

Editorial

The last time we were able to publish an issue on "Women Writing" was in the Fall of 1993. That was seven years ago, and we are still kicking! Then, like now, "Women Writing" falls into the category of what our editorial board likes to call "wish" issues. These are the ones for which funding is rarely available and which we can only produce out of our own resources. Then, like now, we couldn't have done this without the generous support we continue to receive from our staunchest champions as well as from our loyal readers and subscribers.

The past seven years haven't been easy. As government funding, as well as other sources of funding—public and private—become increasingly harder to access, we continue to struggle from issue to issue. The commitment of our editorial board—which is made up entirely of volunteers who have dedicated their time, energy, and selfless efforts to promoting the *Canadian Woman Studies/les cahiers de la femme* at every opportunity—is indispensable to the Journal's ongoing survival. So, too, is the invaluable support we receive from all our subscribers, who patiently await issues that are long delayed (most often as a result of the scarcity of resources), and who continue to send letters of appreciation and thanks for the issues when they are, at last, received.

This issue of "Women Writing2: Ver/Visions" came about as a wonderful surprise. We had planned another issue for the Spring of 2000; unfortunately, at almost the last minute, we discovered that the funding we had anticipated for the issue would not be available. We could not *not* release a spring issue and we had little resources to fall back on for a "wish" issue. We remembered how inundated we were with submissions for our last issue on "Women Writing" which had seen the office flooded with some 200 manuscripts and so we thought that a second issue on the topic would be feasible and could be prepared in relatively little time. The first problem was to replace the funding that we had anticipated receiving before our year end for the previously scheduled spring issue. This time, we tried something we had never done before—we wrote to a group of women

who have been key supporters of the Journal over the years and asked them outright for their help. And it was absolutely amazing how quickly and how positively they responded! The second problem was that there was no time to send out a call for papers, so we would have to rely on personal phone calls and emails to women, some who had previously published in the Journal, others who we knew are committed to women's issues, and particularly, women's writing, and ask if they would consider submitting something to us within three weeks. Again, we were blown over by the generous and enthusiastic response to our plea for submissions. To *all* these women, supporters and contributors alike, we extend our deepest gratitude. This issue could not have been published without them.

We are very proud of this special issue of *CWS/cf*. Like its predecessor, we did not choose a theme for the issue, but instead preferred to "listen" to what the writers had to say. In fact, we found that the pieces divided themselves roughly into four categories which we have called, "revisoning," "surviving," "healing," and "awakening," as they reflect women's most profound life experiences and "passages"—the exuberance, confusion, pain, and hope of childhood and adolescence, the tribulations, triumphs, joys, and losses of later life. Each section contains a range of genres—prose fiction, poetry, life-writing—and of settings—from Gemmorah (really!) to Vietnam, Burma, Italy, Ireland—and, of course, most regions of Canada. In their own ways and in differing voices (from seven to seventy years old) (really!!), these selections express a rainbow of emotion: some are witty, some bittersweet, some harrowing, some are anguished, some tentatively hopeful, some joyous. Again and again we were impressed by the generosity of these writers, their willingness to share their pain, their vulnerability, their loss, their hope. Women, it seems, just keep on being wonderful!

This issue is a celebration of the voices of women writing, in all their great variety, in Canada today. It is a gift from and to our loyal supporters and our fabulous readers. Without them, we wouldn't be here today.

FRANCES BEER AND LUCIANA RICCIUTELLI

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Canadian Woman Studies/les cahiers de la femme
 212 Founders College, York University
 4700 Keele Street, North York, Ontario M3J 1P3
 Tel: (416) 736-5356 Fax: (416) 736-5765
 Email: cwscf@yorku.ca / Website: www.yorku.ca/cwscf