

2012 AATF BOOK CLUB

This year the AATF Book Club will focus on three works from the French Antilles. We have chosen these works because they can be taught in AP French Language and Culture classes and in intermediate college classes. A number of French teachers who attended the 2003 AATF convention in Martinique discovered these works for the first time and found them fascinating.

The first book, *Un Papillon dans la cité* by Gisèle Pineau, describes the life of a young girl who leaves the island of Martinique where she lives with her grandmother and joins her mother and new husband who live in Paris. Her experiences with the educational system, a public housing project, and life in Paris contrasted with memories of her life on the island, are described in poetic detail.

The second selection, *Une Tempête* by Aimé Césaire, is a fascinating rendition of Shakespeare's *The Tempest*. Césaire has taken the classic play and given it a more modern twist with an additional character. As the play progresses one wonders who is the real master and who is the slave.

The final selection, *Victoire, les saveurs et les mots* by Maryse Condé, depicts the life of three generations of women in Guadeloupe. Victoire, the grandmother, is the woman whose love of food and flavors helps her overcome the difficulties of living in a colonial society of the early 1900s. Jeanne, her daughter and mother of Maryse, is the first black woman to receive the *brevet* and represents the new educated generation. Maryse Condé's reflection on the lives of her grandmother and mother is imbued with beautiful images contrasted with great irony.

The 2012 Book Club will meet in Chicago at the AATF convention to discuss these works and consider using them with high school or college students. Copies are available from Continental Book Company and through [Amazon.com].

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