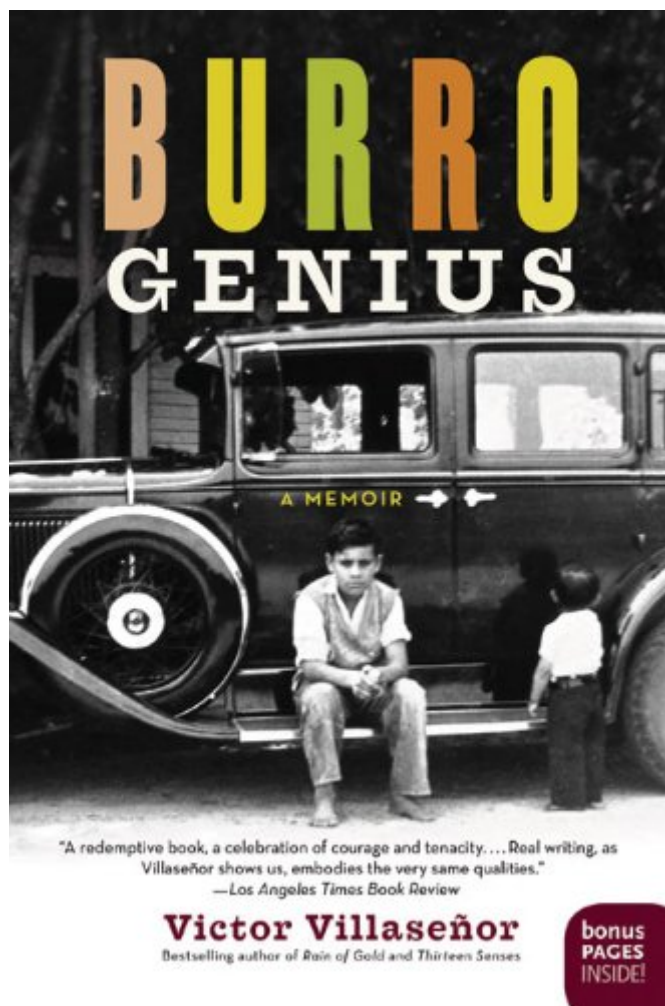


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Burro Genius



Synopsis

From one of America's most beloved authors comes a raw and unnerving memoir that explores the transformation of an angry young man into the bestselling author we know today. When Victor Villaseñor stood at the podium and looked at the group of teachers amassed before him, he became enraged. He had never spoken in public before. His mind was flooded with childhood memories filled with humiliation, misunderstanding, and abuse at the hands of his teachers. With his heart pounding, he began to speak of these incidents. To his disbelief, the teachers before him responded to his embittered recollection with a standing ovation. Many could not contain their own tears. So begins a touching memoir of an extremely angry adolescent. Highly gifted and imaginative, Villaseñor coped with an untreated learning disability (he was finally diagnosed with extreme dyslexia at the age of forty-four) and the frustration he felt growing up Latino in an English-only American school system that had neither the cultural understanding nor the resources to deal with Hispanic students. Often beaten by his teachers because he could not speak English, Villaseñor was made to feel ashamed about his heritage, and even questioned the core values prioritized by his tight-knit family. Villaseñor's dyslexia, and growing frustration over not fitting in, fueled his dream to one day become a writer. He is now considered one of the premier writers of our time. With his signature passion, his gift as a storyteller, and his own incredible story, Villaseñor allows readers into the soul of a young life touched by insecurity yet encouraged by a personal sense of artistic destiny. *Burro Genius*, a complex and inspiring coming-of-age story, is certain to become an American classic.

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Customer Reviews

I had a hard time getting into *Burro Genius* at the beginning. But once I got past reading about the man as an adult and got into reading about Victor as a child I could not put it down. Victor is probably one of the most influential and relatable authors for Mexican-Americans everywhere. His father reminded me of my father, with all of his words of wisdom and his way of telling life lessons. These characters are in my heart like real people. I find myself thinking about Chavaboy, Lupe and even the "help". It has also broadened my understanding on how important it is to have good rolemodels and teachers in life. I have taken some of the advice and lessons and have applied them to my own life.

I must read for all parents of children with learning disabilities. Villasenor is a great story teller, and this would be a great book to read with or to a child--with or without a learning disability. Understanding the thought processes of a child, knowing the damage teachers can do, and seeing how one person can make a lasting impact are central to the story. However, what a parent or grandparent will hold onto is that despite all he went through, Villasenor overcame his disability and wrote such grand literature as *Rain of Gold*.

If you took a bunch of ingredients and put them in a mixer just long enough to break them up, when you poured them out the jumble that results would be as hard to recognize as the plot for *Burro Genius*. That's not to say the results aren't tasty. Victor Villasenor has written an unusual book. Finding a narrative structure with an interesting enough plot to tie together one's life story is always challenging. Victor solves this by jumping back and forth through time, in and out of magic realism, and injecting his secret sauce into his recipe for life. There are times the book hurls bricks at the school systems--private and public-- of the 1950s. As a young child Victor experiences racism first hand with all its illogical stupidity. One of the counterbalances to the destructiveness of this

anti-hispanic hatred is the rich oral teachings of Victor's indigenous grandmother. She left him with another world view that helped him survive. Another counterbalance was being rich, literally. This provides a big dose of cognitive dissidence to white racists. It's an interesting and challenging book. Young Victor's problem with pee has turned off many a reader. Not sure why this particular fact was so pervasive in the story. Try to get past it.

Amazing account of growing up in 1940's Southern California. Villasenor has crafted a beautiful narrative that is still relevant today. I cannot recommend this book enough, and it should be a must read for anyone who is a teacher or planning on entering the profession. Students who find themselves feeling like an "other" or outsider at school would probably also be inspired by the way that Villasenor succeeded in spite of his teachers and his undiagnosed dyslexia.

Burro Genius was the first of Senor Villasenor's books recommended to me. Sounds trite but I literally could not put it down. Victor describes his educational experiences with clarity, compassion and the gift of his humility. Without his family's support he may never have achieved the level of writing that has earned him such public acclaim, and notoriety. Schools across the nation make his works required reading...thereby enriching the lives of students and teachers.

This is a story about a boy with dyslexia and his struggle to deal with bullying teachers and children throughout his school years. This book should really be read to all school age children so that they might have empathy for kids with challenges. It is very inspirational.

This book was great and was very relatable as a hispanic male

I am so glad this book exist because more now will become aware of dyslexia. I especially recall, *maÃfÂ ana es otro milagro de dios*, followed by the mother never never never gave up on life. The mother like many others, generations back, silently and through familia have lived their entire lives. (Hereditary)

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