

Women in French Newsletter

Volume 31, Number 1

Spring 2017

President's Letter

Cecilia Beach
Alfred University

Dear Colleagues,

As President of Women in French, I am so very grateful to the many people who serve our organization in so many different ways. At the back of this Newsletter you'll find a roster with the names of the more official participants—officers, regional representatives, editors, committee members and such. But there are in fact many more people who contribute: WIF conference organizers; chairs and presenters at WIF sessions at a variety of other conferences; authors of articles in *WIF Studies* and the anonymous readers of those articles; those who prepare bibliographies and teaching dossiers for the *WIF Newsletter*; people who volunteer to represent Women in French in roundtables and panels; and every one of you who contributes to the mission of Women in French in the classroom and in your scholarship.

I'd like to take this opportunity to thank in particular our out-going officers: Florence Ramond Journey, who served as Regional Representative for the Middle Atlantic region and who organized our 2016 WIF Conference at Gettysburg College, and Mélissa-Jane Gauthier who served as our Graduate Student

Representative. I'd also like to welcome our new officers and to recognize those who are continuing to serve: Theresa Kennedy, Secretary; Arline Cravens, Representative for the Central and Rocky Mountains region; Nevine El Nossery, Representative for the Great Lakes region; Mercédès Baillargeon, Representative for the Middle Atlantic region; and Leah Holz, our new Graduate Student Representative. I'd also like to thank Joëlle Vitiello and Caroline Strobbe for their 5-year terms as book review editors and Cheryl Toman who took over that role last fall.

In the December election, the WIF community voted to redefine our regional structure to correspond more closely to the MLA conference regions rather than the MLA electoral regions given that the main role of our regional representatives is to organize sessions at the regional conferences.

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Our nominating committee, Annabelle Rea and Colette Trout, will be working over the next few years to implement the new regional structure as the current elected representatives finish their terms.

I am looking forward to the next WIF conference in February 2018 at Florida State University in Tallahassee, organized by Aimée Boutin around the theme of *Le Bruit des Femmes*. The keynote speaker, Elizabeth McAlister, is a Professor of Religion at Wesleyan University whose research focuses on Afro-Caribbean religions including Haitian Vodou, Pentecostalism, race theory, transnational migration, and evangelical spiritual warfare. She has produced three compilations of Afro-Haitian religious music: *Rhythms of Rapture* (Smithsonian Folkways, 1995), *Angels in the Mirror*, and the CD *Rara* that accompanies her first book (<http://emcalister.faculty.wesleyan.edu/>).

The 2018 conference will also include a panel on *Camille en octobre* by Mireille Best (1943-2005), the One Book, One WIF selection for 2017-2018, and a public reading of the novel. Please see the annotated bibliography on Mireille Best prepared by Stephanie Schechner on page 16 of this newsletter. Two papers about Mireille Best are also on the programme of the WIF UK Conference in Leeds in May 2017: Kate Bonin, “Growing up Camille: The pleasures of the liminal, the hybrid, and the transgressive in Mireille Best’s *Camille en octobre* (1988)” and Stephanie Schechner, “Solidarity among Women: Recognizing and Valuing Diverse Forms of Pleasure in the Fiction of Mireille Best.”

Women in French continues to have a strong presence at many of the regional MLA conferences, as well as at conferences like Nineteenth-Century French Studies, 20th and 21st Century French and Francophone Studies, and the Colloque International George Sand. We had two sessions at the MLA Convention in January 2017—Teaching Women in French: Exploring the Boundaries (Cecilia Beach and Joyce Johnston chairs) and Writing the Self in the Age of the Selfie in French and Francophone Literatures (organized by Nicole Meyer), which was co-sponsored by the 20th- and 21st-Century French Forum, as well as a cash bar co-sponsored by the Women's Caucus, Feministas Unidas, and Women in German. Eleven WIF members attended the Annual Business Meeting (see minutes p. 7).

I wish you all an excellent year and look forward to seeing many of you at the WIF conference next February if not before.

Many thanks to Cheryl Morgan for her continued service as editor of this newsletter!

Cecilia Beach

WIF Business & News

Call for WIF Nominations

We encourage you to help WIF by becoming a candidate yourself or contacting another member about running for one of the open positions.

Colette Trout (ctrout@ursinus.edu) and Annabelle Rea (rea@oxy.edu) are now accepting nominations for the 2017 WIF elections.

The four offices open: **President, Vice-President, and two Regional Representatives: 1. New England and Eastern Canada** (Connecticut, Delaware, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Vermont; New Brunswick, Newfoundland and Labrador, Nova Scotia, Ontario, Prince Edward Island, Quebec) and **2. South Central** (Arkansas, Louisiana, Mississippi, Oklahoma, Tennessee, Texas). You may nominate yourself or another, after seeking the permission of that person. We ask that you send your statements, outlining your qualifications and your goals for WIF, for publication in the Fall *Newsletter*, to both members of the Nominating Committee, at the latest by **July 15, 2017**. Please note that there is a 100-word limit for candidate statements (this is an overall limit, including both qualifications and goals). The President and Vice-President will serve two-year terms; Regional Representatives remain in place for three years.

Responsibilities of these offices:

The **President** serves as liaison with the MLA and presides over the WIF Business Meeting and the WIF Executive Committee meeting held during the MLA Annual Meeting. S/he corresponds with the Executive Committee concerning items of business, and with the membership, as questions arise. S/he coordinates all WIF activities.

The **Vice-President** assists the President; together, they decide the allocation of responsibilities between them. In addition to assisting the President, the Vice President is traditionally responsible for recruiting and editing the teaching bibliographies in the bi-annual newsletter as well as setting up the MLA business meeting and reception. The Vice-President is normally expected to become a candidate to succeed the President at the end of her/his term of office.

Regional Representatives serve as liaisons with the Regional MLAs, overseeing, in particular, the WIF sessions and social events. They publicize WIF and its activities to colleagues in their respective regions to recruit new members.

WIF's newly defined regions:

Midwest (MMLA): Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, Ohio, South Dakota, Wisconsin

New England and Eastern Canada (NEMLA): Connecticut, Delaware, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Vermont; New Brunswick, Newfoundland and Labrador, Nova Scotia, Ontario, Prince Edward Island, Quebec

Rocky Mountain (RMMLA): Arizona, Arkansas, Colorado, Montana, New Mexico, Texas, Utah, Wyoming; Alberta, Manitoba, Saskatchewan

South Atlantic (SAML A): Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, North Carolina, South Carolina, Virginia, West Virginia; Washington D.C., Puerto Rico, Virgin Islands

South Central (SCMLA): Arkansas, Louisiana, Mississippi, Oklahoma, Tennessee, Texas

Western United States and Western Canada (PAMLA): Alaska, California, Hawai'i, Idaho, Nevada, Oregon, Washington; British Columbia

Petite allocution présentée par Collette Trout au colloque de la RMMLA à Salt Lake City, Octobre 7, 2016

QUE SERAIT NOTRE VIE SANS WIF ?

Merci, tout d'abord à Arline de m'avoir invitée et au RMMLA pour m'avoir généreusement offert de m'héberger. Je ne vous ferai pas l'historique de Women In French, d'autres l'ont déjà fait avant moi, comme Annabelle Rea, avec beaucoup d'expertise. Je vous dirai seulement que l'organisation à laquelle vous appartenez ou, je l'espère après ce colloque, à laquelle vous voudrez appartenir, a commencé dans la fin des années 70, mais elle a vraiment pris son essor grâce aux efforts de nombreuses femmes, nos pionnières, Lucy Schwartz, Adèle King et Annabelle Rea entre autres qui ont réussi à faire accepter WIF comme une « Allied Organization of the MLA » en 1991. Après cela, WIF a grandi et a ajouté des programmes chaque année, et cela continuera car nous avons des membres engagées et créatives. WIF, ça bouge. Pensez à la toute dernière initiative d'un livre commun entre WIF UK et WIF-USA lancée par Stéphanie Schechner de Widener University (Livre de Mireille Best). Mais, je voudrais ce soir vous parler de mon expérience wifienne d'un point de vue personnel, et ce qu'elle a

apporté à ma vie. Le « notre » du titre peut paraître assez présomptueux, mais pour paraphraser Montaigne, je pense que « Chaque femme ou homme porte la forme entière de l'humaine condition » et que vous pourrez trouver dans mon expérience certains de vos propres sentiments vis-à-vis de WIF.

Tout a commencé pour moi en 1991 ou 92, lors d'un colloque de la MLA pendant lequel entre des sessions, dans lesquelles je ne connaissais personne, j'étais dans le labyrinthe de ces hôtels gigantesques, et ai vu, par hasard, une pancarte : réunion de Women In French. J'y suis entrée, ne sachant à quoi m'attendre. La salle était pleine, Annabelle présidait, et il y avait un sentiment palpable d'enthousiasme et d'engagement. Vers la fin de la réunion, Annabelle a demandé s'il y avait des volontaires pour aider WIF. Rien n'était spécifié, mais j'ai levé la main, et on a pris mon nom avec plaisir. Mon aventure avec WIF commençait. En effet, quelques semaines plus tard je recevais un coup de téléphone me demandant si je voudrais bien être vice-présidente de WIF une fois que les statuts de l'organisation seraient amendés. Demande de réflexion, acceptation. Je ne savais pas que j'allais devenir non seulement la vice-présidente de WIF mais aussi la rédactrice de WIFSTUDIES en 1993 avec la mission d'en faire un « peer-reviewed journal », membre du « Council of Editors of Learned Journals » et présidente pendant 4 autres années. A partir de cette réunion historique, rien n'a été le même pour moi : j'avais trouvé une communauté de chercheuses et d'amies. Finies les déambulations solitaires dans les couloirs des Hyatt, Hilton et compagnie, lorsque j'allais à un colloque de la MLA et plus tard des MLA

régionaux, je savais que j'allais retrouver un groupe de femmes généralement, mais aussi d'hommes qui s'intéressent à la littérature féminine, et que je me sentirais à l'aise pour poser des questions sans avoir peur que l'on me regarde de haut. Je viens d'une petite Université, Ursinus College, et avait peu de collègues avec qui partager mes intérêts. Bien sûr, l'Université de Pennsylvanie n'était pas loin, mais quand j'allais dans leurs colloques j'avais toujours un sentiment d'infériorité : c'était un IVY LEAGUE et moi je venais d'une université avec un nom imprononçable. Ce que j'ai trouvé dans WIF ce sont des chercheuses de qualité, de tous les azimuts, mais qui n'avaient pas de prétention : les plus expertes et connues dans leur domaine acceptaient de discuter avec des professeuses débutantes, et vraiment s'intéressaient à nos idées. Quelle découverte libératrice !!! J'avais des idées qui valaient la peine d'être entendues. En d'autres termes, WIF m'a donné confiance en moi en début de carrière et continue à le faire

J'aime aussi que nous partagions non seulement nos idées, mais aussi nos stratégies pédagogiques dans le Bulletin avec les bibliographies annotées et bien sûr la liste pédagogique qui est un instrument inégalable. Il suffit d'un email pour recevoir dans la semaine qui suit toutes sortes de références et suggestions. Combien de fois cela m'a aidé dans la préparation de cours ou pour l'obtention de sources pour des travaux d'étudiant/e/s avancées. Car notre mission, en tant que professeuses c'est, au-delà de nos recherches, d'aider nos étudiant/e/s le mieux possible à apprécier la littérature des femmes en français et de se développer comme des individus qui contribueront à la société,

même si le français n'est qu'une étape dans leur vie. Et WIF est certainement ce type d'organisation, une organisation qui respecte ses étudiant/e/s et dont les membres se préoccupent de comment partager avec elles et eux leur passion. WIF m'a aussi fait découvrir des tas d'écrivaines que je ne connaissais pas, notamment en francophonie, une autre source dans laquelle j'ai puisé pour mes cours. Je crois, toutefois, que nous devrions plus systématiquement que nous ne le faisons, avoir plus d'auteurs en dehors du XXe et XXIe siècle. Je sais que notre public d'étudiant/e/s est surtout porté vers les deux derniers siècles, avec un peu du XIXe, mais par exemple on pourrait essayer de mettre en regard des auteures des siècles derniers avec un texte moderne, comme l'a fait Arline dans sa présentation sur « Echos de George Sand in Virginia Desportes : Rewriting the Feminine ». Je pense aussi à un petit texte de Constance de Salm, *Vingt quatre heures d'une femme sensible* (1824) lu en conjonction avec *L'occupation* d'Annie Ernaux. Mais on pourrait trouver des textes plus anciens qui marcheraient afin de ne pas perdre cette idée de filiation entre les femmes écrivaines. C'est une leçon que j'ai apprise de WIF et qui a enrichi ma vie intellectuelle.

Cela m'amène à un troisième point dans mon long cheminement avec WIF (+ de 25 ans): donner en retour, aider les autres. Depuis que je suis devenue ce qu'on appelle un « Senior Faculty member », je pense que le moindre que je puisse faire c'est d'aider mes collègues « Junior », surtout dans un contexte de crise économique pour la profession. WIF a mis en place de nombreux programmes qui adressent cette question de mentoring, tels des « mock interviews » pour les candidates

qui se préparent à entrer dans le monde du travail, ou encore plus récemment la formation de tandem entre une professeure chevronnée avec quelqu'un qui commence sa carrière pour l'aider à affronter ces premières années. Je dois dire que c'est pour moi une grande joie de recevoir des demandes « non-officielles » pour lire des manuscrits, de donner des suggestions pour écrire un prospectus à envoyer à une maison d'édition, d'écouter les craintes ou peurs de mes jeunes collègues en train de préparer un dossier de titularisation et d'essayer de les encourager pour trouver la meilleure stratégie. Je sais que ces collègues sont reconnaissantes pour mon aide mais elles ne savent pas à quel point c'est important pour moi de pouvoir partager avec elles un peu de mon expérience. Comme dit Panisse à Fanny dans la pièce de Pagnol du même nom : « Mais, Bonne Mère, C'EST A MOI QUE JE FAIS PLAISIR » (vous avez peut-être compris que je suis du Midi !). WIF me donne donc la chance d'aider les autres, et de me faire plaisir ! Et quand je reçois la nouvelle qu'un livre pour lequel j'ai fait quelques suggestions va être publié, c'est un sentiment de célébration qui me soulève, un sentiment que j'ai contribué très modestement à notre communauté humaine. Toutefois, cette aide ne va pas toujours dans une seule direction, de moi vers les autres. Il y a deux ans, je travaillais laborieusement à mon manuscrit sur Marie Darrieussecq (j'écris avec difficulté) et j'étais pleine de doutes quant à la validité de certaines de mes idées ou de la qualité de mon français. J'ai donc demandé à deux jeunes collègues et amies de WIF, Michèle Schaal et Annabelle Dolidon, qui travaillent dans mon domaine si elles voulaient bien lire deux à trois de mes

chapitres. C'est ce qu'elles ont fait et m'ont rendu un fier service. Ceci est une autre caractéristique de notre association : nous travaillons d'une manière intergénérationnelle et nous apprenons les uns des autres à quelque niveau de notre carrière que nous soyons.

L'année dernière, dans sa présentation devant ce groupe, Cécilia Beach notre présidente actuelle a parlé de WIF en termes de yogi : elle a parlé de *Shanga*, c'est-à-dire l'idée de communauté, mais comme vous l'avez déjà deviné par mes quelques mots, WIF n'est pas n'importe quelle communauté. C'est une communauté qui soutient les autres et veut vraiment faire une différence dans la vie professionnelle et personnelle de ses adhérent/e/s. Je vous invite d'ailleurs à participer aux Colloques WIF qui sont emblématiques de cette ambiance de sérieux professionnel couplé d'échanges personnels pour soutenir les « petites » nouvelles. Je suis fière d'ailleurs que le premier de ces colloques ait eu lieu quand j'étais présidente de WIF grâce à Joelle Vitiello et Dana Strand (McCalester et Carleton). Cécilia a parlé aussi de *Karma*, c'est-à-dire l'idée de service désintéressé. C'est tout cela que j'ai trouvé en WIF. Et maintenant que je suis arrivée à un autre tournant de ma vie, j'ai pris ma retraite l'année dernière, je sais que WIF jouera encore un grand rôle dans mon futur. Je continuerai à contribuer à son succès le mieux possible dans diverses capacités et à présenter dans ses sessions pour me sentir soutenue, encore « dans le coup », et y retrouver des amies que malgré les distances je chérirai pour le reste de ma vie. Alors, joignez-vous ou continuez à nous aider pour que nous gardions cet esprit de corps assez inhabituel dans

notre profession. Il n'y a pas de diva chez nous, nous sommes sans prétention mais prenons notre mission très à cœur. VRAIMENT, QUE SERAIT NOTRE VIE SANS WIF! Certainement pour moi, beaucoup moins riche de toutes sortes de bonheurs intellectuels et personnels. Merci... A boire maintenant !

WIF Business Meeting Agenda MLA 2017 Philadelphia

Present: Cecilia Beach, Julia Frengs, Perry Gethner, Leah Holz, Joyce Johnston, Florence Journey, Nicole Meyer, Tessa Nunn, Christine Probes, Stephanie Schechner, Cathy Webster

--Introductions

Thank you to outgoing officers: Florence Ramond Journey (Middle Atlantic) and Mélissa-Jane Gauthier (Grad Student Rep)

--Recognition of incoming and returning officers:

Theresa Kennedy (secretary), Arline Cravens (Central and Rocky Mountains), Nevine El Nossery (Great Lakes), Mercédès Baillargeon (Middle Atlantic), and Leah K. S. Holz (Grad Student Rep)

--WIF Conference 2016 Gettysburg—
Thanks to Florence Journey!

--WIF Conference 2018 February 8-10, 2018, Florida State University, Tallahassee FL. Organizers: Aimée Boutin (FSU) with Reinier Leushuis (FSU), Martin Munro (FSU), Anaïs Nony (FSU), Silvia Valisa (FSU). Call for Papers will go out very soon.

--New regional structure approved in Dec. election. Transition will be gradual as current officers complete their terms.

--Newsletter—Cheryl Morgan editor

*New teaching dossier—thanks to Joyce and Julia!

*Bibliographies—how to get people to volunteer to prepare them? Stephanie Schechner offered to prepare a bibliography on Mireille Best, our current One Book author with for this spring (depending on the deadline) or next spring. In a subsequent email conversation with Stephanie, Cheryl Morgan, Patrice Proulx and Susan Ireland, it was decided that Stephanie would prepare a bibliography for this spring (deadline late Feb.) and that she would add the bibliography to the One Book proposal process, i.e. whoever proposes an author for the One Book program would also be responsible for preparing a bibliography on that author for the *Bulletin*.

--WIF Studies—Juliette Rogers editor

*The 2016 annual volume (no. 24) will be shipped later this week or early next week, so it should be arriving mid-January to all members who were up-to-date on their 2016 dues.

*Cheryl Toman (professor of French, Case Western Reserve University) is our new book review editor. Many many thanks to Joëlle Vitiello and

Caroline Strobbe for their 5-year terms as book review editors.

*The 2017 annual volume will include a special dossier on Martinican women writers guest edited by Suzy Cater at New York University; the articles are currently being blind-peer-reviewed by a variety of evaluators who are specialists in the field.

*The 2017 "green" (conference) volume is also being evaluated at the current time; we are hoping for an early fall shipment of that volume.

Call for Teaching Dossiers

The *WIF Newsletter* will continue to feature a teaching dossier in the fall issue. This feature serves as a way to share useful pedagogical approaches, sample course descriptions, and innovative practices with our colleagues. Ideas for dossiers should be sent to Susan Ireland (ireland@grinnell.edu) and Patrice J. Proulx by May 1, 2017 at the latest (pproulx@unomaha.edu); a brief description (100-150 words) is sufficient at this point. The complete dossier would be due by August 30 and should be sent to both Susan and Patrice. Submissions should be 3-10 pages in length, double-spaced, in Times New Roman, with endnotes rather than footnotes. Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have any questions.

Undergraduate Award

The undergraduate essay should be written in 12-point Times New Roman, double-spaced with 1-inch margins. The essays must be between 10-12 pages (notes and bibliography included) and written in French.

The topic may be either literary or cultural and should conform to the stated goal of Women in French: to promote the study of French and Francophone women authors, the study of women's place in French and Francophone cultures or literatures, and feminist literary criticism. Please specify your native language. The essays should be sent by THE STUDENT as a Word Document attachment with the name of the professor (WIF member), the student and the university included in the text of the message. There is one competition per year. The WIF Award committee may ask for corrections before publishing the essays on the WIF website.

An essay submission may be returned without review if it does not meet the submission guidelines regarding content, length and formatting as specified on the WIF website. It may also be returned for minor revisions prior to publication. <http://www.english.womeninfrench.org/awards/>

The deadline is **June 15th 2017**.

Please send the essays to [Arline Cravens](#) and [Karin Schwerdtner](#)

Call for Papers & Conference News

WIF 2018

Le bruit des femmes

February 8-10, 2018
Winthrop-King Institute
International Conference
Florida State University
Tallahassee, Florida

CALL FOR PAPERS

Keynote Speaker: [Elizabeth McAlister](#)
([Wesleyan University](#))

Organizers: Aimée Boutin (FSU),
Reinier Leushuis (FSU), Martin Munro
(FSU), Virginia Osborn (FSU), Anaïs
Nony (FSU), Silvia Valisa (FSU)

Women talk too much, their talk is idle gossip or just plain dangerous. Conversely, women have not talked loud enough, their interventions in discourse have been condemned or erased, and there are still disciplines and contexts devoid of female voices. Feminist and feminist scholarship has strived to turn up the volume on the silence surrounding past generations of women's experiences, stories, and artistic achievements. To listen to women and to speak as a woman can become a political act. Hence Eugénie Niboyet's choice of the title *La Voix des femmes* for the first daily feminist newspaper in France. The proliferation of academic titles that use the metaphor of voice specifically in relation to women's enfranchisement to mean "speaking out" and "breaking the

silence" is evidence that women are nothing if no(t) voice. ...

In *The Laugh of the Medusa*, Hélène Cixous struck a chord when she appropriated the metaphor of voice to state powerfully that "Women should break out of the snare of silence... Listen to a woman speak at a public gathering (if she hasn't painfully lost her wind). She doesn't 'speak,'... all of her passes into her voice..." But is the voice necessarily the source of authenticity and affirmation these terms assume? What is meant by voicing as a metaphor for self-expression? How does it relate to making noise or silence, and to other sounds and forms of sensory expressions?

This 9th international Women in French conference seeks to explore how women's voices have been heard, conceived, and represented in French and Francophone literatures. In so doing, participants are encouraged to think about vocality and noise in all their reverberations in relation to the following terms:

Noise and silence

Silencing and the politics of speech

Political voices, women's rights

Cultures of silence and women's issues

Orality/Aurality

Listening practices

Storytelling and oral traditions

Narrative voices

Gossip and rumors

Print vs oral cultures

Oral imaginary

Voice, gender, and sexuality

Voice, race, colonialism
Voice and spirituality
Music, bruitage
Oral performance, oration
Sound ecologies
Sonic Arts
Sound technologies
Soundscapes
Digital sound
Voice, body, and the 5 senses

The conference also supports the One Book, One WIF selection for 2017-2018 and will include a panel on *Camille en octobre* by Mireille Best (1943-2005) and a public reading of her novel. Launched jointly in 2016 by WIF-North America and WIF-UK, the One Book initiative seeks to foster international collaboration by the members of and participants in the two organizations and conferences with the goal of drawing scholarly attention to the work of lesser-known Francophone women writers.

We invite 250 word proposals for panels and papers in French or English on the theme “Women and Sound.” Proposals should be accompanied by a short biography. Please submit proposals by August 1, 2017 via the [online submission portal](#) available February 15.

For more information about the conference, please contact:

[The Winthrop-King Institute](#)
Department of Modern Languages and Linguistics
Florida State University
Tallahassee, Florida 32306-1540

Telephone 850.644.7636
Fax 850.644.9917
E-mail icffs@mailers.fsu.edu
Website www.winthropking.fsu.edu

Le 8-10 février, 2018
Colloque international
The Winthrop-King Institute, Florida
State University, Tallahassee, Florida

APPEL DE COMMUNICATION

Conférencière plénière: [Elizabeth McAlister \(Wesleyan University\)](#)

Organisé par Aimée Boutin (FSU), Reinier Leushuis (FSU), Martin Munro (FSU), Virginia Osborn (FSU), Anaïs Nony (FSU), Silvia Valisa (FSU)

On dit des femmes qu’elles parlent trop, que leurs conversations sont purs commérages ou leur piaillage dangereux. En même temps, elles ne parlent pas assez fort ; leurs contributions au discours ont été condamnées ou effacées et il reste toujours des domaines et des contextes entièrement dépourvus de voix féminines. C’est ainsi que certains discours féministes ont pu faire monter le volume et faire entendre les expériences, histoires et projets artistiques de générations de femmes encore trop souvent réduites au silence. Ecouter les femmes et parler en tant que femme peut devenir un acte politique. C’est pourquoi Eugénie Niboyet fait le choix de nommer le premier journal quotidien féministe *La Voix des Femmes*. La multiplication d’ouvrages universitaires qui utilisent la métaphore de la voix pour parler d’émancipation, comme « parler haut et fort », « briser le silence », est un indice que les femmes ne sont (pas), sans voix.

Dans *Le rire de la Méduse*, Hélène Cixous touche une zone sensible lorsqu'elle s'approprié la métaphore de la voix. Mais la voix est-elle nécessairement une source d'authenticité et d'affirmation ? Qu'est-ce que la métaphore de la voix signifie en terme d'expression de soi ? Comment cela résonne-t-il en terme de faire du bruit ou faire silence ? Et qu'en est-il des autres sons et autres formes sensibles d'expression ?

Ce 9^e colloque international de l'association Women in French souhaite explorer comment les voix des femmes sont-elles entendues, conçues et représentées dans la littérature française et francophone. Les participant-e-s sont donc invité-e-s à penser la vocalité et la sonorité en lien avec les thèmes dans la liste ci-dessus.

Bruit et silence

Politique de la parole

Voix et droits des femmes

Lois du silence et conditions féminines

Oralité et auralité

Pratique de l'écoute

Veillées et traditions orales

Voix narratives

Rumeurs et caquet des femmes

Les voix de la presse

Imaginaire oral

Voix, genre et sexualité

Voix, race, colonialisme

Voix et spiritualité

Musique et Bruitage

Performance

Écologies du son

Arts sonores

Son et technique

Paysages sonores

Voix numériques

Voix, corps et les 5 sens

Ce colloque participe à l'initiative One Book, One WIF pour 2017-2018 et inclura une session sur *Camille en octobre* par **Mireille Best (1943-2005)** ainsi qu'une lecture publique du roman. Conjointement proposée par WIF-Amérique du Nord et WIF-Royaume-Uni en 2016, cette initiative souhaite encourager la collaboration entre les deux organisations autour d'une œuvre commune, et promouvoir les écrivaines francophones moins connues du public ou des universitaires.

Nous invitons des propositions de panels et de communications de 250 mots accompagnés d'une courte biographie. Veuillez soumettre vos propositions avant le 1 août 2017 grâce au [portail de soumission disponible à partir du 15 février 2017](#).

Pour plus d'information sur le colloque, veuillez contactez :

[The Winthrop-King Institute](#)

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* * *

**Call for Article Submission:
Special *WIF Studies* Issue
Francophone Central African
Women's Writing
guest edited by Cheryl Toman**

WIF Studies invites contributions to be considered for the 2020 Special Issue on Francophone Central African Women's Writing. Literary critics have long favored West African women writers, often ignoring the astounding production of women writers from countries like Gabon, Congo, or Rwanda among others. At the same time, there are emerging women writers completely unknown to the field coming from countries such as the Central African Republic, Tchad, Burundi, etc. and they, too, deserve critical attention. This special issue therefore has two goals; 1) to update the status of Central African powerhouses of women's writing such as Cameroon and Congo and 2) to consider writings and authors from countries whose literature can be seen, as Irene d'Almeida has eloquently said, as being part of an "empty canon"--- that is, there is literature that exists but we have either ignored it or refused to see it. Essays can approach works by a single author or country or offer a comparative study of several works or writers from the region.

Abstracts requested by **December 1, 2017**

Full manuscripts due by **June 1, 2018**

Please send proposals to guest editor Cheryl Toman, cat12@case.edu

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**Call for Papers
Women in French Sessions
2017 South Atlantic Modern
Language Association (SAML A)
Conference
Atlanta, Georgia
November 3-5, 2017**

Please send a 250-word abstract in French or English, including presenter's academic affiliation, contact information, and A/V requirements to one of the panel chairs listed below by May 15, 2017.

For more information on SAML A and the annual conference, please visit the conference website: <https://samla.memberclicks.net/>

1. Failure to Conform: The Defiant Female Body in French and Francophone Cultures

This panel considers examples of French and francophone literatures, films, and other art forms, in which contemporary women articulate and/or embody nonconformist physicality which challenges social order. How do women speak against or otherwise resist socially defined borders and boundaries of normative corporeality? Presentations may address both thematic and formal examples of textual disruption that is enabled by bodies which run counter to socially constructed ideals related to women, gender, and race. Possible thematic avenues of inquiry include but are not limited to: pregnancy, aging, disability, beauty, and illness. Please send 250-word proposals in English or French to Adrienne Angelo (ama0002@auburn.edu) by May 15, 2017 along with presenter's academic

affiliation, contact information, and A/V requirements.

Chair: Adrienne Angelo, Auburn University, ama0002@auburn.edu

2. Borders and Boundaries in Popular French Caribbean Culture

This panel welcomes papers focused on illustrations of borders and boundaries in popular culture in French Caribbean women's writing or film. Papers may be in English or French and may not exceed 20 minutes. Please send 250-word abstracts and any A/V requests by May 15 to Lisa Connell (lconnell@westga.edu).

Chair: Lisa Connell, University of West Georgia, lconnell@westga.edu

3. Transcending Borders and Boundaries through the Act of Writing

Pour celles et ceux qui travaillent sur les écrivaines françaises et francophones et qui pensent participer au congrès annuel de SAMLA qui aura lieu à Atlanta, GA du 3-5 novembre 2017, je voudrais proposer une session WIF dont le thème général du congrès, "L'art noble et l'art populaire: Les frontières et les limites dans la culture populaire" fournira une occasion unique d'explorer ces pôles à travers des textes écrits par des femmes de lettres francophones. Je vous prie d'examiner ces délimitations, les zones transfrontalières, les zones subtiles aussi bien que la possibilité de dépasser les frontières de nationalité, de classe, de race, de sexe et de langage grâce à l'acte d'écrire. Veuillez m'envoyer une proposition de 250 mots en français et

anglais accompagnée d'une brève notice bio-biographique avant le 15 mai 2017 à Susan Crampton-Frenchik, scramptonfrenchik@washjeff.edu

For those who specialize in French and francophone female writers who are considering participating in the 2017 SAMLA (South Atlantic Modern Language Association) Conference to be held in Atlanta, GA, 3-5 November 2017, I am proposing a WIF session based on the general conference theme "High and Low Art: Borders and Boundaries in Popular Culture." Examinations of borders and boundaries, border areas, liminal spaces and the ways in which these texts transcend limitations of nationality, class, race, sex, and language are welcome. Please send a 250 word abstract in French or English to Susan Crampton-Frenchik by May 15, 2017 scramptonfrenchik@washjeff.edu

Chair: Susan Crampton-Frenchik, Washington & Jefferson College scramptonfrenchik@washjeff.edu

4. Laughter in "High Art/Low Art": Playing with Boundaries in French and Francophone Literatures

Throughout history, women writers and artists have had to navigate boundaries, whether they be boundaries imposed by society or expectations regarding their art. This panel will explore the different ways in which women use laughter as a means to break down, question, and subvert boundaries in both "high art" and "low art." Among questions one may ask: How do women use satire, irony, clichés, pastiche, etc.? and for what goal? What stances do women writers and artists take in their use of

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humor? How do women use humor to address women's experiences and concerns? The panel is also interested in exploring how women, through their use of laughter, rethink different genres within "high art" and "low art" in addition to rethinking the boundaries between "high art" and "low art." Proposals on French and francophone literatures, films, and other art forms are welcome. Papers may be in English or French. Please send 250-word proposals in English or French to Cathy Leung (CLEUNG34@GMAIL.COM) by May 15, 2017 along with presenter's academic affiliation, contact information, and A/V requirements. Chair: Cathy Leung, cleung34@gmail.com

5. Space and Place in French and Francophone Women's Writing

Recent political events abroad and local are frequently framed around issues of place and, arguably, space. This session proposes to investigate space and place, and how these concepts play out in women's narrative (texts or films). In what ways do women's narratives create new understandings of space and place? In what ways might these spaces and places be gendered? And, in what way are they an experience of othering? Does women's experience create a new space and place, and if so, in what ways? Please send a 250 word abstract in English or French to E. Nicole Meyer, nimeyer@augusta.edu by 15 May 2017 along with presenter's academic affiliation, contact information, and A/V requirements.

Chair: E. Nicole Meyer, Augusta University nimeyer@augusta.edu

Sylvie Blum-Reid announces the publication of *Traveling in French Cinema* (London: Palgrave/McMillan 2016) and an Translation from French: An Excerpt from the Novel *La Maison du Joueur de Flûte* by Alexander Vialatte, *Delos: A Journal of Translation and World Litearture* 31 (2016): 82-84

Vicki Mistacco, "Le masculin, une vieille histoire. Riccoboni et Sand." *Le Masculin dans les œuvres d'écrivaines françaises: "Il faut beaucoup aimer les hommes."* Ed. Françoise Rétif. Paris: Classiques Garnier, 2016. Pp. 133

Catherine R. Montfort will have her paper "Mme de La Tour du Pin, 1770-1853: 'Le Journal d'une femme de cinquante ans'" appear in the journal *Dalhousie French Studies*, Vol. 109 (Winter 2017): 61-71. The paper investigates two main questions: What were Mme de La Tour du Pin's reasons for writing her memoirs in 1820 after the downfall of Napoleon and the return of Louis XVIII to the throne of France, and why did she stop her story as early as 1815 with Napoleon's downfall? After all, she lived until 1853 and witnessed the Restoration and the July Monarchy. And why was she critical of Louis XVI and the aristocracy of her time while remaining a noblewoman at heart and proud of it?

Adrianna M. Paliyenko. *Genius Envy: Women Shaping French Poetic History, 1801-1900*. University Park, PA: The Pennsylvania State University Press: 2016.

From the publisher:

In *Genius Envy*, Adrianna M. Paliyenko uncovers a forgotten history: the multiplicity and diversity of nineteenth-century French women's poetic voices. Conservative critics of the time attributed the phenomenon of genius to masculinity and dismissed the work of female authors as "feminine literature." Despite the efforts of leading thinkers, critics, and literary historians to erase women from the pages of literary history, Paliyenko shows how these female poets invigorated the debate about the origins of genius and garnered considerable recognition in their time for their creativity and bold aesthetic ideas.

This fresh account of French women poets' contributions to literature probes the history of their critical reception. The result is an encounter with the texts of celebrated writers such as Marceline Desbordes-Valmore, Anais Ségalas, Malvina Blanchecotte, Louisa Siefert, and Louise Ackermann. Glimpses at the different stages of each poet's career show that these women explicitly challenged the notion of genius as gender specific, thus advocating for their rightful place in the canon.

A prodigious contribution to studies of nineteenth-century French poetry, Paliyenko's book reexamines the reception of poetry by women within and beyond its original context. This balanced and comprehensive treatment of their work uncovers the multiple ways in which women poets sought to define their place in history.

You can find *Genius Envy* on the Penn State University Press web site at this URL:

<http://www.psupress.org/books/titles/978-0-271-07708-6.html>

Chelsea Ray announces the publication of her edition and translation of Natalie Clifford Barney's *Women Lovers, or The Third Woman* with an introduction by Melanie C. Hawthorne.

This long-lost novel recounts a passionate triangle of love and loss among three of the most daring women of belle époque Paris. In this barely disguised roman à clef, the legendary American heiress, writer, and arts patron Natalie Clifford Barney, the dashing Italian baroness Mimi Franchetti, and the beautiful French courtesan Liane de Pougy share erotic liaisons that break all taboos and end in devastation as one unexpectedly becomes the "third woman." Never before published in English, and only recently published in French, this modernist, experimental work has been brought to light by Chelsea Ray's research and translation.

<https://uwpress.wisc.edu/books/5173.htm> To read Chelsea Ray's blog entry on why this project intrigued her so much, see:
<https://uwpress.wisc.edu/blog/?p=1940>

Schaal, Michèle A. "Bridging Feminist Waves: Wendy Delorme's *Insurrections! En territoire sexuel*." *Rocky Mountain Review* 70.2 (2016). Print.

---. "'Le Désir de raconter quelque chose' : Entretien avec Isabelle Flükiger." *Women in French Studies* 24 (2016): 127-41. Print.

Courtney Sullivan published *The Evolution of the French Courtesan*

Novel: From de Chabrillan to Colette with Palgrave Macmillan in June 2016. *Evolution* examines the autobiographical fictions of nineteenth-century French courtesans. In response to damaging representations of their kind in Zola and Alexandre Dumas *films'* novels, Céleste de Chabrillan, Valtesse de la Bigne, and Liane de Pougy crafted fictions recounting their triumphs as celebrities of the *demi-monde* and their outcries against the social injustices that pushed them into prostitution. Although their works enjoyed huge success in the second half of the nineteenth century, male writers penned faux-memoirs mocking courtesan novels, and successfully sowed doubt about their authorship in a backlash against the profitable notoriety the novels earned these courtesans. Colette, who did not write from personal experience but rather out of sympathy for the courtesans with whom she socialized, innovated the genre when she wrote three novels exploring the *demi-mondaine's* life beyond prostitution and youth.

Cheryl Toman's new book, *Women Writers of Gabon: Literature and Herstory* was published in October 2016 by Lexington Books. This study demonstrates how the invisibility of women (historically, politically, cross-culturally) has led to the omission of Gabon's literature from the African canon, but it also features an in-depth discussion about the unique elements of Gabonese women's writing that show it is worthy of critical recognition, proving why Gabonese women writers must be considered a major force in African literature. This volume is the only book-length critical study of Gabonese literature that exists in English; although there are titles in French that provide

analyses of the works of Gabonese women writers, no one work is comprehensive or considers the history of women's writing in Gabon in the same manner. Throughout the various chapters, this book explores, among other things, contributions that are unique to Gabonese women writers, such as definitions of African feminisms as they pertain to Gabonese society; the rewriting of oral histories, rituals, and traditions of Gabon's ethnic groups; one of the first introductions of same-sex couples in African Francophone literature; discussions on the impact of witchcraft on development; and the appropriation of the Fang epic poetry known as the *mvvet* by women writers. The chapters explore works by all major voices in Gabonese women's writing, including Angèle Rawiri, Justine Mintsa, Sylvie Ntsame, Honorine Ngou, and Chantal Magalie Mbazoo-Kassa, and this book concludes with brief introductions of writers of the younger generation, such as Edna Merey-Apinda, Alice Endamne, Nadia Origo, Miryl Eteno, and Elisabeth Aworet, among others.

WIF Annotated Bibliography
Mireille Best 1943-2005
 by
Stephanie Schechner,
Widener University

Mireille Best, a lesbian, working class author, grew up in Le Havre. She suffered from a variety of health problems that led her to leave her formal studies incomplete. She was unable to sit for the bac. She worked in a factory that

manufactured water-proof garments. Later, she became a civil servant and was able to obtain a transfer to the south of France due to her health. She met her life partner, Jo Crampon, at the age of 15. She was a voracious reader and began writing at a young age. Although she wrote 4 volumes of short stories and 3 novels, all published by Gallimard, she is little known among scholars in France or abroad. Following in the wake of the New Novel, she experimented with style and punctuation, writing lyrical texts that remained grounded in the communities

[Editor's note: This biographical information first appeared in Stephanie Shechner's piece on the WIF One Book project in the Fall Newsletter where she announced that Best's novel Camille en octobre had been selected as the 2017-18 One Book]

Works by Mireille Best

Best, Mireille. *Les mots de hasard*. Gallimard, 1980.

Best's first collection of five short texts is comprised of works that are all marked by her signature style: idiosyncratic use of punctuation, stream of consciousness exploration of the inner workings of her narrators' minds, a wry sense of humor, and a firm grounding in working-class milieus. For the most part, Best's protagonists are lesbians. In addition, she demonstrates great empathy for working-class married mothers such as the protagonist in "Le livre de Stéphanie."

----- *Le méchant petit jeune homme*. Gallimard, 1983.

Best's second published work opens with the longest of three texts. Titled "Des fenêtres pour les oiseaux" this story was lauded as a "chef-d'œuvre" in the French press. This first story focuses on three children raised by their grandparents, a fishmonger and a dockworker. The second text focuses exclusively on a group of women traveling in the south of France and takes on the cruelty to animals involved in bullfighting. The final text explores the fraught relationship between an American alcoholic artist and a French woman.

----- *Une extrême attention*. Gallimard, 1985.

This collection takes up issues related to illness, mortality, and desire. The six stories explore both aesthetic and historical topics in a manner that grounds the texts in post-war France. Best participated in an authors' roundtable on *Apostrophes* shortly after the publication of this book.

----- *Hymne aux murènes*. Gallimard, 1986.

Best's first novel follows its protagonist, Mila, as she leaves her working-class family for a medically-necessary stay at a sanatorium filled with other young women who are suffering from a vaguely-defined medical condition. In this all-female environment, Mila encounters a wide range of characters who fall along the entire spectrum of sexual identities (from strongly heterosexual to strongly lesbian). Best explores a variety of female relationships with an emphasis on friendship that expands traditional

notions of lesbianism and female sexuality.

-----, *Camille en octobre*. Gallimard, 1988.

This unconventional coming-of-age novel recounts the story of Camille, a teenager coming to grips with both her sexuality and her intellectual curiosity while growing up in a working-class family. Neither abandoned nor shamed by her community, Camille nonetheless struggles to find herself as she embarks on an affair with her dentist's wife. The novel includes sympathetic portrayals of working-class married women and the issues that define their lives: endless domestic chores; distant, sometimes violent men; and limited employment options.

-----, *Orphéa trois*. Gallimard, 1991.

In her final published collection of short stories, Best gathered four texts under a title which was evocative of Greek mythology, an ongoing interest for Best. Here, Best explores relationships marked by conflict and loss, often due to interference from a third party. Throughout, Best crafts meditative, reflective texts that demonstrate her continuing effort to illuminate the human quest for identity and for connection with others.

-----, *Il n'y a pas d'hommes au paradis*. Gallimard, 1995.

The third and most ambitious of Best's novels, this book explores the love story between Josephe and Rachel. Best draws complex family portraits of both characters, contrasting Josephe's cold and destructive mother with Rachel's

affectionate and loving one. The novel is set against the politics and horrors of the Spanish Civil War and World War II and reflects a deeper concern for international affairs that is only hinted at in Best's earlier novels.

Critical works on Mireille Best

Aurivel, Rolande. "Parcours à travers l'œuvre de Mireille Best." *Archives, Recherches et Cultures Lesbiennes*, no. 4, June 1986, pp. 73-75.

This study offers a brief introduction to Best's early works.

Cairns, Lucille. *Lesbian Desire in Post-1968 French Literature*. The Edwin Mellen Press, 2002.

Cairns does an excellent job giving an overview of Best's works in the context of post-1968 lesbian literature. In particular, Cairns focuses on the representation of desire and fully explores the treatment of sexuality in Best's work.

Garréta, Anne F. "French Lesbian Writers? Answers from Monique Wittig, Jocelyne François, and Mireille Best." *Yale French Studies*, vol. 90, 1996, pp. 235-241.

This insightful interview helps the reader situate Best with respect to two authors who were her contemporaries and who shared some of her concerns. Best shares with Wittig a desire to "universalize" the lesbian experience. In this important interview, she articulates her desire to reach a wide audience for her work.

Jarczak, Barbara. "Stille woorden over het werk van Mireille Best." *Lust en Gratie*, vol. 18, June 1988, pp. 8-27. (*Translation in French by author available.)

Ricouart, Janine. "Enfance magique ou infernale? Un regard socio-critique sur l'œuvre de Mireille Best." Special Issue of *Women in French Studies*, 2003, pp. 150-65.

This article explores the fundamental question of intersectionality in the work of Mireille Best. Ricouart masterfully explains how Best upends many stereotypes of working-class people as homophobic and unaccepting. Best's unique ability to demonstrate empathy for working-class characters while holding them accountable for their sometimes limited worldviews is detailed in this article.

Schechner, Stephanie. "The Lesbian Body in Motion: Representations of Corporeality and Sexuality in the Novels of Mireille Best." *Lesbian Inscriptions in Francophone Society and Culture*, edited by Renate Günther and Wendy Michallat, Manchester UP, 2007, pp. 123-42.

In this article, I demonstrate how Best deploys images of water and fluidity to represent bodies and desire in her novels. Drawing parallels between Best's novels and the work of Monique Wittig, my analysis is informed by notions introduced by Lucille Cairns in her earlier work on Best.

-----, "La lutte contre la normalisation: représentation de l'adolescence lesbienne chez Jovette Marchessault et Mireille Best." *De L'Invisible au visible:*

l'imaginaire de Jovette Marchessault, edited by Roseanna Dufault and Celita Lamar, Les Éditions du Remue-Ménage, 2012, pp. 155-68.

This article compares Best's work with that of the Canadian lesbian author, Jovette Marchessault. While both authors depict lesbian heroines who resist the heterosexist and misogynistic acculturation that their communities impose upon them, Best does so in a manner that allows her to retain a certain empathy for and connection to the heterosexual women around her. Marchessault develops a militant style that more forcefully rejects the way in which young women are conditioned to accept a limited range of options. This article represents an effort to situate Best's work in an international context.

-----, "The Young Woman and the Sea: Lesbians Coming of Age in Coastal Communities in the Novels of Mireille Best." *Women in French Studies*, vol. 11, 2003, pp. 50-63.

This article explores how Best exploits metaphors related to water to simultaneously convey the fluidity that marks her protagonists' quests for identity and to ground her works in the coastal community in which she was raised. Drawing parallels with other female authors who have deployed water imagery, the article seeks to provide a general introduction to Best's novels in terms of both their content and style.

Schenk-van Witsen, Rosalien. "Nommer le désarroi: Het werk van Mireille Best." *Rapports / Het Franse Boek*, vol. LXII, no. 2, 1992, pp. 64-70.

Waelti-Walters, Jennifer, *Damned Women: Lesbians in French Novels, 1776-1996.* McGill-Queen's University Press, 2000.

Waelti-Walters makes a compelling case regarding the literary merits of Best's novels in this overview of her work. The book helps Best's readers understand where her novels fit within the canon of French literary representations of lesbians. In a chapter comparing Best to her contemporaries Jocelyne François and Hélène de Monferrand, Waelti-Walters succeeds in marking Best as a unique literary voice who participated in an unorganized, yet important, movement toward the positive representation of lesbians in French novels.

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Schechner, Stephanie. "Mireille Best." *The Literary Encyclopedia*, First published 20 July 2015, [http://www.litencyc.com/php/speople.php?rec=true&UID=13478, accessed 19 May 2016.]

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N.B. These articles are not, for the most part, indexed or available digitally through the Bibliothèque Nationale de France although most can be accessed there in hard copy. As a result, some publishing and author information is incomplete. If you would like access to any of these articles, please contact me at saschechner@mail.widener.edu as I have digital copies of the entire dossier.

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Les écrivaines québécoises de la relève: Bibliographie partielle (Lucie Lequin)	Vol. 7 : 1	Spring 1993
Franco-Ontarian Women Writers (Barbara Godard)	Vol. 7 : 2	Fall 1993
Franco-Caribbean Women Writers (Susanne Rinne)	Vol. 8 : 1	Spring 1994
Les Françaises: Civilisation contemporaine (Supplement) (Colette Hall –Trout--)	Vol. 8 : 2	Fall 1994
Franco-Caribbean Woman Writers (Supplement) (Susanne Rinne)	Vol. 9 : 1	Spring 1995
Women's Autobiography Bibliography (Nicole Meyer)	Vol. 9 : 1	Spring 1995
Senegalese Women Writers (Annabelle Rea, Judy Schaneman, Deirdre Bucher Heistad, Frances Novac and Thérèse O'Connell)	Vol. 9 : 2	Fall 1995
Romancières québécoises des années soixante (Anne Brown)	Vol. 10 : 1	Spring 1996
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