

Arna Bontemps

Poet Description:

Born in Alexandria, Louisiana, Arna Bontemps grew up in California and was educated at Pacific Union College. His father was a bricklayer and his mother a teacher. After college he moved to Harlem to teach at the Seventh Day Adventist academy, arriving at the height of the Harlem Renaissance. His poetry began to win awards, but the Adventists reassigned him to Oakwood Junior College in Huntsville, Alabama, in 1931. Although he was in conflict with conservative school officials, the experience of the South helped inspire some of his best work. Bontemps left Alabama in 1934, first for California and then for Chicago, where he earned a library science degree from the University of Chicago and published his second novel, *Black Thunder* (1936). Bontemps's poems combine a strong sense of black history with an almost meditative quality of witness.

Race/Ethnicity:

[African](#) ^[1]

Picture:



Gender:

[Male](#) ^[2]

Sexuality:

[Straight](#) ^[3]

First Name:

Arna

Last Name:

Bontemps

Birth & Death Dates:

Monday, October 13, 1902 to Monday, June 4, 1973

School of Poetry:

[Harlem Renaissance](#) ^[4]

Birth Place:

Alexandria , Louisiana

United States

See map: [Google Maps](#) ^[5]

Louisiana US

Death Place:

Nashville , Tennessee

United States

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

Tennessee 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/male>

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

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

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

[6] <http://maps.google.com?q=33.945669+-93.847129+%28%2C+Nashville%2C+TN%2C+%2C+us%29>