

# NOTES AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

## MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT OF SMFS

The SMFS is facing a major change when we leave our corporate headquarters at the University of Oregon this summer for a new host institution. The amusing clang of that phrase — corporate headquarters — says a lot about who we are. SMFS is certainly not a corporate institution; in fact, we are one of the most egalitarian scholarly organizations around these days. Being faced with a major change of venue and staff is, of course, an amazing challenge. But nothing shows our deep-seated feminist principles as well as the remarkable way we have dealt with the impending change. How do we find a new host institution? What criteria are the most important in selecting an institutional home? How does each possible new base institution propose to fulfill the ongoing goals of the Society?

For the last four months, the SMFS Advisory Board has had a remarkable ongoing, multivocal, multifaceted email correspondence that has considered many of these questions from multiple points of view. We have been blessed with several viable options for a new SMFS home base, but, of course, none replicates exactly the felicitous situation we have had since 1996 at the University of Oregon's Center for the Study of Women in Society. So, in a way, we are back at the beginning, at a moment when a sort of reinvention of SMFS is a possibility.

One of the most hotly contested issues, something that would constitute a real reinvention, has to do with the possibility of bringing the publication of *Medieval Feminist Forum* to a completely online format. Online publication of *MFF* has been discussed over the past few years, and there are several members of the Advisory Board who are, in principle, committed to the prospect. But now that we are facing relocation and a new beginning, the question has become most pressing. Should we just take advantage of these changes and go for it now?

As is probably obvious from all of the conditionals and interrogatives in this message, at the time I am writing this message, late January, 2004, no final decisions have been made. But the discussion itself has been a beautiful thing. On a number of occasions, members of the Advisory Board have said that we should keep the exchanges and publish them as a chronicle of feminist decision-making process. I don't think that would happen — who has time to edit them?! But I do second the notion that we are in the midst of an inspiringly honest discussion about the future of SMFS. By the time we meet at Kalamazoo, these decisions will have been made. I look forward to seeing you all there and presenting the new host and, possibly, the new form of *MFF* at our annual meeting.

—E. Ann Matter