

crossing brooklyn ferry full poem analysis

Crossing Brooklyn Ferry: A Full Poem Analysis

Introduction:

Walt Whitman's "Crossing Brooklyn Ferry" isn't just a poem; it's a timeless meditation on connection, shared human experience, and the enduring power of the present moment. This in-depth analysis delves into the intricacies of this iconic work, exploring its themes, imagery, structure, and lasting significance. We'll unravel the poem's layers, revealing how Whitman masterfully weaves together personal experience with universal truths, creating a piece that continues to resonate with readers centuries later. Prepare to embark on a journey across the Brooklyn Ferry – a ferry that takes us not just across a body of water, but across time and the human condition itself. This comprehensive analysis will equip you with a thorough understanding of this complex and rewarding poem.

I. The Power of the Present Moment: Embracing the "Here and Now"

Whitman's poem is profoundly rooted in the present. The opening lines immediately ground us in the specific moment of the speaker's ferry journey: "Flood-tide below me! I watch you face to face." This direct, sensory language establishes a palpable immediacy, drawing the reader into the experience. The poem doesn't dwell on the past or future; instead, it celebrates the vibrant, fleeting reality of the present. This emphasis on the "here and now" isn't merely descriptive; it's a philosophical statement about the importance of fully engaging with life's immediate experiences. The speaker's observation of the ferry and its passengers becomes a metaphor for observing and embracing the present moment in its entirety. This emphasis is reinforced throughout the poem through the use of vivid sensory details and the constant engagement with the surrounding environment. We're not just reading about a ferry trip; we're experiencing it alongside the speaker.

II. Connection Across Time and Space: A Shared Human Experience

A central theme in "Crossing Brooklyn Ferry" is the idea of shared human experience across time and space. Whitman transcends the limitations of his own time and place by imagining himself connected to all those who have crossed, or will cross, the Brooklyn Ferry. He uses the ferry itself as a symbolic bridge connecting past, present, and future generations. This idea is powerfully expressed in lines like: "Just as you feel that you are to me now, so did others feel in the ages past." This sense of interconnectedness isn't just limited to those who have physically traversed the ferry; it expands to encompass all humanity, sharing similar emotions, hopes, and fears throughout history. The speaker's empathy and connection to these unseen individuals creates a profound sense of community and universality.

III. Imagery and Symbolism: The Ferry as a Metaphor for Life's Journey

Whitman masterfully employs imagery and symbolism to enrich the poem's meaning. The Brooklyn Ferry itself becomes a powerful metaphor for the journey of life. The ebb and flow of the tide, the

movement of the ferry, and the changing cityscape reflect the cyclical and ever-changing nature of human existence. Other significant images, such as the sun, the city lights, and the faces of fellow passengers, contribute to a rich tapestry of sensory experience and symbolic meaning. The descriptions of the city – its bustling energy, its mix of people – further emphasize the poem's themes of community and shared experience. The vibrant, detailed imagery draws the reader in, allowing for a deeper engagement with the poem's core message.

IV. Form and Structure: Free Verse and the Rhythms of Experience

Whitman's use of free verse in "Crossing Brooklyn Ferry" is crucial to its effectiveness. The lack of a rigid metrical structure mirrors the unpredictable and flowing nature of life itself. The poem's lines often break unexpectedly, reflecting the spontaneous and sometimes disjointed experiences of daily life. This structural freedom allows the poem to capture the rhythm and energy of the ferry journey and the city itself. The lack of strict formal constraints further enhances the poem's sense of immediacy and authenticity, reflecting the speaker's direct and unfiltered engagement with the world.

V. The Enduring Legacy of "Crossing Brooklyn Ferry"

The poem's enduring power lies in its ability to transcend time and space. Its themes of connection, shared human experience, and the appreciation of the present moment remain relevant to readers today. "Crossing Brooklyn Ferry" continues to inspire readers to reflect on their own lives, their place in the world, and the enduring bonds that connect us to others. The poem's accessibility combined with its profound philosophical depth ensures its lasting impact on literature and the human imagination. It serves as a reminder that despite the passage of time and the vastness of the world, we are all inherently connected, sharing in the universal experiences of life.

VI. A Detailed Outline of the Analysis:

Name: Crossing Brooklyn Ferry: A Comprehensive Poetic Exploration

Introduction: Introducing the poem and its central themes.

Chapter 1: The Power of the Present Moment: Focus on Whitman's emphasis on immediacy and sensory detail.

Chapter 2: Connection Across Time and Space: Exploring the themes of shared human experience and transcending temporal boundaries.

Chapter 3: Imagery and Symbolism: Analyzing the symbolic significance of the ferry, the cityscape, and other key images.

Chapter 4: Form and Structure: Examining the impact of free verse and the poem's rhythmic qualities.

Chapter 5: The Enduring Legacy: Discussing the poem's continued relevance and enduring impact.

Conclusion: Summarizing the key findings and highlighting the poem's multifaceted richness.

(Each chapter expands on the points outlined above, providing detailed textual evidence and critical analysis.)

FAQs:

1. What is the central theme of "Crossing Brooklyn Ferry"? The central theme revolves around the interconnectedness of humanity across time and space, emphasizing the shared experience of life and the importance of the present moment.
1. What is the significance of the ferry in the poem? The ferry serves as a powerful metaphor for the journey of life, connecting the past, present, and future.
1. How does Whitman use imagery in the poem? Whitman uses vivid sensory imagery to create a palpable and immersive experience for the reader, reinforcing the themes of the poem.
1. What is the impact of Whitman's use of free verse? The free verse structure mirrors the fluidity and unpredictability of life itself, enhancing the poem's natural flow and immediacy.
1. Who is the intended audience of "Crossing Brooklyn Ferry"? While initially written for a specific audience, the poem's universal themes resonate with readers across time and cultures.
1. What is the poem's overall tone? The tone is predominantly contemplative, reflective, and optimistic, emphasizing the interconnectedness and beauty of human existence.
1. How does the poem relate to Whitman's other works? The poem's themes of democracy, community, and the celebration of the individual are consistent with other works by Whitman.
1. What are some critical interpretations of "Crossing Brooklyn Ferry"? Various interpretations exist, focusing on themes of spirituality, democratic ideals, and the power of shared human experience.

1. Where can I find more information about Walt Whitman and his poetry? Numerous biographies, critical essays, and academic resources are available online and in libraries.

Related Articles:

1. Walt Whitman's Use of Free Verse: A Stylistic Analysis: Explores Whitman's innovative use of free verse and its impact on American poetry.
1. The Symbolism of Water in Whitman's Poetry: Examines the recurring motif of water and its symbolic significance in Whitman's works.
1. Democratic Ideals in "Crossing Brooklyn Ferry": Focuses on the poem's political and social dimensions.
1. Whitman's Celebration of the Body: A Look at Sensuality and Spirituality: Analyzes the sensual and spiritual aspects of Whitman's poetry.
1. Comparing "Crossing Brooklyn Ferry" to Other Poems of Shared Experience: Compares and contrasts "Crossing Brooklyn Ferry" with similar works exploring themes of connection and community.
1. The Influence of Transcendentalism on Whitman's Poetry: Explores the influence of Transcendentalist thought on Whitman's artistic vision.
1. The Reception of "Crossing Brooklyn Ferry" Upon Publication: Examines the initial critical reception of the poem and its subsequent evolution in literary history.
1. Teaching "Crossing Brooklyn Ferry" in the Classroom: Provides pedagogical suggestions for educators teaching the poem to students.

1. "Crossing Brooklyn Ferry" and the American Identity: Explores how the poem reflects the American identity and the development of a national consciousness.

crossing brooklyn ferry full poem analysis: Poems by Walt Whitman Walt Whitman, 2016-04-22 Walt Whitman is widely regarded as one of the masters of American poetry. Here are collected his finest poems, a perfect companion for any fan of Whitman's work.

crossing brooklyn ferry full poem analysis: Crossing Brooklyn Ferry Walt Whitman, 2011

crossing brooklyn ferry full poem analysis: Song of Myself Walt Whitman, 2024-03-20 One of the Greatest Poems in American Literature Walt Whitman (1819-1892) was considered by many to be one of the most important American poets of all time. He had a profound influence on all those who came after him. "Song of Myself", a portion of Whitman's monumental poetry collection "Leaves of Grass", is one of his most beloved poems. It was through this moving piece that Whitman first made himself known to the world. One of the most acclaimed of all American poems, it is written in Whitman's signature free verse style, without a regular form, meter, or rhythm. His lines have a mesmerizing chant-like quality, as he sought to make poetry more appealing. Few poems are as fun to read aloud as this one. Considered to be the core of his poetic vision, this poem is an optimistic and inspirational look at the world in 1855. It is exhilarating, epic, and fresh in its brilliant and fascinating diction and wordplay as it tries to capture the unique meaning of words of the day, while also embracing the rapidly evolving vocabularies of the sciences and the streets. Far ahead of its time, it was considered by many social conservatives to be scandalous and obscene for its depiction of sexuality and desire, while at the same time, critics hailed the poem as a modern masterpiece. This first version of "Song of Myself" is far superior to the later versions and will delight readers with the playfulness of its diction as it glorifies the self, body, and soul. "I am large, I contain multitudes,"

crossing brooklyn ferry full poem analysis: Leaves of Grass Walt Whitman, 1872

crossing brooklyn ferry full poem analysis: The Redshifting Web Arthur Sze, 1998 Sze is one of the most intensely musical and visionary poets writing today. The Redshifting Web spans more than a quarter of a century's worth of his published work and makes available for the first time the full range of his poetry.

crossing brooklyn ferry full poem analysis: On Whitman C. K. Williams, 2017-01-31 Pulitzer Prize-winning poet C. K. Williams's personal reflection on the art of Walt Whitman In this book, Pulitzer Prize-winning poet C. K. Williams sets aside the mass of biography and literary criticism that has accumulated around Walt Whitman and attempts to go back to Leaves of Grass as he first encountered it—to explore why Whitman's epic continues to inspire and sometimes daunt him. The result is a personal reassessment and appreciation of one master poet by another, as well as an unconventional and brilliant introduction to Whitman. Beautifully written and rich with insight, this is a book that refreshes our ability to see Whitman in all his power.

crossing brooklyn ferry full poem analysis: Passage to India Walt Whitman, 1870

crossing brooklyn ferry full poem analysis: Distant Neighbors Gary Snyder, Wendell Berry, 2014-05-13 The letters are valuable for ecologists, students, and teachers of contemporary American literature and for those of us eager to know how these two distant neighbors networked, negotiated, and remained friends. —San Francisco Chronicle In Distant Neighbors, both Berry and Snyder come across as honest and open-hearted explorers. There is an overall sense that they possess a deep and questing wisdom, hard earned through land work, travel, writing, and spiritual exploration. There is no rushing, no hectoring, and no grand gestures between these two, just an ever-deepening inquiry

into what makes a good life and how to live it, even in the depths of the machine age.—Orion Magazine In 1969 Gary Snyder returned from a long residence in Japan to northern California, to a homestead in the Sierra foothills where he intended to build a house and settle on the land with his wife and young sons. He had just published his first book of essays, *Earth House Hold*. A few years before, after a long absence, Wendell Berry left New York City to return to land near his grandfather's farm in Port Royal, Kentucky, where he built a small studio and lived there with his wife as they restored an old house on their newly acquired homestead. In 1969 Berry had just published *Long-Legged House*. These two founding members of the counterculture and of the new environmental movement had yet to meet, but they knew each other's work, and soon they began a correspondence. Neither man could have imagined the impact their work would have on American political and literary culture, nor could they have appreciated the impact they would have on one another. Snyder had thrown over all vestiges of Christianity in favor of becoming a devoted Buddhist and Zen practitioner, and had lived in Japan for a prolonged period to develop this practice. Berry's discomfort with the Christianity of his native land caused him to become something of a renegade Christian, troubled by the church and organized religion, but grounded in its vocabulary and its narrative. Religion and spirituality seemed like a natural topic for the two men to discuss, and discuss they did. They exchanged more than 240 letters from 1973 to 2013, remarkable letters of insight and argument. The two bring out the best in each other, as they grapple with issues of faith and reason, discuss ideas of home and family, worry over the disintegration of community and commonwealth, and share the details of the lives they've chosen to live with their wives and children. Contemporary American culture is the landscape they reside on. Environmentalism, sustainability, global politics and American involvement, literature, poetry and progressive ideals, these two public intellectuals address issues as broad as are found in any exchange in literature. No one can be unaffected by the complexity of their relationship, the subtlety of their arguments, and the grace of their friendship. This is a book for the ages.

crossing brooklyn ferry full poem analysis: I Hear America Singing Walt Whitman, 1991 Whitman's famous poem, accompanied by linoleum-cut illustrations, depicts people at work all over an earlier America.

crossing brooklyn ferry full poem analysis: Song of the Broad-axe Walt Whitman, 1924 Complete set of the thirteen woodcut illustrations used in the 1924 edition of *Song of the Broad-axe* by Walt Whitman, published by Centaur Press in Philadelphia. Each woodcut is titled and numbered 16. The titles are (as they appear in the book): No.I, Ship struck in storm, Beauty of woodmen, building, the forger, hell of war, The great city, of the best-bodied mothers, the hammers-men, the headsman, solid forest, the liquor-bar, and No.II.

crossing brooklyn ferry full poem analysis: When Brooklyn Was Queer Hugh Ryan, 2019-03-05 The never-before-told story of Brooklyn's vibrant and forgotten queer history, from the mid-1850s up to the present day. ***An ALA GLBT Round Table Over the Rainbow 2019 Top Ten Selection*** ***NAMED ONE OF THE BEST LGBTQ BOOKS OF 2019 by Harper's Bazaar*** A romantic, exquisite history of gay culture. —Kirkus Reviews, starred "[A] boisterous, motley new history...entertaining and insightful." —The New York Times Book Review Hugh Ryan's *When Brooklyn Was Queer* is a groundbreaking exploration of the LGBT history of Brooklyn, from the early days of Walt Whitman in the 1850s up through the queer women who worked at the Brooklyn Navy Yard during World War II, and beyond. No other book, movie, or exhibition has ever told this sweeping story. Not only has Brooklyn always lived in the shadow of queer Manhattan neighborhoods like Greenwich Village and Harlem, but there has also been a systematic erasure of its queer history—a great forgetting. Ryan is here to unearth that history for the first time. In intimate, evocative, moving prose he discusses in new light the fundamental questions of what history is, who tells it, and how we can only make sense of ourselves through its retelling; and shows how the formation of the Brooklyn we know today is inextricably linked to the stories of the incredible people who created its diverse neighborhoods and cultures. Through them, *When Brooklyn Was Queer* brings Brooklyn's queer past to life, and claims its place as a modern classic.

crossing brooklyn ferry full poem analysis: When I Heard the Learn'd Astronomer Walt Whitman, 2004-11-01 Leave time for wonder. Walt Whitman's *When I Heard the Learn'd Astronomer* is an enduring celebration of the imagination. Here, Whitman's wise words are beautifully recast by New York Times #1 best-selling illustrator Loren Long to tell the story of a boy's fascination with the heavens. Toy rocket in hand, the boy finds himself in a crowded, stuffy lecture hall. At first he is amazed by the charts and the figures. But when he finds himself overwhelmed by the pontifications of an academic, he retreats to the great outdoors and does something as universal as the stars themselves... he dreams.

crossing brooklyn ferry full poem analysis: O Captain! My Captain! Walt Whitman, 1915

crossing brooklyn ferry full poem analysis: After All, Not to Create Only Walt Whitman, 1871 Seventeen kings and forty-two elephants romp with a variety of jungle animals during their journey through a wild, wet night.

crossing brooklyn ferry full poem analysis: The Universal Deep Structure of Modern Poetry John A.F. Hopkins, 2020-04-02 With something of a poetry renaissance currently under way worldwide, there is now, more than ever, a need for a solidly-based methodology for interpreting poems: something more empirical than traditional "lit-crit" approaches, and something more linguistically-informed than the version of "postmodernism" rampant in certain Anglophone universities. The latter approach, which tends to allow the individual reader to do what he/she likes with a poetic text, is inadequate to interpret modernist poetry, whose English-language precursors may be found in the late Romantics; its pioneers were already writing (in France) as early as 1840. What is so different about the modernists? Most importantly, their works are monumental, in that they are strongly resistant to deconstruction. Contributing to this resistance is the fact that they are built around two deep-level propositions, each of which generates a set of indirectly-signifying images, sharing the same internal structure, but having a different vocabulary. Thus, they do not signify according to linear narrative, but according to these propositions—and the relation between them—which may be reconstructed by a careful comparison of images on the textual surface. Every text—as subject-sign—refers to an intertextual object-sign, which is usually another poem, but may also be a film or other form of art. Mediating between these two signs is their reader-constructed interpretant, which completes the semiotic triad. As this book shows, the novelty of this sign is thrown into relief by the contrast it makes with a lexical counterpart from the reader's experience, which differs from the interpretant in structure. The book's inclusion of French and Japanese, as well as English poems, shows that deep-level signifying mechanisms may well be universal, with considerable research and pedagogical implications.

crossing brooklyn ferry full poem analysis: The Cambridge Companion to the Literature of the American Renaissance Christopher N. Phillips, 2018-03-07 The American Renaissance has been a foundational concept in American literary history for nearly a century. The phrase connotes a period, as well as an event, an iconic turning point in the growth of a national literature and a canon of texts that would shape American fiction, poetry, and oratory for generations. F. O. Matthiessen coined the term in 1941 to describe the years 1850–1855, which saw the publications of major writings by Hawthorne, Melville, Emerson, Thoreau, and Whitman. This Companion takes up the concept of the American Renaissance and explores its origins, meaning, and longevity. Essays by distinguished scholars move chronologically from the formative reading of American Renaissance authors to the careers of major figures ignored by Matthiessen, including Stowe, Douglass, Harper, and Longfellow. The volume uses the best of current literary studies, from digital humanities to psychoanalytic theory, to illuminate an era that reaches far beyond the Civil War and continues to shape our understanding of American literature.

crossing brooklyn ferry full poem analysis: Beat! Beat! Drums! Walt Whitman, 2015-12-12 Walter Walt Whitman (1819 - 1892) was an American poet, essayist and journalist. A humanist, he was a part of the transition between transcendentalism and realism, incorporating both views in his works. Whitman is among the most influential poets in the American canon, often called the father of free verse. Whitman's work breaks the boundaries of poetic form and is generally prose-like. He also

used unusual images and symbols in his poetry, including rotting leaves, tufts of straw, and debris. He also openly wrote about death and sexuality, including prostitution. He is often labeled as the father of free verse, though he did not invent it. Whitman wrote in the preface to the 1855 edition of *Leaves of Grass*, The proof of a poet is that his country absorbs him as affectionately as he has absorbed it. He believed there was a vital, symbiotic relationship between the poet and society. This connection was emphasized especially in *Song of Myself* by using an all-powerful first-person narration. As an American epic, it deviated from the historic use of an elevated hero and instead assumed the identity of the common people. *Leaves of Grass* also responded to the impact that recent urbanization in the United States had on the masses.

crossing brooklyn ferry full poem analysis: *The Routledge Encyclopedia of Walt Whitman* J.R. LeMaster, Donald D. Kummings, 2013-09-05 The Routledge Encyclopedia of Walt Whitman presents a comprehensive resource compiled by over 200 internationally recognized contributors, including such leading Whitman scholars as James E. Miller, Jr., Roger Asselineau, Betsy Erkkila, and Joel Myerson. Now available for the first time in paperback, this volume comprises more than 750 entries arranged in convenient alphabetical format. Coverage includes: biographical information: all names, dates, places, and events important to understanding Whitman's life and career Whitman's works: essays on all eight editions of *Leaves of Grass*, major poems and poem clusters, principal essays and prose works, as well as his more than two dozen short stories and the novel, *Franklin Evans* prominent themes and concepts: essays on such major topics as democracy, slavery, the Civil War, immortality, sexuality, and the women's rights movement. significant forms and techniques: such as prosody, symbolism, free verse, and humour important trends and critical approaches in Whitman studies: including new historicist and cultural criticism, psychological explorations, and controversial issues of sexual identity surveys of Whitman's international impact as well as an assessment of his literary legacy. Useful for students, researchers, librarians, teachers, and Whitman devotees, this volume features extensive cross-references, numerous photographs of the poet, a chronology, a special appendix section tracking the poet's genealogy, and a thorough index. Each entry includes a bibliography for further study.

crossing brooklyn ferry full poem analysis: *The Good Gray Poet* William Douglas O'Connor, 1927

crossing brooklyn ferry full poem analysis: *Memories of President Lincoln* Walt Whitman, 1906

crossing brooklyn ferry full poem analysis: *Live Oak, with Moss* Walt Whitman, Brian Selznick, 2019-04-09 "Reading this book, what becomes eminently clear is that Selznick is laying the groundwork for GLBTQIA+ literary history . . . as it pertains to Whitman." —School Library Journal As he was turning forty, Walt Whitman wrote twelve poems in a small handmade book he entitled "Live Oak, With Moss." The poems were intensely private reflections on his attraction to and affection for other men. They were also Whitman's most adventurous explorations of the theme of same-sex love, composed decades before the word "homosexual" came into use. This revolutionary, extraordinarily beautiful and passionate cluster of poems was never published by Whitman and has remained unknown to the general public—until now. New York Times–bestselling and Caldecott Award–winning illustrator Brian Selznick offers a provocative visual narrative of "Live Oak, With Moss," and Whitman scholar Karen Karbiener reconstructs the story of the poetic cluster's creation and destruction. Walt Whitman's reassembled, reinterpreted *Live Oak, With Moss* serves as a source of inspiration and a cause for celebration. "In harmony, the art, the poems, and [Karbiener's] analysis all honor while illuminating Whitman's work and make it more accessible to contemporary readers." —Publishers Weekly

crossing brooklyn ferry full poem analysis: *Literary Brooklyn* Evan Hughes, 2011-08-16 For the first time, here is Brooklyn's story through the eyes of its greatest storytellers. Like Paris in the twenties or postwar Greenwich Village, Brooklyn today is experiencing an extraordinary cultural boom. In recent years, writers of all stripes—from Jhumpa Lahiri, Jennifer Egan, and Colson Whitehead to Nicole Krauss and Jonathan Safran Foer—have flocked to its patchwork of distinctive

neighborhoods. But as literary critic and journalist Evan Hughes reveals, the rich literary life now flourishing in Brooklyn is part of a larger, fascinating history. With a dynamic mix of literary biography and urban history, Hughes takes us on a tour of Brooklyn past and present and reveals that hiding in Walt Whitman's Fort Greene Park, Hart Crane's Brooklyn Bridge, the raw Williamsburg of Henry Miller's youth, Truman Capote's famed house on Willow Street, and the contested streets of Jonathan Lethem's Boerum Hill is the story of more than a century of life in America's cities. Literary Brooklyn is a prismatic investigation into a rich literary inheritance, but most of all it's a deep look into the beloved borough, a place as diverse and captivating as the people who walk its streets and write its stories.

crossing brooklyn ferry full poem analysis: The Imperial Self Quentin Anderson, 1971

crossing brooklyn ferry full poem analysis: **LEAVES OF GRASS** WALT WHITMAN, 1892

crossing brooklyn ferry full poem analysis: *What Is the Grass* Mark Doty, 2021-04-06 "[An] incisive, personal mediation." —New York Times Book Review Mark Doty has always felt haunted by Walt Whitman's perennially new American voice, and by his equally radical claims about body and soul. In *What Is the Grass*, Doty effortlessly blends biography, criticism, and memoir to keep company with Whitman and his *Leaves of Grass*, tracing the resonances between his own experience and the legendary poet's life and work.

crossing brooklyn ferry full poem analysis: **A Voyage to the Country of the Houyhnhnms** Jonathan Swift, 2011-08-01 According to legend, when the author and Historical Long Rider Jonathan Swift made an equestrian journey across Ireland, he arrived at a remarkable conclusion. The beloved mare who carried him faithfully was a paragon of reason, understanding and sympathy, unlike his fellow human beings. At the conclusion of the ride, Swift penned his famous book, *Gulliver's Travels*. It told the tale of Lemuel Gulliver, a ship's captain who sailed to four remarkable kingdoms. While the simple children's version focuses on the little people of Lilliput, it was the talking horses found in the fourth adventure which outraged civilised English society. *A Voyage to the Country of the Houyhnhnms* recounts how Captain Gulliver's crew mutinied and set him ashore on an unknown island. There he encountered a race of savage humanoids who threatened to kill him. The bewildered traveller was rescued by horses, who it turns out could speak and in fact ruled the island. What follows is an astonishing tale that turns man's definition of himself on its head. The naked, warlike and murderous humans are known as Yahoos, a term still used today as a synonym for ruffian. In order to draw attention to the evils of materialism and elitism, Swift described the Yahoos as savage creatures with selfish habits, who are obsessed with digging pretty stones from the mud. In stark contrast the Houyhnhnms, which in their language means the perfection of nature, are a race of intelligent horses that enjoy a peaceful society based upon reason. Though he is biologically akin to the Yahoos, Gulliver prefers the company of his benevolent equine hosts. When he learns to converse with the horses, Gulliver attempts to explain human society. His equine hosts are perplexed with the alien concepts of greed, war and injustice. Nor do they have a word for 'lie,' and must substitute the phrase to say a thing which is not. When Gulliver reluctantly returns to England, he finds the company of his countrymen, whom he now views as Yahoos, so intolerable that he spends most of his time in the stable near his home. Thus, this equine episode is the keystone of *Gulliver's Travels* and reflects Swift's disenchantment with popular society. Originally it was believed that *A Voyage to the Country of the Houyhnhnms* was a metaphor used by Swift to highlight England's treatment of slaves as lesser human beings. More recently, it has been described as an early example of animal rights, in that Gulliver's role reversal highlighted how cruelly English horses were treated. First released anonymously in 1726, it sold out in less than a week. Since then, the challenging tale has never been out of print. Nor has there arrived a human who has answered the challenge Swift wrote for his own epitaph. Go forth, Voyager, and copy, if you can, this vigorous champion of Liberty.

crossing brooklyn ferry full poem analysis: **Invisible Listeners** Helen Vendler, 2009-02-09 When a poet addresses a living person—whether friend or enemy, lover or sister—we recognize the expression of intimacy. But what impels poets to leap across time and space to speak to invisible

listeners, seeking an ideal intimacy—George Herbert with God, Walt Whitman with a reader in the future, John Ashbery with the Renaissance painter Francesco Parmigianino? In *Invisible Listeners*, Helen Vendler argues that such poets must invent the language that will enact, on the page, an intimacy they lack in life. Through brilliantly insightful and gracefully written readings of these three great poets over three different centuries, Vendler maps out their relationships with their chosen listeners. For his part, Herbert revises the usual vertical address to God in favor of a horizontal one-addressing God as a friend. Whitman hovers in a sometimes erotic, sometimes quasi-religious language in conceiving the democratic camerado, who will, following Whitman's example, find his true self. And yet the camerado will be replaced, in Whitman's verse, by the ultimate invisible listener, Death. Ashbery, seeking a fellow artist who believes that art always distorts what it represents, finds he must travel to the remote past. In tones both tender and skeptical he addresses Parmigianino, whose extraordinary self-portrait in a convex mirror furnishes the poet with both a theory and a precedent for his own inventions. By creating the forms and speech of ideal intimacy, these poets set forth the possibility of a more complete and satisfactory human interchange—an ethics of relation that is uncoerced, understanding, and free.

crossing brooklyn ferry full poem analysis: *The Plural of Us* Bonnie Costello, 2020-06-09 *The Plural of Us* is the first book to focus on the poet's use of the first-person plural voice—poetry's "we." Closely exploring the work of W. H. Auden, Bonnie Costello uncovers the trove of thought and feeling carried in this small word. While lyric has long been associated with inwardness and a voice saying "I," "we" has hardly been noticed, even though it has appeared throughout the history of poetry. Reading for this pronoun in its variety and ambiguity, Costello explores the communal function of poetry—the reasons, risks, and rewards of the first-person plural. Costello adopts a taxonomic approach to her subject, considering "we" from its most constricted to its fully unbounded forms. She also takes a historical perspective, following Auden's interest in the full range of "the human pluralities" in a time of particular pressure for and against the collective. Costello offers new readings as she tracks his changing approach to voice in democracy. Examples from many other poets—including Walt Whitman, T. S. Eliot, Elizabeth Bishop, and Wallace Stevens—arise throughout the book, and the final chapter offers a consideration of how contemporary writers find form for what George Oppen called "the meaning of being numerous." Connecting insights to philosophy of language and to recent work in concepts of community, *The Plural of Us* shows how poetry raises vital questions—literary and social—about how we speak of our togetherness.

crossing brooklyn ferry full poem analysis: *The Seaside and the Fireside* Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, 1850

crossing brooklyn ferry full poem analysis: *Anthem For Doomed Youth* Wilfred Owen, 2015-02-26 'Tonight he noticed how the women's eyes Passed from him to the strong men that were whole.' The true horror of the trenches is brought to life in this selection of poetry from the front line. Introducing Little Black Classics: 80 books for Penguin's 80th birthday. Little Black Classics celebrate the huge range and diversity of Penguin Classics, with books from around the world and across many centuries. They take us from a balloon ride over Victorian London to a garden of blossom in Japan, from Tierra del Fuego to 16th-century California and the Russian steppe. Here are stories lyrical and savage; poems epic and intimate; essays satirical and inspirational; and ideas that have shaped the lives of millions. Wilfred Owen (1893-1918). Owen is available in Penguin Classics in *Three Poets of the First World War*: Ivor Gurney, Isaac Rosenberg, Wilfred Owen.

crossing brooklyn ferry full poem analysis: *The Bridge* Hart Crane, 1970 Like Whitman, Hart Crane strove in his poetry to embrace America, to distill an image of America.

crossing brooklyn ferry full poem analysis: *Dark Horses* Joy Katz, Kevin Prufer, 2007 Poets discuss forgotten favorites

crossing brooklyn ferry full poem analysis: *The Mystic Trumpeter* Walt Whitman, 1916

crossing brooklyn ferry full poem analysis: *Pindar's Homer* Gregory Nagy, 1994-03-01 Throughout, he progressively broadens the definition of lyric to the point where it becomes the basis for defining epic, rather than the other way around.

crossing brooklyn ferry full poem analysis: Refugees Brian Bilston, 2024-09-24 Refugee is a powerful word. One that conjures opposing emotions.

crossing brooklyn ferry full poem analysis: **Dazzled** Arthur Sze, 1982

crossing brooklyn ferry full poem analysis: Autumn Rivulets Walt Whitman, 2013-08
AUTUMN RIVULETS Part 1. As Consequent, Etc. As consequent from store of summer rains, Or wayward rivulets in autumn flowing, Or many a herb-lined brook's reticulations, Or subterranean sea-rills making for the sea, Songs of continued years I sing. Life's ever-modern rapids first, (soon, soon to blend, With the old streams of death.) Some threading Ohio's farm-fields or the woods, Some down Colorado's canons from sources of perpetual snow, Some half-hid in Oregon, or away southward in Texas, Some in the north finding their way to Erie, Niagara, Ottawa, Some to Atlantica's bays, and so to the great salt brine...

crossing brooklyn ferry full poem analysis: **Chants Democratic** Walt Whitman, 2015-12-12
Walter Walt Whitman (1819 - 1892) was an American poet, essayist and journalist. A humanist, he was a part of the transition between transcendentalism and realism, incorporating both views in his works. Whitman is among the most influential poets in the American canon, often called the father of free verse. Whitman's work breaks the boundaries of poetic form and is generally prose-like. He also used unusual images and symbols in his poetry, including rotting leaves, tufts of straw, and debris. He also openly wrote about death and sexuality, including prostitution. He is often labeled as the father of free verse, though he did not invent it. Whitman wrote in the preface to the 1855 edition of Leaves of Grass, The proof of a poet is that his country absorbs him as affectionately as he has absorbed it. He believed there was a vital, symbiotic relationship between the poet and society. This connection was emphasized especially in Song of Myself by using an all-powerful first-person narration. As an American epic, it deviated from the historic use of an elevated hero and instead assumed the identity of the common people. Leaves of Grass also responded to the impact that recent urbanization in the United States had on the masses.

crossing brooklyn ferry full poem analysis: American Bard Walt Whitman, William Everson, 1982

crossing brooklyn ferry full poem analysis: **Song of the Open Road** Walt Whitman, 2022-06-21 Walt Whitman's poem was first published in the 1856 collection Leaves of Grass.

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