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Abstract

How do standards of poetic beauty change as a function of time and expertise? Here we use computational methods to compare the stylistic features of 359 English poems written by 19th century professional poets, Imagist poets, contemporary professional poets, and contemporary amateur poets. Building upon techniques designed to analyze style and sentiment in texts, we examine elements of poetic craft such as imagery, sound devices, emotive language, and diction. We find that contemporary professional poets use significantly more concrete words than 19th century poets, fewer emotional words, and more complex sound devices. These changes are consistent with the tenets of Imagism, an early 20th-century literary movement. Further analyses show that contemporary amateur poems resemble 19th century professional poems more than contemporary professional poems on several dimensions. The stylistic similarities between contemporary amateur poems and 19th century professional poems suggest that elite standards of poetic beauty in the past "trickled down" to influence amateur works in the present. Our

results highlight the influence of Imagism on the modern aesthetic and reveal the dynamics between "high" and "low" art. We suggest that computational linguistics may shed light on the forces and trends that shape poetic style.

1 Introduction

From Homer's epics to Li Po's elegant verses to Billy Collins' startlingly insightful portrayals of ordinary moments in life, poetry has been widely celebrated across languages, cultures, and time. Countless readers have experienced the power of a beautiful poem; however, an astute reader will notice that this power takes a different form in Shakespeare's measured sonnets than it does in Pablo Neruda's lush poetry. In this paper, we are interested in the forces and elements that shape the aesthetic standards of poetry. In particular, how do literary movements transform ideals of poetic beauty? How do changes in aesthetic standards impact poets with high versus low levels of expertise? Can we characterize literary movements using precise quantitative methods and analyze their influence on a large scale?

Many literary critics, historians, and social scientists have studied artistic change and proposed theories about its inception and development. These scholars have approached artistic change from the perspective of direct influence among artists (Clayton and Rothstein, 1991, Levenson, 1986), legitimation of new or previously ignored art forms due to social movements (Baumann, 2007, Isaac, 2009), and the dynamics between high and low social classes (Simmel, 1957). This diversity of approaches suggests that a holistic view of artistic change should incorporate the influence of individual artists as well as broader societal forces. While the ideas proposed in these works are enlightening and influential, their methods have been mostly qualitative, making it difficult to draw objective and data-driven conclusions about large bodies of texts.

Martindale (1990) was one of the first scholars to use quantitative methods to comprehensively analyze a sizable collection of artwork across several time periods. His analysis showed that visual, verbal, and musical art all tend to exhibit higher complexity over time, suggesting that a major force for artistic change may be the pressure to be less predictable and thus more complex. While this research presents compelling quantitative evidence to support a theory of artistic change, it (largely intentionally) ignores the historical context in which change takes place. Furthermore, Martindale regards certain types of art such as poetry as a product of the elite and overlooks poetry generated and consumed by the masses. While this approach sheds light on broad patterns of artistic change, it fails to consider the different ways in which the force of change acts upon artists in different historical and social contexts.

In this paper, we apply the same degree of quantitative rigor to ex-

amine changes surrounding a specific literary movement in the English language: Imagism. By focusing on a particular movement, we are able to examine whether and how powerful literary leaders can dramatically shift the standards of poetic beauty within a short amount of time. Furthermore, by comparing the movement's effect on elite poets and amateur poets, we aim to explore the differences between high and low art as well as their responsiveness to change.

We chose to focus on the Imagist movement for two reasons. First, Imagism is regarded by many literary critics as "the beginning of modern literature in English" (Pratt, 1992). Leaders of the Imagism movement articulated and championed some of the principles of craft still taught in creative writing workshops today, such as the advice to show and not tell (Addonizio and Laux, 1997, Burroway, 2007). If the Imagism movement truly had a strong influence on modern aesthetic standards, then we should find significant differences between the styles of poems written prior to and following the movement.[1] Second, while the work of amateur poets before the 21st century is mostly undocumented, the Internet now enables easy dissemination and documentation of poems produced by the masses. It is now possible to collect poems not only from modern anthologized poets, but also from modern amateur poets who published their work on the Internet. By choosing a movement closer to our times, we are able to compare the influence of Imagism on poems written by poets with vastly different levels of skill and formal training.

The Imagist movement

Given its significance, the Imagism movement was surprisingly small and short-lived. The movement officially launched in 1912 and ended in 1917, involving only a handful of English and American poets, including Ezra Pound, Amy Lowell, William Carlos Williams, and James Joyce. Ezra Pound is regarded as the intellectual leader of the movement (although Amy Lowell took over soon afterwards, not without some drama). Although there is speculation about Pound's personal motives for launching the movement (Thacker, 2011), Imagism is often construed as a reaction against Georgian and Victorian styles, which are characterized by abstract and sentimental language (Frank, 1991).

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[1]We note that other literary movements that overlap in time with Imagism make it difficult to draw definitive conclusions about whether Imagism is solely responsible for the changes during this period. However, our main goal is to provide quantitative evidence that such differences exist and to track these differences across time and expertise. We leave it to future work to more carefully disentangle the causal mechanisms that engendered such changes.

The Imagists articulated their aesthetic ideals in an anthology published in 1915, titled *Some Imagist Poets* (Lowell, 1915). Here we list the six tenets they proposed, modified for brevity:

1. To use the language of common speech, but to employ always the exact word, not the nearly-exact, nor the merely decorative word.

2. To create new rhythms—as the expression of new moods—and not to copy old rhythms, which merely echo old moods.

3. To allow absolute freedom in the choice of subject.

4. To present an image. We believe that poetry should render particulars exactly and not deal in vague generalities.

5. To produce poetry that is hard and clear, never blurred nor indefinite.

6. Finally, concentration is of the very essence of poetry.

Pound's poem titled *In a Station of the Metro*, published in *Poetry* magazine in 1913, embodies the central tenets of the Imagism movement:

> *The apparition of these faces in the crowd;*
> *Petals on a wet, black bough.*

In fourteen words, the poem constructs a clear and compelling image that conveys an abstract emotional experience without explicitly describing it. The poem does not follow a strict meter or rhyme scheme; instead, the relationship between the two lines is one of imagery rather than one of sound. The image of faces in the crowd is equated with an image of petals on a bough, remnants of flowers that had just been separated from the tree after rain. A sense of ephemerality is evoked by the precise and concrete image of these delicate petals, which lingers in the reader's mind for much longer than an abstract statement about the transience of life.

According to Imagists, the work of a great poet is to select the right image that causes the reader to experience a particular emotion or infer a particular reality (Hamilton, 2004). As Pound said, "The gulf between evocation and description is the unbridgeable difference between genius and talent." Regardless of whether the aesthetic ideals of Imagism provide an objective measure of "genius," the question of whether Imagists were successful at shifting standards of poetic beauty and influencing modern poets to adopt these ideals is the one we wish to investigate.

2   Features of Imagism

The tenets articulated in the Imagist manifesto form the basis of our analysis. In order to determine the degree to which a particular poem conforms to Imagist ideals, we first define specific features that correlate with each of these tenets. We then measure the number of times a poem uses these features. By comparing these features across different sets of poems, we can identify the amount of Imagism's influence on poets from different time periods and with varying levels of expertise. Here we motivate and describe the set of features selected for this purpose.

2.1   Concrete imagery

Imagists put great emphasis on depicting concrete, specific objects and avoiding abstractions and generalizations (Aldington et al., 1916). We quantified the degree of concreteness in poems using the following predefined lexicons and psycholinguistic measures.

The Harvard General Inquirer (Stone et al., 1966) consists of 182 word categories, including a category for words referring to concrete objects (Object: 661 words) and one for words referring to abstract concepts (ABS: 276 words). We computed an *Object* score for each poem by counting the number of words that appear in the Object category and dividing it by the total number of words in the poem. We similarly computed an *Abstract* score by counting the number of words that appear in the ABS category and dividing it by poem length.

For more fine-grained psycholinguistic measures of imageability, we used the MRC Psycholinguistic Database (Wilson, 1988), which contains imageability ratings for $4{,}954$ words (Coltheart, 1981). We derived an *Imageability* score for each poem by computing the average imageability rating for all of the words in the poem that appeared in the database. Finally, we used concreteness ratings for $39{,}955$ words collected by Brysbaert et al. (2013) to compute the average concreteness of all words in the poem, resulting in a *Concreteness* score.

2.2   Emotional language

As seen in Pound's *In a Station of the Metro,* Imagist poets often use carefully chosen objects and imagery to evoke emotional reactions instead of depicting emotions explicitly (Hamilton, 2004). To quantify the degree of emotion explicitly described in each poem, we used the EMOT category (311 words) in the Harvard General Inquirer (Stone et al., 1966). We computed an *Emotion* score for each poem by counting and normalizing the number of words that appear in the EMOT category.

To account for more fine-grained differences between negative-

valence and positive-valence words (e.g. "torture" v.s. "love") and low-arousal and high-arousal words (e.g. "sad" v.s. "panicky"), we in addition used the valence and arousal norms of 13, 915 words collected by Warriner et al. (2013). A *Valence* score was obtained for each poem by computing the average valence rating for all words in the poem that appeared in the database, and an *Arousal* score from average arousal ratings.

2.3   Sound devices

To examine the types of sound devices used in different poems, we computed sound device features using Kaplan (2006)'s PoetryAnalyzer, which utilizes the Carnegie Mellon Pronouncing Dictionary to identify phonetic patterns indicative of poetic sound devices. We examined six different sound devices, which are listed as major elements of poetic craft in influential handbooks on creative writing (Burroway, 2007, Addonizio and Laux, 1997): identity rhyme, perfect rhyme, slant rhyme, alliteration, consonance, and assonance.

The PoetryAnalyzer identifies rhymes by examining phoneme sequences at the end of lines. If two words in a window of four line endings have identical phoneme sequences, then an instance of an identity rhyme is recorded. The final count of identity end rhymes is divided by the total number of words in the poem to produce an *IdentityEndRhyme* score. If two words in the window have different initial consonants but identical phoneme sequences from the stressed vowel phoneme onward, then the count for perfect end rhymes is incremented, and the final count normalized by poem length to produce a *PerfectEndRhyme* score. If two words in the window of four line endings have the same stressed vowel but different phonemes following the stressed vowel, then the count for slant end rhymes is incremented, and the final count normalized to produce a *SlantEndRhyme* score. If the initial phoneme of two consecutive words are identical consonants, an alliteration count is incremented, and the final count normalized to obtain an *Alliteration* score. If there are at least two identical consonant phonemes in a window of nine syllables, the consonance count is incremented, and the final count similarly normalized to obtain a *Consonance* score. Finally, if there are at least two identical vowel phonemes in a window of nine syllables, the assonance count is incremented, and the final count normalized to obtain an *Assonance* score.

2.4   Diction

The first tenet of Imagism is "to use the language of common speech, but always the exact word, not the nearly-exact, not the merely decorative

word" (Aldington et al., 1916). This suggests that diction, or word choice, may reveal interesting characteristics of Imagism.

We measured the "commonness" of language used in a poem by computing average word length (*WordLength*) and average word frequency (*WordFreq*), which are often used as proxies for word difficulty (Breland, 1996). We measured average word length by computing the average length of words in each poem, in units of letters. This was done by summing up the number of letters in a poem and dividing the total by the number of words in the poem. We measured average word frequencies using a list of the top 500,000 most frequent words in the Corpus of Contemporary American English (COCA) (Davies, 2011). For each poem, we summed up the word frequencies of every word and divided the total by the number of words in the poem to obtain a *WordFreq* score.

Finally, to measure the "exactness" of language, we assumed that more precise words tend to be appropriate for fewer contexts. According to this logic, "exactness" can be approximated by the ratio of total word types to total number of words in each poem, known as the type-token ratio. Poems with higher type-token ratios avoid repeating the same words and are assumed to employ more diverse and precise vocabulary (Ben-Simon and Bennett, 2007, Pitler, E. and Nenkova, Ani, 2008). We summed up the number of unique word types in a poem and divided the sum by the total number of word instances in the poem to compute a *TypeTokenRatio* score. Table 1 provides a summary of all 16 features and their corresponding examples.

3   Study 1: Imagists *vs.* 19th century professional poets

We first validated the 16 features described above by testing whether poems written by Imagist poets differ significantly from poems written by other poets in the 19th century along these feature dimensions.

3.1   Materials and methods

To construct a dataset of Imagist poetry, we compiled poems from two seminal anthologies that put forth the ideals of Imagism: *Des Imagistes* (Pound, 1914), which included 34 poems written in English, and the first anthology in the series *Some Imagist Poets* (Lowell, 1915), which included 37 poems in English. This resulted in a total of 71 Imagist poems, ranging from 17 to 1039 words in length with an average length of 163.48 words (see Appendix for the full list of poets and poems).

For our comparison dataset, we collected English poems written by 19th century American poets, defined as American poets born between 1801 and 1900, from a website called "Famous Poets and Poems"

Feature	Examples
Object	*boat; leaf*
Abstract	*day; love*
Imageability	*an → beach*
Concreteness	*although → comb*
Emotion	*confidence; anxious*
Valence	*torture → love*
Arousal	*sad → panicky*
Identity end rhyme	*restore / store*
Perfect end rhyme	*floor / store*
Slant end rhyme	*bred / end*
Alliteration	*frozen field*
Consonance	*brown skin hung*
Assonance	*shallower and yellowed*
Word length	–
Word frequency	–
Type-token ratio	–

TABLE 1 Summary of features

(http://famouspoetsandpoems.com). To ensure that we select prolific poets whose works are well known, we selected forty-four poets with more than ten poems listed on the website. None of the poets selected were involved in the Imagist movement. We then randomly selected one to five poems from each poet, resulting in 88 poems written by 19th century non-imagist poets. These poems ranged from 12 to 1775 words in length, with an average length of 217.35 words (see Appendix for the full list of poets and poems).[2]

3.2   Results

We measured the features described in Section 2 for all 159 poems. Figure 1 shows the mean feature scores for poems written by 19th century non-Imagist poets and Imagist poets, while Table 2 indicates whether the differences are statistically significant.[3]

Our features for concrete imagery quantify distinctive characteristics of Imagist poems and distinguish them from 19th century poems. Imagist poems contain marginally significantly more *Object* words

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[2]As a shorthand, we will refer to poems written by Imagists as Imagist poems, poems written by non-Imagist poets born in the 19th century as 19th century poems, poems written by professional poets born in the 20th century as contemporary poems, and poems written by amateur poets as amateur poems.

[3]Throughout this work, we applied a two-tailed unpaired t-test in which we did not assume the variance for the two populations to be equal.
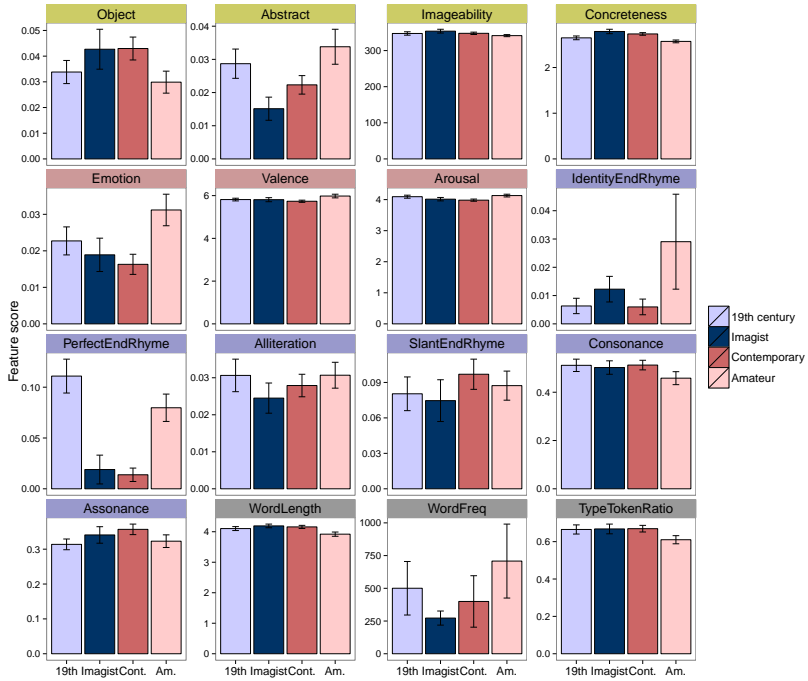
FIGURE 1 Mean feature scores (and 95% confidence intervals) for poems written by 19th century poets, Imagist poets, contemporary professional poets, and contemporary amateur poets.

Feature	19th (N=88)	Imagist (N=71)	Significant?
Object	0.034	0.043	marginal
Abstract	0.029	0.015	yes
Imageability	347.399	353.791	marginal
Concreteness	2.649	2.789	yes
Emotion	0.023	0.019	no
Valence	5.816	5.810	no
Arousal	4.094	4.014	yes
IdentityEndRhyme	0.006	0.012	yes
PerfectEndRhyme	0.111	0.019	yes
Alliteration	0.031	0.025	yes
SlantEndRhyme	0.080	0.075	no
Consonance	0.511	0.502	no
Assonance	0.314	0.341	marginal
WordLength	4.104	4.191	marginal
WordFreq	500.443	272.647	yes
TypeTokenRatio	0.665	0.668	no

TABLE 2 Average feature scores for poems written by Imagist poets and 19th century poets, as well as whether differences between the two groups are statistically significant.

($t(114.76) = 1.97, p = 0.051$) and significantly fewer *Abstract* words ($t(154.53) = -4.80, p < 0.00001$). In addition, Imagist poems score marginally significantly higher on *Imageability* ($t(150.04) = 1.80, p = 0.07$), and significantly higher on *Concreteness* ($t(146.41) = 4.38, p < 0.000001$).

In our analysis of emotional language, we found that poems written by Imagists do not contain significantly fewer *Emotion* words ($t(145.68) = -1.27, p = 0.20$), or differ significantly from 19th century poems in terms of *Valence* ($t(125.95) = -0.10, p = 0.92$). However, Imagist poems score significantly lower on *Arousal* ($t(148.96) = -2.17, p = 0.03$), suggesting that Imagist poets use language that demonstrates fewer explicitly strong emotions. While the *Emotion* and *Valence* features do not distinguish Imagist poems, ratings of emotional arousal may better capture the impression of Imagism as using imagery to evoke subtle emotions rather than using explicitly emotional language to describe strong emotions.

Besides the use of concrete imagery, perhaps the most distinguishing characteristic of the Imagist style is its departure from traditional rhyme schemes. Consistent with our predictions, Imagist poems contain significantly fewer perfect end rhymes than 19th century poems ($t(156.5) = -8.37, p < 0.00001$). Rather surprisingly, our collection of Imagist poems contains significantly more identity end rhymes ($t(117.59) = 2.24, p = 0.027$), perhaps due to the presence of repeated words. Imagist poems contain significantly fewer occurrences of alliteration ($t(158.86) = -2.04, p = 0.04$). However, they contain marginally significantly more occurrences of assonance ($t(124.08) = 1.91, p = 0.059$), a subtler sound device than rhyme and alliteration. There were no significant differences in the occurrences of slant end rhymes ($t(142.59) = -0.51, p = 0.61$) and consonance ($t(151.48) = -0.48, p = 0.63$).

Finally, our analysis of diction suggests that, contrary to the tenet promoting the use of "the language of common speech," Imagist poets actually used marginally significantly longer ($t(156.89) = 1.97, p = 0.051$) and significantly less frequent ($t(98.82) = -2.14, p = 0.035$) words than other 19th century poets. They also did not use significantly more varied words, as measured by type-token ratio ($t(152.77) = 0.15, p = 0.88$). This departure from our prediction highlights an interesting tension within the first tenet of the Imagist manifesto. While the language of common speech is desired, the pressure to employ "the exact word" pushes contemporary poets to choose words with precise meanings, which tend to be words that are less frequently used because their meanings are only appropriate in highly specific contexts.

Testing the 16 features we designed on a set of poems written by Imagists and their peers, we find that more concrete imagery and fewer perfect end rhymes may be the most distinguishing features of Imagist poetry, as well as more subdued emotional language. While the other features did not consistently reveal interesting differences between Imagist poems and 19th century poems, we will continue using all 16 features in the following studies to observe whether they capture differences between other sets of poems.

4 Study 2: Contemporary *vs.* 19th century professional poets

Imagism is thought to have had a great influence on the style of modern poets. To examine the influence of Imagist ideals on the modern literary aesthetic, in this study we compared poems written by contemporary poets (poets born in the 20th century) to those written by 19th century poets.

4.1 Materials and methods

We selected 100 poems from sixty-seven professional poets whose work appeared in a collection of Contemporary American Poetry (Poulin and Waters, 2006). These poets produced most of their poems towards the middle and end of the 20th century and are considered some of the best contemporary poets in America. All of the poets we selected are listed in the website of the Academy of American Poets, and many have won prestigious awards (e.g., Louise Gluck, Mary Oliver, Mark Strand).[4] We randomly selected one to three poems from each poet, roughly proportional to the number of poems each poet had in the collection. The final selection ranged from 32 to 378 words in length with an average length of 174.15 words (see Appendix for the full list of poets and poems).

4.2 Results

We measured the features described in Section 2 for these additional 100 poems written by contemporary professional poets. We began with a simple analysis comparing the feature scores of poems written by 19th century professional poets and contemporary professional poets. Table 3 shows the average feature scores for these two categories of

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[4]Since the selection of poems in an anthology is based on the subjective judgments of its editor(s), there are undoubtedly other critically-acclaimed poets whose works were not represented in this particular anthology. However, we hope that we have succeeded in including most of the well-regarded poets in modern times, and invite future work to test our features on poems we may have omitted.

Feature	19th (N=88)	Contemporary (N=100)	Significant?
Object	0.034	0.043	yes
Abstract	0.029	0.022	yes
Imageability	347.399	347.803	no
Concreteness	2.649	2.735	yes
Emotion	0.023	0.016	yes
Valence	5.816	5.736	marginal
Arousal	4.094	3.982	yes
IdentityEndRhyme	0.006	0.006	no
PerfectEndRhyme	0.111	0.014	yes
Alliteration	0.031	0.028	no
SlantEndRhyme	0.080	0.097	marginal
Consonance	0.511	0.512	no
Assonance	0.314	0.357	yes
WordLength	4.104	4.158	no
WordFreq	500.443	399.578	no
TypeTokenRatio	0.665	0.669	no

TABLE 3 Average feature scores for poems written by 19th century poets and contemporary professional poets, as well as whether differences between the two groups are statistically significant.

poems, as well as whether the differences are statistically significant.

With respect to the use of concrete imagery, we found that contemporary poems contain significantly more *Object* words ($t(185.01) = 2.87, p < 0.005$) and significantly fewer *Abstract* words ($t(149.68) = -2.43, p = 0.016$) than 19th century poems. We also found that contemporary poems score significantly higher on *Concreteness* ($t(159.58) = 3.39, p < 0.001$), although not on *Imageability* ($t(158.47) = 0.14, p = 0.89$). This suggests that, consistent with the influence of Imagism, modern aesthetic standards are characterized by the presence of concrete imagery to a higher degree than 19th century poems.

In our analysis of emotional language, we found that contemporary poems contain significantly fewer *Emotion* words than poems by 19th century poets ($t(162.17) = -2.7, p < 0.01$). Contemporary poems score marginally significantly lower than 19th century poems on *Valence* ($t(173.3) = -1.95, p = 0.053$). Similarly to Imagist poems, contemporary poems score significantly lower on *Arousal* ($t(163.38) = -3.71, p < 0.0005$) than 19th century poems. Together, these results suggest that contemporary poets are less likely to explicitly reference emotions and more likely to use more emotionally subdued and slightly more negative language. While the *Emotion* and *Valence* features do not distinguish Imagist poems from 19th century poems, they seem

to indicate that the contemporary aesthetic involves less emotionally effusive language, perhaps beyond the influence of Imagism.

The sound devices used by 19th century and contemporary poets also differ along several of the features we identified. Contemporary poets used significantly fewer perfect end rhymes ($t(114.08) = -10.76, p < 0.00001$), which follows naturally from 19th century adherence to stricter poetic forms and rhyme schemes. On the other hand, contemporary poets developed "new rhythms" and new sound patterns by employing more subtle devices such as slant end rhymes ($t(180.6) = 1.72, p = 0.09$) and assonance ($t(184.8) = 3.97, p < 0.0005$). The two groups of poems did not differ significantly in their use of identity end rhymes ($t(185.66) = -0.17, p = 0.86$), alliteration ($t(158.55) = -1.02, p = 0.31$), or consonance ($t(169.66) = 0.06, p = 0.95$).

Finally, our analysis of diction shows that contemporary professional poets did not use significantly shorter ($t(170.86) = 1.32, p = 0.19$), more frequent ($t(184.07) = -0.71, p = 0.48$), or more varied words ($t(162.89) = 0.28, p = 0.78$) than 19th century poets, suggesting that the literary styles in these two time periods do not differ in terms of the difficulty or diversity of the vocabulary used.

Overall, the comparisons we conducted suggest that contemporary aesthetic standards are more consistent with Imagist sensibilities, particularly in terms of the increase in concreteness, decrease in emotional arousal, and decrease in perfect end rhymes. However, a more detailed analysis of the timing of these changes may help uncover the role of the Imagist movement in establishing these trends. Particularly with regards to concrete imagery, Martindale (1990) proposed that the pressure to be novel naturally requires artists to create work with higher complexity, which can manifest in higher concreteness. If so, this gradual increase in concreteness over time may be responsible for the differences we observe between 19th century and contemporary poems. If time is the best predictor for concreteness, then we would expect the degree of concreteness in a poem to be consistently higher the later it is written, regardless of the Imagism movement. If, on the other hand, Imagism is responsible for promoting concreteness as a critical characteristic of good poetry, then we would expect that poems written prior to the Imagism movement would be uniformly low on concreteness, while poems written after the movement would be uniformly high on concreteness. In other words, we would expect to see a shift in concreteness before and after the Imagism movement, without much systematic variation otherwise.

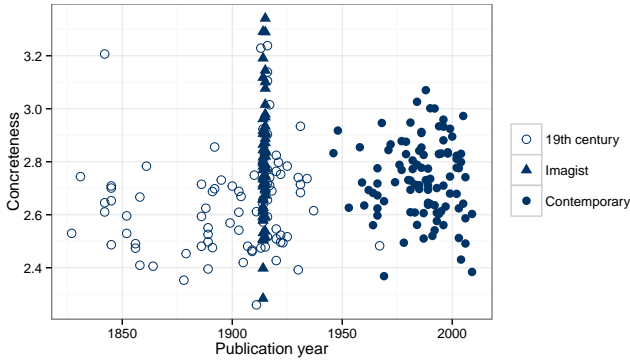To test these two hypotheses, we obtained the publication years of

FIGURE 2 Scatter plot of concreteness score *vs.* publication year for 88 19th
century poems, 71 Imagist poems, and 100 contemporary poems. Poems
published after the the Imagist movement have significantly higher
concreteness scores; however, within each group of poems, there is no
positive correlation between publication year and concreteness.

each of the poems.[5] We first tested whether the concreteness of a poem
is correlated with the poem's publication year and found a significant
correlation of $r = 0.25$ ($p < 0.001$) among the 188 19th century and con-
temporary poems (not including Imagist poems). This suggests that,
overall, poems published later in time contain words with higher con-
creteness. We then tested whether this correlation is consistent across
time, or if there is a significant shift prior to and after the Imagist
movement. To do so, we constructed a linear regression model with
two predictors: a continuous variable for the publication year, and a
binary variable indicating whether the poem was published before the
Imagism movement began in 1912. We found that while the binary fac-
tor is a significant predictor of concreteness ($t = -3.43, p < 0.001$),
publication year does not capture a significant amount of the residual
variance ($t = -0.38, p = 0.70$). Among poems published before 1912,
there is no significant correlation between concreteness and publication
year ($r = -0.22, p = 0.15$); among poems published after 1912, there
is also no significant correlation between concreteness and publication
year ($r = 0.016, p = 0.85$). Figure 2 shows the relationship between the
poem's publication year and its concreteness. Our analysis suggests
that, contrary to Martindale (1990)'s hypothesis that poetry naturally
trends towards higher concreteness over time, a more likely explanation

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[5]For some of these poems, it was difficult to obtain reliable publication years. In
those cases, we estimated the publication year by choosing the poet's midlife point.
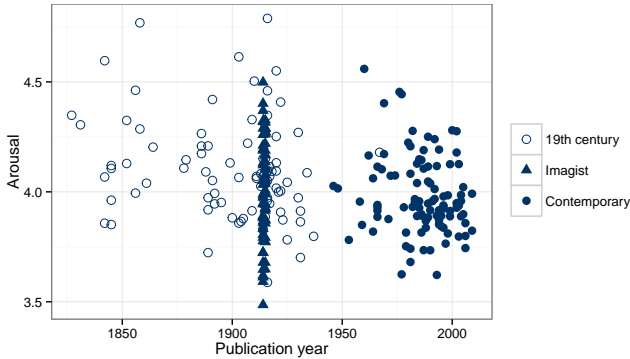
FIGURE 3 Scatter plot of arousal score *vs.* publication year for 88 19th century poems, 71 Imagist poems, and 100 contemporary poems. Following the Imagist movement, poems scored increasingly lower on emotional arousal.

for this set of data is that a shift towards concreteness occurred after the Imagism movement.

We conducted a similar time series analysis for emotional arousal. We found a strong negative correlation between publication year and arousal across 19th century and contemporary poems ($r = -0.33, p < 0.00001$), suggesting that poems published later in time tend to express lower emotional arousal. While there is no significant correlation between publication year and arousal among poems published before 1912 ($r = -0.19, p = 0.20$), the arousal scores of poems published after 1912 continued to decline ($r = -0.21, p = 0.01$) (Figure 3). Whether this trend will continue into the 21st century is an interesting area for future research.

5 Study 3: Contemporary professional *vs.* amateur poets

Our results from Study 2 suggest that the Imagism movement had a marked influence on the styles of contemporary professional poets. However, to examine the effect of Imagism on the modern aesthetic in a more holistic manner, it is important to consider whether amateur poets writing in modern times were similarly affected by Imagist ideals. Furthermore, by comparing poems written by professional versus amateur poets, we can shed light on whether the same features that distinguish contemporary professional poems from older poems also distinguish professional poems from amateur poems, a pattern that may

have implications on the nature and direction of artistic change.

Many literary movements in the late 19th century were intentionally targeted at professional writers to create an atmosphere of exclusivity (Thacker, 2011). While amateur poets may seek to emulate elite poetry, it is more difficult for them to access the latest styles; as a result, their impression of good poetry is more likely to be shaped by the styles of the previous era. When amateur poets later produce poetry of their own, they may tend to emulate these more "outdated" styles. Following this reasoning, we predicted that poems written by contemporary amateur poets would more closely resemble poems written by 19th century poets, and thus lack characteristics of the Imagist aesthetic. In this section, we explore the dynamics between professional and amateur poetry by examining the presence of Imagist ideals in poems written by contemporary amateur poets.

5.1   Materials and methods

We randomly selected 100 poems written by amateur poets who submitted their work anonymously to a free and uncurated website, aptly called "Amateur Writing" (http://www.amateur-writing.com).[6] The website contains a diverse set of poems submitted by amateur writers with a wide range of experience and skill levels.[7] At the time of selection, the website had over 2500 amateur poem submissions by registered users. The final selection of 100 amateur poems ranged from 21 to 353 words in length with an average length of 137.52 words (see Appendix for the full list of poem titles).

5.2   Results

For each of the 100 amateur poems, we computed the 16 feature scores described in Section 2. Figure 1 shows the mean scores for each of the 16 features, while Table 4 indicates whether the scores significantly differ from those of 19th century poems.

In our analyses, we found that amateur poems do not differ significantly from 19th century poems in terms of *Object* words ($t(183.63) = -1.26, p = 0.21$) or *Abstract* words ($t(183.59) = 1.47, p = 0.142$).

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[6]While it is possible that professional poets may also submit their poems to this website, it is reasonable to assume that most poets who submit to this website are not professionally trained, or at least are not held to the same standards as poets whose works are anthologized.

[7]Poems submitted to this website do not undergo a reviewing or editing process; as a result, it is natural for these poems to contain more errors. Since mispellings result in more out-of-vocabulary words, which affect our analyses, we manually corrected these errors in order to reduce the difference in basic language correctness between professional and amateur poems.

Feature	19th (N=88)	Amateur (N=100)	Significant?
Object	0.034	0.030	no
Abstract	0.029	0.034	no
Imageability	347.399	341.412	yes
Concreteness	2.649	2.572	yes
Emotion	0.023	0.031	yes
Valence	5.816	5.981	yes
Arousal	4.094	4.130	no
IdentityEndRhyme	0.006	0.029	yes
PerfectEndRhyme	0.111	0.080	yes
Alliteration	0.031	0.031	no
SlantEndRhyme	0.080	0.087	no
Consonance	0.511	0.458	yes
Assonance	0.314	0.323	no
WordLength	4.104	3.921	yes
WordFreq	500.443	708.123	no
TypeTokenRatio	0.665	0.610	yes

TABLE 4 Average feature scores for poems written by 19th century poets and contemporary amateur poets, as well as whether differences between the two groups are statistically significant.

However, amateur poems contain words with significantly lower *Imageability* ($t(146.48) = -2.15, p = 0.03$) and *Concreteness* ($t(165.43) = -3.01, p = 0.003$) than 19th century poems. Amateur poems also tend to contain significantly more *Emotion* words ($t(185.44) = 2.91, p = 0.004$) and words with more positive *Valence* ($t(176) = 3.08, p = 0.002$) than 19th century poems. On the other hand, amateur poems and 19th century poems do not differ significantly in terms of emotional *Arousal* ($t(181.42) = 1.10, p = 0.27$). Amateur poets tend to use fewer *PerfectEndRhymes* than 19th century professional poets ($t(173) = -2.89, p = 0.004$), but still significantly more than contemporary professional poets ($t(144.06) = 8.73, p < 0.00001$). Finally, amateur poems contain significantly shorter words ($t(185.98) = -3.83, p = 0.0002$) as well as a less diverse vocabulary ($t(180.13) = -3.33, p = 0.001$) than poems written by 19th century professional poets. Across these features, it appears that poems written by contemporary amateur poets exhibit fewer instances of Imagist ideals than poems written by either group of professional poets.

To visualize the differences between 19th century poems, Imagist poems, contemporary professional poems, and contemporary amateur poems, we used Principal Component Analysis to project each poem

onto a two-dimensional space based on their 16 features scores. While the first two principal components only capture 16.5% and 11% of the total variance, respectively, we can still observe some interesting differences between the four groups of poems along these two principal dimensions. Consistent with our predictions and earlier analyses, Imagist poems tend to cluster along the direction of higher *Imageability*, *Concreteness*, and *Object* scores, while contemporary amateur poems tend to cluster along the direction of higher *IdentityEndRhyme*, *Valence*, *Emotion*, and *PerfectEndRhyme*. Moreover, while the standard error ellipse for contemporary professional poems lies within the ellipse for Imagist poems, indicating high similarity in this projected space, the ellipses for 19th century and contemporary amateur poems lie farther away. This analysis gives us further insight into the relative similarities among poems written by these four groups of poets, as well as the features that characterize them. Overall, our data suggests that contemporary professional poems adhere more to the Imagist aesthetic, while contemporary amateur poems are more similar to 19th century poems and stray even further from Imagist ideals.

6   Discussion

In this paper, we quantified the aesthetic ideals of Imagism using computational linguistics techniques and evaluated the degree of conformity to these ideals in four sets of English poems: poems written by 19th century professional poets, Imagist poets, contemporary professional poets, and contemporary amateur poets. Our analyses reveal several interesting insights on Imagism and its effect on the modern literary aesthetic. First, poems written by contemporary professional poets exhibit significantly more features of Imagism than poems written by 19th century professional poets. This suggests that even though the Imagist movement itself was short-lived, the modern literary aesthetic has adopted Imagist ideals and moved away from the more abstract, emotional, and rhyme-schemed style of the 19th century. Second, while some theories of artistic change claim that the use of concrete imagery may be a natural consequence of the pressure to be novel (Martindale, 1990), a more detailed analysis of concreteness suggests that the Imagist movement may have been responsible for promoting the use of concrete imagery, above and beyond a uniform pressure of time.

Although contemporary professional poets have adopted Imagist ideals, we found that contemporary amateur poems reflect the Imagist ideal to an even lesser degree than 19th century poems. This finding brings up an interesting and rather controversial point about the na-
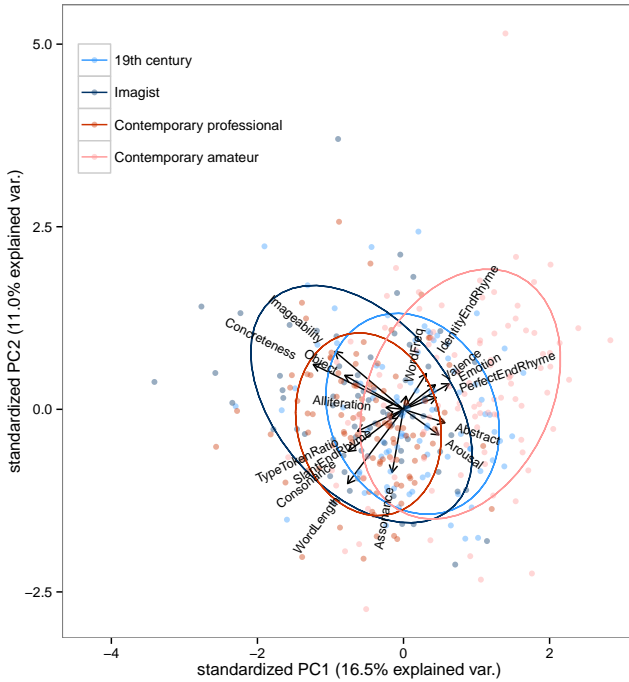
FIGURE 4 Biplot and standard error ellipses of the 359 19th century poems, Imagist poems, contemporary professional poems, and contemporary amateur poems along the first two principal components.

ture of art and artistic change. "Great poetry," the poet T.E. Hulme argued, "always endeavors to arrest you, and to make you continuously see a physical thing, to prevent you from gliding through an abstract process." Perhaps the reason why amateur poets exhibit fewer features of Imagism than 19th century professional poets is because the Imagist aesthetic correlates with higher sophistication, and is thus less likely to be mastered by amateur poets who lack the proper skill and training. It is possible that the style of contemporary professional poets is in a sense more "advanced" than the style of 19th century professional poets, which in turn is more advanced than amateur poets. This explanation suggests that the Imagist aesthetic not only happens to be the prominent aesthetic in modern times, but is a *better* and more desirable aesthetic than the ones in the past. Indeed, the appeal of concrete imagery may have roots in processes that facilitate learning and memory. Research in psychology has shown that concrete noun pairs are easier to memorize than abstract noun pairs, and that mental imagery facilitates stronger association between concepts (Paivio et al., 1966, Bower, 1970). One of the reasons why we find poetic imagery striking may be its ability to evoke rich associations formed by culture and personal experience. The mark of a skilled poet may then be his or her ability to pick out specific sensory details that allow readers to access these experiences and form their own personalized interpretations.

On the other hand, some views on artistic change would disagree with the claim that the contemporary imagery-centric aesthetic is superior to poetic styles of the past. According to Lowell (1920), "Fundamental beliefs change art, but do not, necessarily, either improve or injure it. Great poetry has been written at every stage of the world's history, but Homer did not write like Dante, nor Dante like Shakespeare, nor Shakespeare like Edgar Allan Poe." While our data is unable to conclusively validate the inherent value of Imagist ideals, it supports the idea that Imagism has strongly influenced the ways in which modern professional poets conceptualize poetic language and may have helped establish the modern preference for concreteness.

Our analysis of sound devices also provides interesting insight into the current stylistic trends of contemporary professional poetry. Sound devices have a long history in poetry and are traditionally considered an important aspect of poetic craft. However, contemporary professional poets now use these devices much less frequently than either 19th century poets or contemporary amateur poets. Sound devices that were traditionally important for mnemonic purposes are now more characteristic of amateur poetry. These results suggest that repetition of sound is becoming a less aesthetically significant poetic device among con-

temporary masters of poetry. Instead, imagistic patterns have largely displaced sound patterns and risen to power as the primary indicator of poetic language.

The tools and methodology in this work enabled us to operationalize the Imagist aesthetic and test its influence on a large number of poems. By examining the claim that Imagism gave rise to the modern aesthetic (Pratt, 1992), our work highlights the benefits of applying computational approaches to questions in the humanities. Without the fine-grained measurements that these tools provide, it would be difficult to tease apart two competing hypotheses regarding the increasing levels of concreteness in poetry: whether it is a natural consequence of artistic evolution, or whether the Imagism movement was responsible for initiating and sustaining this change. Furthermore, we showed that the lexicons used in psycholinguistics and natural language processing capture textual qualities that are important in literary analysis, such as imagery and sentiment, and that these measures can identify important trends in literary style. Finally, the computational nature of our analyses means that we can apply the same features and measurements to different set of poems and replicate or extend our findings.

Computational techniques have been applied to analyze literary style in many ways. Holmes (1985) discussed the benefits of quantitative measures of style, and Stamatatos et al. (2000) used stylistic measures to automatically classify texts into different genres and authors. More recently, Kaplan and Blei (2007) developed a computer program to visualize and compare the styles of different American poets, some of the features of which we incorporated in this work. Although we drew upon the insights of these previous studies, our approach was somewhat more theory-driven. We selected measures directly based on the tenets of a specific literary style and investigated the impact that this style had on later work. Given this top-down approach, we hope that our findings are interpretable and useful to scholars in the humanities, since the relationship between a tenet—"to present an image"—and its operationalization—word-level *concreteness* ratings—was designed to be sufficiently clear.

While we focused on poetic style in this paper, the results of our work regarding the differences between professional and amateur poetry are consistent with recent computational studies of literary style in prose. Ashok et al. (2013), for example, found lexical and syntactic features that correlate with literary success in novels: more successful novels used more verbs and discourse connectives, while less successful ones used more sentiment-laden words like "love". On the other hand, we have not examined whether the differences we found between 19th century

and contemporary poems exist in other genres written in those times; as a result, our data does not allow us to conclude that these changes are specific to poetic language. It would be interesting for future work to compare historical trends in other genres as well.

While our analyses shed light on the contemporary literary aesthetic and its relationship to the Imagist movement, it leaves open many questions to investigate in future research. For example, of the many literary movements of the late 19th century, why did Imagism leave such a distinct mark on modern poetic styles? What other factors, such as the pressure to publish or the historical context of these movements, do we need to consider in order to situate isolated stylistic features in a broader context? Are contemporary amateur poets also beginning to adopt Imagist ideals, such that amateur poetry written more recently exhibit more concrete imagery and fewer sound devices than amateur poetry written in the last decade? Would modifying a professional poem to include fewer concrete words make modern readers perceive it to be less beautiful? Is it easier for people to memorize poems that contain more concrete words, in much the same way that it is easier to memorize poems with stricter rhyme schemes? These questions have important implications on theories of artistic change, the relationship between elite and mainstream literature, and the historical and psychological bases of aesthetic appreciation. Our work provides a novel way of using computational methods to begin answering these questions in an empirical and data-driven manner. By conducting a quantitative comparison of poetic style across time and expertise, we hope to contribute to a deeper understanding of the forces that shape great poetry throughout the ages.

Acknowledgments

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Appendix: List of poems

19th century professional

88 poems written by poets born between 1801 and 1900. Taken from "Famous Poets and Poems" (http://famouspoetsandpoems.com).

No.	Poem title	Poet	Publication year
1	From The Short Story What The Swallows Did	Louisa May Alcott	1864
2	Turns And Movies: Zudora	Conrad Aiken	1916
3	The Window	Conrad Aiken	1916
4	Before an Examination	Stephen Vincent Benet	1920
5	Lonely Burial	Stephen Vincent Benet	1920
6	Knowledge	Louise Bogan	1922
7	Weather	Ambrose Bierce	1878
8	A Woman's Reason	Gelett Burgess	1903
9	The Goops	Gelett Burgess	1900
10	The Sheep	Ellis Parker Butler	1903
11	Cupid Caught Napping	Ellis Parker Butler	1899
12	In the desert	Stephen Crane	1895
13	A god in wrath	Stephen Crane	1886
14	Upon the road of my life	Stephen Crane	1886
15	Once I knew a fine song	Stephen Crane	1886
16	To Emily Dickinson	Hart Crane	1916
17	Interior	Hart Crane	1916
18	If I can stop one Heart from breaking	Emily Dickinson	1914
19	I felt a Funeral in my Brain	Emily Dickinson	1914
20	We lose – because we win	Emily Dickinson	1914
21	Going to Heaven!	Emily Dickinson	1914
22	There is no Frigate like a Book	Emily Dickinson	1914
23	Life's Tragedy	Paul Laurence Dunbar	1889
24	Encouraged	Paul Laurence Dunbar	1889
25	The Unlucky Apple	Paul Laurence Dunbar	1889
26	A Noon Song	Henry Van Dyke	1911
27	God of the Open Air	Henry Van Dyke	1920
28	Indian Summer	Henry Van Dyke	1911
29	Farewell and Thanksgiving	Mark van Doren	1967
30	Give All To Love	Ralph Waldo Emerson	1842
31	The Park	Ralph Waldo Emerson	1842
32	Threnody	Ralph Waldo Emerson	1842
33	The Road Not Taken	Robert Frost	1918
34	Mending Wall	Robert Frost	1916
35	My November Guest	Robert Frost	1915
36	A Valentine	Eugene Field	1914
37	Horace to phyllis	Eugene Field	1889
38	The Boys	Oliver Wendell Holmes	1852
39	The Organ-Blower	Oliver Wendell Holmes	1852
40	End Of The World	Robinson Jeffers	1925
41	Promise Of Peace	Robinson Jeffers	1925
42	A Dream	Helen Hunt Jackson	1858
43	My Tenants	Helen Hunt Jackson	1858
44	Poets	Joyce Kilmer	1913
45	The Rainy Day	Henry Wadsworth Longfellow	1845
46	Woods in Winter	Henry Wadsworth Longfellow	1845
47	The Three Kings	Henry Wadsworth Longfellow	1845
48	Wapentake	Henry Wadsworth Longfellow	1845
49	Drying Their Wings	Vachel Lindsay	1913
50	To Lady Jane	Vachel Lindsay	1920
51	A Curse for Kings	Vachel Lindsay	1915
52	City Visions	Emma Lazarus	1888
53	The Taming of the Falcon	Emma Lazarus	1879
54	A Dedication. To Charlotte Cushman	Sidney Lanier	1892
55	To Beethoven	Sidney Lanier	1892
56	A Red Flower	Claude McKay	1922
57	On the Road	Claude McKay	1922
58	Love Is Not All	Edna St. Vincent Millay	1931
59	The Suicide	Edna St. Vincent Millay	1917
60	Griffy the Cooper	Edgar Lee Masters	1916
61	Emily Sparks	Edgar Lee Masters	1916
62	Poem in Prose	Archibald MacLeish	1937
63	The Enthusiast	Herman Melville	1891
64	Song	Edgar Allan Poe	1827
65	The Valley Of Unrest	Edgar Allan Poe	1831

66	A Fairly Sad Tale	Dorothy Parker	1930
67	Dilemma	Dorothy Parker	1930
68	Miniver Cheevy	Edwin Arlington Robinson	1910
69	Lancelot	Edwin Arlington Robinson	1921
70	Painted Head	John Crowe Ransom	1931
71	Happiness	Carl Sandburg	1916
72	Horse Fiddle	Carl Sandburg	1920
73	The Idea Of Order At Key West	Wallace Stevens	1934
74	Nomad Exquisite	Wallace Stevens	1923
75	Do You Remember Once	Alan Seeger	1917
76	To England at the Outbreak of the Balkan War	Alan Seeger	1917
77	After Love	Sara Teasdale	1909
78	The Years	Sara Teasdale	1909
79	Prayer	Henry David Thoreau	1903
80	Tell Me	Jean Toomer	1931
81	O Captain! My Captain!	Walt Whitman	1891
82	Beginners	Walt Whitman	1856
83	Inscription	Walt Whitman	1856
84	A Golden Day	Ella Wheeler Wilcox	1905
85	Our Blessings	Ella Wheeler Wilcox	1904
86	A Word for the Hour	John Greenleaf Whittier	1861
87	The Old Guitar	James Whitcomb Riley	1916
88	Silver Filigree	Elinor Wylie	1907

Imagist

71 Imagist poems published in *Des Imagistes* (1914) and *Some Imagist Poets* (1915).

No.	Poem title	Poet	Publication year
1	Choricos	Richard Aldington	1914
2	To a Greek Marble	Richard Aldington	1914
3	Au Vieux Jardin	Richard Aldington	1914
4	Lesbia	Richard Aldington	1914
5	Beauty Thou Aast Hurt Me Overmuch	Richard Aldington	1914
6	Argyria	Richard Aldington	1914
7	In the Via Sestina	Richard Aldington	1914
8	The River	Richard Aldington	1914
9	Bromios	Richard Aldington	1914
10	To Atthis	Richard Aldington	1914
11	Sitalkas	H.D.	1914
12	Hermes of the Ways	H.D.	1914
13	Priapus	H.D.	1914
14	Acon	H.D.	1914
15	Hermonax	H.D.	1914
16	Epigram	H.D.	1914
17	I	S.F. Flint	1914
18	Hallucination	S.F. Flint	1914
19	III	S.F. Flint	1914
20	IV	S.F. Flint	1914
21	The Swan	S.F. Flint	1914
22	Nocturnes	Skipwith Cannell	1914
23	In a Garden	Amy Lowell	1914
24	Postlude	William Carlos Williams	1914
25	I Hear an Army	James Joyce	1914
26	A'Opia	Ezra Pound	1914
27	thereturn	Ezra Pound	1914
28	After Cwu Yuan	Ezra Pound	1914
29	Liu Ch'E	Ezra Pound	1914
30	Fan-piece for her Imperal Lord	Ezra Pound	1914
31	Ts'ai Chfh	Ezra Pound	1914
32	In the Little Old Marketplace	Ford Madox Hueffer	1914
33	Scented Leaves from Chinese Jar	Allen Upward	1914
34	The Rose	John Cournos	1914
35	Childhood	Richard Aldington	1915
36	The Poplar	Richard Aldington	1915
37	Round-pond	Richard Aldington	1915
38	Daisy	Richard Aldington	1915
39	Epigrams	Richard Aldington	1915
40	The Faun Sees Snow for the First Time	Richard Aldington	1915
41	Lemures	Richard Aldington	1915

42	The Pool	H.D.	1915
43	The Garden	H.D.	1915
44	Sea Lily	H.D.	1915
45	Sea Iris	H.D.	1915
46	Sea Rose	H.D.	1915
47	Oread	H.D.	1915
48	Orion Dead	H.D.	1915
49	The Blue Symphony	John Gould Fletcher	1915
50	London Excursion	John Gould Fletcher	1915
51	Trees	F. S. Flint	1915
52	Lunch	F. S. Flint	1915
53	Malady	F. S. Flint	1915
54	Accident	F. S. Flint	1915
55	Fragmat	F. S. Flint	1915
56	Houses	F. S. Flint	1915
57	Eau-Forte	F. S. Flint	1915
58	Ballad of Another Ophelia	D.H. Lawrence	1915
59	Illicit	D.H. Lawrence	1915
60	Fireflies in the Corn	D.H. Lawrence	1915
61	A Woman and her Dead Husband	D.H. Lawrence	1915
62	The Mowers	D.H. Lawrence	1915
63	Scent of Irises	D.H. Lawrence	1915
64	Green	D.H. Lawrence	1915
65	Venus Transiens	Amy Lowell	1915
66	The Travelling Bear	Amy Lowell	1915
67	The Letter	Amy Lowell	1915
68	Grotesque	Amy Lowell	1915
69	Bullion	Amy Lowell	1915
70	Solitaire	Amy Lowell	1915
71	The Bombardment	Amy Lowell	1915

Contemporary professional

100 poems taken from Contemporary American Poetry (Poulin and Waters, 2006).

No.	Poem title	Poet	Publication year
1	Riot Act April 29 1992	Ai	1993
2	Twenty-year Marriage	Ai	1999
3	To Dorothy	Marvin Bell	1981
4	To an Adolescent Weeping Willow	Marvin Bell	1981
5	Dream Song 26: The glories of the world struck me	John Berryman	1969
6	Dream Song 172: Your face broods	John Berryman	1969
7	The Fish	Elizabeth Bishop	1946
8	Warning to the Reader	Robert Bly	1992
9	The Russian	Robert Bly	1966
10	A Lovely Love	Gwendolyn Brooks	1959
11	The Choir	Olga Broumas	1987
12	at the cemetery walnut grove plantation south carolina 1989	Lucille Clifton	1989
13	scar	Lucille Clifton	1996
14	Japan	Billy Collins	2006
15	Writing in the Afterlife	Billy Collins	1991
16	The Language	Robert Creeley	1987
17	The Warning	Robert Creeley	1960
18	Adultery	James Dickey	1962
19	Tomatoes	Stephen Dobyns	1987
20	Fragments	Stephen Dobyns	1979
21	Wingfoot Lake	Rita Dove	1964
22	The Stairway	Stephen Dunn	2006
23	The Strange People	Louise Erdrich	2003
24	New Vows	Louise Erdrich	1984
25	Sexual Jealousy	Carol Frost	1994
26	The Undressing	Carol Frost	1994
27	To Kill a Deer	Carol Frost	2000
28	Nostos	Louise Gluck	1997
29	Celestial Music	Louise Gluck	1990
30	How Simile Works	Albert Goldbarth	2009
31	The Older Child	Kimiko Hahn	1992
32	The Porcelain Couple	Donald Hall	1996
33	Reuben Reuben	Michael S. Harper	1977

34	Our Lady of the Snows	Robert Hass	1996
35	The Image	Robert Hass	1999
36	Those Winter Sundays	Robert Hayden	1966
37	This Night	William Heyen	1977
38	Playing Dead	Andrew Hudgins	2005
39	Degrees Of Gray In Philipsburg	Richard Hugo	1984
40	Absences	Donald Justice	2006
41	Variations On A Text By Vallejo	Donald Justice	1995
42	After Making Love we Hear Footsteps	Galway Kinnell	2002
43	Blackberry Eating	Galway Kinnell	1980
44	Thrall	Carolyn Kizer	1986
45	The Intruder	Carolyn Kizer	1986
46	Facing It	Yusef Komunyakaa	1988
47	Audacity of the Lower Gods	Yusef Komunyakaa	2004
48	Heaven as Anus	Maxine Kumin	1989
49	Nurture	Maxine Kumin	1989
50	The Abduction	Stanley Kunitz	1985
51	My Indigo	Li-Young Lee	1986
52	Eating Alone	Li-Young Lee	1986
53	The Mutes	Denise Levertov	1966
54	Wedding-Ring	Denise Levertov	1978
55	They Feed They Lion	Philip Levine	1972
56	Animals Are Passing From Our Lives	Philip Levine	1968
57	To Speak of Woe That Is in Marriage	Robert Lowell	1976
58	Onions	William Matthews	1989
59	Charles on Fire	James Merrill	1966
60	b o d y	James Merrill	1996
61	For the Anniversary of My Death	W.S. Merwin	1993
62	When You Go Away	W.S. Merwin	1993
63	Minor Miracle	Marilyn Nelson	1994
64	The Small Vases from Hebron	Naomi Shihab Nye	1998
65	Hello	Naomi Shihab Nye	1995
66	Personal Poem	Frank O'Hara	1964
67	Why I Am Not A Painter	Frank O'Hara	1966
68	May-68	Sharon Olds	1996
69	University Hospital Boston	Mary Oliver	1983
70	The Summer Day	Mary Oliver	1992
71	Dearest Reader	Michael Palmer	1984
72	Aubade: Some Peaches After Storm	Carl Phillips	2004
73	Crossing The Water	Sylvia Plath	1971
74	Power	Adrienne Rich	1974
75	Root Cellar	Theodore Roethke	1948
76	The Room of My Life	Anne Sexton	1981
77	Her Kind	Anne Sexton	1981
78	Fork	Charles Simic	1999
79	My Noiseless Entourage	Charles Simic	2005
80	Working Late	Louis Simpson	1988
81	Cleaning a Fish	Dave Smith	1985
82	Pacemaker	W.D. Snodgrass	2002
83	Hay for the Horses	Gary Synder	1958
84	Oranges	Gary Soto	1985
85	Glass-Bottom Boat	Elizabeth Spires	1989
86	Gin	David St. John	1994
87	Traveling through the Dark	William Stafford	1998
88	Notice What This Poem Is Not Doing	William Stafford	1953
89	The Dancing	Gerald Stern	1982
90	The Prediction	Mark Strand	1979
91	The Night The Porch	Mark Strand	2009
92	Letter	Jean Valentine	2004
93	Year's End	Ellen Bryant Voigt	1983
94	In Trackless Woods	Richard Wilbur	2003
95	The Singing	C. K. Williams	2003
96	More Blues and the Abstract Truth	C.D. Write	2002
97	Approximately Forever	C.D. Wright	2002
98	Clear Night	Charles Wright	1982
99	Lying in a Hammock at William Duffy's Farm in Pine Island Minnesota	James Wright	1990
100	A Blessing	James Wright	1990

Contemporary amateur

100 poems taken from a website for Amateur Writing (http://www.amateur-writing.com). All poems are anonymous and have no publication date.

No.	Poem title
1	Only but a dream
2	Dr. Heinz Doofenshmirtz
3	Freedom
4	The foolish man
5	Live for the moment
6	Eaten up
7	Gates of Goodbye
8	true beauty
9	A Walk in the Park
10	The two of them
11	Your life
12	Thing we have lost in fire
13	Mother Rabbit
14	Aurora
15	Boy to a man
16	Goodbye poem
17	Read me
18	Angel eyes
19	Another Chapter
20	Self Reserved
21	Yet the sun still sleeps.
22	Let love be as one
23	Charlotte Emily and Anne
24	Cappuccino
25	Pleasure trip
26	I thought I knew
27	Where is our fate formed?
28	Sometimes
29	Life
30	You can cry
31	Breaking heart
32	And a Merry Christmas to You
33	Everybody likes my clock
34	I nearly fell
35	Denial
36	Winter silence
37	Demons and scars
38	The first time I saw you.
39	Sister
40	For Thee
41	Precious Lord
42	Love is like
43	Life2
44	To Be Young And Naive
45	Why I love You
46	First Love
47	Miss You
48	THE END HAD COME
49	BABY OF POVERTY
50	Broken Home

No.	Poem title
51	My Thoughts On Love
52	Take Me Back
53	A Friend Is
54	THE GARDEN
55	Insomnia
56	Unrequited Love
57	Wavering
58	Garden of Shattered Dreams
59	Thinking Of You
60	My heart bleeds
61	Time Isn't Always a good thing
62	Is It Really Love
63	Same Ole' Story
64	Restored
65	Do You?
66	Adoption is Love
67	Road to Happiness
68	Untitled 1
69	Reflection
70	A DREAM WITHIN A DREAM
71	Waiting
72	The War
73	On a Moonlit Night
74	Traipsing on Bantayan Shore
75	you are my angel
76	I Know
77	The Way That You Left Me
78	Waiting for Love
79	a love without good-byes
80	Wail of a wave
81	Your still here
82	Why?
83	Always on my mind.
84	Lonely in the dark room
85	Untitled 2
86	As One
87	life goes on
88	Everlasting Love
89	ethics of the blacks
90	Hazed Maze
91	ME AND YOU
92	When you left
93	MAGIC
94	TOGETHER. FOREVER!
95	YOU ARE MY EVERYTHING
96	Believe in Miracles!
97	A Lie
98	I love you
99	It
100	Memories