



Aurora Levins Morales

Biography

Aurora Levins Morales was born on February 24, 1954, in Castañer, Puerto Rico. She is the daughter of an American Jewish father and a Puerto Rican mother, author Rosario Morales. At age five, Aurora's mother taught her how to read; and soon after, she began writing poetry. When Levins Morales was 13-years-old, her family moved from their home in Indiera, Puerto Rico to Chicago, Illinois, where she lived until she attended Franconia College in New Hampshire in 1972. She then transferred to Oakland, California, where she earned an undergraduate degree in creative writing and ethnic studies. Levins Morales also holds an M.A. and Ph.D. from The Union Institute in Cincinnati, OH. Throughout her life, Levins Morales has worked in a variety of different fields: marine biology, news and radio reporting, school administration, teaching, and research and activism in domestic and social movements in Latin America and the U.S.

Levins Morales has been published in many journals and magazines, including *Americas Review*, *Ms.*, *Coming Up*, *Gay Community News*, *Cuentos: Stories by Latinas*, and *Revista Chicano-Riqueña*. Most notably, in 1981, Levins Morales was published in *This Bridge Called My Back: Writings by Radical Women of Color*, the first anthology of Hispanic American women writers published in the United States. In 1986, Levins Morales co-authored, with her mother, a collection of short stories, essays, prose poems, and poetry in English, entitled *Getting Home Alive*. Shortly after its publication, Levins Morales was in a car accident that caused injuries to her brain. For a year, she was unable to think clearly or perform certain everyday tasks, such as writing her name.

Quick Facts

- * Born in 1954
- * Puerto Rican poet, short story writer, and essayist
- * First published work is entitled *Getting Home Alive*

This page was researched by Tina McCormack, Celeste Silva, Maren Whitman, and Matt Whitmer, students at Miami University, Hamilton who created this artist page for their LAS/ENG 254 class with Professor Kelli Lyon Johnson. The page was submitted on 4/27/05.



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Biography continued

Even though Levins Morales has lived in a variety of settings -- Chicago, New Hampshire, the San Francisco Bay Area, and Minneapolis, Minnesota -- her work reflects her own belief that no matter where she lives, she is first and foremost Puerto Rican. Her work has been largely influenced by North American feminists, particularly Alice Walker, and she aims to recreate the Latina struggle and experience in her writing.

One of Levins Morales' most recent books, *Remedios: Stories of Earth and Iron from the History of Puertorriqueñas*, is a retelling of thousands of years of Latin American history through the eyes of the oppressed and the forgotten. Her poem "Shema," based on the tragedy of September 11, 2001, was widely read across the country on the internet, at religious services, and on Pacifica Radio.

Levins Morales continues to write for those struggling to find their identities and their voices. She currently divides her time between Oakland and Minneapolis, where she writes and speaks on issues pertaining to history and the multicultural experience.

Selected Bibliography

Works by the author

Getting Home Alive (1986).

Medicine Stories: History, Culture and the Politics of Integrity (1998).

Remedios: Stories of Earth and Iron from the History of Puertorriqueñas (1998).

Telling to Live: Latina Feminist Testimonios (2001).

Works about the author

Rojas, Lourdes. "Latinas at the Crossroads: An Affirmation of Life in Rosario Morales and Aurora Levins Morales's *Getting Home Alive*" in *Breaking Boundaries: Latina Writing and Critical Reading*, ed. A. Horno-Delgado, E. Ortega, N. Scott, and N. Saporta-Sternbach (University of Massachusetts Press, 1989).