**Kirsch on Glück**

Kirsch writes about Glück’s poetry existing outside herself while still being centered around herself. Kirsch observes that Glück writes about a great amount of topics as though she has experienced them, portraying a deep sense of honesty. Glück has not experienced many of the events that she has written about. Kirsch ties this idea of poetic “acting” into his idea that speaking this false sincerity is a fruitless effort. In order to say the truth, one’s experiences must have candor. Not only can someone who has not truly experienced an event not have the thoughts to call upon in order to speak candidly, but also an author such a Glück values her writing quality over a disorganized confession. An author writes consciously, so a candid confession cannot be truly achieved unless back-of-the-envelope lines are published. Kirsch establishes this paradox in Glück’s writing, but he does not address a truth that makes Glück the skilled poet she is. Glück can consciously portray false-sincerity accurately.

Kirsch, in fact, does touch upon the subject. He addresses details and techniques that can be seen in Glück’s poetry. Kirsch says that one of Glück’s favorite rhetorical devices is the thought that deeper knowledge is gained through deeper suffering. Later on, talks about Glück’s techniques in portraying honesty. One of them, which has a very powerful effect, is Glück’s use of weakness in her poetry. Showing weakness is a very powerful tool because it helps convince the reader that the writer is not holding anything back, which, as Kirsch points out, is a hallmark of today’s societal expectancy. Showing weakness and confusion is a sign of incapability in today’s society, and people do not want to seem incapable. Today’s society also labels over and under eating as a sign of someone who feels they cannot take control of their lives. Glück could write poems with mal-nourished characters in order to portray these weaknesses; there definitely are annalists who would interpret her characterization as just that and would conclude a sense of honesty on the poet’s from a character who confesses to her eating habits. This technique, though, does not require personal knowledge of the subject, but rather knowledge of how the reader will react to what the poet says. Kirsch talks about how it is truly impossible to portray candor without being truly candid, but Glück’s skill shows that candor is in the eye of the beholder. Someone can lie and be thought to have told the truth and someone can tell the truth and thought to have lied. Glück’s false sincerity is not a paradox because of it’s attempt, but a master-stroke because of its success.