

CELEBRATING LITERARY DIVERSITY:
SELECTED MODERN AUTHORS

Exhibit curated by

Jack Hall



M. D. Anderson Library
University of Houston
October - December 1991

The library exhibit is part of the University of Houston's Celebrating Diversity Conference, October 7-11, 1991, a week-long exploration of contributions by diverse constituencies within the university community.

The exhibit catalog was printed in an edition of 5,000 copies on 80 lb. Lustró Dull Cream in Houston, Texas by the Printing Department, University of Houston. It was produced using a 386SX PC and a Hewlett-Packard LaserJet III with HP Post-Script Cartridge.

This publication was made possible by the
Friends of the University of Houston Libraries.



Acknowledgments

Special thanks go to a number of library staff who gave generously of their time and talents to make this catalog, and the exhibit which it records, possible.

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❖ INTRODUCTION ❖

The M.D. Anderson Library has selected over one hundred recent works of fiction, poetry, drama, and autobiography to celebrate the cultural diversity of modern American literature. Cultural diversity derives primarily from the ethnic and/or national heritage of the authors, whether they are immigrants, or whether they belong to groups that have been in America since its earliest history. It can also develop from other experiences of the author regardless of racial or ethnic identity, such as the experience of being disabled.

Although every American author can be read and studied in the context of national or ethnic heritage or major life experiences, we have chosen to focus the exhibit on five groups: African American, Hispanic American, Asian American, Native American, and Authors with Disabilities.

Fine contributions to American literature have also been made by writers with ethnic heritages from Armenia to Zimbabwe and with other significant individual life experiences. Due to the limitations of available space, only a representative sample of authors are included in this exhibit. It was, of course, difficult to choose from among the many significant works available. After selecting the five groups highlighted, we emphasized the present generation of authors, selecting their most recent writings whenever possible. Thus, this exhibit offers an opportunity to celebrate many writers who distill their life experiences in language fresh and immediate. Most of the texts are written in English, but included are examples of authors such as Isabel Allende and Reinaldo Arenas who maintain their cultural bonds so strongly that they write primarily in their native language.

"What then is the American?"

J. Hector St. John de Crèvecoeur, *Letter from an American Farmer*, originally published in 1782.

American culture has been viewed as a melting pot into which varied cultures are assimilated into one *mélange*, or as a "stir-fry" in which each culture maintains its distinctive flavor and texture. Authors, readers, and scholars love to savor at one moment the "Americanness" of a literary work, and at another moment its ethnicity. Every group immigrated to this land at some point, whether transversing the Bering Land Bridge at least 20,000 years ago, or flying into Houston Intercontinental Airport yesterday. All Americans have a heritage of "otherness" which is felt and expressed to different degrees.

Literary works also express authors' perceptions of "otherness" that derive from additional aspects of their lives. The experience of "otherness" not only arises from ethnic or national heritage but also emerges in such groups as the disabled. Works by authors with disabilities reflect such experiences, leading to feelings of separateness.

In recognition of the important contributions of diverse groups, the University of Houston sponsors programs such as African American and Mexican American Studies. It also houses the Arte Público Press, the leading publisher of Hispanic American literature. The Handicapped Student Services Office provides services for the significant population of disabled students at the University. It is, therefore, fitting that the University of Houston Libraries pay tribute to the rich cultural and experiential variety that infuses today's American literature.

The importance of this literature is reflected by the many awards and prizes received. For example, Pulitzer Prize-winning authors in this exhibit include: N. Scott Momaday (1969), Charles Fuller (1982), Alice Walker (1983), Rita Dove (1987), Toni Morrison (1988), and August Wilson and Oscar Hijuelos (1990). Such major recognition for more established authors has also brought to greater public attention many impressive contributions from other talented authors. The University of Houston Libraries are proud to honor all these authors and look forward to enriching our collections with the works they will continue to add to America's diverse literary heritage.

JACK HALL

❖ AFRICAN AMERICAN AUTHORS ❖

Maya Angelou. *Now Sheba Sings the Song.* New York: E. P. Dutton, 1987.

Across my peach flesh lips I blow river boats on the skin
of the Mississippi.
And feluccas up the ancient Nile

James Baldwin. *Jimmy's Blues.* London: Michael Joseph, 1983.

Well. Niggers don't own nothing,
got no flag, even our names
are hand-me-downs
and you don't change that
by calling yourself X

"Staggerlee wonders"

Toni Cade Bambara. *The Salt Eaters.* New York: Random House, 1980.

Helps neutralize the venom...to neutralize the serpent's another matter!... She thought she knew that. At some point in her life she was sure Douglass, Tubman, the slave narratives, the songs, the fables, Delaney, Ida Wells, Blyden, DuBois, Garvey, the singers, her parents, Malcolm, Coltrane, the poets, her comrades, her godmother, her neighbors, had taught her that.

Amiri Baraka (LeRoi Jones). *The Autobiography of Leroi Jones.* New York: Freundlich Books, 1984.

David Bradley. *The Chaneyville Incident.* New York: Harper & Row, 1981.

Kip Branch. *Gnawing at My Soul.* New York: Richard Marek Publishers, 1981.

Many times Jackie wondered how people like Justine got to be the way they were -- pretty, smart, and destined to be something in their lives. He *knew* how they got black. He thought that he, too, would be something one day, but the question was when and how he would make it....

Gwendolyn Brooks. *To Disembark.* Chicago: Third World Press, 1981.

When you set out for Afrika
you did not know you were going
Because
you did not know you were Afrika.
You did not know the Black continent
that had to be reached
was you.

"To the Diaspora"

Cecil Brown. *Days Without Weather.* New York: Farrar Straus Giroux, 1983.

Ed Bullens. *The Duplex: A Black Love Fable in Four Movements.* New York: William Morrow and Company, Inc., 1971.

Octavia Butler. *Patternmaster.* Garden City, New York: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1976.

Lorene Cary. *Black Ice.* New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1991.

St. Paul's gave me new words into which I must translate the old. But St. Paul's would keep me inside my black skin, that fine, fine membrane that was meant to hold in my blood, not bind up my soul.

Cyrus Colter. *A Chocolate Soldier.* New York: Thunder's Mouth Press, 1988.

Common Bonds: Stories by and about Texas Women. Edited by Suzanne Comer. Dallas: Southern Methodist University Press, 1990.

Prince didn't even look at me until he got to the door of his dressin' room. Then he stared at me real strange, his eyes wide like he was dreamin'. He kissed his index finger and pointed at me and said, "God loves you and I do too." Then he snapped his fingers and one of those other bodyguards handed him a plastic purple rose. He threw the rose at me just like you throw peanuts to a monkey at the zoo....

Hermine Pinson's "Someday My Prince"

J. California Cooper. *Some Soul to Keep.* New York: St. Martin's Press, 1987.

You know, life goes a long way, don't it? Just is all around you ...filling up all the tiniest places, so you got to watch round you and keep it all together. Watch it, so to take care of it best you can, with whatever you have to work with.

"Sisters of the Rain"

Dear Dark Faces: Portraits of a People. Selected and illustrated by Helen Earle Simcox. Detroit: Lotus Press, 1980.

I love you for your brownness
and the rounded darkness of your breast.
I love you for the breaking sadness in your voice
and shadows where your wayward eye-lids rest.

Gwendolyn B. Bennett's "To a Dark Girl"

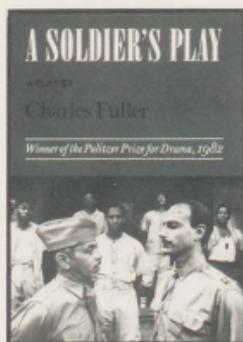
Rita Dove. *Thomas and Beulah.* Pittsburgh: Carnegie-Mellon University Press, 1986.

Robe slung over
her arm and
the cradled hymnal,

she pauses, remembers
her mother in a slip
lost in blues,
and those collards,
wild-eared,
singing.

"Sunday Greens"

Henry Dumas. *Goodbye, Sweetwater*. New York: Thunder's Mouth Press, 1988.



1982 Pulitzer Prize
for Drama

Charles Fuller. *A Soldier's Play*. New York: Hill and Wang, 1981.

Ernest J. Gaines. *A Gathering of Old Men*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1983.

Nikki Giovanni. *The Women and the Men*. New York: William Morrow and Company, Inc., 1975.

and she would learn

how god was neither north
nor south east or west
with no color but all
she remembered was that
Sheba was Black and comely

and she would think

i want to be
like that

"Poem for Flora"

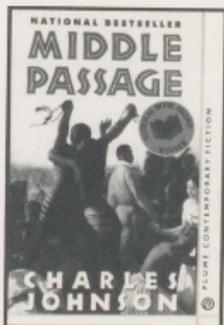
Rosa Guy. *My Love, My Love, or the Peasant Girl.* New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1985.

Alex Haley. *A Different Kind of Christmas.* New York: Doubleday, 1988.

Chester Himes. *My Life of Absurdity: The Later Years. The Autobiography of Chester Himes.* New York: Paragon House, 1990.

If one lives in a country where racism is held valid and practiced in all ways of life, eventually, no matter whether one is a racist or a victim, one comes to feel the absurdity of life....

Langston Hughes. *The Ways of White Folks.* New York: Vintage Classics, 1990.



1990 National Book
Award for Fiction

Charles Johnson. *Middle Passage.* New York: A Plume Book, 1991.

Most of the time Da did fight...chafing under the constraints of bondage, and every other constraint as well: marriage and religion, as white men imposed these on Africans. Finally, in the light of my slush lamp, I beheld his benighted history and

misspent manhood turn toward the night he plotted his escape to the Promised Land.

Bessie Jones and Bess Lomax Hawes. *Step it Down. Games, Plays, Songs, and Stories from the Afro-American Heritage.* Athens and London: The University of Georgia Press, 1987.

Gayl Jones. *Corregidora.* New York: Random House, 1975.

June Jordan. *Living Room.* New York: Thunder's Mouth Press, 1985.

John Oliver Killens. *'Sippi.* New York: Thunder's Mouth Press, 1988.

It was one of those moments all over the world when time caught up with history.... Even a sophisticated disenfranchised city like Washington...could no longer maintain with dignity its 'objective' posture on the sidelines of the main event. And this race was the main event of the entire twentieth century.

Audre Lorde. *A Burst of Light.* Ithaca: Firebrand Books, 1988.

South Africa *will* be free, I thought, beneath the clatter of my waiting typewriter and the sonorous tones of the United Nations broadcast, the U.S. delegate, along with the one from Great Britain, talking their rot about what 'we' have done for Black South Africa.

"Apartheid U.S.A."

John McCluskey, Jr. *Mr. America's Last Season Blues.* Baton Rouge and London: Louisiana State University Press, 1983.

Toni Morrison. *Tar Baby.* New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1981.

Sterling D. Plump. *The Mojo Hands Call, I Must Go*. New York: Thunder's Mouth Press, 1982.

Funny. How old and young, men and women,
Animals and plants, come up with the sun
To darn the morning with laughter.

"Clinton"

Ishmael Reed. *Reckless Eyeballing*. New York: Atheneum, 1988.

Up north there was the wizened hoary Protestant white father
god brought to North America by the Puritans who looked
after things, but down here it was Mama. Island and water
deities.

Sonia Sanchez. *Homegirls & Handgrenades*. New York: Thunder's Mouth Press, 1984.

there is an echo about her. of black people rhyming. of a
woman celebrating herself and a people.

"From a Black Feminist Conference.
Reflections on Margaret Walker: Poet"

Ntozake Shange. *The Love Space Demands (A Continuing Saga)*. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1991.

song of a ol hand me down blues
hangin by its breath/ alone
a fragile new blues
hardly close to nowhere/ cept them eyes
& i say/ i heard a heap of etta james
in them eyes/ all over them eyes/
So come on Annie

"crack annie"

Ellesee Southerland. *Let the Lion Eat Straw*. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1979.

Lorenzo Thomas. *The Bathers*. New York: I. Reed Books, 1981.

And the dopies
Who loved Charlie Parker made his memory live
Those who loved music made his memory live
And made the young ones never forget Bird

Was a junkie

"Historiography"

Alice Walker. *Her Blue Body Everything We Know*. San Diego: Harcourt
Brace Jovanovich, Publishers, 1991.

To acknowledge our ancestors means
we are aware that we did not make
ourselves, that the line stretches
all the way back, perhaps, to God; or
to Gods. We remember them because it
is an easy thing to forget: that we
are not the first to suffer, rebel,
fight, love and die. The grace with
which we embrace life, in spite of
the pain, the sorrows, is always a
measure of what has gone before.

"In These Dissenting Times"

Margaret Walker. *This is My Century. New and Collected Poems*.
Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1989.

If I could write my epitaph it would read:

Here lies Margaret
Walker
Poet and Dreamer.
She tried to make her life
a Poem.

Preface

Marilyn Waniek. *The Homeplace*. Baton Rouge and London: Louisiana
State University Press, 1990.

John Edgar Wideman. *Fever: Twelve Stories.* New York: Penguin Books, 1989.

John A. Williams. *Love.* Derry, New Hampshire & Ridgewood, New Jersey: Babcock & Koontz, 1988.

In the morning we went to the site of the Dachau concentration camp.... The first thing we saw was a collection of small ID photos of the inmates. There were two black men among them and I wondered how they got there.

Sherley Anne Williams. *Some One Sweet Angel Chile.* New York: William Morrow and Company, Inc., 1982.

She was sunlight
dapplin a man's arm
the prettiest thing
I eva seen was
the color of her
skin in the light
comin through them red
and gold leaves.

"Fragments"



1990 Pulitzer Prize
for Drama

August Wilson. *The Piano Lesson.* New York: A Plume Book, 1990.

Al Young. *Snakes*. Berkeley: Creative Arts Book Company, 1981.

Music to me was more than sound: it was a substance, something that not only filled my ear but that I could touch as well, a rolling, almost visible substance like technicolor fog puffed into a room, each sound having its own particular texture and effect on my nervous system.... When I read in books or heard musicians talk about eating, sleeping and breathing music, I felt I knew what they were talking about.

❖ HISPANIC AMERICAN AUTHORS ❖

CHILEAN

Isabel Allende. *The Stories of Eva Luna.* New York: Atheneum, 1991.

Lautaro Vergara. *Two Pathways, and Other Poems of the Southwest.* Quanah, Wichita Falls, Texas: Nortex Press, 1975.

I too am an American
born on the plains
of Aztlan,
soil of the cacti
and the chamisa thickets,
and land of majestic mountains.

"Heart of the Great Southwest"

COSTA RICAN

Rima Vallbona. *Mujeres y agonías.* Houston: Arte Público Press, 1982.

CUBAN

Reinaldo Arenas. *Singing from the Well.* New York: Penguin Books, 1988.

Cuban American Writers: Los Atrevidos. Selections with an introduction by Caroline Hospital. Princeton: Ediciones Ellas/ Linden Lane Press, 1988.

Digging for roots in his grandmother's yard
between Little Havana and Coral Gables
(we're speaking English today)
David found two toy soldiers, green in their prime,

one kneeling with a bazooka,
the other on his platform-feet aiming a gun
that wasn't there.

The story is this:
I brought them from Cuba in 1960.

Gustavo Pérez-Firmat's "A Likely Story"

Roberto G. Fernández. *Raining Backwards*. Houston: Arte Público Press, 1988.

"And the sand? Was it like Clearwater's?"

"You must be kidding. In all the beaches in Cuba the sand was made out of grated silver, though in Varadero it was also mixed with diamond dust."



1990 Pulitzer Prize
for Fiction

Oscar Hijuelos. *The Mambo King Plays Songs of Love*. New York: Harper & Row Publishers, 1989.

Elías Miguel Muñoz. *The Greatest Performance*. Houston: Arte Público Press, 1991.

She was too much of a grown-up when she came to the Promised Land, too old to become a true Gringa, too young to embody the Guantanamera myth.

Virgil Suarez. *The Cutter*. New York: Ballantine Books, 1991.

Jose Yglesias. *Tristan and the Hispanics*. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1989.

MEXICAN

Daniel Cano. *Pepe Rios*. Houston: Arte Público Press, 1991.

Ana Castillo. *Sapogonia (An Anti-Romance in 3/8 Meter)*. Tempe, Arizona: Bilingual Press/Editorial Bilingüe, 1990.

We almost always spoke in Spanish, a convenience language for conspiratorial behavior, especially around gringas.

Lorna Dee Cervantes. *From the Cables of Genocide: Poems on Love and Hunger*. Houston: Arte Público Press, 1991.

Sandra Cisneros. *Woman Hollering Creek and Other Stories*. New York: Random House, 1991.

Salvador of the crooked hair and crooked teeth, Salvador whose name the teacher cannot remember, is a boy who is no one's friend, runs along somewhere in that vague direction where homes are the color of bad weather, lives behind a raw wood doorway, shakes the sleepy brothers awake.... Salvador inside that wrinkled shirt, inside the throat that must clear itself and apologize each time it speaks, inside that forty-pound body of boy with its geography of scars, its history of hurt, limbs stuffed with feathers and rags, in what part of the eyes, in what part of the heart, in that cage of the chest where something throbs with both fists and knows only what Salvador knows....

Lucha Corpi. *Delia's Song*. Houston: Arte Público Press, 1989.

Roberta Fernández. *Intaglio*. Houston: Arte Público Press, 1990.

Genaro González. *Only Sons*. Houston: Arte Público Press, 1991.

The closer he got home, the more homogeneous their faces,
until only other *raza* and an occasional redneck prevailed.

Rolando Hinojosa. *Mi querido Rafa*. Houston: Arte Público Press, 1981.

Max Martínez. *Schoolland*. Houston: Arte Público Press, 1988.

No one in the family was particularly impressed or pleased
that I could now do a passable reading in Spanish. In fact, my
mother had warned me to stop my nonsense. If I was ever
going to amount to something, I had better concentrate on
English and that's all there was to it.

Pat Mora. *Communion*. Houston: Arte Público Press, 1991.

Alejandro Morales. *Death of an Anglo*. Tempe, Arizona: Bilingual
Press/Editorial Bilingüe, 1988.

Las Mujeres Hablan. An Anthology of Nuevo Mexicana Writers. Al-
buquerque: El Norte Publications, 1988.

remember the pact you made with my mother
 you told her that you would teach me spanish
and she would teach me english
 i learned your language
but you left me too much in the hands
 of the gringo schools
they didn't like what you taught me
 they made me over
it hurts, lita, it hurts so bad
 but i promised you, lita

Juanita M. Sánchez's "Ciprianita"

Necessary Theater. Six Plays About the Chicano Experience. Edited by
Jorge Huerta. Houston: Arte Público Press, 1989.

Américo Paredes. *Between Two Worlds.* Houston: Arte Público Press, 1991.

Mary Helen Ponce. *The Wedding.* Houston: Arte Público Press, 1989.

Tomás Rivera. *The Searchers.* Edited by Julian Olivares. Houston: Arte Público Press, 1990.

We were not alone in Iowa
When we slept in wet ditches
frightened by salamanders
at night
reclaiming their territory
and we
killing them
to maintain it as our --
then, our only -- possession

Joe Rodríguez. *Oddspayer.* Houston: Arte Público Press, 1989.

Floyd Salas. *Lay My Body on the Line.* Berkeley: Y'Bird, 1978.

Gary Soto. *Lesser Evils: Ten Quartets.* Houston: Arte Público Press, 1988.

I ain't gonna do field work, I thought, and went to college, sat
on campus grass among other ambitious Mexicans, conjugated
English verbs, read history, and worried over the up-
and-down graphs in geology that showed the country falling
into the sea, in 10,000 years.

Estela Portillo Trambley. *Trini.* Binghamton, New York: Bilingual
Press/Editorial Bilingüe, 1986.

Sabine Ulibarrí. *El Cóndor and Other Stories.* (Bilingual edition.)
Houston: Arte Público Press, 1989.

Daniel Venegas. *Las aventuras de don Chipote, o, Cuando los pericos
mamen.* Introduction by Nicolás Kanellos. Mexico: Frontera, 1984.



1991 National Book Award
for Non-fiction nomination

Victor Villaseñor. *Rain of Gold.* Houston: Arte Público Press, 1991.

The following year, I started school and was truly shocked when I was told on the playground that I was Mexican and didn't belong in this country. Then to complicate things even farther, the new priest came to our home and told my parents that they shouldn't allow us to speak Spanish at home.

NICARAGUAN

Alejandro Murguía. *Southern Front.* Tempe, Arizona: Bilingual Press/Editorial Bilingüe, 1990.

Roberto Vargas. *Nicaragua, yo te Canto Besos, Balas, y Sueños de Libertad.* San Francisco: Editorial Pocho-Che, 1980.

PUERTO RICAN

Miguel Algarín. *Body Bee Calling (from the 21st Century).* Houston: Arte Público Press, 1982.

Houston the invisible city
under siege by real estate vampires
who wing in from the northeast on holidays
to low finance the barrio people
out of their crumbling dwellings

"Materialization in Houston"

Judith Ortiz Cofer. *Terms of Survival*. Houston: Arte Público Press, 1987.

It is the flight of migrating birds
you watch from your room every autumn,
heading for islands
where wishes grow like coconuts
on beaches you will never see.

"La Envidia"

Victor Hernández Cruz. *Rhythm, Content & Flavor*. Houston: Arte Público Press, 1989.

Tato Laviera. *AmeRícan*. Houston: Arte Público Press, 1985.

the angels brought a law suit to the supreme
court of heaven, protesting puerto rican prayers
"we cannot pick up their signals, them puerto rican
ladies, they pray non-stop, when they pray, they
pray for everybody, their prayers are over-
flowing their allotted time, and its working
against you, papá dios, we cannot answer their
prayers, they must be wondering 'how come papá
dios, does not reply?'"

"praying"

Nicholasa Mohr. *El Bronx Remembered*. Houston: Arte Público Press, 1986.

Aurora Levins Morales and Rosario Morales. *Getting Home Alive*. New York: Firebrand, 1986.

I am caribeña, island grown.
Spanish is in my flesh, ripples from my tongue, lodges in my
hips,
the language of garlic and mangoes.
Boricua. As Boricuas come from the isle of Manhattan.
I am of latinoamerica, rooted in the history of my continent.

"Ending Poem"

Nuyorican Poetry: An Anthology of Puerto Rican Words and Feelings.
Edited by Miguel Algarín and Miguel Piñero. New York: William
Morrow & Company, 1975.

Miguel Piñero. *La Bodega Sold Dreams.* Houston: Arte Público Press,
1980.

i was born on an island were to be puerto rican meant to be
part of the land & soul & puertorriqueños were not the
minority
puerto ricans were first, none were second
no, i was not born here....

"This is Not the Place Where I was Born"

Ed Vega. *Casualty Report.* Houston: Arte Público Press, 1991.

GENERAL

On New Ground: Contemporary Hispanic-American Plays. Edited by
M. Elizabeth Osborn. New York: Theatre Communications Group,
1987.

Short Stories by Latin American Women: The Magic and the Real.
Edited by Celia Correas de Zapata. Houston: Arte Público Press, 1990.

❖ ASIAN-AMERICAN AUTHORS ❖

Aiiieeee! An Anthology of Asian-American Writers. Edited by Frank Chin, Jeffrey Paul Chan, Lawson Fusao Inada, and Shawn Hsu Wong. Washington, D.C.: Howard University Press, 1974.

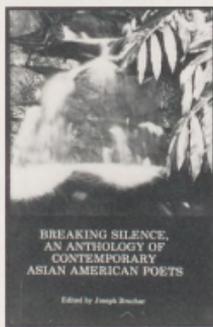
And as for Chinatown, Sylvia could not even bear to think of it to this day, that ghetto begging tourists to inspect its shame.

Diana Chang's "The Frontiers of Love"

Between Worlds. Contemporary Asian-American Plays. Edited by Misha Berson. New York: Theatre Communications Group, 1990.

Antonio Gargazulio-Duarte, also known as Bongbong to family and friends, has been in North America for less than two years and is slowly going mad. He doesn't know it, of course -- having left his birthplace, the Philippines, because his sanity was at stake.

Jessica Hagedorn's "Tenement Lover: No Palm Trees/in New York City"



1984 American Book Award,
Before Columbus Foundation

Breaking Silence, An Anthology of Contemporary Asian American Poets. Edited by Joseph Bruchac. Greenfield Center, New York: Greenfield Review Press, 1983.

The Hawk's Will. A Collection of Japanese-American Art and Literature. Volume One. Edited by Huira. San Jose, California: Ocean Press Printing, 1986.

Lawson Fusao Inada. *Before the War. Poems as They Happened.* New York: William Morrow and Company, Inc., 1971.

Have you ever seen
blue eyes in a Japanese face?...
Have you even been wakened
by blue eyes shining in your face?

"Father of My Father"

Gish Jen. *Typical American.* Boston: Houghton Mifflin/Seymour Lawrence, 1991.

Cynthia Kadohata. *The Floating World.* New York: Viking Penguin, 1989.

Years later, in Hawaii at the start of World War II, the local school made my grandparents change their children's first names before they could enroll. Satoru, Yukiko, Mariko, Haruko, and Sadamu became Roger, Lily, Laura, Ann, and Roy. Today their original names are just shadows following them.

Maxine Hong Kingston. *Tripmaster Monkey. His Fake Book.* New York: Vintage International, 1990.

Gus Lee. *China Boy.* New York: Dutton, 1991.

"Sung-ah, I give you the name Jennifer. It is very classy, very tremendously musical! A name Amadeus Mozart would have composed!" said Tutor Luke, smiling while tears glazed over his fiery eyes.

David Wong Louie. *Pangs of Love.* New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1991.

Toshio Mori. *Yokohama, California*. Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1985.

Bharati Mukherjee. *Jasmine*. New York: Fawcett Crest, 1989.

Bapsi Sidhwa. *The Bride*. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1983.

Amy Tan. *The Kitchen God's Wife*. New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1991.

In America I saw your father and I had both changed, and yet we had not. Our love was the same, but he now had his love for God. He could always speak English, I still could not.

The Third Woman. Minority Women Writers of the United States.
Edited by Dexter Fisher. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1980.

Last night I dreamt in Chinese.
Eating Yankee shredded wheat,
I told it in English terms
To a friend who spoke
In monosyllables,
All of which I understood:
The dream shrunk
To its fiction.
I knew its end
Many years ago.
The fallow child
Eating from a rice-bowl
Hides in the cupboard
With the tea-leaves and the china.

Shirley Geok-Lin Lim's "Modern Secrets"

John Yau. *Corpse and Mirror*. New York: Holt Rinehart and Winston, 1983.

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CHICAGO, ILLINOIS 60637

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❖ NATIVE AMERICAN AUTHORS ❖

American Indian Literature. An Anthology. Edited by Alan R. Velie.
Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1979.

He promised
that life would go on as usual,
that treaties would be signed, and everyone --
man, woman and child -- would be inoculated
against a world in which we had no part,
a world of money, promise and disease.

James Welch's "The Man from Washington"

Joseph Bruchac. *Entering Onondaga.* Austin: Cold Mountain Press,
1978.

I will remember
two things from today:
what to say when a neighbor
comes to your door,
and the way
my friend felt when she first heard
The Great Law spoken at Six Nations,
spoken in the Onondaga tongue.

"November at Onondaga"

A Ceremony of Brotherhood. Edited by Consuelo Pacheco. Albuquerque: Academia, 1981.

he spoke
to the boundaries:
 These Mountains
call for us.
Waters are Blood to us.
Speak as Wind and Blood speak.
And be urgent,
not demanding
but regarding life.

Simon Ortiz's "He Spoke to the Boundaries...."

Come To Power. Eleven Contemporary American Indian Poets. Edited by Dick Lourie with an introduction by Joseph Bruchac. Trumansburg, New York: The Crossing Press, 1974.

Dancing on the Rim of the World. An Anthology of Contemporary Northwest Native American Writing. Edited by Andrea Lerner. Tucson: Sun Tracks and the University of Arizona Press, 1990.

Harper's Anthology of 20th Century Native American Poetry. Edited by Duane Niatum. San Francisco: Harper & Row Publishers, 1988.

I walked beside the stone
that bore your name and date
and felt the threat of history
give rise to sudden chill, like wind
from unseen creek. Ancestral bones
lie in anonymity in this New World
except that History called you Christian
and your name
kill-in-war-with-spear
vouched for you.

Elizabeth Cook-Lynn's "My Grandmother's Burial Ground"

Literature of the American Indian. Edited by Thomas E. Sanders and Walter W. Peek. New York: Glencoe Press, 1973.

Spirit Mountain. An Anthology of Yuman Story and Song. Edited by Leanne Hinton and Lucille J. Watahomigie. Tucson: Sun Tracks and the University of Arizona Press, 1987.

Travois: An Anthology of Texas Poetry. Edited by Joanie Whitebird and Paul Foreman. Houston: Thorpe Springs Press, 1976.

my grandfather
worked as a gager
for humble oil
for thirty five years,
he walked the long fields
from derrick to derrick

adjusting pressure valves
and counting
the big gummy
barrelful that came
belching out of the earth

Joanie Whitebird's "My Grandfather"

Voices of the Rainbow. Contemporary Poetry by American Indians.
Edited by Kenneth Rosen. New York: The Viking Press, 1975.

anishinabe grandmothers
swelling like sweet clover on the dancing fields

stomachs swaying
print dresses smiling on the wind

tribal dream songs
coming from the past without teeth
more beautiful than flowers

Gerald Vizenor's "Anishinabe Grandmothers"

James Welch. *The Indian Lawyer.* New York: W.W. Norton and Company, 1990.

Harwood glanced over at Sylvester Yellow Calf.... He was a big man, good shape, good-looking. Harwood had never seen an Indian in a suit and tie before. He knew Yellow Calf was a lawyer in Helena and a former basketball player.... Harwood didn't pay much attention to sports but the fact that Yellow Calf was a lawyer in Helena did intrigue him.

Winged Words. American Indian Writers Speak. Edited by Laura Coltelli. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1990.

I think there is inherent in the Native American worldview the idea that naming is coincidental with creation; that, when you bestow a name upon someone or something you at the same time invest it with being.

Interview, N. Scott Momaday

Yaqui Deer Songs: Maso Bwikam. A Native American Poetry. Edited by Larry Evers and Felipe S. Molina. Tucson: Sun Tracks and the University of Arizona Press, 1987.

Ray A. Young Bear. *The Invisible Musician.* Duluth, Minnesota: Holy Cow! Press, 1990.

Truth aside, we often react
like beached whales, and this culture
keeps throwing us back into the black,
chaotic sea. Although we thrash about
for our lives, however demented and painful
it has been, we drown others in the process.

"The Handcuff Symbol"

❖ AUTHORS WITH DISABILITIES ❖

Despite This Flesh: The Disabled in Stories and Poems. Edited by Vassar Miller. Austin: University of Texas Press, 1985.

Swimming against the coarse grain
of sun-streaked air, I am intercepted
by the crisscross of fins, the sparkle
of black diamond scales and the greetings
of strangers of long standing, who slip
their arms under mine, steering me like a
shipwreck. *Watch out!* they cry, *there's
a step!*, and heave me off my feet so that I
stumble and slip, leaving my arm behind.
When they finally leave me and dissolve
into the fibres of mist, my thankyou damn
their eyes.

Felix Pollak's "Visit to the Institute for the Blind"

Ved Mehta. *Vedi.* New York, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1982.

Years later, I finally learned the reason for the frocks: Mamaji had attributed my blindness to the vengeance of the evil eye for my being a healthy, handsome boy. To ward off the evil eye from Om, she would dress him up in frocks.

Helen Keller. *The Story of My Life.* New York: Gossett & Dunlap Publishers, 1905.

There are also rare and beautiful moments when I see and hear in Dreamland. What if in my waking hours a sound should ring through the silent halls of hearing? What if a ray of light should flash through the darkened chambers of my soul? What would happen, I ask many and many a time. Would the bow-and-string tension of life snap? Would the heart, over-weighted with sudden joy, stop beating for very excess of happiness?

Vassar Miller. *If I Had Wheels or Love: Collected Poems*. Dallas: Southern Methodist University Press, 1991.

Feet that, floundering, go
No way of your own will --
Numb with eternity
You now have gained your goal.

Fingers writhed from weaving
Like crabs with claws torn loose --
You mold in your unmoving
The perfect shape of peace.

"Epitaph for a Cripple," originally from *Adam's Footprint*.



1961 Pulitzer Prize
for Poetry nomination

Vassar Miller. *Wage War on Silence*. Middletown, Connecticut: Wesleyan University Press, 1960.

I am heavy with my wait
Through each moment's long-drawn sigh
While my heart, my drowsy strummer
Plays my body tunes of calm.
I am somnolent with fate,
Gaze with animal's soft eye,
Take the humid strokes of summer
On a saint's extended palm.

"In the Fullness of Time"

James Thurber. *The 13 Clocks*. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1950.

Toward Solomon's Mountain: The Experience of Disability in Poetry. Edited by Joseph L. Baird and Deborah S. Workman. Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1986.

Tonight I stood looking at what I knew was a starry sky, trying to think that at night, I miss little-- for little is seen and so much is felt. But something is missing.... I miss the stars most of all, their brilliance hidden from me now.

Susan L. Dunn's "Tonight I stood looking..."

With Wings: An Anthology of Literature by and about Women with Disabilities. Edited by Marsh Saxton, and Florence Howe. New York: The Feminist Press at the City University of New York, 1987.

In my back, a metal rod won't let me
bend like Scarlett O'Hara into your arms
and the nerve endings in my thigh
never know the feel of your fingers
stroking it though
I pretend otherwise.

Leslie A. Donovan's "Recurrences"

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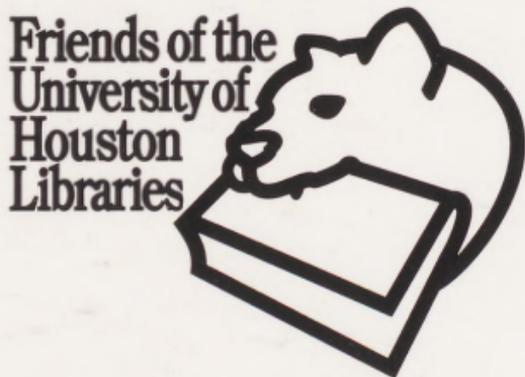
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