

Sackville-West. Her tempestuous affair with Violet Trefusis is presented with all its emotions and struggle. Vita wrote in her journal about the entire relationship, which was published posthumously by her son, Nigel Nicolson.

The diversity of the women presented is obvious from glancing through the table of contents. There is poetry from Amy Lowell, H.D., Muriel Rukeyser, Audre Lorde, Judy Grahn, Olga Bromus, Dorothy Allison, as well as many others. Through the passing of time all the writing becomes less coded, less closeted, and more defined. Eventually, we hear from a contemporary group of women that are even daring with their words, their visions, their definition of lesbian. One such writer is Chystos:

"Your Tongue Sparkles"

*sun on water now in my mouth memory rich as real  
kisses I understand to my root to bone ancestors where red  
& so new you speak without calluses despite our scars  
Woman down my throat you stir my heart nectar where  
bitterness  
has fought to seed  
O you rainy tongue you amaryllis tongue you early spring  
tongue you smooth black leather tongue you firemoon tongue  
you goosebump tongue you soft bits tongue you feather  
tongue you take me all in tongue you fill me up tongue  
you butter tongue you maple syrup tongue you rising  
wind tongue you creamy silky tongue  
you fine fine tongue  
you knows the way  
tongue*

This review touches on only a glimpse of the anthology. The book represents an arduous task long overdue and one that we can all appreciate. A reader may always wonder about the selection process for anthologies, and even question the editor's judgement. In this case, I would argue the need to include the several pieces written by male authors. Faderman defends that these early selections helped to shape our definition of who we are as lesbians. However, I think a footnote would have sufficed. Haven't we already heard what these men have said?

Despite this criticism, the collection is well worth buying hardcover and spending the long winter months curled around its thick spine. Virginia herself, as well as all the women included, should indeed be proud to be spirited through this enormous work. ▼

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