

## **CASTILLO, ANA (1953– )**

Chicago born and bred, Ana Castillo's Mexican American family originated in the Southwest. Castillo developed her vibrant literary talents during her college years and gave her first public poetry reading at the age twenty. Reflections on racism and sexism, experiences that she and her family encountered, informed her poetic themes. She earned a master's degree and later a doctorate in American studies at the University of Bremen in Germany. Castillo's first three publications were collections of poetry: *Otro canto*, *The Invitation*, and *Women Are Not Roses*. Throughout the 1980s Castillo's poetry incorporated a more musical tone as the result of her involvement with the Aandalus Flamenco Dance Company. But perhaps her most celebrated publication is *The Mixquiahuala Letters* (1986). The book won the American Book Award from the Before Columbus Foundation. Castillo continues to expand her literary style by publishing children's books, newspaper articles, and nonfiction essays.