

# DOWNLOAD PDF FEAR OF FLYING : ROBERT LOWELL AND THE TROPE OF VULNERABILITY

## Chapter 1 : Project MUSE - "My Mind's Not Right": the Legacy of Robert Lowell

*The trope of vulnerability, as Bloom describes it in Lowell, derives from Williams' "fiction of nakedness," but I would argue that it greatly complicates the earlier poet's relatively simple desire to articulate ordi-*

One is offered such oracular statements all the time, but often misses them, gets lazy about writing them out in detail, or the meaning refuses to stay put. Dial, , Robert Dale Parker Moths never aspire, and no reader could previously have associated aspiration with Man-Moths, having never heard of the things before. Only people Men, in the language of the poem aspire, so that the poem becomes an allegorical commentary on human ambition and the restraint of ambition by fear, especially fear of failure. The Man dares not ascend, because he knows he will fall; whereas the Man-Moth believes he will fall if he dares ascend, but dares not refuse to try. The world of have they find confining. They aspire to more than they can have, and they cannot believe they will ever reach what they aspire to, so that only wish is left to fill the space between satisfaction in the here and natural, and faith in the hereafter and supernatural. Bishop thus choose wishes instead of unbelief. He tries, in the first half, to escape into aloneness, but in the second half, the populated world around him reasserts its routine. Then, abruptly, she addresses us as if we share the mythical world that until then she has described as apart from us and as fantastically imaginary. Like watchmen, we patrol the illusory world and hold it up to the cold, flashlight scrutiny of synthetic vision. From the sympathetic, opening "Here" that mixes so oddly with the extraterrestrial "above" that Bishop joins to it, we change to the guarded but earthly distance of watching and disarming. Perhaps Bishop then feels a guilt or regret for deserting what she had romanticized, which leads her to sentimentalize the final lines, as if to compensate. That hardly helps, for in the process she condescends to the once-wild and boldly wishful creature, reimagining him as timid and obedient. The residue of human imagination is thus desperate and wishful, hanging on by its spoils, agonizingly secondary. From Robert Dale Parker, "Wish: The Poetry of Elizabeth Bishop Urbana: University of Illinois Press, , , Bishop remembers that in a dream her friend Margaret Miller "had looked into the inside of a small mask someone had pulled from his face, and caught in it all around the eyeholes were the little hairy eyelashes. We know that a newspaper misprint, reading "manmoth" for "mammoth," prompted the poem: Doreski Early "Man-Moth" and late "Pink Dog" examples of her personae of exile illustrate her fascination with extreme isolation, with freaks and outcasts. Though their admittedly distorted perspectives are convincing, they engender no sense of kinship, nor are they intended to. Their purpose is to engender languages of extremity, and to plot with their grotesque narratives the border beyond which the psyche and language no longer appear to coincide. The otherworldliness of "The Man-Moth" beckons; like the shadows of German Expressionist films, it looms uncomfortably near enough to darken the familiar world. The man-moth is an oddly plausible figure, drawn to the surface from tunnels and nightmares of the ordinary imagination. The "whole new world" he occupies depends upon negatives or opposites: The shadowy mirror-images unlike the playful distortions of "The Gentleman of Shalott" challenge his grip on the surface of the earth just as they challenge the ordinary viewer to define a comfortable self-image, a grip on sanity. Yet even this world of negatives and opposites has limits and rules. The nature of his other life, underground, remains undetermined; but unlike Crusoe this alien shares, somewhat unwillingly, what humanity he contains: If you catch him, hold up a flashlight to his eye. Bishop conjures similarly self-inhibited spirits throughout her writing. The actions of Crusoe occur within a carefully depicted emotional frame, but the Man-Moth embodies the unknown or the unconscious, "an entire night in itself. The truncated first lines of these stanzas indicate how very tentative this gesture really is. Though the images are tethered to the knowable world, the poem heightens the contrast between shadow and light, the strangeness of ordinary landscapes, and the potential oddities of perspective. Bishop has dramatized the way the ordinary daylight world forcibly persuades the outsider to conform: The compactness of his world, the tension of his stance, in these lines is oppressive. The density of the stanzas, the longish lines dominated by monosyllables, suggest what the Man-Moth must penetrate. These contrasting

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worlds of shadow and light, underground and surface seem mutually exclusive, beyond interpretation or knowledge. The ordinary world has broken down into cubist planes of darkness and reflected light, while the poet-observer stands to one side, manipulating those reflections in the terms of self-definition. The Restraints of Language. These associations are preserved, instead, in her working notebooks, where a direct relationship is forged between the fatal third rail and the dangers of alcoholism. In the journal she kept following her graduation from Vassar, Bishop plays with certain ideas that would eventually find their way into "the Man-Moth," including the observation that "the third rail is almost worth some sort of prose poem. Running along silently, as insincere as poison" "Recorded Observations," p. As we have already seen, she would come to think of alcohol as a poison with "flattering" effects, thus establishing a connection between ingratiating liquor and the "insincere" third rail that runs beside the subway track like an "unbroken draught of poison. Like the vampire the man-moth seeks to penetrate the physical boundaries of this universe and be born into a new existence, one that escapes the laws of mortality and gravity that weigh down the natural man. Thinking of the moon "as a small hole at the top of the sky," his aim is to "push his small head through that round clean opening. It also connects the Man-Moth with strange legendary creatures like genies and leprechauns, who must surrender their treasure when caught or summoned. In each case, attention can reveal the openings in the external facade and make connection with the internal or other world possible. The suggestion that the tear be drunk, that the other be internalized, relates to the image of the moon as birth canal; the mortal risk and the possibility for true connection through internalization seems to me a profoundly feminine image. The tear is, as Lloyd Schwartz says, "a clarifying vision for whoever asks for it. In the act of imbibing the tear, man risks, the danger of self-annihilation, transcendence and understanding. University of Alabama Press, , Helen M. Dennis One of the problems of romanticism is the divide between the phenomenal and the noumenal which I have just referred to, and one of the tasks of the romantic poet is thus to find ways of linking the two. The man-moth foregrounds the "imaginary" identity and plays down the actual, and yet there are moments of linkage: Each night he must be carried through artificial tunnels and dream recurrent dreams Just as the ties recur beneath his train, these underlie his rushing brain. The fantasy world of the "imaginary" is proffered as the norm, and details from what we normally accept as the "real" world, the world of commuter travel becomes the descriptive figure of speech. The figurative and the real, or the vehicle and tenor have been inverted. The sublime is the locus where phenomenon and noumen should meet, it is an indeterminate space which should act as a bridge between the two; or as a place where the impossible leap can be made to connect the two. He thinks the moon is a small hole at the top of the sky, proving the sky quite useless for protection. He trembles, but must investigate as high as he can climb. So that this is a type of attempt at aesthetic transcendence, in a modernist parody of what Brooks calls the verticality of sublime landscapes. Yet even in the romantic project the ascent is doomed to a fall. The vertical landscapes of the romantic sublime with their dizzying heights and peaks lost in the clouds emphasize the impossible but ineluctable ascent and the subsequent fall back into the merely human. It ends with a tear which becomes a "pearl" of wisdom or exchange with the reader; a tear which reminds us that terror and self-pity are also linked in the romantic landscape of the self. Poetry and the Sense of Panic:

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## Chapter 2 : Pulitzer Prize for Poetry - Wikipedia

*In its place he suggests a model of vulnerability, incoherence, and disorientation to reflect the modern destabilizing nature of travel, a condition that began with the unprecedented movement of people during and after World War II and has not abated since.*"--Jacket."

She was a controversialist not out of belligerence or righteousness or arrogance, but out of cultural conviction. Argument is the visible, sequential life of ideas. Controversy is good for the heart, and indispensable for any but the lazy mind. This is a stance which leads to stridency, almost entails it. It also tends to literalism, to an underrating of the meanings of silence, or of motivations which are signalled but not fully declared. I am its product. For all of my life, the fear of insanity has blocked the free play of my imagination and made me too intent upon reasonableness. Students occupied university buildings, and after a week were forcibly ejected by the police; there was fear of racial riot; flying rhetoric, some vandalism, much dissension among teachers and students and administrators who had previously not known how much room there was for disagreement in their lives. Mrs Trilling has some sympathy for the black demonstrators " she admires their dignity and self-respect, and thinks they have a case against American society " but thinks the white student radicals were just spoilt and ungrateful kids, peeing on the carpet that welcomed them. We may well think that this was some cheek, or some chic, chutzpah well beyond the call of Oedipal protest. There is a remarkable anticipation here of one of the key strategies in the attribution of political correctness. A question is asked, characteristically by someone with very little institutional or political power except that which your conscience concedes them. But it has been asked, so the next best thing is to turn the asker into a Stalinist or a Nazi. We need to go further, though. We caution against capitulation to the revolution designed by the New Left, point to its ugly violence But must we not also caution against the comfortable assumption that liberalism has only to shine up its old medals and resurrect its old rhetoric of responsibility? By confusing quiet with quietism, by buttressing legality with inertia, liberalism has earned at least some part of its present poor reputation on the campus. Yet it will suffer more than disrepute, destruction, if in admitting its deficiencies it either rests with these as its cosy guilt or, in its desire for revitalisation, takes the revolution as its alternative. Diana and Lionel Trilling were born in July ; they married in They came from well-to-do Jewish families who lived, at various times, in Manhattan, Brooklyn and Westchester County. She studied at Radcliffe, he at Columbia. After a year in Wisconsin, he got a job at Columbia, and for the rest of their lives, apart from vacations and stints as visitors at Oxford, they lived in New York " most of the time on Morningside Heights, close to Columbia. Lionel Trilling died in , and the book ends as an elegy, not only for him and their marriage, but for their friends and their world. The tone here is as far from stridency as it could be. I have not found a substitute for his unhurried and unostentatious thoughtfulness. He lived in the world of ideas and he constantly brought me its news. He valued his intellectual endowment all too lightly and I am afraid that I also undervalued it. Her gloss makes clear, though, the sort of moral evaluation she and Lionel Trilling were after. What skews the aftermath of this moment, and makes Mrs Trilling look like the neoconservative she is not, is the notion of the single colossal error " an error so interesting that everything pales into insignificance beside it. It may also be that people who feel they were wrong only once have an even stiffer and more exalted sense of virtue than those who believe they were never wrong at all. Theirs was uniquely the age of criticism. Their criticism went everywhere. They had no gods, no protectorates or sacred constituencies. They were a small, geographically concentrated group, but if they did nothing else, they kept the general culture in balance. We could think of Kenneth Burke, R. Blackmur, Allen Tate, many more. We so happily give our assent to what Tolstoy shows us and so willingly call it reality because we have something to gain from its being reality. Perhaps, indeed, what Tolstoy has done is to constitute as reality the judgment which every decent, reasonably honest person is likely to make of himself. This is further than the darkest deconstructionist would go. The practical limits to deconstruction are political and historical " it is the point

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of deconstruction to show that that is what they are, but the world Lionel Trilling evokes is a universal flung across a void. Or if we have quite other notions of what decency and honesty are? The world of Tolstoy evaporates, and with it the world we wanted. Believing in Dostoevsky, and the truths of horror and evil, as our century means we must, we are in danger of believing only in those truths. This is the great modern orthodoxy, and an overwhelming heresy against the kindness and ordinariness we also know. This point is very well made, and a glance at *The Liberal Imagination*, for instance, confirms it amply. Lionel taught me to think; I taught him to write. In a society such as ours, where despite the efforts of feminism, women continue to be treated with less generosity than men, I realise of course that whereas my statement that Lionel taught me to think will be received without a murmur, I put myself at risk by saying that I played a role in his literary accomplishment. In fact, I recently tested the response which I might expect to this bald assertion: I tried it on an old friend, the editor of a magazine to which Lionel and I had contributed. He made no attempt to conceal his displeasure. Lionel was a writer of broader vision than mine and of more complex purpose and in the course of time he developed a prose which I could only envy. It was the perfect instrument of his ideas, cadenced yet forceful, precisely elegant, with a curious ability to suggest that space was being saved for what the author had left unsaid. Mrs Trilling did not usually save such space, and even in this book, with its admirable honesty and vulnerability, she often makes announcements rather than gives clues. It was itself a movement of power, and like all movements of power it was led by ambition and self-interest. But then there are marvellously stealthy phrases here, and some fine musical paragraphs. I wonder if the fact that Mrs Trilling who is almost blind had to dictate the book was a help rather than a hindrance here – stylistically, I mean, since it obviously complicated her labour immensely in other ways. Her jokes about her husband manage to be both sharp-edged and amiable, even fond: As man-about-town he had a long way to go and would never really make the course. At will, I conjure up the little boy he was then: I see him rising at dawn and treading the worn earth behind his tenement as he goes about the preparation of his long dark day. I see him at heder, bright-eyed, timid, shrewd, studying his Talmud, rocking and chanting in unison with the other little scholars, all of them hungry and sleepy and scared, all of them at the mercy of the Reb, that seedy and greedy tyrant over the young. I sometimes think that my heart has never stopped aching, whether with my masked and injured love for my father or my injured and buried love for my mother. But there are admirable notations of American Jewish life in the early part of the century; shrewd comments on the Depression and on the American response to World War Two; on what it meant to be a woman in an intellectual world assumed to belong to men. There is a powerful description of becoming the mother of a first and only child at He idealised the creative writer as a recklessly liberated figure, trampling on the codes that fetter the rest of us, but he became mainly a critic through decency. Lionel Trilling was often depressed; Diana Trilling endlessly phobic. She was frequently, on her own account, almost impossible to live with. But she creates, seemingly without trying and certainly without boasting, the impression of a woman of great courage – the courage which comes from getting the best of your terrible nerves – and of remarkable generosity.

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### Chapter 3 : Mastery's End : Travel and Postwar American Poetry |

*Near the middle of Robert Lowell's For the Union Dead, a new trope appears, one that will continue in several successive books, particularly those whose poems are often presented as daily notes--Notebook , Notebook, History, For Lizzie and Harriet, and The Dolphin. .*

Published in Oakland, the anthology draws on a considerable number of Bay Area poets, whose attitudes are vehemently ideological. Many poems nourished an apocalyptic view of the event: In this fatalistic scenario, the new century is imagined as more harrowing than the previous one, in which, for example, Robinson Jeffers calmly imagines not only a terminus for the war signified by Pearl Harbor, but inevitable victory for the nation whose flag he flies from his tower: What would constitute victory in the cycle of violence inaugurated, or reinvigorated, by the destruction of the World Trade Center? That is, do some poets see the disaster as an opportunity that they can turn selfishly to their own personal or political program by manipulating the high emotions of their readers to make a name for themselves as a sensitive soul or a charismatic prophet? But I suspect even more the desire to demean imaginative texts on any subject as exploitative. Norman Mailer confessed that his first thought upon hearing of the attack on Pearl Harbor was to wonder if the great American novel about the coming war would be set in the Pacific or European theater of conflict. Does that low musing affect our judgment of *The Naked and the Dead*? The artwork itself provides the only genuine evidence as to whether it is worthy or unworthy, a cynical grab for public attention or a hard-won effort to reveal the urgent significance of its topic. I give every poem in this essay the benefit of the doubt. Their sincerity, I believe, is guaranteed by their achieved craft. *American Writers Respond*, edited by William Heyen. Incorporating essays, poems, and memoirs, this assemblage is the most important literary document of the event so far. I have an essay in the collection. I have used some of the poems from this anthology in my undergraduate classes and I can testify that students appreciate the timeliness, the air of high-emotion reportage, even if they disdain some of the attitudes. We cannot live in Eden anymore. The wall is broken. We peer beyond the ruin of that day and see. Just smoke and rubble. A vacancy terrible to behold. The poem concludes with the image of milkweed seeds blowing in the wind. But what are words now? Words are so small. Words have no weight. And nothing will ever be the same. This disconsolate poem is a classic expression of melancholia and mourning; it transcribes the emotional devastation of the day itself, when the entire nation watched on television a continuous loop of the disappearance of two giant towers, the damage and casualties at the Pentagon, and the wreckage of United Airlines Flight 93 near Shanksville, Pennsylvania, with plentiful alarms of more destruction to come. The vacancy without becomes by the end of the poem a vacancy within, as even the power of language is extinguished. It is a quintessential poem of September 11, But students tend to scorn the poem. They resist its sentiment, or more precisely they question its ethical purpose. In its defeatism they sense a victory for the terrorists. The poem stirs deep feelings and extended discussion in class, and I welcome the controversy because it involves basic questions about whether poetry can matter in the lives of its readers. The poem is a cry of pain, and its rhetoric is suited to its emotion, hyperbolic in the manner of a love poem that makes claims about the beloved that may in some objective sense be noncredible, even ludicrous, but are relished for their truth to feeling. One does not tell a person wailing at a funeral or a person in the rapture of first love that their feelings are inauthentic or excessive. Indeed, lyric poetry exists to give a voice to the indecorous, the extravagant. And also the banal. Oh, the way he folded and unfolded in the air. We all gasped when he split the surface and disappeared. But he rose up in a shimmering swath of bubbles, unbounded joy. Seventeen years later, a man steps out through the lattice of a skyscraper and folds himself into a breathtaking pike. An anonymous diver, abandoning his day job. A single body falling, white oxford full and fluttering, like a peony, blowsy, on that singular day. In any poem of two stanzas, the second strophe must depart in a significant way from the first, but it would be hard to find a better example of how a second thought can radically subvert the first. The poem is an unrhymed Petrarchan sonnet

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with octave and sestet inverted. But the volta beginning with line seven is shocking, not least for its cool tone: In this case we find two vertical columns of words, and all the constituent phrases are from actual cell phone messages left on answering machines by people trapped in the towers or on Flight Artfully displayed, the language is anything but artificial: From Thomas Burnett on Flight I love you honey. I love you Mommy, goodbye. Viola and William S. The Pentagon and Flight 93 Well-intended, no doubt, but any effort to render the dead as martyrs full of high sentiment is going to infuriate, not inspire, readers who seek the felt meaning of historical events. Of special interest in these anthology poems is the representation of the terrorists. Poets offer a range of attitudes, of course; they have a diversity of perspectives just like the population at large. They wrestle with an intractable dilemma: Even poets who assert that the U. Hey journalists, you know better. Inevitably, the meditations on the terrorists have recourse to the Bible as a means of conceptualizing the standoff of West and East. Just as the Book of Lamentations underlies many lyric elegies, so the Book of Jeremiah or the Book of Revelation inform meditations on these acts of violence. Diane Glancy is hawkish in the way she imagines the enemy in a passage of poetic prose: Osama bin Laden, the Muslim extremist, the terrorists, the Taliban housed in Afghanistan, the Iraqi, the Pakistani, all of them, masks for the powers of darkness that would take America in its teeth. A new war is upon us. The enemy is faceless and placeless. Who should we attack? They are the powers of darkness behind the powers on earth. Another high-spirited poem, by Nikki Moustaki, gives the readers instructions on how not to speak about the calamity, since so many metaphors and phrases within the year became hollowed out by overuse and rendered trite. We know they saw it coming. Reading poem after poem one sympathizes with the efforts of poets to condense, to synthesize, to streamline, so as to avoid rehashing the same old tired tropes. This poem swings the camera away from the spectacular imagery of the towers, and the welter of crowds rushing through the streets of lower Manhattan, to query the absence of familiar figures from quiet locations inside and outside the city where the victims, or possible victims, resided and where their absence is now intensely felt. Where is the man who sold the best jelly doughnuts and coffee you sipped raising a pastel blue Acropolis to your lips? Two brothers who arrived in time for lunch hour with hot and cold heroes where Liberty dead ends at the Hudson? I know none of their names, but I can see their faces clear as I still see everything from that day as I ride away from the place we once shared. Where are they now? It is helpful to get a fresh geographical perspective like the one Kimiko Hahn provides in one of her tankas set in Brooklyn: The beams of light memorializing the dead in this spring mist are not a tourist attraction. We see them every clear evening in Boerum Hill. By paying a ceremonial visit to outlying regions that are home to the majority of people who died in the rubble, poets display a civility and compassion that constitute the American narrative, a modest and humane response to terrorist ideology. Another region alluded to and explored at length in these anthologies, and poems published elsewhere, is airspace. The fact that the targets of the hijacked airplanes were the tallest towers in the city, thrusting more than thirteen hundred feet into the New York skyline, caused everyone, even TV viewers, to lift their gaze into the celestial realm, the conventional site of the transcendent. The impact zone down below, a place of tribulation, embodies the subterranean, the underworld, the inferno of everlasting torment. Because of these high places resonant with order and beauty, the poems imply, future claims of justice might take their inspiration from the harmony of the spheres. History has that kind of routing, as many writers have noted, and the grand cities are those immensely significant interchanges or transfer points that redirect a society, often a vast community of nations, in a direction full of mystery and transformation. The birth and death of Jesus is the most popular example, as we find it, say, in T. One kept waitingâ€”as if a morning would arrive from before that day to take them all along a different track. One kept waiting for that shattering day to unhappen, so that the realâ€”the intendedâ€”future, the one that had been implied by the past, could unfold. Hour after hour, month after month, waiting for that day to not have happened. But it had happened. And now it was always going to have happened. The past has been remade entirely by the event that happened, and of course the future also. The future will always be redolent of the ineradicable event, choking on the ashes of its psychic fallout. In most cases, a literary, religious, or occult tradition suggested ways of shaping such unruly

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material. May what you have made descend upon you. May the listening ears of your victims their eyes their breath enter you, and eat like acid the bubble of rectitude that allowed you breath. There are these vicious circles of accumulated causation. Irreal is the word. I know of no defense against those addicted to death. I thought it was over, absolutely had to be. What am I supposed to feel?

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## Chapter 4 : Robert Lowell's Afflicted Vision | Essays in Criticism | Oxford Academic

*Contents Preface: Points on a Personal Compass ix List of Abbreviations Roots and Routes: The Trouble with Travel 1 Falling off the Round, Turning World: Elizabeth Bishop's Tristes Tropiques Interlude: Travelers and Tourists: From Bishop to Lowell Fear of Flying: Robert Lowell and the Trope of Vulnerability Interlude: Dandies.*

Married 1 Michael Werthman in divorced ; 2 Allan Jong in divorced ; 3 the writer Jonathan Fast in divorced , one daughter; 4 Kenneth David Burrows in Publications Novels Fear of Flying. How to Save Your Own Life. A Novel of Venice. Boston, Houghton Mifflin, and London, Bantam, A Story of Adjustment. West Hollywood , California , Dove Kids, A Novel of Mothers and Daughters. New York, HarperCollins, Poetry Fruits and Vegetables. Here Comes and Other Poems. New York, New American Library, The Poetry of Erica Jong. New York, Holt Rinehart, London, Panther, 2 vols. At the Edge of the Body. Other Four Visions of America, with others. Santa Barbara, California, Capra Press, New York, Abrams, ; London, Granada, The Devil at Large: Erica Jong on Henry Miller. What Do Women Want?: Bread, Roses, Sex, Power. Urbana, University of Illinois Press, Although she has aligned herself with the feminist movement, her poetry goes beyond the dilemma of being a woman in a male-dominated world, or for that matter, a Jew in an urban culture, to the ubiquitous need for human completeness in a fiercely hostile social and cosmic world. Jong distinguishes her poetic and fictional forms: In the novel what I wanted was excess, digression, rollicking language, energy, and poetry. Torn between the stability of marriage and her sexual fantasies for the "zipless fuck," she abandons Bennett for Adrian Goodlove, an illiterate, sadistic, but very sexy London psychiatrist. Adrian is a selfish and pompous bully, whose words arouse her as much as his sexual promise. Bennett, though "often wordless," is a far better lover. Her excursions into the past, where we meet her family and childhood world, her brilliant but sad and mad first husband, and her various sexual partners, are drawn in an earthy and ebullient fashion. Sex is only the apparent means toward connecting and feeling alive, an outlet that confounds desperation and freedom. It is only a temporary departure from guilt, an illusory means of flying. The end of the book only half-heartedly suggests some sort of insight and the half-believed: She retains an unremitting sense of guilt, vulnerability, childish impulsiveness, and romanticism. As Jong again portrays it, the plight of the woman is to be torn between her own restlessness and the bourgeois virtues of marriage. It is a rich, racy, and enormously funny and serious bookâ€”moving, at times to the extreme, in its focus on love, friendship, motherhood, and courage. It is filled with serious, playful, and frequently ironic references to an enormous body of literature. Fanny, as a character and novel, embodies, above all, an unflagging and uncompromising search for truth. Here Jong portrays the famous, rich, brilliant, and beautiful writer, now nearly forty and separated from her husband. Isadora once again possesses a prodigious sexuality, but it is now accompanied by a purposive loneliness. Although she would seem to have reconciled her sexuality with her personal and professional responsibilitiesâ€”mainly as mother and writerâ€”it is the quest for love that remains her driving force. Isadora relates her experiences with a series of loversâ€”including a real estate developer, rabbi, antiques dealer, plastic surgeon, and medical studentâ€”but the need for love and security remains insatiable. Isadora may long ago have given up the fear of flying, but she remains, in many ways, the woman she described herself as in the earlier works: Jessica Pruitt, a middle-aged, jet-setting movie star, has come to Venice as a judge for the Film Festival. Although she plans to play Jessica in a "filmic fantasy" of The Merchant of Venice, she is forced to remain in Italy, since she has become ill. She takes this as the occasion to embark upon a trip back in time to sixteenth-century Venice. The city, with its grand history, labyrinthine canals, and reflexive surfaces, permits not just her thorough investigation of the Bard himselfâ€”in all his natural i. It is a pagan rite de passage in preparation for her future. Amid all the disguises, ruses, and exposes, however, Jong casts a number of tasteless scenes, such as the incredible romping of the Bard with his own creations like Juliet , or with specifically important people who lived during his lifetime, like his patron, the Earl of Southampton. Jong portrays, for example, Shakespeare and Southampton with a

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courtesan posing as a boy. They were, she writes, "a three-backed beast that pants and screams and begs for mercy. When Jessica first meets Shakespeare, for example, in the Ghetto Vecchio, he says to her: A rose by any other name would smell as sweet. Presumably authored by Isadora Wing which we learn in a foreword and afterword, the novel deals with an artist in her mid-forties. When she first sees him he is "helmeted like Darth Vader. He spoke, in fact, like a Hallmark greeting card. It is there for the taking. You have only to love one another, thank God, and rejoice. At its most simple, it is a prayer. Why else are we passing through this sublunary sphere? Having coined the term "zipless fuck" in *Fear of Flying*, virtually a classic in its portrayal of female libido, Jong now uses the word "whiplash" in *Fear of Fifty* to describe what she calls the "women of her generation. The book rings painfully true for many women torn between career and motherhood, sexuality and traditional reserve, and even feminism as opposed to femininity. Subtitled "A Midlife Memoir," *Fear of Fifty* more importantly deals with the "terror" women experience when they realize they are no longer young and beautiful. Although Jong appears less concerned with her body while still capable of great sexual prowess, her words ring true in such statements as: Telling the story of four generations of women, in this case of Jewish heritage, she demonstrates their growth as they are "shaped by the challenges of Jewish history and the misery created by the deeply flawed men they choose.

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## Chapter 5 : Project MUSE - With Robert Lowell and His Circle

*"Focusing on lyric poetry, Mastery's End looks at important, yet neglected, issues of subjectivity in post-World War II travel literature. Jeffrey Gray departs from related studies in two regards: nearly all recent scholarly books on the literature of travel have dealt with pre-twentieth-century periods, and all are concerned with narrative genres.*

Most of the cast from Rokudenashi Blues , but particularly Maeda. But by far the most badass of the lot is Soldato-J , who does most of the same stuff Guy does as well as riding missiles through walls and makes it look easy with his cool and utterly unflappable attitude. The Mazinger trilogy is a World of Badass: Sayaka was one of the first Action Girls in anime. Even some characters like Prof. Yumi or Boss have their moments. And many of the villains also count. Or Pygman who fought Humongous Mecha on his own. Tetsuya was a certified, Hot-Blooded badass and Ace Pilot He acted like an arrogant jerk could not bear someone showed him up because he had absolutely NO self-esteem and he was terrified of if he was not good enough he would be replaced and forgotten. Still, he was the best pilot in the whole saga. Jun Hono was an even better Action Girl than Sayaka, being an well-trained pilot and fighter. He was fully capable to kick the butt of whoever was stupid or suicidal enough to challenge him. Though the villains to favored plan their strikes from far, they absolutely played the role when they fought Grendizer personally. Throughout the series only the main antagonist could put up a fight and defeat him while others fall to his might in a competition. The man has done it all, and done so without even a grunt of exertion. Sana-Kan and Dhomochevsky from the same series may also qualify, but they get less screen time than Killy. While Allen and Lavi are struggling just to keep Tyki away from Lenalee and Chaozii, Marshall Cross swoops in and saves their sorry asses by simply shooting Tyki a few times with Judgement. Allen, the Badass Adorable , Kanda, Mr. Rachel saves nearly six people from heavily armed terrorists with nothing but sheer grit, Jacuzzi demonstrates almost insane levels of courage under pressure, Graham can and probably will knock your head off with a monkey wrench, Nice will blow up anything and everything, Szilard can take machine gun fire while barely flinching, and Chane can deflect bullets. The Light Novels add more examples, like Luck Gandor, who stabbed a guy in the throat with his own severed arm. In this series, pretty much every single non-civilian character became certified ninja by the time they were His Badass aura weakens as Naruto begins to reclaim the spotlight, causing Sasuke to suffer from Badass Decay which led him further and further into an antagonistic role. Every member of Akatsuki is ranked a badass in-universe aka S-Rank. In fact, many Friendly Neighborhood Vampires are Badasses. Then again, consider the origin of Badass Decay. Alucard is anything but friendly. Especially if you get on his bad side. Also from the same series: The fact that Zaraki was the one person he could find who was a bigger badass than himself is the main reason he even joined the 11th squad in the first place. Really, any of the Shinigami Captains count as badasses; there is a good reason that Ichigo is told to run if he ever encounters one. Yeah, that big, fat Vizard. How badass is he? Well, in the recent flashback arc, he one-shotted both the Captain and Lieutenant of the Ninth Squad now turned into monsters with binding spells. One of which was Level 99, without an incantation. And, he was the only one of the Vizards to really make any progress during that fight. If the Dattabayo sub is to be believed, Hirako Shinji actually calls him badass after he does this. To say nothing of how he comes back years later and proceeds to compete with Advancing Wall of Doom Barragan in who can one up the other in terms of badassery. The First, no less. Kira Izuru gets a moment when fighting Avirama in the fake Karakura. Officially the fourth strongest Espada, a Vasto Lorde class Arrancar, one-shots two Soul Reapers in less than ten seconds with one hand, has a really awesome release form plus a second release form, and, oh yeah, he killed the main character. Bonus points for beating Ichigo in twenty seconds with two moves and almost killing him with the third in their first fight. Many consider his Inner Hollow to be badass as well. Ulquiorra gets some more Badass points for surviving that, and then defeating the zombie-Ichigo. Grimmjow has made use of practically every moment of his screentime just to showcase how badass he is. What other character can say they made the main character their personal punching bag on

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their first meeting? Responding to the above, Aizen and Byakuya can, actually. Both completely destroyed Ichigo the first time they fought in fact, their "fights" were really just made up of Ichigo getting OHKO'd. But yes, Grimmjow is pretty badass too. Oh Isshin, you comic relief- wait! Did you just send Aizen flying with a finger poke! And are you able to fight him on equal terms? Well, you officially qualify for badass right there then. Yes, the little girl that works with Urahara. Why is she badass? And it drew blood. Hinamori Momo is a fragile girl, and manages to get stabbed twice by the good guys. Before the second time, we have this scene: Matsumoto is on the ropes. Just when things are at their darkest, a large explosion engulfs the Arrancar for no apparent reason. Hinamori is coming out from the point where the gigantic explosion started! She created it by weaving a net of Kido around the Arrancar, all of whom could kill her easily, and then used her spirit sword to create a fireball which blew the whole net up. Not so fragile after all. Ah, you know what? Just say that Bleach is a World of Badass and leave it at that. Makoto Shishio, one of the main villains, seems to be a combination of a Badass and a Diabolical Mastermind. The man single-handedly and effortlessly defeated and made fools of several of the most powerful swordsmen imaginable, despite having been burned alive and shot in the head. Hajime Saitou and Kenshin when he sheds off his Obfuscating Stupidity are pretty badass on their own, too. Hiko Seijuro is badass incarnate on a level no other RK character can match. If anyone who knew that man was told that he sat on top of Mount Fuji, looked at the horizon, grabbed and tossed his sword with his left hand while drinking sake with his right and nailed the wings of a fly He is that badass. Mugen from Samurai Champloo is very clearly a badass. He lives for battle, and has performed such feats as cutting a thrown toothpick in half blindfolded, defeating countless highly trained and armed ninjas barehanded, and surviving numerous experiences that would have easily killed anybody else. Jin from the same series is also a badass, and their interactions are mainly focused on their badassery. Vicious may be a monster, but there is no denying that he too is a Badass, of the trenchcoated, sword-wielding variety. Vincent, from The Movie, is also Badass, even if he is completely out of his mind. The Dragon Ball cast is made of badass, though Piccolo is the biggest, as he can keep a cool head while fighting multiple opponents, he even almost defeated Goku in a fight. From main character Goku, all the way down to fat guy Yajirobe, almost all characters are pretty much an example. Fist of the North Star makes it a main priority to showcase just how much of a badass Kenshiro is. He is a walking death machine with an almost instinctual knowledge of every pressure point on the body, which he uses to annihilate entire armies in some of the most spectacular and gruesome ways possible. The only other person who possibly outstrips Ken in this regard is his brother Raoh. A man so incredibly badass that, after he died, a real-life funeral was held for him. No mention of Toki? Come to think of it, there are a lot of characters from Fist of the North Star that qualify as badass. From the many ways he tortures his slave Yako, to how he brutally tortured the new bloodline member DR. Oh and having nearly every pretty girl in a mile radius wanting to marry him. Happosai did that to him. Did you really think sealing me in concrete and burying me in the yard was even going to slow me down?! Though sadly often passed over or ignored, all of the other characters have gotten at least one badass moment. Genma Saotome, who otherwise is content to loaf around and make Ranma handle his problems, proves that even he has his limits when he uses his Battle Aura to turn into a giant version of himself to take on Happosai. Soun Tendo, a wimp who normally uses his Demon Head trick to bully the more capable Ranma into taking care of his household, tells an oni possessing his eldest daughter to take his body instead. Akane Tendo has several, but the first one is taking on the Orochi at Ryugenzawa. Shampoo, in the first Non-Serial Movie, saves Ranma from a messy death at the hands of a martial artist using Razor Floss, then tells him to go and save her enemy Akane, despite the fact Ranma openly considers her an Unwanted Spouse. And those are just some examples. Also qualifying is the Skull Knight from the manga series. And anyone who can defy the Godhand themselves to save Guts and Casca from a horrible death during the Eclipse qualifies as a serious badass. Later, he swallows his sword and fuses the Behelits to his sword, creating a sword that can cut reality itself. Prospective Getter Robo pilots need to prove their badassitude before being allowed anywhere near the titular mecha unless they hijack it, which is in itself proof of their badassery. Breaks minds and bones with ease.

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### Chapter 6 : Some Literary Criticism quotes

*Finally, two multi-poet chapters examine the travel poetry of Allen Ginsberg, Gary Snyder, and Robert Creeley, Lyn Hejinian, Nathaniel Mackey and others. Author Biography Jeffrey Gray is an associate professor of English at Seton Hall University.*

Cobb whose inimitable style began the television detecting technique where we know who did it. In Murder, Inc Falk is so dark and brooding as a little thug with a mad on at the world and no acuity toward right and wrong. The only time I saw him create a darker character that sent chills down the back of my neck was in an episode of The Alfred Hitchcock Hour that aired on December 13th, called Bonfire where he plays a psychopathic lady-killer who is posing as a firebrand evangelist. Peter Falk plays psychopath Robert Evans who has brought on a heart attack in the kindly rich widow Naomi Freshwater Patricia Collinge so he can take over her impressive house. Peter Falk received an Oscar nomination for Best Supporting Actor for his ruthless, violent and misogynistic murderous thug real life hit man "Abe Reles. Real life hit man Abe Reles film critic Bosley Crowther wrote: Then viciousness pours out of him and you get a sense of a felon who is hopelessly cracked and corrupt. Filmed in CinemaScope Murder, Inc. The viciousness touches the garment district, the Unions, the burlesque clubs all the way up to the Borscht Belt where comedian Walter Sage Morey Amsterdam is hit by Reles at the request of Lepke. Sage has been holding out money from the slots and Lepke is a petty hothead who constantly drinks milk with a literal belly ache. She tries to throw Reles out. While the couple stay together because they are forced into a dynamic by Reles, they no longer sleep in the same bedroom nor act as a married couple. The weak and shameful Joey should have listened to Eadie! Reles sets the kids up in this glamorous apartment as a front. The police want to bring Lepke in because they have found a witness, small business man Rosen who Lepke warned already to keep his mouth shut. He should have had his trusted man-crush Mendy push down the elevator shaft when he had the chance. Rosen is seen brought in by detective Tobin by Lepke, Mendy and their lawyer Laszlo in the halls of the courthouse. What kind of a girl are you? What they teach you over there in Europe? I told you a hundred times I have to be on a special diet. I got the most delicate stomach in the world! She refuses to say a word. He asks Reles how he can simply murder people without any feelings around it. Reles asks him how his first time on the job as a cop effected him.

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## Chapter 7 : Badass Examples 3 / Sandbox - TV Tropes

*Robert Lowell (Robert Traill Spence Lowell 4th), , American poet and translator, widely considered the preeminent American poet of the midth cent., b.*

Poetry was like theatre, as in Yeats; like music, as in Pasternak and Eliot; and like sculpture, as in Pound", Denis Donoghue, "Words Alone", "Poetry, unlike music, is a meta-art, and relies upon non-physical structures for the production of its effects. In its case, the medium is syntax, grammar and logical continuity, which together form the carrier-wave of plain sense within which its deeper meanings are broadcast. In contrast to many of his contemporaries who make similar claims, however, Hegel never wavers in insisting that poetry is the crisis of art as much as it is its triumph. That is what it comes from and to that it must always return for nourishment", T. I am convinced that most readers, when they think they are admiring poetry, are deceived by inability to analyse their sensations, and that they are really admiring, not the poetry of the passage before them, but something else in it, which they like better than poetry", A. Housman, "The Name and Nature of Poetry" lecture , Its cultured members expect to find in poetry, if anything, repose from material and nervous anxiety; an apt or chiselled phrase strokes the appetites and tickles the imagination. The more general public merely enjoys its platitudes and truisms jerked on to the understanding in line and rhyme; truth put into metre sounds overwhelmingly true", Harold Monro, "The Future of Poetry", Poetry Review, January "artworks not only mime nature; they also mime the accepted modes of miming", Stephen H. Another way of putting this is to say that art expresses something while at the same time hiding it", Adorno," "What the artist tries to do either consciously or unconsciously is to not only capture the essence of something but also to amplify it in order to more powerfully activate the same neural mechanisms that would be activated by the original object", Ramachandran, "It is a mistake to suppose, with some philosophers of aesthetics, that art and poetry aim to deal with the general and the abstract. This misconception has been foisted upon us by mediaeval logic. Walter Raleigh , It is, indeed, the noblest and most extensive of the mimetic arts; having all creation for its object, and ranging the entire circuit of universal being", Richard Hurd, "Discourse on Poetical Imitation", "Poetry exists partly to undermine the certainties of an accepted intellectual system, by opening a fissure of awareness at which the reality of the unconquered world may enter", "Slipshod Sibyls", Germaine Greer, Viking, , p. More and more mankind will discover that we have to turn to poetry to interpret life for us, to console us, to sustain us", Matthew Arnold, "The Study of Poetry". Art is a way of experiencing the artfulness of an object; the object is not important" - Shklovsky, "Art as Technique", in Russian Formalist Criticism: A poem is absolute", EM Forster, "Anonymity: I do not know if such increased awareness makes us more moral or more efficient. I think it makes us more human, and I am quite certain it makes us more difficult to deceive", Auden, in "The English Auden: It should matter first to the writer and then to the reader", Michael Rosen poetry is the "fusion of three arts: Collins "A poem needs to find a way into itself", G. Margolis "A poem is a detour we willingly subject ourselves to, a trick surprising us into the deepened vulnerability we both desire and fear. Its strategies of beauty, delay, and deception smuggle us past the border of our own hesitation", J. Entering the mind of poetry", Harper Collins, , p. They wonder into the cities and forests, with eyes and ears open, and report on these experiences with astonishing candor and subtleness", Parini, "Why Poetry Matters", Yale UP, , p. The work of the poet is to contribute a text that will firstly invite such a reading; and secondly reward such a reading. In effect, poetry renders the world by making illusory and even impossible images of things - by rendering the world as what it is not", Daniel Tiffany, "Infidel Poetics", Univ of Chicago Press, , p. The Ultimate Guide ", Palgrave Macmillan, , p. One half of the double pattern is made up of devices, effects, habits and frames of reference that poetry shares with all other linguistic discourses The other half of the pattern pulls against this, it announces the text as a poem by marshalling aspects of language into patterns that serve no purpose elsewhere in language yet which play a role in the way the poem is structured and, most significantly, in how it discharges meaning. It shows us that language is brittle, magical, untrustworthy,

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arbitrary, but unlike a philosophical essay on such topics, it does not enable us to answer back. It demonstrates that, on the one hand, language creates it, that consciousness and language are coterminous but also that we can step outside it", Richard Bradford, "Poetry: This combination takes place only if the platinum is present; nevertheless the newly formed acid contains no trace of platinum, and the platinum itself is apparently unaffected: The mind of the poet is the shred of platinum", T. Eliot, "Selected Prose of T. More than meter, more than rhyme, more than images or alliteration or figurative language, line is what distinguishes our experience of poetry as poetry, rather than some other kind of writing", James Longenbach, "The Art of the Poetic Line", Graywolf, "[poetry is news] brought to the mountains by a unicorn and an echo", Milosz "Eloquence is heard; poetry is overheard This conflict has the function of breaking down automatism of perception and occurs simultaneously on the many levels of a work of art As soon as one assigns a given text to the category of poetry, the number of meaningful elements in it acquires the capacity to grow [and] the system of their combinations also becomes more complex", "Analysis of the Poetic Text", Yury Lotman, Ardis, , p. This feature can stand as a definition of poetry", Antony Easthope, "Poetry as Discourse", Methuen, , p. Poetry is therefore primarily a commemorative act" - "Sonnets", Don Paterson, Faber and Faber, , p. But, of course, only those who have personality and emotions know what it means to want to escape from these things", T. Eliot, "Tradition and the Individual Talent", Wilson, "Relevance", Blackwell, , p. Sebeck , Cambridge, , p. The poem is an original and unique creation, but it is also reading and recitation: The poet creates it; the people, by recitation, re-create it. Poet and reader are two moments of a single reality. Nor does the supposed rich excess of meaning provide a useful means of defining poetic language, since the reader can readily supply that excess in the act of reading", "Studying Poetry", S. Jones, Arnold, , p. That is, poetry may be demanding to read because we think of a poem as a powerful, concentrated use of all the resources of language", "Studying Poetry", S. Form back to top "I broke the poem into quatrains for the purpose of making a better shape on the page", Paul Hoover, "Ecstatic occasions, expedient forms, David Lehman ed Univ of Michigan, " "I chose couplets because they require clarity of image or statement to work at all. I chose a variable pentameter line for its declarative potential", Lawrence Joseph, "Ecstatic occasions, expedient forms, David Lehman ed Univ of Michigan, " "The absence of punctuation Doing without it, in my mind, maintains a living line to the spoken word and its intonations and motions, which do the work of punctuation themselves", W. Merwin, "Ecstatic occasions, expedient forms, David Lehman ed Univ of Michigan, " "Light verse adhered to rhyme and metrical strictness long after serious poets had gone the way of vers libre, and for a good reason: Structure functions as a buoy to which the poetic swimmer clings: The shortness of line constricts, in a sense, the breadth of your movement", Seamus Heaney, "Ploughshares, 5, 3", , p. The Ultimate Guide", palgrave macmillan, , p. It is largely untaught - except in rather pointless exercises in which students write a sestina or a vilanelle - and most critics of contemporary poetry seem largely uninterested in it", David Kennedy, "The Ekphrastic Encounter in Contemporary British Poetry ", Ashgate Publishing, , p. Versification is inherently a way of asserting the relatedness of words and therefore also of things to one another", David J. The expert guide", Robert Hale, , p. Many excellent syllabics-controlled poems offer occasional miscounted lines", Claire Crowther, "Syllabics: The move into free verse is always a pleasant surprise for a poem that has passed through so many cages and narrow ways. And such a poem bears the voice-print of strictness and discipline while also appearing to be merely spoken, inevitably, as if improvised on the spot. Your working must never show. Art must conceal art", David Morley "Form is content-as-arranged; content is form-as-deployed", Helen Vendler "Can form make the primary chaos Can form go even further than that and actually generate that potency, opening uncertainty to curiosity, incompleteness to speculation, and turning vastness into plentitude? Form does not necessarily achieve closure, nor does raw materiality provide openness", Lyn Hejinian in "Moving Borders", Mary Margaret Sloan ed , Talisman House, , p. Wildness and Domesticity, Harper and Row, , p. Indeed they demand them. For if new contents were forced into old forms, at once you would have a recurrence of that disastrous division between content and form", Brecht, "Uber Lyrik", , p. The content of a poem may be personal to the point of narcissism, self-involved to the point of autism, but its form - that is, any

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feature that gives the poem cohesion and keeps it from drifting into chaos - is communal, inclusive, even cordial. Outsiders may see formal composition as rule-fixated grind: I have heard it said that the least talented writers benefit the most from practising form. This is only partly true That most symmetrical forms have certain uses. That a vast number of subjects cannot be precisely, and therefore not properly rendered in symmetrical forms", Ezra Pound, "A Retrospect" in *Literary Essays of Ezra Pound* "vers libre has not even the excuse of a polemic; it is a battle-cry of freedom, and there is no freedom in art", T. Eliot, "Reflections on Vers Libre" "I began to suspect that the vaunted strictures of the New Formalism were rather like the rules in a household with small children: Adams, "Rialto 38", , p. It has long been recognised that metrical verse encourages a tendency towards reflection and introspection while free verse acts as a vehicle for expressing the immediate, capturing the sense of the moment as it happens", Ian Parks, p. The metre always fixes the length of the line with controlled variation In English, stress maxima are fixed in place. In Welsh, rhyme is fixed in place. In poetry the answers come not as arguments but as form" - Schmidt, "Lives of the Poets", , p. I propose that the nature and primary function of the most important poetic devices - especially rhyme, meter, and metaphor - is to release words in some measure from their bondage to meaning, their purely referential role, and to give or restore to them the corporeality which a true medium needs. The device itself will be parodied, distorted, or avoided in such a way as to make its absence very remarkable", "The Chances of Rhyme", R. Wesling, Univ of California Press, I think more of a bird with broad wings flying and lapsing through the air, than anything, when I think of metre Stravinsky maintained that only in art could one be freed by the imposition of more rules, perhaps because these rules limit the field of possibilities and escort us rapidly beyond the selection of tools and media to laying the first stone of the work itself. For the reader, on the other hand, the shared language of the poem functions as a map through the terrain of a new idea We are hypnotised or spellbound by form, because the traditional aural techniques of verse But think of the unconscious effect of form on the poets themselves In the European system the beat is fundamental, but still the two never correspond. This sets up a descant. The natural rhythm of the spoken language, that is the rhythm of syntax, of meaning, also never or nearly never coincides with the metrical units even for a single line. When it does so, it produces the gigantic clang of a final closure But sometimes the ground-rhythm is very obscurely established; in that case the moment it becomes clear is an important and tense one", "The Noise Made by Poems", Peter Levi, Anvil, , p. In the one case, the Reader is utterly at the mercy of the Poet, respecting what imagery or diction he may choose to connect with the passion; whereas, in the other, the metre obeys certain laws, to which the Poet and Reader both willingly submit because they are certain, and because no interference is made by them with the passion, but such as the concurring testimony of ages has shown to heighten and improve the pleasure which co-exists with it. Childs, Associated University Presses, A work has form insofar as one part of it leads us to anticipate another part, to be gratified by the sequence", Kenneth Burke, "Counter-statement", "Forms can only expose other forms, and the new ones seem transparent only by highlighting the opaqueness of the old", ra page, "hyphen", Comma Press, , p. In a few exceptional cases, this manly independence produces something original and impressive, but more often the result is squalor - dirty sheets on the unmade bed and empty bottles on the unswept floor. McH, , in B.

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### Chapter 8 : Table of contents for Mastery's end

*The Pulitzer Prize for Poetry is one of the seven American Pulitzer Prizes that are annually awarded for Letters, Drama, and Music. It has been presented since for a distinguished volume of original verse by an American author, published during the preceding calendar year.*

Additional Information In lieu of an abstract, here is a brief excerpt of the content: But if Robert Lowell liked a poem, he would go to great lengths for the writer. Lowell was generous in promoting his students and friends. But this could backfire. Once Lowell advised me to send my poems to Judson Jerome, an editor of a prestigious poetry magazine. Jerome wrote back that anyone whom Lowell recommended must be a terrible writer, a member of the loathsome East Coast literary establishment, and that there was no way on earth he would even read or consider my work. There seemed to be extra amounts of coffee staining that rejected group of poems. Hannah Arendt, Mary McCarthy, and other literary heavies. Ah yes, the East Coast literary establishment. Lowell knew about publishing and rejection. There was a certain law of averages. I had coffee with Robert Lowell and Anne Sexton when they discussed this. They decided that a 3 percent return on submissions was the best one could expect. Anne had kept careful track: Anne Sexton kept all her rejections in a stack of file drawers. God, she claimed, would know when she had accumulated enough. Time for a little mercy. Writers sometimes papered their bathrooms with rejection slips. It was considered a breach of etiquette to send copies of poems. Each submission had to be freshly typed, no carbon paper. This included completed manuscripts also: Prospective publishers could hold the work for years. A former executive secretary, a stroke had left her housebound. She enjoyed getting mail, and rejection of my poems would neither devastate nor stop her. I gave her a list of magazines, authorized her to sign my name on the cover letters, and soon she was accumulating a shoebox of rejection slips. Before long Polly was corresponding with editors, signing my name. She wrote supportive notes to conservative columnists, decrying irresponsible youth. She quarreled with liberal political magazines. Soon she was getting chatty letters back. She was also getting a 3 percent return on the poetry submissions. And she threw away the rejections before I saw them! Then the poetry editor of the New Yorker, he told me how much he hated to send out his poems, and how he feared rejection. I did not point out that he was able to get round that problem by publishing himself. But I told him about Polly, who had decided to send his magazine a poem of mine every ten days until he finally relented and took one. He enjoyed her lively letters, he said. He wished he had an Aunt Polly too. When I was sending round the manuscript of my first book, these poets read and made suggestions. Elizabeth Bishop made extensive notes in her tiny unreadable handwriting throughout the typescript. The older poets encouraged me with stories of their own first attempts to get books published. A poet-editor who rejected your work might later apply for a prize or to You are not currently authenticated. View freely available titles:

### Chapter 9 : The Response of American Poets to 9/ A Provisional Report

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