Yerby, Frank,

Yerby's story "Health Card" won the O. Henry Memorial Award for best first published short story in 1944. In 1946 his first novel, The Foxes of Harrow, was an immediate success. His novels are action-packed, usually featuring a strong hero in an earlier period. The stories unfold in colourful language and include characters of all ethnic backgrounds, enmeshed in complex story lines laced with romantic intrigue and violence. His best work may be his novel The Dahomean (1971).

As a black author, Yerby was widely criticized for not giving more attention to racial problems in his fiction. But though Yerby himself said that writers should amuse and not preach to their readers, some critics see in his writings a savage critique of historical myths, especially of the United States and the American South.

Discrimination in the United States caused Yerby to leave and live in self-imposed exile in Madrid from 1955 until his death.