flash back to Fresno where the Armenian crones reaffirm the harmony of the life cycle:

What is [your granddaughter] studying?
Life, she says she's studying life.
What do you mean she's studying life?
That's what she told me, she said she was studying life sciences.
Is there any money in that kind of subject?
There's money in everything.
Not in raisins. There's no money in raisins anymore.
You wait, in a few years there'll be money in raisins again too (157).

Written with one of the finest prose styles in contemporary American fiction, Daughters of Memory helps the Armenians catch up with ourselves and points us toward the love that redeems history.

—Margaret Bedrosian
University of California, Davis


Perhaps humans are most ethnocentric when it comes to matters of food and music. “Soul food” has become a dimension for defining ethnic groups—the dishes may be chitlins, bagels, tacos or other such foods. As society becomes more open, these foods pass from the ghettos and barrios to the community at large. One would hope that some inter-ethnic group understanding and appreciation might accompany the sharing of varying gustatory pleasures. Music represents another dimension of ethnic group identity. As with learning to eat different foods, one might comprehend something of the spirit of another people by listening to their songs—their soul music.

The flute, the rattle, and the drum represent the triumvirate of American Indian musical instruments. The music for these instruments has been handed down from generation to generation. The musicological system represented has a very long tradition if one can judge from fragments of flutes and rattles preserved in archaeological sites dating eight to ten thousand years ago. Thus, listening to Native American music today can put one in touch with a traditional sense of time which is one of the dimensions of American Indian ethnicity.

R. Carlos Nakai is a Navajo-Ute musician and educator who performs traditional Native American songs and composes new melodies on a hand-crafted flute of red cedar heart-wood. During the approximately twenty-two minutes of Changes we can listen to a collection of fourteen
songs on solo flute. Included are Zuni, Lakota, and Blood songs as well as Nakai’s impressionistic compositions based on traditional melodies. The juxtaposition of these pieces provides a nice case study in continuity and change. Even more dramatic, in this respect, is the music recorded on Cycles. This tape, including eight compositions, constitutes the sound track for a multi-image show, “Our Voices, Our Land,” which was prepared at the Heard Museum in Phoenix, Arizona. Here, Nakai plays his flute against background music which he composed for the synthesizer. The electronic instrument often simulates the beat of the drum, that which Native Americans sometimes refer to as the heartbeat of their people. Some of the pieces are embellished with rattles of differing tones. The tape may take some listeners a second or even third time around to fully appreciate what is going on. The result cannot be measured objectively. But subjectively, “there you have it”: the melding of the old and the new, the millennia-old triumvirate and the epitome of twentieth-century sound engineering technology. Puns aside, the reviewer finds the results electrifying. What better way to appreciate—and pass on to students—the fact that American Indians (and others) can maintain their traditional heritage and ethnicity while participating in the larger society around them?

In sum, I highly recommend the records and cassettes of Native American music by R. Carlos Nakai for use in the classroom or, as they say, “for your listening pleasure.”

—David M. Gradwohl
Iowa State University


*Reaping the Whirlwind* is a case study of the black American struggle for civil rights and racial democracy in a unique community of the Black Belt South. It is a story of Tuskegee’s white political hegemony and the black elite’s early cooperation with and later mild challenge to that dominance. In 1880, as a result of collaboration between white politicians and Tuskegee’s black leadership, the Democrats secured political control of the Alabama state legislature. The following year, as pay-off for the deal, Tuskegee Institute was established with Booker T. Washington at the helm, and the goal became one of making Tuskegee a model community for safeguarding racial cooperation through black political subordination. Tuskegee’s white merchants, former slaveowners, and educators alike encouraged black educational opportunities (“separate