



# **Pictures from an Institution: A Comedy (Phoenix Fiction)**

*Randall Jarrell*

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# Pictures from an Institution: A Comedy (Phoenix Fiction)

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Beneath the unassuming surface of a progressive women's college lurks a world of intellectual pride and pomposity awaiting devastation by the pens of two brilliant and appalling wits. Randall Jarrell's classic novel was originally published to overwhelming critical acclaim in 1954, forging a new standard for campus satire—and instantly yielding comparisons to Dorothy Parker's razor-sharp barbs. Like his fictional nemesis, Jarrell cuts through the earnest conversations at Benton College—mischievously, but with mischief nowhere more wicked than when crusading against the vitriolic heroine herself.

“A most literate account of a group of most literate people by a writer of power. . . . A delight of true understanding.”—Wallace Stevens

“I'm greatly impressed by the real fun, the incisive satire, the closeness of observation, and in the end by a kind of sympathy and human warmth. It's a remarkable book.”—Robert Penn Warren

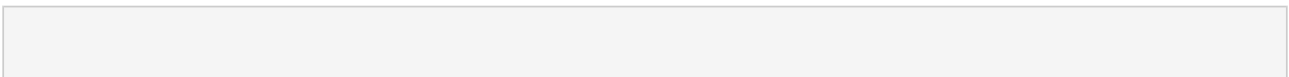
“Move over Dorothy Parker. *Pictures* . . . is less a novel than a series of poisonous portraits, set pieces, and endlessly quotable put-downs. Read it less for plot than sharp satire, Jarrell's forte.”—Mary Welp

“One of the wittiest books of modern times.”—*New York Times*

“[T]he father of the modern campus novel, and the wittiest of them all. Extraordinary to think that ‘political correctness’ was so deliciously dissected 50 years ago.”—Noel Malcolm, *Sunday Telegraph*

“A sustained exhibition of wit in the great tradition. . . . Immensely and very devastatingly shrewd.”—Edmund Fuller, *Saturday Review*

“[A] work of fiction, and a dizzying and brilliant work of social and literary criticism. Not only ‘a unique and serious joke-book,’ as Lowell called it, but also a meditation made up of epigrams.”—Michael Wood



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