

The Prentice Hall Anthology of

Women's Literature

DEBORAH H. HOLDSTEIN

PRENTICE HALL Upper Saddle River, New Jersey 07458 Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

The Prentice Hall anthology of women's literature/[selected by] Deborah Holdstein,

p. cm.

Includes index.

ISBN 0-13-081974-3

1. Literature—Women authors. 2. Literature, Modern—20th century.

3. Women Literary collections. I. Holdstein, Deborah H., 1952-

PN6069.W65P74 1999 99-39922

808.8'99287-dc21

CIP

Editorial Director: Charlyce Jones Owen

Editor-in-Chief: Leah Jewell

Acquisitions Editor: Carrie Brandon

Editorial Assistant: Sandy Hrasdzira

AVP, Director of Production and Manufacturing: Barbara Kittle

Senior Managing Editor: Bonnie Biller

Production Editor: Randy Pettit

Manufacturing Manager: Nick Sklitsis

Prepress and Manufacturing Buyer: Mary Ann Gloriande

Marketing Director: Gina Sluss

Marketing Manager: Brandy Dawson

Interior Design: Amy Rosen

Cover Design Director: Jayne Conte

Cover Design: Kiwi Design

Portraits: Van Howell

For permission to use copyrighted material, grateful acknowledgment is made to the copyright holders listed on page 1072-1078, which is considered an extension of this copyright page.

This book was set in 10.5/12.5 Minion by Progressive Information Technologies, and printed and bound by Courier-Westford.

The cover was printed by Phoenix Color Corp.

© 2000 by Prentice-Hall, Inc.

Upper Saddle River, New Jersey 07458

All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reproduced, in any form or by any means, without permission in writing from the publisher.

Printed in the United States of America

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

0-13-081974-3

PRENTICE-HALL INTERNATIONAL (UK) LIMITED, London

PRENTICE-HALL OF AUSTRALIA PTY. LIMITED, Sydney

PRENTICE-HALL CANADA INC., Toronto

PRENTICE-HALL HISPANOAMERICA, S.A., Mexico

PRENTICE-HALL OF INDIA PRIVATE LIMITED. New Delhi

PRENTICE-HALL OF JAPAN, INC., Tokyo

EDITORA PRENTICE-HALL DO BRASIL, LTDA., Rio de Janeiro

Preface

... Now she started out of the torpor common to us all and asked me in a whisper (everyone whispered there):

"Can you describe this?"
And I said: "I can."
Then something like a smile passed fleetingly over what had once been her face.

TRANS. RICHARD MCKANE

In these lines excerpted from a brief piece called "Instead of a Preface," Russian poet Anna Akhmatova suggests the power of the writer—in this instance, the certainty and strength with which she will create living testimony to pain, political upheaval, and human suffering. The writer in these lines, Akhmatova herself, demonstrates the primacy accorded a voice that can carry shared experience and give it the permanence of written language. If often for different purposes and with different means and contexts, such are powers of the myriad voices featured in the *Prentice Hall Anthology of Women's Literature*.

Yet it is with some irony that I choose Akhmatova's as the powerful voice with which to begin this anthology. In an attempt to create a useful volume of manageable length for readers of literature written by women, I have limited the scope of the anthology to the turn of the twentieth century and onward, focusing primarily on women writing in various traditions in English. As readers might be aware, debates rage about the value of writing that has been translated, reflecting the concern that much is "lost in translation." While I appreciate these issues, one must consider as well the value of disseminating work that even widely educated readers might not otherwise find accessible.

There is a formal section in this anthology devoted to Akhmatova, but her compelling, powerful work, even in translation, only marginally represents the international writers whom we could not feature. By including the words of this early twentieth-century Russian poet, we are compelled to remember several things: first, that no anthology on women writers of the twentieth century can ever pretend to be complete; and second, that writers whose work comes to us in English, however varied and deep, however representative of numerous traditions and genres, cannot and do not represent the whole of valuable writing by women.

The Prentice Hall Anthology of Women's Literature presents work by women from the very late nineteenth century and onward, from "turn-of-the-century" literature through modernism and the era before the Second World War, through post-war and contemporary literature and beyond. Perhaps fittingly and symbolically, we begin with Alice James and Emma Lazarus. Put simply, James's life represents the dark side of fine breeding: an outstanding intellect and wit imprisoned by her womanhood and stifled by her imposing, overachieving father and brothers. While the dates of her life and death rest firmly within the nineteenth century, hers are very much twentieth-century concerns: her brother, Henry James, himself admitted that girls in their family seemed "scarcely to have a chance." Lazarus, in "The New Colossus," speaks for the outsider, the oppressed immigrant to the United States, with a voice that we now find perhaps overly confident about the promise of a welcoming, sheltering United States. Yet, she might also seem to speak for those born here but kept on the fringes of society by elitism, racism, and prejudice—or those brought here in earlier times, for insidious purpose, and against their wills. "The New Colossus" also stands at the front of this anthology to represent all that Lazarus might never even have foreseen when she titled her poem: the "new," rich evolution and expansion of literary canons and of feminist and other forms of critical thought and of more penetrating, inclusive ways of looking at traditions, texts, and experiences.

From James and Lazarus, the anthology proceeds towards a vast collection of writing by women over the last one hundred years with an emphasis on contemporary writers. Through an often agonizing, add-and-cut process, I designed this collection to range from frequently anthologized, celebrated writers, such as Charlotte Perkins Gilman, Alice Moore Dunbar Nelson, Edith Wharton, Tillie Olsen, and Zora Neale Hurston, to equally impressive and significant, if less-familiar, names, such as Mina Loy, Miriam Raskin, Jill Bialosky, and Allegra Goodman. Many of these authors are associated with important literary, historical, and artistic movements of their respective times. For instance, Gertrude Stein, Virginia Woolf, H.D., and Mina Loy were important forces in literary modernism; Zora Neale Hurston, a folklorist-novelist, not only celebrated and preserved regional dialect, but was also an important part of the Harlem Renaissance; Anzia Yezierska, a social documentarian, reflected the lives and the trials of hopeful immigrants to the United States in the early twentieth century. As a recent essay in the New York Times Book Review indicates, Allegra Goodman is one of the few writers who integrates the religious world (in the case of her new novel, the world of Orthodox Jewry) as a matter-of-fact underpinning of her narrative. What will literary history name this type of writing—or will it go unnamed? How does such "naming" by the literary establishment guarantee or alternately deny historical importance to a work? This volume celebrates these and many other writers who might, in fact, defy categorization—even when they have been associated with literary movements or styles—or about whom literary-historical categories have yet to be named. Perhaps inclusion in anthologies such as this will assure authority to those who might otherwise go unread.

At times, I have had to choose fewer selections by a well-known author to include the work of a greater number of writers whom readers might not otherwise have occasion to know. I have also chosen to make this what is called a "clean" anthology, a collection of writings by authors interrupted only by headnotes (which have been kept fairly brief). The clean anthology allows readers with all purposes in mind—pleasure reading, learning, teaching, or all of these—to approach the various works without being steered toward particular approaches, questions for interpretation, or similar strategies for the texts. My desire to keep the anthology as unfettered as possible perhaps explains my reluctance to prescribe a particular focus other than to present a wide range of worthwhile reading by women writers, primarily from traditions in English, in roughly chronological order. The rest is up to the reader.

While I would like to suggest that anthologies are products only of intellectual and teaching interests, they are not. We could not include several of the writers we had wanted to simply because the permissions rights to acquire their works were too costly, thereby keeping some outstanding writers from a wide audience. In an attempt to make the size of this volume manageable and affordable, we decided, at least for this first edition, to include only a few works in translation. The diversity of women's writing is represented both through the major genres and, where possible, the inclusion of various works by those who wrote in several genres, as is the case of Charlotte Perkins Gilman, writer of fiction, poetry, and essays. Needless to say, *The Prentice Hall Anthology of Women's Literature* presents authors of tremendously diverse background and lifestyle, voice, tradition, and world view.

I alternate between "we" and "I" throughout this introduction, and I do so with a purpose. I do not say "we" in the royal sense. Anthologies such as this can never be the product of one person, and I have been graced by the assistance of many, some even before this project could have been foreseen. My parents, Reinhard Holdstein and Henia Freifeld Holdstein, survivors of Hitler's Holocaust, blessed me with their love of reading, of learning, of appreciating and celebrating difference while upholding and cherishing one's personal heritage and traditions. I must also acknowledge the English teachers in the New York City public schools. I especially recall Mrs. Civin, Mrs. Feinsilver, Mrs. Schutz, Mr. Phillips, and my other English teachers, people for whom the term "dedication" must certainly have been invented. It is they who made me believe that somehow the world of the "other"—as represented to me and my peer group by writers such as T.S. Eliot—could somehow become mine as well. I am grateful to them.

However, in strictly practical terms, this project would not exist at all were it not for the consummate graduate assistant, Ted Spaniak. All for the glory of literary study, a close, personal relationship with interlibrary loan and the photocopying machine, and for very little money, Spaniak's intellectual gifts and dedi-

cation have put me in awe and forever in his debt. Spaniak is already the kind of student whom one hopes to see on the class list at the start of the term; he is an outstanding writer, a reliable and able researcher, and an excellent decision-maker. He is also responsible for many of the headnotes you will read throughout this volume. I am also grateful to Nancy Spaniak and to Ted and Nancy's son, Paul, for their support and patience during what must have been Ted's long hours at the computer or photocopier. Should they so desire, I am happy to prepare for them many a home-cooked meal.

John Larrabee has certainly earned a thank-you for his thoughtful and last-minute help with biographical headnotes. And much love and appreciation go to my children, Emily Gilman and David Gilman, whose curiosity and ongoing questions about the project served as both support and necessary comic relief as they bantered with me and with their father, Roger Gilman. Thanks to Nancy Perry, formerly at Prentice Hall, for luring me to this publisher to begin with.

Thanks, too, to the fine and helpful reviewers of the list of authors—accidental collaborators, perhaps, but with whose advice I added more contemporary writers and various works to the anthology: Beth Daniell, Barbara Hackett, Roberta Rosenberg, and John Schilb. Randy Pettit, Project Manager, has helped this project overcome various logistic hurdles, with a tremendous gift for detail—and kindness. And although I spoke with her only once or twice, I share in the early, tragic loss of Bonnie Biller, who made this project one of her priorities during her last days at work. Thanks also to Cantor Julie Green for emergency assistance in Yiddish. Carrie Brandon, literature editor extraordinare at Prentice Hall, deserves thanks and praise for her enthusiasm, support, and practical wisdom. Carrie is a knowledgeable, fine editor, and she is always sensible and good to talk with. That she understands the value of good food as the medium for crucial business and intellectual conversations is surpassed in importance only by her abilities, her good literary tastes, and her comprehensive knowledge of the profession.

— Deborah H. Holdstein

Contents

Preface	xix
Alice James (1848-1892) From The Diary of Alice James	1
Emma Lazarus (1849-1887) The New Colossus	4
Sarah Orne Jewett (1849-1909) Tom's Husband A White Heron	5 15
Kate Chopin (1850-1904) The Story of an Hour The Awakening	23
Mary E. Wilkins Freeman (1852-1930) The Revolt of Mother	125 126
Charlotte Perkins Gilman (1860-1935) The Yellow Wallpaper Closed Doors The Real Religion	138 139 151 152
Mary Elizabeth Coleridge (1861-1907) The Other Side of the Mirror Marriage Companionship	153 154 155
Edith Wharton (1862-1937) The Other Two Her Son	155 155 1 <i>7</i> 0

vi Contents

Mary Austin (1868–1934)	215
The Basket Woman	215
The Stream That Ran Away	220
The Coyote-Spirit and the Weaving Woman	223
Henry Handel Richardson (1870-1946)	227
Two Hanged Women	227
Amy Lowell (1874-1925)	231
The Letter	231
Summer Rain	232
After a Storm	232
The Sisters	233
Gertrude Stein (1874-1946)	238
The Furr and Miss Skeene	238
Gentle Lena	242
Alice Moore Dunbar Nelson (1875-1935)	264
I Sit and Sew	265
The Goodness of St. Rocque	266
Zora Neale Hurston (1881-1960)	
Gilded Six Bits	270
Sweat	278
Virginia Woolf was an	207
Virginia Woolf (1882-1941)	287
From A Room of One's Own; Shakepeare's Sister	288
The Mark on the Wall	295
Susan Glaspell (1882-1948)	300
Trifles	301
Mina Loy (1882-1966)	311
Moreover, the Moon—	312
Lunar Baedeker	312

	Contents	vii
Anne Spencer (1882-1975)		314
Substitution		314
Lady, Lady		315
Anna Wickham (1884-1947)		315
The Affinity		316
Divorce		317
Anzia Yezierska (1885-1970)		31 <i>7</i>
My Own People from Hungry Hearts		318
America and I		327
Radclyffe Hall		335
Miss Ogilvy Finds Herself		336
H.D. (Hilda Doolittle) (1886-1961)		349
Sea Rose		350
Oread		350
Helen		350
Marianne Moore (1887-1972)		351
Poetry		351
When I Buy Flowers		352
Hometown Piece for Messrs. Alston and Reese		352
Katherine Mansfield (1888-1923)	,	354
Bliss		354
The Garden-Party	3	364
Anna Akhmatova (1888-1966)		375
In Memory of M.B.		376
Redwinged Birds		376
The Guest		377
Miriam Raskin (1889-1973)	3	378
At a Picnic	3	378

viii Contents

Jean Rhys (1890-1979)	381
From Wide Sargasso Sea	382
Edna St. Vincent Millay (1892-1950)	389
[I, Being born a woman]	389
Apostrophe to Man	390
The Snow Storm	390
[I will put Chaos into fourteen lines]	391
Untitled Sonnet I	391
Dorothy Parker (1893-1967)	392
Indian Summer	392
The Little Old Lady in Lavender Silk	392
Marita Bonner (1899-1971)	393
On Being Young—a Woman—and Colored	394
	3, .
Meridel Le Sueur (1900-1996)	398
From Salute to Spring: A Hungry Intellectual	398
The Girl	405
Stevie Smith (1902-1971)	421
Not Waving but Drowning	421
The New Age	421
	121
Sylvia Regan (1908-)	422
Morning Star	423
Under a Painted Smile	478
We'll Bring the Rue de la Paix!	478
Eudora Welty (1909-)	478
A Worn Path	
Elizabeth Bishop (1911-1979)	485
The Fish	486
Invitation to Miss Marianne Moore	488

	Contents ix
May Sarton (1912-1995)	489
The Muse As Medusa	490
Der Abschied	491
Mary Lavin (1912-1966)	492
The Nun's Mother	492
Tillie Olsen (1912-)	505
I Stand Here Ironing	505
Muriel Rukeyser (1913-1980)	511
Study in a Late Subway	512
Eccentric Motion	512
To Be a Jew in the Twentieth Century	513
Ruth Stone (1915-)	514
Things I Say to Myself While Hanging Laundry	514
Margaret Walker (1915-)	515
For My People	516
Chicag o	518
Southern Song	518
Judith Wright (1915-)	519
The Sixters	519
To Another Housewife	520
Naked Girl in the Mirror	521
Counting in Sevens	522
Lili Berger (1916-)	523
On Saint Katherine's Day	523
Gwendolyn Brooks (1917-)	530
Five Men Against the Theme "My Name is Red Hot.	
Yo Name Ain Doodley Squat."	531
Friend	531
The Mother	532

x Contents

Mary Tallmountain (1918-1994)	533
The Last Wolf	533
The Ivory Dog For My Sister	534
There is No Word for Goodbye	535
May Swenson (1919-1989)	536
Sleeping with Boa	537
View to the North	538
How to Be Old	538
Doris Lessing (1919-)	539
To Room Nineteen	539
Hisaye Yamamoto (1921-)	564
Seventeen Syllables	565
Grace Paley (1922-)	574
Enormous Changes at the Last Minute	575
Denise Levertov (1923-1997)	586
The Ache of Marriage	587
Divorcing	587
Bedtime	588
Nadine Gordimer (1923-)	588
Town and Country Lovers	
Jane Cooper (1924-)	597
Rent	597
Flannery O'Connor (1925-1964)	598
Good Country People	598
Carolyn Kizer (1925-)	614
The Intruder	614
A Window in Wintertime	615
Thrall	616

	Contents xi
Maxine Kumin (1925-)	617
Regret	617
By Heart	618
Anne Sexton (1928-1974)	618
Said the Poet to the Analyst	619
Her Kind	620
Maya Angelou (1928-)	620
From I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings	621
A Good Woman Feeling Bad	626
A Georgia Song	626
Cynthia Ozick (1928-)	628
The Shawl	628
Lore Segal (1928-)	632
The Reverse Bug	632
Ursula LeGuin (1929-)	642
	642
Some Approaches to the Problem of the Shortage of Time She Unnames Them	643
The Professor's Houses	645 648
Paule Marshall	651
Barbados	
Dia Diadri	652
Adrienne Rich (1929-)	664
When We Dead Awaken: Writing as Re-Vision (1971)	664
When We Dead Awaken	677
Sisters	679
Peeling Onions	680
From a Survivor	680
Toni Morrison (1931-)	681
Recitatif	682

xii Contents

Alice Munro (1931-)	696
Visitors	696
Sylvia Plath (1932-1963)	<i>7</i> 10
Conversation Among the Ruins	710
Channel Crossing	<i>7</i> 11
Lady Lazarus	712
Daddy	714
Edna O'Brien (1936-)	716
Number Ten	<i>717</i>
Audre Lorde (1934-1992)	722
Future Promise	723
This Urn Contains Earth from German Concentration Camps	724
Joan Didion (1934-)	<i>7</i> 25
Holy Water	725
Sonia Sanchez (1934-)	729
After Saturday Night Comes Sunday	<i>7</i> 30
Poem No. 2	735
Blues	735
Haiku	736
To All Brothers: From All Sisters	736
Lucille Clifton (1936-)	737
Poem	737
Album	738
Marge Piercy (1936-)	739
Barbie Doll	739
The Woman in the Ordinary	740
Bessie Head (1937-1986)	740
Snapshots of a Wedding	741

	Contents	xiii
Joyce Carol Oates (1938-)		744
Unmailed, Unwritten Letters		745
Toni Cade-Bambara (1939-1995)		760
The Lesson		<i>7</i> 61
Margaret Atwood (1939-)		767
Rape Fantasies		767
Lynne Sharon Schwartz (1939-)		774
The Melting Pot		774
Angela (Olive) Carter (1940-1992)		<i>7</i> 97
The Loves of Lady Purple		798
Judy Grahn (1940-)		0 N A
Carol, in the park, chewing on straws		804 804
II. Ella, in a square apron, along Highway 80		805
Mayine Hong Kingston (1949)		0 O E
Maxine Hong Kingston (1940-) No Name Woman		805 806
NO Nume Woman		000
Bobbie Ann Mason (1940-)		815
Private Lies		815
Bharati Mukherjee (1940-)		825
The Management of Grief		826
Pattiann Rogers (1940-)		838
Nearing Autobiography		839
Counting What the Cactus Contains		840
Irena Klepfisz (1941-)		841
Dedication from Bashert		841
Etlekhe verter oyf mame-loshn (A few words in the mother tongu	e)	843
Royal Pearl		845

xiv Contents

Isabel Allende (1942-)	846
From The Stories of Eva Luna: If You Touched My Heart	846
Rayna Green (1942-)	853
When I Cut My Hair	853
Coosaponakeesa (Mary Matthews Musgrove Bosomworth),	
Leader of the Creeks, 1700-1783	854
Sharon Olds (1942-)	855
The Knowing	855
Why My Mother Made Me	856
My Mother's College	857
I Cannot Forget the Woman in the Mirror	858
Gail Galloway Adams (1943-)	859
The Purchase of Order	859
Nikki Giovanni (1943-)	872
Nikki-Rosa	873
Woman	873
For Saundra	874
Louise Gluck (1943-)	875
Illuminations	875
Nancy Mairs (1943)	875
Carnal Acts	877
Kathryn Stripling Byer (1944-)	885
Diamonds	885
Alice Walker (1944-)	886
The Flowers	887
In Search of Our Mother's Gardens	888
Ann Beattie (1947-)	896
What Was Mine	896