

## All the Women in My Family Sing: Women Write the World---Essays on Equality, Justice, and Freedom

**Deborah Santana, Editor**

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*All the Women of My Family Sing* is a rousing compilation by sixty-nine women of color, featuring essays that address personal and collective identity, history, place, perspective, sexuality, immigration, and modern day life.

The diverse contributors include actress-activist America Ferrera; transgender entertainer Mila Jam; novelist Samina Ali; humanitarian and children's rights advocate Marian Wright Edelman; and Tammy Thea, a Cambodian refugee who survived the horrific Khmer Rouge regime, and who now proudly owns her own nail salon in California.

Alternating from conversational and reflective to more intense and purposeful, the essays are brief and often gem-like, many gleaming darkly with memories of prejudice, abuse, loss, or anguish. There are tales of hard-earned triumph, recollections of tougher times and pride for resilient forebearers, as well as a questioning of future goals and battles not yet won. Standards of traditional art and feminine beauty are also examined, with a focus more on truly appreciated diversity rather than tolerated inclusion or acceptance.

La Rhonda Crosby-Johnson recalls with wry eloquence being born to "Colored" parents, and through the decades being called negro, then black, and then African-American—with black always feeling the most "like home." Phiroozeh Petigara details the irony of becoming fascinated by her Pakistani heritage, only to be admonished by her Pakistani extended family for spending too much time writing and neglecting her wifely duties. Miriam Ching Yoon Louie celebrates her warrior goddess Korean grandmother—"laundress, migrant farmer," giver of life, and economic provider.

While some voices ring differently and others share more in a harmony, *All the Women in My Family Sing* offers imperative expressions from, and acknowledgment of the experiences of, women of color.

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