

Lettre de la Présidente

Fall 2011

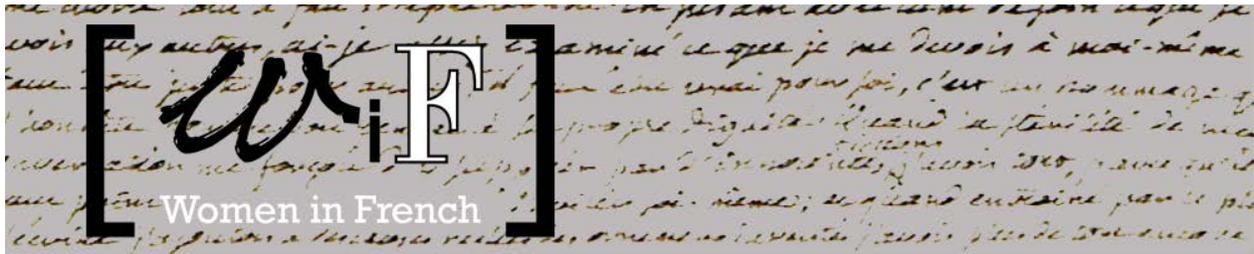
Dear Colleagues,

This is my last letter as President of Women in French, and as I sit down to write to you about what is going on this fall and winter, I am also thinking about all that has happened during my two terms as President. We have accomplished so much! Women in French has held two conferences (2008 in Texas and 2010 in New York) and is preparing for its sixth international conference, “Crossing Boundaries” to be held at Arizona State University in February 2012. The conference committee is busy putting together the program as I write this letter, and will announce keynotes, registration and hotel information very soon. For more information, please check the conference website: <http://asu.edu/clas/silc/wif/>

We have also continued to be a presence at the conventions of the Modern Languages Association as well as at the regional MLAs over the past four years. I am beginning work on the application to renew our status as an allied organization of the MLA, one of my last duties this fall. We are looking forward to the MLA 2012 convention in Seattle in January where we will be sponsoring one WIF session (“La force des femmes” organized by Alison Rice, to be held on Friday January 6 from 5:15 to 6:30 p.m. in Cedar A and B, Sheraton) and one collaborative WIF-George Sand Association session (“Literature, Gender, and the Press: Around and Beyond George Sand” organized by Catherine Nesci, also to be held on Friday January 6 from 10:15 to 11:30 a.m. in Boren, Sheraton). Other WIF members have also organized special sessions, including Michèle Magnin and E. Nicole Meyer and I am sure there are others – please write to the list and let us know when and where you will be speaking!

As in years past, we will be holding our annual business meeting at the MLA. Although the venue is not reserved yet, we plan to hold it on Friday evening January 6, 2012, immediately following the WIF session that ends at 6:30 p.m. Please plan to attend and bring colleagues who might be interested in joining! We will also be co-sponsoring the Women’s Caucus of the Modern Languages cash bar, along with Women in German and Feministas Unidas. That meeting will take place on Thursday evening, January 5. Please come and network with colleagues in other language departments!

The time has also come to choose a WIF session for the 2013 MLA in Boston. Please do read through the list of proposals for the WIF session included in the next section of this newsletter, and make your choice by December 1. Results of the vote will be announced at the meeting in Seattle in January 2012. As was decided during the 2011 Annual Business Meeting at the MLA in Los Angeles, we are also working on organizing a collaborative session with the Simone de Beauvoir Association and will let you know more about that shortly.

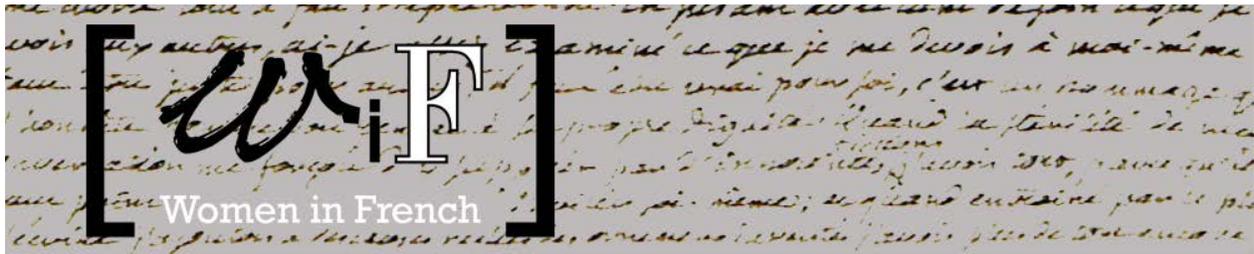


During my time as president, WIF editors Catherine Montfort and Dawn Cornelio have published several volumes of *Women in French Studies*, including the regular annual volume, two special volumes, and two volumes of selected essays from our conferences, with one more special volume in preparation. The exciting news from Catherine is that she has secured a contract this summer with Project Muse for *Women in French Studies*. Beginning in 2012, our journal will be available online for all those students and scholars whose libraries subscribe to Project Muse. This is a fantastic development, since it means that our authors' research will be disseminated much more broadly, not only in the U.S., but around the world. As I mentioned in my Spring 2011 letter, after many years as our Book Review Editor, Sara Steinert Borella is stepping down, and we are seeking a volunteer to work in her place. The job description is included in this newsletter, and I ask that you please write to me or to Dawn as soon as possible if you are interested in this position.

Some of the greatest changes in our organization over the past four years have been technological in nature; we switched from a paper newsletter to an online one, thanks to the hard work and efforts of our newsletter editors Martine Guyot-Bender and Cheryl Morgan. Electronic delivery by email means rapid communication, a great reduction in printing and mailing costs as well as a more environmentally friendly newsletter. Our outgoing website manager, Nancy Virtue, left us with an entirely renovated website, complete with new domain name (www.womeninfrench.org) and more user-friendly features. I thank our new website manager, Michèle Schaal, for taking on this position beginning this fall. If you have items to post to the website, you may contact her at: mischaal@umail.iu.edu. I am also proud to announce that our first ever online elections will take place this fall, on the votingplace.net website. Many thanks to the nominating committee, Annabelle Rea and Colette Trout, and to our secretary Marijn Kaplan, who worked with me this summer and fall to prepare the election website for you.

I also want to thank Annabelle and Colette for the excellent work recruiting new candidates for so many important offices: you will be voting for your new President, Vice President, Graduate Student Representative, and some of you will also be voting for regional representatives (New England/Eastern Canada and New York State). You will find more information below on each member who is running for office, along with a link that will take you directly to the election website page. Please logon to the votingplace.net website and submit your ballot by November 8.

As you may recall, we received news this summer from the undergraduate prize committee, Margot Miller and Cora Monroe, that they had awarded the 2011 undergraduate prize to Lea Malewitz for her essay "L'immigrée parisienne," sponsored by Alison Rice at Notre Dame University. I send my *félicitations* to Lea Malewitz and a great thank you to Alison Rice for her work as mentor and supervisor of Lea's project. I also want to recognize Cora and Margot for their many years of service as our undergraduate prize committee; they have been diligent in their pursuit of excellence in judging our students' essays and have worked hard to clarify the



guidelines of the competition. I am happy to announce a new committee to run the prize competition, comprised of co-chairs Karin Schwerdtner and Arline Cravens and additional reader Mary Rice-Defosse. After an extended online discussion, the WIF Executive Board has decided to continue with the same guidelines that Cora and Margot established a year ago, but we will allow slightly longer papers (8-12 pages) and add cultural topics to the literary ones that have been accepted in the past. Look for news from our new committee about the next deadline for submissions.

Since this is my last letter, I want to mention a few people who have been particularly helpful or who have lightened my workload as president. These include our secretary Marijn Kaplan and her wonderful new system of renewal notifications, along with her up-to-date database of all members and their contact information. I also have appreciated our treasurer Eileen McEwan Ketchum's initiatives to seek out investment opportunities when we had a surplus and her sage counsel on all financial issues. Cheryl Morgan has taken on the newsletter alone the past two years with grace and aplomb, and Dawn Cornelio has produced some of our finest volumes of *WIF Studies* to date. Finally, Annabelle Rea has been an amazing source of advice and wisdom for almost every challenge and question that I have faced; I am truly thankful for her generous aid and her passion for Women in French. I am simultaneously thrilled by all that our organization has accomplished over the past four years and confident in our future direction, knowing that we have such devoted and capable volunteers.

To conclude, I want to quote a statement made by my predecessor, Mary Rice-Defosse, as she was leaving her second term as President. She said, "WIF is not only a core group of volunteers—however appreciated they are! It is a network of dedicated professionals and scholars who share common interests and concerns." I have found her statement to be especially true during my time as President of WIF, and I encourage ALL of you to stay involved with WIF and to invite other graduate students and faculty who have scholarly interests like yours to become involved with Women in French. The members of this organization are what make WIF the innovative, collaborative, forward-thinking research group it is.

Best wishes for a productive semester,

Juliette Rogers
Macalester College