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Table of contents

1 OUR HEROES.....	2
1.1 Caribbean Authors.....	2
1.2 Olga Lopes-Seale : Our Energetic Social Worker.....	5

1. OUR HEROES

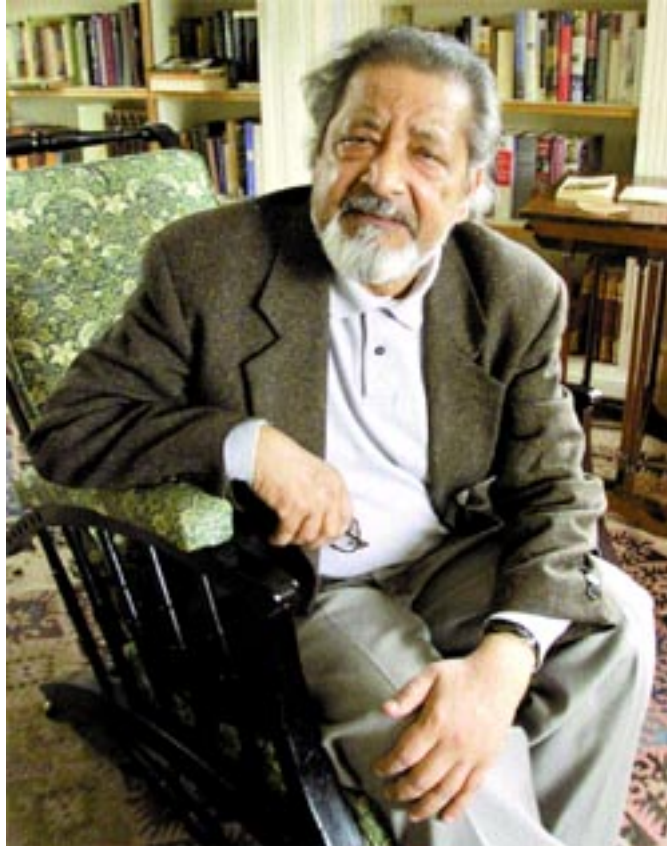
SAGHS' Young Leaders 2005 ... Strengthening Our Societies ... Our Vision ... Our People ...
Our Culture

1.1. Caribbean Authors

1.1.1. Sir V.S. Naipaul



Sir Vidiadhar Surajprasad Naipaul was born in Trinidad in 1932 and has lived in England since 1950. A master of English prose with virtuosity and psychological insight, he focuses on his childhood and often details the difficulties facing the Third World.



Widely considered as the leading novelist of the English speaking Caribbean, Naipaul was born into a family of Indian Brahmin origin. Naipaul was educated in Port-of-Spain and in 1950 received a scholarship to Oxford. On graduation, Naipaul started a career as a freelance writer.

Naipaul published his first books in the late 50's which included the classic *Miguel Street*. In 1961, he released *A House for Mr. Biswas*, which is often referred to as his masterpiece.

In 1961, Naipaul received a grant from the Trinidadian Government to travel in the Caribbean. From his wide period of travels the world over, Naipaul produced among others *India: A Wounded Civilization* (1977) and *A Bend in the River* (1979).

In the 90's, Naipaul concentrated on non-fiction. In 1994 appeared his long-awaited novel, *A Way in the World* (an autobiography and a fictional history of colonialism) and in 2001, *In a Half Life*. Sir Naipaul's awards include: the Booker prize for *In a Free State* (1971); knighthood in 1989; the David Cohen British Literature Prize for "lifetime achievement by a living British writer"; the Nobel Prize in literature in 2001.

1.1.2. Samuel Dickinson Selvon



Samuel Selvon was born to East Indian parents in San Fernando, Trinidad, and was educated at Naparima College, Trinidad. Graduating in 1938 with a Senior Cambridge Certificate, Selvon subsequently equipped himself for his writing career through professional experience and on-the-job training. Between 1945 and 1950, he published a number of short stories, poems, and articles in Caribbean magazines. Between 1950 and 1952, Selvon was a free-lance writer in England, where he became internationally recognized. He moved to Canada in 1978.

Selvon began his international career with his first novel, *A Brighter Sun*, which is set in Trinidad and explores peasant experience during socio-economic change.

With the exception of *The Lonely Londoner*, Selvon's novels focus on the everyday experience of islanders in Trinidad. *The Lonely Londoner* portrays in a humorous manner the experience of the expatriate West Indians in London. *Moses Ascending* (1975) expresses what may be Selvon's most trenchant social criticism, which he communicates through a hybrid form of English that combines Trinidad Creole English and Standard English. *Moses Migrating* (1983) - Moses returns to Trinidad as an ambassador of British cultural pride, providing the reader with many ironic contrasts between colonizer and colonized. Selvon's career places him in the two worlds of colonial and post-colonial experience. His work extends from the period of waning colonial control by Britain, through the dislocating experience of exile (*The Lonely Londoner*) and the disappointing search for

synthesis and completeness in Moses Ascending, to the hopeful resumption of the search in Moses Migrating, which combines the ironies and contrasts of failed experience and fantasy.

1.2. Olga Lopes-Seale : Our Energetic Social Worker

Olga Lopes-Seale is known affectionately to all Barbadians as "Auntie Olga". She was born in Guyana on December 26, 1918, and was educated there. In 1939 Olga married a Barbadian, Dick Seale. The couple had two children - Marcia and John who were born in Guyana. The family moved to Barbados in 1963.

Olga Lopes-Seale's career started when she was in her early teens. She loved singing and playing her own mandolin. She became well known as far back as 1942 visiting Barbados for singing engagements.

In 1952 in Guyana, Olga started full-time radio broadcasting. Her warm and friendly voice along with her caring personality made her extremely successful and popular with programmes such as "Yours Truly Olga", as well as her Children's Talent Shows. She also started the Radio Demerara Needy Children's Fund in 1953. Through this programme many children in need benefited from Santa's presents each Christmas. In 1961, Olga was made a Member of the Order of the British Empire for her kind humanitarian efforts and for her contribution to Broadcasting in Guyana.

Olga was known in the 40s and 50s as the "Vera Lyn of the Caribbean" and sang many inspirational favourites which included "If I can help somebody". This became her theme song.

Since 1963 she has helped and warmed the hearts of many people in Barbados. Her particular devotion is in assisting the young as well as the elderly Barbadians through her Barbados Rediffusion programmes, and has inspired many successful fund raising events.

Olga Lopes-Seale is now a proud great-grandmother and continues her work with those in need. She has a wide knowledge of Barbados and is also a poet and newspaper columnist. She is the recipient of a long list of many different awards given for all her humanitarian work in the Barbadian community.

Her humble deeds and actions have certainly made her an outstanding personality. Her life is a leading example of that beautiful and touching song which is still one of her favourites today:

"If I can help somebody as I pass along, If I can cheer somebody with a word or song, If I can show somebody who is travelling wrong, Then my living shall not be in vain."

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