

1. Record Nr.	UNINA9910809961903321
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Titolo	Random walks : essays in elective criticism / / David Solway
Pubbl/distr/stampa	Montreal ; ; Buffalo, : McGill-Queen's University Press, c1997
ISBN	1-282-85464-X 9786612854644 0-7735-6674-0
Edizione	[1st ed.]
Descrizione fisica	xxi, 224 p. ; ; 23 cm
Disciplina	801/.95
Soggetti	Criticism Literature - History and criticism
Lingua di pubblicazione	Inglese
Formato	Materiale a stampa
Livello bibliografico	Monografia
Note generali	Bibliographic Level Mode of Issuance: Monograph
Nota di bibliografia	Includes bibliographical references.
Nota di contenuto	Front Matter -- Contents -- Preface -- Acknowledgments -- Foreword -- Random Walks -- Part One -- Never on Sontag -- Culling and Dereading, or the Pursuit of Absence -- The Autoerotic Text -- On the Essay, or the Jubilation of the Lambda -- The End of Poetry -- The Word and the Stone -- Fellatiotics: The Relation between Surface and Depth -- Notes on Lucianic Satire -- Part Two -- The Trial As Jewish Joke -- Framing Layton -- Pronominal Debris -- Intoxicated Words: Language in Shakespeare's Late Romances -- Dukes and Duchesses: A Minority View of "My Last Duchess" -- Joyce's Choices -- Swift and Sartorism -- Notes
Sommario/riassunto	The first section of the book develops Solway's approach to literature, starting from the assumption that genuine criticism requires the intellectual freedom to range at will across the literary landscape rather than restricting one's direction based on what is current, fashionable, or politically correct. Solway argues that advocating a theoretical school - postmodernism, poststructuralism, semiotics, new historicism, Marxist revisionism, or queer theory - generally involves abandoning the real critical project, which is the discovery of one's own undetermined motives, dispositions, and interests as reflected in the secret mirrors embedded in literary texts. Instead Solway pursues what he calls elective criticism, writing that enables the critical writer to

freely discover his or her own identity - a concept that he claims cannot reasonably be diluted, relinquished, or deconstructed. In the second section Solway practices what he preaches, exploring a wide range of authors and subjects. His essays include an analysis of Franz Kafka's *The Trial* as a Jewish joke, a personal memoir of Irving Layton, an interpretation of Erin Moure's "Pronouns on the Main," an examination of language in William Shakespeare's romances, a reading of Robert Browning's "My Last Duchess" that is sympathetic to the Duke, an assertion that James Joyce has more in common with the traditional novelist than with the professional, (post-)modern alienator, and an exploration of Jonathan Swift's sartorial imagery that contends that form is the source of substantive identity.
