

*been violated and used to dehumanize.
How can I reclaim English so we can see
it as a source of hope, purification and
consciousness?*⁸⁵

Some of her influences include Abraham Lincoln, Frederick Douglass, Winston Churchill, Yusef Komunyakaa, Sonia Sanchez, [Tracy K. Smith](#), and Phillis Wheatley.⁸⁶ Gorman is said to have studied

speeches of these past leaders to see how “words can be used for good.”⁸⁷

Gorman’s poetry confronts serious issues facing the world today, including racism, hunger, inequality, climate change, illiteracy, and more. She was twenty years old when she performed “[Earthrise](#)” for the Climate Reality Leadership Corps in 2018.

SELECTED WORK: “Our Purpose in Poetry: or, Earthrise” (2018) by Amanda Gorman

Dedicated to Al Gore and The Climate Reality Project

On Christmas Eve, 1968, astronaut Bill Anders
Snapped a photo of the earth
As Apollo 8 orbited the moon.

Those three guys
Were surprised
To see from their eyes
Our planet looked like an earthrise
A blue orb hovering over the moon’s gray horizon,
with deep oceans and silver skies.

It was our world’s first glance at itself
Our first chance to see a shared reality,
A declared stance and a commonality;

A glimpse into our planet’s mirror,
And as threats drew nearer,
Our own urgency became clearer,
As we realize that we hold nothing dearer
than this floating body we all call home.

We’ve known
That we’re caught in the throes
Of climactic changes some say
Will just go away,
While some simply pray
To survive another day;
For it is the obscure, the oppressed, the poor,
Who when the disaster
Is declared done,
Still suffer more than anyone.

Climate change is the single greatest challenge of our time,