

Maya Angelou



Writer and activist Maya Angelou had a broad and successful career as a streetcar conductor, a dancer, editor, teacher, storyteller, and actress. Born Marguerite Johnson in 1928, she gained fame with *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings*, her 1970 autobiography which speaks courageously of her encounters with racism. One of the best-known writers in America, Angelou read her poem "On the Pulse of the Morning" at the presidential inauguration of Bill Clinton in 1993. She was the first black woman to have a screenplay (*Georgia, Georgia*) produced in 1972, and she received an Emmy nomination for her performance in *Roots* in 1977. Angelou wrote the poetry for the 1993 film *Poetic Justice*, and went on to appear in that film and others, including *There Are No Children Here* and *How to Make an American Quilt*. She died in 2014 at the age of 86.