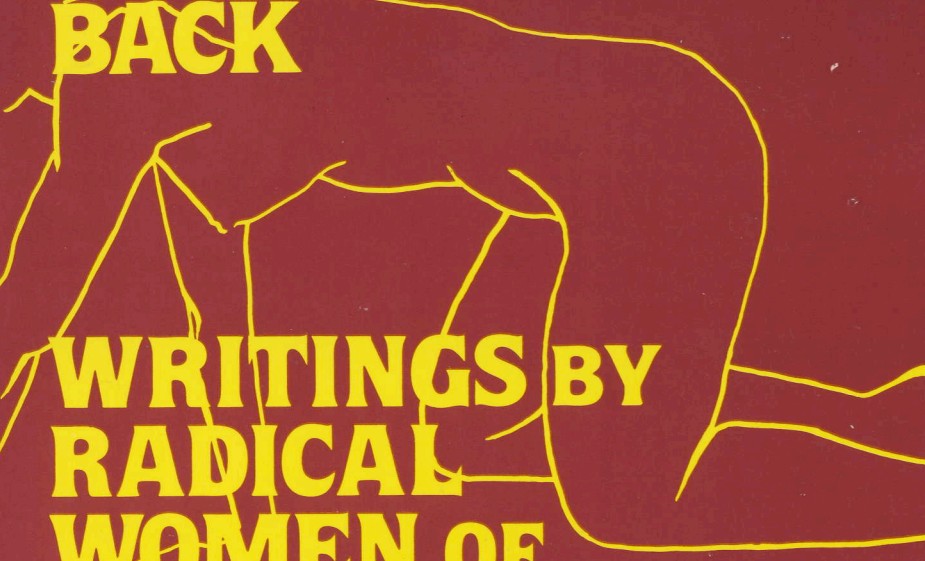


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# **THIS BRIDGE CALLED MY BACK**



**WRITINGS BY  
RADICAL  
WOMEN OF  
COLOR**

**EDITORS:**

**CHERRÍE MORAGA  
GLORIA ANZALDÚA**

**FOREWORD:**

**TONI CADE BAMBARA**

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**KITCHEN TABLE: Women of Color Press**

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Also by Cherríe Moraga

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para

Elvira Moraga Lawrence y  
Amalia García Anzaldúa  
y para todas nuestras madres  
por la obediencia y  
la insurrección  
que ellas nos enseñaron.

for

Elvira Moraga Lawrence and  
Amalia García Anzaldúa  
and for all our mothers  
for the obedience and rebellion  
they taught us.

When Persephone Press, Inc., a white women's press of Watertown, Massachusetts and the original publishers of *Bridge*, ceased operation in the Spring of 1983, this book had already gone out of print. After many months of negotiations, the co-editors were finally able to retrieve control of their book, whereupon Kitchen Table: Women of Color Press of New York agreed to republish it.

The following, then, is the second edition of *This Bridge Called My Back*, conceived of and produced entirely by women of color.

# The Bridge Poem

## *Donna Kate Rushin*

I've had enough  
 I'm sick of seeing and touching  
 Both sides of things  
 Sick of being the damn bridge for everybody

Nobody  
 Can talk to anybody  
 Without me  
 Right?

I explain my mother to my father my father to my little sister  
 My little sister to my brother my brother to the white feminists  
 The white feminists to the Black church folks the Black church folks  
 To the ex-hippies the ex-hippies to the Black separatists the  
 Black separatists to the artists the artists to my friends' parents . . .

Then  
 I've got to explain myself  
 To everybody

I do more translating  
 Than the Gawdamn U.N.

Forget it  
 I'm sick of it

I'm sick of filling in your gaps

Sick of being your insurance against  
 The isolation of your self-imposed limitations  
 Sick of being the crazy at your holiday dinners  
 Sick of being the odd one at your Sunday Brunches  
 Sick of being the sole Black friend to 34 individual white people

Find another connection to the rest of the world  
 Find something else to make you legitimate  
 Find some other way to be political and hip

I will not be the bridge to your womanhood  
Your manhood  
Your human-ness

I'm sick of reminding you not to  
Close off too tight for too long

I'm sick of mediating with your worst self  
On behalf of your better selves

I am sick  
Of having to remind you  
To breathe  
Before you suffocate  
Your own fool self

Forget it  
Stretch or drown  
Evolve or die

The bridge I must be  
Is the bridge to my own power  
I must translate  
My own fears  
Mediate  
My own weaknesses

I must be the bridge to nowhere  
But my true self  
And then  
I will be useful