

Link	Larkin	Duffy
Historical/lifetime	Born 1922 World War 2 Adult in post-war Britain Wrote WW age 42 (1964) Class divide	Born 1955 Post-War childhood Wrote MT age 38 (1993) Weakened class system
Family	Middle class parents Only child Dominant father – Nazi sympathiser died in 1947 Passive mother – looked after her until death in 1977 Sad / drab / intimidating childhood	Working class – improved 4 brothers Father Labour councillor & trade unionist Affectionate mother Lively childhood
Political views	Right-wing – attended Nuremburg rally with father	Left-wing – Labour
Religion	Atheist (followed father) Spiritual at times Fascinated by ritual	Roman Catholic upbringing Non-believer as adult
Education	Home-school then state school Father encouraged culture – Jazz, Shakespeare Avid reader – library/books escape from unhappy childhood Average student until A Level First in family to go to uni – St John’s College, Oxford (English)	State school Avid reader – library – encouraged by grandfather Talent recognised in school First to go to uni in family – Liverpool (Philosophy)
Love/Relationships	‘Feminine, almost lesbian sensibility’ Insecure, esp. about appearance Some early homosexual relationships Attitude to women: ‘morbid sense of sin, a furtive lechery’ Unsuccessful attempts at relationships with women at uni Never married – relationships with Ruth Bowman, Monica Jones, Maeve Brennan, Betty Mackareth Diaries destroyed before died - pornographic	Relationship painter / poet Adrian Henri as teenager Bi-sexual Never married Relationship with poet Jackie Kay Daughter Ella by a fellow poet 1995
Career	Torn between wanting to write & having to work 2 novels (1946/7) Rejected by civil service & Foreign Office Librarian in public library / Uni of Belfast / Uni of Hull (1955-1985) – couldn’t make a living from poetry Lived in bedsits/rented flats	Won National Poetry Prize in 1983 – career poet Lecturer in poetry at Manchester Met. in 1996 Poet Laureate 2009-2019

	Colloquial and demotic (everyday) language – natural speech patterns underpinned by rigorous structure of rhythm & rhyme Some use of traditional forms, e.g. sonnet Often narrative but moments of intense lyricism Allude to popular culture, fixing them in space & time	
Style	Structure leads reader through arguments: premise, expands, concludes/contemplates with broader perspective (tripartite structure) Regular rhyme schemes, sometimes complex/varied Asymmetric / syncopated structures (rhyme scheme / syntax runs across stanzas – links or creates forward momentum) – ‘jagged feelings’ set against ‘smooth structures’ to create emotional / intellectual tension	Dramatic monologues using demotic style Complex rhyme schemes
Tone/voice	Morose Own Voice	Life-enhancing 2 nd person Persona/dramatic monologue
Subject matter	Autobiographical Personal experience becomes universal observation	
Setting	Coventry Urban & rural life contrasted Landscapes of own life	Glasgow/Stafford Urban The cosmos (metaphysical imagery) Landscapes of own life
Characters	Class divide - disparaging	Understanding of subjects
Themes:	Larkin Poems & Treatment:	Duffy Poems & Treatment:
Gender / sexuality		
Childhood / Youth		
Loss / mourning / disappointment		
Time / memory / reminiscence		
Society / Education / Class		