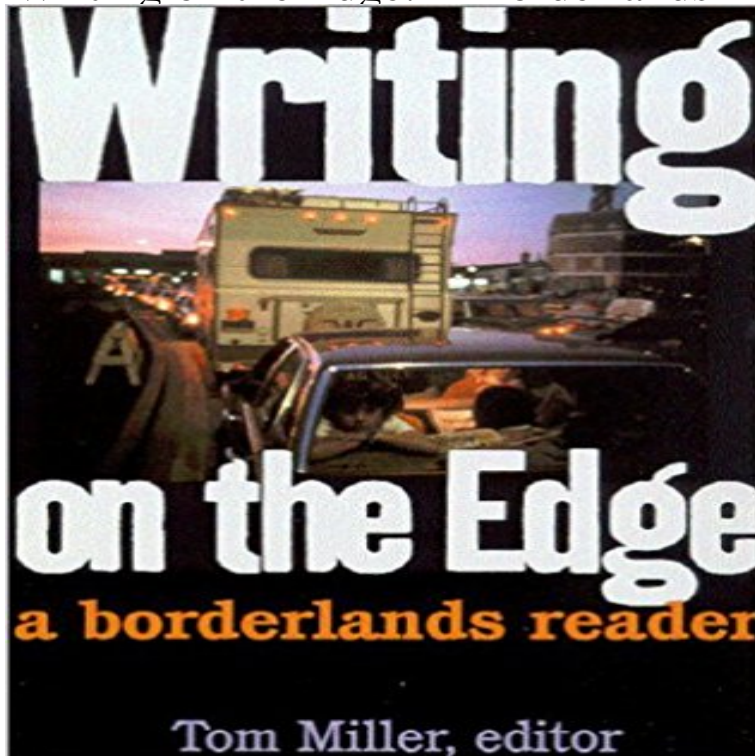


Writing on the Edge: A Borderlands Reader



Twenty miles wide and two thousand long, the U.S.-Mexico borderland is a country unto itself that has been celebrated in the works of many writers and not just those who call it home. Here artists as disparate as Carlos Fuentes, Maya Angelou, and Allen Ginsberg have found literary inspiration, presenting the region through varied viewpoints that give border writing its unusual scope and texture. This wide-ranging anthology gathering short stories and essays, song lyrics and poems offers readers a new appreciation of the border and its literature. Residents of the region may be startled to learn how many passers-by have been struck by this unruly slice of North America, while those living in other parts of the country may be surprised to find it more than a dateline for reports of smuggling and illegal immigration. Collected here are both celebrated and underappreciated gems of American and Mexican literature depicting a region that for some writers represents an exotic land, for others home. Writing on the Edge juxtaposes passages by New Jersey poet William Carlos Williams and native songwriter Flaco Jimenez, British novelist Graham Greene and American poet Demetria Martinez, to show us the border from both sides and from a distance.

In all of the selections, La Frontera looms larger than life as an energizing force that frames the lives of the characters living within its boundaries. Included in the book is a literary map of the border highlighting the sites with which each author is identified. As editor Tom Miller observes, the very notion of literature in a region considered an irrelevant nuisance allows for more free-ranging creative output. Writing on the Edge sparkles with such creativity and invites readers to enjoy the best of two worlds and of the world they share. Print a literary map of the borderlands here!

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