

Chapter 1 : A Reader's Manifesto - www.nxgvision.com

A Reader's Manifesto. B. R. Myers, the author of A Reader's Manifesto, argues that the time has come for readers to stand up to the literary establishment.

Adam Begley From the Reviews: His essay would be annoying even if he were more often wrong, and his tin ear easier to dismiss. His method -- clever, efficient and unfair -- is applied, doggedly, to each victim in turn. Similarly the illustrative quotes chosen here are merely those the complete review subjectively believes represent the tenor and judgment of the review as a whole. We acknowledge and remind and warn you that they may, in fact, be entirely unrepresentative of the actual reviews by any other measure. The publication of B. See our crQuarterly piece, Considering B. Now comes the expanded and revised edition in book form, including an Introduction, an Epilogue in which Myers responds to his critics, and an Appendix suggesting -- tongue deep in cheek -- "Ten Rules for Serious Writers". The Introduction offers some background on the piece. Myers originally did make his attack in book form, self-publishing what he then titled *Gorgons in the Pool* a Cormac McCarthy allusion. It was not a success -- the only three copies sold at Amazon. Amazingly, shortly after he agreed to publish in *The Atlantic Monthly* Myers was contacted by the *Times Literary Supplement* who were planning to run a review of *Gorgons in the Pool*; he had to ask them not to. The frustrating experience of getting into print and the not always happy experiences with *The Atlantic Monthly* not limited to pre-publication issues, as Myers later notes various actions and inactions on their part afterwards as well re. Once the piece appeared in the magazine all or at least some hell broke loose. It was a much-discussed piece -- and the discussion was as interesting and revealing as the piece itself. Michael Dirda apparently wrote: The bulk of the book is very similar to *The Atlantic Monthly* piece, with a few changes, more examples, and more detailed discussion of some of the points. The five authors whose work he discusses, each representing a different literary fashion, are: We still agree with much that he says -- but we have to admit a certain bias: The author-selection remains the most problematic part of the argument. Myers condemns the current situation how reviewers treat "literary" authors and what kinds of books get the literary prizes without considering all the relevant authors and books. Yes, good storytelling is universal -- but translation is a killer, and surely there are enough American examples he could have found. It is unclear why Myers focusses so on this literary versus popular divide -- except, perhaps, that he wants to be seen as being on the side of populist appeal. Predictably instead it only got him labeled as a philistine. Unfortunately, too, he does not extend his bad-writing analysis to the books that truly are mass-consumed -- and we wonder why not. The high art-lowbrow distinction or whatever you want to call it is irrelevant because, as Myers notes, good writing knows no genre or other bounds and can appear in any sort of book; the manner in which he makes this point, however, seems to have led many readers astray. We agree with most of his specific points, given these examples, though we note that there is something to be said for some of what he criticizes. As we noted in our crQ piece on the essay, sentence-by-sentence is also not always the best way to appreciate a book. That said, he is spot on when he rails against the current cult of the sentence -- and when he notes that much contemporary American writing "demands to be read quickly, with just enough attention to note the bold use of words. Slow down and things fall apart. We still disagree with the subtitle claim of a "growing pretentiousness in American literary prose", a claim that Myers unfortunately does very little to back up. Yes, there is a literary clique where certain "literary" authors blurbs each others books and there are review-fora that will always review and generally praise whatever the anointed authors put on the market -- but these are of limited influence. Yes, the same authors and types of books get all the prizes and all the fellowships and that is a self-perpetuating shame. And, amazingly, there are authors who can write who do receive some attention as well. So much for the Manifesto itself-- the fun part of the book is, of course, the Epilogue, in which Myers considers the responses to his *Atlantic Monthly*-essay, and answers his critics. The response to the essay was fascinating: See also our crQuarterly piece, Considering B. As Myers points out: The most common way of rebutting the Manifesto was therefore not to rebut it at all, but to misrepresent it as a plea for lowbrow writing. We agree that many of the critics got it dead wrong and we especially love those who

weighed in on the topic without reading the thing , but surely Myers understands that if so many people got it wrong then he too failed. We suggest also that many of those who wrote to Myers and to the newspapers in support of his position similarly misinterpreted it. This is a problem that has not been rectified in the book-version of the Manifesto. The defenses of the literary authors shredded by Myers are quite amusing, as are the other criticisms of his attack. Myers has a fun time quoting and rebutting -- the book is worth it just for all that silliness. Finally, there is also an Appendix: Ten Rules for "Serious" Writers. These sum up all that Myers believes is wrong with contemporary American writing -- and thus are the secret to literary success. It serves as a convenient summary of the writerly flaws that Myers found in the five authors under discussion and many others. And it is amusing enough, proving again that Myers does have quite a few valid gripes about what passes for good writing nowadays. Myers tackles a huge issue in scattershot fashion, and one might wish for a more comprehensive survey, but he does get his point across.

Chapter 2 : A Reader's Manifesto for | Literary Hub

A Reader's Manifesto is a book written by B. R. Myers that was originally published in heavily edited form in the July/August issue of The Atlantic Monthly.

Delightfully, it is one of those rare volumes I could not bear to sit down once I started. You have created a world at once easy to enter, yet rich enough to keep my attention and with characters I wanted to know. Does this story seem particularly strong to those of us who have experienced being alone and loneliness? Or is this just me? It was quite depressing for a while when Ko turned against Jackal and she ended up in VC. But I had faith that you would not leave her to waste her brilliant mind and personal drive. Thanks for rewarding my faith: I bet there was lots of head scratching over what to put in and take out of that section of the book! Rarely though can an author pick-up where she left off years later, I suppose, when the pressures to do so begin and continue the story to the satisfaction of those wanting a sequel. I suspect if I found the book again, there would be plenty of fantasy in it, judging by many of her later works. Not that there is anything wrong with fantasy, just not my taste. Guess I just wanted to say thanks for such a fine novel, for giving us a view of the corporate future that is not too grim, and for the chance to imagine a happy ending. And all my readers are unique people of exceptional character and taste grin. I, too, assume that we all share some experience of being alone, as well as lonely. This is important to me, and one of the building blocks of Solitaire. I empathize with people who are just setting off into these territories, as well as with those who find it too frightening to go there; but I connect with people who have mapped some of the landscape, who have found some ease with the ambivalent spaces. My American Sign Language curriculum requires students to examine the dynamics of dominant and non-dominant cultures, and our assumptions about our own culture. One of the lessons I learned from those times is that members of the non-dominant culture know a lot more about the dominant folks than the other way around. But for the folks on the downside of the equation, knowing everything possible about the dominant culture is often a matter of survival mental, emotional, social, literal. People of color have to pay close attention to white people. Women have to watch men very carefully. Queer people understand a lot about heterosexual dynamics and often participate in them, for a variety of reasons that mostly come back to wanting to be safe. Some science fiction, as well. However, I think that men who write with emphasis on character are more likely to have some experience of being the Other in their own lives. I think you are noticing that women writers sometimes notice different things. Another notion I resist. Myers, first published here in The Atlantic. Not everyone is as taken with Myers as I am oh, the howls from the literary establishment! I went to look at the essay again because I remembered this bit: Myers Amen, brothers and sisters, amen. Author Kelley Posted on.

Chapter 3 : A Reader's Manifesto by B.R. Myers

*A Reader's Manifesto: An Attack on the Growing Pretentiousness in American Literary Prose [B. R. Myers] on www.nxgvision.com *FREE* shipping on qualifying offers. A welcome contrarian take on the state of contemporary American prose.*

Tiring of it, one skims ahead to the book reviews, only to realize: A common experience for even the occasional reader of B. Myers, it never fails to make the heart sink. The problem is not only one of craft and execution. Myers writes as if the purpose of criticism were to obliterate its object. He scores his little points, but so what? Do reviewers really believe that isolating a few unlovely lines in a five hundred page novel, ignoring the context for that unloveliness, and then pooh-poohing what remains constitutes a reading? Is this what passes for judgment these days? If so, Myers would have a lot to answer for. Annie Proulx, among others. It was subsequently published as a stand-alone book. Yet the essay was itself little more than an exercise in style, and not a very persuasive one at that. It was hard to say which was more irritating: It made one weary of reading, weary of writing, weary of life. Saying that reviewers must never be reviewed would place reviewers above criticism. Cohen is himself criticizing a reviewer. But to argue with Myers was, manifestly, to summon his contempt. In your face, Toni Morrison! To date, I have yet to read a comprehensive debunking of the Myers bunkum. Set Richard Katz aside for the moment maybe Myers lives next door to some priapic indie rockers. Patty will return to the theme in her whip-smart autobiography, after all. But Myers seems to have not read *Madame Bovary*, or, at best, to have paid it the same glancing attention he pays to *Freedom*. They appear throughout the novel, starting on the first page with new boy. With this emphasis he is drawing attention to language that was commonly, and unthinkingly, used to express shared ideas that were also unquestioned. Nor is this the only place he seeks to have it both ways. It would be a mistake, however "a Myers-ish one" to read too much into this incoherence. The approach would be codified, with no apparent irony, in the relaunch slogan: Or before either of us has read the book. Remarkably, Myers even manages to be wrong when he tries to concede something positive about *Freedom*. Of course, this late softening in the review is probably, like the invocation of *Emma B*. He consistently shows himself, here and elsewhere, to be deaf to point-of-view, tone, and implication. Indeed, he seems to revel in this deafness. Thus does he participate in the destruction of value he claims to lament. Moreover, Myers has, symptomatically, mistaken a signifier for the thing it signifies. In this sense, B. Finally "and most damningly" Myers has little to tell us about beauty. Without this second element, which might be described as the amusing, enticing, appetizing icing on the divine cake, the first element would be beyond our powers of digestion. In his dyspeptic disregard for what might be amusing, enticing, or appetizing about the world we live in "his inability, that is, to read like a writer, or write like a reader" B. Myers has placed contemporary literature in toto beyond his limited powers. He offers us, in place of insight, only indigestion.

Chapter 4 : How to write a manifesto. | Alexandra Franzen

A lolcat is an image combining a photograph of a cat (usually in a "zany" situation) with text intended to contribute humour. The text is often idiosyncratic and grammatically incorrect, and its use in this way is known as "lolspeak" or "kitty pidgin".

Description[edit] Myers described the original article, which saw no end of responses from admirers and critics, as "a light-hearted polemic" about modern literature. Myers was particularly concerned with what he saw as the growing pretentiousness of American literary fiction. He was skeptical about the value of elaborate, allusive prose and argued that what was praised as good writing was in fact the epitome of bad writing. His critique concentrated on E. Myers also focuses on what he calls "the cult of the sentence", criticizing critics for pulling single sentences out of novels in order to praise their brilliance, while ignoring shortcomings in the novel as a whole. Myers suggests there are only three possible responses when a critic is asked to review a work of literature: For many critics, Myers was continuing the popular comments on postmodernism , of which John Gardner On Moral Fiction was the most recent proponent. Categories of criticism[edit] Myers explains and critiques the following five prose styles. Myers says Proulx writes to "startle or impress the reader. Myers criticizes Proulx for being "too egocentric" to put herself in the place of her characters when deciding what is important and what is unnecessary. He also mentions that maybe Proulx writes one thing but means something else, therefore emphasizing the importance of polishing. Myers writes, "Someone needs to tell her that half of good writing is knowing what to leave out. Cormac McCarthy[edit] Myers criticizes McCarthy for filling his sentences with bulky words that contain no real detail or meaning. He uses the following as an example from *The Crossing*: But like the slide-show and unlike the shopping-list , the andelope often clashes with the subject matter, and the unpunctuated flow of words bears no relation to the methodical meal that is being described. By making a description too long, as Auster does, Myers says that an author encourages a reader to "feel emboldened to ask why it needed to be said at all. Myers also criticizes Auster for saying the same thing too many times; he states: Myers concludes that *Snow Falling on Cedars* is no more than "flat, stereotypical descriptions" of characters in a given context, and, were its pace not slow, it would be considered a genre novel. Myers responds that books may also be difficult to read because of poor writing style, and he recommends other authors as examples of a complex style executed with skill. Myers was unable to find any evidence backing this claim, and responds to this argument with the absence of criticism for the authors and several examples of praise. Myers states "Literature need not answer every question it raises, but questions themselves should be clear. Myers points out that the critics made no attempt to argue that the defamed excerpts deserved the praise originally lavished on them. Instead the critics based their arguments on a matter of perspective. Myers refutes these criticisms by stating that he uses the same excerpts that were previously praised by other critics. He also explains that some good parts do not qualify a work of literary prose as being worth the money and time it costs to purchase and read. Myers claims that the writer has become more important than the writing and any failings "only makes them more lovable" in the eyes of the modern critic. Myers agrees to a point, but gives the example of the National Book Award winners between and compared to those of through winners.

Chapter 5 : a reader's manifesto " Kelley Eskridge

When I didn't give Philip Jones a title or a topic for this talk, he billed it a reader's manifesto. That's a very strong word, manifesto.

As a reader, I will read when I am bored, instead of checking my phone or tablet. I will read a story instead. I will read in the bathroom when I have an extra moment, instead of checking my phone. When I wake in the morning, I will read a chapter from my book instead of doing a first checkin on email and social media. Because I know that beginning my day with a good book will make me happier, better adjusted and more ready for a long day. When I go to bed in the evening, I will read a chapter from my book instead of doing a last checkin on email and social media. Because I know that ending my day with a good book will make me happier, and will lead to better sleep. I will read a book when I am bored in a grocery line, instead of checking my phone. Perhaps I might even converse with the people around me, and hear their stories. I will read on airplanes. I will read on buses. I will read on subways. I will read on trains. I will read on submarines. I will read on aircraft carriers. I will read everywhere! In fact, I will read on the subway and the bus, even if I have to take quick gulps, just a sentence or two that I can ponder, instead of checking social media for the last insipid update. Perhaps I might even read and ponder a poem. When I am waiting and bored, I will pull out my book and immerse myself in an alternate world of wonder and insight, instead of checking my phone. I might, if I forgot my book, simply allow myself to be bored, and drift into that place of emergent creativity through my moment of boredom. I will read in the waiting time. I will read when I have to wait for an appointment. I will read when my flight is delayed. I will read when my bus is stuck in traffic. I will read when I have to wait, instead of doing anything else. I will read on my breaks at work. I will read on my breaks from home chores. When I am with my children, I will turn off my phone and read to them, or focus on them. They will always remember that moment, for the rest of their lives. I will never remember, two seconds later, what I read on my phone in that same fleeting moment. When I am with my parents or siblings, I will turn off my phone and focus on them. I will always remember looking in their eyes and talking with them. But whatever was on my phone will be forgotten. When I am with my friends, I will focus on them, or I will read to them. I will evangelize reading as a way to make the world a more interesting and better place! I will write reviews for my favorite books and tell people about the books I love. I will read when I am bored. I will read when I am happy. I will read when I am upset. I will read when I am sad. I will make time for reading each and every day. Readers can find my books at these bookstores:

Chapter 6 : INCIDENTAL COMICS: A Reader's Manifesto

A Reader's Manifesto I made this manifesto for the Colombian newspaper El Espectador. Thanks to editor Daniel Jimenez Quiroz! Posters are available at my shop.

Writers sometimes balk at this “ after all some of it flies in the face of what is taught in the writing world. Readers come for what goes on beneath the surface. Being enthralled by a story just happens. We can learn what triggers the surge of dopamine that biologically pushes the pause button on real life, letting us get lost in the world of the story. And once we do that, we can create a story that lures a reader in as surely as a trail of crumbs in the woods. The reader expects that the story will start making a point, beginning on page one. The brain is wired to begin making sense of things instantly. We are constantly on the search for meaning “ not in a metaphysical way, but in a how-will-this-affect-me way. Which is why our first questions tend to be: Why should I care? This is not to say that you have to spell the point out on the first page, but readers need enough of a sense of it “- enough context -“ to do three things: The reader expects that the story will revolve around a single clear, escalating problem that the protagonist has no choice but to deal with. That is, we expect a story to be about one, single overarching problem that then complicates throughout the story. We expect that problem to escalate, but what throws us is when that problem is suddenly back-burnered, or it splits into two separate-but-equal problems, or the problem ends and another begins, or the author keeps throwing random problems at the protagonist, you know, to keep things exciting. This escalating problem is the external context within which the story unfolds. This external problem is what the plot is about. The plot is the external manifestation, the thing that forces the protagonist to take action. The reader expects that the protagonist will enter the story already wanting something, which is what gives true meaning to her goal. Have you ever woken up in the morning with no idea who you were, what you believe, why you believe it, or what you want to or have to do that day? Okay, okay, maybe once or twice, in college. All I want is to feel normal. To live like everybody else, with experience building on experience, each day shaping the next. I want to grow, to learn things, and from things. I cannot imagine how I will cope when I discover my life is behind me, has already happened, and I have nothing to show for it. No treasure house of recollection, no wealth of experience, no accumulated wisdom to pass on. What are we, if not an accumulation of our memories? Which is why at the beginning of a story that is exactly what every protagonist must have: The reader expects the protagonist will already have a deep-seated fear, misbelief or wound “ i. Just as we all have an agenda, we all have things that hold us back from carrying it out. Point being, this is what your story is actually about “ an internal change. So not only does your protagonist need to come in wanting something, but they also need a deep-seated misbelief that keeps them from having a shot at getting it. In a story, the reader evaluates everything that happens based on one thing: What you actually need to do is write fleshed out scenes about the origin of their desire and their misbelief “ scenes that will help you figure out what your story is about and where it starts and where it ends. Worrieth not, none of it will go to waste. What keeps us reading is dopamine-fueled curiosity. Wanting to know what will happen next when something is at stake. Because, really, who cares? In other words, will this get her closer to what she wants, or further away? A big mistake that writers often make is that they think it means that something is at stake externally. And while yes, there must be something at stake externally, the real question is: The reader expects a clear and present force of opposition, with a loudly ticking clock. But if what seemed to be a ticking clock suddenly stops, so does our interest in it. We all know where tomorrow falls on the calendar: A week from Never. The whole point of the plot is to force the character to take action, and without a rapidly approaching deadline “ well, good luck with that. The reader expects the protagonist to try to make sense of everything that the plot puts her through, in the moment, on the page, as she struggles with what to do. This is where the true story lies. Everything else is there to serve this one master. What is this character really thinking? What would that really feel like? Not thinking in general, mind you. Not long, rambling, stream of consciousness musings about this and that. The past is the yardstick by which we measure the meaning of the present. Otherwise, how will you know what anything means to them at all? The answer is simple: And yes, this applies to scenes in which the protagonist

is not present. The reader expects that everything in the story is there strictly on a need-to-know basis, even the weather. The reader thinks that whatever you wrote has story significance, and so they dutifully ascribe meaning to it, and that meaning is, by definition, going to be wrong. And so the protagonist never makes mistakes or has any real flaws that might offend or embarrass. And, probably, hiding something. What problem could they possibly have? Something they got wrong. Otherwise, what do they have to struggle with? The reader expects that as the protagonist tries to solve the story question, he will only make things worse, until he has no choice but to face his inner issue. This is not a moral judgment: We want to have our cake and eat it too. But as experience has taught us read: The reader expects that at the end of the story the protagonist will emerge changed " seeing the world through new eyes " and that we, the readers, will emerge changed, as well. Remember where we started? And when it comes to envisioning the future, to imagining what might happen, a story is a simulation: We began telling stories at the dawn of time, and by the time novels came around like five minutes ago, in the grand scheme of things , our wiring was in place. All stories are a call to action. The reader expects no less. The floor is yours. Lisa Cron is the author of *Wired for Story: Her video tutorial, Writing Fundamentals: The Craft of Story*, can be found at Lynda. *The Common Thread of Our Humanity*.

Chapter 7 : The Pulp Archivist: "A Reader's Manifesto"

A Reader's Manifesto Affiliate links, Pedagogy, Readers Workshop, Readers Writers Workshop, Shana Karnes August 28, Comments: 6 After a hectic summer of being well behind my fellow Book Love Book Club readers, I finally finished Kyleene Beers and Bob Probst's latest book, Disrupting Thinking.

Chapter 8 : The Leader's Data Manifesto " DATA LEADERS

A Reader's Manifesto Sep 7, | Posts, Reviews, Writing In the digital age of Android and iPads, Facebook and Instagram, I think there's the need for a new Reader's Manifesto, a statement of action that will remind readers everywhere of their identity and the difference that reading makes in a busy world.

Chapter 9 : The Scripture Reader's Manifesto

A Reader's Manifesto by SB Sarah Â Aug 30, at pm Â View all 33 comments From the school of "slap one hand to raise the other," we have a thought provoking article from The Atlantic, emailed to me by Bitchery reader Deb, on the nature of "literary fiction."