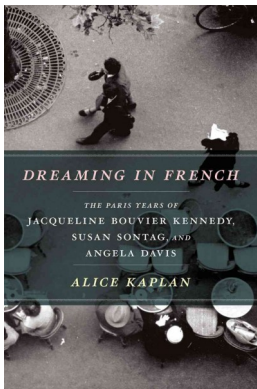


# Dreaming in French : the Paris years of Jacqueline Bouvier Kennedy, Susan Sontag, and Angela Davis

## Dreaming in French: the Paris Years of Jacqueline Bouvier Kennedy, Susan Sontag, and Angela Davis



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Confession: I tried to learn French once. Years ago, I signed up for a New Orleans Free University class in what should have been a great place to learn French or at least Cajun. But each week the instructor came to class "under the influence." Even though he shared some wild Paris stories and jumped on and off the teacher's desk, my French never improved.

I've always enjoyed books about experiencing the world through the lens of a new culture. Alice Kaplan's excellent [Dreaming in French](#) is a very fun and compelling read. In clear beautiful prose, she writes about how living in France changed the life courses of three smart and gifted women: Jackie Bouvier Kennedy, Susan Sontag, and Angela Davis.

Each of them spent time in France on the cusp of womanhood. In many ways, France and French culture affected not only how they viewed the world but their entire lives afterward. In 1949 Jackie travelled to Paris by ship as part of a contingent of Smith College students spending the year abroad. It was soon after World War II and she was placed with a former WWII resistance fighter whose husband had died in a camp doing slave labor for the Nazis.

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