

## YUWO Spring 2021

### 👉 Watch for Zoom Invites!

#### May 5 -12:30

Annual Meeting and Scholarship Award Luncheon on Zoom with a special speaker, voting on By-laws Revisions, and new slate of officers.

#### May 14 - 1:00

Bob Potter returns with a Lecture on the American Gilded Age.

#### May 25 - 12 noon

Chris Wigren, Deputy Director of Connecticut Trust for Historic Preservation, on The New Haven Green



## Spring Lecture Series

### “Women Playwrights from the (former) British Commonwealth”

**March 31:** *Tea in a China Cup*  
(Northern Ireland)

**April 7:** *My Sister-Wife*  
(Asian British)

**April 14:** *Leave Taking*  
(Caribbean British)

**April 21:** Three South African  
One Act Plays

**April 28:** *The Komagata Maru Incident* (Canadian)

YUWO Members and Friends,

My primrose planter was my first sign of Spring. By the time this newsletter arrives the golden forsythia will be cheering our landscape. I hope that all of you have had the opportunity for vaccination. For our Spring 2021 Lecture Series there will be no driving or parking issues. Consider registering to learn about playwrights and their plays from an expert on the subject, Professor Murray Biggs. Professor Biggs, semi-retired from Yale, teaches Yale Alumni Courses. He also leads groups of theatre enthusiasts on AYA weekend trips to New York City, San Diego and Sarasota, as well as week-long trips to London, the Shakespeare Festival in Stratford, Ontario, the Shaw Festival in Niagara-on-the-Lake; and the Shakespeare Festival in Ashland, Oregon. Come learn!

Very best, as always,

— Mary-Jo Warren, YUWO President

## YUWO VIRTUAL Monthly Book Groups – Read On!

### Second Monday Afternoon at 2:00 pm on Zoom:

On Monday, April 12, we will discuss *The Other Americans* (2019) by Laila Laramie. Our May book is *Never Let Me Go* by Kazuo Ishiguro; June, *Deaths of Despair and the Future of Capitalism* by Anne Case and Angus Deaton, and July, *Caste* by Isabel Wilkerson.

Contact Pat Goldstein (203-535-0734) or [patgoldst@gmail.com](mailto:patgoldst@gmail.com)

### Third Monday Afternoon at 2:00 pm on Zoom:

Renee Chotiner will lead our discussion of *The Lost Children Archive* (2019) by Valeria Luiselli, the tale of a family’s emotional and physical journey across the United States. Rave reviews mark this one as “a great American novel for our time.” [*This book group has room for new members; contact Louise if you are interested in joining.*]

Contact Louise Ciulla (203) 288-5195, or [lciulla@yahoo.com](mailto:lciulla@yahoo.com)

### Second Tuesday Afternoon at 2:00 pm on Zoom:

On April 13, our book is *Caste* (2020) by Isabel Wilkerson.

Contact Lyn Howe (203-606-0370) or [lyn.howe66@gmail.com](mailto:lyn.howe66@gmail.com)

### Second Thursday Morning at 9:30 am on Zoom:

On April 11 we will discuss *The Postmistress* (2009) by Sarah Blake. This novel, set in World War II but filled with parallels to today’s world, shows that war may rage around us while ordinary lives continue

Contact Audrey DeFronzo (203-804-5572) or [amdefronzo@gmail.com](mailto:amdefronzo@gmail.com)

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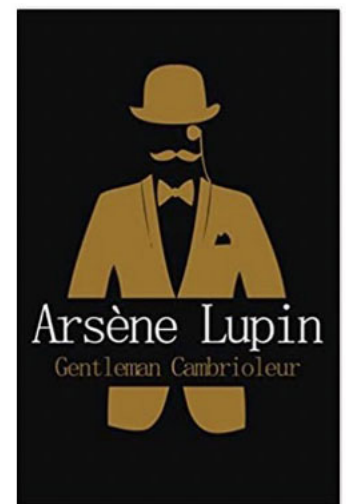
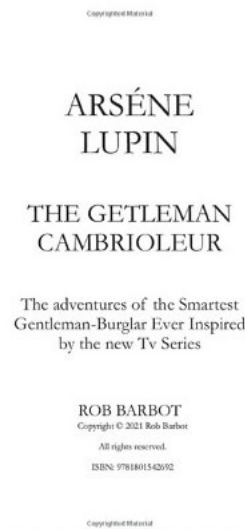
## YUWO Interest Groups

### NEW Activity — Movie Group

Bernardina Wilcox urges members who wish to talk about the movies to watch “The Dissident,” a documentary based on the assassination of Washington Post columnist Jamal Khashoggi, on Amazon Prime video and to join her to discuss it. This new movie group will function as book groups do, with a one-hour discussion of a film previously seen (like a book previously read). As chair of the activities committee, she has set the date for the first meeting. If you wish to receive a Zoom invitation to join the group, contact Bernardina [bernardinawilcox@gmail.com](mailto:bernardinawilcox@gmail.com). Together you will decide on a zoom date.

### Bonjour from the YUWO French Group!

Although we’d all prefer to get-together in person, this group, like many, has made the best of the Covid-19 situation and switched to zoom meetings. We still “gather” the first Tuesday of every month, each one of us sitting in front of our computers, phones or other devices, to spend an hour or more together



speaking French, a language we all love. We discuss French movies and television shows, books, past travels, hopes for future travels, the state of the world, and more. Most recently, we became actors and took on parts from several famous French plays. It was educational, a change of scenery and lots of fun.

The best part about our venue and remote reunions is being able to have members who spend part of the year living elsewhere able to meet up with those of us who remain in the New Haven area. So, when we visit one another every month, some of us are here in CT, but others are in Vermont, Massachusetts, and Florida. No matter where we are, it's nice to be connected and to keep our group alive.

## Lunch and Learn



Illustration by Andy Friedman

*Above, Julia Adams (left), Wikipedia, and Philip Roth*

On Thursday, February 25, Julia Adams, Sociology Professor and Head of Grace Hopper College, spoke to over 50 YUWO members on her current research endeavors: “Wikipedia, Democracy and Academic Knowledge.” Adams and her colleague, Brückner, focus on comparing the structure and statistics within Wikipedia entries to better understand the development of Wikipedia as a functional and legitimate online encyclopedia.

To help us better understand her research Professor Adams recounted a story of the prolific author, Philip Roth. In 2012, when Philip Roth read Wikipedia’s entry on his recent novel *The Human Stain*, he found inconsistencies. Through an interlocutor, presumably his publisher, he petitioned Wikipedia to delete the misstatement, along with two others. The English Wikipedia Administrator wrote back to Roth telling him that he was not a credible source. “I understand your point that the author is the greatest authority on his own work but we require a secondary source.” Roth took the matter into his own hands to write an article for the *New Yorker Magazine* which Wikipedia could use as a secondary source.

The link is here – Enjoy! <https://www.newyorker.com/books/page-turner/an-open-letter-to-wikipedia>.

# The Speaker, the Dates, the Plays, and the Registration



## Our Speaker:

Professor Murray Biggs is a semi-retired Adjunct Associate Professor of English, Theater Studies, and Film at Yale. Professor Biggs is known everywhere for his dynamic teaching style that inspires great enthusiasm and active participation. Professor Biggs assumes that we will be familiar with the play of the week. [murray.biggs@yale.edu](mailto:murray.biggs@yale.edu)

**The Plays, the Dates and the Times: Wednesdays at 10:30 on Zoom – A PDF of the plays will be sent as an email attachment to all participants. Option: Spiral bound copies are available to order in advance for pick-up at the Broadway New Haven Tyco Printing - (203) 777-8926 – Price @ \$34.**

March 31: Christina Reid: *Tea in a China Cup* (Northern Irish)

April 7: Meera Syal: *My Sister-Wife* (Asian British)

April 14: Winsome Pinnock: *Leave Taking* (Caribbean British)

April 21: Three One Act Plays from South African Playwrights with a glossary of notes:

Geina Mhlophe: *Have you Seen Zandile?*

Magi Noninzi Williams: *Kwa-Landlady*

Lueen Conning: *A Coloured Place*

April 28: Sharon Pollock: *The Komagata Maru Incident*

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Save the top of the Form  Cut Here and Return the Registration below with a \$40 check

## Registration for the Spring Lecture Series Women Playwrights from the (Former British Commonwealth)

**March 31, April 7, 14, 21 & 28 at 10:30 am. On Zoom**

This course is open to YUWO members and the public. The Fee is \$40 per person for the series. Make checks payable to YUWO.

**Mail to Nancy Rosenbaum, 200 Leeder Hill Road, Apt. 503, Hamden, CT 06517**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

*Questions contact Mary-Jo Warren at [warrenmaryjo1635@gmail.com](mailto:warrenmaryjo1635@gmail.com)*

## Women Playwrights from the (Former) British Commonwealth

### Bios culled from on-line sources



**Christina Reid** (1942-2015) was from the Ardoyne area of Belfast and her plays provide a working-class, female and Protestant perspective on her society. She was one of a prominent group of Belfast playwrights whose work in the 1980s gave a more working-class take on the Troubles. Her play *Did You Hear the One About the Irishman?* won the Ulster Television Drama Award in 1980, while her breakthrough work *Tea in a China Cup* was a runner-up in the 1982 IT/DTF competition for plays by women. In 2002 she was awarded an Artist Award in recognition of her contribution to playwriting in Northern Ireland.



**Meera Syal**, writer, actress and comedian of Asian descent, was born in 1963 near Wolverhampton in the West Midlands and was educated at Manchester University. She co-wrote the script for 'My Sister Wife', a three-part BBC Television series, and wrote the film *Bhaji on the Beach* for Channel 4. She co-writes and is a cast member of the popular BBC Television comedy series 'Goodness Gracious Me' and *The Kumars at No. 42*. She also works as a journalist and is a regular contributor to *The Guardian*.



**Winsome Pinnock** was born in [Islington, North London](#), in 1961 to migrant parents from Jamaica. Her mother was a cleaner, and her father a checker at [Smithfield Meat Market](#).<sup>[1]</sup> Pinnock graduated from [Goldsmiths, University of London](#) with a BA and from [Birkbeck, University of London](#) with an MA in Modern Literature in English.<sup>[1]</sup> She is an award-winning playwright and dramaturg. Her work has been produced on the British stage and internationally. She was the first black British female writer to have a play produced by the Royal National Theatre.



**Three South African Playwrights:** **Ccina Mhlophe**, born in 1958, is a South African [anti-apartheid activist](#), actress, [storyteller](#), poet, playwright, director and author. She does her work through charismatic performances, to preserve storytelling as a means of keeping history alive and encouraging South African children to read. She tells her stories in four of South Africa's languages: English, [Afrikaans](#), [Zulu](#) and [Xhosa](#)

**Magi Noninzi Williams** is a South African playwright and actress best known for a string of television shows. Williams obtained a drama teacher's diploma in 1993 but opted for a life in front of the cameras. She has also starred in several films. Her writing credits include a translated film script of the highly successful *Mapantsula*. Her theatre work has taken her around the world, touring many countries including the UK.



**Luene Conning** is a South African playwright whose exciting play *A Coloured Place* explores the contradictions inherent in being 'colored' in postapartheid South Africa. Using multimedia staging, the play is unrelenting as its barrage of images, perceptions, and attitudes spill out onto the stage from disembodied voices.

**Sharon Pollock** (born in 1936 in [Fredericton](#), New Brunswick) is a Canadian playwright, actor, [director](#), who lives in [Calgary](#), Alberta. She has been Artistic Director of [Theatre Calgary](#), [Theatre New Brunswick](#) and Performance Kitchen & The Garry Theatre, the latter which she herself founded in 1992. In 2007, she was made a Fellow of the [Royal Society of Canada](#). Pollock examines historic events and tells them in a way that causes the audience to question the reality between the official story and what is shown on stage. Pollock is one of Canada's most notable playwrights, and is a major part of the development of what is known today as Canadian Theatre.

## **The Nominating Committee is Pleased to Recommend the Following Slate:**

**Assistant Treasurer: Carmen Rodriguez**

**Scholarship Chair: Jane Shaw**

**Membership Chair: Willi Stahura**

**Recording Secretary: Susan Anderson**

### ***Assistant Treasurer: Carmen Rodriguez***

Carmen's initial experience was in investments and budget management. With Merrill Lynch, she developed particular expertise in the interpretation of financial statements. Later Carmen was Director of the New Haven Welfare Department (70 employees, \$22 million budget), where she was responsible for budget development and administration. Carmen has been a board member of the United Way of Greater New Haven, has led the League of United Latin America citizens' scholarship program, and is currently treasurer of the New Haven North End Club.

### ***Scholarship Chair: Jane Shaw***

Jane is a long-standing member of YUWO, currently serving on the Scholarship Committee, hosting a virtual cook club, and enjoying our hiking and lectures. A graduate of the University of Michigan (B.A.) and John Carroll University (M.A.), Jane worked as a teacher, as Director of Development at The Country School (Madison), and as a development consultant at the Ronald McDonald House of CT. Jane has served on the boards of the Community Fund for Women and Girls and the Visiting Nurses Association of South-Central CT. She is a member of the North End Club and the League of Women Voters of North Haven/Hamden.

### ***Membership Chair: Willi Stahura***

Willi moved to Wallingford eight years ago and has been delighted to be part of YUWO, where she is a current member of our Board. Willi has served as Chairman of the Wallingford Senior Center's Member Advisory Council, has performed with the Wallingford R-Band, and is a member of the Wallingford Public Library's Board of Managers. Prior to living in Connecticut, she was a faculty assistant in the Department of Health Care Policy at Harvard. She is a graduate of Bucknell University (B.S.) and Harvard (C.M.S.)

[In addition, Susan Anderson, who is currently serving as Recording Secretary on the YUWO Board, has been nominated to a second 2-year term.]

### ***Recording Secretary: Susan Anderson***

Susan moved to the New Haven area in 1982 when her husband joined a NH law firm. Trained as a nurse, she had worked previously at Children's Hospital in Philadelphia and the Public Health Department in Washington, DC. Once in New Haven, she joined the Yale School of Public Health and spent 30 years there rising to be a Director in the Yale Center for Clinical Investigation. She has degrees from Villanova University (BS) and Columbia University (MFA). In retirement, she has enjoyed getting to know more about Yale, beyond the Medical School. She is active in the Gourmet Group, the Hikers, and a book group and is now serving on the YUWO Board.

Submitted by:

Betsy Weber, Nominating Committee Chair

## Online Giving Made Easy



The **COMMUNITY** Foundation  
for Greater New Haven



The Scholarship Committee is pleased to let you know that YUWO is introducing an easy way for members to make online donations. We are now able to offer online giving to our scholarship program through the website of The Community Foundation for Greater New Haven (CFGNH). We are grateful to our Board for their work to register YUWO and create an online giving profile of our scholarship program.

This spring, YUWO will be joining **The Great Give**, a 36-hour community fundraising event sponsored by CFGNH. The event will run from 8 am, **May 4** until 8 pm, **May 5**. All you need is a credit card or mobile wallet and access to the internet from your computer, smart phone, or tablet.

During The Great Give, YUWO will be eligible for prize drawings, from \$1000 for an Early Bird (8-9 am) to \$500 for the Midnight Snack Prize and many other random drawings throughout the event. The chance to win a prize is very engaging and keeps people coming back to learn who the winners are. We're hoping for beginner's luck this year!

All donations to **The Great Give** will support our Annual Scholarship Fund. Those who wish to make gifts to one of our three trust funds (Magee Fenn, Gustave and Carol Lynn Sirot, and the Scholarship Trust Fund) may access them online through the Donor Central option. Both options will be open for giving throughout the year. Gifts are tax deductible and you will be emailed a tax receipt from CFGNH once your donation is processed. Credit card transaction and third-party processing fees of 4.2% will be deducted from each donation.

Check your email box for messages about **The Great Give** and please take a look at YUWO's profile as you consider donating to our scholarship fund. Our YUWO Scholars are remarkable and continue to need our support as they work toward continuing their educations. Thank you to all who support YUWO's signature scholarship program.

*Of course, we will continue to accept checks, with gratitude, from those of you who prefer giving that way.*

— Jane Shaw (contact Jane at [jane2shaw@gmail.com](mailto:jane2shaw@gmail.com) with any questions)