

Who Will Speak for America?

Stephanie Feldman, Editor

Nathaniel Popkin, Editor

Temple University Press (Jul 2, 2018)

Softcover \$19.95 (238pp)

978-1-4399-1624-7

Timely and important, *Who Will Speak for America?* is a powerful anthology of essays, poetry, fiction, and art that grapples with our current political situation. The book's forty writers and artists explore the question of what it means to be an American in the age of Donald Trump.

Stephanie Feldman and Nathaniel Popkin organized the Philadelphia's Writers Resist (now Write Our Democracy) event—part of a nationwide literary protest meant to celebrate free expression and democracy in the aftermath of the 2016 election. Their anthology is inspired by the writing and art that came out of those events. Organized in two parts, “Speaking to America” and “Speaking for America,” the collection contains personal essays on the election's emotional impact, fictional explorations of possible futures in an increasingly fascist society, poetry about personal and national identity, and much more.

The range of work in this anthology is impressive. Melissa Febos's essay “Teaching after Trump” describes her brilliant method for encouraging students of varied political beliefs to empathize with those they disagree with. Carmen Maria Machado's poem “How I Should Have Known Trump Would Be Elected President” movingly captures the sense of foreboding that haunted her before the election. Mohja Kahf combines poetry and prose in “I Want Milk, I Want Honey” to explore the limbo dance as a metaphor for learning from women's wisdom from the past to help heal our present. Writing quality is consistently high.

Work is thematically organized, with poetry, prose, and images juxtaposed to provide stylistic and tonal variety. The contributions share a political perspective, but they answer the question posed by the title in consistently surprising and fresh ways. *Who Will Speak for America?* will inspire thought, conversation, and possibly even political action.

REBECCA HUSSEY (July/August 2018)

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