

The Day my Daughter Was Born

Theodore Richards

Theodore Richards is a poet, writer, and religious philosopher. He is a student of the Taoist martial art of Bagua and hatha yoga, and has worked and studied in 25 countries, including the South Pacific, Far East, India, Middle East, Africa, and Latin America. Theodore holds degrees from the University of Chicago, The California Institute of Integral Studies, Wisdom University, and the New Seminary where he was ordained. He served as director of YELLAWE, an innovative program for inner city teens in Oakland created by Matthew Fox, where he taught philosophy, cosmology, and martial arts with an emphasis on creativity and imagination. His first collection of poetry, *Handprints on the Womb*, will be published in fall 2009.

My daughter was born into a room of wise women.
She brought with her
Memories of the ancestors:
The stars in her flesh;
The seas in her tears;
Memories of mammalian compassion
When she searched for her mother's breast;
Memories of the first people
Wandering out on to the African plain,
Of painting the inside of the cave
As she did inside her womb.
She brought with her
Memories of Ellis Island, where they told her to remember no more,
And the Middle Passage, which she never could forget.

My daughter was born from a womb of boundless wisdom.
She could have shared all this, I'm sure.
But after looking up at me,
She simply cried.
Knowing one's audience, they say, is a sign of wisdom.