

Tillie Lerner Olsen

Poet Description:

Born in Nebraska of Russian parents who participated in the 1905 Revolution and fled when it failed, Tillie Lerner had to leave school to work after the eleventh grade. She trimmed meat in a packinghouse, worked as a waitress and a domestic, and meanwhile joined the Young Communist League. Her father had become state secretary of the Nebraska Socialist Party. Lerner herself went to jail for trying to organize packinghouse workers. Meanwhile, she began to write, starting the novel that would become *Yonnondio* years later when she was only nineteen. She moved to California in the early 1930s, publishing "I Want You Women Up North to Know" in the West coast John Reed Club magazine *Partisan* in 1934. She was harassed repeatedly by the FBI during the McCarthy period. Her story "Tell Me a Riddle" is her most famous work.

Race/Ethnicity:

Eastern European ^[1]

Picture:



Gender:

Female ^[2]

Sexuality:

Straight ^[3]

First Name:

Tillie Lerner

Last Name:

Olsen

Birth & Death Dates:

Sunday, January 14, 1912 to Monday, January 1, 2007

School of Poetry:

Leftist ^[4]

Birth Place:

Wahoo , Nebraska

United States

See map: Google Maps ^[5]

Nebraska US

Death Place:

Oakland , California

United States

See map: [Google Maps](#) [6]

California US

Group visibility:

Private - accessible only to group members

Source URL: <http://modernamericanpoetry.org/poet/tillie-lerner-olsen>

Links

[1] <http://modernamericanpoetry.org/category/race-ethnicity/eastern-european>

[2] <http://modernamericanpoetry.org/category/gender/female>

[3] <http://modernamericanpoetry.org/category/sexuality/straight>

[4] <http://modernamericanpoetry.org/school-poetry/leftist>

[5] <http://maps.google.com?q=46.880607+-87.363281+%28%2C+Wahoo%2C+NE%2C+%2C+us%29>

[6] <http://maps.google.com?q=44.540344+-69.721992+%28%2C+Oakland%2C+CA%2C+%2C+us%29>