

Gwendolyn Bennett

Poet Description:

Born in Giddings, Texas, Bennett and her family moved to Nevada and Washington, D.C, before the marriage broke up and her father took her to Pennsylvania and then Brooklyn, New York. She studied fine arts at both Columbia University and Pratt Institute. While teaching art at Howard University she won a scholarship to study in Paris for a year. She had published "Heritage" in 1923, and when she returned to Harlem in 1926 she continued doing both literary and graphic work for magazines like Opportunity and Crisis. Her accomplished graphic art had both wit and style and remains immensely appealing today. Her poetry, consistently elegant, celebrated a black difference with an effortless ease that set it apart from much of the more anguished protest poetry of the 1910s and 1920s. After her husband died, she worked in a government job until the anticommunist witch hunts saw her fired and blacklisted. Despite scholars assuming for decades that she stopped writing around 1930, we now know that is not the case. Instead she stopped publishing, but for at least a decade she continued to write poetry. Indeed she took on a powerful voice of social and political protest. Perhaps she felt publishing protest poetry was not compatible with a government job. Certainly her experience in the McCarthy period would have confirmed that judgment.

Race/Ethnicity:

African ^[1]

Picture:



Gender:

Female ^[2]

First Name:

Gwendolyn

Last Name:

Bennett

Birth & Death Dates:

Tuesday, July 8, 1902 to Saturday, May 30, 1981

School of Poetry:

[Harlem Renaissance](#) [3]

Birth Place:

Giddings , Texas

United States

See map: [Google Maps](#) [4]

Texas US

Group visibility:

Private - accessible only to group members

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Links

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

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

[3] <http://modernamericanpoetry.org/school-poetry/harlem-renaissance>

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