

A MESSAGE FROM THE SOCIETY



KKALAMAZOO ONCE AGAIN afforded numerous opportunities for medieval feminists to get to know each other and extend our networks. The feminist sessions were well-attended—the roundtables were standing room only. Clearly, this group is addressing many issues of pressing concern to feminist medievalists. Look for next year's sessions in the Kalamazoo call for papers under the rubric Society for Medieval Feminist Scholarship. Assuming that all our proposals are accepted, there should once again be a balance between roundtables and the traditional format of research papers.

The business meeting this year was a productive one. A number of new initiatives were proposed, indicating the breadth of concerns of our growing membership. Look for notices about the Mentoring Program and the Task Force on Publications under "Notes and Announcements" in this issue. Jennifer Rondeau has almost got a Medieval Feminist discussion list up and running. If you would like to be a part of this e-mail network, send your address to Jennifer at either jrondeau@iubacs.bitnet or jrondeau@ucs.indiana.edu. One final activity in the offing is a directory of Society members that will be coordinated by Nancy Jones. Drop Nancy a line (Romance Languages, Harvard University) if you have any suggestions about the format or type of information such a directory should include.

The issue looming largest on our immediate horizon is the formulation of by-laws in order to become a properly constituted, tax-exempt organization. Watch for these by-laws in a forthcoming issue of this newsletter. You'll be asked to ratify them. The process of becoming a formal society is something of a mixed blessing. Structure necessarily implies a certain degree of advance planning. It does not have to mean, however, hierarchy or a loss of spontaneity. Formalized mechanisms for electing the Society's Executive and Advisory Board can also ensure a broad representation of the membership in all areas of activity. So bear with this period of transition and we'll try to avoid the pitfalls of bureaucracy. But please do remember that this process will also ensure a long-lived, representative, and democratic organization. Let us know your concerns. Send us your suggestions. Volunteer to help with one of the programs. We look forward to hearing from you.

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COMMENTARY



WE HOPE THIS COMMENTARY column and Forum will mark the beginning of a continuing dialogue on gay and lesbian issues in Medieval Studies. Anyone wishing to