

# Inimitable writer visits Victoria

BY APRILL BRANDON

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Writer Antonya Nelson is a literary multitasker. An author, a celebrated short story writer and an essayist, she can do it all.

But it was only recently that she jumped into the personal essay genre as the writer-at-large for Texas Monthly magazine.

As the featured speaker for the American Book Review at the University of Houston-Victoria on Thursday, Nelson gave the audience a taste of her writing by reading a personal essay she wrote for the magazine titled "Inimitable Ink."

"This your first tattoo?" the 'artist' asked. Already I felt uncomfortable — 46 years old (it was literally my forty-sixth birthday), hanging around at a place that I had so hoped would resemble a doctor's office, but looked like the skanky apartments of slacker boyfriends from college, with a ripped pleather couch, sophomore posters, and foul incense — but his question gave me further pause," Nelson read as

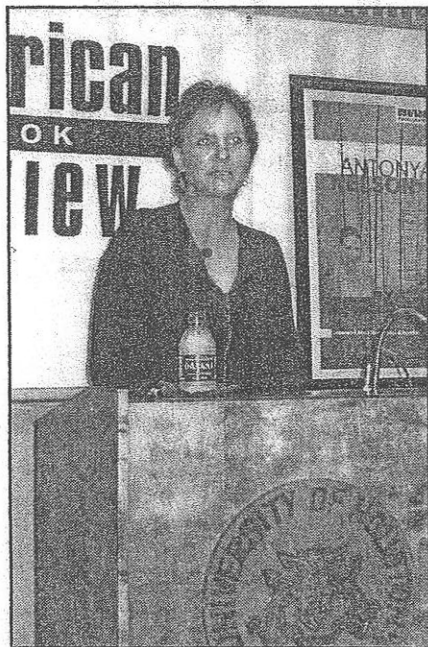
## READING SERIES

Antonya Nelson is the 17th speaker for the American Book Review reading series and is the last speaker for the 2008 fall series. The spring series begins Jan. 22 with writer Marjorie Perloff.

the audience laughed. "It was akin to somebody asking the bride, on her wedding day, if this was her first husband. I mean, how many — husbands, tattoos — did a person need?"

With three novels, five short-story collections and articles appearing in publications such as Esquire, Harper's and The New Yorker, Nelson also discussed her writing process.

"When I write, I'm mostly discovering the story as I write it," she said. "And as I first begin writing, the audience I'm writing to is myself. It has to be something interesting to me and something that I would like to read."



APRILL BRANDON/VICTORIA ADVOCATE

Writer Antonya Nelson visited the campus of the University of Houston-Victoria on Thursday as part of the American Book Review reading series.