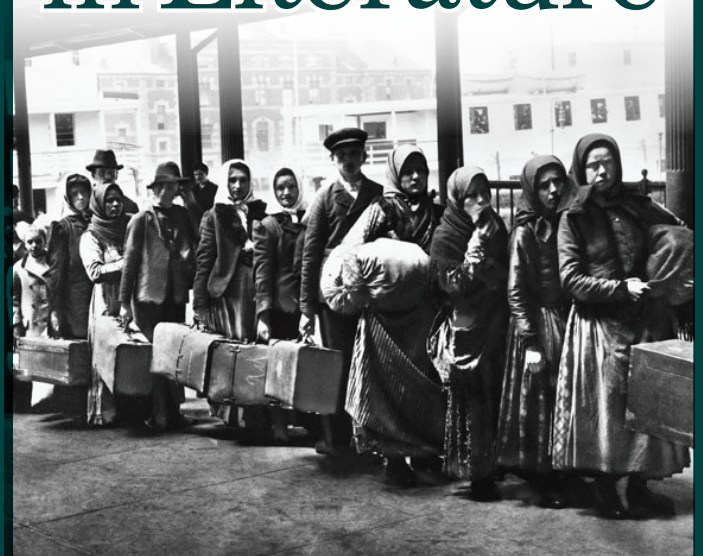




# The Immigrant Experience in Literature



A Collection of Fiction,  
Nonfiction and Poetry



**Monroe County  
Library System**  
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All books listed are available at  
libraries in the Monroe County Library System.

## Fiction and Poetry

***Looking for the Gulf Motel*** (2012)

**Richard Blanco**

Richard Blanco's third book of poetry is a "genealogy of the heart," as it explores his family's emotional legacy. His parents were Cuban exiles to Spain, where he was born, then onto the United States, where he was raised in Miami. This collection is presented in three parts, each one chronicling his understanding of life from childhood to adulthood. Blanco questions cultural identity, examines the frailty of his father-son relationship, focuses on his mother's life shaped by exile, and all the while, he is looking for the elusive meaning of home.

***Girl In Translation*** (2010)

**Jean Kwok**

Fresh off the boat from Hong Kong, Kimberly Chang begins life in Brooklyn with her mother carrying little but her gift for learning and a job at a garment factory. This story follows Kimberly's difficult life through elementary, middle and high school, then fast-forwards to a point after college, when she surprises us with all that she has accomplished.

***Brooklyn*** (2009)

**Colm Toibin**

Ellis can't find a job in Ireland and an Irish priest offers to sponsor her in Brooklyn. She makes her way and finds love, but then needs to return to Ireland where she feels the pull of home and has her doubts about returning to America.

***The Book of Unknown Americans*** (2014)

**Cristina Henríquez**

Arturo Rivera was the owner of a construction company in Pátzcuaro, México. One day, as his beautiful fifteen-year-old daughter, Maribel, is helping him at a work site, she sustains an injury that casts doubt on whether she'll ever be the same again. And so, leaving all they have behind, the Riveras come to America with a single dream: that in this country of great opportunity and resources, Maribel can get better.

***The Beautiful Things That Heaven Bears*** (2007)

**Dinaw Mengestu**

Sepha Stephanos owns a run-down convenience store in a gentrifying neighborhood in Washington D.C. after fleeing civil war in Ethiopia. His only friends are two other African immigrants until a white woman and her biracial daughter move in on his street and give him hope for the future. But racial tensions threaten to split the changing neighborhood.

***No One Can Pronounce My Name*** (2017)

**Rakesh Satyal**

What does it mean to "belong" for a fortysomething Indian immigrant navigating life in a suburb of Cleveland? This story of Harit, a lonely single man living with his mother, and Ranjana, a wife and mother, will have you laughing at every turn as their friendship unfolds, enriching their lives.



## Nonfiction

***A Long Way Home*** (2015)

**Saroo Brierley**

This is the triumphant story of Saroo Brierley who was separated from his family at the age of five and survived on the streets of Calcutta alone for weeks. Eventually adopted by an Australian family, he now leads a successful and happy life, going to University. Google Earth has just been invented and Saroo has a photographic memory. Can he find his home? The basis for the film "Lion."

***Zeitoun*** (2010)

**Dave Eggers**

Syrian-born Abdulrahman Zeitoun chose to remain in New Orleans during Hurricane Katrina to oversee his properties and contracting business. In the days following the storm, he paddled around the devastated city feeding abandoned pets and helping those in need. But then Zeitoun disappeared, leaving his wife and children, whom had chosen to evacuate, stricken. Zeitoun is more than a narrative of a family ravaged by Katrina; it's an exposition of the shady dealings of the agencies that were supposedly there to help in the wake of the storm.

***In the Country We Love: My Family Divided*** (2016)

**Diane Guerrero**

Diane Guerrero, born in the United States, was fourteen years old on the day her parents were detained and deported in 2001. Her story relates the fears and struggles of families in similar situations. It is also a tale of personal triumph, through the support of extended family and friends.

***The New Odyssey: The Story of a Twenty-First Century Refugee Crisis*** (2017)

**Patrick Kingsley**

Kingsley's book marries the telling of one Syrian refugee's cross-continental journey to the moral implications of mass migration. He keenly weaves narratives that describe the horrors of the rolling Mediterranean, desert dust storms, and what it means to be a refugee without a country.

***In Other Words*** (2016)

**Jhumpa Lahiri**

An autobiographical account on the long process of Lahiri immersing herself in Italy and the Italian language. The book demonstrates the constant struggle of identity and prejudice often faced by immigrants. Written in both English and Italian. The audiobook is also read both in English and Italian by the author.

***We Crossed a Bridge and it Trembled: Voices from Syria*** (2017)

**Wendy Pearlman**

In the wake of the protests of the Arab Spring in 2011, the Syrian government became increasingly destabilized which led to a fierce civil war that has ravaged the country for the last 5 years. The book is a collection of hundreds of displaced Syrians' stories, giving the reader a first-hand perspective of the struggles, tragedies and triumphs of leaving a war-torn country that was once called home. Pearlman, an expert in Middle East Politics, constructs these chronicles from interviews she's had with displaced Syrians across Europe, and they illustrate a broad narrative of a new search for identity, belonging and survival.