



## Blues: For All the Changes

*Nikki Giovanni*

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## Blues: For All the Changes Nikki Giovanni

Intimate, edgy, and unapologetic, *Blues: For All the Changes* bears the mark of Nikki Giovanni's unmistakable voice. In a career that has spanned three decades, Giovanni has created an indispensable body of work and earned a place among the nation's most celebrated and controversial poets; Gloria Naylor calls her "one of our national treasures." Now, in these fifty-two new poems, Giovanni brings the passion, fearless wit, and intensely personal self that have defined her life's work to a new front.

Invoking the fates and exalting the rhythm of the everyday, Giovanni writes with might and majesty. From the environment to our reliance on manners, from sex and politics to love among Black folk, *Blues* is a masterwork with poems for every soul and every mood: The poignant "Stealing Home" pays tribute to Jackie Robinson, while "Road Rage Blues" jams on time and space; Giovanni celebrates love's absolute power in "Train Rides" and laments life's transience in "Me and Mrs. Robin." With the tenderness that has made her one of our most accessible and beloved poets, Giovanni evokes a world that is not only just but also happy. Her powerful stand engages the world with a truth telling that is as eloquent as it is elegant.

Intimate, edgy, and unapologetic, *Blues For All the Changes* bears the mark of Nikki Giovanni's unmistakable voice. At once political and intensely personal, this long-awaited volume embodies the fearless passion and wit that have made Nikki Giovanni one of our most accessible poets; her audience defies all boundaries of race, class, age, and style. From the poignant "Stealing Home," Ms. Giovanni's tribute to Jackie Robinson, to the defiant "Road Rage Blues," a jam on time and space, these fifty-one poems challenge the fates and invoke the precarious state of our environment, Giovanni's battle with illness, manners, and other topics seminal to one of our most compassionate, outspoken observers.

With a reverence for the power of language, *Blues For All the Changes* will once again enchant Nikki Giovanni's extensive following and inspire those who are newly discovering her work.

## Blues: For All the Changes Details

Date : Published April 21st 1999 by William Morrow

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Author : Nikki Giovanni

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## **From Reader Review Blues: For All the Changes for online ebook**

### **chunk says**

4.5 stars.

One of the things I really loved about this collection are the poems that are long and lack punctuation. I read every poem out loud and it was comforting to read something that has the same rambling pace, but concise thoughts that I feel like I speak with. There are moments that feel redundant... Tupac and the construction company, for example... but otherwise, this was fantastic.

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### **Sydney says**

I enjoyed her perspective. A few poems really stayed with me.

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### **Melanie Hilliard says**

Exploring experimental poetry. While I love Giovanni and whole-heartedly agree with her vision of the world, this wasn't the collection I was most enchanted with.

But I'm certainly inspired to read more poetry in 2014!

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### **Amalia says**

nobody trusts silence,.....ehmmmmmmmmmm."People think the blues is sad. They hear people moaning and such. That's not the blues. That's just somebody singing slow . . . The blues is about truth-telling.

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### **Andrea Engle says**

Much angrier than other collections of her poetry ... at least the ones I have read ... a few bordering on poor taste ... still, her poetic voice does not desert, though at times it seems a little shrill ...

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### **Caitlin says**

The prose poems are excellent. The verse ones are dumb, juvenile. But since this is mostly prose, it gets a positive 3 stars. Neat phrasing, word selection and observations - about her neighbors, herself and her blackness. Pretty cool, but I also did not find a poem which I LOVED, so there's that... Good, but for me, not the best. But maybe I should have given this 4 stars. Eh.

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### **Maughn Gregory says**

Uncannily I found and read these poems the week of Trump's ascendancy. There is a poem called "the Inaugural poem," which includes these lines: "we hope the president will try to be a decent person while he is president ... let's put the guns away and let's not strike back at people whom we have initially violated and let's see if for just a brief moment we can talk it over and let's think about the new world we are borning and while we recognize we cannot repay the Indian nor the Blacks nor make whole again the Browns nor the Yellows we do not still think we should allow the Whites to run roughshod over the rest of us and we have to say that affirmative action is good and right that equal pay is good and right that paying our taxes is good and right that women have a right to our bodies and that life decisions cannot always reside with those who can enforce their desires with physical strength ..."

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### **Jessica Hanley says**

I have read a few of Giovanni's poems before, but this was the first time I have read a large collection. After reading Blues for All the Changes, I must admit that I am a bit surprised that this anthology is in my middle school library. The language and thematic issues in many of the poems are filled with inappropriate language and issues. With that being said, I think these poems do have a place with adolescents and their tumultuous view of the world. Giovanni tackles her writing with unbridled enthusiasm and she throws her weight behind each piece of writing. This collection (using select poems) would be a great example of writing about everyday issues, as well as really big issues to show my students how they can begin writing their own poems on issues, big or small. Overall, I think Giovanni's poems are an important read.

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### **Joy says**

I am not sure that there are enough words to describe how amazing this poetry is. Professor Giovanni is brilliant, blunt, hilarious, dead serious and speaks her mind with clarity and honesty. Her poems give voice to how racism has impacted her life and the lives of others without sugar coating or trying to comfort people who might be offended. She talks about the loss of one part of one of her lungs and that this isn't what finally breaks open her grief, but finding a baby bird that needs to be cared for does. She talks about family. She also talks about the stress of living one's life that made me laugh so hard I cried.

Her poetry is so amazing that I picked up a CD of her reading her poetry with a full gospel choir behind her and two more volumes of her poems. They are outstanding.

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### **Michael Kikle says**

About as racist and race-focused as a book could get.

Disgusting.

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### **Lisa says**

Blues: For All the Changes: New Poems by Nikki Giovanni (1999)

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### **Kate says**

The long prose poems without punctuation were tough to read, even as a sometimes fan of minimal punctuation. The continual mentions of R. Kneck Kracker (as in "redneck cracker," maybe? took me 80% of the book to think of that) made me feel like I was missing a major reference that was never explained and often felt tacked on as an unnecessary "fuck you" at the end of otherwise lovely poems. There were multiple things that irked me which I didn't expect from Nikki Giovanni (for example, calling Monica Lewinsky a slut, multiple times?). There were moments that I enjoyed, and I still want to read Love Poems, but I was pretty disappointed by this.

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### **Christy Baker says**

I got a few poems into this before I realized that I had read it previously, but don't recall when precisely. I'll make a best guess so this will list as a twice read. Some of the poems are very definitely dated to the Clinton years and what would have been the immediacy of the aftermath of Lewinsky and Starr and impeachment hearings. Still, they offer an amusing take on such news and history while serving up other poems that are less time bound in topic.

I love the very raw and real and immediate feeling of Nikki Giovanni's words. I love her evocative use of language and the emotions she conjures with these letters across the page. The tightly held together ideas are allowed some loose play with punctuation and structure. For me, Giovanni is the kind of poet who speaks in a powerful voice and isn't afraid to call out, to name, to swear, to uphold and draw attention to whatever and whomever she gets focused on. This is my idea of the power of poetry to speak in a way that prose alone cannot.

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### **RYCJ says**

Most enjoyable about this small dated rambling treat was the skill used to create satirical artsy prose. The mockery, riddled through long-winded ambling sentences made this otherwise reflective, often serious commentary on everyday life happenings and conversations effective, and easy to curl up with. My favorites; '2 Word Poem,' 'Monday,' 'Be My Baby' and (haha) ...'A Real Pisser' was simply, one word, Hilarious. 'Iverson's Posse' was another prose to treasure, and as well, Truthtelling! All around, an impressive treat.

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### **Jennifer says**

Nikki Giovanni won my heart years ago with her collection *Love Poems*. I read this book somewhere,

borrowed from someone or someplace, but then had to get a copy of my own, mostly for the poem "Road Rage," though there is so much other fabulousness in this book, and even "Road Rage" itself is made more fabulous by all the other poems that continue and expand on its story of the developers who destroy the little natural area behind her house.

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