

Remarks on accepting the CSRS Lifetime Achievement Award, Toronto, May 2017
Patricia Demers

I was surprised and genuinely honoured when Margaret contacted me.

An idea invoked often in academic talk is that of community, communities of practice, collaborative agency; for me la Société canadienne d'Études de la Renaissance truly embodies and exemplifies a welcoming, diverse, and from the ocular proof of the programme of this year's conference, growing community. So many CSRS members, particularly those who have presented over the past three days, are wonderful friends, mentors, and sources of inspiration. I am thinking of the energy and passionate commitment of past presidents—Judith Rice Henderson, Brenda Dunn Lardeau, Konrad Eisenbichler, Brenda Hosington, Guy Poirier, Claude La Charité, Joseph Khoury, Hélène Cazes, and currently Margaret Reeves. How appropriate that Brenda chaired a session on intellectualizing women's friendship! She has been a constant, witty, and true friend. Drawing on her years of administrative experience Eva Kushner has offered valuable advice about procedures in this and other organizations. Olga Pugliese kindly invited me as a guest at the Centre for Renaissance and Reformation Studies. I cannot neglect to mention the warm hospitality and sustained scholarly engagement of Don Beecher.

Our conferences continue to forecast and reflect changes in the literary canon and academic curriculum—hybridity, transnationalism, material histories, digital data bases and editions, wiki-books, intersectionality, transmissions. One of the most exciting features of our gatherings for me has been the re-discovery or exhumation of women writers, many of whom those of us of a certain age never studied in graduate school. As for scarce representation of French women writers, I learned recently that before the 1980s, few early women writers, if any,

were included in reading lists for preliminary and oral exams, and it was not until 2000 that Marguerite de Navarre's *Heptaméron* was featured on the program for the *agrégation*, while Louise Labé had to wait until 2005. My past and present medievalist and early modernist colleagues at the University of Alberta—among them, Rick Bowers, Sylvia Brown, John Considine, Garrett Epp, David Gay, Roz Kerr, Stefano Muneroni, Steve Reimer—remain true springs, fountains, manufacturers, suppliers -- take your pick of the labels -- of illuminating information. Over the years I think I've learned most from the research and interests of graduate students, supervisees, and pdfs. Among this crew are Kristine Kowalchuk, Maureen King, Kirsten Uszkalo, and Kirsten Inglis, and as presenters at this year's conference, Mathew Martin, Arlette Zinck, and Paul Dyck.

I thank you all for this quite unexpected and moving honour.