

2019

Sacred Lucidity: Embodied Identity Through the Lens of Poetry

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Laporte, Abby, "Sacred Lucidity: Embodied Identity Through the Lens of Poetry" (2019). *Scholarly & Creative Works Conference 2019*. 56.

<https://scholar.dominican.edu/scw/SCW2019/conference-presentations-exhibits-and-performances/56>

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**Sacred Lucidity;
Embodied Identity
through the Lens of Poetry**

by Abby Peyton Laporte

What is your identity?

I am a white female with mental illness. I am a poet. I am a survivor of gendered violence. I am in recovery from anorexia. I am spiritual.

→ Who are you?

→ What are some of the stories or feelings in your own selfhood?

Confessional Poetry:

“Confessional poetry is verse in which the author describes parts of his or her life that would not ordinarily be in the public domain.

The prime characteristic is the reduction of distance between the persona displayed in a poem and the author who writes it.”

- Oxford Research Library, Literature

What you will hear from me, today:

- Analysis of Sylvia Plath, Lucille Clifton, and Rupi Kaur
- Excerpts of my creative component
- Action steps for adding the benefits of poetry into your life

Sylvia Plath and identity exploration through poetry

Mirror

I am silver and exact. I have no preconceptions.
Whatever I see I swallow immediately
Just as it is, unmisted by love or dislike.
I am not cruel, only truthful ,
The eye of a little god, four-cornered.
Most of the time I meditate on the opposite wall.
It is pink, with speckles. I have looked at it so long
I think it is part of my heart. But it flickers.
Faces and darkness separate us over and over.

Now I am a lake. A woman bends over me,
Searching my reaches for what she really is.
Then she turns to those liars, the candles or the moon.
I see her back, and reflect it faithfully.
She rewards me with tears and an agitation of hands.
I am important to her. She comes and goes.
Each morning it is her face that replaces the darkness.
In me she has drowned a young girl, and in me an old woman
Rises toward her day after day, like a terrible fish.

Lucille Clifton and identity exploration through poetry

in salem

to jeanette

weird sister
the black witches know that
the terror is not in the moon
choreographing the dance of wereladies
and the terror is not in the broom
swinging around to the hum of cat music
nor the wild clock face grinning from the wall,
the terror is in the plain pink
at the window
and the hedges moral as fire
and the plain face of the white woman watching us
as she beats her ordinary bread.

Rupi Kaur and identity exploration through poetry

(from Kaur's book, milk and honey)

p. 124

your voice
alone
drives me
to tears

p. 150

you must enter a relationship
with yourself
before anyone else

Two poems from my creative component, Sacred Lucidity...

→ “Faded Madness” (p. 18)

→ “Be Present Forever” (p. 15)

by APL

Faded Madness

medication dreams of me
Big Pharma saved my little life

my grand existence, hobbled by the ultimate safeguards
and yet
I inhabit the same lunatic, here.

cracks in the concrete became a childhood obsession
stepping for the feeling of an even footprint-
at all times-
I believe in

angels

magic

martians

time travel

I became my self when I took their pills
spilling ideas over into this bronze bowl of the now

God cannot create such a dilemma- I play between the realms

so, I straddle timelines
and sift the sands of spacetime
rupture the wormholes of the cosmos until I become dizzy

I saw a thin red-looking crack on the wall of the psychiatric ward
it become my most sincere destiny. Now, the medicines inhabit *me*.

Be Present Forever

Just so much to touch, like cobwebs and a spider's freshest home
each spun thread in contact with another
the online abundance of ideas, like a woven net
high fidelity truth unearthed each moment
because this is infinity
and you are its steward
its observer
its guest.

How can you add more poetry into *your* life?

- Obtain a poetry anthology/collection that includes a variety of authors. Read it until a poem speaks to you - in its power of relatability or contrast to your own identity!
- Get ready to write, and then pour forth *whatever is on your mind*. Trust the process, and trust that your intuition will create whatever you need, in that moment.
- Attend events: compete in poetry slams, or just listen at an open mic. Whichever variation resonates with your soul!
- Remember: confessional poetry is a discovery or creation of new information about humanness. Enjoy this radical renewal of self!

Thank you so very much:

First and foremost, to the wonderful **Dr. Judy Halebsky**. I could not have created this project without your help, as my thesis reader! To you, I am forever grateful. You are a true inspiration, and I am honored that you believe in my poetic work.

Thank you to **Dr. Chase Clow**, my academic advisor, and the reason I am graduating at all!

Thank you to **Lisa Haydon** for her help throughout these years.