

# "continuum" by allen curnow essay sample

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## **“ Continuum” by Allen Curnow Essay Sample**

“ Continuum” is a poem written by New Zealander Allen Curnow in which he illustrates his intended theme ambiguously, yet sincerely. The structure, along with the tone and overall writing quality of the poem, introduces to the reader a discrepancy of uncertainty and emotions that reveals the author’s principle motif, but not immediately the true profundity behind this work of art. Curnow gives off to a vague start; however, the reader is still able to recognize a gloomy milieu - chiefly created by the reiteration of the moon’s lonely presence in the night sky. Instantly, we are able to notice that he was actually making a reference to himself. This could be because of the fact that he feels alone (to the likeness of the moon), or perhaps because he believes that an introduction of his sole persona is undeserving of a reader’s attention. He then emphasizes on his frustration with his inability to think consciously, and his disorganized flow of thoughts implies to us that he is actually slowly departing from his artisan, poetic self. Soon thereafter, he proceeds from what is thought to be his bedroom to the porch of his house hastily enough as to neglect wearing his shoes beforehand. He looks at the outside world as a dark, washed out place.

The meaning behind this could very possibly be that he himself feels washed out of the unfair universe he exists in, or that his aesthetic ideas are being washed out of him. As he admires two clouds in the sky, he refers to one of them as his opponent, an opponent that sits in a ‘ dark place’ that seems to accommodate everything capable posing a problem to him. This adversary, as he calls it, fluctuates according to the wind, implying that he has no

control whatsoever of the obstacles he is facing in life. His bipolar insensateness of time and temperature may represent his old age or insanity due to insomnia. On the other hand, the sudden cold he feels in his throat as he admires the washed out world can very well represent his coming to a realization. In that moment he realized that he did not belong where he was, so much, that he cringes just at the thought of it. It is almost as if there was two of him at once – his poetic self and his current insane self.

It is implied that only artists can have the privilege to admire to beauty of the world that is in fact not so beautiful on his behalf, and so he then proceeds to pick up what he claims as ' litter' (which may be referring to his works of literature), as he stealthily paces back to his bedroom as if ashamed of his unworthy compositions, which have cost him his place in the world of poesy. In conclusion, this poem can be seen as obscure and even slightly self indulgent. Allen doesn't even try to make it easy to understand; however, the simplicity of the concept is where the beauty of the poem lies. The several layers of nonsensical combinations of words, enjambment, and metaphors convey a certain depth of confusion, and one must put an effort to understand the author's peculiar fashion in order to truly see the poem's significance.