



**Name in English:** Bette Bao Lord  
**Name in Chinese:** 包柏漪 [包柏漪]  
**Name in Pinyin:** Bāo Bǎi Yī  
**Gender:** Female  
**Birth Year:** 1938  
**Birth Place:** Shanghai, China  
**Current location:** New York New York  
**Philanthropy:** Yes

## Bestselling Author

**Profession(s):** Author, Human Rights Advocate

**Education:** Bachelor of Arts, History & Political Science, Tufts University, 1959;  
Master of Arts, Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy, Tufts University, 1960

**Awards:** 1984, Award for Book “The Year of the Boar and Jackie Robinson,” American Library Association; 1985, Jefferson Cup Award for Book “In the Year of the Boar and Jackie Robinson,” Virginia Library Association; 1990, “Legacies: A Chinese Mosaic” listed as one of Top 10 best nonfiction books, Time Magazine; 1992, Exceptional Achievement Award, Women’s Project and Production; 1993, Barnard College Medal of Distinction; 1998, Eleanor Roosevelt Award for Human Rights, Clinton Administration; 1998 Immigrant Achievement Awards, American Immigration Law Foundation; 2002, Founder’s Award, Historical Society of Pennsylvania; 2002, Founder’s Award, Carnegie Foundation; Honorary doctorate degrees from the University of Notre Dame, Tufts University, Skidmore College, Marymount College, Bryant College, and Dominican College

**Contribution (s):** Bette Bao’s father was a British educated engineer who was sent by the Nationalist Chinese government in 1946 to buy heavy equipment in the United States rebuild China following WWII. His wife and two of his three daughters joined him in America leaving their youngest in the care of relatives to spare the toddler the rigors of a month-long ocean voyage. In 1949, with the communist revolution in China, it became obvious that there would be no easy way to go home or to get the youngest daughter out. The family lived in Brooklyn, New York but soon moved to New Jersey. After graduate school Bette worked for the University of Hawaii's East-West Cultural Center. In 1961 she became an adviser to the director of the Fulbright Scholarship Program in Washington and in 1962, married Winston Lord, later US Ambassador to China (1985-1989.) In the same year her mother faked a grave illness that convinced the communist authorities to allow Sansan, the now 17 year old sister, to leave China.

Inspired by friends and by Sansan, Bette wrote her first book, “Eighth Moon: The True Story of a Young Girl's Life in Communist China” which gained critical and commercial success. Her 1981 fictional book, “Spring Moon” was nominated for a National Book Award and was on the New York Times bestseller list for thirty weeks. In 1984, Bette published her first children's book, “In the Year of the Boar and Jackie Robinson,” a

fictionalized account of her first year in America as a grade-schooler in Brooklyn, which won the American Library Association Award. In 1990, Bette published her second work of nonfiction, "Legacies, A Chinese Mosaic," which tells the story of her return to China as the wife of the American ambassador. The book became a New York Times bestseller, a Book of the Month Club selection, and was named one of the top ten books of nonfiction for 1990 by Time Magazine. During the time of her husband's service she played a critical role in smoothing Chinese and American relations as China opened up economically and politically by acting as a cultural ambassador. She explained China to the American TV and print media, serving as special consultant for CBS News as student protests unfolded at Tiananman Square. She helped send artists and writers to study in the U.S. and brought such people as Charlton Heston over to direct Chinese actors in a stage production of "The Caine Mutiny." She is a founding member of the Committee of 100. Bette continues to be an author and distinguished guest lecturer at universities and government institutions across the US and is the Chairman Emeritus of Freedom House, which promotes democratic institutions around the world. The "Bette Bao Lord Prize for Writing in the Cause of Freedom" is named in her honor.

### **Philanthropy**

Bette Bao Lord and Winston Lord are sponsors of The Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts and the International Rescue Committee, an international relief and humanitarian aid organization.

### **Publications**

Eighth Moon: The True Story of a Young Girl's Life in Communist China, by Sansan as told to Bette Lord, New York, Harper & Row, 1964.

Spring Moon: A Novel of China, Boston, Massachusetts : G.K. Hall, 1982.

In the Year of the Boar and Jackie Robinson, New York : Harper & Row, 1984.

Legacies : a Chinese Mosaic, New York : Alfred A. Knopf, distributed by Random House, 1990.

The Middle Heart, New York : Alfred A. Knopf, distributed by Random House, 1996.

### **External Links:**

<http://www.neh.gov/news/humanities/2005-11/bridging.html>

[http://www.gale.cengage.com/free\\_resources/whm/bio/lord\\_b.htm](http://www.gale.cengage.com/free_resources/whm/bio/lord_b.htm)

<http://worldcat.org/identities/lccn-n81-35451>

<http://www.charlieroose.com/guests/betty-lord>