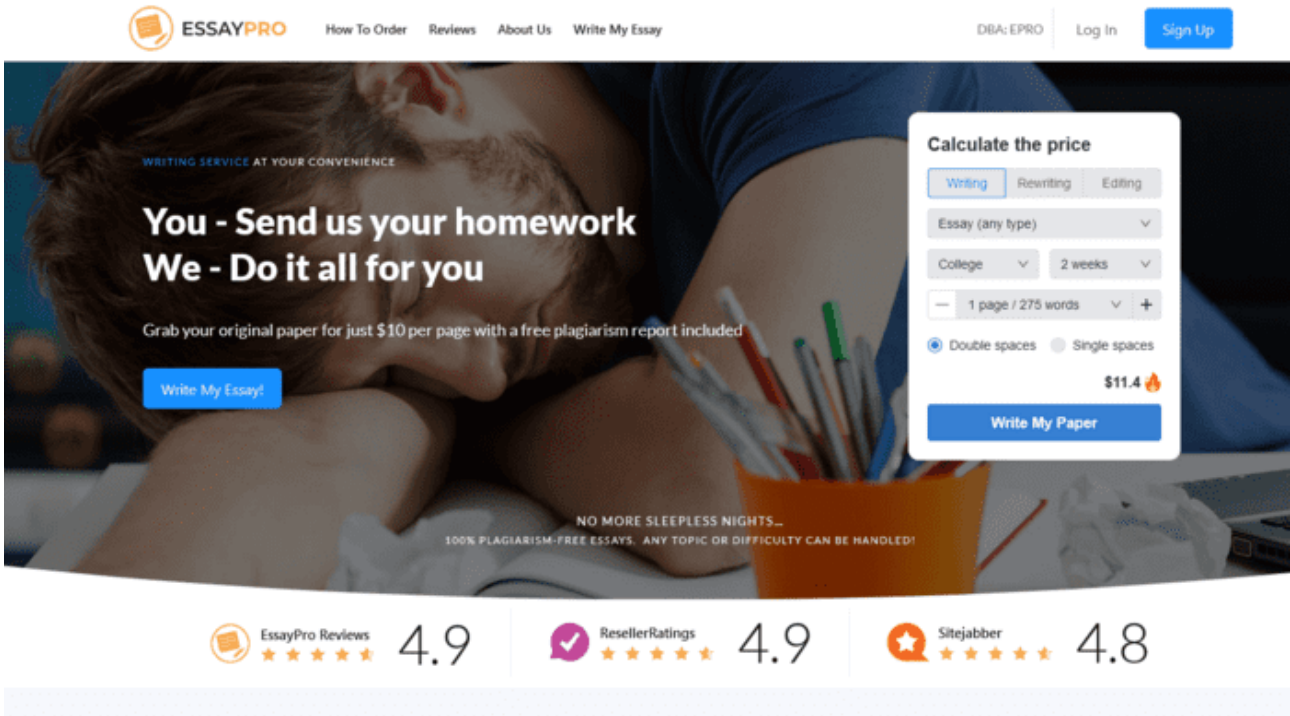


Philip Larkin - A Voice of Pain for This Century



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Philip Larkin - A Voice of Pain for This Century

On August 9, 1922, the poet Philip Larkin was born in the town of Coventry in England (Thwaite, Letters xvii). After graduating St. John's College in Oxford in 1943 with a First Class degree, he worked at both the University College of Leicester and Queen's College at [Belfast](#) before finally settling down at the University of Hull as Librarian in 1955 (Thwaite, Letters xviii). That same year, with the publication of his collection *The Less Deceived*, he "began to be recognized" (Thwaite, "Introduction" xv). His popularity continued to grow thereafter, and over the next twenty years amongst many awards and honorary doctorates he published two more highly acclaimed books of poetry, *The Whitsun Weddings* in 1964 and *High Windows* in 1974 (Thwaite, "Introduction" xvi). In 1984 he was offered the ultimate title of Poet Laureate, which he declined in part because of "shyness" and in part because of the "conviction that his poetry had deserted him" (Motion 510). With the words "I am going to the inevitable," he died a year later on [Monday](#), December 2, 1985 (Motion 521).

During his stay at [Oxford](#), Larkin was a member of a group called "the Movement, its revolt being against rhetorical excess or cosmic portentousness" (Ellmann and O'Clair 579). He

held disdain for the intricate poetic approach of Eliot and Pound in which "first of all you have to be terribly educated, you have to read everything to know these things, and secondly you've got somehow to work them in to show that you are working them in" (Ellmann and O'Clair 579). Larkin instead pursued "a more even-tempered, conversational idiom, more accurate than magniloquent" (Ellmann and O'Clair 579). But this "even-temperament" did n...

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... who reside in the twentieth-century and stand as perennial expressions of not only his but of any individual's mind. While the people of the world poise anxiously on the verge of a new millenium, only poets of his caliber will be remembered as having the sensitivity to capture the emotional need of this generation that will surely pass on to the next.

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