



Re-reading Poets: The Life of the Author (Pitt Comp Literacy Culture)

Paul Kameen

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In *Re-reading Poets*, Paul Kameen offers a deep reflection on the importance of poets and poetry to the reader. Through his historical, philosophical, scholarly, and personal commentary on select poems, Kameen reveals how these works have helped him form a personal connection to each individual poet. He relates their profound impact not only on his own life spent reading, teaching, and writing poetry, but also their potential to influence the lives of readers at every level.

In an examination of works by William Wordsworth, Samuel Taylor Coleridge, Walt Whitman, and others, Kameen seeks to sense each author's way of seeing, so that author and reader may meet in a middle ground outside of their own entities where life and art merge in deeply intimate ways. Kameen counters ideologies such as New Criticism and poststructuralism that marginalize the author, and instead focuses on the author as a vital presence in the interpretive process. He analyzes how readers look to the past via "tradition," conceptualizing history in ways that pre-process texts and make it difficult to connect directly to authors. In this vein, Kameen employs examples from T. S. Eliot, Martin Heidegger, and Mikhail Bakhtin.

Kameen examines how people become poets and how that relates to the process of actually writing poems. He tells of his own evolution as a poet and argues for poetry as a means to an end beyond the poetic, rather than an end in itself. In *Re-reading Poets*, Kameen's goal is not to create a new dictum for teaching poetry, but rather to extend poetry's appeal to an audience far beyond academic walls.

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