

Notes from Pulitzer Prize Archive Volume 17 by Heinz Fischer  
**Compiled by and commented upon by Dr John WorldPeace JD**

These are notes about the Pulitzer Poetry Prize from 1921 to 2000 from the book

“The Pulitzer Prize Archive Part F: Documentation Volume 17:  
Heinz-D Fishcher, Erika J. Fisher  
COMPLETE HISTORICAL HANDBOOK OF THE PULITZER PRIZE SYSTEM  
1917-2000  
Chapter 13.3 Poetry Prize p. 397 to 426”

The content and commentary below only refers to the above book.

However, there is a more expansive book which I did not reference in this document

“Chronicle of the Pulitzer Prizes for Poetry: Discussions, Decisions, and Documents  
(Pulitzer Prize Archive Volume 23) 484 pages Published August 19, 2009

#### BEHIND THE SCENES AT THE PULITZER PRIZE 1917 TO 2000

There was no poetry prize initially dictated by Joseph Pulitzer. It was established by the Board in 1922.

1922: 28 submissions **Edwin Arlington Robinson** “Collected Poems” won over **Edna St Vincent Millay**

1923: The jury “did not consider any volume of verse among the submitted entries to be worthy of winning the prize.” **The committee went on a quest and said:** The poems of **Edna St Vincent Millay**... are rather slight and few in number, but they do represent, so far as the Committee can discover, the best verse published in 1922.

1924: **Robert Frost** won. The jury chooses the winner and submits it to the Advisory Board who approves it. Generally the jury has to be unanimous in their recommendation.

1925: 35 submissions. The jury said **Edward Arlington Robinson** “The Man Who Died Twice” The jury stated “Undoubtedly the best work” **But he won in 1922 and should not receive the award. So we see here in the third year of the prize that having the best book of poetry was not necessary determinative of the winner.** In the end, with the other submissions being of only average quality, they went ahead and **gave the award to E A Robinson.**

1926: 44 entries **Amy Lowell’s “Whats A Clock”** won. She had been among the **finalist 4 years prior** but had deceased by the time the prize was bestowed. Over the following years there would be discussions about giving the prize to a dead poet.

1927: 41 entries. Leanora Speyer for “Fidler’s Farewell...” The comments were: Ms Speyer’s verse has the widest range both in subject and technique. It also contains a depth of emotion, and an imaginative swing beyond anything in Sara Teasdale or **MacLeish** submitted.

1928: 44 entries. 10 volumes worthy of being winners. **Winners for the third time Edward Arlington Robinson Tristram is considered from all points of view, the best piece of work.**

1929: 49 entries. 30 excellent in different ways. In technique they run from conventional forms to latest phases of free verse. In subject, grave, serious, humorous. Light, satirical, philosophical. Frost, Millay and Robinson at the top. But Stephen Vincent Benet John Brown's Body won. wide scope, few weaknesses in structure. verse and theme are of great variety, from description of character sketches to lyrics of very great beauty.

(NOTES: The book was 336 pages and read front to back by the jury. Jwp)

1930: 48 entries. 10 on the short list. E A Robinson had the best book but he had won 3 times already and so was set aside and Selected Poems by Conrad Aiken won.

(NOTES: In what other contest does the winner get blackballed for having won too often??? You will see this kind of manipulation over and over through the years by the Pulitzer jurors and Board members. Jwp)

1931: 53 entries. Robinson, Frost, and MacLeish were at the top. Robinson again eliminated due to 3 prior wins. Robert Frost Collected Poems represents the high water mark of all books submitted. No mention if they specifically read Robinson's submission.

1932: 51 entries. Benet, Millay, Robinson, Speyer had won before and eliminated from consideration. George Dillon for The Flowering Stone won.

(NOTES: So we see the best poets were eliminated out of hand. How depressing for the best poets who were marginalized. Of course this was not public information. Jwp)

(NOTE: At the end of this summaries the author Fischer of The Pulitzer Archives says: In general, the history of this award category shows that "the poetry prize remained one of the least controversial Pulitzers for it hardly happened that the board overruled the jury decision. (I think that is about to change. My primary life is devoted to advocating WorldPeace and the manipulation by the juries and board are an impediment to peace. Time to open the windows and doors and give some air to the Pulitzer Poetry Prize. Jwp)

1933: 41 entries. Again right off the start E A Robinson is eliminated due to 3 wins. MacLeish Conquistador won unanimously.

1934: 32 entries. Robinson and MacLeish eliminated. Robert Hillyer The Collect Verse won.

1935: 37 entries. E A Robinson Amaranth was the best volume but his prior wins eliminated him AGAIN. Millay eliminated due to a prior win. Audrey Wurdemann Bright Ambush won. Young 23 years old. her work still experimental but she acquired a beautiful technique on a variety of themes.

(NOTES: Ms. Amanda Gorman is younger by a few months than Ms Wurdemann. I am sure this is going to be referred to if Ms Gorman wins the 2022 Pulitzer Poetry Prize in order to further boost her book sales. Jwp)

1936: 47 entries. Winner Robert P Tristram Coffin Strange Holiness winner. All the poems are descriptive lyrics, having their basis in some scene or character in country life. A moral inference, never strained,

growing directly out of the scene, incident or character. The technique though it may seem simple, is carefully studied.

1937: 79 entries. 4 worthy of the prize. It came down to Stephen Benet and Robert Frost. Both had won. The prior win elimination was rejected and Frost A Further Range won.

(Here we have a shift removing the prior win problem. Jwp)

1938: 77 entries. 1) dead poets were eliminated. 2) Poets who had submitted better works in prior years were eliminated. 5 were in the final cut who were all young poets. Mary Saturenska Cold Morning Sky won. with this comment. "It must be said in conclusion that no volume of verse submitted this year reaches the high quality of work by Frost and Benet.

(The true winners Frost and Benet but they did not get the prize. The first 16 years of the Pulitzer poetry prize were riddled with manipulation and therefore corruption. Jwp)

1939: 52 entries. Jury report: there is not a single outstanding volume which would make the decision easy. John Gould Fletcher Select Poems won. His work represents very well the various phases in poetic art during the last 25 years. It has a good average quality. Regarding William Carlos Williams Complete Collected Poems 1906-38 over 300 pages by a practicing physician has many fine poems.

(The jury obviously read a book of over 300 pages. They did not read my submission of 3,500 poems for the 2020 prize. Jwp)

1940: 44 volumes. There is less very poor verse and at the same time there is less excellent verse. Five in the final cut. Mark A VanDoren Collected poems won.

1941: 50 entries. The competition shows more very radical verse than ever before. Some of it in technique and content might well come from institutions for the mentally afflicted. Leonard Bacon for Sunderland Capture winner. had some notable poems, particularly the long poem which was the book title.

(Some of the poems were from "the mentally ill" . There is an overall bias against non-traditional poetry to this day. Jwp)

1942: 41 entries. About half the number, though fairly competent in technique, are lacking in original thought and personality. Winner William Rose Benet The Dust which is God.

1943: 34 entries. Four former winners. But with the conspicuous exception of Frost, the others show no marked advance in subject and style over the excellent work for which they received the prize. No other book of American Poetry published during 1942 is in a class with Robert Frost A Witness Tree. Winner.

1944: 30 entries. More than half show excellent workmanship. 3 prior winners. Stephen Benet's (prior winner) Western Star at the head of the list. for interest and for distinguished workmanship. His most mature work. Winner Benet Western Star: died the prior year.

1945: 36 entries. Nearly as many volumes as usual represent distinguished work. The most distinguished was WH Auden For The Time Being but he was not an American citizen yet. Winner second best work to

Auden: Karl J Shapiro V-leter and other poems winner. He does not have the technical skill of Auden. Auden addresses intellect, Shapiro addresses emotion.

1946: Auden the best but still not a citizen. Emily Dickenson 2d but long time dead. NO PRIZE AWARDED in 1946.

(The only year no prize awarded. Jwp)

1947: Robert T S Lowell Jr for Weary's Castle. No comments

1948: Usual number of entries. Winner Auden (now a citizen) The Age of Anxiety winner is a powerful, highly original poem which is not easy and demands and will receive intensive study.

1949: Peter R E Viereck Terror and Decorum. winner. A young up and coming poet whose debut was praised highly.

1950: The finest book Complete Poems of Robert Frost which summarizes his whole career. Unwise to give him a 5<sup>th</sup> award if no other candidate was in site. Winner Gwendolyn Brooks "Annie Allen" great originality, real distinction and high value as a book as well as poetry.

(What a rip off of Frost. How much quality of American poetry is diminished by the penalties placed on the stellar books of stellar poets in America. Jwp)

1951: Most of the entries range from the near illiterate to merely competent. The general level of a readable but unremarkable mediocrity. Complete Poems by Carl Sandburg far above the rest. Never won a Pulitzer for Poetry winner. declared winner.

(A bad year for submissions. Sandburg won in part because he never won based on his reputation. Jwp)

1952: 40 entries. Four categories. 1) competent, 2) promising 3) accomplished and well-established 4) the indisputably original, remarkable, and otherwise outstanding. Collected Poems by Marianne Moore winner.

(I think this is a good categorization that should be applied each year. Jwp)

(This the last year the number of entries were noted by Fischer. I was really surprised at an average of about 40+ entries on the average. When the word got around that the best were not awarded the prize, and the prize was manipulated, I think many poets quietly boycotted the prize or just saw no reason to enter. As you will see from my analysis of 2000-2021 there is a heavy bias toward awarding professors with significant accolades. It makes a cursory judgment easy. Submitting professors are a small percentage of poets in America. There are secondary factors like undergraduate Ivy League attendance, savvy publishers like Copper Canyon Press, and some affirmative action like in 2021 (which I did not enter) female Hispanic native American, 2020 Gay Black male, 2019 Forrest Gander because his wife also a well known poet died. Both were very active poets. And there is obvious some skewing toward those associated with Columbia University that administers the Pulitzer Prize. See <https://drjohnworldpeacejdversuspulitzerorg.com/list%20of%20winners%20and%20credentials%202010803.pdf>. From my website: DrJohnWorldPeaceJDversuspulitzerorg.com a companion of sorts to my website DrJohnWorldPeaceJDPoetry.com Jwp)

1953: The quantity is less and the quality of entries are lower. T S Elliot and Macleish were the best but Elliot is not an American. Entries by these two are so outstanding that, by comparison, all the others seem meager in scope and minor in effect. The Collected poems of Archibald MacLeish wins.

(The Pulitzer Prize is an American Prize and I don't know why T S Elliot is even mentioned. He is irrelevant not matter what he wrote. Same with W H Auden when he submitted without being a citizen. When he became a citizen, he won.)

1954: Quickly the clear favorite, Theodore Roethke. He was that rare thing, a poet who is original without being freakish. His imagery is sometimes bizarre and often brusque but it is always logical and never less that stimulating. He is essentially a lyric poet and although his lyrics are not conventional rhythmical, they have enough music to make them traditional and just enough dissonances to make them modern. Of the younger poets he has the most striking combination of boldness and discipline. Theodore Roethke The Waking wins.

(The Pulitzer has always leaned toward conventional tradition lyrical poets. That is not the nature of poetry in the 21<sup>st</sup> century and will be less so as the Third Millennium unfolds. Corporate religion, especially Corporate Christianity) is going to be rejected for Spiritual Christianity. Jwp)

1955: Wallace Stevens vs. E E Cummings the clear favorites. Both with Collected Poems. Stevens has been the recipient of several prizes in the past. He has never won the Pulitzer. Wallace Stevens for his Collected Poems wins.

(This seems to me to be bullshit. In the past Stevens won some awards not the Pulitzer. I guess more prizes than E E Cummings. Cummings broke a lot of ground. But I think his ground breaking was just too radical. The prize is not about past accumulated prizes other than the Pulitzer. It is about what is on the table under the Pulitzer genre. I think E E was just too radical and no one to compare to and the jurors did not want to risk their careers voting for him. This is more evidence of the impurity of the judging process of the Pulitzer. Jwp)

1956: Two jurors who did not meet but submitted separate reports. Elizabeth Bishop's Poems North and South is noteworthy in every way. Both jurors came broadly to the same conclusion. Bishop won.

(The tradition was 3 jurors so to have a tie breaker and a unanimous decision. Without that the prize defaults to the non-poets of the Pulitzer Board. Jwp)

1957: Richard Wilbur was the outstanding candidate with Things of This world. His third volume is his best. It is doubtful that a more worthy candidate for the Pulitzer Prize has appeared in years. He won.

1958: The jurors could not come to a decision and left it to the Board. One juror wrote Warren's Promises Poems 1954 to 1956 tops all the others. It does not stand in anyone's shadow. These poems by Warren reflect intensified experience, a force and an almost fierce sensibility uncommon in today's poetry. Warren won.

(The selection of jurors in this case seems to me to be substandard. Indecisiveness seems to me to mean lack of enough poetry depth.)

(NOTES; There is no mention in this Volume 17 of The Pulitzer Prize Archive by Fischer about how the jurors were selected for any year. Jwp)

1959: E E Cummings 95 Poems. Again this year the two jurors could not agree. One juror expressed the following opinion of Cummings: It has all his characteristics: the idiosyncrasies of punctuation, the disrupted syntax, the wild metaphorical leaps, the mockeries, the tenderness, the mixture of buffoonery and wit. He has received honors but no Pulitzer. Kunitz Selected Poems rival any past Pulitzer award. He has tremendous range of interests, a constant variety of forms, the courage to face his own tragedies in life. Kunitz wins.

(NOTES: It seems that the board went conventional. Cummings is a decorated ground breaking poet but Kunitz was compared to the past winners. The metric was **conventionality**. Also, why two jurors as opposed to three. Was the Pulitzer short of money or just lazy and considered the poetry prize marginal to the other prizes. Jwp)

1960: The smallest entries in years. But high quality, young and original. The jurors agreed. There were no specific comments on Ruth Stone the other top candidate for the prize. Regards to W D Snodgrass Hearts Needle. Snodgrass is a truly distinguished new poet. With his first volume he establishes himself as one who experimenting with new subject matter, does not scorn tradition. On the contrary, he puts ne vigor into traditional matter. I can't think of a new poet in the last decade who has said so many things so well. Jurors agreed. Snodgrass won.

(NOTE: The majority of the winners were determined by the jurors. In less than a handful of cases did the board have to make the call. But again here you see the word tradition comes up in the comments. Jwp)

1961: 50 entries. A half dozen fine entries that could have won in the past. The winner Phyllis McGinley Times Three. With regards to McGinley, "This omnibus collection containing seventy new poems plus a selection from three decades of published work is almost an unalloyed treat. **She is equally admired and loved by scholars, intellectuals, and most of all, the people.** The other juror said, "she occupies herself with the curious shapes of what is occupational commonplace in contrast to those who are at ease only with the bizarre, she is at home with what other have rejected as too familiar and too unimportant for poetry.

( Note Again the metric is conventionality. Jwp).

1962; Alan Dugan Poems. A first volume that shows unevenness obvious in a first publication. But unlike more serious contenders, **Dugan sounds like no one else. He is himself, his own poet, fresh, odd, and thoroughly alive.** Dugans Poems strikes us as the most noteworthy as well as the most original volume of the year. Alan Dugans Poems wins.

(Dugan sounds like no one else. He is himself, his own poet, fresh, odd, and thoroughly alive. I think this is a great description of my poetry. But I am not a professor, I have no accolades, did not go to an Ivy League university, self-published all my poem. In short, an outlier. And one who is not concerned about pleasing anyone but I have just written poems for my own pleasure and due to my own passion. Jwp)

1963: **The two jurors agree on the winner. William Carlos Williams Pictures from Brueghel and Other Poems. He has been signally honored never received a Pulitzer.** Time to recognize him, as have

practically all the poets in the USA many of whom have been influenced by his integrity, strength of utterance, dedication to the essential poetry of thing instead of the usual abstractions. Williams died after the selection but before getting the prize. He won posthumously.

(NOTES. Again we hear a vote for conventionality and again we hear he should win because he has been awarded by others. Time for a Pulitzer. These arguments avoid any controversy. The jurors to me do not seem to want to put forth the effort to really compare the entries in real time outside other accolades which is they job. Basically the jurors are lazy when they do this. And their careers are safe. Jwp)

1964: There was no book that leaped out of the list to proclaim itself the inevitable first and right choice. Louis Simpson's At the End of the Open Road. the winner. His fourth collection of poems and it unmistakably demonstrates the sureness of his development and the growing confidence and force of his voice.

1965: Jurors had a clear winner. If the poetry award is to be made strictly on the basis of merit, it should go, posthumously to Theodore Rothke for his collection The Far Field which we rank first of the books this year. An equal book of merit from a living poet John Berryman for his 77 Dream Songs. His peers acclaim his brilliance. His book gives fresh evidence of a fierce and idiosyncratic imagination. His book belongs to the history of poetry. The Board rejected Rothke because he had won before and he was dead. Berryman won.

(Again we hear the metric of conformity with the past from the jurors. I have no idea how a poet dies before the award has anything to do with anything. And he had won before which always seems to be a consideration. Jwp)

1966: Richard Eberhart familiar in American Poetry. Hiss Selected Poems 1930-1965 covers the span of his career. a dozen collections. A prolific but uneven poet. but he has written at least a handful of poems that are incomparably pure and radiant. His poems the most distinguished always out of the drift of fashion. Never received the Pulitzer. M B Tolsons Harlem Gallery a rich and fantastic poem of negro life. Eberhart won.

(NOTE: Again we see a win because he was a worthy poet that never won. I am sure Tolson lost because he was Black. This was 1966 at the beginning of the civil rights movement. Jwp.)

1967: Three candidates. question again came up about living and dead poets. Roethke was dead. There were 9 other living candidates. Anne G. Sexton Live or Die won.

1968: Three works on the short list. Juror decision was unanimously for Anthony Hechts The Hard Hours. Simply a poet who depends on the perfection and strength of the individual poem. Honoring Hecht honors poetry itself apart from considerations of dogma or literary politics. Hecht won.

(NOTE: Another traditional poet winner. Jwp)

1969: Easy selection. George Oppen Of Being Numerous all the jurors were able to recommend with enthusiasm. Oppen won

1970: Richard Howard Untitled Subjects. winner. Characterized as a consistently interesting, varied and intelligent book of poems with little of the sense of the thrown together that characterizes most poem books. wholeness of purpose, imagination and of poetic integrity lacking in most others.

1971: Pound, James Dickey, Wm Merwin, 3 more. Merwin's The Carrier of Ladders won. book is exceedingly austere in places faint to the point of disappearance. On the other hand, it is a real effort of imagination. move the reader inch by inch beyond what he knows toward something else. Merwin won

1972: James Wright Collected Poems. winner. A steady development from the traditional style and forms to the experimental writing of recent poems. His writing shows dedication and fine imaginative gifts.

1973: 7 finalists. Maxine Kumin Up Country. winner Up country is a collection of fine pastoral poems with an American flavor. considerable range of tender feeling, anger, and pathos, and she writes with a humanizing directness. poems shaped with great skill.

1974: No consensus. 2 of 3 for Robert Lowell The Dolphin the winner. Because it is masterly in its technique. varying of cadence to capture shades of feeling, the dramatic appositeness of its pauses ring true in every case.

1975: Good year. 3 or 4 worthy of the prize. Gary Snyder Turtle Island winner. Poems were outstanding. strong and attractive collection of poems. held together by the author's argument for a widening of human awareness and need for change in society in order that the environment, and plant and animal life, not be destroyed. delightful book, mixing the author's life and his public concerns in language clear, sharp and innovative.

1976: Clear favorite. John Ashbery's Self-Portrait in a Convex Mirror. winner. author responded to those impulses of recuperation of recurrence and reversion which poetry incarnates, observing its beginnings and ending by a prosody of intermittence and collage rather than by any such conventional markings as rhyme or refrain.

1977: 68 entries. Unanimously vote for James Merrill Divine Comedies. winner. Merrill a poet of considerable inventiveness, the central narrative depends on an idea, transmigration of souls, which Merrill elaborate with humor and wit. His art is most welcome at the present time when poets seem lacking in ideas and limited by their own experience. Brilliant stylist, humorous, elegant, informed.

1978: 85 entries no unified agreement. Howard Nemerov's Collected Poems winner. brilliant career as a poet has been outstanding contributor to letters by virtue of the wit and depth of a large body of work. tremendously wide variety of form, its command of language, and its vivid and perceptive use of imagery.

1979: 100 entries. Not unanimous initially. Robert Penn Warren Now and Then won. Great poetry in the book. It was either Warren or no prize.

(NOTES: the board does not want a no prize year. I think it only happened once. Interesting is that this year was the one with the most entries. And there could be no agreement. No discussion of prior awards. So that issue seems to be settled. The number of entries has doubled since the 50s it seems. So I

guess there was more crap submitted. It is nonsense that worthy judges could not come to a conclusion except boredom with the process. Meaning the wrong set of jurors in the decision seat. Jwp)

1980: 72 entries. Unanimous vote by jurors individually and as a group. Donald Justice's Selected Poems.

1981: 79 entries no agreement. James Schuyler the Morning of the Poem the winner. Two jurors for and one not for but not against.

(What is interesting at this point is that there is no poet taking multiple Prizes like Robert Frost, E A Robinson, Edna SV Millay, Robert Penn Warren, etc. Each year a new batch with no dominant poet in America. No old school passionate poet. Jwp)

1982: Two of three initially for Sylvia Plath Collected Poems winner. Plath is extraordinary. won no major prizes in her lifetime, and most of her work has been posthumously published. This volume brings together the mature work, combination of metaphorical brilliance with an effortless formal structure makes a striking volume.

(NOTE. Plath kept trying to kill herself and succeeded at 30 years old. Obviously mentally ill as was suggested of E E Cummings. I am conflicted about awarding a truly unstable poet. Suicide is a definite metric of mental illness. Cummings was not mentally ill. Jwp)

1983: Galway Kinnell Selected Poems. winner. These wide ranging poems explore the world in language always exactly fitted to their subjects, and manages to be civilized without sacrificing an iota of reality. They manage also to touch the deepest springs of feeling. Kinnell produces poems that increase in meaning with each re-reading and make clear his position as one of the major figures in contemporary American poetry.

1984: agreement immediately by the jurors. Mary Oliver American Primitive. winner. Seldom has a poet been more intensely alive, able to catch the sensations of the moment as reflected and enriched, even interpreted by the natural world around her. These feelings lyrics attain the casualness and intensity with which creatures move through life and death, they form an allegory of acceptance for human as well. The book is filled with luminous moments hovering over the dark morass.

1985: Carolyn Kizer Yin. winner. Kizer was ranked by two jurors on their list of the three best books of the year. The third juror expressed his admiration for this book. Y is Kizer's 5<sup>th</sup> book of poems. it combines satirical even raucous humor and delicate lyricism to reveal a caring, affectionate sensibility.

1986: jurors were forced to select a 3<sup>rd</sup> poet. Henry Taylor The Flying Change. winner. are skillfully crafted, gracefully written poems set in a rural landscape. This is excellently written verse – nothing fake, nothing forced. A clear and authoritative voice.

( NOTES: From 1986 it seems the process of selection has solidified. Also all the greats that entered year after year are gone. Those poets who became well known to the general public like William Carlos Williams, Cummings, E A Robinson, Frost, and MacLeish died off and have not been replaced. By the end of the year I will do further research and see how these winners proceeded with their careers after winning the prize.. Presently there are only a few who submit every year. Or if they do they don't make the top 3 and there is no commentary in this Archive book except the top three submitted to the Board. I have no idea how many entries each year. I will have to look at the more expanded Archive book on

Poetry. That would be the volume (Chronicle of the Pulitzer Prizes for Poetry: Discussions, Decisions, and Documents (Pulitzer Prize Archive 23) 484 pages Published August 19, 2009

The winners list on the Pulitzer.org site is sterile and only lists the winner's book and two finalist with no comment. My commentary on the 2000 to 2021 is really an analysis of the winners and finalist. Such as undergrad university, accolades, professorship or not, without any background commentary.

<https://drjohnworldpeacejdversuspulitzerorg.com/list%20of%20winners%20and%20credentials%20210803.pdf> Jwp)

1987: All new members of the jury. Rita F. Dove Thomas and Beulah winner. Rita Dove's Third book, continues her exploration of black history and feeling in America, and finds a new direction for there striking lyric gifts. It traces the life of a couple who are part of the great movement of Southern Black to the North in the early years of the 1900s. As in the best sequences, each poem gains strength and weight from its companions, the whole is memorable both as social portraiture and as terse, brilliant writing.

(From here to 2000 there is not much peripheral commentary from Fisher. So I have just listed the winner and the comments about the winner for what that is worth. Jwp)

1988: William M. Merediths Partial Accounts winner. Meredith has an excellent eye for the prospect of our situation and for the profits and losses of his distinguished generation, the generation of Berryman, Roethke, Lowell, Bishop and Wilbur. He belongs with these classics. This is the optimum time for the poetry of Meredith to be honored by the Pulitzer and probably the last chance to put Meredith in the public eye.

1989: Richard P. Wilbur New and Collected Poems winner. presents the elegantly articulated and crafted work that this distinguished author has forged during the past 4 decades and more. These poems tease us into sympathetic thought and beyond into wonderment; we marvel at h is precise geography of the world's body and h is probing insight into the human circumstances. We are astonished that a contemporary poet can give us the welter of humankind's velleities and aspiration in the Popeian measure of rhyme and meter.

1990: Charles Simic the World doesn't end. bring together two of his major themes – the foibles and pratfalls of our contemporary society and his wistful and anguished memories of a childhood spent in Yugoslavia during WWII into a collection of haunting and memorable prose poems that, taken as a whole construct rough parables for our lives.

1991: Mona J Van Duyn Near Changes. winner. the book permits us to look upon the truth without being turned to stone. She is able to put together every ideal of romance with the terribly funny businesses of the body and keep both sides tense and equal, the condition of our health. In the best of her poems it is not only that they teach us so much about life, but that life, over a long time, teaches us the truth of these poems.

1992: James Tate Selected Poems winner. His poetry has always been original. Beginning as the Yale Younger Poet and h is first book Last Pilot in 1967, he has delighted his admirers over the years by his inventiveness. In his many fine poems, this very funny poet who is also a tragic poet, gives us an American experience in whose strangeness we begin to recognize ourselves.

1993: Louise Glück *The Wild Iris* winner. This is a book with a solitary, almost monastic vision. A kind of devotional poetry, it recalls the metaphysical tradition of the early 1600s. The poems themselves take place entirely within a garden, with the Christian motif of suffering and redemption, death and resurrection much in evidence. It is a book of intense inward rapture where lyric values, pure lyric values of voice and spiritual meditation, predominate, and its appearance secures for Glück a high place indeed in contemporary American poetry.

(NOTE. I never saw an entry for Ms Glück before 1993. She won this Pulitzer and a Nobel Prize. Jwp)

1994: Yusef Komunyakaa *Neon Venacular* winner. The poems are deeply felt and experienced, often narrating the author's memory of childhood, his time in Vietnam, or an emotion -often melancholy- that is salved by music and/or love. His poems resonate with vigorous vocabularies, with great musical range and nuance. His poetic navigations of intense quiet and gentleness move subtly by leaps of truth telling and song.

1995: Philip Levine *The Simple Truth*. winner. This book in the eyes of the jury "has combined narrative grace and humor to form one of the most moving sequences of elegies in recent American poetry.

1996: Jorie Graham *The Dream of the Unified Field*. This work was called a significant volume in its own right. It clarifies the superb achievement of one of America's most accomplished writers.

1997: Lisel Mueller *Alive Together: New and Selected Poems*. winner. This book was called a significant volume in its own right. It clarifies the superb achievement of one of America's most accomplished writers.

1998: Charles P. Wright Jr. *Black Zodiac*. winner. In the words of the jurors "has fashioned a distinguished career in poetry on two distinct levels. He is a craftsman of lines, a musical and innovative edge-runner where words in razored sequences become edges between the breath and the silences that contain rhythmic form.

1999: Mark Strand *Blizzard of One*. No comments

2000: Charles K Williams *Repair* winner. No comments.

(Notes: You can see from 1922 to 2000 the Poetry Prize seems to have run out of gas. I think this is because it has become, per my research from 2000 to present dominated by university professors and their poetry that does not inspire the general public. I think the main reason is that the Pulitzer has been apathetic. Contemporarily the average person reads on an 8<sup>th</sup> grade level and cannot understand one of these poems without a dictionary at their side. And I do not think the contemporary public cares much about the structure of poems. They want something that flows and something that is more basic than what the Pulitzer is promoting. I think contemporary music has become the new poetry. I do not think those lyrics would be of much interest without the loud boom, bang, high energy sexual music. I have not listened to music since Heavy Metal Took over. I have a minor hearing impairment that cuts down my enjoyment of music. I am stuck in the 50s and 60s, gospel, country and Opera. I cannot understand the foreign language of most Opera but the music is clear and sharp and I enjoy that. Jwp)