

Hélène E. Bilis

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ACADEMIC POSITIONS

2008-present Assistant Professor of French, Wellesley College
2015 (Spring) Assistant Visiting Professor of French, Harvard University
2013-2014 Co-director, Medieval/Renaissance Program, Wellesley College

EDUCATION

Ph.D. **University of California, Berkeley**, French, Spring 2008. Dissertation: *Passing On: Dynastic Succession and the King's Body in French Tragedy, 1637-1749*.
Chair: Prof. Nicholas Paige.
M.A. **University of California, Berkeley**, French Literature, Fall 2002.
B.A. **Rutgers University**, New Brunswick, N.J., Highest honors, French major,
Spanish and Italian minor, Fall 2000.

PUBLISHED BOOKS

Forthcoming *Passing Judgment: The Politics and Poetics of Sovereignty in French Tragedy from Hardy to Racine*. (forthcoming, University of Toronto Press).
2014 *L'Eloquence du Silence: Dramaturgie du non-dit sur la scène théâtrale des 17^e et 18^e siècles*, ed. Hélène Bilis and Jennifer Tamas. Paris: EDPS Classiques Garnier.

PUBLICATIONS

Forthcoming "Corneille aux Etats-Unis, ou quel 'auteur classique' pour les campus américains?"; on-line publication : Centre International Pierre Corneille ; Centre d'études et de recherches, Université de Rouen, Fall, 2015
Forthcoming "Solo on Stage: The Single Mother's Solitary Path to Tenure," *Staging Women's Lives: Gendered Life Stages in Language and Literature. Workplaces*, eds. Nan Bauer-Maglin and Michelle Massé (SUNY Feminist Theory and Criticism Series: 2015).
2014 "The Silence of Subjects: Tragedy and the Refusal to Speak in Tristan's *La Mort de Sénèque*," *L'Eloquence du Silence: Dramaturgie du non-dit sur la scène théâtrale des 17^e et 18^e siècles*, eds. Hélène Bilis and Jennifer Tamas. Paris: EDPS Classiques Garnier.
2013 "Voir la Sorcière de Colchis d'un nouvel œil ou comment rendre visible la dignité," *Littératures Classiques* 82 (2013): 233-245.

- 2013 "Corneille's *Cinna*, Clemency, and the Implausible Decision," *The Modern Language Review* Volume 108, Number 1, January 2013: 68-89.
- 2010 "Poétique tragique et pensée politique: mise en scène de la souveraineté dans l'*Œdipe* de Voltaire," *Symposium*, Volume 64, Issue 4, October 2010: 258-274.
- 2010 "Corneille and the Politics of Seventeenth-Century Succession," *MLN* (French Issue) 125:4 (2010): 873-894.
- 2008 "Tragic Succession in Racine's *Mithridate* and *Phèdre*." *Fortune and Fatality: Performing the Tragic in Early Modern France*, eds. Hosford and Wrightington (Oxford: Oxford Scholars Press).

PUBLISHED REVIEWS

- Forthcoming* *Walter Benjamin's Hypothetical French Trauerspiel*, ed. Hall Bjornstad and Katherine Ibbett. *Yale French Studies* 124 (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2013). *The French Review*.
- 2012 *The Shock of the Ancient: Literature & History in Early Modern France* (Chicago & London: The University of Chicago Press, 2011). By Larry Norman. *Papers on French Seventeenth-Century Literature* Vol. XXXIX, Number 76: 266-270.
- 2012 *The Enlightenment Past: Reconstructing Eighteenth-Century French Thought*. (Cambridge, UK: The University of Cambridge Press, 2008). By Daniel Brewer. *Eighteenth-Century Current Bibliography*, 34, 2012.
- 2011 *Figures de l'histoire de France dans le théâtre au tournant des Lumières 1760-1830*, eds. Paul Mironneau and Gérard Lahouati (Oxford: Voltaire Foundation, 2007). *Eighteenth-Century Current Bibliography* 33, 2011.
- 2010 *The Style of the State in French Theater: Neoclassicism and Government 1630-1660* (Shirey, UK: Ashgate, 2009). By Katherine Ibbett. *Renaissance Quarterly* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, Summer 2010).
- 2010 *Voltaire Comic Dramatist* (Oxford: Studies in Voltaire and the Eighteenth Century, 2006). By Russell Goulbourne. *Eighteenth-Century Current Bibliography*: 32: 289-90.

AWARDS, GRANTS, PROFESSIONAL SERVICE

- Current* MLA French Seventeenth-Century Division Executive Committee Officer (2012-2017), Division Chair
- Current* Literary editor, H-France Forum, Medieval-17th Century
- 2015 Alliance to Advance Liberal Arts College (AALAC) Mellon Grant: "Blended Learning Approaches to Teaching Early Modern France in a Liberal Arts Context." (\$7,500) With Hélène Visentin, Smith College. Workshop scheduled, 10/2015
- 2015 Educational Research and Development Grant, Wellesley College
- 2015 Knapp Instructional Technology Internship Program (\$3,500), "The Anxiety of Competition"

- 2012 President, Conference Organizer: 31st Annual Conference of The Society for Interdisciplinary French Seventeenth-Century Studies, Wellesley College (Nov. 8-10, 2012)
- 2012 Faculty Fellow for “Teaching with Books and other Text-Technologies: Book History, Book Arts, and Book Studies in the Wellesley Curriculum.”
- 2012 Madeleine Korbel Albright Institute for Global Affairs, Faculty Fellow
- 2011 Wellesley College Faculty Research Award (\$3,300), “The Judicial Process: The Royal Judge and the Tragic Genre in Rotrou, Corneille, Racine, and Voltaire”
- 2011 Fellow, Leslie Center for the Humanities, Dartmouth College (*declined*)
- 2010 Wellesley College Faculty Research Award (\$3,500), “Deciphering the Decision: Neoclassical Tragedy and the King in Judgment”
- 2009 Theodore E. Braun Travel Grant, American Society for Eighteenth-Century Studies
- 2009 Wellesley College Faculty Research Award (\$3,500), “Putting the King to Rest: The Making of Louis XIV’s Legacy in Early Eighteenth-Century France”
- 2009 Educational Research and Development Grant, Wellesley College
- 2006 Effectiveness in Teaching Award, UC Berkeley Graduate Division (2006)
- 2004 Outstanding Graduate Student Instructor Award, UC Berkeley

ACADEMIC CONFERENCES

- 2016 “The Queen’s Royal Body: French Tragedy and the Performance of the Female Sovereign.” Modern Language Association. Austin: to be given in January.
- 2015 Comité Scientifique, “La Mémoire de la Blessure au théâtre,” Colloque international, Université de Nantes (November 18-20)
- 2015 Panel Chair: “Laughter.” Modern Language Association. Vancouver, (1/8/15)
- 2014 “Corneille aux Etats-Unis, ou quel « auteur classique » pour les campus américains?” Appropriations de Corneille, Colloque International de Rouen. Rouen, (10/17/14).
- 2014 Invited Discussant: “Sovereignty in the 17th and 18th centuries,” Roundtable Discussion. MLA Conference, Chicago, (1/10/14).
- 2014 Panel Chair: “The Imagined Text.” MLA Conference. Chicago, (1/9/14).
- 2013 Panel Chair: “The Miraculous.” Modern Language Association. Boston, (1/4/13).
- 2013 “The Royal Decision as Tragic Dénouement: Three Case Studies of the King as Judge in Corneille.” Modern Language Association. Boston, (1/3/13).
- 2012 “Granting Life, A Tragic End: Royal Clemency in the Theater of Corneille, Rotrou, and Racine.” North American Society for Seventeenth-Century French Literature (NASSCFL). Vanderbilt University, (5/23/12).
- 2012 “Augustan Clemency and the Richelieu Milieu: The Politics of Roman Antiquity in French Neoclassical Tragedy.” American Comparative Literature Association. Brown University, Providence, RI, (4/1/12).
- 2012 “Clemency and the State of Exception in Corneille’s *Cinna* and Rotrou’s *Venceslas*.” Renaissance Society of America, Washington, D.C., (3/23/12).
- 2011 Panel Chair: “La Publication.” Society for Seventeenth-Century Interdisciplinary French Studies. Lexington, KY, (11/3/11).

- 2011 "The King Holds Court: Racine and the Royal Judge." Kentucky Foreign Language Conference. Lexington, KY, (4/15/11).
- 2011 "Lifting the Law: Tragedy and the Royal Judge in Corneille and Rotrou." Renaissance Society of America. Montreal, CA, (3/24/11).
- 2010 "Médée et ses frères : le héros cornélien entre noirceur et éblouissement." Regards Croisés. The Classical Eye. Perspectives on the Gaze in France in the 17th century. Harvard University, Cambridge, (10/22/10).
- 2010 Panel Chair: "Judging Women: Law, Literature, and Female Guilt." North East Modern Language Association, Montreal, (4/14/10).
- 2009 "Corneille, Historical Authority, and the Embodiment of Justice in Neoclassical Theater." Modern Language Association National Conference, Philadelphia, (12/29/09).
- 2009 "Embodying Justice: Corneille and the King's Legal Authority." Society for Seventeenth-Century Interdisciplinary French Studies, Philadelphia, (10/23/09).
- 2008 "Literary Justice in Seventeenth-Century France: Teaching Pierre Corneille's *Le Cid* and *Horace* through Mock Trials." North East Modern Language Association Conference, Boston, (2/27/08).
- 2008 "Poétique tragique et pensée politique: Voltaire et la mise en scène de la souveraineté." Colloque International de Voltaire, "Homme de théâtre." Geneva, Switzerland, (1/28/08).
- 2008 "Heroic Attempt, Royal Mistake: Corneille's *Œdipe* and the Politics of Seventeenth-Century Succession." SE 17 National Conference, Saskatoon, Canada, (10/23/08).
- 2008 "Unmaking the King: Voltaire Rewrites *Œdipe*." American Society for Eighteenth-Century Studies National Conference, Portland, (3/29/08).
- 2008 Panel Chair: "Taking Up Tragedy from the Seventeenth to the Eighteenth Century." American Society for Eighteenth-Century Studies National Conference, Portland, (3/27/08).
- 2007 "Voltaire and Theatrical Innovation: The Example of *Sémiramis*." American Society for Eighteenth-Century Studies National Conference, Atlanta, (3/24/07).
- 2006 "The Theatricality of Tragic Succession: Fathers Who Will Not Die and Sons Who Cannot Reign." CUNY Center for Graduate Studies, (10/20/06).
- 2006 Invited Panel Respondant: "Corneille and Empire." UC Berkeley, (11/10/06).

PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS

MLA • NEMLA • The Society for Interdisciplinary French Seventeenth-Century Studies
American Society for Eighteenth-Century Studies • The Renaissance Society of America

COURSES TAUGHT

French 101, Beginning French I, Wellesley College
 French 102, Beginning French II, Wellesley College
 French 206, Intermediate Spoken French, Wellesley College
 French 210A, French Literature: Middle Ages - Enlightenment, Wellesley College
 French 211, Studies in Language, Wellesley College
 French 224, Versailles and the Age of Louis XIV, Wellesley College

French 241, Laughter is the Best Medicine, Wellesley College

French 303, Women and Royal Power, Wellesley College

French 333, Classical Tragedy

Writing 145, Do French Women Really...?, Wellesley College

RLL 134, Comedic Timing: Laughter on the Pre-revolutionary Stage, Harvard University

H   ne E. Bilis. pp. 97-110. Download. In *Passing Judgment*, H   ne Bilis examines how an overlooked character-type  the royal judge  remained a constant of the tragic genre throughout the 17th century, although the specifics of his role and position fluctuated as playwrights experimented with changing models of sovereignty onstage. Her readings analyze how this royal decision-maker stood at the intersection of political and theatrical debates, and evolved through a process of trial and error in which