

## AUTOBIOGRAPHY

The sniff of the real, that's  
what I'd want to get  
                  how it felt  
to sit on Parliament  
Hill on a May evening  
studying for exams  skinny  
seventeen  dissatisfied  
                  yet sniffing such  
a potent air, smell of  
grass in heat from  
the day's sun

I'd been walking through the **damp**  
rich ways by the ponds  
and now lay on the upper  
grass with Lamartine's poems

life seemed all  
loss, and what was more  
I'd lost whatever it was  
before I'd even had it

a green dry prospect  
distant babble of children  
and beyond, distinct at  
the end of the glow  
St Pauls like a stone thimble

longing so hard to make  
inclusions that the longing  
has become  in memory  
an inclusion

*Thom Gunn*

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*Composer's World* (Harvard, 1952), stems from his feeling that they try to impose themselves dramatically to the neglect of the composer's creation. A similar danger can be seen in the kind of criticism which Walter Slatoff advocates in his otherwise impressive *With Respect to Readers* (Cornell, 1970).