

*Contemporary
Authors*

volume 147

Contemporary Authors®

**A Bio-Bibliographical Guide to
Current Writers in Fiction, General Nonfiction,
Poetry, Journalism, Drama, Motion Pictures,
Television, and Other Fields**

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volume 147



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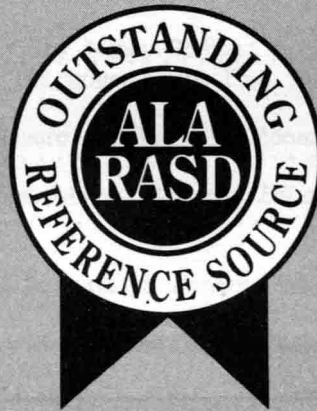
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past twenty-five years.

Preface

Contemporary Authors (CA) provides information on approximately 100,000 writers in a wide range of media, including:

- Current writers of fiction, nonfiction, poetry, and drama whose works have been issued by commercial publishers, risk publishers, or university presses (authors whose books have been published only by known vanity or author-subsidized firms are ordinarily not included)
- Prominent print and broadcast journalists, editors, photojournalists, syndicated cartoonists, screenwriters, television scriptwriters, and other media people
- Authors who write in languages other than English, provided their works have been published in the United States or translated into English
- Literary greats of the early twentieth century whose works are popular in today's high school and college curriculums and continue to elicit critical attention

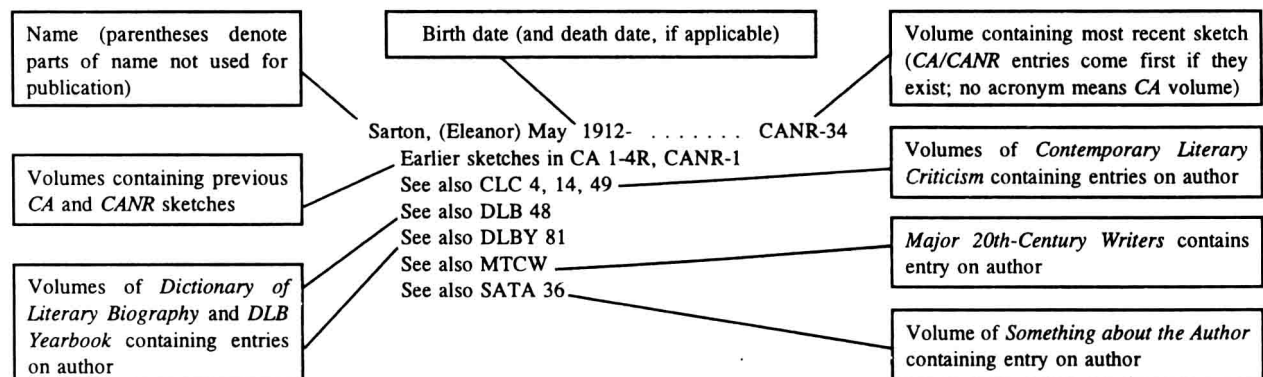
A *CA* listing entails no charge or obligation. Authors are included on the basis of the above criteria and their interest to *CA* users. Sources of potential listees include trade periodicals, publisher's catalogs, librarians, and other users.

How to Get the Most out of *CA*: Use the Index

The key to locating an author's most recent entry is the *CA* cumulative index, which is published separately and distributed with even-numbered original volumes and odd-numbered revision volumes. It provides access to *all* entries in *CA* and *Contemporary Authors New Revision Series (CANR)*. Always consult the latest index to find an author's most recent entry.

For the convenience of users, the *CA* cumulative index also includes references to all entries in these Gale literary series: *Authors and Artists for Young Adults*, *Authors in the News*, *Bestsellers*, *Black Literature Criticism*, *Black Writers*, *Children's Literature Review*, *Concise Dictionary of American Literary Biography*, *Concise Dictionary of British Literary Biography*, *Contemporary Authors Autobiography Series*, *Contemporary Authors Bibliographical Series*, *Contemporary Literary Criticism*, *Dictionary of Literary Biography*, *Dictionary of Literary Biography Documentary Series*, *Dictionary of Literary Biography Yearbook*, *DIScovering Authors*, *Drama Criticism*, *Hispanic Literature Criticism*, *Hispanic Writers*, *Junior DIScovering Authors*, *Major Authors and Illustrators for Children and Young Adults*, *Major 20th-Century Writers*, *Native North American Literature*, *Poetry Criticism*, *Short Story Criticism*, *Something about the Author*, *Something about the Author Autobiography Series*, *Twentieth-Century Literary Criticism*, *World Literature Criticism*, and *Yesterday's Authors of Books for Children*.

A Sample Index Entry:



How Are Entries Compiled?

The editors make every effort to secure new information directly from the authors; listees' responses to our questionnaires and query letters provide most of the information featured in *CA*. For deceased writers, or those who fail to reply to requests for data, we consult other reliable biographical sources, such as those indexed in Gale's *Biography and Genealogy Master Index*, and bibliographical sources, including *National Union Catalog*, *LC MARC*, and *British National Bibliography*. Further details come from published interviews, feature stories, and book reviews, and often the authors' publishers supply material.

An asterisk () at the end of a sketch indicates that the listing has been compiled from secondary sources believed to be reliable but has not been personally verified for this edition by the author sketched.*

What Kinds of Information Does an Entry Provide?

Sketches in *CA* contain the following biographical and bibliographical information:

- **Entry heading:** the most complete form of author's name, plus any pseudonyms or name variations used for writing
- **Personal information:** author's date and place of birth, family data, educational background, political and religious affiliations, and hobbies and leisure interests
- **Addresses:** author's home, office, or agent's addresses as available
- **Career summary:** name of employer, position, and dates held for each career post; resume of other vocational achievements; military service
- **Membership information:** professional, civic, and other association memberships and any official posts held
- **Awards and honors:** military and civic citations, major prizes and nominations, fellowships, grants, and honorary degrees
- **Writings:** a comprehensive, chronological list of titles, publishers, dates of original publication and revised editions, and production information for plays, television scripts, and screenplays
- **Adaptations:** a list of films, plays, and other media which have been adapted from the author's work
- **Work in progress:** current or planned projects, with dates of completion and/or publication, and expected publisher, when known
- **Sidelights:** a biographical portrait of the author's development; information about the critical reception of the author's works; revealing comments, often by the author, on personal interests, aspirations, motivations, and thoughts on writing
- **Biographical and critical sources:** a list of books and periodicals in which additional information on an author's life and/or writings appears

Obituary Notices in *CA* provide date and place of birth as well as death information about authors whose full-length sketches appeared in the series before their deaths. These entries also summarize the authors' careers and writings and list other sources of biographical and death information.

Related Titles in the *CA* Series

Contemporary Authors Autobiography Series complements *CA* original and revised volumes with specially commissioned autobiographical essays by important current authors, illustrated with personal photographs they provide. Common topics include their motivations for writing, the people and experiences that shaped their careers, the rewards they derive from their work, and their impressions of the current literary scene.

Contemporary Authors Bibliographical Series surveys writings by and about important American authors since World War II. Each volume concentrates on a specific genre and features approximately ten writers; entries list works written by and about the author and contain a bibliographical essay discussing the merits and deficiencies of major critical and scholarly studies in detail.

Available in Electronic Formats

CD-ROM. Full-text bio-bibliographic entries from the entire *CA* series, covering approximately 100,000 writers, are available on CD-ROM through lease and purchase plans. The disc combines entries from the *CA*, *CANR*, and *Contemporary Authors Permanent Series (CAP)* print series to provide the most recent author listing. It can be searched by name, title, subject/genre, personal data, and by using boolean logic. The disc is updated every six months. For more information, call 1-800-877-GALE.

Online. The *Contemporary Authors* database is made available online to libraries and their patrons through online public access catalog (OPAC) vendors. Currently, *CA* is offered through Ameritech Library Services' Vista Online (formerly Dynix), and is expected to become available through CARL Systems, The Library Corporation, and Winnebago Software. More OPAC vendor offerings will soon follow.

Magnetic Tape. *CA* is available for licensing on magnetic tape in a fielded format. Either the complete database or a custom selection of entries may be ordered. The database is available for internal data processing and nonpublishing purposes only. For more information, call 1-800-877-GALE.

Suggestions Are Welcome

The editors welcome comments and suggestions from users on any aspects of the *CA* series. If readers would like to recommend authors whose entries should appear in future volumes of the series, they are cordially invited to write: The Editors, *Contemporary Authors*, 835 Penobscot Bldg., 645 Griswold St., Detroit, MI 48226-4094; call toll-free at 1-800-347-GALE; or fax to 1-313-961-6599.

CA Numbering System and Volume Update Chart

Occasionally questions arise about the *CA* numbering system and which volumes, if any, can be discarded. Despite numbers like “29-32R,” “97-100” and “147,” the entire *CA* print series consists of only 121 physical volumes with the publication of *CA* Volume 147. The following charts note changes in the numbering system and cover design, and indicate which volumes are essential for the most complete, up-to-date coverage.

CA First Revision

- 1-4R through 41-44R (11 books)

Cover: Brown with black and gold trim.

There will be no further First Revision volumes because revised entries are now being handled exclusively through the more efficient *New Revision Series* mentioned below.

CA Original Volumes

- 45-48 through 97-100 (14 books)

Cover: Brown with black and gold trim.

- 101 through 147 (47 books)

Cover: Blue and black with orange bands.

The same as previous *CA* original volumes but with a new, simplified numbering system and new cover design.

CA Permanent Series

- *CAP*-1 and *CAP*-2 (2 books)

Cover: Brown with red and gold trim.

There will be no further *Permanent Series* volumes because revised entries are now being handled exclusively through the more efficient *New Revision Series* mentioned below.

CA New Revision Series

- *CANR*-1 through *CANR*-47 (47 books)

Cover: Blue and black with green bands.

Includes only sketches requiring extensive changes; **sketches are taken from any previously published *CA*, *CAP*, or *CANR* volume.**

If You Have:

You May Discard:

CA First Revision Volumes 1-4R through 41-44R and <i>CA Permanent Series</i> Volumes 1 and 2	CA Original Volumes 1, 2, 3, 4 Volumes 5-6 through 41-44
CA Original Volumes 45-48 through 97-100 and 101 through 147	NONE: These volumes will not be superseded by corresponding revised volumes. Individual entries from these and all other volumes appearing in the left column of this chart may be revised and included in the various volumes of the <i>New Revision Series</i> .
CA New Revision Series Volumes <i>CANR</i> -1 through <i>CANR</i> -47	NONE: The <i>New Revision Series</i> does not replace any single volume of <i>CA</i> . Instead, volumes of <i>CANR</i> include entries from many previous <i>CA</i> series volumes. All <i>New Revision Series</i> volumes must be retained for full coverage.

A Sampling of Authors and Media People Featured in This Volume

Hank Aaron

Aaron, a baseball legend, broke Babe Ruth's career home-run record in 1974. He has also authored several volumes of memoirs as well as instructional books for aspiring athletes.

Francisco X. Alarcon

The discrimination and prejudice Alarcon experienced as an openly gay writer in his Hispanic community are at the core of his critically acclaimed poetry.

Terry Anderson

Anderson, a former reporter for the Associated Press, tells of his 2,454-day captivity by Islamic terrorists in the book *Den of Lions: Memoirs of Seven Years*.

Jean-Bertrand Aristide

A controversial priest who became President of Haiti, Aristide wrote *Peace, Justice, and Power: My Return to Haiti, the United States, and the New World Order* and *In the Parish of the Poor: Writings from Haiti*.

Karen Armstrong

Armstrong is a former nun who writes on religious themes. Her titles include the 1993 bestseller *A History of God: The 4000-Year Quest of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam*.

Stanley B. Burns

Utilizing an immense collection of nineteenth- and early twentieth-century photographs, Burns addresses medical history and memorial photography in his provocative books.

Caleb Carr

Carr's skill as a historian is reflected by his use of period detail in the popular novel *The Alienist*, a sensational murder mystery set in New York City in 1896.

Chris Elliott

A versatile comic talent, Elliott contributed to the scripts of the film *Cabin Boy* and the television series *Get a Life*. His book *Daddy's Boy* is a tongue-in-cheek memoir of Elliott's relationship with his father, comedian Bob Elliott.

Donna Ferrato

A photojournalist and author of *Living with the Enemy*—a pictorial essay on domestic abuse—Ferrato has devoted her career to exposing the problem of violence against women.

Peter Guralnick

A journalist and novelist, Guralnick has written about music for more than three decades. Works such as *Last Train to Memphis: The Rise of Elvis Presley* have distinguished him as an expert on American popular music.

Robert Harling

Harling's stage play *Steel Magnolias*, which he wrote in memory of his deceased sister, was adapted for film by the author himself.

Kathe Koja

Koja's fusion of counter-culture attitude with psychological horror have resulted in the novels *The Cipher*, *Bad Brains*, *Skin*, and *Strange Angels*.

Yusef Komunyakaa

The poems of Komunyakaa, who won a Pulitzer Prize in 1994 for *Neon Vernacular*, recall his experiences as an African American growing up in Louisiana and fighting in the jungles of Vietnam.

J. E. Lighter

Lighter, a collector of slang and unusual words, incorporated his detailed notes into the voluminous *Historical Dictionary of American Slang*, Volume 1: A-G.

Maria Montessori

Montessori is remembered for her work in the field of early childhood education. Among her influential writings are *The Absorbent Mind* and *The Montessori Method*.

George Romero

Romero's *Night of the Living Dead* became a cult classic among horror movie fans. A writer as well as director, he has crafted screenplays for numerous other horror films.

Philippe Soupault

Soupault, a French poet, playwright, critic, and prose writer, helped create the artistic and literary movement known as Surrealism. His novel *Last Nights of Paris* is a highly regarded Surrealist text.

Robert James Waller

Waller, the author of the bestselling *Bridges of Madison County*, followed up his success with such novels as *Slow Waltz in Cedar Bend* and *Border Music*.

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Indexing note: All *Contemporary Authors* entries are indexed in the *Contemporary Authors* cumulative index, which is published separately and distributed with even-numbered *Contemporary Authors* original volumes and odd-numbered *Contemporary Authors New Revision Series* volumes.

As always, the most recent *Contemporary Authors* cumulative index continues to be the user's guide to the location of an individual author's listing.

A

**Indicates that a listing has been compiled from secondary sources believed to be reliable, but has not been personally verified for this edition by the author sketched.*

AARON, Hank 1934-

PERSONAL: Born Henry Louis Aaron, February 5, 1934, in Mobile, AL; son of Herbert and Estella Aaron; married second wife, Billye Suber, November, 1973; children: (first marriage) Gail, Hank, Lary, Gary (deceased), Dorinda; (second marriage) Ceci. **Education:** Attended the Josephine Allen Institute, 1951.

ADDRESSES: *Office*—Atlanta Braves, 521 Capitol Ave. Southwest, Atlanta, GA 30312-2803.

CAREER: Professional baseball player, executive, and author. Began as semi-professional player in the Negro League, 1952; Milwaukee Braves baseball team, Milwaukee, WI, professional baseball player, 1954-66, team became Atlanta Braves, 1966; Atlanta Braves baseball team, Atlanta, GA, professional baseball player, 1966-74, vice-president for player development, 1976-89, senior vice-president, 1989—; Milwaukee Brewers, Milwaukee, professional baseball player, 1974-76. Member of the board of directors of the Atlanta Braves and Turner Broadcasting. Sponsor of the Hank Aaron Celebrity Bowling Tournament for Sickle Cell Anemia, 1972; involved in numerous charitable activities, including the National Easter Seal Society, Leukemia Society of Atlanta, No Greater Love, and Friends of Fisk for Athletics; organizer of the Hank Aaron Scholarship Fund, 1974.

MEMBER: Big Brothers/Big Sisters of America (member, national board), National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, American Cancer Society (member, Atlanta board), and Operation PUSH—People United to Save Humanity (member, executive board).

AWARDS, HONORS: Named to the National League

All-Star Team, 1955-74, the World Series Championship Team, 1957, and the American League All-Star Team, 1975; National League batting champion, 1956 and 1959; named Player of the Year, *Sporting News*, 1956 and 1963; Kenesaw M. Landis Award (Most Valuable Player), National League, Baseball Writers' Association of America, 1957; Rawlings Gold Glove Award, Rawlings Sporting Goods Company, 1958, 1959, and 1960; Spingarn Medal, National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, 1976, for achievements in baseball; inducted into the Baseball Hall of Fame, Cooperstown, NY, 1982; Silver Buffalo Award, Boy Scouts of America, 1984, for humanitarian service; holds eighteen major league records, including most career home runs and most runs batted in; holds nine National League records; Horatio Alger Award, Horatio Alger Association of Distinguished Americans.

WRITINGS:

- (With Furman Bisher) *Aaron, r.f.*, World Publishing (Cleveland, OH), 1968, revised edition published as *Aaron*, Crowell (New York), 1974.
- (With others) *How to Hit and Run the Bases*, Grosset & Dunlap (New York), 1971.
- (With Joel Cohen) *Hitting the Aaron Way*, Prentice-Hall (Englewood Cliffs, NJ), 1974.
- (With Stan Baldwin and Jerry Jenkins) *Bad Henry*, Chilton (Radnor, PA), 1974.
- (With Lonnie Wheeler) *If I Had a Hammer: The Hank Aaron Story*, HarperCollins (New York), 1991.

SIDELIGHTS: Hank Aaron is one of the most famous players in the history of baseball; he holds several of the sport's top records and is one of its first African American players to achieve major celebrity status. Much of his fame stems from his triumph in 1974

when, as a longtime Atlanta Braves outfielder, he surpassed Babe Ruth's career homerun record which had remained unbroken for several decades. Aaron retired from playing a few seasons later to embark upon a second career as a team executive. Since then, Aaron has put his skills to use in searching out new baseball talent; he also continues to contribute his time and name to several charitable organizations. Aaron is the author of a number of books about baseball and his career in it; some are geared toward aspiring young ballplayers and provide technical tips and inspirational messages.

Aaron's first published work, 1968's *Aaron, r.f.*, was written with journalist Furman Bisher and is an account of his years in baseball, beginning with his participation in the Negro League in 1952. The "r.f." designation in the title stands for Aaron's position then as a right-fielder, and the work chronicles his achievements in the sport until 1968. The biography was revised and published just prior to Aaron's record-breaking 715th homerun. The 1974 edition, entitled simply *Aaron* (by then he had switched to left field), provides an additional chapter detailing Aaron's career after 1968 up through the end of the 1973 season. Aaron has also authored a number of instructional books for young adults on the sport of baseball. One of these works is 1974's *Hitting the Aaron Way*, written with Joel Cohen. The text and its illustrations are designed to help players improve their batting averages, and the writers also include tips on other aspects of the sport, such as running bases and physical training.

In 1991 Aaron issued a more introspective biography entitled *If I Had a Hammer: The Hank Aaron Story*, a work written with sports journalist Lonnie Wheeler. The memoir details Aaron's personal experiences throughout his career in baseball, revealing years of painful discrimination. Over the years Aaron's career had been affected by the racial, and sometimes racist, tone of baseball. For the first half of the twentieth century, baseball, like many other American institutions of the era, was segregated. White players had their leagues, forerunners of today's American and National leagues, while African American athletes were only allowed to play in the Negro League. This barrier was broken down in 1947 when Jackie Robinson joined the Brooklyn Dodgers. However, it took many years for fans to accept baseball as a truly integrated sport.

Aaron's book begins with an account of his early impoverished childhood in Mobile, Alabama, and his rise through the ranks of baseball until signing with the Milwaukee Braves. But in those early days of

"integrated" baseball, African American players were often forced to lodge in separate, substandard quarters when on the road. Aaron recounts eating in a Washington, D.C., restaurant where the employees broke the dishes on which they had served the African American players' dinners rather than washing them and using them to serve other customers. Fans in the stands commonly hurled racial epithets at Aaron and other African American players for many years.

According to critics, one of the saddest memories chronicled in *If I Had a Hammer* should have been his most triumphant. When it seemed likely that he would soon break Babe Ruth's career homerun record, the publicity-shy Aaron was forced to hide out in hotel rooms for much of the season. He received countless hate letters, some of which he turned over to the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), that condemned his quest to break a white player's longstanding record. Some even threatened his life.

If I Had a Hammer also provides insight into Aaron's second career as a baseball team executive. As a vice president for player development with the Atlanta Braves, Aaron has used his status to challenge the subtler remaining racism in baseball. Under his aegis, the team has launched a minority internship program designed to bring more African Americans into the management offices. He has spoken out against the lack of minority team executives and owners, and has expressed the importance of keeping ticket prices affordable to low-income children. "I think a lot of people dislike me because of the stances I've taken on certain things, because of being honest," Aaron reflected about his career in a 1992 *Atlanta Constitution* interview. "But I fought the system, and if you fight the system you're not going to be accepted by the system." Even during his promotional tour for the book Aaron encountered hostility from baseball fans, based in part on the public's perception of him as aloof. He explained that while many other retired baseball stars are just as reclusive, he has been excessively criticized and points out some of these inconsistencies in his book. *New York Times Book Review* writer Fannie Flagg described *If I Had a Hammer* as "beautifully written" and a biography "surprisingly lacking in anger or bitterness, a miracle considering the abuse and humiliation Aaron had to endure in life, as well as in baseball."

BIOGRAPHICAL/CRITICAL SOURCES:

PERIODICALS

American Spectator, November, 1991, p. 46.

Atlanta Constitution, March 30, 1991, p. D8; May 3, 1992, p. E1.
Booklist, June 1, 1974, p. 1075; September 1, 1974, p. 37.
Christian Science Monitor, April 12, 1991, p. 14.
Library Journal, April 15, 1974, p. 1146; December 15, 1974, p. 3278.
New York Times Book Review, June 2, 1974, p. 6; April 7, 1991, p. 25.
Time, June 17, 1991, p. 72.*

—Sketch by Carol Brennan

* * *

AARON, Henry Louis
 See AARON, Hank

* * *

ABBOTT, George (Francis) 1887-1995

OBITUARY NOTICE—See index for CA sketch: Born June 25, 1887, in Forestville, NY; died of a stroke, January 31, 1995, in Miami Beach, FL. Actor, director, producer, playwright, screenwriter, and author. Abbott was a giant of the American theater. For nearly eighty years he was a key player on Broadway, responsible for such commercial and artistic successes as *Pal Joey*, *The Pajama Game*, *Damn Yankees*, and *A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum*. A no-nonsense professional who had an uncanny feel for what worked, Abbott could doctor scripts, rescue flops, and create hits—his mastery known as the “Abbot touch.” Because he was impatient with inner meanings and symbolism in theatrical works and liked action and wit, Abbott gravitated toward musicals; similarly, he preferred working with talented unknowns, rather than grappling with established stars and their egos. Shirley MacLaine, Gene Kelly, Carol Burnett, Bob Fosse, Harold Prince, and many, many others owed their early successes to Abbott.

Abbott studied journalism at the University of Rochester, but was soon drawn to its drama club. After graduating in 1911 he enrolled in a playwriting workshop at Harvard University taught by George Pierce Baker. Abbott remembered that year as one of the most important of his life, for Baker emphasized the pragmatics, rather than the aesthetics, of theater. In

1913 the young dramatist got a small role in the Broadway play *The Misleading Lady*, and for more than two decades worked as a stage actor. But he also joined producer John Golden’s staff, honing his skills in theatrical writing and staging. Abbott’s first big success was the 1926 hit *Broadway*, which he wrote with Jed Harris and directed. Soon after, he left for Hollywood to direct a handful of films. He would return there occasionally during the next few decades, usually to bring his Broadway hits to the screen (and with *The Pajama Game* and *Damn Yankees*, to help write their scripts). Still, Abbott’s heart remained on Broadway, where he produced and directed success after success, often collaborating with his playwrights. His countless awards included six Tonys and a 1960 Pulitzer Prize for *Fiorello!*, written with Jerome Weidman. He recalled his life in the 1963 autobiography *Mr. Abbott*.

OBITUARIES AND OTHER SOURCES:

BOOKS

Who’s Who in America, 49th edition, Marquis, 1995.

PERIODICALS

Los Angeles Times, February 1, 1995, p. A13.
New York Times, February 2, 1995, P. B10.
Times (London), February 2, 1995, p. 21.

* * *

ABOU-SAIF, Laila 1941- (Laila Said)

PERSONAL: Born November 19, 1941, in Cairo, Egypt; daughter of Nessim (a physician) and Baheya (a homemaker; maiden name, Faltas) Abou-Saif; married Adib Wahba, August, 1963 (divorced, 1971). **Education:** American University, Cairo, Egypt, B.A., 1959; University of Chicago, M.A., 1962; University of Illinois, Urbana, Ph.D., 1968. **Religion:** Coptic Christian.

ADDRESSES: *Home*—8 Cedar Crest Condos, 2514 Boston Post Rd., Guilford, CT 06437.

CAREER: Writer, director, actor, and educator. Lawrence University, Appleton, WI, instructor of theater, 1969-71; Cairo University, Cairo, Egypt, instructor of drama, 1972-77; Columbia University, New York City, instructor of Asiatic theater, 1977; Southern Connecticut State University, New Haven, instructor of theater, 1984—; Cornell College, Mount

Vernon, IA, instructor of theater, 1984-85; University of New Haven, New Haven, CT, instructor of literature and composition, 1987-89; Pace University of New York, NY, instructor of theater, 1989-91. Macmillan Publishing Co., New York City, writer, 1986. Center for Research on Women, Stanford University, visiting scholar, 1986.

Director of plays, including *Henry IV*, Hakim Theatre, 1974; *Hassan wa Naima*, Wekelat-al-Ghuri Theatre, 1976; *Mother Courage*, Citadel Theatre, 1981; *Ring around the Moon*, Cornell College, 1984; *La Ronde*, Southern Connecticut State Theatre, 1984; and *Saadawi*, American Place Theatre, New York City, 1986. Director of films, including the Egyptian television play *The Birth of a Hero*, 1974, and the documentaries *Where Is My Freedom?*, 1978, and *Enaba, Aziza, wa Abeer*, 1981. Acting roles include Lady Hurf in *Thieves Carnival*, Murya in *Riders to the Sea*, Inez in *No Exit*, Lady Bracknell in *The Importance of Being Earnest*, Mme. Desmorteaux in *Ring around the Moon*, and the title role in *Saadawi*.

MEMBER: American Theatre Association, American Association of University Professors.

AWARDS, HONORS: University of Illinois fellowship, 1969; Fulbright grant, 1976; Ford Foundation grant, 1978.

WRITINGS:

Najib al-Rihani and the Development of Comedy in Egypt, Dar al-Ma'aref (Cairo), 1972.

(Under pseudonym Laila Said) *A Bridge through Time: A Memoir*, Simon & Schuster (New York), 1985, reprinted under name Laila Abou-Saif, foreword by Gloria Steinem, Lawrence Hill Books (New York), 1993.

Middle East Journal: A Woman's Journey into the Heart of the Arab World, Scribners (New York), 1990.

Contributor to *Theatrical Movement: A Bibliographical Anthology*, edited by Bob Fleshman, Scarecrow Press, 1985. Contributor of articles to periodicals, including *Journal of Arabic Literature*, *Christian Science Monitor*, *Los Angeles Times*, *Le Monde*, and *Majalet al-Cinema wal Masrah*.

WORK IN PROGRESS: *Mommie & Bonnie* (a novel), a sequel to *A Bridge through Time*.

SIDELIGHTS: Laila Abou-Saif broke the traditions of her Egyptian upbringing to become a writer, educator, director, and actor. Raised in a society that val-

ues women only as wives and mothers, Abou-Saif was educated in the United States and became known for Egyptian stage, film, and television productions that satirized the policies of the country's military and government and that condemned discrimination against women. As Abou-Saif's productions became more controversial, the Egyptian government prevented her from showing her work in certain venues. Now residing in the United States, Abou-Saif has fought against both censorship and sexism. In 1985 she saw publication of her memoir entitled *A Bridge through Time*. Abou-Saif told the *New York Times* that she hopes her book demonstrates "that the problems of being a woman are universal, and that the condition of women around the world demands of women to be fighters."

In *A Bridge through Time*, which Abou-Saif originally wrote under the pseudonym Laila Said, the author recounts her personal life, career, and the political climate of her time. The book details Abou-Saif's arranged marriage, her subsequent abortion and divorce, her determination to embark upon a career in theater, and her work as a university professor in the United States. According to *Washington Post* reviewer David Ottaway, "no westerner can help but be moved by [Abou-Saif's] uphill and often lonely struggle to break through the taboos of Egypt's male-dominated society."

Critical reaction to *A Bridge through Time* was generally favorable. Ottaway called the book "a sad and often beautiful story about alienation." Although *Los Angeles Times Book Review* contributor Camelia Anwar Sadat found some faults in the memoir, she noted, "Overall, however, one must credit [Abou-Saif] with a great deal of courage for having spoken so openly and so frankly of things that in Egyptian society might bring her personal censure. Her book is one of the first of its kind in the Middle East." According to a *Publishers Weekly* reviewer, *A Bridge through Time* is "eminently readable and engrossing."

Abou-Saif is also author of *Middle East Journal: A Woman's Journey into the Heart of the Arab World*, which was published in 1990. In this volume Abou-Saif interviews various Arab political and cultural leaders in order to illuminate the Arab-Israeli conflict and the relationship between the Arab and Western worlds.

Abou-Saif told *CA*: "To write frankly and honestly about emancipation in Arab society is to commit a grave error; indeed, it is to commit a sin against one's community. In America, to declare one's feminism is to ask for trouble."

BIOGRAPHICAL/CRITICAL SOURCES:

PERIODICALS

Los Angeles Times Book Review, August 4, 1985, p. 3.
New York Times, June 20, 1985.

Publishers Weekly, May 10, 1985, p. 219; February 2, 1990, p. 70.

Times Literary Supplement, August 15, 1986, p. 886.

Washington Post, August 12, 1985.

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ACKER, Bertie (Wilcox Naylor) 1922-

PERSONAL: Born October 1, 1922, in Waco, TX; daughter of Dowell (in local government) and Frances Elizabeth (Wilcox) Naylor; married Charles Irvin Acker, July 19, 1944 (divorced, 1956); children: Barbara Frances Acker, Phyllis Marlene Harmon, Ruth Ann Bilbo. **Education:** Texas Woman's University, B.A., 1943; Southern Methodist University, M.A., 1956; University of Texas at Austin, Ph.D., 1971. **Politics:** Liberal. **Religion:** "Episcopalian with a Taoist twist." **Avocational interests:** Growing roses, playing bridge, traveling, attending theater and dance performances, swimming, martial arts, reading.

ADDRESSES: Home—1705 Briardale Ct., Arlington, TX 76013.

CAREER: Worked with the Army Signal Corps as a cryptographer, and read mail for the Bureau of Censorship during World War II; Sherman Public Schools, Spanish teacher, 1956-57; Austin Public Schools, Austin, TX, Spanish teacher, 1957-59; University of Texas at Austin, instructor, 1959-60; Universidad del Valle, Cali, Colombia, technical advisor for the Rockefeller Foundation, 1964-65; University of Texas at Arlington, assistant professor, 1965-72, associate professor, 1972-85, professor, 1985-89, professor emerita of Spanish, 1990—.

MEMBER: Asociacion de literatura femenina hispanica (secretary, 1984, president, 1985), Southwest Council of Latin American Studies (president, 1981, secretary-treasurer, 1987—), Dallas Council on World Affairs, League of Women Voters (director of voter services, 1989-92 and 1994-95), American Literary Translators Association.

AWARDS, HONORS: Harvey L. Johnson Book Award, 1984, for *El Cuento mexicano contemporaneo: Rulfo, Arreola y Fuentes (temas y*

cosmovision), and 1994, for *Iphigenia (The diary of a young lady who wrote because she was bored)*; Sourette Diehl Fraser Translation Award, Texas Institute of Letters, 1994, for *Iphigenia*.

WRITINGS:

El Cuento mexicano contemporaneo: Rulfo, Arreola y Fuentes (temas y cosmovision), Editorial Playor (Madrid, Spain), 1984.

(Translator) Teresa de la Parra, *Iphigenia (The diary of a young lady who wrote because she was bored)*, University of Texas Press (Austin), 1993.

Contributor of articles and translations to anthologies, including *Religion in Latin American Life*, 1980, *Fifty Spanish American Women Writers*, 1990, *Women's Studies Encyclopedia*, 1990, and *Beyond the Border: A New Age in Latin American Women's Fiction*, 1991. Contributor of articles, translations, and reviews to periodicals, including *Calyx: A Journal of Art and Literature by Women*, *Heartland Journal*, *a/b Auto/Biography Studies*, and *Letras Femeninas*.

WORK IN PROGRESS: An adaptation of *Iphigenia (The diary of a young lady who wrote because she was bored)* as a stage play; research on Sor Juana Ines de la Cruz, Teresa de la Parra, and quantum physics as an unrecognized component in the work of Jorge Luis Borges.

SIDELIGHTS: During Bertie Acker's long career as a scholar and translator of Spanish literature, she has contributed numerous translations and articles to journals and anthologies. She also translated a book, Venezuelan author Teresa de la Parra's novel *Iphigenia (The diary of a young lady who wrote because she was bored)*, into English in 1993.

First published in serial form by de la Parra in 1922, *Iphigenia* is narrated by its heroine, Maria Eugenia. The first section of the book consists of a letter from Maria Eugenia to her friend Cristina, which "recounts [her] sojourn in Paris and her image of herself as an independent, cosmopolitan, wealthy young woman," according to Janet Jones Hampton in *Belles Lettres*. The next three sections, however, take the form of Maria Eugenia's diary after she returns to Venezuela, where her fortune is under the control of one of her uncles, and where she is virtually imprisoned by an old-fashioned, patriarchal society. Maria Eugenia must decide between becoming the mistress of the man she loves, or marrying a rich man that she hates in order to please her family. When she makes the latter choice, she compares her sacrifice to that of the classical Greek tragic heroine Iphigenia.