

You Don't Know Me: Picture Books to Make Biracial and Multiracial Children Comfortable with Dual Identities

Kena Sosa

Next year, in 2010, our country will be due for round two of the census containing an option for biracial or multiracial people. This feature debuted in the 2000 census cycle, when for the first time in U.S. history, people had the chance to choose their racial description as they pleased, and to include their multiple backgrounds. At that time, 6,826,228 Americans were recognized as being of more than one race, 2.4 percent of the counted population. This number may be fairly accurate or slightly deceiving. Although many people were pleased to determine the categorization of their own heritage, others preferred to claim only the blood to which they felt most closely connected. As Americans, we appreciate our right to choose.

Now that we have a multiracial president for the first time in our history, will the results of the 2010 census show a sudden surge in those taking pride in being biracial? Will Barack Obama's enthusiasm for inclusion and his exploration of his own roots encourage others to take a more introspective look at themselves and proclaim themselves as both halves of the whole of their parents as they were born?

Tish Cisneros, of both Japanese and Hispanic heritage, states that she will declare herself as "multiracial" on the 2010 census. She says that as a child she did identify more with one of her backgrounds than the other. "I was definitely closer to my mom.

I just find my Japanese side more intriguing. Plus, my dad never spoke about his heritage much." She also admitted that she felt others categorized her as Asian because she "look(s) much more Asian."

Sean Ibañez, of Irish and Hispanic descent, says he will "put both. I didn't realize that was an option." Ibañez states that as a child his "parents didn't really hold [heritage or race] over [my] head. I think they were very open about religion, and since most cultures revolve around a specific religion, I didn't grow up immersed in a specific group of people." When asked about how others view him he says, "most people just think I'm white. I'm okay with that. I don't care what people think about my background. Most people can't even figure out where my last name

comes from."

When asked about the lack of multiracial characters in children's literature Ibañez replies, "I wasn't aware of it at the time, but I do remember being enamored with characters that weren't white—primarily because they were totally out of the ordinary.

I don't recall ANY multiracial characters, but I think that has a lot to do with how difficult it is to see a half black/half Asian person in your head. It's easier to visualize (especially for kids, I think) a white person, or an African person, or an Asian person." Ibañez doesn't feel that he was greatly affected by the missing multiracial characters because "I think I pretty much saw myself as being a normal person in the crowd. Ethnic background didn't mean much to me because I did what everyone else did. The color of my skin is close enough that I didn't draw a line between myself and my neighbors. I also don't recall many books going out of their way to say the main character was specifically white, or had specifically Eurocentric Caucasoid features. Anyway, I just let the story guide me; I didn't look into character ethnicity until MUCH later."

This is where picture books with illustrations or photos can help younger children form a connection to their own identity. Although, as Ibañez states, it is easier to visualize a monoracial person, this might

be why we are so eager to categorize others. If we are exposed to a greater variety of people and cultures, the need to place a label on someone to put our minds at rest should diminish. Picture books represent the perfect opportunity to help here. Even if a book is not about multiracial issues or families, the illustrations can depict multiracial families. These families experience the same issues, adventures, and wonderful memories as everyone else. So, why should the assumption be made that unless instructed to do so, families in picture books must be of one race? Would an illustrator who took it on him/herself to create illustrations of a multiracial family be frowned on or redirected not to draw attention to the cultural background of the characters? Would publishers who do not specialize in multicultural literature back away from books

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that depict these families as normal? Would readers put the book down in fear that the book was more political than whimsical? How would it make children feel?

Rikki Foster, of Japanese and Caucasian heritage, will also declare himself multiracial on the upcoming census. But when asked how he would define his background, he said that he would consider himself “American, because I really wasn’t raised with Japanese culture ... I really wish I was, but since I only spoke Japanese when we moved to the U.S, my parents made me learn English and they sort of forgot about the Japanese, so I eventually lost it.”

Foster recognizes that other people did not always see him as “American.” “I was always the ‘Asian kid’ or ‘Chinese boy,’ which made me feel awkward because I didn’t see myself as that.” While learning to read, he didn’t take much notice of the racial identities of the characters, but did not feel it would have changed his outlook much.

Foster brings up another issue relevant to many multiracial households—the issue of language. For many families who have more than one racial contribution, there is sometimes more than one language. Depending on the one most used in the home, children sometimes grow up with the accent of their native tongue when they speak English or with an American/English accent on their other language. This can lead to ostracism from one culture or another as American peers can take this to mean that the child is not American, or for example, in the case of my mixed family, take the accented Spanish to mean that someone is not 100 percent Mexican. It seems strange that people would isolate people within their own backgrounds or make a competition out of who is more “what” than another, but it happens. In very traditional families, a person of mixed heritage may sometimes not be listened to as a full member of the family, or they may be told that they “just wouldn’t understand.”

A few picture books address this issue of language and the struggle of mixed-race children to feel a part of one or both extended families. For the most part, books that depict extended families of different races show positive interactions rather than conflicts and struggles.

Having a positive outlook on life can be difficult when we are identified by our skin and not our names or personalities. I had to stay late at work one day before picking my son up from day care. When I arrived, his regular teacher was gone, and in her place stood a teacher I had yet to meet. She refused to release my child until I verified myself at the office as his mother. I realized later that this was policy but not until after being told by his teacher that many of the staff were sure my son was adopted since he didn’t look like me. I take it in stride, but will my son be able to let things go as easily?

Many biracial and interracial children feel caught in the same identity crisis. So, what can a parent do? According to Renea Nash’s *Everything You Need to Know About Being a Biracial/Biethnic Teen*, “reading stories about teens or parents like yours,

no matter what your racial or cultural heritage, helps you gain a sense of pride.” Luckily, in the last ten years since Nash wrote her book, many more stories for young people about being biracial or biethnic have been published and are available in public libraries and schools, although not in the numbers that they should. I work in a large elementary school library. If I search for books classified as multicultural, there are more than 50. However if I search specifically for books on being biracial, I find only six titles. My role demands that I increase the amount of these resources available to students.

Part of the reason for fewer biracial picture book titles than multicultural titles is that “multicultural” includes subcategories such as folktales, which may have little to do with being multiracial. And Cisneros, commenting on the lack of multiracial characters in children’s books during her childhood, says, “I mean, let’s face it. They are just starting to have interracial couples at all.”

Once interracial relationships became more accepted, their numbers surged. A special consideration must be taken for the fact that Hispanics/Latinos did not have their own category on the census until 1970. Until then, they were included under the white category, despite society thinking of and treating them otherwise. Yet many biracial and multiracial people like

Dwayne Johnson (the Rock), Halle Berry, Derek Jeter, and Barack Obama have become very successful. Although the country has come a long way, it still has a long way to go.

“The beauty of interracial children is their complete lack of prejudice,” said Gail Mathabane, coauthor of *Love in Black and White*, in a 1992 interview in *American Baby*. This may be the case, but their peers are not always color blind. I think a lot about how this will affect my biracial son. I often wonder if when my son is older he will refuse to speak Spanish, his father’s native tongue, as some of my students do, because they have been made to feel uncomfortable instead of proud. I think about whether or not he will acknowledge to his friends that his mother is Caucasian when asked. I ponder whether he will have an accent in one or the other of his languages, and if people on one side or the other of the racial divide will use that against him.

The conclusion I come to is always the same. It is my responsibility to expose him to the good and bad of both his backgrounds, to the riches and splendors that both have to offer. If I can make him proud of himself in both ways, he will not be embarrassed about either. He will cherish them both. He will be bicultural, bilingual, bi-literate—and proud.

The following are 20 recommended picture books that depict biracial and multiracial characters and subjects. Many are biographies of notable biracial individuals, of whom President Obama is the best known but far from the only. I made an effort to find books with a variety of heritages, characters, themes, and, in the case of biographies, fields of endeavor. Both illustrated books and photo-essays are included.

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Ada, Alma Flor. *I Love Saturdays and Domingos*. Illus. by Elivia Savadier. Atheneum, 2002.

There's nothing like grandparents to make family connections in the hearts of children. Ada brings together Mexican-American culture and traditions and European-American culture and traditions and makes both relevant and appreciated for a young girl.

Adoff, Arnold. *Black Is Brown Is Tan*. Illus. by Emily Arnold McCully. HarperCollins, 1973.

Children will be enchanted by the poetic verse as they follow the loving relationships within an interracial family with two children. *Black Is Brown Is Tan* shows that love is not color blind, but colorful.

Burgan, Michael. *The Rock: Pro Wrestler Rocky Maivia*. Illus. with photos. Capstone Press, 2002.

Highlighting the myriad of accomplishments in Dwayne Johnson's life, the author does not spend much time on Johnson/Maivia's racial background—he is of African-Canadian and Samoan descent—but on what a successful athlete The Rock became, first as a football player and then as a professional wrestler. Again, a great biography of a high profile biracial person, without race as the focus.

Cheng, Andrea. *Grandfather Counts*. Illus. by Ange Zhang. Lee & Low, 2000.

Gong Gong, or Grandfather, is coming from China to live with Helen and her family. His arrival stirs up many emotions between the biracial (Chinese and Caucasian) grandchildren who wish they could have learned more about their culture in order to communicate with their Gong Gong. What they all discover is that where there is love, there is learning, sharing, and joy.

Davol, Marguerite. *Black, White, Just Right!* Illus. by Irene Trivas. Albert Whitman, 1993.

Black, White, Just Right! is a simple tale of the self-awareness and self-acceptance a biracial child feels for herself and both sides of her family. The attractive illustrations depict family members ranging from blond to dark-skinned and the family members' favorite things to do and eat.

Donovan, Sandy. *Derek Jeter*. Illus. with photos. LernerSports, 2004.

This biography does not focus on Jeter's biracial upbringing, but instead on his development as a baseball player. Although it does not discuss much about his being biracial, multiracial children should be able to identify with others raised in multicultural families who they can look up to in order to become successful.

Edwards, Roberta. *Barack Obama, An American Story*. Illus. by Ken Call. Grosset & Dunlap, 2007.

Obama's path to the presidency was not an easy one, nor was it predictable. His history-making win fulfilled lifelong goals. As described by Edwards, Obama's multicultural background helped others across the United States to identify with him, his struggles, and his accomplishments. He made them believe that everyone has a place and everyone is important. This biography is one that should not be missed.

Friedman, Ina R. *How My Parents Learned to Eat*. Illus. by Allan Say. Lerner, 1998. First published by Houghton Mifflin in 1984.

Everyone can identify with loving the food we grew up with. However, if asked to try a food foreign to us or to use chopsticks instead of a fork, would we no longer know how to eat? Mom and Dad learned a lot about eating since they first met when he was a sailor stationed in Yokohama and she a high school student there. Japanese Mom learned how to be comfortable using a fork, and American Dad with chopsticks. Now they use both when they eat with their daughter at home.

Frith, Margaret. *Frida Kahlo: The Artist Who Painted Herself*. Illus. by Tomie DePaola. Grosset & Dunlap, 2003.

What better way to get to know about a famous person than through a school assignment, right? Few kids would agree, but in this story, a kid's point of view on Frida Kahlo and her work is exactly what readers get. Well written, and illustrated by Tomie dePaola, one of the industry's finest, Kahlo's colorful story and multicultural (Mexican and European Jewish) background come to life.

Igus, Toyomi. *Two Mrs. Gibsons*. Illus. by the author. Children's Book Press, 1997.

A new twist on love and learning in a multiracial family. This time one child finds beauty and character, not in her two grandmothers, but in the two Mrs. Gibsons, her African-American grandma and her Asian-American mother. The two Mrs. Gibsons share more than just a name.

Iyengar, Malathi Michelle. *Romina's Rangoli*. Illus. by Jennifer Wanardi. Shen's Books, 2007.

Romina's Rangoli is a well-woven tale of biracial Romina, who is faced with a school project about heritage. She doesn't want to leave out either her Mexican father's or her Asian Indian mother's influence. Finally she is able to combine the Mexican art of *papel picado* and the Indian art of Rangoli designs, not only to impress her class with their beauty but also to be inclusive of both sides of her family. The merging of two art forms offers an opportunity for creative illustration as well.

Lacapa, Kathleen, and Lacapa, Michael. *Less Than Half, More Than Whole*. Illus. by Michael Lacapa. Northland, 1996.

Kids can be cruel, as is the case when one boy tells Tony that he is “less than half” Indian. How can someone be half of someone else? What did the boy mean? Tony learns to appreciate his background and see himself as colorful and beautiful as multicolored corn in this book with poetic language and stunning pictures from the late Hopi/Tewa/Apache artist.

Lamperti, Noelle. *Brown Like Me*. Illus. by the author. Dingman/McKay, 2000.

Young children sometimes find it hard to “love how they look” even without the complex inner-struggles that multiracial and biracial children face. Through sensitive text and detailed, realistic illustrations, *Brown Like Me* gives readers a taste of what loving yourself means for children and is a great example of a healthy self-image for children of every race.

Monk, Isabell. *Hope*. Illus. by Janice Lee Porter. Lerner/Carollrhoda, 1998.

Hope means many things to many people. Hope is a blessed girl. She is blessed with the faith and strength of her two heritages—African American and European American—making her family who they are today. When visiting her aunt, a stranger’s comment makes Hope unsure of herself and her place in society, but she is reassured that her mixed background was made possible by the love of many people—especially her family, who struggled to come together from the civil rights movement on to bring Hope to the world.

Olivas, Daniel A. *Benjamin and the Word/Benjamin y la palabra*. Illus. by Don Dyen. Spanish translation by Gabriela Baeza Ventura. Piñata Books, 2005.

After a classmate insults him with an unstated word, the Latino-Jewish youngster learns about his dual heritage and gains the self-confidence to confront his tormentor and obtain an apology.

Rattigan, Jama Kim. *Dumpling Soup*. Illus. by the author. Little Brown, 1992.

New Year’s celebrations bring families together from all over the world, and in the case of Marisa, from throughout her multiracial family. Her family depicts the harmony that can be fostered when everyone—her Chinese, Japanese, Korean, and Caucasian relatives—is invited and included in the New Year’s festivities.

Savageau, Cheryl. *Muskrat Will Be Swimming*. Illus. by Robert Hynes. Northland, 1996. Republished by Tilbury House, 2006.

A young girl being bullied by her peers over her “mixed” American Indian and French Canadian heritage finds comfort in the knowledge her grandfather—who is also multiracial—provides on seeing the wisdom and beauty in the variety of life and the small insights a frog and a lake can provide. Set in Maine, the book deals with class issues, as the girl lives in a rundown neighborhood by the lake instead of the nice houses on the hill where her tormentors live.

Taylor, Gaylia. *George Crum and the Saratoga Chip*. Illus. by Frank Morrison. Lee & Low, 2006.

Crum’s journey from being a biracial country boy to inventor of the legendary potato chip is a ride in itself. At a time when African Americans were not allowed to eat or work in restaurants with white people, Crum’s talents shone through. Crum, part African American and part Native American, eventually used his success to create a place with delicious food that welcomed anyone and everyone to enjoy it.

Thompson, Holly. *The Wakame Gatherers*. Illus. by Kazumi Wilds. Shen’s Books, 2007.

Thompson, who lives in Japan, describes the bonding between Nanami’s two grandmothers, one from the United States and one who lives with her in Japan. When her grandmother visits from Maine, she and the Japanese grandmother enjoy the shared custom of gathering seaweed.

Torres, Leyla. *Liliana’s Grandmothers*. Illus. by the author. Farrar, Strauss & Giroux, 1998.

Liliana’s Grandmothers continues the theme of grandmothers who connect through a multiracial grandchild. Liliana, of Latino and Anglo heritage, has a loving relationship with both grandmothers, and the things they share serve as an example of a caring multiracial family.

Resources

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Rodriguez, Cindy. U.S. Census now recognizes multiracial entries. Identify your race: Check all that apply. *Seattle Post Intelligencer*, December 16, 2000, taken from www.seattlepi.com/national/cens16.shtml on April 30, 2009. www.census.gov (2000 Census information).

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Kena Sosa is a teacher in Dallas, Texas, and a regular reviewer for *MultiCultural Review*. 🌍

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CARMEN AGRA DEEDY

Bringing Poetry Back Home

Foster Dickson

Poetry can be a dirty word in a high school classroom. If the teacher says, “We’re going to begin poetry tomorrow,” s/he will often hear sighs and complaints: “Aw man...,” with the possible exception of maybe a student here or there who likes it. And that’s a real shame, too. Many secondary English teachers come to their work through a love of literature—in some cases poetry, though some not—and to have this thing that we enjoy to be so maligned is hard to take. I remember reading Allen Ginsberg’s poetry for the first time, in my late teens, and loving it ... and I remember disliking *Beowulf* and *Paradise Lost* as much as any 17-year-old senior ever has.

Granted, most of us can’t teach Allen Ginsberg’s poetry instead of the classics, but there is a lot of poetry we can teach that will reach our students who come from working-class backgrounds. What makes Ginsberg’s poetry so accessible—and what drew me to it as a young man—is the almost brutal honesty and the evident tension, which are also two aspects of life in working-class households and neighborhoods. But Ginsberg isn’t the only poet who achieved those things. Etheridge Knight wrote haiku while in prison, and John Beecher wrote historical narratives on labor and racial struggles. Tension keeps readers interested; it is the reason that conflict is so important to literature. As for honesty, the late June Jordan wrote, “You cannot write lies and write good poetry. Deceit, abstraction, euphemism: any of these will doom a poem to the realm of ‘baffling’ or ‘forgettable’ or worse.”¹ Honesty and tension are the keys. It’s hard to lose a reader, from any social background, if the work has those two things.

On a similar point, if we do have students who enjoy poetry, it is probably their own. Many people, young and old alike, write poetry, but a rare few seem to enjoy reading it, as evidenced by comparing the sales of poetry books to novels and nonfiction. Several years ago, a friend who has worked for years in bookselling, in both independents and chain stores, told me that there are about 10,000 avid poetry readers in the United States. I don’t

know if he was right or not, but if he was, then that is about one in 30,000 Americans. But there is no shortage of poets, including amateur ones: the teenager in black clothes scribbling in a sticker-covered composition notebook, the elderly lady still trying to write that perfect sonnet after all these years, the guy who goes

to open mike night at the coffee shop. What brings people to poetry, generation after generation, is the beauty of the harmonious sounds in words, as in rhyme, coupled with the opportunity to state something bold or witty in relatively few words. Someone writing a novel must sustain a narrative for many pages, but a person writing a poem sees the chance to say something meaningful and musical in a small space.

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Yes, poetry production is thriving in modern America ... but the consumption of it is pitifully low.

Why?

In his essay, “Caste, Class, and Canon,” critic Paul Lauter proposed that people in the middle class who write poetry do so for personal satisfaction during leisure time, while working-class poets tend to use their work to unify people—unity being the force the working class has against the powers of a capitalist system. If Lauter is right—and I believe that he is—working-class poetry is inherently different, in both form and content, from the poetry of the middle class and the wealthy, who are not writing to fight social injustice.

The tradition of working-class poetry did not begin in the 1920s and 1930s, but that time period was one of its heydays. Poets like Carl Sandburg and Langston Hughes had an obvious social consciousness in poems like Sandburg’s “Chicago” or Hughes’s “Harlem.” They wrote some timeless poems about hard-working people facing social and political struggles. Adding to these two men, Claude McKay’s “If We Must Die” is an anthem of unity against authoritarianism and inequality.

Following those poets and others of their time, another prominent group appeared to the American mainstream: the Beats.

These more popular, less academic poets were the next generation of working-class poets, producing work that revealed their emotions, grievances, and desires, often in embarrassingly frank terms, giving voice to the outsiders in society. They came from working-class families with their share of struggles with limited resources. Notwithstanding my personal affinity for the Beats, their first-person assaults on institutions, public and private, and on middle-class standards of decorum have caused them to be left out of many textbooks and classrooms. Continuing to use Allen Ginsberg as an example, the line “Go fuck yourself with your atom bomb” in the poem “America” makes a very powerful political statement, but one that would be hard to carry off in a classroom. (And the poem would not be the same with that line and others like it censored out.) One unfortunate legacy of the Beats is that some aspiring poets have failed to see the unifying element of social consciousness in the Beats’ poems, instead replacing it with the superficial notion that any surly, gushing confession written ungrammatically and broken into lines must be equal in quality. The Beats were writing to praise nonconformity and freedom and to express dissatisfaction with an intolerant culture, not simply to shock readers by bragging about deviant behavior. Similarly, when the next generation of popular non-middle-class poets, the rappers of the 1980s and 1990s, brought a social consciousness about the gritty facts of urban poverty into middle-class mainstream culture, this misconception—that poetry is nothing more than spilling your guts in shocking language—was reinforced further.

Now, try to teach the working-class audiences with those ideas about poetry to appreciate the nuance of T.S. Eliot’s “The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock” or Ezra Pound’s “In a Station at the Metro” or Wallace Stevens’s “The Idea of Order at Key West.” The result is usually confusion followed by open hostility that these poems are “too hard” or “not any fun.” These complex works that require multiple readings and explication “take the fun out of it,” I often hear. But what a grand notion: that even after nearly a hundred years of the poetics of “fragmentation” and existential angst, so many people still see poetry as something they should enjoy. Granted, some students’ resentment is rooted in the realization that writing “good” poetry takes work and that a powerful poem probably can’t be dashed off in ten minutes over a latte in a distractingly crowded coffee shop. In our fast-paced world of Internet news sources and music videos on two-inch-square screens on cell phones, the idea of reading anything more than once to dig for meaning is just crazy. So much modern poetry is losing the culture war.

Perhaps teachers of working-class students should scrap those kinds of poems. Yes, you’re right (on one level) if you’re protesting. Those of us with post-secondary educations in English literature know what people are missing when they won’t give great modern poetry a chance—but start with baby steps.

The tradition of working-class poetry did not begin in the 1920s and 1930s, but that time period was one of its heydays.

Instead, secondary school teachers of working-class students should start off by having classes study some modern, culturally relevant material that is useful as cultural self-examination. In a study done in May of 2008, the Michigan Education Association found that more than half of high school dropouts left school because they found no relevance between what they got in school and what they saw in real life.² Another study done by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation in 2006 stated that about half of dropouts cited a lack of interest in their classes as a reason for dropping out.³ Making a connection between poetry and real life requires

discarding the notion that secondary education is college-prep job training that should reify middle-class values, like the idea that the only things worth learning are things that help us earn money. We have to put out of our minds the idea that everything we teach has to help our students fit in with middle-class norms. That view of education—we make good grades in high school to get into a good college so we can get a high-paying job and

make the money to buy things that will make us happy—is a far-flung myth for many students, especially ones from working-class and low-income families. Teaching poetry, the right poetry, to those working-class and poor teenagers—ones who have stayed in school instead of dropping out—will give them something no job or paycheck ever could: an affirmation of the validity of their own community and their own culture.

What made poetry a great art form to begin with was its communal nature. Ancient epic poems, like the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, were pleasing to the ear for listeners and were easier to memorize for the people that carried them in that oral tradition. Poems named individuals who were part of the community and contained the stories that held the community together in a common tradition. This role continued through the Middle Ages, as poems depicted the medieval French hero Roland nobly saving his king and country, or the Italian, Catholic poet Dante Alighieri exploring the essence of good and evil as he traversed Hell and Purgatory to reach Heaven.

Somehow that communal ideal got lost when the trends of modern poetry became so highly personal, as typified by the Confessional poets who sought therapy in poetry. Returning to the points about honesty and tension, although confessional types of poetry do have honesty and tension, they less often give readers what they expect—relief from that tension in the end. In “Beowulf,” we are relieved to know that Grendel is dead and that the threat is over, but in Sylvia Plath’s “Daddy,” the speaker’s hatred of her father continues to the very last syllable. The tension that Plath creates is never relieved. We, as teachers, can choose poems that have honesty and tension, while passing up T.S. Eliot’s hopeless finality in “This is the way the world ends / Not with a bang but a whimper.”⁴

Providing examples of culturally relevant poetry will help many more students enjoy poems, which in turn will allow them

to be adults who may still like reading them. By choosing poems that students can identify with, rather than utilizing a curriculum that often results in revulsion and misunderstanding, we can truly educate them about poetry. Teaching in an Alabama high school, I have a high percentage of African-American students, and it is hard to find many who have never heard “Life for me ain’t no crystal stair.”²⁵ There is immediate recognition in their eyes when those lines come up; and not only that, there is immediate recognition in the eyes of the White students about how significant this poem is for the African Americans in the class, something they may not have known previously.

So what are my suggestions? I have a few.

Some of the poems I suggest are not commonly anthologized, but I have made sure to include several that are, in order to make their use feasible. Teachers have limited resources and funds so having to buy a trade book for one poem is unreasonable in many cases. Ishmael Reed’s quasi-textbook, *From Totems to Hip-Hop: A Multicultural Anthology of Poetry Across the Americas, 1900–2002*, has an excellent selection of poems in it, as well as another feature that makes it attractive to teachers: its retail price of \$17.95 in paperback. Among the 560 pages in the book are several shining examples of the cultural relevance I described above. “Sun Yat Sen Comes to Lodi” by Alan Chong Lau centers on the speaker’s chagrin that he has lost his roots in his native culture, as he looks at a photograph from the past of his Chinese grandparents who have come to California. “Six Families of Puerto Ricans” by Terence Winch describes the dismay within the speaker’s neighborhood when immigrants begin to move in and change the face and character of their community. “To My Sister” by Jannifer Traig deals with the ongoing dynamics between siblings.

Elegy for the Southern Drawl by the Southern poet Rodney Jones is a trade book by a single author that I often use. The first poems in the collection, “Advice” and “The Fruit House,” are especially powerful and effective in the classroom. “Advice” tells a framework story; the narrator speaks directly to a reader who is presumably seeking advice. The narrator refers to some advice his grandmother gave his mother having to do with a now-deceased uncle whose arm was severed in a railroad accident. The poem is loaded with humor, as the uncle attempts to end the phantom pains in his missing arm. I have very few students who don’t laugh at this poem. “The Fruit House” is about a boy who gets accidentally locked in a storage shed as he is helping store canned vegetables and fruits, and the darkness in the shed frightens him. Jones treats the episode with a boyish charm, having the narrator try to talk himself out of being scared. Both poems are accessible and enjoyable, while portraying working-class situations.

The next suggestion is a poem by Gwendolyn Brooks titled “A Song in the Front Yard.” An African-American poet who died in 2000, Brooks is a fixture of modern poetry whose work has been published since the mid-twentieth century. In this particular poem, the speaker, a young girl, wants to play in the “back yard” where life is seedier. She wants to experience some of the

things she is being warned against. The poem is written in common language and is fairly easy to understand. Rather than being rooted in a traditional narrative style, “A Song in the Front Yard” is built on images of urban poverty familiar to some students, and the poem deals with the difficulties of traversing those challenges daily. Brooks also includes a little humor in the poem, telling toward the end that a neighborhood boy has stolen and sold her family’s back gate. This poem is very accessible to teachers, as it has been anthologized regularly and is also available on some web sites.

What made poetry a great art form to begin with was its communal nature.

My fourth suggestion has a more rural and historical basis: John Beecher’s long narrative poem, “In Egypt Land,” originally published in 1940. The poem tells the true story of a union rebellion in Notasulga, Alabama, in 1932 that involved both Black and White farm workers. Local African-American sharecroppers fed

up with unfair repossession practices by White landowners and lawmen stood up against one such attempt with bloody and fatal results. Their White fellow union members were not even present during the shootout. Beecher uses foreshadowing heavily, along with archetypal imagery, like storms, to create a prolonged tension, giving the reader some sense of the certain death these men knew they were facing. Teaching this poem, which is also written in very clear common diction, will probably require multiple class periods. Though Beecher provides no happy endings in this poem, the characters facing inequality and insurmountable odds will strike a chord with some students. Though this poem is exceptionally powerful, it is also hard to find. Only one book of Beecher’s poems, *One More River to Cross*, is in print, and he is rarely included in anthologies and textbooks.

For a final suggestion, with less controversy than Beecher’s poem, “Yellow Light” by Hawaiian poet Garrett Hongo is also a solid choice. Appearing in Hongo’s collection of the same name, “Yellow Light” combines an urban scene of a woman coming home from work with groceries and a poetic motif similar to Amy Lowell’s “Thompson Lunch Room – Grand Central Station: Study in Whites.” Hongo carries his main character through multicultural scenes, all bathed in their own yellow tinge. The woman’s fatigue is evident, and she may be quite identifiable to many students as the mothers, aunts, grandmothers, and sisters of their families.

Of course, there are thousands of poems that a teacher could choose. Unfortunately, because textbooks are often so inadequate in terms of their poetry selections, especially for modern working-class poems, some teachers may have to purchase or borrow trade books to have access to poems like the ones I mention. Also unfortunate is the fact that poetry holdings in library media centers are usually scant and often represent the types of canonical poetry that many twenty-first-century students don’t like, such as Robert Frost (admittedly something of a working-class poet himself). Two Internet options for finding poems to study at no cost are the web sites for the Poetry Out Loud program (www.poetryoutloud.org) and the Academy of American Poets (www.poets.org). Personally, I advise against subscribing to literary journals

as a source for getting poems to use in high school classrooms, because many journals only publish two issues per year and may not come when the teacher needs them, and because poems with adult themes and language (that teachers won't want their students to find while browsing) often appear in their pages.

Poetry is a vibrant art form in modern America. And it has tremendous power that is often untapped. A myth exists that everyday people don't like poetry, and that myth starts in school when students read, study, and explicate difficult poetry with obscure nuances. I use the word "myth," because it is a fabrication of a perceived reality that we seem to buy into fully. The truth is some poems, even very good ones, drive many people away from the art form, while other more accessible types are excluded from formal study in schools, thus drawing a line between "poetry I study in school" and "poetry I like."

American society would benefit from a change in the way that poetry is taught, away from analysis-driven approaches and toward what is usually called "appreciation." Helping students identify with poems that render scenes similar to their own lives will help many working-class students in public schools all over the United States understand poetry as something for everyone, not a high culture art form like opera or classical music. Our education system should help produce literate people who are not cut off from poetry, which discusses matters of our basic and common humanity. What must first occur is divorcing our ideals from the middle-class notion that education leads to money, which buys happiness. Poets don't make much money. They never have. And, after all, rich people aren't always happy either.

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2. *Dropouts: One Is Too Many*. Michigan Education Association. 2008. <http://www.mea.org/dropouts/>.
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4. Eliot, T.S. "Hollow Men."
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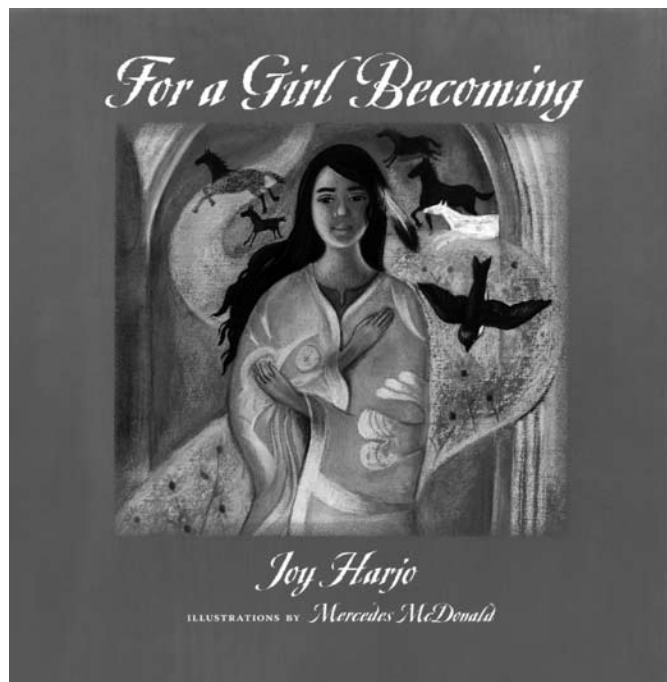
Foster Dickson is a writer, editor, teacher, and cultural worker who lives in Montgomery, Alabama. He teaches creative writing at Booker T. Washington Magnet High School and has recently been awarded an Arts Teacher Fellowship from the Surdna Foundation. His three published books are *Kindling Not Yet Split* (Court Street Press, 2002), *I Just Make People Up: Ramblings with Clark Walker* (NewSouth Books, 2009), and *The Life and Poetry of John Beecher (1904–1980)* (Edwin Mellen Press, 2009). His web site is www.fosterdickson.com. 

An Interview with Joy Harjo

Loriene Roy

An Oklahoman by birth, Joy Harjo is Mvskoke, a member of the Muscogee Creek Nation. Recognized for her writing and creative works—poetry, short stories, films, plays, and now two picture books—Harjo is also an award-winning tenor saxophonist who performs and records with her band, Joy Harjo and the Arrow Dynamics Band. She travels the world as an educator and performing artist and splits her time between Native homeland areas in New Mexico and Hawai'i. Her published works include seven books of poetry, including *In Mad Love and War* (Wesleyan University Press, 1990), *The Woman Who Fell From the Sky* (Norton, 1994), *A Map to the Next World* (Norton, 2000), and *How We Became Human: New and Selected Poems* (Norton, 2002). She has received an American Book Award, the 2002 Beyond Margins Award from PEN in honor of outstanding book-length publications by writers of color, and the 2001 American Indian Festival of Words Author Award, the only award given by a public library that honors a Native author. In addition, she received the Western Literature Association's Distinguished Achievement Award in 2000, the Lila Wallace-Reader's Digest Writer's Award, the Lifetime Achievement Award from the Native Writers' Circle of the Americas, and the New Mexico Governor's Award for Excellence in the Arts, the highest honor for creative artists in the state of New Mexico. In 2003–2004 the Wordcraft Circle of Native Writers and Storytellers acknowledged her contributions as both a performer and an author with two awards: Storyteller of the Year and Writer of the Year.

I first met Harjo at the annual Sequoyah Research Center Symposium in Little Rock. We met again in summer 2009 through her good friend, young adult author Lurline Wailana McGregor, a presenter at the 2009 Hawaii Book and Music Festival and au-



“I create from the heart out and am always looking towards forms of expression that will refresh the present and future shape of culture.”

thor of the young adult novel, *Between the Deep Blue Sea and Me* (Kamehameha Publishing, 2008). Harjo's last name is an Anglicized version of the Mvskoke word, *Hadjo*, “so brave you're crazy.” We have been blessed by Joy Harjo's bravery—as a young mother, a grandmother, an author, a musician, a playwright, and an indigenous woman of the planet.

You're an accomplished writer of many forms—poetry, plays, music, short stories. Tell us about your journey to write picture books. How do you approach writing picture books? Is this process different than the one you follow in your other writing?

I've written two picture books, and the approach and impetus for each was different. *The Good Luck Cat* came about shortly after the birth of my first grandchild. It was with her birth that the need to tell stories was released in me. I wanted her to know about my beloved Aunt Lois Harjo, and the stories she told me. Aunt Lois told me that some cats are good luck, and

there aren't many in this world. She also filled me in about belonging to the Katchv or Tiger Clan, so we have a relationship with cats. The book honors that connection with cats.

The story came first. My intention was to write about a niece and nephew's cat who had died, to help them come to terms with their grief, but the story took its own path and I followed it. When I contracted with Harcourt for the book, they allowed me choose an artist. Harcourt contracted with him, a rare thing I learned later, as publishers usually insist on their own choice of illustrator. When the artist didn't come through with finished art, after we waited for two years, they found illustrator Paul Lee, who created the final images for the story. And the book was finally published several years after the first rough draft of the story.

For a Girl Becoming was a poem written for a coming of age event honoring a grandchild. I mean it for all of my grandchildren. And, the wise ones remind us that all are our children. The editor, Patti Hartmann at the University of Arizona Press, helped find Mercedes McDonald as illustrator. Mercedes and I worked together in conceptualizing the images for the story. We practically dreamed the images together. Her paintings make the book.

How does writing for young readers and their families impact your other writing?

Everything I do, from poetry, to prose, to children's books, music, and performing all make a continuum. I create from the heart out and am always looking towards forms of expression that will refresh the present and future shape of culture. I often meld forms to make a new one. The poem in *For a Girl Becoming* is ceremonial and relates back to various tribal traditions of acknowledgement of the coming of age of a child. That it's in English and in a book fits the time and reality of our current lives.

What were some of your favorite books as a child?

My favorite was the *Golden Books Family Treasury of Poetry*, selected and with commentary by Louis Untermeyer. I loved the Mrs. Piggle-Wiggle books. I loved *Island of Blue Dolphins*, *A Wrinkle in Time*, Charles Dickens novels, and just about anything else I could smuggle into my quiet reading place: the closet. Within a month of learning to read in first grade, I devoured everything with print. I was sent to the second grade classroom to read from their shelves.

What writers for young people are important to you?

Debra Frasier has been important and helpful to me. *On the Day You Were Born* was poetic, and spoke powerfully to many ages. She assisted in getting my first children's book published.

What new opportunities have arisen for you from writing picture books?

After performances, I often have a selection of my books and CDs for sale. I enjoy signing and speaking with audience members. I have several different audiences and they sometimes don't cross over. The poetry audience doesn't always know I am a musician with a body of work, and vice versa. And neither is usually aware that I have written a children's book (now two books), and seeing *The Good Luck Cat* for sale on the table surprises them. It's usually one of the first items to sell out. Picture books create a new audience. It is important that young Native students see themselves.

When you are not seen, as happened to my generation, a generation taught to read by the Dick and Jane series, you are basically "disappeared" from the story realm of meaning informing your mainstream social world. It's also important for them to know it's possible for them to create their own stories.

How have readers responded to your first picture book, *The Good Luck Cat*?

I have heard many times over how much children love to hear the book. It's a most requested bedtime story, according to many who take the time to tell me. I often read the book in classrooms to young students. The students' hands shoot up immediately when I begin the story because they are moved to share. They ask about

Woogie and everything that befalls Woogie. They want to share their own stories of their animal friends. As I've read it over the years, I get more and more inventive with the performance of the reading. I enjoy it, and so do the students. The book brings up many questions, questions of losing and finding, dreaming, violence, the love of animals, hunting, the need for companionship by animal friends...

Let's talk about your newest picture book, *For a Girl Becoming*. You spend your time between New Mexico and Hawai'i and have lived in and visited many

other places. How are these places special to you? How do they play a part in the setting of *For a Girl Becoming*?

We are a multicultural world. We have always been multicultural. My tribal nation was situated near the Mississippi, the Gulf Coast, and the Atlantic. All kinds of influences washed through. People intermarried, exchanged stories and ideas. This has been going on since the world was created. Air travel has increased the opportunity for connections and sharing. And some are the ones in our family who are charged with gathering stories to infuse the consciousness with new matter. The poets, musicians, writers, and artists usually have that role.

I left Oklahoma for New Mexico in high school to attend the Institute of American Indian Arts. (It was a high school with two years of a postgraduate curriculum in the late sixties.) I was blown open creatively because all of us were young Native artists, from tribal nations from each corner of the United States. We inspired each other and were also inspired by mainstream social and cultural events. Though we were young, we were aware that our art had to bring forth that which defined us as tribal, as well as incorporate what inspired and fed us, like Coltrane, Jackson Pollack, and pop culture. I graduated high school from IAIA and have lived most of my life in New Mexico. I continue to leave and return. I have recently returned again. I lived in Hawai'i for about eleven years. I don't know that Hawai'i plays an integral

“We have always been multicultural. My tribal nation was situated near the Mississippi, the Gulf Coast, and the Atlantic. All kinds of influences washed through.”

part in *For a Girl Becoming* but it has in my life. The ocean has taught me to trust the mysteries of the deep and shown me how to navigate through changes of emotional weather. The Hawai'ian culture has reminded me of the power of cultural expression to grow and hold a people together, no matter gun power. Song language is loved and respected there, so yes, Hawai'i is important to my newest book.

There are several indigenous cultural threads and references in the book because my grandchildren are multicultural beings. The book references Mvskoke and Navajo predominately, as well as Pueblo and Cherokee.

The baby's birth coincides with numerous blessings—with rain arriving from the Pacific, pollen blowing through the house, and hundreds of running horses. As the girl grows older, she continues to receive these blessings and in turn her life is recognized as a blessing and her task is to continue to bless. How do these thoughts reflect an indigenous view of the world, especially reciprocity?

We are all born within a familial stream of connection. It grows us, and in turn we feed it. We live in give and take. That's basic human law, and many indigenous cultures still consciously practice it.

One feature of the baby's birth is song: the singing (and dancing) of medicinal plants. The singing also brought on the blessing of rain. What were these plants and their roles? How do they express the Native view of wellness as a balance in life?

Which plants depends on which geographical area the tribe lives in, or lived in originally. There are over 500 indigenous nations and cultures, each with helpers. There are established relationships. Plants are beings and require respect and singing if they are to be helpful. We all owe our lives to the helpfulness and sacrifice of plants. Corn is very powerful. Corn has managed to be included as an ingredient in almost every manufactured "food" item in this country. The impetus of corn therefore is very powerful. If we enslave plants, disrespect them, abuse them, we get the same in return. Look at tobacco, for instance. It is a beloved plant for my people, and is actually a different plant than used in the manufacture of tobacco products. We used to use it sparingly. It's a powerful plant. The power gets angry when misused. We are all familiar with the effects of excessive tobacco use: lung disease, strokes, and heart problems.

*Native people recognize and celebrate both women's ways and men's ways. The baby in *For a Girl Becoming* receives an inheritance in the form of specific gifts from her mother and father. Tell us about these gifts. Were they based on the gifts you received from your parents? Are these the gifts you have given your children and grandchildren?*

These are gifts particular to the child, from the two sets of grandparents, though most have been passed from one generation to another.

*The baby in *For a Girl Becoming* was welcomed with ceremony and a gathering of her relatives. How does this reflect ceremonies that families hold to welcome babies into their families?*

Children are considered the continuance of life. They are spirits who have come to share the world with us. We have a responsibility to nurture their gifts, to teach them. A ceremony or gathering cements the relationship and responsibilities. The overculture—a term I created to name the false culture that traps us economically, whose products do not feed our souls with filling cultural

song-story-art food—has infantilized children and the experience of children. And the overculture keeps us as children so we do not question consumption and the needs of our souls.

Houses play important roles in the story. Before the baby entered this world, she lived in a spirit house. Her mother's body may have been the rainbow house. She was born in a desert house. Her parents' gifts came from their houses of genealogy and personality. Her family hoped she would always have her home. Please explain the prominence of the house. How does this relate to Native views of

belonging and connection to the land?

A house can be a home. Houses may assume importance here because my tribe was uprooted from our homelands east of the Mississippi River and forced to Indian Territory in what is now known as Oklahoma. Our homes were burned behind us or taken over by colonizers. We are still recovering. This is true for many tribal peoples in this hemisphere. This process of takeover is still ongoing, in more recent years with the U.S. government's relocation program.

*The girl in *For a Girl Becoming* is given advice on protocol or cultural etiquette. She is told to share water, food, and kindness. Tell us about the role of protocol in the story.*

It is important that the child reading about and participating in the story understand that protocol means respect. It is respect for oneself, gifts, family, and everyone's place in the world. And the poem was written as a ritual act so protocol is really the bone structure.

*You once wrote that "at the presence of birth I have always felt death standing nearby." How is this side of life also shown in *For a Girl Becoming*?*

“Plants are beings and require respect and singing if they are to be helpful. We all owe our lives to the helpfulness and sacrifice of plants.”

It isn't directly acknowledged in the story. But it is there, always.

*In your short story, "The Reckoning," your mother calls you a dreamer. What is the role of dreaming in *For a Girl Becoming*?*

First of all, it isn't my mother calling me a dreamer. "The Reckoning" is somewhat autobiographical fiction. The mother is fictional as is most of the story. Dreaming could be the same thing as imagination. Everything is imagination. We are imagining ourselves. This computer I am typing on is solidified imagination. Each of our paths is born of the imagination of our ancestors and our own personal spirit.

*You once said, "My work is woman identified." Do you think of yourself as a writer for girls? Do you also see yourself writing a picture book that might be called *For a Boy Becoming*?*

You're ahead of me! I'm already planning for the book *For a Boy Becoming*. I have two grandsons who will be coming of age. One is eight and one is ten. The book is percolating.

Can you tell us about the illustrations in the book? How do you think the artist depicted Native influence in the illustrations without veering toward stereotypical imagery?

I have nothing but praise for Mercedes McDonald. She is a sensi-

tive and powerful image-maker. Mercedes's illustrations are beautiful and unique and not stereotypical. It's always been important to me that we Native people are seen as human beings. The public tends towards images and illustrations that continue to present us in traditional dress and in mythic situations and stories. These

have a place, but this shouldn't be the only context in which we are seen. I want my grandchildren to be able to see themselves. I want all children to be able to see themselves in each other. I want anything I am involved in to help us re-imagine ourselves as beautiful and powerful, all of us.

What's next for you as far as future writing projects?

For a Boy Becoming, of course. I'm in the midst of a "memoir," a book of poetry, and also working on music and a play.

*Congratulations on the beauty and poetry of *For a Girl Becoming*. I look forward to suggesting it to li-*

brarians, parents, and young readers.

"It is important that the child reading about and participating in the story understand that protocol means respect. It is respect for oneself, gifts, family, and everyone's place in the world."

Dr. Loriene Roy is a professor in the School of Information at the University of Texas at Austin and a past president of the American Library Association. An Anishinabe (Ojibwe), she is enrolled on the White Earth Reservation and is a member of the Minnesota Chippewa Tribe. 🌐

The Pre-Inauguration Sundance Film Festival 2009: Native Film, World Cinema, and New Media

Christine McDonald

The premier United States film festival proved not to be entirely recession-proof this year, with noticeably less crowded screenings for excellent films. It was easier to see films one wanted to see except on the weekend before the inauguration, when the crowds were large. And on lower Main Street in Park City where Sundance had set up a gigantic screen, a huge crowd watched the inauguration on January 20. Many of us sat in our hotel rooms, missing a film to witness this historic event. Corporate sponsorships were down, including those of Volkswagen and Adobe Systems. Yet overall, the festival had about the same number of sponsors, and tickets sales were equal to 2008. Still, last-minute film buffs could find a place to stay. Corporations that usually buy up large blocks of tickets reduced their presence at the festival. There were new sponsors: YouTube, Google, and Brita. Sundance went “green” this year. Dispensing with free bottled water for filmmakers, pass holders, and press, Sundance distributed clear lime green water bottles. Pass holders dispensed their own water from Brita-filtered water stations located where water bottles used to be. It was a brilliant move, which made an important statement about Sundance’s commitment to reducing the plastic waste stream at the festival.

Just prior to the opening press conference was the press conference on New Media. The more personal interaction of younger viewers is influencing how artists create their media. When I arrived, Iowa video artist Leighton Pierce, whose *Agency of Time, Part 1B* was featured, commented that with new media “we aren’t trying to tell a timeless, ageless story. We’re engaging people to tell their own stories—about their experience, the views they have and how it lingers.” He said we can tell our stories on a phone or PC. We don’t need a big screen to elicit a deep emotional response. Sep Kamvar (*We Feel Fine* and *Universe*) finds that this new way of seeing film is a more personal experience and not a group experience; everyone experiences the work differently. “I’m not trying to tell a story. Part of the story resides with the viewer. The story resides in all of us and that completes it.”

These changes in format are important to anyone who loves film because they will affect how we see film, including documentary, in coming years. Kelly Richardson’s *Twilight Avenger*

(UK, 2008) transforms a stag in the forest into a magical being suffused with dazzling light, deliberate slow movements, and otherworldly green colors. The most compelling of the New Media works was *Evolution of Fearlessness* by Lynette Wallworth. The video is located in a dark room where, on walking in, one sees images of women from Afghanistan, Iraq, Sudan, and El Salvador who have survived in war zones, experienced violence, and/or endured incarceration. The images direct the viewers’ attention to the emotional details of the women’s faces; it seems as if the viewer is in the presence of these women. An accompanying book tells the women’s stories.

The opening press conference with Robert Redford, Geoffrey Gilmore, and John Cooper was the last for Gilmore.

He moved to the Tribeca Film Festival later in 2009, making way for Cooper to take his position as festival director. Redford introduced Cooper and commented on his new festival director’s interest in the latest technology and in expanding the documentary offerings. The 25th anniversary of the Sundance Festival offered Redford the opportunity to reflect on the Festival’s history as well.

Two of the audience questions touched on the internationalization of the Sundance Festival. One audience member asked if Redford was “selling” the festival in Abu Dhabi. Redford replied, “Sundance is in the Middle East with our labs, the documentary program in Human Rights. We brought people and stories from the Middle East to our labs. We’ve also been in Jordan and Iran. In looking to the future, it makes sense we’d extend our vision to the Middle East. I was approached by Abu Dhabi on this. It’s not resolved and discussions continue.”

Another questioner asked, “How do you see Latin American cinema at the Sundance Film Festival after 25 years?”

“There’s a real commitment to Latin American cinema—our next door and southern neighbor,” Redford answered. “We’ve brought many Latin American filmmakers to the Sundance Film Festival. Gabriel García Márquez was asked in 1988 to help bring Cuban filmmakers and to assist with the Latin American lab. Through NHK and Walter Salas, we made *Motorcycle Diaries*. Each year the labs have Latin American participants. This year

“The more personal interaction of younger viewers is influencing how artists create their media.”

we're presenting *Sin Nombre*." [Editor's note: *Sin Nombre*, the feature film about a journey by train through Mexico to the United States of a teenage Honduran girl and a Mexican boy on the run from his violent gang, will be reviewed in the spring 2010 issue of *MultiCultural Review*.]

A reporter from *USA Today* asked about the effects of the current economic situation on filmmaking now and in the near future. Redford used this question as an opportunity to comment on the inauguration of Barack Obama, taking place at the same time as the festival: "The inauguration is ... an important one because of the change it represents. ... Culture will return to Washington, D.C., now. In 2008, I lobbied NEA in Washington for more funding for art. I told NEA how important the arts are. NEA said last year—we can't help you, there's no money. There will be a change. Priorities will be put in place. Things can't worse than they are, they can only improve. ... Other countries support the arts more than the U.S. I'm optimistic about the new administration."

The Native American and Indigenous Forum at Sundance this year featured a party and a strong presence of films integrated into the festival programming, including four features and one documentary. *Before Tomorrow* was included in the World Dramatic Competition, and *Barking Water*, *The Only Good Indian*, *La Mission* and the documentary *Wounded Knee* were all included in the Spectrum Section which highlights "new voices and creative spirit" in filmmaking. After the festival, the Sundance Institute announced that four Native filmmakers had been named the 2009 Sundance Institute's Ford Foundation Fellows—Sydney Freeland (*Drunktown's Finest*), Adam Piron (*The Last Thanksgiving*), Rachel Naminaaq Edwardson (*The Nanuk's Tooth*), and Brian Young (*Walk in Beauty*). The fellows will participate in the Sundance Institute's Native Filmmaker's Lab in Apache, New Mexico, in May and then be involved in Native Forum events at the 2010 festival. Bird Runningwater, the associate director of the Sundance Institute's Native American and Indigenous Program, also coordinates the Native Filmmakers Lab.

Before Tomorrow

Canada, 2008. 93 min. Color

Inuktitut with English subtitles

Co-Directors: Marie-Hélène Cousineau and Madeline Piujuk Ivalu

Based on the novel by Danish writer Jørn Riel, *For Morgendagen*

Distribution information: beforetomorrow.ca

Shari Frilot, senior programmer, introduced the film, which was in the World Dramatic Competition. She said she was deeply affected by the film when she saw it at the Toronto Film Festival; it was one of the most compelling Native American films at Sundance in the past few years. Made with the Arnait Video Workshop Collective, it is co-directed by Cousineau and Inuit elder

Madeline Piujuk Ivalu, from Igloodik. Ivalu stars in the film as the grandmother, Ninguiq, with Paul-Dylan Ivalu as her grandson, Maniq. It was co-produced by Igloodik Isuma Productions, which produced *Atanarjuat: The Fast Runner*, winner of the Camera d'or, at the 2001 Cannes Film Festival. Shot in Nunavik, northern Quebec, near the village of Puvirnituk, the setting is the 1840s, at a time when many tribes have not yet experienced first contact with Whites. Although the dialogue refers to rumors of the strangers, the community in *Before Tomorrow* hasn't been exposed to Whites, only to objects others bring to show them, like knives and needles. The strangers have a strange liquid and when they drink it, they want their women. There is a sense of foreboding when Maniq finds an object on the beach that no one has ever seen. He asks his grandmother to tell him stories.

Her first story is about a raven that flies over the head of a bow-head whale. The whale swallows the bird, and it is dark inside, just like a cave. The raven then sees an oil lamp flicker. There is a girl trying to keep the light alive. The girl tells the raven that

he must be faithful to her and to never touch the light. The raven forgets his promise and touches the light. The girl dies when he does this. The raven is then taken over by her spirit and dies when the light goes out.

This is a hunting-gathering society, with summer fishing and winter seal hunting as their means of survival. One summer, when families reunite on the tundra, Ninguiq, Maniq, and her friend, the elder Kutuguk, are taken to an island by family in boats to catch and dry fish before winter sets in again. They are to be picked up again after the fish have been dried. When the family fails

to return well after the weather has become cold, Ninguiq knows something is very wrong. But she is also busy helping her friend Kutuguk who is dying.

After burying her, Ninguiq and Maniq travel back to their community where they find their families and friends massacred. There is evidence from the objects left behind that Whites have murdered everyone. Ninguiq and her grandson are left without any human comfort or means to survive in their summer home. They decide to return to where they have the dried fish stored. There, they also find a cave that shelters them from the onset of the harsh Arctic winters when darkness and cold take over. The grandmother tells Maniq stories during the winter, and the seal oil lamp becomes a symbol of the coming light of summer and hope. Ninguiq tends the oil lamp, never letting it go out completely, especially at night. She speaks to her dead husband asking him, "How much longer must we wait?" They put their paddles on the side of a hill hoping some winter hunters will see them. On one seal-hunting trip, wolves attack the grandmother and the wounds are deep. Her grandson helps her tend to her wounds, but we can see both are very frightened. She tells him, "I love you, you don't have to be afraid of the dark." He tells her they will survive. She calls on her dead husband to help her because she knows that no children can live alone. She is frightened that if she dies, Maniq won't be able to survive without her. She organizes the

"Two of the audience questions touched on the internationalization of the Sundance Festival."

cave and puts her combs in order. This one night, she extinguishes the seal oil lamp completely. She sees her family alive again and happy as spirits. (See Q & A with Marie-Hélène Cousineau on p. 37.)

Barking Water

USA, 2008. 85 min. Color

Producer: Chad Burris [chad@indionfilm.com]

Director: Sterlin Harjo

Barkingwatermovie.com

Sterlin Harjo of the Seminole and Creek Nations comes from Holdenville, Oklahoma. His first feature film, *Four Sheets to the Wind*, premiered at the 2007 Sundance Film Festival. This year he brought another feature film set in Oklahoma about a Seminole man who at the end of his life is trying to make peace with those he loves. Frankie reaches out to his old lover Irene who has long ago given up on him. Despite knowing it's not what she wants to do, Irene picks up Frankie at the Seminole Medical Center Hospital where he's gotten the news about his very poor health. He tells Irene, "I have to keep moving. I knew I'd just fade away in that hospital bed." Knowing he has little time, Frankie wants to see the people who hold the meaning of his life. And because this journey is an important one, he puts on his grandfather's suit. While traveling with Irene in her car to see his daughter and grandbaby, Frankie has flashbacks to idyllic times with Irene, the days when things made sense, when they got along and made a life together. Frankie knows that his drinking broke them up but that they had been together on and off for over 40 years. Against a backdrop of Harjo's Oklahoma, the journey takes Frankie and Irene to his "Sunset Place," to his nephew's, and ultimately to his daughter Doe's home. And the journey reveals truths about his life: "Just when I figured it out, I'm out the door." Frankie is with family when he dies, his wish to be with them fulfilled by his own efforts and motivated by their abiding love.

Wounded Knee

USA, 2008. 76 min. Color

Director: Stanley Nelson

Distribution: WGBH, Boston; (617) 300-5959

Bird Runningwater, the associate director of the Sundance Institute's Native American and Indigenous Program and a creative consultant for the film introduced *Wounded Knee*: "We respect the Ute Nation for allowing us to be here today." It was WGBH, he said, that first conceived of the *We Shall Remain* series, which is an important popular story of our modern Native American history. He introduced Stanley Nelson as a "seasoned" Sundance director. Co-producer Julianna Brannum also attended the screening. Nelson, whose films *The Murder of Emmett Till*, *Black Press*, and *Marcus Garvey* reclaim African-American history, turns his attention to a pivotal event in Native American history—the 1973 occupation of *Wounded Knee*, South Dakota, one mile from the site of the 1890 massacre of the Sioux and now part of the Pine Ridge Reservation. As one of five segments in the PBS series, *Wounded Knee* explores the controversies surrounding

the emergence of Native activists in the late twentieth century. The film examines the role of the American Indian Movement (AIM) as a voice for Native American people who lacked one before the occupation. Founded in 1968, AIM had taken part in the occupation of Alcatraz in 1969–1971. AIM used military tactics, embraced its outlaw reputation, and was controversial within Native communities.

What precipitated the occupation was a call from over 200 traditional Oglala Sioux to AIM to help them in their struggle with the Bureau of Indian Affairs–backed reservation government headed by "progressive" Sioux leader Dick Wilson. He was seen by the traditional Sioux as ruling with an iron hand, inflexible, abusive of his power, and not an advocate for Indian concerns. The traditional Sioux were distraught over the strip mining agreements between Wilson and the U.S. government, which they felt desecrated the sacred land of the Black Hills and trampled on the 1868 treaty with the Sioux which allowed autonomy and negotiation with the government. The world was watching Wounded Knee in 1973 and the siege which lasted 71 days. Media from around the world came, as did the FBI. Ninety percent of the American people were following the siege and didn't want the Indians massacred. On day two of the siege, AIM took eleven hostages. The U.S. Army was sent in, and the reservation was surrounded by armored personnel carriers, jet airplanes, and over 250 armed personnel. By day four a demilitarized zone was set up where negotiations could take place between the government and the Indians represented by AIM. The government set up roadblocks, and Wilson set up his own outside-the-government roadblocks. The film makes clear the complexity of the standoff and places it in the context of the 1890 Wounded Knee attack by the U.S. government in which 300 Lakota were killed and after three days buried in mass graves. The land became sacred to Native Americans. Within the film is an animation about the infamous boarding schools where Indians were denied their language and customs, often dying of neglect, grief, and malnutrition. One Indian who endured the schools said, "It's like I had to be two people ... It was torture and brainwashing."

The documentary depicts the major events of the nine-week siege—the negotiations in South Dakota and Washington, D.C., the arrests of Indian negotiators, the aerial food drops to the besieged reservation warriors, the shooting of reservation resident Buddy Lamont, and the cease fire during his funeral at the 1890 burial ground. Above AIM's objections, the traditional chief called an end to the siege. Although reports vary, two FBI agents and 60 AIM supporters were killed during the siege. The siege brought national attention to the plight of Native people: poverty, broken treaties, government abuse of power, and the boarding school program. AIM managed to get world media attention, which led the way for a strengthening of Native initiatives, a return to Native languages and customs, and a new sense of Native American identity that continues to grow.

Reporter

USA, 2009. 90 min. Color

Executive Producer: Ben Affleck

Director: Eric Daniel Metzger

The festival inaugurated a new screening venue for documentaries this year at Temple Bar Shalom, a Reform Jewish temple built last year. Redford appeared there after services during the Sundance-sponsored *Oneg* (reception) and just before the screening of Metzger's documentary about Pulitzer Prize-winning *New York Times* reporter Nicholas Kristof. *Reporter* was included in the U.S. Documentary Competition at the festival. Cara Mertes, director of the documentary program, introduced Afleck, Metzger, and Kristof. Caroline Libresco from Sundance summarized the film's principal themes—the role of the press in a democracy and the ways that a journalist can effect change. In the film, Kristof travels to the Congo in 200 with a group of journalism students to report on issues there similar to those he has reported on in Darfur. The students at times express concern for their own safety. Kristof reassures them, even while filming interviews with the Congolese warlord Nkunda very close to sunset, a time when travel is particularly dangerous for foreigners. Kristof explains his way of communicating horrific world situations to his readers. Rather than overwhelming readers with statistics about the millions being killed in Darfur, or of the thousands dying of hunger and being terrorized by roaming warlords in the Congo, “the rape capital of the world,” he instead finds one or two people whose stories are so compelling that they come to represent all those who are suffering. When he interviews victims, he is wary of stories that are self-serving or about people who have benefited from a conflict. He says people lie and he has to get at the truth. He knows he can't save each individual and has to make choices about who to help.

In the film he says he's embarrassed that he keeps his professional distance with people. But he feels that one person's story is most meaningful to his readers because they can identify with the suffering of this one individual. Kristof is able to make that person's life, although separated by thousands of miles from the United States, real to his readers. In that way, he feels he can bring world attention to horrifying situations of genocide, hunger, violence, and war. In the Congo, he finds Yohanita, a woman dying of malnutrition and infection, who tells the simple story of how her life ended up as it has. He asks his readers to multiply Yohanita by four million, the number of human beings victimized by warfare since 1998.

The Glass House

USA/Iran, 2008. 92 min. Color

Farsi with English subtitles

Director/Cinematographer/Editor: Hamid Rahmanian
info@fictionvillestudio.com

In 2004, London-based Iranian psychotherapist Marjaneh Halati established the Omid e Meir Center for young women 15–25 years old who are in shockingly unstable, poverty-stricken, or violent homes. An entry in the World Cinema Documentary Competition, *The Glass House* tells the stories of several of the women who live at the Center. Cara Mertes introduced the film. She reminded the audience that from about 2,000 submissions about 30 films are chosen. Now that international films are being submitted, there's also an amazing trend of films being submitted from closed societies, from China to the Middle East and, in this

case, Iran.

Director Hamid Rahmanian left Iran in the 1990s, as did many artists at the time. He connected with the founder of the Center and was interested in the women's stories because in Iran, young women in trouble because of unstable families are unprotected. By revealing the plight of several women who live at the Center, the filmmaker is able to represent thousands of women in Iran who have fragile home situations. Sussan, age 20, was hit in the head by her “temporary husband or sigheh” or her brother, is unable to talk without severe stuttering, has memory loss, anger, and problems separating from those who abused her. The Center provides the closest thing to a family that she and the other young women could hope to experience in Iran. They are taught computer skills, English, and other skills to help them become more independent in a society that doesn't support women's independence. Nazila is 19, and her sister is 17. Nazila wants to be a singer even though in Iran women are forbidden to sing in public. After living at the Center, she began recording songs in a studio. She says singing gives her a sense of self.

Every year, the Center takes on a few hard cases. One girl, Samira, was found unconscious in the street. Her mother, a drug addict, had taken this 14-year-old girl to drug parties where she was abused. Halati gave the girl a doll and sent her to intensive rehab. The Center wants to take her back after her rehab and get her into school. These are some of the stories of hopeless situations that are told in the film. The intervention of the Omid e Meir Center highlights the dark underside of Iranian society and the terrible plight of women, left with no safety net in a society that cares nothing for them.

Taking Chance

USA, 2008. 88 min. Color

Distributor: HBO

Director: Ross Katz

U.S. Dramatic Competition

Under the Bush administration Americans were prohibited by the U.S. government from seeing news footage or photographs of returning caskets of dead military personnel from the Iraq War. In *Taking Chance*, the casket draped in the American flag takes center stage throughout. Starring Kevin Bacon and based on a true story, the film portrays U.S. Marine Lt. Colonel Michael Strobl, who volunteers to return the remains of Lance Corporal Chance Phelps to his family in Wyoming. Phelps was killed by hostile fire in An Anbar Province, Iraq. The draped coffin reminds us continually of the sacrifices made by ordinary citizens. And this is a very emotional film. I thought often about my father's funeral while watching *Taking Chance*. My father's casket was draped in the American flag because he had served in the Navy and seen action at Pearl Harbor, Guadalcanal, and the Solomon Islands. The single coffin in *Taking Chance* came to represent the sacrifice of thousands of military personnel whose families grieve the loss of their loved ones who made the ultimate sacrifice. Throughout the journey to Wyoming, ordinary citizens pay their respects to the soldier. The film allows us to acknowledge our personal and national grief. 🕯️

Q & A with Marie-Hélène Cousineau on the making of *Before Tomorrow*

What was the process to adapt a Danish novel? Was it a collective process developing the script?

It was a very collaborative process. I had just read the novel and cried. I had lived in the north for 10 years before I read the novel. The author touched what was essential in the narration. I've been working since 1991 with women in the Igloodik collective. They approved the novel and said it was like their own stories. And they changed the stories in the novel to fit their local Baffin Island stories.

How did you photograph the cave scenes?

We shot in the cave during four seasons—the months of June, July, August, and September and again in November for winter scenes. We first started filming in September after a thunderstorm. Shooting in June was a bad idea because it was so cold and humid.

What's the little boy's background [the grandson]?

He's the real grandson of the grandmother Madeline Piujuq Ivalu. In the book, he's younger, only nine years old. He was eleven when the film started, and he grew up as the film progressed. And his parents have also acted.

Was this story a stretch for the actors? Is the lifestyle in their village now as tough as then?

No, this isn't like their reality now because this

story took place over 100 years ago.

What's their village like today?

They have a cooperative store, houses, TV, radio. When they get sick, they go to the hospital by plane. It's like a Third World country. And they still go camping, hunting seals, fishing, whaling—those things aren't foreign to them.

How do they see non-Native roles with their traditions? Are they proprietary?

I have worked with this community since 1991. Our collaborations have been built on trust, and we worked together for the same goals. I don't speak their language. We work with translators. Somehow, it's working.

They're trying to share stories?

With these women, if you went as a stranger, they might not share with you. Madeline Piujuq Ivalu and I are two artists working together. There's teamwork—everyone is an expert in her field.

What's the language?

It's Inuktitut. I wrote the script in French and translated it to English, and it was translated to Inuktitut and then back to English. The novel is originally written in Danish. 🇩🇰

The 2009 Tribeca Film Festival

Richard Lachmann

The 2009 Tribeca Film Festival was a mix of upcoming Hollywood releases, quirky independent films, and probably the largest selection of non-U.S. films shown at any festival in this country. The Festival certainly demonstrated that cinema is an art; yet,

her. Suddenly, Mounir is a big man in town, and the villagers come to him hoping that his new connection to a wealthy foreigner will produce riches and favors for his neighbors. Mounir takes advantage of his new prestige, soliciting bribes in return for

Real innovation often occurs far from the center of art worlds, and some of the best films at Tribeca came from countries with small film industries largely unnoticed by the rest of the world.

like painting, photography, sculpture, and music, contemporary film is a discipline that combines crass and obvious attempts to achieve commercial success with often desperate and bizarre experiments that seek to provoke strong feelings but usually leave viewers cold.

Real innovation often occurs far from the center of art worlds, and some of the best films at Tribeca came from countries with small film industries largely unnoticed by the rest of the world. Three of the films I saw grapple with the problems of tradition and modernity. I have no idea if those films are the start of a new direction in cinema, but they are examples of what film can be and, in the ways that they draw on the rich history of film, of what cinema often has been over its first century.

Masquerades

Algeria, 90 min. Color
Arabic with English subtitles
Director: Lyes Salem

Mounir (played by the director) lives in a small, dusty town in rural Algeria. In a recurring comic scene, the men who sit in the town square are covered with dust every time a car passes through. The poor and isolated townspeople literally are left in the dust by those with money.

Mounir makes his living as a gardener for a wealthy military officer. He is the head of his family, caring for his wife, his son, and his beautiful younger sister Rym, who suffers from narcolepsy.

Rym is in love with Khlifèn, Mounir's best friend, who dreams of opening a video store. Khlifèn's escape is films from the United States and Europe, posters from which adorn the walls of an abandoned storefront he is perpetually preparing for the videos that never arrive. The villagers tease Mounir, telling him that he will never find a husband for Rym. One night, when Mounir is drunk, he runs out to the village square and announces that Rym is about to be married to a wealthy European. Rym goes along with Mounir's deception in hopes of convincing Khlifèn to marry

his promise to intervene with government officials.

Mounir's situation is farce, as he becomes ever more deeply entangled in the web of lies he spins to convince his neighbors that Rym really is marrying a wealthy European. Yet, this comedy also is a commentary on Algeria and its brutal and corrupt military dictatorship. Mounir is a servant of a colonel whose huge house and luxurious cars allude to the riches extorted by Algeria's rulers. Yet, once Mounir is able to claim a connection to power, he eagerly imitates the colonel in extracting bribes.

I don't want to give away the film's elegant ending, but Mounir and Rym find ways to achieve happiness without surrendering their goodness and integrity. They do, however, have to step out of the rigid gender roles and familial relations that limit them. Neither tradition nor the corrupt modernity of the military regime is a guide for life. The film, through its compelling characters and sharp humor, shows another path for contemporary Algerians.

Pandora's Box

Turkey, 112 min. Color
Turkish with English subtitles
Director: Yesim Ustaoglu

Two sisters and a brother are called away from their cosmopolitan lives in Istanbul when their elderly mother, Nusret, wanders off. Her dementia becomes ever more obvious as the film proceeds. The siblings feel they have a duty to care for their mother, but each wants to fob off the responsibility on the others. One sister has a high-powered job and a demanding boyfriend. The other sister has a bad marriage and a troubled son of her own. The brother is unemployed and spends most of his time drinking and smoking dope.

The mother declines when the siblings move her to Istanbul, and she is diagnosed with Alzheimer's. Her dementia is real, but it also is a metaphor for the pressures of living in a vast city that literally is between Europe and Asia. Istanbul is shown as noisy and ugly. The mother's confusion leads her to wander off at the

same time that Murat, the sister's troubled son, has also run away. Murat is the only member of the family who is able to talk with Nusret. When Murat takes her to the waterfront, Nusret is happy, and for a moment Istanbul is an inviting and attractive city. Eventually, Murat accompanies his grandmother back to her country home where both are content.

The message of *Pandora's Box* is clear. Modern city life is alienating. No one can be happy in Istanbul. Country life and traditional family ties provide comfort to the elderly Nusret and an anchor to the troubled young Murat.

Departures

Japan, 130 min. Color
 Japanese with English subtitles
 Director: Yojiro Takita

Departures won the 2008 Academy Award for Best Foreign film, beating both *Waltz With Bashir* from Israel and *The Class* from France. As a result, *Departures* has been stereotyped as a Hollywood film, meaning formulaic and vapid. In fact, *Departures* is emotionally powerful and offers a penetrating view of contemporary Japan, and indeed of wealthy industrialized societies in general. Daigo, the protagonist, has just lost his job as a cellist in an orchestra in Tokyo, and he returns to his childhood home in a small town. Desperate for work, he answers an ad for work in “departures,” thinking it is a travel agency. In fact, he is hired to assist an elderly master of *Nokanshi*, the art of washing, dressing, and

grooming a corpse in front of the deceased's family. Traditionally, family members took care of these tasks before their relative was cremated. In modern Japan, such duties are farmed out to paid professionals.

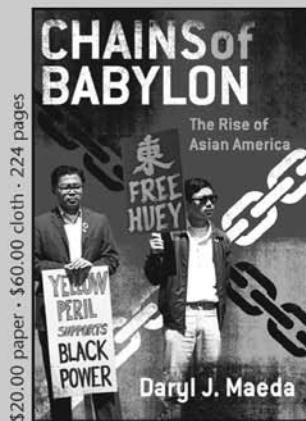
Daigo is at first ashamed of his new job, and he doesn't even tell his wife Mika what he is doing. Yet, over time he sees the value of his work. In the most moving scene of the film, Daigo is preparing a young woman's body and then notices she has a penis. He whispers to his boss to ask what he should do. The boss reminds him that they are there to comfort the family and should prepare the dead person as he/she and the family would have wanted. After the ceremony, the dead man's father thanks Daigo, saying that this was the first time he was able to appreciate and fully love his child.

Departures is a hopeful film. In it, tradition is presented as capable of being molded to meet the needs of modern, atomized families and of resolving gender confusion. Indeed, tradition is essential. The more skilled Daigo becomes in the elaborate rituals developed over centuries, the more capable he is of meeting the emotional needs of mourning families, and ultimately of himself and his wife.

The tensions that are resolved by tradition in *Pandora's Box*, and by a break with tradition in *Masquerades*, are addressed through adapted and modified rituals in *Departures*.

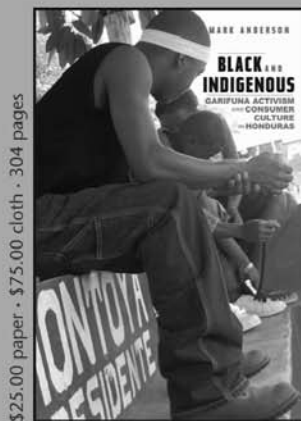
Richard Lachmann is a professor of sociology at the State University of New York, University at Albany and the author of articles on the sociology of culture and the arts. 📖

Identity, Community, Culture



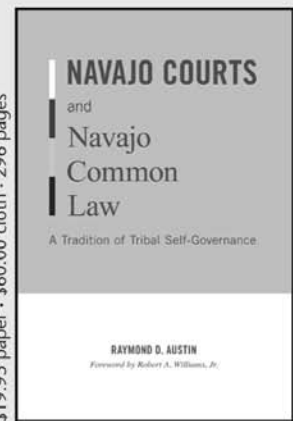
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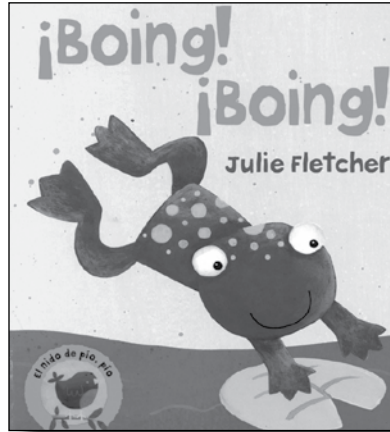
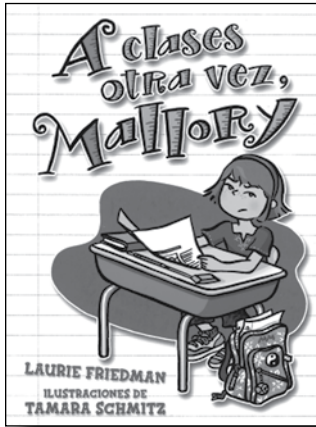
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Recent Books in Spanish: A Representative Sample

Isabel Schon



Although the current economic recession has severely impacted the publishing world, it is interesting to note its effects both in the United States and in Spanish-speaking countries. U.S. publishers are releasing authors and carefully trimming their lists of books in Spanish. Publishers in Spain and Latin America are concerned not only about their own countries' economies, most of which are suffering recessionary conditions even worse than those in the United States, but also about the costs of shipping and the reduction of distribution channels in the United States.

Despite the bad news, selectors should be aware of the wide

variety of books in Spanish that are still being published to satisfy the recreational and informational needs of Spanish speakers (and Spanish learners). The following is a representative sample of fiction and nonfiction books, graphic novels, and reference works in Spanish or bilingual Spanish and English for children and adolescents. These titles have been published in the past three years in the United States or in Spanish-speaking countries. Those published in 2009 and later are starred, offering a visual indication of the toll the recession has taken on Spanish-language publishing for children and teens.

For the Young

Ajmera, Maya, and Ivanko, John D. *Ser vecinos* (*Be My Neighbor*). Watertown, MA: Charlesbridge Publishing, 2007. 32 pp. Trans. by Yanitzia Canetti. ISBN 978-1-57091-703-5, \$15.95. Gr. K-3.

*Aliaga, Roberto. *El príncipe de los enredos* (*The Prince of Mischief*). Madrid: Edelvives, 2009. 48 pp. Illus. by Roger Olmos. ISBN 978-84-263-7233-8, \$17.12. Gr. 1-3.

Aloian, Molly, and Kalman, Bobbie. *Muchos tipos de animales* (*Many Kinds of Animals*). ISBN 978-0-7787-8832-4.

Kalman, Bobbie. *Ranas y otros anfibios* (*Frogs and Other Amphibians*). ISBN 978-0-7787-8837-9.

———, and Lundblad, Kristina. *Animales llamados mamíferos* (*Animals Called Mammals*). ISBN 978-0-7787-8836-2.

———, and Sjonger, Rebecca. *Aves de todo tipo* (*Birds of All Kinds*). ISBN 978-0-7787-8834-8.

MacAulay, Kelley, and Kalman, Bobbie. *Reptiles de todo tipo* (*Reptiles of All Kinds*). ISBN 978-0-7787-8835-5.

Ea. vol.: New York: Crabtree Publishing, 2006-2007. 32 pp. Trans. by translations.com. Series: Qué Tipo de Animal Es?

\$18.95. Gr. 1-3.

Aloian, Molly, and Kalman, Bobbie. *Un hábitat de bosque tropical* (*Rainforest Habitat*). ISBN 978-0-7787-8333-6.

———. *El hábitat de la Antártida* (*Antarctic Habitat*). ISBN 978-0-7787-8332-9.

———. *Un hábitat de pantano* (*Wetland Habitat*). ISBN 978-0-7787-8328-2.

———. *El hábitat del Ártico* (*Arctic Habitat*). ISBN 978-0-7787-8330-5.

———. *Hábitats acuáticos* (*Water Habitats*). ISBN 978-0-7787-8325-1.

———. *Hábitats subterráneos* (*Underground Habitats*). ISBN 978-0-7787-8331-2.

Kalman, Bobbie. *Un hábitat de bosque* (*Forest Habitat*). ISBN 978-0-7787-8327-5.

———, and Crossingham, John. *Habitats terrestres* (*Land Habitats*). ISBN 978-0-7787-8324-4.

———, and Sjonger, Rebecca. *Un hábitat de sabana* (*Savanna Habitat*). ISBN 978-0-7787-8329-9.

MacAulay, Kelley, and Kalman, Bobbie. *Un hábitat de desierto* (*Desert Habitat*). ISBN 978-0-7787-8326-8.

———. *Un hábitat de pastizal* (*Grassland Habitat*). ISBN 978-0-7787-8334-3.

———. *Hábitats de jardín* (*Backyard Habitats*). ISBN 978-0-

7787-8335-0.

Ea. vol.: New York: Crabtree Publishing, 2007. 32 pp. Trans. by translations.com. Series: Introducción a los Hábitats. \$25.27. Gr. K-2.

*Álvarez, Rosanela. *¿Cómo es tu mamá?* (*How Is Your Mom?*). México, D.F.: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 2009. 28 pp. ISBN 978-607-16-0005-9, \$19.95. Gr. K-3.

Ashbé, Jeanne. *¿Dónde está Tedy?* (*Where Is Teddy?*) Barcelona: Corimbo, 2008. 18 pp. Trans. by Anna Coll-Vinent. ISBN 978-84-8470-322-8, \$14.00. Gr. Preschool.

Barber, Shirley. *Cuenta conmigo* (*Count with Me!*). León: Everest, 2007. 16 pp. Trans. by Lourdes Huanqui. ISBN 978-84-2411-308-7, \$7.99. Gr. Preschool-1.

Bataille, Marion. *ABCD* (*ABCD*). Madrid: Kókinos, 2008. 34 pp. ISBN 978-84-96629-67-7, \$11.95. Gr. K-2.

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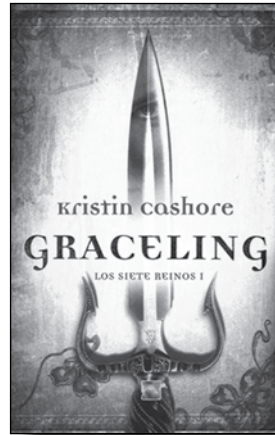
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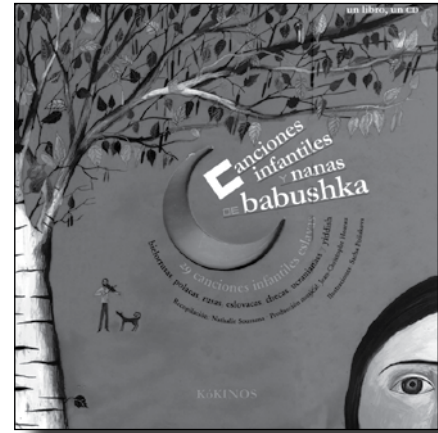
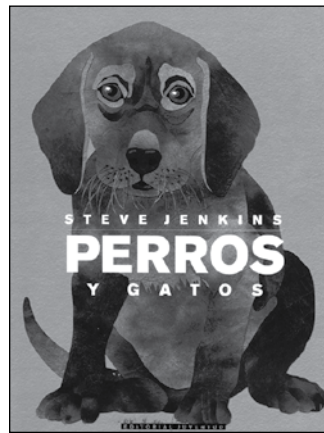
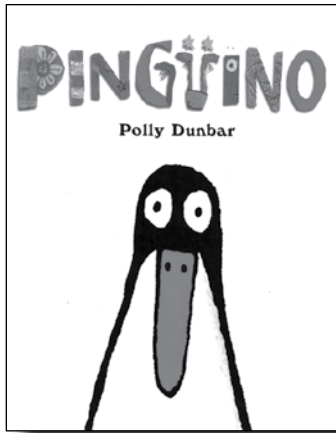
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