

## Robert Creeley

### Poet Description:

Robert Creeley was born in Arlington, Massachusetts, near where he grew up on a small farm. As a young child he suffered two losses, that of his father and that of his left eye. He was raised by his mother, who worked as a public health nurse. Creeley enrolled at Harvard but took a leave to be an ambulance driver for the American Field Service toward the end of World War II. He was in the India-Burma area from 1944-1945. He returned to Harvard but left without his degree, taking up subsistence farming for a time in New Hampshire. A correspondence with poet Charles Olson, maintained while Creeley was in France and Spain, led him to Black Mountain College in North Carolina, where he completed his degree, began to teach, and edited the *Black Mountain Review*. He later spent time at New Mexico and in Guatemala before taking a job at Buffalo for the rest of his career.

A thin, spare, compressed, and consistently minimalist verse became his signature style. Certainly the phrasing often seems conversational, though jazz is another continuing influence, but the progress of a poem is often interrupted by hesitation, sudden wonder, or disabling pain. Thus, in the end, it is consciousness's interior struggle with both self-reflection and exterior circumstances that explains his sometimes broken rhythms. William Carlos Williams was clearly a strong influence, both in form and subject matter, but a Williams poem flows smoothly, whereas a Creeley poem may choose to falter.

### Race/Ethnicity:

European <sup>[1]</sup>

### Picture:



### Gender:

Male <sup>[2]</sup>

### Sexuality:

Straight <sup>[3]</sup>

### First Name:

Robert

### Last Name:

Creeley

### Birth & Death Dates:

Friday, May 21, 1926 to Wednesday, March 30, 2005

**School of Poetry:**

Black Mountain <sup>[4]</sup>

**Birth Place:**

Arlington , Massachusetts

United States

See map: Google Maps <sup>[5]</sup>

Massachusetts US

**Death Place:**

Odessa , Texas

United States

See map: Google Maps <sup>[6]</sup>

Texas US

**Group visibility:**

Private - accessible only to group members

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[1] <https://modernamericanpoetry.org/category/race-ethnicity/european>

[2] <https://modernamericanpoetry.org/category/gender/male>

[3] <https://modernamericanpoetry.org/category/sexuality/straight>

[4] <https://modernamericanpoetry.org/school-poetry/black-mountain>

[5] <http://maps.google.com?q=46.880607+-87.363281+%28%2C+Arlington%2C+MA%2C+%2C+us%29>

[6] <http://maps.google.com?q=40.700759+-99.255248+%28%2C+Odessa%2C+TX%2C+%2C+us%29>