

10th International Women in French Conference
“Margins: Voices and Pathways”
Iowa State University
14-16 May 2020

Iowa State University is honored to host the 10th International Women in French Conference, focusing on margins and marginalities.

Confirmed Plenary Presentations:

- Anne Donadey (San Diego State University)
- Claire Legendre (Université de Montréal)

Theme:

The twentieth century, especially the second half, has witnessed a marked increase in the number of women authors on the French and francophone literary scene. Because of the significant increase in the publication of debut novels by young authors and books by established writers, it would be tempting to conclude that women authors have finally achieved widespread cultural and public recognition. Nevertheless, in 2014, a high-school student, Ariane Baillon, launched a petition on *Change.org* to challenge the fact that just one female philosopher, Hannah Arendt, was part of the Baccalauréat exam. Two years later, high-school teacher Françoise Cahen submitted a similar request to the Ministère de l'Éducation nationale, de l'Enseignement supérieur et de la Recherche to include more women authors in the Bac L exam. Although Madame de La Fayette, Madame de Staël and Colette were added to the program in 2018, “of the 51 texts included from 2003 to 2017, only three . . . were by women authors” (Brigaudeau). The same is true for literary awards: “Since the creation of the Goncourt . . . in 1903, French women authors have received only 159 of the 740 awards” (Orain and Dagorn). Finally, Christine Planté and Audrey Lasserre remind us that, despite their major contributions to French literature, women writers still do not occupy a prominent place in textbooks on literary history. Likewise, what can be said of authors from sexual or ethnoracial under-represented communities? These authors suffer the consequences of a double, or even triple invisibilization. Despite their large numbers and regardless of the historical time period, women authors are still marginalized in the literary world and in the transmission of cultural heritage. However, as posited by African-American feminist and philosopher bell hooks, being on the margins may constitute a powerful tool for creating awareness and protest. Indeed, women authors have written some of the most rebellious, original and political literature of French expression in all historical eras.

The 2020 WIF Conference will examine voices and pathways from the margins, as well as diverse forms of marginality from all eras. Possible topics include; but are not limited to:

- Identities (individual, national, regional, gender, etc.)
- Intersectionality (gender, class, race, religion, etc.)
- Discrimination, including under-represented forms such as ageism or ableism
- Colonialism and Postcolonialism
- Approaches to teaching the issue of marginality at the university level
- Destitution
- Illness (including mania, obsession, addiction)
- Alternatives (perspectives, societies, feminisms, etc.)
- Theories of the margins (queer, trans*, etc.)
- Disabilities
- Literary and cinematographic genres
- Place of under-represented women and perspectives in literature or film
- “Minority” literature and film
- Empowerment
- Rebellions
- Paraliterature
- Relationship between the center(s) and the margin(s)

“One Book, One WIF” Initiative:

In partnership with our colleagues from WIF UK, Women in French is continuing the “One Book, One WIF” initiative. Established in 2017 by Stephanie Schechner, this project aims to promote critical interest in lesser known French and francophone women writers. The book selected for the 2020 WIF conference is Claire Legendre’s novel *L'Écorchée vive* (2009). Proposals for papers or panels on this author are encouraged.

Proposals:

Individual abstracts should not exceed 250 words and should include the presenter's contact information as well as a short biography (100 words maximum). Proposals for three- or four-paper panels are also encouraged. Panel proposals should include a 250-word rationale for the proposed topic as well as individual abstracts.

Submissions:

Individual abstracts or panel proposals must be submitted no later than September 1, 2019 via the conference website: <http://www.wif2020conf.org>.

Calendar:

September 1, 2019: Submission of proposals.

October 31, 2019: Notification of acceptance or refusal.

November 30, 2019: deadline to confirm conference participation.

December 15, 2019: deadline to register for the conference.

January 1, 2020: Participants must be members of WIF by January 1, 2020 to participate in the conference.

March 15, 2019: Deadline for reimbursement of the registration fee due to cancellation.

Ames and Iowa State University:

Ames was established in 1864 to serve the westward-bound Cedar Rapids and Missouri River Railroad. The president of the railroad named the town after fellow rail promoter, Congressman Oakes Ames. Ames is the home to Iowa State University, the nation's first land-grant university. Iowa State has established itself as a world leader in diverse disciplines such as agriculture, engineering, and veterinary medicine. With more than 35,000 students hailing from nearly 130 different nations, Iowa State offers cultural diversity and brings a distinct international flavor to the Midwest. Ames is easily accessible by ground and air transportation. Ames is 40 miles (45 minutes) from the Des Moines International Airport.

Organisatrices/Organizers:

Dr. Michèle A. Schaal (Iowa State University) mschaal@iastate.edu

Dr. Arline Cravens (Saint Louis University) arline.cravens@slu.edu

Dr. Susan Ireland (Grinnell College) ireland@grinnell.edu

Comité scientifique/Selection Committee:

Arline Cravens (Saint Louis University), Susan Ireland (Grinnell University), E. Nicole Meyer (Augusta University), Patrice J. Proulx (University of Nebraska Omaha), Michèle A. Schaal (Iowa State University)

Bibliographie/References:

Baillon, Ariane. « Benoît Hamon: Donnez une place aux femmes dans les programmes scolaires. » *Change.org* août 2014. Web. 30 août 2018 <<https://www.change.org/p/beno%C3%A9t-hamon-donnez-une-place-aux-femmes-dans-les-programmes-scolaires>>.

Brigaudeau, Christel. « Colette, Madame de Staël... un bac français 2018 très féminin. » *Le Parisien.fr* 18 juin 2018. Web. 30 août 2018 <<http://www.leparisien.fr/societe/colette-madame-de-stael-un-bac-francais-2018-tres-feminin-18-06-2018-7780074.php>>.

Cahen, Françoise. « Pour donner leur place aux femmes dans les programmes de littérature au bac L. » *Change.org* mai 2016. Web. 30 août 2018 <<https://www.change.org/p/najatvb-donnez-leur-place-aux-femmes-dans-les-programmes-de-litt%C3%A9rature-au-bac-l>>.

hooks, bell. *Feminist Theory: From Margin to Center*. 1984. New York : South End Press, 2000.

Lasserre, Audrey. « Les Femmes du XX^e siècle ont-elles une histoire littéraire ? » *Cahier du CERACC.4* (2010) : 1-18.

Orain, Grégoire, et Gary Dagorn. « Combien de femmes parmi les prix littéraires français ? » *Le Monde.fr* 24 nov. 2017. Web. 30 août 2018 <https://www.lemonde.fr/les-decodeurs/article/2015/11/03/les-prix-litteraires-francais-sont-ils-sexistes_4802462_4355770.html>.

Planté, Christine. « La Place des femmes dans l'histoire littéraire : Annexe ou point de départ d'une relecture ? » *Revue d'histoire littéraire de la France* 103.3 (2003): 655-68.