



Revising Life: Sylvia Plath's Ariel Poems (Gender and American Culture)

Susan R. Van Dyne

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'Provides a compelling argument for Plath's revision of the painful parts of her life--the failed marriage, her anxiety for success, and her ambivalence towards her mother. . . . The reader will feel the tension in the poetry and the life.' *Choice* '[Examines] Plath's twin goals of becoming a famous poet and a perfect mother. . . . This book's main points are clearly and forcefully argued: that both poems and babies require 'struggle, pain, endless labor, and . . . fears of monstrous offspring' and that, in the end, Plath ran out of the resources necessary to produce both. Often maligned as a self-indulgent confessional poet, Plath is here retrieved as a passionate theorist.'--*Library Journal* Susan Van Dyne's reading of twenty-five of Sylvia Plath's Ariel poems considers three contexts: Plath's journal entries from 1957 to 1959 (especially as they reveal her conflicts over what it meant to be a middle-class wife and mother and an aspiring writer in 1950s America); the interpretive strategies of feminist theory; and Plath's multiple revisions of the poems.

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