Sobel discusses the life and art of African-American painter Bill Traylor. Between being born a slave on a cotton plantation in Benton, Alabama, in 1853 and dying in a terrible old folks’ home in Montgomery in 1949, Traylor lived a life that was defined by the experience of violence against Blacks in the twentieth century. Sobel argues that Traylor’s paintings are filled with hidden symbolism related to the lynching of his son and other violence suffered by Blacks in the South. But Traylor, like his paintings, was also influenced by his large family (blood and fictive kin), wives and children, the possibility that he murdered his wife’s lover, his inner rage, slavery, the American South, the Jim Crow period, the blues, conjure power, sexual rivalry, Africa and the African Diaspora, the Baptist Church, and Catholicism.

A complex man who used his paintings in a subversive way to discuss ideas and messages of protest that were not recognized by the White population, Traylor “created a visual language that had great power and also, in his hands, great beauty” (4). Black-and-white and color images and photos are included. The book offers a new glimpse into the life and art of an important American artist and is recommended for colleges and universities.

Melissa Aho
Univ. of Minnesota

Interventions is recommended for academic libraries.

Kristin Whitehair
Univ. of Kansas Medical Center Library

18-3-0274


18-3-0275

Through short personal essays that read like poetry, Agosín describes the process of growing up in Chile, exile, and return that has been the story of her life. The essays are divided into three parts. The first describes her childhood in a South American Eden—her grandmother’s house in Osorno in southern Chile and the house where she lived with her parents in Santiago. Readers are treated to the sights, the sounds, the smells, the stories of her beloved Mapuche nanny, Carmen, and the rituals of a German Jewish home. But even in this gorgeous, rain-swept land among the lakes, between the mountains and the sea, there are ill omens—notably the anti-Semitic Germans who would later become the Pinochet dictatorship’s fervent supporters.

Agosín left Chile as a teenager, along with her parents, in 1971. In the second part of the book, she describes the 1973 coup and its aftermath as if she had been there. One realizes that she has inhabited the bodies of those who endured the violence—those who were tortured in secret prisons as well as the loved ones of the disappeared. The third part narrates her return to her beautiful but now scarred country, as she mourns what has been lost, assesses how much has changed, and finds in the landscape the comfort of her memories and a source of healing. Her cello is a symbol of her voice as she carries it, plays it, loses it, and finds it again.

Gordenstein’s translation captures perfectly the imagery, rhythm, and emotion of Agosín’s writing. Those who love Chile as the author does will cherish this memoir, which should attract new fans for Agosín’s work. It belongs in high school and college libraries and is a good choice for classes in world history, literature, Latin American studies, Jewish studies, and women’s studies.

Lyn Miller-Lachmann

18-3-0276

More than just a footnote to American sports history, Kokomo Joe is about U.S. history. Yoshio Kobuki had a life of bad breaks, beginning with his being born premature and tiny, having his mother and most of his siblings die of the Spanish flu, being sent...
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Unlike autobiographies and biographies, memoirs focus more on the author’s relationship to and feelings about his or her own memories. Memoirs tend to read more like a fiction novel than a factual account, and should include things like dialogue, setting, character descriptions, and more. Authors looking to write a memoir can glean insight from both fiction and nonfiction genres. An autobiography is a self-written account of one’s life. The word “autobiography” was first used deprecatingly by William Taylor in 1797 in the English periodical The Monthly Review, when he suggested the word as a hybrid, but condemned it as “pedantic”. However, its next recorded use was in its present sense, by Robert Southey in 1809. Despite only being named early in the nineteenth century, first-person autobiographical writing originates in antiquity. Roy Pascal differentiates autobiography from... Biography is a detailed account of a person’s life written by someone else, while autobiography is written by the subject themselves. Biography can be written with (authorized) or without permission (unauthorized) from the person/heir’s concerned. On the other hand, autobiographies are self written and therefore doesn’t require any authorization. An autobiography is a biography that is written by the subject himself. It is just like a biography and incorporates all the elements of a biography. The only way it differs from a biography is that instead of being written by a third person author, it is written by the subject themselves.Â There are various advantages for writing a biography over an autobiography and vice versa. Having a biographer write you story is preferable as the author is a professional writer and his writing will be more dignified than an amateur’s. Both, the autobiography and biography refer to the life-long journey of a person. The biographies and autobiographies we have with us are written on the celebrities or written by the celebrities themselves. The autobiography and biography are the two terms that can be differentiated on the basis of its writer. The autobiography is the book written by oneself regarding his/her life-long journey, whereas the biography is the book written on the life-long journey and different events; it is written by someone else.