

Lettre de la présidente

Spring 2013

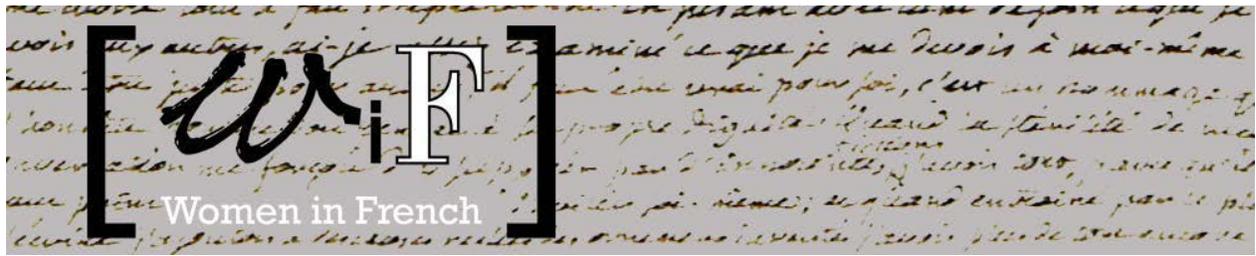
Dear colleagues,

As Women in French celebrates its 35th anniversary, we have many accomplishments to look back on and many opportunities to look forward to. Our membership numbers remain strong at over 400, our biennial conferences continue to grow in quality and prestige as does our journal, *Women in French Studies*, and our status as an Allied Organization of the MLA has been renewed for seven more years. Our success is the result of the hard work of our many volunteers and I thank you all for your many contributions.

One of the priorities we identified at our Business Meeting at MLA in Boston was the recruitment of graduate students. A year ago, the Board voted to lower the membership fee for graduate students to \$15. In Boston, Jenny Meyer, our graduate student representative, volunteered to create and moderate a Twitter account for us. She will also create an e-brochure targeting graduate students. Vice-President Cecilia Beach has volunteered to set up a Facebook account. Cecilia and Jenny are also working together to develop criteria and an application for travel support for graduate students whose papers are accepted for our Women in French conferences. Another initiative that we hope to implement before the next MLA is the establishment of a list of mentors willing to do mock Skype interviews with graduate students who are looking for jobs. These mentors could also review portfolios and provide feedback.

Women in French, as I reported in the fall newsletter, is expanding its presence at the regional MLA conferences. Each regional MLA has its own governance structure and processes for accepting sessions, but we are finding that having one of our regional representatives directly in liaison with those in charge of establishing conference programs has allowed us to increase the number of sessions at several of the regional MLAs. As of now, in 2013 WIF should have four sessions at PAMLA (Catherine Montfort), seven at RMMLA (Arline Cravens), seven at SCMLA (Theresa Varney Kennedy), and two at MMLA (Nicole Meyer). One of the difficulties we face is that the seven regions, established by the national MLA and which we must use to elect our delegates, do not correspond geographically to the states included in the regional MLAs.

In this regard, I must confess having made an error in my appointment last year of Theresa Varney Kennedy of Baylor to succeed me as regional representative for the South. Texas is, in fact, part of MLA's Central and Rocky Mountain Region, but belongs to the South Central Modern Language Association. Theresa has done a wonderful job working with SCMLA and was nominated and elected as delegate for the South in December, before the Board realized the mistake. We have agreed it is best to keep her as the representative for the South for 2013, but we will call for a new election for the South in December. It will be for a two-year term (rather than three-year) so that the rotation of elections for delegates from the seven regions is not thrown off.



Finally, my thanks go to the editor of *WIF Studies*, Dawn Cornelio and her team for a superb issue of our journal (2012) and to Catherine Montfort for the publication of the impressive special issue, *Les femmes et la lecture*. Bonne lecture à toutes et à tous !

Best wishes to all,

Mary Anne Garnett
University of Arkansas at Little Rock