Women in French Colleagues,

As I write this letter, I feel energized by the enthusiasm of my new students, having just finished teaching my first set of classes at the beginning of the new academic year. In a similar way, as I look over the activities of our organization during the past six months since my last column, I am amazed by the energy and enthusiasm that our WIF members have for the profession in general and for our organization in particular.

To begin, I am very happy to reconfirm that our next Women in French conference will be hosted by Wagner College on Staten Island in the city of New York, next June 10 to 12, 2010. Many, many thanks go to Natalie Edwards, one of our New York State representatives on the WIF Executive Committee, who so generously offered her campus to sponsor our conference and who will act as the conference director. I also want to extend a special thanks to our Newsletter co-Editor, Martine Guyot-Bender who has sent out the various calls this summer and who has been collecting paper proposals from members. As a reminder, the general theme for the program is **Women's Self Narrative Across the Francophone World**, and paper proposals related to that theme, or to Women in French more generally. We are opening a second deadline to allow more members to participate. You can still **submit a proposal until October 30**. Send individual paper proposals (title and contact information, plus 300-word description) or full panels, to Martine at mguyotb@hamilton.edu.

Please note that in order to participate in a WIF conference, your membership in Women in French will have to be current (you must have paid your dues.) In addition to securing Wagner's brand new dorm for our use that weekend, Natalie has received funding from her administration for a keynote speaker and related conference costs. Natalie has also recently confirmed that the **main keynote speaker will be Judith Miller**, Collegiate Professor of French at New York University. Professor Miller has written extensively on French and francophone women playwrights, including a monograph on Ariane Mnouchkine (2007) and numerous articles on Hélène Cixous and other francophone women writers. She has translated and written critical editions for a great number of francophone plays, including *Plays by French and Francophone Women: A Critical Anthology* (1994) and *Women Writing Africa: West Africa and the Sahel* (2004). For more information on Judith Miller, please see her website: <http://french.as.nyu.edu/object/judithmiller.html>

For the upcoming **2009 MLA convention in Philadelphia**, we have two Women in French sessions organized by Colette Trout and Maria Traub, and the annual business meeting for Women in French as well. The session by Maria Traub, titled "Memory, History, and the Literary Text," will take place on **Tuesday, December 29, from 12 noon to 1:15 p.m. in the Loews Philadelphia**. Presenters include Brigitte Weltman-Aron (speaking on Assia Djebar), Kennedy

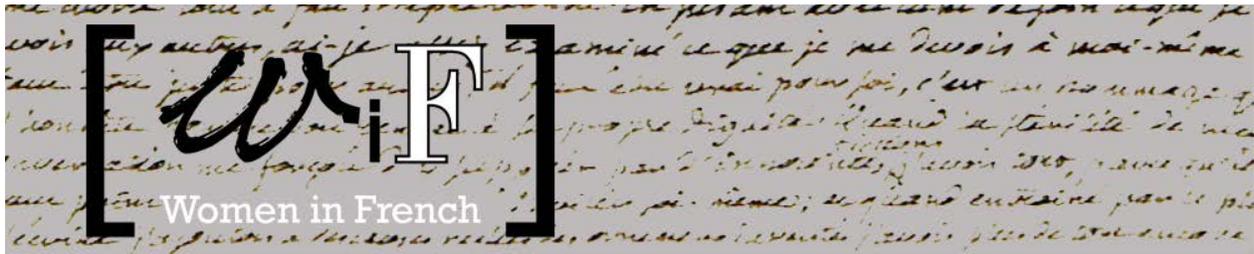


Miller Schultz (speaking on Marie-Célie Agnant), Dorothea Beate Heitsch (speaking on Andrée Chedid), and Anne-Marie Obajtek-Kirkwood (speaking on Nancy Huston). The session organized by Colette Trout, titled “Rebelles, mécréantes et criminelles dans la littérature francophone féminine,” will take place on Wednesday December 30 from 1:45 to 3:00 p.m., also in the Loews Philadelphia. Presenters include Grace M. Armstrong (speaking on the *Heptaméron*), Candice Nicolas (speaking on *Kamouraska*), Joëlle Vitiello (speaking on Calixthe Beyala and Léonora Miano), and Michèle Schaal (speaking on Virginie Despentes). I hope that many of you will be able to attend these two WIF sessions.

The annual **Assemblée Générale** at the MLA is open to all members and to individuals interested in learning more about or joining Women in French – please invite your colleagues and graduate students to the meeting. We will begin with a cash bar and free hors d’oeuvres beginning at 5:15 on Monday, December 28 at the restaurant Italian Bistro (located at 211 South Broad St., 215-731-0700), then proceed to the business meeting at 5:45 or 6:00 p.m. Winners of this year’s elections and the two Women in French sessions for the 2011 MLA in Los Angeles will be announced at the business meeting, in addition to discussion of new agenda items, including the WIF website, travel grants for graduate students, and a possible fundraising campaign. Venez nombreuses et nombreux! If you have items for discussion that you would like to include on the agenda, please contact me directly: jmrogers@macalester.edu.

The 2009 volume of our scholarly journal Women in French Studies will be ready for shipment in November, so if you have not renewed your membership for the 2009 year, please be sure to renew by October 1 on the WIF website: <http://www.womeninfrench.org/espace-membre/cotisation/> The easiest way to pay is by credit card on our secure website, but U.S. residents may also send a check to our secretary, Marijn Kaplan (details available on the website). A reminder that Women in French membership is based on the calendar year (January-December), not the academic year. If you have not paid your 2009 dues by the October 1 deadline, you will not receive the 2009 volume of WIF Studies. As usual, we have elections coming up this fall, with several open positions this year including President, Vice-President, and Regional Representatives for the Executive Committee from two geographic locations: the South and the Western U.S. and Canada. You will find all the nominees, along with their short bio statements, on page 18 of this newsletter. Please note that all current members may vote for President and Vice-President, but only members who live in the region where there is an open seat may vote for a representative. If you reside outside the region, please do not vote for a representative this year. You can send your votes to both members of the Nominating Committee by December 1: Colette Trout (ctrout@ursinus.edu) and Annabelle Rea (rea@oxy.edu).

We have also ready to receive five proposals for Women in French sessions for the 2011 MLA convention. You will find all of the proposed sessions on page 17 of this newsletter. Please send your votes for the two sessions you would most like to see at the convention to both members of the Nominating Committee: Colette Trout (ctrout@ursinus.edu) and Annabelle Rea



(rea@oxy.edu) by December 1. Because the dates of the convention have changed from late December to early January, the next MLA convention after this year's meeting will take place January 6-9, 2011 in Los Angeles.

At this time, I wish to express my sincere appreciation to Cathy Yandell for her service as the WIF Vice-President over the past twenty months. Her perseverance in both soliciting and editing the bibliographies for the newsletter has been excellent, and she found and booked a location for last year's annual business meeting during the San Francisco MLA that was "très sympa." When she received the news that she had been chosen to become the first director of the new Humanities Center that just opened up at Carleton College, she found that there were not enough hours in a day to juggle the WIF Vice-President tasks with her new administrative duties and all of her regular work as professor, advisor, study abroad program director, and scholar. So we are saying "au revoir" for now, but look forward to seeing her at future Women in French events whenever possible. Merci Cathy!

I also wish to send my deepest thanks to Catherine Montfort who has finished her term as Executive Editor of our scholarly journal, *Women in French Studies*, and who will continue as General Editor this year. The role of Executive Editor requires a substantial time commitment and extraordinary attention to detail, both of which Catherine has given many times over to *Women in French* – merci mille fois, Catherine! Dawn Cornelio has made the transition from Production Editor to Executive Editor seem effortless, even though there is a steep learning curve and many different tasks associated with each role – bravo, Dawn! And I am very happy to welcome Marianne Golding in the position of Production Editor for *WIF Studies* – *bienvenue, Marianne!* As Dawn mentioned in an email to the list earlier this year, *WIF Studies* is currently looking for a volunteer to work on advertising for the journal; if you are interested in helping, please write directly to Dawn (dcornelio@guelph.ca).

Many other volunteers have worked hard this year so that WIF can continue to thrive: our treasurer, Eileen McEwan, our secretary, Marijn Kaplan, our website manager, Nancy Virtue, our electronic list manager, Gay Rawson, our library subscriptions manager, Maureen Perry, our book review editor, Sara Borella Steinert, our nominating committee, Colette Trout and Annabelle Rea, and our newsletter editors, Martine Guyot-Bender and Cheryl Morgan. Thanks also to our regional representatives and graduate student representative for their help with membership. As you can see, the number of individuals who volunteer their time for our organization is truly amazing, and I thank all of you for your help in strengthening Women in French.

Merci et bonne année à tous et à toutes,

Juliette Rogers