

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT OF SMFS

Dear Members and Subscribers,

First of all, thanks to everyone involved in SMFS events at Kalamazoo this past May. There are so many of you! Isn't that great? Thanks to the Advisory Board members and the editors of *MFF*, to everyone who attended the business meeting and my fellow officers of SMFS, to the banquet organizers and last but not least to the panel organizers and presenters. SMFS is about supporting your scholarship.

Many activities and initiatives were discussed by the Advisory Board and at the business meetings at Kalamazoo this year. Much of that business is already visible in this issue of *MFF*. The ballot at the end of the issue (please vote!) reflects work begun by the nominating committee at Kalamazoo. Kit French has heroically agreed to be reappointed for a second, two-year term as secretary-treasurer of SMFS. The panel proposals for Kalamazoo 2002 were put forward, discussed, and voted on at the business meeting. Please do consider giving a paper in an SMFS-sponsored session, now that the Congress organizers have advertised the sessions which will be going forward. SMFS session organizers will be happy to answer your queries.

Incoming SMFS president Anne Clark Bartlett organized "The Mentoring Exchange," an initiative that seeks to match graduate students and beginning faculty with experienced scholars who share their scholarly and professional interests. This past year, Anne and SMFS graduate student representative Francine McGregor made nineteen matches. Many of these pairs met for the first time at the International Congress at Kalamazoo. There is still plenty of potential for and interest in expanding this service. Contact Anne if you are interested in participating as a mentor, mentee, or matchmaker: abartlet@condor.depaul.edu

We have a new graduate student representative. Patti Renda, a doctoral candidate in English at the University of Illinois at Chicago, is writing her dissertation, tentatively entitled *Representations of Female Sexual Subjectivity in Medieval Literature*. Her other areas of specialization include feminist theory and modernist writers. One of her long-term goals is to describe how the medievals influenced modernist writers and contemporary theorists. In addition to her teaching at different Chicago-area community colleges, Patti has been involved in activist work—promoting gender, race, and class equality—both in Chicago's Westtown neighborhood and on campus. She was awarded the 2001 UIC Gender and Women's Studies Graduate Student Prize for outstanding achievement in applying and furthering the use of feminist scholarship and activist principles.

Two issues arose regarding *MFF*. First, we are happy to report that the second *Subsidia* volume, a bibliography on women in medieval Iberia and edited by Rafael Merida, is in production. Second, in response to inquiries from publishers, the Advisory Board is in the process of reviewing for adoption an advertising

policy for *MFF* that will allow for a very, very small number of pages in each issue to be devoted to such commercial advertisements as the managing editor of *MFF* deems useful for its members. This policy will not affect conference announcements, calls for papers and submissions, session announcements, and the like. Want ads and personals that satisfy Dame Folly's (admittedly somewhat warped) sense of humor will continue to be published free of charge (examples can be found in *MFF*, volume 29).

I know that everyone joins me in again thanking The Center for the Study of Women in Society (CSWS) at the University of Oregon for providing SMFS and *MFF* with a home and an allowance (for operating expenses). And I am thrilled to report that CSWS is stepping up its commitment to SMFS. It has agreed to design, launch, and maintain an SMFS website. The Advisory Board has appointed me as its liaison to work with CSWS on the website during the fall. I'm glad to be able to see this initiative through to its conclusion.

This is my last president's message. Dear members, I have loved serving as president of SMFS and working with dedicated, responsible, thoughtful, smart, and funny colleagues who share a commitment to feminist scholarship, who want to build an organization based on feminist principles, and who like to get things done. I am grateful to have had this opportunity to communally translate, in some small way, shared ideals into practice.

Ann Marie Rasmussen

MESSAGE FROM THE EDITOR

"Feminist Legacies," the special topic of issue 30, is continued here in issue 31 of *MFF*. Essays in the fall issue primarily took the form of narrative reflections on what it has meant to work in the academy as a woman. In those autobiographical or personal narratives, contributors wrote about the professional challenges incurred either because of their gender or because of their political commitments. Some readers, responding to the issue, have said they found the essays fascinating; some have also said they found them depressing—as accounts, realistic rather than uplifting, of careers that have been constrained and even diminished by the network of proscriptions that are part of institutionalized patriarchy.

The five essays in the current issue switch from personal narrative to biography. Four sketch out the careers of important early 20th century scholars in medieval studies: Hope Emily Allen, Margaret Schlauch, and Eleanor Prescott Hammond. A fifth essay, by Mary Carruthers, takes the form of a personal reflection. What links the careers of all these scholars so remarkably, Carruthers included, is interdisciplinarity, the practice of historical and cultural scholarship that has even helped to redraw disciplinary boundaries. Hope Emily Allen, as Marea Mitchell shows, was practicing cultural criticism long before cultural studies