



Excavation: A Memoir

By Wendy C. Ortiz

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Wendy C. Ortiz was an only child and a bookish, insecure girl living with alcoholic parents in the San Fernando Valley of Los Angeles in the late 1980s and early 1990s. Her relationship with a charming and deeply flawed private school teacher fifteen years her senior appeared to give her the kind of power teenagers wish for, regardless of consequences. Her teacher - now a registered sex offender - continually encouraged her passion for writing while making her promise she was not leaving any written record about their dangerous sexual relationship. This conflicted relationship with her teacher may have been just five years long, but would imprint itself on her and her later relationships, queer and straight, for the rest of her life. In *Excavation: A Memoir*, the black and white of the standard victim/perpetrator stereotype gives way to unsettling grays. The present-day narrator reflects on the girl she once was, as well as the teacher and parent she has become. It's a beautifully written and powerful story of a woman reclaiming her whole heart.

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Editorial Review

Review

"*Excavation* by Wendy C. Ortiz will change your life. Readers will find everything here: a gripping and necessary story, luminous writing and an utterly compelling heroine who is both generous and fierce. You will emerge changed, dazzled, energized, disbelieving and yet a believer. Most of all, read this book because, like all great literature, and especially the best memoirs, it will make you feel more alive."

--Emily Rapp, author of *The Still Point of the Turning World* and *Poster Child*

"The time has finally arrived when women are telling the truth--the hard truths, the messy, glorious, loud, tender, screeching corporeal truths--about their lives as they live them and not lived as we are asked to live them. Wendy C. Ortiz's writing will rearrange your DNA. Permanently, beautifully..."

--Lidia Yuknavitch, author of *The Chronology of Water* and *Dora: A Headcase*

"It's rare to meet a memoirist who can write about the darkest things without judgment and emotional simplification. Wendy C. Ortiz is that kind of writer, and *Excavation* is a book that's devastating, funny, tough, broken, and achingly clear all at the same time."

--Paul Lisicky, author of *The Burning House* and *Lawnboy*

"A raw, unflinching memoir, beautifully told, *Excavation* is a portrait of all that roils beneath the teenage surface, a reminder of the secrets that any kid might be hiding. Ortiz is a fearless and generous storyteller, peeling back the layers of memory, exploring her parents' alcoholism and her years-long illicit relationship with a teacher, never slipping into the easy traps of sentimentality or self-pity. This is a brave, illuminating book..."

--Cari Luna, author of *The Revolution of Every Day*

"*Excavation* stopped my heart. Its story is vital, cracking open a dialogue about what we keep secret and how those secrets shape our lives. The narrative is direct and unflinching, pulling you, challenging you, the kind of read where you call in sick because ohmygod what happens next; but between those moments, Ortiz hits pause and looks back, allowing the reader to breathe with her, to reflect with her, to "wrestle with ghosts," in language so breathtakingly beautiful, so precise and poetic and true."

--Megan Stielstra, author of *Once I Was Cool*

About the Author

Wendy C. Ortiz is the author of EXCAVATION: A MEMOIR (Future Tense Books, 2014) and *Hollywood Notebook* (Writ Large Press, 2014). Wendy writes the column "On the Trail of Mary Jane" for *McSweeney's Internet Tendency*. Her work has appeared in The New York Times, The Nervous Breakdown, Vol. 1 Brooklyn, *The Rumpus*, *Specter Magazine*, and many other journals. She is co-founder, curator and host of the Rhapsodomancy Reading Series in Los Angeles.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Rafael Brooks:

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Herbert Mikula:

Playing with family within a park, coming to see the marine world or hanging out with good friends is thing that usually you may have done when you have spare time, in that case why you don't try thing that really opposite from that. Just one activity that make you not feeling tired but still relaxing, trilling like on roller coaster you are ride on and with addition of information. Even you love Excavation: A Memoir, you may enjoy both. It is very good combination right, you still would like to miss it? What kind of hangout type is it? Oh can occur its mind hangout folks. What? Still don't have it, oh come on its referred to as reading friends.

Tommy Bowles:

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