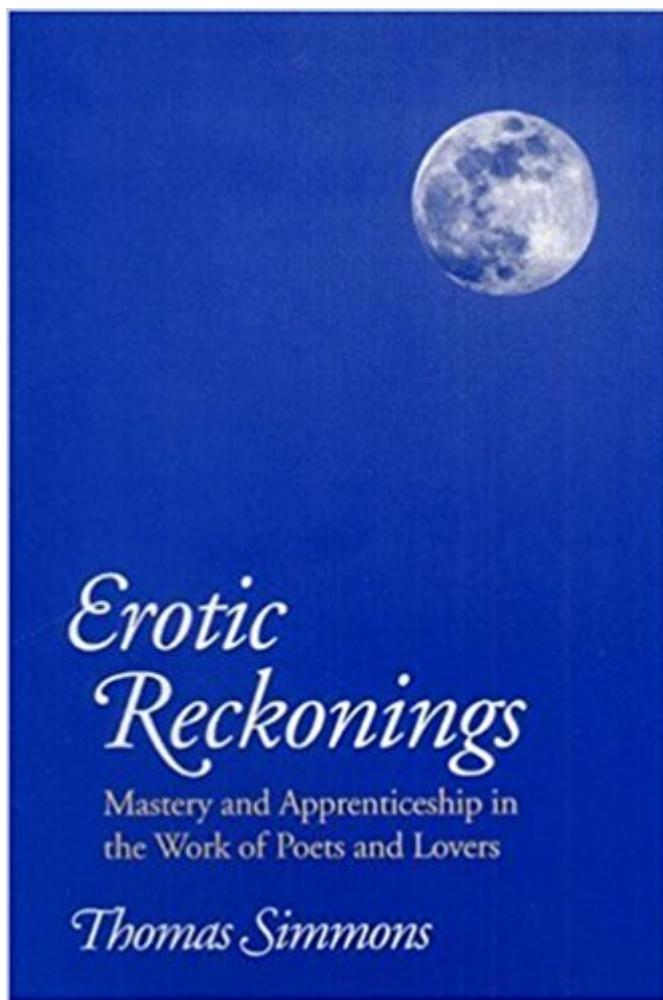


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Erotic Reckonings: Mastery And Apprenticeship In The Work Of Poets And Lovers



Synopsis

Erotic Reckonings explores the problem of tradition and authority in the lives and work of three pairs of twentieth-century American poets - Ezra Pound and H.D., Yvor Winters and Janet Lewis, and Louise Bogan and Theodore Roethke. Drawing on classical and feminist psychoanalytic theory, Thomas Simmons argues that mentor-apprentice relationships are inescapably erotic, though not necessarily sexual. Pound and Winters manifest profound conflicts between allegiance to a tradition of knowledge and allegiance to apprentices; both tend to master the apprentice, to bind her to a body of knowledge. In contrast, Bogan and Roethke display a different approach: wary of the value of a tradition of knowledge, Bogan insists that Roethke represent himself as a person of authority. She plays for him a role of sustained reciprocity, rather than of domination.

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