



# How Do I Begin? A Hmong American Literary Anthology (Hmong American Writers' Circle)

By The Hmong American Writer's Circle

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Hmong history and culture can be found in the form of oral stories, oral poetry, textile art, and music but there is no written account of Hmong life, by a Hmong hand, passed down through the centuries. As an undergraduate, Burlee Vang experienced this void when he received valuable advice from his English professor: 'Write about your people. That story has not been told. If you don't, who will?'

*How Do I Begin?* is the struggle to preserve on paper the Hmong American experience. In this anthology, readers will find elaborate soul-calling ceremonies, a woman questioning the seeming tyranny of her parents and future in-laws, the temptation of gangs and drugs, and the shame and embarrassment of being different in a culture that obsessively values homogeneity. Some pieces revisit the ghosts of war. Others lament the loss of a country. Many offer glimpses into intergenerational tensions exacerbated by the differences in Hmong and American culture.

*How Do I Begin?* signifies a turning point for the Hmong community, a group of people who have persevered through war, persecution, and exile. Transcending ethnic and geographic boundaries, it poignantly speaks of survival instead of defeat.

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### Editorial Review

#### Review

'Seventeen Hmong come-of-age writers meet you head-on with their hearts on fire, their eyes electric, their voices thundering: bullet-riddled histories, miraculous border-breakouts, adopted fractured citizenships, landscapes in spirit flight, language in between languages, and impossible healings of community, and perhaps one of the finest collections of creative writing in decades. A monumental tour de force.' ---- Juan Felipe Herrera, Tomas Rivera Endowed Chair, UC Riverside

'The confident clear Americano speech tells frankly of the anxieties and questions around being Hmong, new Americans, and artists, with diverse and ever-shifting resolutions. We are witnessing creation.' ---- Gary Snyder, Pulitzer Prize-winning poet, author of *Mountains and Rivers without End*

#### About the Author

Founded in 2004, Hmong American Writers Circle (HAWC) has served as a forum to discover and foster creative writing within the Hmong community. HAWC coordinates monthly writing workshops and provides educational/professional support and networking opportunities to emerging writers in California's Central Valley. Its members have partaken in writing residencies at Hedgebrook and conferences such as Kundiman, Napa Valley Writers Conference, and Tinhouse, and have published their work with Random House, New Rivers Press, Heyday, Swan Scythe Press, and the Minnesota Historical Society Press. Their writings have also appeared in literary journals such as *Ploughshares*, *North American Review*, *In the Grove*, *Paj Ntaub Voice*, *Hyphen Magazine*, and *Alaska Quarterly Review*, among many others. Through the years, HAWC's efforts and achievements have been geared toward the creation of a visible body of Hmong American literature and the establishment of a Hmong literary culture.

### Users Review

#### From reader reviews:

##### Cheryl Dawkins:

This How Do I Begin? A Hmong American Literary Anthology (Hmong American Writers' Circle) book is just not ordinary book, you have after that it the world is in your hands. The benefit you will get by reading this book will be information inside this reserve incredible fresh, you will get information which is getting deeper a person read a lot of information you will get. This How Do I Begin? A Hmong American Literary Anthology (Hmong American Writers' Circle) without we realize teach the one who reading through it become critical in pondering and analyzing. Don't become worry How Do I Begin? A Hmong American Literary Anthology (Hmong American Writers' Circle) can bring whenever you are and not make your carrier space or bookshelves' become full because you can have it with your lovely laptop even phone. This How Do I Begin? A Hmong American Literary Anthology (Hmong American Writers' Circle) having great arrangement in word as well as layout, so you will not really feel uninterested in reading.

##### Cornell Smith:

Reading a book tends to be new life style with this era globalization. With reading you can get a lot of

information that can give you benefit in your life. Using book everyone in this world could share their idea. Textbooks can also inspire a lot of people. Lots of author can inspire their reader with their story or even their experience. Not only the storyline that share in the guides. But also they write about the ability about something that you need example. How to get the good score toefl, or how to teach your kids, there are many kinds of book which exist now. The authors on earth always try to improve their talent in writing, they also doing some investigation before they write on their book. One of them is this How Do I Begin? A Hmong American Literary Anthology (Hmong American Writers' Circle).

**Rhonda Joiner:**

Spent a free the perfect time to be fun activity to do! A lot of people spent their free time with their family, or all their friends. Usually they undertaking activity like watching television, likely to beach, or picnic inside park. They actually doing same task every week. Do you feel it? Will you something different to fill your free time/ holiday? Might be reading a book is usually option to fill your free of charge time/ holiday. The first thing you ask may be what kinds of book that you should read. If you want to consider look for book, may be the book untitled How Do I Begin? A Hmong American Literary Anthology (Hmong American Writers' Circle) can be fine book to read. May be it could be best activity to you.

**Jack Nguyen:**

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