

Native American poets discover few problems getting published

By Patti Wieser

Editor's Note: This is the final article in a three-part series on local women authors.

One of the few problems Native American poet Gail Tremblay has with publishers is poem content, she said. Tremblay explained that some publishers did not want to publish poems "whose primary substance was Native American."

However, she said she had no other particular problems with getting published.

She had to work hard learning to write and acquiring skills, she said. Once that was done, she added, she had very few difficulties.

Influenced by Theodore Roethke, Emily Dickinson, Scott Momaday and many others, Tremblay said probably the most impressionable thing that happened to her was "growing up Native American, hearing the different stories and legends."

Some of her poems carry Native American themes, she said, although she writes about all kinds of things.

Born in Buffalo, N.Y., the 34-year-old poet has been living in Omaha for three years.

She said her involvement in writing began because "I just couldn't not write." Tremblay said she has written for a long time but became serious about writing when she was about 17 years old.

She has a master's degree in Creative Writing with a specialty in poetry from the University of Oregon and has studied at the University of New Hampshire, she said.

No system

Tremblay said she had no real system to her writing but just got up and wrote, adding it was often the first thing she did in the morning.

She said a lack of time stopped her from writing as much as she'd like to.

A collection of poems, by Tremblay, entitled *Night Gives Old Woman the Word* was published in December, 1979, by S. Limited Gallery.

Tremblay said the collection is doing "pretty well." A manuscript of 40 poems, *Talking to the Grandfathers*, is expected to come out in June, 1980, the poet said. She said it is part of an anthology, *Annex 21*.

Tremblay said she has written some poems about Nebraska and about things that have happened since she's been here.

"In terms of places to publish and contacts, it's (Nebraska) been very good for me as a writer," she said.

The poet said she has published poems in several journals and teaches one course each semester at UNO's Writer's Workshop. The course this semester centers on fiction theory.

Tremblay also works full time at the Goodrich Program in Omaha.

Publishing difficult

Megan Terry, 47, has had 37 plays, one non-fiction book and five articles published.

Terry said the problem she faced with being a playwright was "it's hard to get published."

She said she writes about "women in prison, the status of women, spouse and child abuse, myself and my family," among other subjects.

One of her plays, *Viet Rock: A Folk War Movie*, is a commentary on the Vietnamese war. In 1966, it ran for 62 Manhattan performances.

The People vs. Ranchman is a Terry play about an accused rapist and is described by Time Magazine as "a simplistic attack on American blood lust," in the Nov. 8, 1968 issue.

A native of Seattle Wash., the playwright said she has been in Omaha since 1970.

Terry said she received certificates in directing, design and acting from the Banff School of Fine Arts and has a bachelor's of education from the University of Washington.

A recipient of the Stanley Drama award in 1965, the Office of Advanced Drama Research award in 1965, and the Obie award in 1970, Terry was also a Rockefeller grantee in 1968 and a Guggenheim fellow in 1978.

In 1977, Terry was the playwright-in-residence at the Omaha Magic Theatre and a member of the performing arts panel for the Nebraska State Council for Arts.

Terry's book, *Couplings and Groupings*, was published by Pantheon Books in 1972 and is about marriage, sex customs and interpersonal relations.

Workshop will offer future-shaping ideas

Rather than throwing up our hands and accepting what may seem to be a formidable future, Dr. Thomas J. Sork, assistant professor in UNL's Department of Adult and Continuing Education, advocates shaping the future to our liking.

"We don't simply have to prepare for its coming," said Sork, who began teaching a workshop in "educational futuristics" last summer and plans to offer it again during the first five-week summer session this year.


In the workshop, students will explore the philosophical foundations of futurism, methods to study it, futures literature and the application of the futures perspective in both school-based and non-school educational systems, Sork said.

"There are a host of alternative futures possible for us," said Sork. He said he believes commercialization of the minicomputer, video-disc and player technology will become so widespread as to change drastically the way people acquire an education.

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