on Gish Jen, *Tiger Writing: Art, Culture, and the Interdependent Self* (2013):

For author Gish Jen, the daughter of Chinese immigrant parents, books were once an Outsiders’ Guide to the Universe. But they were something more, too. Through her eclectic childhood reading, Jen stumbled onto a cultural phenomenon that would fuel her writing for decades to come: the profound difference in self-narration that underlies the gap often perceived between East and West.

Drawing on a rich array of sources, from paintings to behavioral studies to her father's striking account of his childhood in China, this accessible book not only illuminates Jen's own development and celebrated work but also explores the aesthetic and psychic roots of the independent and interdependent self-each mode of selfhood yielding a distinct way of observing, remembering, and narrating the world. The novel, Jen writes, is fundamentally a Western form that values originality, authenticity, and the truth of individual experience. By contrast, Eastern narrative emphasizes morality, cultural continuity, the everyday, the recurrent. In its progress from a moving evocation of one writer's life to a convincing delineation of the forces that have shaped our experience for millennia, *Tiger Writing* radically shifts the way we understand ourselves and our art-making.

on David Palumbo-Liu, *The Deliverance of Others: Reading Literature in a Global Age* (2012):

*The Deliverance of Others* is a compelling reappraisal of the idea that narrative literature can expand readers' empathy. What happens if, amid the voluminous influx of otherness facilitated by globalization, we continue the tradition of valorizing literature for bringing the lives of others to us, admitting them into our world and valuing the difference that they introduce into our lives? In this new historical situation, are we not forced to determine how much otherness is acceptable, as opposed to how much is excessive, disruptive, and disturbing?

The influential literary critic David Palumbo-Liu suggests that we can arrive at a sense of responsibility toward others by reconsidering the discourses of sameness that deliver those unlike ourselves to us. Through virtuoso readings of novels by J. M. Coetzee, Nadine Gordimer, Kazuo Ishiguro, and Ruth Ozeki, he shows how notions that would seem to offer some basis for commensurability between ourselves and others—ideas of rationality, the family, the body, and affect—become less stable as they try to accommodate more radical types of otherness. For Palumbo-Liu, the reading of literature is an ethical act, a way of thinking through our relations to others.