

PV Log: (circle one) **Poem** / Movie / Picture / LyricDate 1/10/14Title "Power"Author / Director / Adrienne Rich

Context (Where Found / Viewed / Read?)

Found on shmoop.com while searching for poems

Content / CD / Summary / Precis (Say? "Plot? Setting/Situation? Key lines/phrases scenes, etc?)

This poem is an oddly set up poem, but it brings a powerful message. It begins telling the story of how an old bottle of liquid was dug up, and how it had one of those substances that was advertised to cure everything. Then the poem switches to the story of Marie Curie. It says how she knew better than anyone else her radiation sickness, but she still denied it in public. The final line states that the source of Curie's power and fame was also the source of her sickness and death.

Content / CM / Meaning? / Theme(s)?

This poem's theme is power obviously, but more importantly, it is about the old saying, "With great power comes great responsibility." I'm not saying that Marie Curie was greedy or obsessed with power, but she did uncover a great power that had great potential that ended up hurting her because she did not handle it properly. She had no idea that she was handling it improperly, but with modern science, we know that radiation is very dangerous. This is a huge metaphor for all kinds of power whether it is money, political power, or power over people.

Form (Diction? Construction Terms? Symbolism?)

This poem is free verse, and doesn't really follow any particular construction pattern. It tells one story, then suddenly shifts to another. It does, however, have some rather oddly large spaces in the first five or so lines. These tell us that the speaker is leaving something out, and there is more to be discovered.

Commentary (What do you want to say? Why like? Questions? Synthesis / Allusions-Connections / Relevance to personal experience, to literature, 20Q's? etc.)? "Poetic" Traits?

I like this poem because it holds a very important message. Power can be used for good, but it can also be harmful. People with power must not become full of themselves or let their power get the best of them. This poem's message applies to just about every single government in the world today. Corruption is way to prevalent in our society, and world leaders must learn how to handle their power properly and not let it take them over. They may think that they are in control of everything, but in reality, the power has control over them and can manipulate them in any way it wants.

over (do not mix logs; e.g., no poem log in front, and movie log on back)

Power

Living in the earth-depositis of our history

Today a backhoe divulged out of a crumbling flank of earth
one bottle amber perfect a hundred-year-old
cure for fever or melancholy a tonic
for living on this earth in the winters of this climate

Today I was reading about Marie Curie:
she must have known she suffered from radiation sickness
her body bombarded for years by the element
she had purified
It seems she denied to the end
the source of the cataracts on her eyes
the cracked and suppurating skin of her finger-ends
till she could no longer hold a test-tube or a pencil

She died a famous woman denying
her wounds
denying
her wounds came from the same source as her power