



Riches for the Poor: The Clemente Course in the Humanities

By Earl Shorris



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"Rich people learn the humanities; you didn't. . . . It is generally accepted in America that the liberal arts and humanities in particular belong to the elite. I think you're the elite." In this groundbreaking work, Shorris examines the nature of poverty in America today. Why are people poor, and why do they stay poor? Shorris argues that they lack politics, or the ability to participate fully in the public world; knowing only the immediacy and oppression of force, the poor remain trapped and isolated. To test his theory, Shorris creates an experimental school teaching the humanities to poor people, giving them the means to reflect and negotiate rather than react. The results are nothing short of astonishing.

Originally published in hardcover under the title *New American Blues*.

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Editorial Review

Review

Provocative. . . . Provides extraordinary glimpses into the workings of poverty and democracy. . . . The ideas [in this book] clearly merit serious debate. -- *BookPage*

About the Author

Earl Shorris (1936–2012) was the author of many works of both fiction and non-fiction including *Latinos*, *Under the Fifth Sun*, *In the Language of Kings*, and *Riches for the Poor*. He was awarded a National Humanities Medal by President Clinton for his founding of the Clemente Course in the Humanities®, Inc.

From The Washington Post

How refreshing it is to see a well-regarded New York intellectual like Shorris teaching poor people--the allegedly uneducable. . . . That Shorris took his passion for teaching to those who probably otherwise wouldn't [make it] is reason enough to honor his life and debate his theories.

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