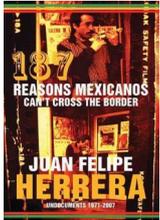


Multicultural

New United States Poet Laureate



[view in catalog](#)

Just announced: the Library of Congress appointed Juan Filipe Herrera as our latest national poet laureate. The child of migrant farm workers, Herrera is the first Latino poet laureate. As a child, he traveled up and down the state of California with his parents, and later attended UCLA with the help of a grant for disadvantaged youth.

At the age of 21, Herrera was inspired by the debut book by Puerto Rican poet, Victor Hernandez Cruz.

He also writes children's books and those for young adults. Check out our [list of his titles](#). [Read more](#)

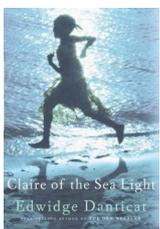
Posted by Dory L. on June 10, 2015

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Claire of the Sea Light



[view in catalog](#)

This Sunday at 2 p.m. in Room 2B, join our Booksplus discussion about Edwidge Danticat's *Claire of the Sea Light*. In honor of Black History month, we will discuss this luminous book set in Haiti just before the cataclysmic earthquake of 2009.

Danticat, who emigrated from Haiti as a child, has won many awards including the MacArthur Award (nicknamed the genius award).

If you like folklore and learning about other cultures, *Claire of the Sea Light* is the book for you. It

tells the tale of a young girl whose mother died just after her daughter's birth. According to Haitian folklore, this makes Claire a *revenan*, a child who battled with her mother's spirit and won.

On each of her birthdays, Nozias, Claire's father, takes her to visit her mother's grave. In the cemetery they meet Madam Gaelle, a fabric store owner and wealthy widow in town, who lost her own daughter on the same date as Claire's birthday. [Read more](#)

Posted by Dory L. on January 28, 2015

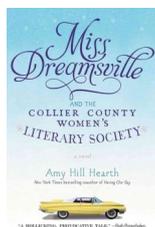
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Booksplus Discussion, Sunday Nov. 2 at 2: Miss Dreamsville and the Collier County Women's Literary Society



[view in catalog](#)

What happens when an energetic, middle-aged Bostonian moves to a sleepy town in Florida in 1962? First, she starts a radio show under the persona of Miss Dreamsville and secondly forms a book club. Ex-Bostonian Jackie Hart starts a ruckus when she invites people of other races and sexual persuasions to the club in a decidedly racist, homophobic town where a divorcee is considered socially-risky and improper.

Narrated by a lovable octogenarian, Dora, who does not fit into Naples herself, this novel discusses important issues such as racism, feminism, and homophobia while presenting an interesting mix of characters. With a backdrop of serious and important issues, it provides a humorous and entertaining read.

In her debut novel Amy Hearth manages to take on both the Ku Klux Klan, North versus South, the nature of community, and newcomer angst to Naples, Florida. [Read more](#)

Posted by Dory L. on October 29, 2014

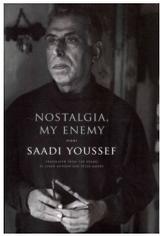
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Nostalgia, My Enemy



[view in catalog](#)

A great way to explore another culture is through poetry. This book, by one of the best living writers in Arabic, Saadi Youssef, does just that. It also provides beautiful poetry.

Youssef writes about all the traditional topics: love, nature, the changing seasons, and daily activities but he also describes his pain and anger at seeing the damage to his home country. In "A Difficult Variation" he describes his wishes for his native country, "Peace be upon Iraq's hills, its two rivers, the bank and the bend, / upon the palm trees / and the English hamlet gently dragging its clouds."

He writes deeply poignant poems about Iraq. In one he asks, "Is it your fault that once you were born in that country? / Three quarters of a century / and you still pay from your ebbing blood / its tax." [Read more](#)

Posted by Dory L. on September 30, 2014

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The Book of Unknown Americans



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With immigration a hot button issue both politically and in the news, it was interesting to read Cristina Henríquez's second novel *The Book of Unknown Americans*. It tells the stories of various immigrants (from Mexico, Puerto Rico, Nicaragua, Venezuela, and other Latin American countries) who have all landed in Delaware.

The book opens with a family's arrival at night from the border. A paid driver has brought Arturo, Alma, and their daughter Maribel to this immigrant enclave outside of Dover. They are legal immigrants given papers to work on a mushroom farm. Or at least Arturo will work there. They have come primarily to get special schooling for 15 year old Maribel who fell off a ladder at her father's construction site in Mexico and has brain damage.

The story of this family is the heartwood of the novel. But woven in are life stories of other immigrants including a boxer, who came to the states to win matches but became instead a landlord, and an actress who worked hard to make it in New York City, but came to Delaware and formed her own theatre.

This beautiful book gives you a feel of how hard it is to start life over in a new place, not understanding the language or culture. It also explores issues of guilt and secrecy, and how they affect even the strongest of marriages. [Read more](#)

Posted by Dory L. on August 18, 2014

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Touching Strangers



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Anyone with the ability to get a stranger to pose for a camera while touching two or three other strangers in New York City must have both courage and amazing diplomatic skills. Enter photographer Richard Renaldi. Since 2007 Renaldi has been hauling his big, 8 by 10 inch view camera not just around New York, but around other cities and towns across America. This cool

involving book presents some of the amazing portraits he's created.

The juxtapositions are captivating: ages, races, classes, sexes, outfits, jewelry, tattoos, and indoor and outdoor settings all present a panoply of portraits of 21st century Americans. In 'Jesse and Michael,' a bearded middle-aged man in an orange sweatshirt and woolen cap clutches the hands of a very old woman wearing a wig, with her cane draped over her purse. Atlantic Ocean waves break behind them.

'Pedro and Neal' touch in some kind of shop or factory. Pedro sits, his body exuding confidence and authority, a radio attached to his shirt. Neal in a blue cap has claimed a perch on Pedro's desk and Neal places one hand on Pedro's shoulder, another around his wrist.

'Michael and Sarah' look like they could be engaged. Sarah leans into Michael's shoulder on the NYC subway during winter; both wear coats and hats; their opposite hands are clasped on Sarah's left wrist. [Read more](#)

Posted by Dory L. on August 13, 2014

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