

THE SEVEN DEADLY VIRTUES AND OTHER LIVELY ESSAYS

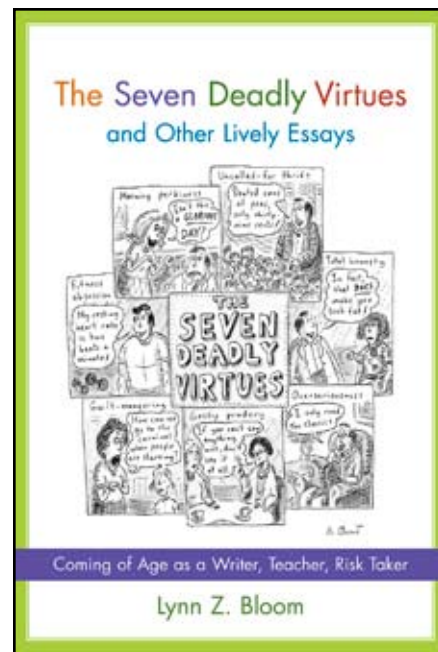
Coming of Age as a Writer, Teacher, Risk Taker
Lynn Z. Bloom

"A fascinating book by a dedicated master teacher who practices what she preaches, by putting herself on the line and her life vividly on the page, this sophisticated, self-reflexive take on autobiographical writing should clarify and illuminate many of the dark corners of creative nonfiction."—Phillip Lopate

In this career-spanning intellectual auto-biography, inspiring educator and writer Lynn Z. Bloom brings to fore the trials and triumphs she has experienced in coming of age as a scholar, teacher, wife, mother, grandmother, and especially writer. A pioneering voice in the field of composition studies (before the discipline even had that name) and a chronic nonconformist, she is a lifelong advocate of opportunity, authenticity, and expression. Taking a stance in favor of bold creativity in living, teaching, and writing, Bloom warns against the snares and sneers of the seven deadly virtues—duty, rationality, conformity, efficiency, order, economy, and punctuality—that so often subvert the mission of education and the potential of expressive communication.

Ranging from the comic to the confessional, Bloom's memoir interweaves the pleasures and problems of a forbidden marriage and complex family, the joys of cooking and travel, the struggles to become a professor during an era that did not welcome women faculty, and the risks and rewards of heeding the siren call of creative nonfiction. Emblematic of Bloom's methods for teaching teachers, her swiftly flowing prose is spiced with bold opinions, leavened with playful wit, and rich with revealing details as she surveys the defining moments in her personal life and in an academic field in which she has been a central figure. Failure, success, perplexity, resilience, and wonderment all rise to the surface in a series of accounts that confide much about what is at stake for a writer, teacher, or woman striving to grow beyond conventional expectations. Her message is an open invitation to share in the exhilarating liberation of living and writing on the edge, far from the nay-saying of the seven deadly virtues and their acolytes, and where limitless creative possibilities abound.

May 2008, 224 pages, 15 illus.



Lynn Z. Bloom is a Board of Trustees Distinguished Professor and the Aetna Chair of Writing at the University of Connecticut in Storrs. She is an author or editor of numerous books, including *Doctor Spock: Biography of a Conservative Radical*, *Composition Studies as a Creative Art*, and *Writers without Borders*. Her essay "(Im) Patient," which appears in this collection, was named a Notable Essay of 2005 in Best American Essays.

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