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Lyric Shame: The Lyric Subject of Contemporary American Poetry (Hardback)

By Gillian White

HARVARD UNIVERSITY PRESS, United States, 2014. Hardback. Condition: New. Language: English . Brand New Book. Bringing a provocative perspective to the poetry wars that have divided practitioners and critics for decades, Gillian White argues that the sharp disagreements surrounding contemporary poetics have been shaped by lyric shame --an unspoken but pervasive embarrassment over what poetry is, should be, and fails to be. Favored particularly by modern American poets, lyric poetry has long been considered an expression of the writer s innermost thoughts and feelings. But by the 1970s the lyric I had become persona non grata in literary circles. Poets and critics accused one another of identifying with lyric, which increasingly bore the stigma of egotism and political backwardness. In close readings of Elizabeth Bishop, Anne Sexton, Bernadette Mayer, James Tate, and others, White examines the social and critical dynamics by which certain poems become identified as lyric, arguing that the term refers less to a specific literary genre than to an abstract way of projecting subjectivity onto poems. Arguments about whether lyric poetry is deserving of praise or censure circle around what White calls the missing lyric object an idealized poem that is nowhere and yet everywhere, and which...



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