

Neil Devindra Bissoondath, novelist, short-story writer, essayist.

He has been nominated for the Booker Prize and shortlisted for the Governor General's Award and the Guardian Fiction Prize. He has won the Hugh MacLennan Prize for Fiction, the Canadian Authors Association Fiction Prize and a National Magazine Award (Gold) for fiction.

Bissoondath was born in 1955. He comes from a literary family: his uncles are V. S. Naipaul and the late Shiva Naipaul. He moved to Canada for university in 1973. In 1977, he graduated from Toronto's York University with a degree in French literature. He is a professor in the Département des littératures at Université Laval.

His first big career break came in 1985 with his debut collection of short stories, *Digging Up the Mountain*. In 1988 he published his first novel *A Casual Brutality*, set in a troubled Caribbean nation. Bissoondath's next book is another collection of short stories, *On the Eve of Uncertain Tomorrows* (1990). His stories often focus on the themes of the marginalized and dispossessed. The culture conflict of the immigrant is also the subject of Bissoondath's novel, *The Innocence of Age* (1994), the story of intergenerational tensions in an increasingly racist Toronto. His 1994 political critique *Selling Illusions: The Cult of Multiculturalism in Canada* became a national best seller and won the Gordon Montador Award. In 1998 Bissoondath was nominated for a Governor General's Award for *The Worlds Within Her*. His latest novels are: *In Doing the Heart Good* (2002), *The Unyielding Clamour of the Night* (2005), *The Soul of All Great Designs* (2008) and *Postcards from Hell* (2009).

Ángeles de la Concha is Professor of English Studies at the Spanish National University of Distance Learning (UNED) in Madrid, where she teaches early modern drama and contemporary fiction. She has co-authored *Literatura Inglesa hasta el siglo XVII* (2002) and *English Literature in the Second Half of the 20th Century* (2006); edited, introduced and contributed to *Shakespeare en la imaginación contemporánea. Revisión y reescrituras de su obra* (2004) and *El sustrato cultural de la violencia de género. Literatura, cine, arte y videojuegos* (forthcoming); and she has co-edited as well as introduced and contributed to *Mujeres y niños primero. Discursos de la maternidad* (2004). She has published numerous articles and book chapters on gender issues and feminist theory, on contemporary women writers, and on postmodern fiction, particularly historical fiction and rewritings of the canon; among others: "The Impact of Literature on the Shaping of Feminine Desire" (2006), "The Body as Discursive Locus of Female Identity" (2006), "La escritura de Jeanette Winterson: un desafío a la categorización y a las convenciones" (2008), "Autobiografía y ficción: discursos en competencia en la obra de Doris Lessing" (2006), "Unravelling Conventions; or, the Ethics of Deconstruction in Ian McEwan's *Atonement*" (2007), "The End of History. Or is It? Circularity Versus Progress in Caryl Phillips' *The Nature of Blood*" (2000), "'Crossing the lines, crossing the squares'. Marina Warner's New Cartography of *The Tempest*" (2002). Her current research focuses on the impact of cultural and literary representations on gender violence, a subject on which she has also taught several courses in the UNED MA in "Cultura y Violencia de Género", which she has directed until 2009.

Richard Kurth Larson, Ph.D. 1983, University of Wisconsin - Madison

Richard Larson held appointments at the University of Pennsylvania (1984-85) and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (1985-1989), before joining the faculty at the University at Stony Brook, where he is currently Professor of Linguistics.

His research has examined a wide variety of topics in syntax and semantics, including relative and adverbial clauses, NP adverbs, disjunctions, prepositional phrases, double objects and clausal complements. It has also involved a wide variety of languages, including English, Warlpiri, Japanese, Korean, Mandarin Chinese, Persian, Zazaki, Gilaki and Pashto. He has published numerous research articles, and is author/co-author of two linguistics textbooks. His current research is in two major areas: the structure and projection of nominals (DPs), and the realization of semantic intensionality in grammar.

In addition to linguistics research, he has worked in the area of undergraduate science education in connection with the NSF-sponsored Grammar as Science Project. His contributions to developing the Syntactica and Semantica software, produced under the GAS project, were honored in 1998 by an EduCom medal, awarded in partnership between EDUCAUSE and the Linguistic Society of America. He has also received the Stony Brook President's Award for Excellence in Teaching, and the SUNY Chancellor's Award for Excellence in Teaching.

Montserrat Martínez Vázquez, Professor of English Language and Linguistics (Universidad Pablo de Olavide, Seville)

She holds a Ph.D. in English Philology from the University of Seville, 1990. She has held academic and research positions at different Universities (Harvard University, University of Seville, University of Extremadura, University of Huelva and University Pablo de Olavide in Seville).

Her main area of research is the analysis of argument structure from a constructional perspective. She is coordinator of a research group on Contrastive Linguistics and has coordinated three linguistics projects funded by the Spanish Ministry of Science and Technology. She is editor of the three first volumes of *Syntaxis. An International Journal of Syntactic Research* and of a series of *Working Papers in Linguistics* published at the University of Huelva (*Gramática Contrastiva Inglés-Español, Gramática y Pragmática, Transitivity Revisited, Recent Approaches to English Grammar, Gramática de Construcciones* and *The Historical Linguistics-Cognitive Linguistics Interface*). She is author of *Sintaxis inglesa: la atribución* (Cáceres, 1991) and *Diátesis: alternancias oracionales en la lengua inglesa* (Huelva, 1998) (winner of the AEDEAN 1998 award for Studies in Linguistics). She has collaborated in the *Diccionario Sintáctico del Verbo Inglés* (Barcelona, 1996) and published articles and chapters in edited volumes on English Grammar and English-Spanish Contrastive Linguistics. Her most recent publications concentrate on the analysis of different constructions from a contrastive perspective and on the metonymic basis of some constructions.

Ben Okri was born in 1959 in northern Nigeria. He grew up in London before returning to Nigeria with his family in 1968. He left the country when a grant from the Nigerian government enabled him to read Comparative Literature at Essex University in England. He became a Fellow of the Royal Society of Literature in 1987, and was awarded honorary doctorates from the universities of Westminster (1997) and Essex (2002). In 1991 Okri was awarded the Booker Prize for Fiction for his third novel *The Famished Road* (1991). Other recent fiction includes *Astonishing the Gods* (1995) and *Dangerous Love* (1996), which was awarded the Premio Palmi (Italy) in 2000. His latest novels are *In Arcadia* (2002) and *Starbook* (2007). In his latest book, *Tales of Freedom* (2009), Okri brings together poetry and short stories.

He is the author of a collection of poems, *An African Elegy* (1992) and an epic poem, *Mental Flight* (1999). Ben Okri is a Vice-President of the English Centre of International PEN and was awarded an OBE in 2001. He lives and works in London. He has been a visiting writer-in-residence at Trinity College, Cambridge.