

SONIA SANCHEZ
POET / PROFESSOR / ACTIVIST

A prolific writer, Sonia Sanchez is serious and original. Her poems depict the struggles between black people and white people, between men and women, and between cultures. She is innovative in her use of language and structure, sometimes using black speech in her poetry. Her brilliant sense of history and vision of her people helps her to create expressive poetry, with themes and underlying tones.

Sanchez deals with the characterization of women, making it clear to audiences the stereotypes that black women endured in the 1960s and 1970s. A renowned playwright, her work includes the token black whore, a white woman (sometimes represented as a whore), and a revolutionary sister, charting the changes that a black woman went through from soul sister to old Christian woman. Sanchez always examines the lives of women within family and society as they have changed throughout her time.

Deemed “a lion in literature’s forest” by poet Maya Angelou, Sanchez explores women’s lives, the struggles and triumphs of people of color, and global and humanist themes through her writings. The author of 14 books, including *Shake Loose My Skin: New and Selected Poems*, she has received countless awards. Sanchez was the recipient of the Harper Lee Award for 2004. *Does Your House Have Lions?* was a finalist for the National Book Critics Circle Award. Sanchez was also honored with the Lucretia Mott Award in 1984, the Outstanding Arts Award from the Pennsylvania Coalition of 100 Black Women, the 1985 American Book Award for *Homegirls and Handgrenades*, the Governor’s Award for Excellence in the Humanities for 1988, and the 1999 Langston Hughes Poetry Award. Her poetry has also appeared in the movie *Love Jones*. She is the Poetry Society of America’s 2001 Robert Frost Medalist.

A nationally recognized and respected public speaker, Sanchez has lectured at more than 500 universities and colleges in the US, in addition to speaking engagements in Africa, Cuba, England, Australia, China, Norway and numerous other countries. Her ability to identify with audiences of all types helps her leave a memorable image and connect with listeners. She is also an activist for peace. For more information please visit www.apbspeakers.com.

TOPICS INCLUDE:

- Coming of Age in the 1960s
- An Evening with Sonia Sanchez
- From the Black Arts to Hip-Hop



Speaking to the World

- A Black Woman Speaks
- The 21st Century for People of Color
- Pushups for Peace