

Anne Sexton A Biography Diane Wood Middlebrook

A Study Guide for Anne Sexton's "Young," excerpted from Gale's acclaimed Poetry for Students. This concise study guide includes plot summary; character analysis; author biography; study questions; historical context; suggestions for further reading; and much more. For any literature project, trust Poetry for Students for all of your research needs.

After the agony of witnessing her mother's multiple—and ultimately successful—suicide attempts, Linda Gray Sexton, daughter of the acclaimed poet Anne Sexton, struggles with an engulfing undertow of depression. Here, with powerful, unsparing prose, Sexton conveys her urgent need to escape the legacy of suicide that consumed her family—a topic rarely explored, even today, in such poignant depth. Linda Gray Sexton tries multiple times to kill herself—even though as a daughter, sister, wife, and most importantly, a mother, she knows the pain her act would cause. But unlike her mother's story, Linda's is ultimately one of triumph. Through the help of family, therapy, and medicine, she confronts deep-seated issues and curbs the haunting cycle of suicide she once seemed destined to inherit.

In 1959 Kathleen Spivack won a fellowship to study at Boston University with Robert Lowell. Her fellow students were Sylvia Plath and Anne Sexton, among others. Thus began a relationship with the famous poet and his circle that would last to the end of his life in 1977 and beyond. Spivack presents a lovingly rendered story of her time among some of the most esteemed artists of a generation. Part memoir, part loose collection of anecdotes, artistic considerations, and soulful yet clear-eyed reminiscences of a lost time and place, hers is an intimate portrait of the often suffering Lowell, the great and near great artists he attracted, his teaching methods, his private world, and the significant legacy he left to his students. Through the story of a youthful artist finding her poetic voice among literary giants, Spivack thoughtfully considers how poets work. She looks at friendships, addiction, despair, perseverance and survival, and how social changes altered lives and circumstances. This is a beautifully written portrait of friends who loved and lived words, and made great beauty together. A touching and deeply revealing look into the lives and thoughts of some of the most influential artists of the twentieth century, *With Robert Lowell and His Circle* will appeal to writers, students, and thoughtful literary readers, as well as to scholars.

Contains some of the best and most representative writing about Sexton's life and work

A selection of poems by contemporary American author Anne Sexton, drawn primarily from eight previously published collections.

In 1956, Anne Sexton was admitted into a mental hospital for post-partum depression, where she met Dr. Martin Orne, a young psychiatrist who treated her for the next eight years. In that time Sexton would blossom into a world-famous poet, best known for her "confessional" poems dealing with personal subjects not often represented in poetry at that time: mental illness, depression, suicide, sex, abortion, women's bodies, and the ordinary lives of mothers and housewives. Orne audiotaped the last three years of her therapy to facilitate her ability to remember their sessions. The final six months of these tapes are the focus of this book. In *An Accident of Hope*, Dawn Skorzewski links the content of the therapy with poetry excerpts, offering a rare perspective on the artist's experience and creative process. We can see Sexton attempting to make sense of her life and therapy and to sustain her confidence as a major poet, while struggling with the impending loss of Orne, who was moving elsewhere. Skorzewski's study provides an intimate, in-depth view of the therapy of a psychologically tortured yet immensely creative woman, during a period of emerging feminism and cultural change. Tracing the mutual development of the poet and the therapist during their years together, the author explores the tension between the classical therapeutic setting as practiced in the early 1960s and contemporary relational and developmental concepts in psychoanalysis, just then beginning to emerge. *An Accident of Hope* also raises broader questions about the nature of healing in psychotherapy. The poet and therapist we encounter in these sessions present complex and conflicted images of the therapeutic and creative process. Orne, equal parts honesty and hesitancy, works to bolster Sexton's self-image and maintain that she is more than the sum of her poetry. Sexton, working against a tendency to hide from her most painful feelings, valiantly pushes to tell the truth in therapy, while her poems invite the readers to see another side of the story. Just as Orne kept the audiotapes so that one day they might help others who suffer, *An Accident of Hope* tells the story of a therapy but moves beyond it. By offering a glimpse into the past, the present is open for reappraisal, both of Sexton herself and the legacy of psychoanalytic treatment.

This set comprises 40 volumes covering 19th and 20th century European and American authors. These volumes will be available as a complete set, mini boxed sets (by theme) or as individual volumes. This second set compliments the first 68 volume set of *Critical Heritage* published by Routledge in October 1995.

Details the books that have forever changed civilization, from the Bible and the Koran to Darwin's *Origin of the Species* and Freidan's *Feminine Mystique*, and includes a historical overview and fascinating facts for each author and book, and much more. Original.

"A spellbinding portrait" of the tumultuous life and artistic career of one of the most creative photographers of the 1960s (New York magazine). Diane Arbus became famous for her intimate and unconventional portraits of twins, dwarfs, sideshow performers, eccentrics, and everyday "freaks." Condemned by some for voyeurism, praised by others for compassion, she was nonetheless a transformative figure in twentieth-century photography and hailed by all for her undeniable genius. Her life was cut short when she committed suicide in 1971 at the peak of her career. In the first complete biography of Arbus, author Patricia Bosworth traces the arc of Arbus's remarkable life: her sheltered upper-class childhood and passionate, all-consuming marriage to Allan Arbus; her roles as wife and devoted mother; and her evolution from fashion photographer to critically acclaimed artist—one who forever altered the boundaries of photography.

A biography of the American poet Sylvia Plath which presents a different view of her life and death by shifting any blame away from Plath's husband, Ted Hughes, and suggesting the problems lay in her personality difficulties.

Just before artist Allie Yates' first New York exhibit, when her husband Sam is on the verge of making their New Hampshire farm a success, one of their three children unexpectedly dies

Collects the best of Anne Sexton's memoirs and prose reflections on her development as a poet

Explores the work and tormented life of the American poet, a woman who struggled with mental illness throughout her career, finally taking her own life in 1974

Ted Hughes married Sylvia Plath in 1956, at the outset of their brilliant careers. Plath's suicide six and a half years later, for which many held Hughes accountable, changed his life, his closest relationships, his standing in the literary world and brought new significance to his poetry. In this stunning new biography of their marriage, Diane Middlebrook renders a portrait of Hughes as a man, as a poet and as a husband, haunted - and nourished - his entire life by the aftermath of his first marriage. Middlebrook presents Hughes as a complicated, conflicted figure: sexually magnetic, fiercely ambitious, immensely caring and shrewd in business. She argues that Plath's suicide, though it devastated Hughes and made him vulnerable to the savage attacks of Plath's growing readership, ultimately gave him his true subject - recreating himself for posterity through his marriage to Sylvia Plath and his struggles within his own historical circumstances.

The collected works of Anne Sexton showcase the astonishing career of one of the twentieth century's most influential poets For Anne Sexton, writing served as both a means of expressing the inner turmoil she experienced for most of her

life and as a therapeutic force through which she exorcised her demons. Some of the richest poetic descriptions of depression, anxiety, and desperate hope can be found within Sexton's work. The Complete Poems, which includes the eight collections published during her life, two posthumously published books, and other poems collected after her death, brings together her remarkable body of work with all of its range of emotion. With her first collection, the haunting *To Bedlam and Part Way Back*, Sexton stunned critics with her frank treatment of subjects like masturbation, incest, and abortion, blazing a trail for representations of the body, particularly the female body, in poetry. She documented four years of mental illness in her moving Pulitzer Prize-winning collection *Live or Die*, and reimagined classic fairy tales as macabre and sardonic poems in *Transformations*. The *Awful Rowing Toward God*, the last book finished in her lifetime, is an earnest and affecting meditation on the existence of God. As a whole, *The Complete Poems* reveals a brilliant yet tormented poet who bared her deepest urges, fears, and desires in order to create extraordinarily striking and enduring art.

Ted Hughes and Sylvia Plath were husband and wife; they were also two of the most remarkable poets of the twentieth century. In this stunning new account of their marriage, Diane Middlebrook draws on a trove of newly available papers to craft a beautifully written portrait of Hughes as a man, as a poet, and as a husband haunted—and nourished—his entire life by his relationship to Sylvia Plath. *Her Husband* is a triumph of the biographer's art and an up-close look at a couple who saw each other as the means to becoming who they wanted to be: writers and mythic representations of a whole generation.

After writing two extremely well received biographies—the first about Anne Sexton and the second about poets Ted Hughes and Sylvia Plath—world-renowned scholar Diane Middlebrook's final project was a study of Ovid's work. Though he has been dead for over two thousand years and had left no personal records—not even the name of his mother—his poetry endures. Middlebrook was convinced that her intimate knowledge of Ovid's poetry and the approach she used in *Her Husband* (winner of the Prix Du Meilleur Livre Etranger), combined with a deep immersion into the Rome of Ovid's time, would enable her to write what could, without bragging, be called an Ovidian biography. However, severe health issues interfered with Middlebrook's work, and she was ultimately unable to complete this ambitious project before her death in 2007. She left behind an extraordinary look at the conditions and customs to which Ovid was exposed as a young Roman, as well as an acute interpretation of his family and personal life, gleaned from close readings of his poetry and letters from exile. Exhaustively researched and carefully constructed, Middlebrook's portrayal of Ovid is certain to be studied by scholars and read by historians for year to come.

The poet's life as a teacher.

"A dual biography of poets, friends, and rivals Sylvia Plath and Anne Sexton"--

Relates the remarkable story of Billy Tipton, a female jazz musician who lived as a man for nearly fifty years
Finalist for the Pulitzer Prize and the National Book Critics Circle Award in Biography • "One of the most beautiful biographies I've ever read." —Glennon Doyle, author of #1 New York Times Bestseller, *Untamed* The highly anticipated biography of Sylvia Plath that focuses on her remarkable literary and intellectual achievements, while restoring the woman behind the long-held myths about her life and art. With a wealth of never-before-accessed materials, Heather Clark brings to life the brilliant Sylvia Plath, who had precocious poetic ambition and was an accomplished published writer—even before she became a star at Smith College. Refusing to read Plath's work as if her every act was a harbinger of her tragic fate, Clark considers the sociopolitical context as she thoroughly explores Plath's world: her early relationships and determination not to become a conventional woman and wife; her troubles with an unenlightened mental health industry; her Cambridge years and thunderclap meeting with Ted Hughes; and much more. Clark's clear-eyed portraits of Hughes, his lover Assia Wevill, and other demonized players in the arena of Plath's suicide promote a deeper understanding of her final days. Along with illuminating readings of the poems themselves, Clark's meticulous, compassionate research brings us closer than ever to the spirited woman and visionary artist who blazed a trail that still lights the way for women poets the world over.

"An important debut work of narrative nonfiction: the timely, never-before-told story of five brilliant, passionate women who, in the early 1960s, converged at the newly founded Radcliffe Institute for Independent Study, stepping outside the domestic sphere and shaping the course of feminism in ways that still resonate today. In 1960, at the height of an era that expected women to focus solely on raising families, Radcliffe College announced the founding of an Institute for Independent Study, offering fellowships to women with a PhD or "the equivalent" in artistic success. Acclaimed writer and Harvard lecturer Maggie Doherty introduces us to five brilliant friends--poets Anne Sexton and Maxine Kumin, painter Barbara Swan, sculptor Mariana Pineda, and writer Tillie Olsen--who came together at the Institute and would go on to make history. Drawing from their notebooks, letters, lecture recordings, journals, and finished works, Doherty weaves from these women's own voices a moving narrative of friendship, ambition, activism, and art. Beautifully written and urgently told, *The Equivalents* shows us where we've been--and inspires us to go forward"--

Pulitzer Prize-winning poet Anne Sexton morphs classic fairy tales into dark critiques of the cultural myths underpinning modern society Anne Sexton breathes new life into sixteen age-old Brothers Grimm fairy tales, reimagining them as poems infused with contemporary references, feminist ideals, and morbid humor. Grounded by nods to the ordinary—a witch's blood "began to boil up/like Coca-Cola" and Snow White's bodice is "as tight as an Ace bandage"—Sexton brings the stories out of the realm of the fantastical and into the everyday world. Stripping away their magical sheen, she exposes the flawed notions of family, gender, and morality within the stories that continue to pervade our collective psyche. Sexton is especially critical of what follows these tales' happily-ever-after endings, noting that Cinderella never has to face the mundane struggles of marriage and growing old, such as "diapers and dust," "telling the same story twice," or "getting a middle-aged spread," and that after being awakened Sleeping Beauty would likely be plagued by insomnia, taking "knock-out drops" behind the prince's back. Deconstructed into vivid, visceral, and often highly amusing poems, these fairy tales reflect themes that have long fascinated Sexton—the claustrophobic anxiety of domestic life, the limited role of women in society, and a psychological strife more dangerous than any wicked witch or poisoned apple.

MERCY STREET is Pulitzer Prize-winning poet Anne Sexton's only play and incorporates many of the themes that infuse her poetry, the deeply personal, the nature of madness, and the subjectivity of truth. "Anne Sexton, a fine poet with an astounding knack for incorporating the

ugly and immediate vocabulary of the pressing workaday world into lyrics that nevertheless remain lyrics, is the author of MERCY STREET ... The play is constructed quite literally to resemble the Offertory in Anglican or Roman Catholic mass ... Miss Sexton's initial use of ritual is striking ... The exploration, in rotating flashbacks, produces some riveting line-images ... -Walter Kerr, The New York Times ..". This is Miss Sexton's first play. She is a Pulitzer Prize-winning poet, and the tone of her poems has always been laceratingly personal. In some she seemed like a latter-day, neurotic Emily Dickinson. The poems have a voice of their own, and a way with imagery. MERCY STREET is the story of a woman searching her way home from the valley of madness ... Miss Sexton has written a play to be considered rather than dismissed ..." -Clive Barnes, The New York Times

A collection of Sexton's greatest works, including "The Touch," "The Kiss," "The Breast," "The Nude Swim," and other poems
New York Times Notable Book: A "beautifully written" memoir by the daughter of the brilliant, troubled poet (Detroit Free Press). This is an honest, unsparring account of the anguish and fierce love that bound a difficult mother and the daughter she left behind. Linda Sexton was twenty-one when her mother killed herself, and now she looks back, remembers, and tries to come to terms with her mother's life. Growing up with Anne Sexton was a wild mixture of suicidal depression and manic happiness, inappropriate behavior and midnight trips to the psychiatric ward. Anne taught Linda how to write, how to see, how to imagine—and only Linda could have written a book that captures so vividly the intimate details and lingering emotions of their life together. Searching for Mercy Street speaks to everyone who admires Anne Sexton and to every daughter or son who knows the pain of an imperfect childhood. "Sexton forcefully communicates the fear, repulsion, neediness, and sorrow that filled her childhood, as well as the agony of her own mental breakdown and her terror of becoming like her mother, in lucid and vivid prose." —The Boston Globe "A candid, often painful depiction of a daughter's struggles to come to terms with her powerful and emotionally troubled mother." —The New York Times

A selection from the thousands of letters written by the late poet reveals the inner and outer affects of her life, the reality of her battles with mental illness, and her career as a successful poet

A collection of poetry addressed to Hughes's late wife, poet Sylvia Plath, reexamines the psychological breakdown that led to both some of her greatest poems and to her untimely death. Reprint.

Anne Sexton A Biography Vintage

A revealing collection of letters from Pulitzer Prize-winning poet Anne Sexton While confessional poet Anne Sexton included details of her life and battle with mental illness in her published work, her letters to family, friends, and fellow poets provide an even more intimate glimpse into her private world. Selected from thousands of letters and edited by Linda Gray Sexton, the poet's daughter, and Lois Ames, one of her closest friends, this collection exposes Sexton's inner life from her boarding school days through her years of growing fame and ultimately to the months leading up to her suicide. Correspondence with writers like W. D. Snodgrass, Robert Lowell, and May Swenson reveals Sexton's growing confidence in her identity as a poet as she discusses her craft, publications, and teaching appointments. Her private letters chart her marriage to Alfred "Kayo" Sexton, from the giddy excitement following their elopement to their eventual divorce; her grief over the death of her parents; her great love for her daughters balanced with her frustration with the endless tasks of being a housewife; and her persistent struggle with depression. Going beyond the angst and neuroses of her poetry, these letters portray the full complexities of the woman behind the art: passionate, anguished, ambitious, and yearning for connection.

From an elderly Spaniard building his own cathedral to a straight-laced woman mortified to have been born at Woodstock, from ill-fated love beneath a kerosene moon on the shores of Lake Michigan to loneliness relieved by utter silence in Alps, Lawrence Kessenich's poems draw vivid portraits of his own powerful experiences and those of colorful individuals, real and imagined, who engage life passionately.

A gifted poet reveals the poignancy and plaintive charm of common experiences.

A celebrated study of Elizabeth Bishop's genius, as revealed through her literary friendships

Given the amount of scholarship on twentieth-century poetry, there has been remarkably little published about Anne Sexton, even though her work is considered to be as important as that of such contemporaries as Sylvia Plath and W. H. Auden. By offering new and provocative readings of her entire oeuvre, Jo Gill provides a long overdue critical appreciation of Anne Sexton and presents a radical rethinking of the confessional mode of poetry and a recuperation of Sexton's place in it. Gill makes substantial use of Sexton's archive of unpublished diaries, drafts, correspondence, lectures, interviews, stage readings, and book annotations, as well as a little-known television documentary on Sexton. She also uses techniques that have not been previously applied to Sexton's poetry to increase our understanding of the poet's life and work. Employing new--principally poststructuralist--literary theories and critical practices, Gill offers new readings of Sexton's complex and ambitious poems. She discusses the diversity and richness of Sexton's writing across her career, shows the relevance of the often-ignored later poems, and places Sexton's work in its specific historical, political, and ideological contexts.

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