



Angry Young Woman: Manifestations of Anger in the Poetry of Adrienne Rich

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امراة شابة غاضبة: تجليات الغضب في شعر ادريان ريتش

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Abstract

The expression of repressed anger became a key element in the American women's poetry movement of the mid-twentieth century. The emotion often associated with the early stages of liberation for many women is anger. Harnessing this anger can empower individuals and strengthen their resolve. Furthermore, women have an inherent reservoir of anger, which, when directed purposefully, can combat both personal and systemic oppression. This anger, when focused, can drive significant progress and transformation. Historically, women have also used their anger as a catalyst for artistic creation as it is perceived that anger is considered one of the significant sources for female authors to reach the status of creative energy, fueling both their thematic and innovative concerns. Adrienne Rich harnessed anger in her poetry to address both societal and political issues. Her poetry, imbued with the anger from her life, not only reflects her emotional experiences but also inspires and engages readers. Hence, this paper aims at exploring how the expression of anger in Rich's poetry is intricately linked to her worldview and how it shapes her consciousness and artistic expression. As well, it labors to probe into the role played by anger as well as its nature in selected poems of Adrienne Rich to illustrate how this emotion serves as a cognitive tool that shapes and organizes her work. It demonstrates how anger acts as a mechanism for making sense of experiences, contributing to the coherence and meaning of her poetry.

Keywords: Rich, Anger, American Poetry, Women Poetry

Adrienne Rich's poetry vividly expresses anger, much of which is directed against anti-Semitism, racism, sexism, political manipulation, and the exploitation of marginalized communities. In her collection *Blood, Bread, and Poetry* (1986), Rich highlights the constructive aspects of anger. She draws an analogy between poetry and the sustenance vital for survival, paralleling poetry with bread and blood, both of which are essential for life. Adrienne Rich, in her 1979 essay which is entitled "Vesuvius at Home: The Power of Emily Dickinson," asserts that "It is always what is under pressure in us, especially under pressure of concealment ... that explodes in poetry" (162). The poet employs images of under-strain emotions, illustrating how concealed feelings, when suppressed, eventually erupt. Through this imagery, Rich allows us to perceive the underlying forces shaping these emotions. She compares between the lives of women and those of erupting volcanoes—often hidden though always retaining the potential for eruption. When anger reaches a tipping point, women erupt similarly to volcanoes. The reference to the imagery and metaphor of volcano "Vesuvius" is likely for volcanoes are known to be occasionally energetic, frequently erupting, and of recent eruptions. In her book, *Blood, Bread and Poetry*, Rich acknowledges a certain rhythm to emotions; however, she contends that poetry transcends mere rhythmic sound that pleases our senses. It also engages and influences our cognitive faculties stating that since she was very young, she had been exposed to poems through hearing and reading, appreciating their musical sounds and vivid images. However, poetry gradually transformed into more than just music and imagery; it also became a source of revelation, knowledge,

and education. Rich thought that one could gain knowledge from it. It didn't surprise or concern her that poets contradicted themselves and one another. Rich was eager for all she could receive; asserting that her young mind did not close off to maintain uniformity. (168-169) The poet openly declares her being commonly viewed by means of a furious child and of being regularly ordered to control the anger inside of her. Nevertheless, she is of the belief that showing this feeling results in beneficial outcomes. She cites William Blake's poem "A Poison Tree" for the aim of backing up the point of view she advocates; "I was angry with my friend / I told my wrath, my wrath did end. I was angry with my foe / I told it not my wrath did grow." The critic Liz Yorke suggests that Adrienne Rich was aiming in the second half of the 20th century at using her writing to express her strong emotions and inspire one certain sort of yearning to achieve a significant change in her readers. Therefore, her "Tear Gas" conveys that: "The will to change begins in the body not in the mind My politics is in my body, accruing and expanding with every act of resistance and each of my failures Locked in the closet at 4 years old I beat the wall with my body That act is in me still." Here, Rich shows how imagery is used to express anger. She claims that this experience is not specific to her, but is entirely relevant to females. The poet claims that it was not until the later years of the previous century that the anger of females along with women's increased awareness, influenced by their limited language, have been reflected in women's literature. As soon as Rich revisited Virginia Woolf's extended essay *A Room of One's Own*, she has come to connect between her repressed feeling of anger and that same feeling of Woolf, and, in turn to connect with the anger of many other women. She noticed in her essay "When We Dead Awaken" that a woman was close to being angry, but was making an effort to remain tranquil, isolated, and appealing inside a room full of male figures who had made attacks on her integrity. (37) The importance of the word "almost" cannot be overstated in the passage mentioned. Rich recognizes that women have made great strides in articulating their anger in poetry, but she emphasizes that there is still a long way to go. Women are close to expressing their anger and receiving acknowledgement, but they need to resist becoming too comfortable for this to happen completely. It took Rich a considerable period until she became willing to openly show that innate feeling of anger. Similar to Woolf, Rich dedicated a considerable amount of her life to meeting the expectations of her father and husband through her writing. In her *On Lies, Secrets and Silence*, Rich definitively states that a significant amount of the anger found in modern women's poetry is a result of their newly heightened awareness, which is evident in their work. She claims that a poet must have a vital connection with her audience, which she refers to by way of "a sort of alchemy." (193) Only in the latter part of her career did Rich's poetry start to showcase prominent political outrage and fury. Similar to numerous Americans, Rich was against the United States' participation in the war on Vietnam. Through her work "The Phenomenology of Anger," she shows the way in which images like "white acetylene/ripples from my body" as well as "the true enemy" give meaningful inclinations to her feelings of anger via articulating both the rage and the strong wish she has to produce a change. Throughout her 1972 work "The Phenomenology of Anger," she imagines turning to be in the form of acetylene torch. Rich is not simply pointing the torch in the direction of her enemy; but, rather, she transforms into the torch, probably emphasizing her strong obligation to her cause: "white acetylene flows from my body effortlessly, focused perfectly on the real enemy. Rich's intense focus on destroying the "real enemy" suggests that she wants her readers to understand her strong determination to defeat her adversaries and rid them of their lies. The anger inside of the poet does not primarily go at the direction of the combatant himself, but at the alteration enforced on him by bureaucratic forces. Considerable intellectual rigor is evident in the creation of "The Phenomenology of Anger". When analyzing the fundamental frameworks used by Rich in this poem and their interconnections to establish a unified structure, it is clear that Rich demonstrates clever management of her emotions. The rage in her subsequent poems is directed with intention and organization, providing an inimitable means to understand her poetry. Rich evaluates how present day combatants have been influenced by the conditioning enforced by his higher-ups. The poet uses the notion of "fakery" for the sake of bringing together the imagery and establish a coherent structure in the poem. "I hate the mask you wear I hate your words they make me think of fake revolutionary bills crisp imitation parchment they sell at battlefields." The man has become desensitized not just in the zone of war, but even in his bedroom; "Last night, in this room, weeping I asked you: "what are you feeling? do you feel anything?" The anger of the poet towards such dehumanization caused by war is unwavering, hitting hard on both political and personal fronts. Fisher (2002) discusses this pure rage. In line with Fisher's viewpoint, we can see how every character completely personifies their passion to the point where everything else, including themselves, is destroyed. According to Stanley Cavell's philosophy (1988), we can describe an impassioned state as emerging when we reject the influence of the ordinary and the everyday (44). The poet is upset with herself for not being able to escape from the control of the enemy and resents her own consciousness for making her so

painfully aware of his power over her. Adrienne Rich's "The Phenomenology of Anger" references particular historical events, like the deployment of acetylene weapons in My Lai during the American war on Vietnam. This poem triggered a lot of debate in America because of its vivid imagery. Many people saw it as Rich's display of hostility towards men. Nonetheless, the hostility was specifically aimed at governmental organizations that hold authority and influence over the community, leading to the responsibility for acts of violence during war times. It is important to emphasize that Rich should not be criticized for merely showing unexamined anger towards the atrocities of war. She genuinely expresses optimism for what lies ahead and considers different options, showing a considered and rational reaction instead of acting out of anger.

"I would have loved to live in world
of women and men gaily
in collusion with green leaves, stalks,
building mineral cities, transparent domes,
little huts of woven grass
each with its own pattern."

This poem expresses how Rich's anger is driven via a desire of peace living and the political hope she has for a positive aftermath of that war. During a conversation about anger with the renowned critics, Charles and Barbara Gelpi, the poet asserts that when such wrath is put into action, it can be a form of brilliance. (8). Rich appears to highlight how anger can be used productively to bring attention to issues and elicit a reaction from others. This viewpoint is similar to the idea that not doing anything about injustices results in negative consequences. If individuals are motivated by ongoing happenings, their rage could lead to political transformation. This concept is similar to the feminist technique of "consciousness raising," in which women strive to empower themselves and others for political awareness. They argue that numerous emotional reactions experienced by women are connected to political matters. In her poetry, such as "The Phenomenology of Anger," Rich uses her politically driven anger to shed light on the atrocities of war and possibly spur societal transformation. Rich has asserted that poetry has the ability to cause a substantial impact on change. During these situations, her anger is not irrational at all; instead, it serves a specific purpose. According to the Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy, phenomenology involves studying formations of consciousness that work through a first-person viewpoint, emphasizing intentionality - the aim of experiences towards particular objects or objectives. It can be safely noted that phenomenology shows the importance of human life events. Consequently, the anger-phenomenology in the poetry of Adrienne Rich emphasizes the role of this feeling to grasp and realize different parts in the life of the poet. Rich expresses her anger using colorful pictures. She analyzes the lies and deception linked to war by using phrases like "the masks you wear," "fake revolutionary bills," and "crisp imitation parchment" to portray its deceitful nature. This critical review starkly compares with Rich's vision of a perfect world - a peaceful place represented by "green leaves." Rich's poetry skillfully contends that her articulation of rage is a deliberate and knowledgeable response. She has examined the Vietnam War and revealed what she sees as its dishonesty. These views are consistent with those of Nussbaum's belief where feelings are not merely regarded as blind compulsions; rather, they are evaluations of cognitive value that we make. In the same way, Anne Sexton critiques her father's making money from wartime activities in "Daddy Warbucks," which he gains through profits. In her poem "Tear Gas" (1969), Adrienne Rich claims that any desire for alteration starts inside of the physical self rather than the mental self. "My beliefs are reflected in my physical presence." Just like "The Phenomenology of Anger," "Tear Gas" indeed signifies an instance of crucial alteration in the poetry of Adrienne Rich. Here, the poet is worried of the patriarchal control that might seep into different areas of life, including the language used to discuss it. The focus of the poem is a protest against how American soldiers were treated with tear gas during protests. According to Liz Yorke (1997), "Tear Gas" demonstrates Rich's increasing disappointment with the radical guarantees of the New Left, arguing that their perspective is limited and their political commitments are too rooted in theory and not connected to real-life experiences (45). Rich wants change not via the conventional revolution of Marxism, yet through the approach detailed in "Tear Gas."

"It wasn't completeness I wanted
the old ideas of revolution that could be foretold, and once
arrived at would give us ourselves and each other
I stopped listening long ago to their descriptions
of the good society."

This particular poem by Rich is segmented into two separate parts. Stanzas one and two deal with widespread impacts of male dominance in war and politics, showing the poet's increasing disappointment with the power of the government. In these stanzas, the speaker's tone appears to be distant from the emotional aspects of the poem, resembling the language typically used by politicians rather than someone who is intimately impacted by the harsh realities of war. On the other hand, the ending of the poem brings the reader in closer contact with the writer by employing metaphors that establish a more personal bond. Rich's tone becomes more intimate, perhaps indicating the conclusion of her marriage. She shifts from analyzing her political criticism and frustration with political institutions to voicing personal desires: "I wanted to make contact with you / through touch, physically." During this transition, Rich expresses her feelings through assessments and opinions on value. As mentioned by Nussbaum (2001), we are at risk of losing important people in our lives, and Rich's upcoming loss of her husband, impacted by uncontrollable circumstances, illustrates this susceptibility. Additionally, there is a notable shift in the third stanza. While the second stanza emphasizes the necessity of physical change—"The will to change begins in the body not in the mind"—the third stanza suggests a renewed recognition of the importance of language: "but also with words I need a language to hear myself with to see myself in a language like pigment released on the board." The poet clearly desires her words to have a profound and enduring impact, as if they were "dyed in the wool," despite the fact that such expressions are often "veiled with contradictions." "that I love you, that we are in danger that she wants to have your child, that I want us to have mercy on each other that I see you changing that it was change I loved in you when I thought I loved completeness." The closing line of this poem emphasizes the notion presented at the initial one: "Not a state of fullness." Rich claims that she does not want to combine two people into one entity at the cost of their unique identities. Instead, she imagines a partnership in which both people are able to develop and mature separately. "Written in October 1969, "Tear Gas" comes before Rich's split from her husband Conrad in 1970." In the poem "Tear Gas," the initial section's detached anger paves the way for a higher extent of anger on the personal level in the latter part. The feelings expressed by Rich in the poem are not just illogical or baseless. Feelings in Descartes' Error (1995) by Damasio function as internal guides and aid in communication by signaling others. In contrast to conventional scientific perspectives, Damasio suggests that emotions, like other senses, can also be regarded cognitive (15). Such cognitive element is clearly observable in "Tear Gas." Rich expresses her emotions towards her husband with great accuracy. Even though she still loves him, her feelings are no longer shown through physical intimacy. The pronouns "I" and "we" are commonly used in expressions like "I adore you," "I desire for us to show kindness to one another," and "I notice you transforming." Nevertheless, when talking about the possibility of starting a family, pronouns change to "she desires to have your offspring." Rich emphasizes through cleverly changing these pronouns that despite her love for her husband and wish to stay friendly, she would rather not continue their relationship. Likewise, Anne Sexton does not hold her husband Kayo accountable for the end of their marriage. The change from communal to personal viewpoints in their relationships is shown by the switch from "we" to "I." Rich clearly expresses his intentions and feelings, supporting Damasio's claim that emotions are not abstract or hard to understand. Published in 1968, at the peak of the Vietnam War, "Nightbreak" delves into the concept of bureaucratic oppression with fervent indignation. The description of "sleep cracked and flaking" and "the rifts" depicts how anger develops in Rich's writing. The poem conveys anger towards the heinous acts done to innocent Vietnamese villagers, engaging the reader in their pain. Rich's compassion is so deep that she experiences their suffering with them: "My body is a catalog of injuries." Still when she falls asleep, she felt many disturbances; "Sleep is crumbling and falling apart over the restless aim." Rich's anger in "Nightbreak" is easily justifiable from a rational and logical standpoint. According to Ronald De Sousa (2004), emotions are inherently logical, whereas Johnson-Laird and Oatley (1993) talk about the notion where fundamental feelings enhance cognitive processes by means of an organized method. Therefore, a crystal clear awareness of Rich's emotional expression resides in the structure of "Nightbreak." Like "Tear Gas," Rich compares her marriage to Conrad to the Vietnam War in the lines: "In the bed the pieces fly together and the rifts fill or else." The verses in "Nightbreak" could be seen in two different ways: they might represent Rich's war-related nightmares or signify the conflict in her marriage. The term "rifts" indicates not just physical cracks but also emotional divides or separations among people. Rich's use of visual representations focusing on breaking and dividing gives a unique quality to her poetry. In the course of her essay "When We Dead Awaken," (1979), Adrienne Rich reflects on the American style upbringing she receives in from 1940 to 1950, that was mainly shaped by male teachers. She characterizes her initial poetry as "universal," suggesting it was not distinctly feminine. Rich describes how formalism was essential in enabling him to work with challenging material, similar to how asbestos gloves protect the hands when handling hazardous objects (40-41). Throughout "Nightbreak" as

well as "When We Dead Awaken," the poet displays the detachment of personal feelings to approach public and political issues with careful consideration. The use of metaphors emphasizes Rich's fury and how formalism limits her poetry. Additionally, they reveal a sense of detachment that can be grasped from the voice of the speaker accompanied by a deficiency in emotional connection. The emotional disconnect is also highlighted by the absence of physical feeling when wearing protective asbestos gloves. Today, when mentioning asbestos and the disease asbestosis, it may bring about a heightened feeling of unease, representing that sort of harm resulting from patriarchal power systems. The philosopher Nussbaum contends the idea that it is not easy to simply consider emotions as merely impulsive or irrational; reasonably, they are based on logical thought and involve important matters. Nussbaum states that anger stems from a sense of harm or injury and is distinguished from other negative emotions by its cognitive evaluation. Rich's poetry demonstrates how her emotional expressions, especially anger, are influenced by her thoughts, as seen in her metaphorical expressions. In her 2004 work "For the Record," the poet thoughts express anger vividly, differentiating this feeling from others with metaphors like "depths of vomit" as well as "slow-soaking blood." In other works like "Hunger," "Tear Gas," "Nightbreak," along with "The Phenomenology of Anger" also demonstrate that anger exists inside of her ideas. During her analysis of "The Phenomenology of Anger," she argues that a fine type of brilliance can be exhibited from acting on one's anger. Additionally, in her poem "Frame" (1980), she delves into the cultural politics of America by showing how phrases like "Just outside the frame," "there is no soundtrack," and "in silence that she cries out" come together to form a structured representation of anger. In the verse, a white female spectator observes a situation where a female student of black complexion is treated falsely and aggressively by white males—a cop and a security guard. While she was waiting for the coming of the bus, the student takes shelter away from the cold night of winter in one unoccupied campus of a deserted university and is then approached by the authorities. Even though the speaker is there, they are not directly involved in the interaction and cannot hear what is being said, emphasizing the student's humiliation of being "seen but not heard." This physical and audio divide highlights the speaker's position as "Just beyond the action's scope." In "Frame," Rich is angry about the lack of a voice for a marginalized individual, leading to her suffering being ignored and not recognized. This scenario showcases what Rich describes as "the past of those who have been deprived." The cop and a security guard's inability of recognizing the eyewitness highlights the "blindness" of their case, which can be simultaneously of metaphorical as well as literal levels. Despite that these two males do not have colorblind health issue, their lack of sensitivity exposes their inability to grasp the seriousness of the situation and the victim's humanity. This contributes to the speaker's frustration, especially regarding the student's prospects, since there is no one to support her. The event is firmly established from the speaker's perspective, indicating her awareness of it;

"I can see from this position there is no sound track
to go with this and I understand at once
it is meant to be in silence that this happens
in silence that he pushes her into the car
banging her head in silence that she cries out."

In her "Frame," the poet makes muteness to play a key role in organizing the visuals. The poem makes frequent mention of "sound" and "non-sound," including phrases like "no soundtrack exists," "this occurs in silence," "he forces her into the car in silence," and "she screams out while banging her head in silence." This creates a vibrant depiction of a silent movie, with clear visual aspects but no accompanying audio. This quietness is not just an absence of sound but reflects a more profound, more oppressive silence of repression. Rich employs this deliberate lack of communication within the theme to connect the visuals in the poem, underscoring the systematic aspect of the exclusion and the muteness of the oppressed individual. Additionally, in Rich's "Aunt Jennifer's Tigers" (1951), she delves into ideas of suppression and dissatisfaction through Aunt Jennifer's needlework and her marital status. The poem portrays Aunt Jennifer as being imprisoned by her marriage, symbolized by the 'uncle's wedding band,' an image of male superiority that traps her. The antique ivory needle also refers to a traditional, constraining role forced upon her, emphasizing her confinement in a life devoid of freedom. The tigers in Aunt Jennifer's embroidery are sharply different from her actual experiences. Aunt Jennifer is unable to personally experience the pride and fearlessness depicted in the poem. In her artistic work, Aunt Jennifer expresses her frustrations and dreams, although they are only reflected in art and not in real life. Rich's portrayal of Aunt Jennifer reflects broader historical roles of women who used needlework as a form of creative expression under restrictive conditions. This echoes historical instances such as the Bayeux Tapestry, where women documented significant events through their craft, and Tennyson's "The Lady of Shalott," where the loom serves as a metaphor for a woman's constrained

view of life. Rich's comment on the poem, expressing that she intended to create a portrait of a woman distinct from herself, highlights the formalism and objective tone used in the poem. This distancing technique serves to present Aunt Jennifer's plight as both specific to her time and universal in its reflection of women's historical struggles against restrictive roles. ("When We Dead Awaken," 40) In this poem, Rich starts by keeping a distance from feelings of anger, instead emphasizing sewing and the symbolic images it creates. The initial lines describe Aunt Jennifer's needlework, highlighting the artistry and the juxtaposition of the tigers' power with Aunt Jennifer's limited life. This method emphasizes the gap, both literal and symbolic, between Aunt Jennifer's artistic creativity and her real-life experiences. Throughout the evolution of the poem, Rich's tone shifts towards a more personal and emotionally connected style. The growing awareness by the poet of the predicament Aunt Jennifer finds herself in, shows a serious concern that there is a way in which it could be counter-productive to struggle against the patriarchal grip only to die and be free in the end. This Rich portrays, by underscoring the contradictions between Aunt Jennifer's artistic freedom and her everyday predicament of exploitation. In a stark contrast, the picture of an 'ancient ivory needle' and the 'weighty wedding ring' portrays succinctly the heaviness imposed on her by 'Uncle' and his dominance where her defiance and artistic expression are severely subdued amidst a time of intense oppression. In another contrast, she can barely get through the needlework and wool during the process, as opposed to the tigers that stride fearlessly with a certain measure of boldness and confidence, a general impression about the immobilized life led by Aunt Jennifer. The wedding ring, instead of being a symbol of unity and love, then is seen as a sign of being ensnared and owned – that marriage has been a concept very effective in curbing down the freedom and emancipation of Aunt Jennifer. Rich's various contrasts serve to set into a sharp contrast not only the bright tigers with Aunt Jennifer's bondage of life but also the overall social constraints placed on women. Her art can be taken as a sign of defiance in the face of the forces that would curtail it, but this reading, it is suggested by the poem, is not very convincing. Effectively, the closure of 'Aunt Jennifer's Tigers' foregrounds that Aunt Jennifer is posthumously oppressed by contrasting with the lasting strength of the tigers in her embroidery. This shows Aunt Jennifer's suffering, for the chains of her marriage still held her 'terrified hands.' In comparison, the tigers are 'proud and unafraid,' suggesting a power and autonomy that is timeless and untainted, that has outlasted Aunt Jennifer's lifetime. Thomas Byars enhances Rich's assertion that poetry offers the form of immortality for human essence (168). Byars suggests that, in this poem, Rich felt it could save Aunt Jennifer's struggle and her art, even the constraints within which she created art were something she didn't want to erase. There is a trace of academic detachment in Rich's engagement with the issue in the Aunt Jennifer's Tiger, but it is too deep-seated for much. Anger becomes a potent critique of male-centered dominance through Rich's turning to imagery and the contrast of the tigers with the abject confinement of Aunt Jennifer's life. In this respect, Rich's poem fits well with Nussbaum's argument that emotions are thinking and necessarily must be combined with reflection on things of importance. Anger, in other words, is not a simple reaction, but is tethered for 'Aunt Jennifer's Tigers' to sharp analyses of culture and personal experience. The symbol and juxtaposition Rich uses help represent the deep and analytical complexity with which Aunt Jennifer felt, thus bringing out a deep connection or relevance to the significant matters at hand. In 'Snapshots of a Daughter-in-Law,' Adrienne Rich looks back at her early married years with raw, intense emotions of anger and anxiety. The structure of the poem, to show anger, places it effectively as Rich moves forth from well-behaved to almost scathing point of view. The ordered form of the poem conveys the daughter's angst at expectations from her and the system even as she feels bound down by them in colorful images and meanderings that are full of contemplation. Rich uses an array of images to make the struggle depicted through a variety of pictures between the apparent roles of wife and mother she has to play and the concept of self she thinks she is. This organization not only shows her anger powerfully but also questions the traditional societal norms put on women. The shift from formal, reserved language to direct and confrontational is representative of radical upheaval in the way Rich was previously writing. It shows a growing dissatisfaction with her place at home, her acceptance of subservience, and her questioning of how society sets the limits for women. The poem was ill-received, and comments were negative, perhaps drawing attention to the confrontation between Rich's revolutionary new voice and the expected tenor of her earlier, more conservative work. Anger in the daughter-in-law is oriented outward toward the societal norms and expectations, though to some extent it is directed inwards. Her tendencies toward self-denunciation and awareness of her role in fettering her own freedom showed that she internalized her anger. Where the personal and social pressures coincide, Rich's depiction of the internal war gives the reason for such a solid emotional reaction. In the poem 'Snapshots of a Daughter-in-Law,' Rich shows not only her disappointment but also questions traditional gender roles. This analysis of anger, be it personal or societal, is in harmony with Nussbaum's view of emotions as reasonable responses to significant

concerns. Using vivid imagery and tone within the poem, Rich gives an indication to the complexity of feelings and her condemnation of social norms;

“Sometimes she's let the tap stream scold her arm
a match burn to her thumbnail
or held her hand above the kettle snout
right in the woolly steam a
desperate self-mutilating act.”

Furthermore, in Rich's poem "Snapshots of a Daughter-in-Law," she aptly uses metaphors to be a way of letting out the fierce anger and frustration women felt within the walls of a conventional marriage during the mid-1960s. The very bright images of the poem show well the emotional and the psychological distress brought by limiting domestic roles. In comparing it to 'clanging the coffee-pot in the sink,' stands for inner anger and discontent. Doing damage to things physically shows that she is obviously frustrated by the limitations set by her traditional position. Listening to the angels' scold adds another layer of alienation and terror, making her world feel so suffocating and judgmental. Rich contrasts this with the orderly 'raked gardens' against the chaotic 'sloppy sky,' bringing forward the opposition in domesticity between inflexibility and liberation. The well-manicured gardens show the limitations in which women are expected to live under by society and the stresses, and the cluttered sky shows the chance for release and being one's self. This further shows the differentiation of the speaker wanting to leave these tight confinements of her life and societal norm for her. The neatness and order of the raked gardens are very much opposite of the wildness and uncontainability of the sky, thus symbolizing that inner turmoil of the speaker between what is expected of her and the actual freedom she desires. These metaphors in the poem are used for the aim of expressing the resentment of the speaker against all social expectations that can enslave women. The poem is severely critical of conventionally based marriages and longs for a more liberated, authentic way of life. As well, in this same poem, the poet skillfully made use of metaphors to focus on various difficulties and dissatisfactions the conventional marriage provides, due to which the speaker has moved forward in her mind. Figures of speech perform different functions in the poem: they attract the interest of the reader, help in understanding, and arouse compassion. Rich's ability to take the material world of the kitchen and garden and make them metaphoric extensions of expression is a prime example of cognitive abstraction. She's able to take an outside landscape and re-create the inside landscape, so readers get much more clear and meaningful insight into the speaker's fury and frustration. Rich uses metaphors that will engage readers by making abstract ideas more concrete. Rich helps readers understand and connect with the speaker's inner turmoil by using tangible imagery such as the raked gardens and messy sky. This method improves understanding and also cultivates a stronger emotional bond with the poem. "Your mind now, moldering like wedding cake, heavy with useless experience Marriage carries a heavy burden similar to the one suggested by "Aunt Jennifer's Tigers." The massive weight of Uncle's wedding band sits heavily upon Aunt Jennifer's hand" In "After Dark" which was composed in 1964, Adrienne Rich explores those intricate emotions that make her recollect her father's impending death, reflecting on the protracted effects of his influence and their fraught relationship. The use of imagery in this poem plays a crucial role in organizing and conveying her anger, as well as in reconciling her feelings. Rich's reference to an "extremely adversarial relationship" to the father, which is noted via her conversation with the interviewer David Montenegro (263), highlights the depth of her emotional conflict. Her anger and complex feelings are not merely responses to his death but are deeply intertwined with their contentious interactions; "You are falling asleep and I sit looking at you old tree of life old man whose death I wanted I can't stir you up now" In "After Dark," Rich articulates profound feelings of anger stemming from the prolonged period of oppressive dominance exerted by her father. As his health deteriorates and his control diminishes, Rich grapples with the challenge of coming to terms with this shifting dynamic; "When your memory fails no more to scourge my inconsistencies the sashcords of the world fly loose. A window crashes suddenly down" Rich's metaphorical instances in "After Dark" poignantly reflect the collapse of her father's influence over her, portraying a world in disarray as his health deteriorates. She depicts him as the "old tree of life" and an "old man," symbols of his diminished power. The realization that the man who once imposed his will upon her is now incapacitated brings about a complex mix of emotions. This shift in control elicits both relief and residual anger from Rich. Similarly, Anne Sexton expressed ambivalent feelings after her mother's death. Rich's anger towards her father was partly fueled by his presumption of knowing that her father knows so much more about her life than she does. The father's professed apprehension for Rich's rational development is ultimately driven by ego, as he saw it as a means to assert his authority and validate his own opinions. In her Blood, Bread and Poetry, Rich describes his investment in her intellect as "egotistical, tyrannical, opinionated, and terribly

wearing” (113). Despite these grievances, Rich acknowledges the positive aspects of her father's influence, noting that her father schooled her on how “to write and rewrite; to feel that I was a person of the book, even though a woman; to take ideas seriously” (Ibid). Yorke attributes Rich’s intense, sometimes rage-filled engagement with feminism to the profound influence resulting from this contentious father-daughter relation. Yorke suggests, “Maybe the sometimes rage-filled urgency fueling Rich’s engagement with feminism finds its own deep source in this primary encounter with a man utterly determined to control and shape his daughter” (122,123). In this poem, Rich's proximity to the emotion expressed in the poem is perhaps more pronounced than in her other works. The anger articulated in this piece aligns closely with Philip Fisher’s concept of temporary emotional states in *The Vehement Passions* (2002). Rich’s emotional intensity in the poem reflects a complete immersion in her anger towards her father, to the extent that she momentarily forgets the fluctuating nature of her feelings—both the past affection she held for him and the future resolution of this anger. This emotional immediacy in "After Dark" contrasts with the portrayal of anger in Sylvia Plath's "Daddy." Plath’s poem concludes with a stark finality: “daddy, daddy, you bastard, I’m through,” signaling an unequivocal severance from her father. Conversely, in "Electra on Azalea Path," Plath’s final line reveals a sense of personal culpability in the death of her father: “It was my love that did us both to death.” Rich's poem may thus embody the profound emotional truth of the writer's relationship with her father. Through her use of vivid imagery and metaphors, Rich conveys not only her anger but also her enduring, complex affection. The poem encapsulates both the intensity of her current emotions and the underlying awareness of her ongoing emotional connection to her father. Furthermore, in her poem "Sources" written in (1983), Adrienne Rich comes to terms with and deals with her husband’s, Conrad, passing. Following a long, quiet period, she reflects on a major loss, exploring the nuances of sorrow and memory. The poem delves into her feelings following his death, expressing the deep and personal effect his passing had on her. Rich employs vivid images and reflective language to explore the emotional landscape of grief. The poem helps Rich come to terms with the conclusion of their time together, presenting a sincere and detailed exploration of her emotions. In "Sources," Rich explores themes of memory, grief, and the lasting impact of her husband on her life, illustrating the profound emotional path she has taken since his passing.

“Ended isolate, who tried to move in the
floating world of the assimilated who
know and deny they will always be
aliens. Who drove to Vermont in a
rented car at dawn and shot himself”

In this particular work, the poet explores the intricate relationship between anger and love after her husband, Conrad, passes away. The poem exposes a strong dissatisfaction with the events leading up to his death and a complex combination of feelings where affection clashes with fury. Rich implies that her anger feels challenged by the existence of love, highlighting a conflict between the strong force of her anger and the calming impact of her long-lasting affection. This statement suggests that the presence of love could weaken her anger, creating a clash between these intense feelings. Rich's depiction of her rage, coupled with feelings of grief and inner conflict, emphasizes the powerful emotional journey she endured. Emotions, in the form of anger, grief, and loss, as noted, for instance, by Antonio Damasio in *Descartes' Error* (1995), are all an integral part of cognitive activities. Emotions do not represent some kind of automatic response, Damasio claims; on the contrary, he holds, emotions are reasoned and absolutely necessary for our cognition. They follow the same type of working as other forms of cognitive operation are assumed to do in drawing conclusions, for example. Rich's depiction of her husband's suicide illustrates her anger which is resulting inside of her due to the death of some poets who are friends to her—an indication of intense, firm unwavering emotional reaction towards death and its outcomes.

Conclusion

In the poetry of Adrienne Rich, anger is often portrayed as a very potent and productive force through which change can be effected. Rich frequently wants to mobilize this anger to bring attention to and challenge the inequalities she witnesses, illustrating how it can be central to processing and understanding significant life events. Metaphors and highly descriptive imagery allow Rich to organize experiences and demonstrate the intense effect of her anger. A second feature of her anger is that she consistently orients it toward others who have been marginalized and oppressed. Rich resents the constrictive and enclosing nature of such conventional institutions as marriage in her Poems “Aunt Jennifer's Tigers” as well as “Snapshots of a Daughter-in-Law,” for she feels they stifle one's growth and freedom of expression.

In “The Phenomenology of Anger,” her politically charged anger is harnessed to expose the atrocities of war for social change. Similarly, “Nightbreak” deals with bureaucratic oppression and “Tear Gas” with the suffering of the innocent—both pointing to the argument that Rich was more focused on systemic evils. In both tone and object, though, Rich's anger differs markedly from that of so many other poets who dealt with anger in their poetry: channeled much more into social and political concerns, rather than personal complaints. Rich used her work to come to terms with and give voice to the many kinds of oppression and violence she saw around her. Seen this way, Rich's rage is a function not only of the release of personal emotion but also of a demand for its fair share of recognition and pro-activity in response to dominant forms of injustice.

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