

# The French Review

## *From the Editor's Desk*

Since it was first announced, the purpose of this special issue of the *French Review* has been to bring together a wide range of viewpoints on the current state and future prospects of French and Francophone studies in the United States. I am glad to report that, no doubt due to the importance of its topic, this issue elicited an exceptionally large number of submissions. This high rate of interest and participation is an encouraging sign for our profession, and an indication of the levels of energy and creativity among our colleagues.

I would first like to thank the team at the Service de coopération et d'action culturelle (SCAC), Ambassade de France aux États-Unis, who produced the introductory article, "Le français aux États-Unis: une priorité de l'Ambassade." I would especially like to thank Jean-Claude Duthion, Attaché de coopération éducative, who coordinated and finalized this article, which provides a detailed overview of the various programs, supported by the SCAC, that are designed to promote and enhance the teaching and learning of French in the United States. The SCAC, I should add, generously provided a \$2,000 subsidy for this special issue.

The "Que faire?" rubric includes ten articles that reflect a wide variety of perspectives on the future of French and Francophone studies in the United States. The "Témoignages" rubric, with seven shorter articles, was designed to encourage participation by colleagues who do not usually publish in the *French Review*. I am particularly thankful to all those who submitted to this rubric. On this topic as on others, it is important that French teachers at all levels make their voices heard.

I will not attempt to summarize or categorize the eighteen articles in this special issue. Each one of them provides stimulating, challenging, and sometimes controversial reading. I will simply point out that, in spite of the significant challenges, budgetary and otherwise, to our field and to the Humanities in general, what most of these articles clearly show is that many programs, practices, and policies do work, that they can be used to maintain and even expand French and Francophone studies in the United States. Among these successful initiatives, in no particular order: dual-degree programs that integrate language-learning with a professional or technical curricular track; encouraging more heritage speakers of Spanish to study and excel in French; enhancing linguistic and cultural studies through service-learning; collaborative efforts between high school teachers and university professors that stimulate interest in French and ultimately increase the number of majors.

Some of the viewpoints and suggestions in this issue, far from being met with a wide consensus, will instead lead to debates—and that is as it should be. As was previously announced, readers will have the opportunity to respond to the ideas presented in this special issue. This exceptional "Réponses" rubric, designed for shorter texts, will be published in Vol. 87.3. For the submission deadline and other details, please see the Announcements page (1311). Due to the importance of this special issue's topic for our profession, it is my hope that the articles published here will lead to wider discussions.

Readers are also reminded that the Announcements page includes the call for articles for our 2014 special issue, which will be published in commemoration of the centennial of the First World War, and which will be devoted to the multiple effects and consequences of the

conflict on French and Francophone literature and culture. Scholars working in numerous fields are encouraged to submit articles: literature, film, bandes dessinées, cultural studies, historical issues.

It has been a pleasure to participate in the development of this final issue of Volume 86 of the *French Review*. In closing, I would like to thank the Assistant Editors of this special issue, Joyce Beckwith (Wilmington High School), John Greene (University of Louisville), and Marie-Christine Koop (University of North Texas), who, with great dedication and professionalism, successfully dealt with a heavy workload and with very tight deadlines.

Edward Ousselin, Editor in Chief