



# Shaping Memories: Reflections of African American Women Writers

*Joanne Veal Gabbin*

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*Shaping Memories* offers short essays by notable black women writers on pivotal moments that strongly influenced their careers. With contributions from such figures as novelist Paule Marshall, folklorist Daryl Cumber Dance, poets Mari Evans and Camille Dungy, essayist Ethel Morgan Smith, and scholar Maryemma Graham, the anthology provides a thorough overview of the formal concerns and thematic issues facing contemporary black women writers.

Editor Joanne Veal Gabbin offers an introduction that places these writers in the context of American literature in general and African American literature in particular. Each essay includes a headnote summarizing the writer's career and aesthetic development. In their pieces these women negotiate educational institutions and societal restrictions and find their voices despite racism, sexism, and religious chauvinism. They offer strong testimony to the power of words to heal, transform, and renew.

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