

@poetics

The UB Poetics Discussion Group

Archive of Electronic Correspondence

July 1994

69 messages · Tue 5 Jul 1994 – Sun 31 Jul 1994

An electronic mailing-list archive

University at Buffalo, State University of New York

A reading edition. For each post the author's name, the subject, and the message are foregrounded, and the date is kept but subdued. Machine headers, encoded attachments, and the repeated listserv routing that once framed every message have been cleared away; email addresses, telephone and fax numbers, and similar personal contact details have been redacted.

Editor's Introduction

Kristen M. Fabians

July is a month that turns its back, and I have long since learned not to hold the habit against it. While the comet came apart against Jupiter in a string of bruises the astronomers could scarcely credit, and the wider world spent its fortnight on catastrophe and a football final, my sixty-nine correspondents bolted the door of the little room and argued, of all the imperishable subjects, about anthologies. I find this exactly right. The list is never more itself than when it declines the news and keeps its own weather. A reader arriving from the century outside will feel the hush of a seminar that has forgotten there is a corridor at all, and I confess I would not have it otherwise.

And yet it opens in mourning. On the fifth, Charles Bernstein reposts Robert Creeley's notice that Warren Tallman has died in Vancouver, at home, on the Fourth of July — the impresario of the 1963 conference that carried Olson and Duncan and Ginsberg north, the teacher who, Creeley says, simply believed. Creeley rarely reaches for the large word; he reaches here, and calls Tallman "*a great, great heart.*" I have let the letter stand at the head of the month unabridged, because everything that follows it — the squabbling, the punning, the earnest scholarship — is in some measure the sound of that heart still being listened for.

The month's true engine, though, is the anthology question, and it runs hot. Alan Golding arrives with the scholar's full armamentarium — citations, a survey of the field, the promise of his forthcoming "*From Outlaw to Classic*" — to ask how canons are actually made: who counts the poets, and by what arithmetic. Marjorie Perloff, characteristically, refuses the arithmetic outright. "*This sort of head count can't work,*" she writes, for there will always be another group, another exclusion, another aggrieved census. Between Golding's patience and Perloff's impatience the list strikes its familiar chord: the canon is a scandal none of them can quite bring themselves to abandon.

Then, as ever here, the argument tips over into play. "*Anthologies*" slides into "*magic anthology ride,*" which slides into the gorgeous nonsense-word "*Anthslide,*" and the thread becomes a spelling game conducted at speed. Marc Nasdor, who posts more than anyone, plants his flag on the far shore — anthologies are "*a needless waste of wood pulp,*" he declares, before cheerfully admitting to a couple of dozen on his own shelves — while Chris Funk opens a

second front entirely, enrolling the whole company in “*an Imaginary University*” whose curriculum is pure cryptic delight. This is the Poetics list at its most itself: unable to lose an argument because unwilling, in the end, to stop enjoying one.

And beneath the play, something is quietly founded. It is in this same July that Loss Glazier posts the announcement of the Electronic Poetry Center at Buffalo — the archive, that is, in which these very letters would one day come to rest. I admit a proprietary tenderness toward that message. The list spent the month mourning a teacher and building a memory-machine, and did not once appear to notice it was doing both at the same time. That, precisely, is the office of an editor: to notice. I have gathered the sixty-nine here in their true order, drawn the bar across what ought never to have been public, and left the rest to speak as it did — all at once, and out of turn.

— K. M. F.

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1. **Charles Bernstein**

Warren Tallman / from Robert Creeley

Tue 5 Jul 1994

--Boundary (ID oTjVMpHWBpRrJM1RImBFWg)

Date: Tue, 5 Jul 1994 08:31:59 EST

From: [REDACTED]

Subject: Warren Tallman

We've had the sad advice from his family that Warren Tallman died yesterday (July 4) in Vancouver, British Columbia, thankfully at home and without difficulty. It's hard to imagine the present fact of Canadian poetry and its relation to our own sans the immense effort which Warren Tallman made in his years as a teacher at the University of British Columbia, and, even more, as the indefatigable reader and friend of all the defining poets of both countries. In 1962, for example, Warren's students at UBC included Daphne Marlatt, Fred Wah, George Bowering, Gladys Hindmarch, Lionel Kearns, and David Bromige, among many others. The landmark 1963 Vancouver Poetry Conference was almost entirely Warren's remarkable invention, bringing together for the first time a decisive company of then disregarded poets such as Denise Levertov, Charles Olson, Allen Ginsberg, Robert Duncan, Margaret Avison, Philip Whalen and myself, together with as yet unrecognized younger poets of that time, Michael Palmer, Clark Coolidge and many more. He said that Warren wrote the first decisive piece on Jack Kerouac's skills as a writer, "Kerouac's Sound," published in the Evergreen Review. Donald Allen and he subsequently edited together *POETICS OF THE NEW AMERICAN POETRY*, a crucial backup of Don's initial anthology which, seemingly, changed everything. Warren's two substantial collections of essays report and review the tenets of poetry which underlie the revolution he had so much to do with.

All that can finally be checked out. What will be sorely missed is the singular insight and invention Warren brought to his relations with poetry and poets. He was a great reader, a great, great heart. Defined by the American Great Depression, he believed absolutely that books mattered, that what people can think of and so imagine is true, that it can really happen. So it was that he brought Robert Duncan first to Vancouver, to talk with his students in a series of meetings, all managed by the money they could themselves modestly and communally provide. Jack Spicer's last articulate lectures were fact of the same circumstance. I was able to teach for a year at UBC at a time when virtually no other job was possible, just that Warren BELIEVED. I cannot overemphasize the significance of such a power. It's as if Warren brought not only the US and Canada together in such interests, but that he really brought western Canada's poetry into the international world it now helps to define and keep possible.

Well, this can be the beginning, I hope, of what can now continue as Warren's work: bringing it all home, keeping the beat, making that joyful sound. Warren loved the sense of "mother tongue" always. He really knew how to listen.

Here's to you, brother, forever.

Robert Creeley

--Boundary (ID oTjVMpHWBpRrJM1RImBFWg)--

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2. **Loss Glazier**

Announcement: Electronic Poetry Center (Buffalo)

Sun 10 Jul 1994

The Electronic Poetry Center (Buffalo) 7-10-94

Announcement

THE ELECTRONIC POETRY CENTER (BUFFALO). The mission of this World-Wide Web based electronic poetry center is to serve as a hypertextual gateway to the extraordinary range of activity in formally innovative writing in the United States and the world. The Center will provide access to numerous electronic resources in the new poetries including RIF/T and other electronic poetry journals, the Poetics List archives, a library of poetic texts, news of related print sources, and direct connections to numerous related poetic projects. The Center's first phase of implementation is scheduled for August 1, 1994. A subscription to the E-Poetry list provides a subscription to the electronic journal RIF/T and E-Poetry Center announcements. Subscriptions to E-Poetry to [REDACTED] Inquiries, suggestions for Center resources, submissions to RIF/T, and other mail may be directed to [REDACTED] The Center is located at gopher://writing.upenn.edu/11/internet/library/e-journals/ub/rift (Presently, the prototype is under construction but operational.)

Gopher Access:

For those who have access to gopher, type

gopher writing.upenn.edu

(or, if you are on a UB mainframe, simply type wings)

at your system prompt. First choose Libraries &

Library Resources, then Electronic Journals, then E-

Journals/Resources Produced Here At UB, then The

Electronic Poetry Center. (Note: Connections to some

Poetry Center resources require Web access, though most are presently available through gopher).

World-Wide Web Access:

For those with World-Wide Web or lynx access, type www or lynx at your system prompt. Choose the go to URL option then go to (type as one continuous string)

gopher://writing.upenn.edu/11/internet/
library/e-journals/ub/rift

__Participation in the Electronic Poetry Center (Buffalo)__

For those interested in helping us build the Center, our goal is to provide a single Internet site that offers a doorway into the different poetic projects out there in the electronic (and paper) poetics world. We would like to offer access to information about poetics and poetry activities, electronic poetry journals, texts in progress, etc. We are currently developing a library of electronic poetry/poetics texts (submissions to [REDACTED] buffalo.edu). The Center has other exciting possibilities:

1. Circulation of electronic journals with an emphasis on direct links to those of relevance to Center concerns;
2. Reviews of recent print and electronic publications. (Brief reviews may also be submitted electronically to [REDACTED]);
3. Direct links to other related electronic sites;
4. Multimedia resources. Sound and graphics relating to poetry.
5. Building our Small Press Alcove, a place for little magazine and book announcements. The point of including announcements of paper resources is to provide a listing of interesting work for people to look at; they can then write or e-mail the publisher to obtain publications. (Send announcements to [REDACTED] or magazines/books to Loss Glazier, E-Poetry, P.O. Box 143, Getzville, NY 14068-0143);
6. Ultimately, the Center could also offer collaborative projects (perhaps for specific groups of writers), lists and/or archives of other lists, and texts-in-progress, as things develop.

The "Buffalo" in the title of the Center is not meant to suggest that this activity is limited to Buffalo, only to give the "visitor" a sense of place, i.e., where the mainframe that's providing this service is "located."

Vigorous writing wants to "circulate." On this new electronic terrain, the Electronic Poetry Center will serve as a gathering place or point of entry for a range of poetic efforts.

How to Contact Us

Please contact us with your suggestions, texts, sound files, and graphics files to submit, or if you have expertise in these areas. LET US KNOW WHAT YOU THINK (this is meant to be a Center that grows with your ideas) by posting to this list, sending mail to E-Poetry, or to Loss Glazier ([REDACTED]) or Kenneth Sherwood (v001pxfu.ubvms.cc. buffalo.edu) privately.

The Archive is administered in Buffalo by E-Poetry and RIF/T in coordination with the Poetics List.

Loss Pequeno Glazier
for Kenneth Sherwood and Loss Glazier
in collaboration with Charles Bernstein

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3. **Joe Amato**
The Waste Land...

Tue 12 Jul 1994

uhm, i dunno if this is what you're looking for, but harper & row published martin rowson's _the waste land_ in 1990---a comic art parody of eliot's work... the protagonist is l.a. private eye christopher marlowe etc...

joe

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4. **Michael Metzger**
Anybody have a clue? M Metzger

Tue 12 Jul 1994

From: IN% "[REDACTED]" "WIG-L - Women in German"
11-JUL-1994 11:10:29.43
To: IN% "[REDACTED]" "Multiple recipients of list WIG-L"
CC:
Subj: author/title/publisher search
id <[REDACTED]>; Mon, 11 Jul 1994 11:09:39 EST
with BSMTP id 4133; Mon, 11 Jul 94 11:07:11 EDT

UBVM.CC.BUFFALO.EDU (LMail V1.2a/1.8a) with BSMTP id 4174; Mon,
11 Jul 1994 11:07:11 -0400

Date: Mon, 11 Jul 1994 15:54:36 +0000

From: Karin McPherson <[REDACTED]>

Subject: author/title/publisher search

To: Multiple recipients of list WIG-L <[REDACTED]>

Organization: Arts

I would be grateful for any information on the following : Maurice Ransone
(author) The Wasteland (title) 1990 or `92(publication date). It is a parody of
Eliot's poem. Where has it appeared? Is it available? Who are the publishers?
Karin McPherson, Department of German, University of Edinburgh, DHT,
George Square, EH8 9JX, Scotland.

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5. **Karin McPherson**
search: the Waste Land

Thu 14 Jul 1994

information found by Joe Amato. author: Martin Rowson. The Waste
Land. Harper & Row 1990. Many thanks to all who helped.
Karin McPherson

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6. **Chris Funk**
des crypt ions of an I U (she he it we you they)

Fri 15 Jul 1994

Not getting enough from / giving enough to
your university?

Sign up for DIU, a weekly from [REDACTED]

POETICS travellers thus far describing
an Imaginary University
include black hole sun; Thus, Albert or Hubert;
PJ; BG &tc

--Boundary (ID 7R/p22VzziXb+AmYddNjOQ)--

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7. **Steve Evans**

Des Cryptionists: An Inquiry

Fri 15 Jul 1994

Chris,

Knowing you, I am inclined to enroll in your imaginary university (department of incidental poetics)--but could you perhaps dilate ever so slightly on what you're up to? I post this to the general list, rather than to you directly, since others may be as puzzled and intrigued as I am.

Thanks.

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8. **Alan Loney**

Jerome McGann

Sun 17 Jul 1994

Hello people,

does anyone have an e-mail address for Jerome McGann, author of *A Critique of Textual Criticism*, among other texts. I'd be very grateful for this info.

Many thanks, in anticipation.

Alan Loney.

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9. **peter quartermain**

Re: Citation for Golding on Anthologies?

Mon 18 Jul 1994

Alan Golding: "A History of American Poetry Anthologies." _Canons_. edited by R. von Hallberg. Chicago, Chicago UP 1984, 279-308. You might also find useful a long piece I did as Appendix to _Dictionary of Literary Biography_ Vol 54: American Poets 1880-1945 [3rd series part 2] (Detroit: Gale, 1986), 579-676 "A Survey of Poetry Anthologies 1879-1960." This is an annotated list preceded by a brief discussion of trends. It reprints a number of prefaces and introductions (eg _Active Anthology_) and the Tables of Contents, but unfortunately omits (permission to reprint was withheld at the page-proof stage) Zukofsky's _An "Objectivists" Anthology_, which thus gets appallingly and undeservedly short shrift. The "Survey" does not (overall) include textbooks. I also discuss briefly the fortune of some of these (and some text-book anthologies) in the general introduction (called "Foreword") to Vol 54, Part 1. This foreword also appears in Vols 45 and 48: _DLB: American Poets &c_ 1st and 2nd Series, and was reprinted in slightly revised form

[with full documentation] in _Sagetrieb_ 9.3 (Winter 1990): 7-29.
There's lots more on all this stuff *somewhere*, but right now I'm in the throes of packing for a three week vacation starting tomorrow (today, where you are). If you want more, ask again around 5 August when (MAYBE) I can lay my stupid hands on my scattered notes. But Alan Golding will have answered you by then, surely. He knows more than anybody. Cheers, Peter Quartermain

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10. **Steve Evans**

Citation for Golding on Anthologies?

Mon 18 Jul 1994

If anyone has it at their fingertips, I need to be reminded of where Alan Golding published an article on the history of poetry anthologies (in 20th-century U.S.).

I'm hoping to get a little perspective on the Messerli, Hoover, Weinberger collections, as well as to push along some work I'm doing on the use of group anthologies by the Objectivists, the New York School, and the language writers. If people have suggestions beyond the Golding I would be very interested in seeing them.

P.S. Thanks to Chris for the first course listings from the Imaginary University. Now how bout the financial aid packets for our imaginary incomes?

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11. **Charles Bernstein**

repost for CF/ RE: In Si Dental Poetics

Mon 18 Jul 1994

From: [REDACTED]
Date: Sat, 16 Jul 1994 10:24:06 -0400 (EDT)
Subject: Re: Dept. of In Si Dental Poetics
Steve,

Hope all goes well in Providence.

Up to a bunch of things. It was someone else who kicked this new/sletter into gear -- accidentally, of course -- then, energy being what it is in addition to our ALWAYS READY stance -- well, you can decide for yourself what it is & isn't as reposting this week's edition below (apologies to those who are on the direct list ALready) -- next week's version will feature a scathing rebuttal by marianne

moore to bhs's course description among other things. We all have our peeves regarding university curriculae, here is a place for I or I to begin again. As usual, a myriad of editors handling the materials...

We welcome all contributions/suggestions-- paz--

chris funkhouser

DIU 2

14 July 94

course description

"american poetry"

required texts:

*walt whitman
drum-taps*

*marianne moore
selected poems, 1935*

*frederico garcia lorca
poeta en nueva york*

*john wieners
behind the state capital or cincinnati pike*

*joanne kyger
the wonderful focus of you*

what does it mean to be an american? & once we think we discover this meaning, what to do with it? for if poetry arises in the gap, not between sense and nonsense, but sense and PURPOSELESSNESS (this will be our first thesis), then the TASK of poetry will be a confrontation with nonsense, in the hope that purpose lies that side of the continuum (this will be our second thesis).

what to do with what we know (not to mention, how to act given what we DON'T know) is poetry's preeminent question.

we begin with war; pause to consider the pleasures and discoveries of the

imperial eye, the grace our language attained when it gave in--without blinking--to the intellectual grandeur of the I, a sure center sure of its own morality; we'll then study--without blinking--the aftereffects of this assumption of power, the poverty and madness which the center always deposits at its margins; and we'll conclude by considering america's prospects in the coming ante-time

a digest:

"Look down fair moon and bathe this scene, / pour softly down night's nimbus floods on faces ghastly, swollen, purple..."
whitman

"Slow / To remark the steep, too strict proportion / Of your throne, you'll see the wrenched distortion / Of suicidal dreams / Go / Staggering toward itself and with its bill / Attack its own identity, until / Foe seems friend and friend seems / Foe"
moore

"Porque ya no hay quien reparta el pan ni el vino / ni quien cultive hierbas en la boca del muerto" ("For see: there is none to apportion the bread and the wine / or cultivate grass in the mouths of the dead")
lorca

"If I tread the straight and narrow / I should no trouble, do what's / expected of me, realize my friends / are not my enemies, and get rid of // them both..."
wieners

"The seemingly inexhaustible / sophistication of awareness becomes relentless and horrible, / trapped. How am I ever going to learn enough to get out"
kyger

--black hole sun

The utopian schemes that have informed us of our possibilities-- Brook Farm, the Marxist stateless state and even the endlessly progressing capitalist economy, guided by an invisible hand or by liberal bureaucracies-- were equally predicated not upon the order of foundational knowledge but upon an order of minds in the thrall of the sublime. The profound moment of insight, enlightenment, revolution is not vision but the catastrophe of the imagination. It is the shattering of the image, of the old style, of the

conventional view, of _ancien regime_, and so forth that leaves one unsettled but grasping a profound point of a knowledge. The site of the revelation is not directly open to inspection, and especially not available for a second look, but, as it--whatever it is--recedes from view, it confirms the the confidence in the utopian possibility, and it can be brought back to the edge of view by the next careful negotiation of imagination into spectacular collapse.

For nearly two hundred years, art had been a matter of tearing through the surface of rationality, convention, and social stultification in order to maintain access to the surprise of life as such. For the generation of artists born of the World War II and after, however, everything they'd learned was wrong. The techniques of the artists who had interested them in art in the first place, whom they had admired and thought to imitate, turned out to be inappropriate to this new condition. Dadaism lives: it is taught at in the Harvard M.B.A. program. Surrealism lives: it is taught to computer programmers at M.I.T. (some might say, mathematics has proven so strange, that it is taught even in the math department). Our architects, our lawyers are modernist purveyors of chaos (to say nothing, of course, of the faceless committees which generate what we call the media).

There is no point, in the face of unbridled growth economies, to recall wild nature in tranquility, to practice nihilistic techniques of art and thought, to do automatic writing, or to create chance generated art. Chaos no longer needs the help of art. The techniques that delivered fresh air in 1810 or 1910 contributed (though contributed insignificantly) by 1970 to a proliferation of incomprehensible energy. The Dadaists never managed to exhibit the degree of chaos that Robert Smithson records in his photographs of Passaic, New Jersey.

If the task of the artists is to right the balance between consciousness and unconsciousness, they must now cast their lot with consciousness. It is the unconscious itself which is manifesting as uncontrolled production. If the task of the artists is to right the balance between order and chaos, they must now cast their lot with order-- with construction, not deconstruction. This involves large scale reordering of the practice of art, in order to serve the same function.

--Thus, Albert or Hubert

air.txt radiostation wrpi 91.5 fm troy, ny 7 july 94 0811-1200

George Quasha/Charles Stein--"life on the flying carpet"/anthology '85
(cassette)

Eric Dolphy--"Burning Spear"/Iron Man

-

Bob Marley & the Wailers--"Positive Vibration|Wake Up and Live|I
Shot the Sheriff|Dem Belly Full|Concrete Jungle|Ambush in the Night|
You Can't Run Away From Yourself|Heathen Writing|Natty Dread
Rides Again|War"/live Santa Cruz 12/79 (cassette)

Public Enemy--"Harry Allen's Interactive Super Highway Phone Call
to Chuck D"/Give It Up

-

Chico Freeman--"title song|Freedom Swing Song|Lookup|Nia's Song
Dance|Morning Prayer"/Peaceful Heart, Gentle Spirit
Mutabaruka--"People's Court Pt. II"/Melanin' Man

-

Lou Harrison--"Threnody"/Just West Coast

-

Cecil Taylor w/Workshop Ensemble--"Legba Crossing"/Legba Crossing
Diedre Murray/Fred Hopkins--"Systems"/Stringology

-

Mission of Burma--"Trem Two"/vs.

Mission of Burma--"That's When I Reach for my Revolver|Outlaw|
Fame & Fortune"/Signals, Calls, Marches

Mission of Burma--"Forget|Peking Spring"/ep

Mission of Burma--"Academy Fight Song"/45 rpm

-

Lisa Germano--"the earth"/happiness

John's Black Dirt--"Movements"/Perpetual Optimism is a Force Multiplier

Lisa Germano--"Miamo-tutti"/happiness

-

Bheki Mselku--"Ntuli Street"/Timelessness

Michael Lally--"Healing Poem"/cd b/w

Henry Threadgill Very Very Circus--"Some Place"/live at Koncepts

*DIU is a weekly newsletter directed towards
Descriptions of an Imaginary University
(c)irculated by the Logic of Snowflakes
hypersidiary of We Press, USA*

*to contribute or receive previous
presentations "write" to [REDACTED]*

--Boundary (ID e1kFdHVOPTZu0qDO+h0Ogw)--

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12. **Alan Golding**
Citation for Golding on Anthologies?
Mon 18 Jul 1994

Associate Professor of English, U. of Louisville
Phone: [REDACTED]; e-mail: [REDACTED]

I figure I ought to be qualified to respond to this one. The essay is "A History of American Poetry Anthologies" in Robert von Hallberg's edited collection *Canons* (Univ. of Chicago Press 1984): 279-307. A revised and updated version with some material on Weinberger and Hoover will appear as the first chapter in my forthcoming *From Outlaw to Classic: Canons in American Poetry* (U of Wisconsin Press early 1995). I have an essay in progress called "Approaching the Present in American Poetry Anthologies" that deals with Weinberger Hoover et al and with mainstream anthologies since the mid-1970s. If anyone's interested in the updated book chapter or the work in progress (I've given the latter as a talk so it's in more or less readable and coherent shape) just drop me a note; both pieces have notes/bibliographies that might suggest further resources. As regards the recent anthologies I'm sure there are a ton of reviews that I don't know about (a mini-bibl. of reviews for those anthologies would actually be a useful project for someone to take on) but the exchanges in *American Poetry Review* are lively: John Yau's original review followed by Weinberger's response and Yau's response to the response; and Burt Hatlen reviewed the Weinberger collection in *Sagetrieb*. So Steve--you might look at those pieces if you haven't already done so.

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13. **Alan Golding**
Citation for Golding on Anthologies?
Mon 18 Jul 1994

Associate Professor of English, U. of Louisville
Phone: [REDACTED]; e-mail: [REDACTED]

Dear Steve Evans--In my first reply to your post I forgot to mention that I also have a section of the forthcoming book on Brooks and Warren's Understanding Poetry--just in case you're interested in that earlier material.

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14. **Steve Evans**

Anthologies

Mon 18 Jul 1994

Thanks to Alan, Peter, and the several back-channel saints who responded so quickly to the query I posted yesterday. I am again awed and a little humbled by the capacity this medium has for instancing acts of generosity.

I agree with Alan that a mini-bibliography of reviews of the anthologies would be useful for many of us on this list: should we agree to volunteer whatever information we run across in our individual researches? If people are afraid of cluttering the band with multiple posts of the same information, I will volunteer to receive mail on the subject and post updates for the list as new sightings warrant.

Let me know if this sounds like a good idea.

Best to everyone.../Steve

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15. **klindberg**

Re: Anthologies

Mon 18 Jul 1994

Sounds like a good idea to me. I have recently been fascinated by the way that polemical anthologies, ones including sustained academic essays as well as "in your face" wishes and fabrications, made the Harlem Renaissance. But then this has always been the case. Whether or not they sold or did the job intended, such projects do, in retrospect, mark recurrent modernisms variously named. Enough of that shit. Eh? Let me say that we are in an excellent position with our new electronic nets. We can turn retrospects into prospects and nullify the need to apologize even as we meta-anthologize. What fun. Hope it isn't rude to be ironic. I am not, in any case, being ironic. I will be as helpful and/or quiet as I can in the anthology and other projects.

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16. **Jed Rasula**

Re: Citation for Golding on Anthologies?

Mon 18 Jul 1994

Thanks to Steve's question, a gratifying convocation of replies; to which I can add my own take on Weinberger --as set off against McClatchy's *Vintage Anthology*-- forthcoming in *American Literary History*. That essay constitutes the final chapter of my book *The American Poetry Wax Museum* (& a belated thanks to Charles's plug on this list earlier in the summer); but in the wake of the Hoover & Messerli collections I'm planning on reconceiving that chapter in August as the book goes to press. So any discussion that unfolds here between now and then will not only be welcome, but duly noted in the result (I have yet to see biblio-credits for e-mail discussions in print, but surely they've happened & there must be some unfolding protocol).

--Jed Rasula

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17. **Marc Nasdor**

Re: Citation for Golding on Anthologies?

Tue 19 Jul 1994

Boycott all poetry anthologies! They're a needless waste of wood pulp.

-Nasdor

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18. **Pierre Joris**

Re: Anthologies

Tue 19 Jul 1994

I'm on the road so I don't have the exact info available, but re anthologies, there is also an interesting piece by Clayton Eshleman analyzing the Norton MODERN POETRY antho. I believe it appeared in the AWP newsletter --or, more probably in fact in the AMERICAN BOOK REVIEW.

=====
=====
Pierre Joris | "The great pain
afflicting mankind, from child- Dept. of English | hood until death, is that
looking and eating are SUNY Albany | two different operations. Eternal
beatitude is Albany NY 12222 | a state in which to look is to eat." Simone
Weil tel&fax: [REDACTED] | email: [REDACTED] | "He who leaves a trace, leaves an
abcess." [REDACTED] | Henri Michaux
=====
=====

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19. **Alan Golding**
Anthologies

Tue 19 Jul 1994

Associate Professor of English, U. of Louisville

Phone: [REDACTED]; e-mail: [REDACTED]

Dear Steve--Your idea for pooling information sounds good to me. But then I'm a literary historian and secret biblio-drone . . . Nasdor won't like it!

Alan G.

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20. **Hank Lazer**
Re: Anthologies

Tue 19 Jul 1994

Pierre--

When will the Rothenberg/Joris 20th Century Poetry anthology be out from U of California Press? Could you send me a Table of Contents?

Thanks.

Hank Lazer

P.S. Say hello to Jerry & Diane for me....

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21. **Alan Golding**
Re: Anthologies

Tue 19 Jul 1994

Associate Professor of English, U. of Louisville

Phone: [REDACTED]; e-mail: [REDACTED]

Just for everyone's information: the Clayton Eshleman essay that Pierre Joris refers to is "The Gospel According to Norton," in American Poetry Review, Sept./Oct. 1990: 33-41. And yes, watch for Jed Rasula's forthcoming book--a mine both of useful information and analysis thereof, including on virtually every post-World War II anthology published.

Alan Golding

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22. **Marc Nasdor**

Re: Anthologies

Tue 19 Jul 1994

Clayton Eshleman's analysis of the Norton Anthology of Modern Poetry appeared in the American Poetry Review, Vol. 19/No. 5 -- September/October 1990 with Ann Lauterbach's mugshot on the cover.

--Regards, Marc Nasdor

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23. **Marc Nasdor**

Re: Anthologies

Tue 19 Jul 1994

Nah, I wuz jus' joshing. Otherwise, I'd better sell my 20 or 30 anthologies.

--Nasdor

:~)

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24. **klindberg**

Re: Anthologies

Tue 19 Jul 1994

Still, one might keep in mind one small detail about the "economy" of anthologies: the law of diminishing financial and intellectual returns to the poet(s). It would seem that inflation also affects the reception of anthologies. To say nothing about Pound's anthologizing, his criticism and competition in this (fallow and/or easily penetrated) field of the market. In short, nothing more on anthologies. . . .

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25. **Tenney Nathanson**

presumably all have seen this but

Wed 20 Jul 1994

Forwarded message:

> From: [REDACTED] Tue Jul 19 23:24 CDT 1994
> From: [REDACTED] (Ken Beversdorf)
> Message-Id: <[REDACTED]>
> Subject: Matters of Personal Privacy....
> To: [REDACTED]
> Date: Tue, 19 Jul 1994 20:58:15 -0800 (PDT)

> X-Mailer: ELM [version 2.4 PL22]
> Content-Type: text
> Content-Length: 7273
>
> > To all Employees of Cray Research and Cray Research Superservers:
> >
> > This will directly affect the privacy of your childs and possibly
> > your own personal data. Please read and be informed. This is for
> > your own personal benefit if you value your privacy.
> >
> > Ken Beversdorf
> >
> > *****
> >
> > > Subject: Privacy at risk: Educational Records
> > >
> > >
> > > Seattle CPSR Policy Fact Sheet
> > > K-12 Student Records: Privacy at Risk
> > > -----
> > >
> > > TOPIC
> > >
> > > The U.S. education system is rapidly building a nationwide network of
> > > electronic student records. This computer network will make possible
the
> > > exchange of information among various agencies and employers, and the
> > > continuous tracking of individuals through the social service, education
> > > and criminal justice systems, into higher education, the military and the
> > > workplace.
> > >
> > > WHAT IS THE ISSUE?
> > >
> > > There is no adequate guarantee that the collection and sharing of
personal
> > > information will be done only with the knowledge and consent of
students or
> > > their parents.
> > >
> > > Changes Are Coming to Student Records
> > > National proposals being implemented today include:
> > >

- > > > - An electronic "portfolio" to be kept on each student, containing
 - > > > personal essays and other completed work.
 - > > >
- > > > - Asking enrolling kindergartners for their Social Security Numbers,
 - > > > which will be used to track each student's career after high school.
 - > > >
- > > > - Sending High school students' transcripts and "teachers' confidential
 - > > > ratings of a student's work-related behavior," to employers via an
 - > > > electronic network called WORKLINK.
 - > > >
- > > > At the heart of these changes is a national electronic student records
 - > > > network, coordinated by the federal government and adopted by states
 - > > > with
 - > > > federal assistance.
 - > > >
- > > > Publication 93-03 of the National Education Goals Panel, a federally
 - > > > appointed group recently empowered by the Goals 2000 bill to oversee
 - > > > education restructuring nationally, recommends as "essential" that
 - > > > school
 - > > > districts and/or states collect expanded information on individual
 - > > > students, including:
 - > > > - month and extent of first prenatal care,
 - > > > - birthweight,
 - > > > - name, type, and number of years in a preschool program,
 - > > > - poverty status,
 - > > > - physical, emotional and other development at ages 5 and 6,
 - > > > - date of last routine health and dental care,
 - > > > - extracurricular activities,
 - > > > - type and hours per week of community service,
 - > > > - name of post-secondary institution attended,
 - > > > - post-secondary degree or credential,
 - > > > - employment status,
 - > > > - type of employment and employer name,
 - > > > - whether registered to vote.
 - > > >
- > > > It also notes other "data elements useful for research and school
 - > > > management purposes":
 - > > > - names of persons living in student household,
 - > > > - relationship of those persons to student,
 - > > > - highest level of education for "primary care-givers,"
 - > > > - total family income,
 - > > > - public assistance status and years of benefits,

> > > - number of moves in the last five years,
> > > - nature and ownership of dwelling.
> > >
> > > Many of these information categories also were included in the public draft
> > > of the 'Student Data Handbook for Elementary and Secondary Schools',
> > > developed by the Council of Chief State School Officers to standardize
> > > student record terminology across the nation. State and local agencies
> > > theoretically design their own information systems, but the handbook
> > > encourages them to collect information for policymakers at all levels.
> > > Among the data elements are:
> > > - evidence verifying date of birth,
> > > - social security number,
> > > - attitudinal test,
> > > - personality test,
> > > - military service experience,
> > > - description of employment permit (including permit number,)
> > > - type of dwelling,
> > > - telephone number of employer.
> > >
> > > WHO CAN ACCESS THIS COMPREHENSIVE INFORMATION?
> > >
> > > Officers, employees and agents of local, state and federal educational
> > > agencies and private education researchers may be given access to
> > > individual student records without student or parent consent, according
to
> > > the federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (20 USC
> > > 1232g) and related federal regulations (34 CFR 99.3). Washington state
law
> > > echoes this federal law.
> > >
> > > WHAT IS COMING NEXT?
> > >
> > > Recent Washington state legislation (SB 6428, HB 1209, HB 2319)
directly
> > > links each public school district with a self-governing group of social
> > > service and community agencies that will provide services for families.
> > >
> > > This type of program is described in detail in the book, Together We Can,
> > > published jointly by the U.S. Department of Education and the U.S.
> > > Department of Health and Human Services. The book speaks of
"overcoming

> > > the confidentiality barrier," and suggests creating centralized data banks
> > > that gather information about individuals from various government
agencies -

> > > or in other ways ensuring agencies, "ready access to each other's
records."

> > >

> > > The book calls for a federal role in coordinating policies, regulations and
> > > data collection. A group in St. Louis, MO, called Wallbridge Caring
> > > Communities, is cited as a model for seeking agreements to allow
computer

> > > linkups with schools and the social service and criminal justice systems
to

> > > track school progress, referrals and criminal activity.

> > >

> > > WHAT HAPPENED TO ONE COMMUNITY

> > >

> > > In Kennewick, WA, over 4,000 kindergarten through fourth graders were
rated

> > > by their teachers on how often they lie, cheat, sneak, steal, exhibit a

> > > negative attitude, act aggressively, and whether they are rejected by
their

> > > peers. The scores, with names attached, were sent to a private
psychiatric

> > > center under contract to screen for "at-risk" students who might benefit

> > > from its programs. All of this was done without the knowledge and
consent

> > > of the children or their parents.

> > >

> > > CPSR's POSITION

> > >

> > > CPSR Seattle believes that schools other agencies should minimize the
> > > collection, distribution and retention of personal data. Students and/or
> > > their parents should decide who has access to detailed personal
> > > information.

> > >

> > > CPSR ACTIONS

> > >

> > > Representatives of CPSR Seattle have gone to Olympia to:

> > > - oppose the use of the Social Security Number as the standard student
> > > identifier,

> > >

> > > - urge legislators to set educational goals that can be measured without

> > > invading privacy,
> > >
> > > - oppose turning over individual student records to law enforcement
> > > officials apart from a court order or official investigation.
> > >
> > > Computer Professionals for Social Responsibility - Seattle Chapter
> > > P.O. Box 85481, Seattle, WA 98145-148 [REDACTED]
> > > [REDACTED]
> > >
> > >
> > > --- CPSR ANNOUNCE LIST END ---
> > >
> >
> >
>
>

Mike Zwinger
Cray Research, Inc.
Phone: [REDACTED]

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26. **Marc Nasdor**

Re: Anthologies

Wed 20 Jul 1994

Hmmm--

Well, Klindberg, that's fine except that anthologies are frequently used for the purposes of "recanonicalization" by the very people who would like to see the "opposing" canon debunked. One cannot have it both ways. But consider that poetry magazines may serve a greater purpose directly due to their perceived limited shelf life. Anthologies--while retaining some nostalgia value for those who wish to revisit their intellectual youth--are stagnant pools attracting little more than mosquitos, while journals are more indicative of the actual state of literary life; i.e., there is the assumption of impermanence, and everyone is forced to keep on their toes. I prefer to sort out the interesting from the mediocre on my own, thank you. If I must have my literature filtered, I'd rather depend on a greater number of editors than a smaller number of agenda-toting anthologists to provide that service. Regards, Marc Nasdor

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27. **Joseph Conte**
Literary Biography
Wed 20 Jul 1994

Now that we're fully assembled and have adjusted our headsets for color and vertical roll, I'd like to invite anyone with an interest in literary biography to contribute to a two-volume series that I'm editing for the *Dictionary of Literary Biography* (Gale Research Press) on American poets after 1945. So far there are some fifty entries in progress, including Brett Millier on Elizabeth Bishop, Robert Bertholf on Robert Duncan, Tom Gardner on John Ashbery, Miriam Nichols on Robin Blaser, and Mark Scroggins on Louis Zukofsky. Entries range from 5000 to 10,000 words. The entries are literary biographies, but the principal focus is the presentation and appraisal of the poet's complete work in chronological fashion. All contributors to the volume receive an honorarium from the publishers, a copy of the volume, and offprints of their entry.

I'm particularly interested to hear from anyone willing to write on David Antin, Amiri Baraka, Clark Coolidge, Louise Gluck, David Ignatow, Kenneth Koch, Adrienne Rich, Jerome Rothenberg, or Ron Silliman. I'm open to other suggestions, assuming that the poet is appropriate to the volume and not already assigned.

If you're at all interested in contributing, please respond to me personally (i.e. off-list). I'd be happy to answer any questions you might have about the project, or take suggestions for subjects and/or contributors.

Thanks.

Joseph Conte

*

Joseph M Conte		"Where is the figure in the Department of
English		carpet? Or is it just . . . SUNY at Buffalo
carpet?" he asked. "Where is--"	██████████	"You're talking a lot of
██████████		buffalo hump, you know that."
Donald Barthelme		

*

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28. **klindberg**
Re: Anthologies
Wed 20 Jul 1994

Well, in as much as it is a point worth making, I believe that was something of my point. The realities of classroom teaching at universities such as my own

raise the issues of anthologies with a certain urgency, or so it is thought. My irony--whether caught, missed, or intended (Ah Ha)--was in some fashion motored by why the greatest activity I have seen for some time on this network was centered around questions so market driven. Wouldn't it, then, be more interesting to talk about the market than the anthologies? Or is that what we are doing? Please feel free to respond in anger or pique; such responses please. Anyway, really, I do mean that, while one is interested in the production and distribution of anthologies, other poetic(s)/political issues might be more pressing. I apologize for any, if not all, offenses.

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29. **klindberg**

Re: Literary Biography

Wed 20 Jul 1994

Question for Joseph Conte. I ask this one over the net, since it might prevent a flood of repetitions of the same question. Just to be helpful, as is my nature, if you will.

What do you mean by American? Do you seek info. on poets from the Caribbean, perhaps even those who find themselves morooned, as 't were in the US?

Will this volume update, supersede, articulate with, say, the DLB volume devoted to the Beats? I guess those are more than the promised "question." I didn't mean to be so helpful with irony-ing.

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30. **Steve Evans**

Anthslide

Wed 20 Jul 1994

I think Kathryn's bemusement about the sudden activity here on the list around "questions so market driven" is on the whole well placed. It may be that the anthologies--which will not, I suspect, break too many sales records--raise as a question something we otherwise take for granted: namely, that poetry's resistance to integration through the market, its failure as a commodity, is one of its decisive, albeit negative, attributes.

Meanwhile, though their economic effects will be minimal, the symbolic effects of these anthologies could be quite formidable--the legitimation of the language writers may in fact have reached its apogee with them (for instance). One thing I find myself thinking about is how little these collections have risked by way of recasting the *form* of the anthology: a patent contradiction considering how

much of the work included is by poets who sought radical transformations not only of poetic but also cognitive forms. This fundamental conservatism makes the utility of each of the volumes dubious to me even in terms of classroom use. I don't want to romanticize the practice (time-consuming and often difficult) of making xerox-anthologies, but as someone who was taught, and now does teach, from them, I don't envision the new volumes individually or in combination offering a better alternative. I would, on the other hand, have liked to see something such as McGann has done with his Oxford volume of Romantic Period Verse, where one witnesses something of the unfolding of a field of practice in history: neither Weinberger's thematic editing, nor Hoover's conventional birth-dating, nor Messerli's combination of the two, seem very soundly motivated to me. (Even Allen's, at the time controversial, clustering of movements drew on principles of division that were at least deducible from the immanent organization of the poetic field at the time.)

I am open to the criticism that my judgements here are a little hasty, given that I've not owned a single one of these volumes for more than two months and have certainly not read even one of them in their entirety (has anyone? will anyone?).

Finally, a thought experiment that owes a little to Ron Silliman's remarks in "Canons and Institutions: New Hope for the Disappeared": what place would these anthologies have in the curriculum of an institution that--unlike the ones most of us work in, for, or near--was autonomous and deeply committed to the real possibilities (past, present, and future) of poetic practice? For while the form and contents of these books can indeed be defended as *compromises,* I think it is of vital importance to weigh these compromises, which after all take a lot out of one, against the prospects of transforming the situation so as to make them unnecessary.

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31. **Mn Ctr for Book Arts**

Re: magic anthology ride

Wed 20 Jul 1994

First, regarding "the 'economy' of anthologies: the law of diminishing financial and intellectual returns to the poet(s)"-- diminishing from what? Is there a place of undiminished financial returns to poets?

And I am surprised to find no nod or reference to anthologies such as the recent special double issue of o-blek (one volume on technique, the other on practice, which is in effect an anthology), and the recent The Art of Practice (Potes & Poets). Both of them seem to me anthologies which want to push something forward, rather than documenting the past (although that could be argued, as

the latter does publish works which have been published previously, although mostly in the last couple of years). Are these anthologies less valuable than the works by Allen, Messerli, and others mentioned in this discussion? I don't think so.

Anthologies are like our institutions of literature. It's hard to live with them, but also hard to live without them. But is it hard to outlive them?

charles

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32. **Susan Schultz**

Re: Anthslide

Thu 21 Jul 1994

Steve Evans brings up the conservatism of the new anthologies vis-a-vis their form. Having scattered my attentions across the Hoover and Messerli volumes, I'd venture to add that, while they may represent "a new American poetry" (the subtitle to Messerli's anthology), they don't necessarily represent a new America. Messerli's volume includes Baraka and Mackey, who are included as writers who, with Inman, Child, and Darragh, "all work closely with genres that explore sound/music/ voice relationships" (33). They are not included among the poets who are concerned with cultural issues (group #1), or those who focus on issues of self (#2), or those who are engaged with "language, reader, and writing communities" (#3). Such thematic groupings are intriguing, but many, if not most, could be included in all of them. This is just a guess, but it sounds to me as if the groupings were developed to describe writers, rather than emerging out of a wide-sweeping survey of the 1960-1990 frame that Messerli assigns himself.

Hoover's anthology, organized rigidly as it is by birth-dates, comes a bit closer to "looking like America." Hoover includes Hagedorn, Yau, and Berssenbrugge; Algarin, Baca, and Cruz. I wonder if the term "postmodern," which is both a descriptive and an historical term, allows him greater leeway. At any rate, while I hardly want to subscribe to an arts-by-numbers scheme, I also want to see a wider range of experiences (both historical and aesthetic) represented here. The Heath tried to broaden the range of ethnicities welcomed into the American canon, but failed miserably (as I guess everyone knows) at challenging the hegemony of free-verse. Where's the response? While I seldom teach with anthologies, to dismiss them totally seems utopian--many university courses do use them. I would think twice about using these anthologies in a Hawaii classroom, though I'd happily recommend them to students as partial portraits of contemporary American poetry.

Susan M. Schultz

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33. **Marc Nasdor**

Re: Anthslide

Thu 21 Jul 1994

I agree with Steve Evans, and I would like to add a comment.

Since there is little market for poetry, in the conventional sense of "market," I would suggest that anthologies have no market outside of poets and a dwindling number of students. That fact, however, does not totally destroy their value.

But as for me, I would prefer to receive my anthologies with loose, unbound pages, so I could chuck the crap and keep the cool stuff. You want to empower the reader, right? :-)

Regards, Marc

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34. **Marc Nasdor**

Re: magic anthology ride

Thu 21 Jul 1994

Charles--

Unfortunately, it's impossible to outlive them. That's why they give me the creeps.

Marc

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35. **Marc Nasdor**

Re: Anthslide

Thu 21 Jul 1994

Susan--

The "hegemony of free verse" you refer to is simply a reflection of time marching (or goose-stepping, as you might refer to it) forward. The problem is that most of the interesting rhymed & metered verse is being written by songwriters. I'll take verse from the Residents, Iggy Pop, or Kurt Cobain for that matter, over volumes of mindless drivel from the likes of an R. Wilbur or R. Howard.

Marc Nasdor

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36. **Joseph Conte**
Re: Literary Biography
Thu 21 Jul 1994

In answer to Mr. Klindberg's useful questions regarding the volumes on American Poets since 1945 that I'm editing for the *Dictionary of Literary Biography*:

Although it may sound parochial, the senior editors of the series have decided to treat Anglo-Caribbean writers and Canadian poets in separate volumes. There are always exceptions, especially for instances in which the poet is born in the Caribbean or Canada but has spent the major portion of his or her life in the US.

This volume is actually updating and superseding *DLB* 5 on American Poets since 1945, edited by Donald Grenier (1980). It may overlap in a few instances with Ann Charters' two volumes on the Beats, in part because the careers of several of the poets found in her volume were never strictly identified with the Beats. Perhaps, after the big Beat reunion in May in NYC, Charters will update her own volume. So there may be new entries on Allen Ginsberg (if someone's so inclined) whose work was addressed in *DLB* 5, or Paul Blackburn, who appeared in Charters' volume but was more closely associated with Black Mountain.

In both instances the membrane's semi-permeable, and I'm rather open to (private) negotiation.

Thanks for your interest.

Joseph Conte

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37. **Jed Rasula**
Re: Anthslide
Thu 21 Jul 1994

Susan Schultz's distinction between a "new American poetry" (Messerli via Allen : & I continue to be amazed at the hero worship Allen inspires almost 35 years later, as Messerli, Hoover, Weinberger, & Silliman's **Tree** testify) and a "new America". I think on the one hand of Emerson's phrase "this new yet unapproachable America"--from, I believe, the essay on Experience--taken by Stanley Cavell as the title of a book; and on the other hand, think of Jose Marti, and his quite different & unEmersonian experiences as a Cuban journalist in NYC in the 1890s, struggling to certify "nuestra America" in the expansive sense I think Susan is speaking of. So I note, with both curiosity & apprehension, the announcement in the Viking catalogue for Fall, an anthology

edited by Maria Mazziotti Gillan & her daughter Jennifer: *Unsettling America: An Anthology of Contemporary Multicultural Poetry*. --does anybody know the editors, or know anything of this project??-- this is touted as a book designed to "displace the myths and stereotypes that pervade our culture", but I have a hunch it doesn't do much to displace the fastest growing myth on the cultural horizon coming into the 90s, which is the uniformity of the white male. Which is not to say that white males haven't had a couple centuries (in the USA) to create a diversified self-portrait (in various convexities); but the very "selling points" of this anthology are a portent of an ominous but it seems inexorable social fact, that nothing gets valorized except by a corresponding devalorization-by-caricature.

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38. **Marc Nasdor**

Re: Anthslide

Fri 22 Jul 1994

Jed Rasula's comments about the "myth of the uniformity of the white male" are right on target, but I might qualify somewhat. Outside the arts and academic communities, these issues used to barely generate much interest. It is worth noting that it has been papers such as *The Wall Street Journal* which has brought this issue into the mainstream.

BTW, I've just returned from a month in Hungary, and I cannot overstate the degree of puzzlement exhibited by young Budapest intellectuals concerning the subject of political correctness. They think the Americans are retarded. But maybe that says something about the former.

--Marc Nasdor

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39. **Jorge Guitart**

Re: Anthslide

Fri 22 Jul 1994

i would like to know what hungarians find wrong with political correctness.

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40. **klindberg**

Re: Anthslide

Fri 22 Jul 1994

Perhaps they hero echoes of the Stalinist notions of "correctness" and "correct" party discipline.

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41. **Marc Nasdor**

Re: Anthslide

Sat 23 Jul 1994

Jorge:

What Hungarians find wrong with political correctness is undoubtedly that p.c. is the first step on the slippery slope leading to neo-puritanism. I've been hanging around with many Hungarians for the past decade (in fact, I'm married to one). And what I can tell you is that Hungarians like to enjoy themselves. They like to cook and drink and fuck and let their kids run around naked at the lakeside beaches. Those to whom I spoke on the subject of political correctness, however, sometimes posed inane hypothetical questions, such as: "So, if the woman *successfully* slept her way up the corporate ladder, could she later charge sexual harassment of those former superiors, for her own personal gain?" This was enough evidence for me to conclude that mainstream Budapest intellectual circles were receiving their information from rather suspect sources, probably the mainstream American press. :-) I would say that sexism and harassment are as prevalent in Hungary as in the rest of the world, but it's probably more out in the open, and I think that less and less Hungarian woman are willing to tolerate standard macho b.s. I've heard plenty of horror stories from my wife about her treatment by male superiors when she was teaching gymnastics in her twenties. At least the Hungarians aren't totally hypocritical, like many French intellectuals, who will claim of sexism in France that "we've already solved that problem," which as far as I'm concerned is a lot of hooey. As for other issues, multiculturalism, for example, the Hungarians usually claim that they are the embodiment of multiculturalism, being descended from seven or eight different nationalities stretching far into central Asia. Of course, try telling that to the Gypsies, who are treated as pariahs, to put it mildly. One gypsy family in a department store has everyone clutching their wallets with an iron grip. What can I say? We live in a screwed up world. In any case, political correctness in the USA has been demonized as a bourgeois pasttime. Unfortunately, discussions about such issues as spouse abuse, as well as gender-related issues, rarely include members of lower socioeconomic groups, whose members are affected is much greater numbers.

Regards, Marc Nasdor

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42. **Marc Nasdor**

Re: Anthslide

Sat 23 Jul 1994

Klindberg writes:

> Perhaps they hear echoes of the Stalinist notions of "correctness" and "correct" party discipline.

Well, maybe, but they also think that American intellectuals take themselves *way* too seriously. Can you blame them? How many examples of Hungarian fiction, poetry, drama, or criticism ever make it into English. I think many intellectuals writing in "less popular" language groups feel their works are constantly belittled by the "imperialist" languages. They are correct.

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43. **Patrick Phillips**

Re: Anthslide

Sat 23 Jul 1994

Marc,

from *Hungarian Anthology*, Pannonia Books, Toronto, '66

(the truck of the existential anti-imperialist editors is evident here in this mostly male-dom; but it's the only Hungarian anthology I have. What a nut to fit my knowledge of Hungarian poetry into, or what a *small* book to get it from....

From Anna Bede's "Ode to the Dishwater" (no date given)

Dishwater,

you daily gathering!

What are you making from the salad's green,
from the golden meat, from ash-colored fruit?

What do you do with the screaming of the tender finger-grabbed silverware,
engine-rumbling, painting, struggle of tuneful words?

How do you dissolve the changing to a man,
the leisure majesty of feasting,
the sparkling faith of working days?

You are like the jealous earth

Which only can dissolve and cleanse when she kills,
and falling in her pit, insects, leafage, fruit and men
become united and unrecognizable.

In many ways the anthology this fragment comes from is itself compost in this dishwater; that its ideological choices are informed by the themes, the forms, the conceits; that its picture of Hungarian poetry is messy, a messy remnant -

particularly now. Anna is one of three women collected here and *I* chose this fragment; itself a messy, and could be construed as ideological, choice. (Another - "I Am The One" - is much more clearly marked out as an *anti-war* metaphysics.) -- In many ways we engage in literary history and not poetry at all.... Of the many questions I'm raising in this post, foremost is how, or is it possible to be updated by another Hungarian (or by any) anthology? Anthologies are beasts one sleeps with while clutching a knife under the pillow. I have the knife; is there one that I could try with?

Pat

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44. **Marc Nasdor**

Re: Anthslide

Sat 23 Jul 1994

Thanks for the posting, Pat.

Hmm, unfortunately there's not much of interest in English. You might look at: *Modern Hungarian Poetry* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1977) The Hungarian issue of *Translation* from the mid-1980s An earlier issue of the *Five Fingers Review*, which includes poems by one of the more interest younger Hungarian poets, Endre Kukorelly, translated by Sandor Andras, a professor at Howard University in Washington. Interested Hungarophiles and others can write to him c/o the German Dept. there; or at 9007 Sudbury Rd., Silver Spring, MD 20910. Tell him I sent you. Thanks

The rest, alas and alack, are dull mainstream academic translations of Agnes Nemes Nagy, Sandor Weores, and Istvan Vas (all recently deceased elder poets)

-- Marc Nasdor

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45. **Susan Schultz**

Re: Anthslide

Sat 23 Jul 1994

I have the unhappy feeling that my posting led somehow to a discussion of "political correctness." That term, and its benevolent confrere, "multiculturalism," tend to obscure debate rather than open it up. The commercialization of "multiculturalism" (CNN advertises itself internationally as having a "multicultural" staff) comes to mean that we have "anthologies" and "multicultural anthologies" as if the two were necessarily distinct from one another. My argument for the inclusion of ethnic diversity in the former comes out of the experience of teaching in a place where 90-95% of my undergraduate

students in most classes are non-Caucasian Americans. At that point the debate over political correctness seems frivolous, and the need to diversify one's reading lists becomes a matter of pragmatism rather than idealism (or, if you're anti-PC, a stain on the traditional canon). But I don't think Hawaii's alone; California is becoming a state with no ethnic majority population. Doubtless others will follow.

This is not to say there isn't resistance here, too. There is, and it makes life in the UH English department interesting (in the sense of the Chinese curse: "May your life be interesting"). And my syllabi are often top-heavy with members of the old canon. But I wish we could talk about these matters without using the show-stoppers, pc and multiculturalism. We might at least talk about what "multicultural" might mean in a productive (and not in a commercial) sense.

Susan

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46. **kat**

Re: Anthslide

Sat 23 Jul 1994

A few very minor points in response to recent flurry, if I may.

1) to M. Nasdor--If members of socio-economic under-class are not part of our (?) conversations, how can we know that they are more affected by spousal abuse, etc?

2) S. Schultz--The point about saving productive thought and/or work from commercialism is, of course, well taken and shared. However, where do notions of "productivity" come from if not directly--or even reactively-- from the Market? one market or another? Expensive whole food markets, which tend to be quite p.c.; little broken down markets that sell lotto tickets and beer by the can; open subsistence markets in India; the commerce in ideas over emergent media, etc....

While it's no fun to pun about m/Market(s), it's worth recognizing some of the slippages from, say, high to low culture and sacred to profane (literary/literal?) property. Oh, anyway. By the way, I teach in Detroit, where it seems to be rather clear that "multiculturalism" and "cultural criticism" can too easily be an evasion of Race and Class, which are stunningly practical (Praxis) issues--even for the few theorists left at the front guarding their rear(s). Charges of p.c. can work same.

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47. **Marc Nasdor**

Re: Anthslide

Sat 23 Jul 1994

Kat:

Even if the socio-economic underclass (let's not leave out the culturally working class) were less plagued by spousal abuse, etc., it is clear that they must be somehow brought into the conversation. Do you think that *only* members of the upper and middle classes should be subject to (re)educational efforts on behalf of all women, minority groups, children, etc. Surely one cannot count on the moral Trickle-Down Effect to apply here. Try working on Wall Street for a while: I can assure you that you'll run into people from a wide breadth of backgrounds, most of them incredibly ignorant of even the subject of these discussions. These people--and most of "Middle America"-- are precisely those who American left intellectuals have been taking for granted in recent decades. These are also the same people who are never exposed to innovative art works, experimental poetry, film and music from other cultures, etc. There is one whopper of a cultural revolution that never happened in most of America in the 30+ age group. Maybe grunge culture has made deeper inroads among the twentysomethings than all the poetry or p.c. jingoism will ever hope to accomplish.

--Marc Nasdor

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48. **John Fowler**

Re: ANTHSLIDE

Sat 23 Jul 1994

Released from the tyranny of the bound book (canon)
a reader is truly empowered: the "book" loses its "market value";
texts have only use (commodity) value and no exchange value.

Where can the "unbound book" reside if not here?

First put it here, then choose your "pages" from it.

Do not give it to the "binders".

fowler

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49. **Robert Drake**

Re: Citation for Golding on Anthologies?

Sun 24 Jul 1994

Bob-- Yes, the problems are precisely the ones you named: commodification and canonization, though one suspects that both will be only modestly achieved by the respective collections.

*I think a forum on the questions raised by these books (and you are right to include the o*blek, leave, and P&P volumes: I haven't been able to track down the latter though) is very much desirable, especially since I think many of us are having to re-adjust our thoughts on the status of our "tradition" after such a conspicuous, and may it be said quite *alienating* repackaging of the work (alienating perhaps because it is so visibly dead labor all of a sudden, whereas before we all were prone to thinking we had a duty to keep it living through small scale, even illegal, republishing ((xerox packs, personal anthologies, the tattered copies we stumbled on in used book stores, etc.)). Do you recognize what I'm describing here?*

Let me know how you envision the section in TapRoot and how I might help you with it. I would be happy to prepare (and perhaps introduce) a selection based on remarks culled from a forum on the poetics list--if the list-owner and various subscribers agree that that's a legitimate use of bandwidth (which I think they will).

Get back to me on how to proceed when you have a minute. Until then, I wish you well.

steve--

sorry to be so tardy in replying--mounting a gallery exhibit (which opened friday) which included a 1300 item catalog... your original post seems to have sparked some discuss, much missed from the list of late. my own rantings:

anthology, from gk "collection of flowers"--neatly labled and pressed into a book, no longer living or fragrant, nor allowed to go to seed...

looked at in the most sceptical light, the urge to anthologize seems to me an attempt at ownership, a beating of the bounds which not only defines but claims rights to a territory. that's the sense, for me, in which it's an attempt to canonize--to control what is or is not allowed in, what is legitimate to consider. i have to think, given the power of the Norton anthologies in general, that Hoover & the editors there must be consious of that side of it; inexcusable if not so. & too, putting the thing together as a product to sell, obviously not just the commodity of an individual book on the shelves but a perspective, actual capital value in a (praps corrupt) cultural market. that's the "commodification" angle.

i think, for the others (Barone & Ganick, o*blek, Sun&Moon), there's a bit of an embattled sense, in which they feel they must struggle against that entrenched power structure, either to storm the gates or at least to define & defend their domain. those alternative practices & poetics i am much committed to, but i'm not sure that adopting the same tactics is the best agency for advancing the cause...

wanna be the next don allen. wanna out the next
in the american grain (such an important book
to me--& maybe moreso 'cause i got it fr a buck
in the remainder bin...)

this is all very largely overstating the case.
hyperbole that i all too often believe.

i appreciate having the chance to read other editor's selections, reading the editing as well as the selected work. telling, fr instance, that the Hoover is arranged by chronologic date of birth--nothing about the work itself, but centrally about the author--as arbitrary as any, i suppose. the author-ity of the editor, tho, is i imagine not something most students will be aware of--and there's an arguement in favor of the "illegal xerox packs & personal anthologies" you mention, which are so obviously the selections of an individual...

a plug here, for the initial issue of "Chain" (spring summer 1994, "Special Topic: Gender & Editing", edited by Jena Osman & Juliana Spahr; \$7.95 to 107 14th St., Buffalo NY 14213). A _crucial_ piece of work. from their "editor's notes" (without permission): "Relation: Perhaps a good starting point would be to discuss my apprehension about editing. I am uncomfortable with the idea of the editor as arbiter of good taste, or as the (in)visible navigator/sculptor of a final packaged product. Journals rarely seem to openly admit the presence of personal ideology behind their pages. And when they do, the "personalized" frame seems to stifle and alter the work by mashing it into an overly-prescribed space. We all change what we read in the very act of reading; however, editing forces an external median strip between the substance of the original and what it will become. Such mediation can create a powerfully dialogic space; it can also create a "culinary" space that limits the possibilities in the act of reading. The _Chain_ project is an attempt to investigate the (im)possibility of an unmediated reception, the (im)possibility of detaching a writing from its presentations/ideological form."

(& yes, i(ronic), male, select this particular excerpt for
this particular space...)
(wondering if the (coincidentally male) editors of the

anthologies under discussion might have some awareness of these concerns)...

so what does an anthology teach? that literature is a dead thing (again, the flowers pinned down & labled); that you (reader) can rely on someone else to distinguish for you what is important, what is not. (too bad "discriminate" has lost some utility--of course it would be evil to "discriminate against" something; so instead we are indiscriminate); & that it has no context. the anthologist trots out a string of "good" poems, demonstrating their power & virtue--& by extension poems that are "like" those are "good", ones that are "different" must not be. profoundly conservative.

why not teach a few "bad" poems? teach from the struggling journals (we could use the business), let (make) students hunt thru and make their own choices. for the cost of the Norton (aww, quit raggin' on them...) you could choose a half-dozen "slim darlings" & really get into a poet's work, the best and the not-so (once got an order frm a univerisity bookstore for 50 copies of one of our chaps; made my day for a week).

"1805 W. Taylor in Ann. Rev. III 651 It ought not be said
that any aanthologist can strrip the garden of its flowers."
(i love my OED--so optimistic; & so well edited)

so, that's my rant, or a bit of. as fr TRR: our (thee editorial "we"!) main goal is to provide access to material, descriptive over evaluative, and as above encourage the reader to make her own choices. a brief survey, say a paragraph or 2 on each of a half dozen, plus a few paragraphs to contextualize (raise some of these questions, not neccesarily lay down the definitave answers), would be a valuable contribution. hope you'll consider.

asever
luigi

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50. **Marjorie Perloff**

Anthologies

Tue 26 Jul 1994

Well, I've finally managed to retrieve 58 messages from my other Eudora) system at Stanford via my computer in Los Angeles. But I haven't figured out how to send it the other way yet. So let's see if it works on MCI. A few comments: in all the discussion of anthologies, no one has mentioned that the

odd thing about Hoover, messerli, and Weinberger is that they feel obliged to buttress the present with so much of the past. Don Allen, after all, really did do the New American Poetry. So why do these anthologists begin with Olson or the Objectivists, etc.? Stuff that's 30 years old or 40. Do we feel too little confidence that we can pick the New American Poetry. As for the Multiculti issue (brought up by K. Lindberg, Susan Schultz etc), I think much more of it will kill off any interest in poetry anyone might have. Poetry isn't written by quota. Gays, for example, have always been way overrepresented--the leading poets at many periods of history have been, say, 60 % gay. Now if we have to go by quota, where does that leave the poetry of Hart Crane or Auden or O'Hara or Ashbery or Schuyler or even Whitman and Dickinson? Secondly, the sort of thought police to be found in John Yau's recent rant is really counterproductive. Whatever one thinks (thought0 of Eliot W's anthology, this sort of head count can't work. There will always be more groups, always those not represented, etc. etc. Why does every group have to write poetry to begin with?

Marjorie Perloff

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51. **Marc Nasdor**

Re: Anthologies

Tue 26 Jul 1994

Marjorie:

I'm so busy working my butt off in the sweatshop that I did not see the rant of John Yau that you mentioned in your post. Could you please tell me where I can get a hold of it.

Sincerely,

Marc Nasdor



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52. **Susan Schultz**

Re: Anthologies

Wed 27 Jul 1994

Dear Marjorie and K. Lindberg and others:

It seems to me that there has to be a middle position here; to argue for "multiculturalism" does not necessarily invoke the thought police, or John Yau. I do think it's worth asking whose interest in poetry is deadened by such

discussions (and that, I suppose returns us to the question of community); as K.L. and I have noted (and I'm sure people are getting sick of hearing me write this), multicultural syllabi are often more a practical, than an idealistic--or cynical, if you will--concern. That's why readings by white male mainland poets average fewer than 35 members in the audience, and why readings by prominent Asian-American writers can easily attract several hundred here. Audiences do matter, and I'd like to see them overlap more. The problem with multicultural anthologies is, to my mind, that the creation of a "multicultural" market may tend to reaffirm the differences between audiences. What I'm suggesting is a blending of that large group of white male gay poets (or whoever's in the statistical ascendancy) with other voices. I'm not talking essentialism, but experience here. It's not that all groups should write poetry, but that individual members of all groups, for whatever reasons, do. I appreciate the fear of quotas; I feel it myself sometimes. But there are unconscious, as well as conscious, quotas. Why else would 98% of the University of Hawaii English department be white, in a state that has no majority group?

Enough huffing and puffing by me. Back to Honolulu's humid squelch. I hope others are cooler.

Susan Schultz

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53. **Marjorie Perloff**

Anthologies again

Wed 27 Jul 1994

In response to Susan Schultz: you're right, Susan, I was just sounding off because I did find John Yau's attack on Elliot Weinberger especially irritating and disingen- uous. But you'r right: if I taught at Hawaii, I would certainly feel a responsibility to have plenty of local (or Asian-Am or Asian) poets and not just white males. But I think that's less a question of ethnicity in general than of local pride, isn't it? The feeling of always importing things from the mainland? Anyway, I'm looking forward to my Phi beta Kappa visit next January and see for myself, never having been to Hawaii. All very complicated! Marjorie

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54. **Steve Evans**

Yau's Review

Wed 27 Jul 1994

For Marc and others who may not have seen it, John Yau's review of the Weinberger volume appeared in the March/April issue of American Poetry

Review. The current issue of the APR (with Joe Ceravolo on the cover) includes letters--all of them hostile to Yau--from: Weinberger, Esther Allen, David Hinton, Forrest Gander, Roberto Tejada, and Cecilia Vicuna. Yau is given space to respond to each letter.

[What follows are some thoughts, composed rather late at night, that can certainly be passed over by anyone who is growing tired of this topic.]

My gloss on the exchange in APR is, I regret to say, rather negative. I hope it won't sound cynical when I say that **credentials** seem more at stake than substantive issues. This is not to argue that credentials are **not** a substantive issue in the politics of representation, but it is to admit a certain weariness with the American reflex of personalizing important debates (e.g. Weinberger's calling Yau's review "a nervous breakdown in print," & other examples too numerous to mention).

One interesting note: Yau wrote exactly the review Weinberger had apparently been having nightmares about while preparing the book (see his defensive "note on the selection" at the front of his book, with its Malthusian reference to a "population explosion" in recent poetry apparently contradicting the denigration, several pages later, heaped on those who "count heads" or maintain "police-blotter files on individual poets".) That the "Very Brief History" of "American Poetry Since 1950" is more than an apology for the editorial decisions of the book I also take to be incontrovertible. Had Weinberger admitted that his description is **historically** accurate for the period between 1950-1965 (or 70 at the latest), and then only for a very specific (and indeed, very significant: cannot specific and significant be thought at the same time?) group of writers, there would have been a lot less room for misunderstanding.

My point here is: Weinberger and Yau are playing two sides in a single game, a game in which "marginality" has been converted into the stake and highest honor even by intellectuals who feel few of its withering social effects. I would suggest that we wean ourselves of "marginality" and consider more seriously the values and meanings of "specificity"; that we, further, dis- abuse ourselves of illusions that, historically, avant-garde formations have been drawn from any class other than the dominant one, and that in the U.S. that class has been and continues to be white; and finally, that positions in the economy of literary canonization have any **direct** correspondence to positions of social power. I hope that it is recognized that the latter two points go together: drawn from the dominant class does not mean loyal to it. The avant-garde hasn't had, by any means, the monopoly on oppositional cultural and political practice in capitalist societies; but it has had, at various times, important links to oppositional social movements and to the intellectuals who inevitably emerge as such movements

progress. Vexed, contradictory, seldom studied in any detail, such links might be the basis for an anthology neither Yau nor Weinberger, nor for that matter Michael Harper (*Every Shut Eye Ain't Asleep: An Anthology of Poetry by African Americans Since 1945,* \$13 from Back Bay/Little, Brown), have yet imagined.

One last note: Erica Hunt's "Notes for an Oppositional Poetics" has been mentioned on this list before, but its relevance for this discussion seems worth noting once again. It is published in *The Politics of Poetic Form* (Roof, 1990). Cary Nelson's *Repression and Recovery: Modern American Poetry and the Politics of Cultural Memory* (U Wisconsin, 1989) also is useful here, especially with respect to the way class, and class struggle--two things that identity politics and official multiculturalism cannot recognize-- were once vital, generative, categories of poetic practice in this country.

I apologize for the length of this post; as usual I couldn't resist the opportunity for discussion this list represents to me.

Regards to all,

Steve Evans

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55. **Joseph Conte**

Re: Anthologies

Wed 27 Jul 1994

I for one can't remember the last time I bought an anthology for personal reading. I evaluate them as textbooks for survey courses, trying to anticipate their appropriateness for a fairly disinterested group of largely blue-collar students here in Buffalo. I order an anthology because my students can't afford a long reading list, and so they get a wide selection at one low price. I used Codrescu's *Up Late: American Poetry Since 1970* in a class on Contemporary Literature (along with several pbk. novels). Antin's talk poems and Judy Grahn's lesbian odes were the surprise hits; much other experimental work was largely met with stoney silence. I actually looking forward to trying out Hoover's book next spring. I think the poetry has to move the audience, regardless of race, gender, or sexuality. If gets them talking about something other than the Buffalo Bills on Monday Night Football, it's a success.

From Buffalo, where the cool breezes blow off Lake Erie and there's nary a day over 90 degrees:

Joseph Conte

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56. **Marc Nasdor**

Re: Yau's Review

Wed 27 Jul 1994

Thanks to Steve Evans for his relevant posting. I look forward to rereading Cary Nelson's book. I just have a couple of points to add. First, Steve, I think that it's a bit disingenuous to say, in 1994, that the dominant class "has been and continues to be white." That sounds like a statement by someone who never gets off campus. I'm a freelancer and I have been poking my nose into many types of work and social situations for a long time. I can guarantee you that the dominant class--the "middle" class, the class to which we're referring--is well represented by non-white members, who spend the same amount of energy as white people hypeing the dominant culture--capitalism, know- nothingism, the general conservative ethic, etc. I think that for domestic politics in the present and future, race is and will be a distraction, and I don't think that the community of "alternative" poets and writers will ever really come together, to make definitive cultural/political action, until it recognizes that *class* was/is/will be the central issue here. I don't know, people seem to go out of their way to avoid talking about class. I wrote this posting because of the way you ended yours (making reference to the fact that identity politics and official multiculturalism cannot recognize class and class struggle). I think you contradict yourself. The second bone in my throat: your inference that "credentials" may be a substantive issue in the politics of representation. Steve, that's why we love the Net, because it frees us from such ephemera. I have no idea what your credentials are, and I couldn't give a flying Flinstone. We should all be grateful to be alive to see the crumbling of the priesthoods. We only have to be vigilant enough to watch out for new ones.

Regards, Marc

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57. **MARK WALLACE**

Situation on the move

Thu 28 Jul 1994

Situation magazine is moving again,
this time to Washington D.C.
Please send all correspondence after August 1
to:

Mark Wallace
Situation
10402 Ewell Ave.
Kensington, MD 20895

Issue #7, just out, features the work of
Kevin Killian, Ron Silliman, Dodie Bellamy,
Carmen Orrega, A.L. Nielsen, Mark Hammer, and Sterling Plummpp.

Only \$8 for four issues,
\$2 for single and back issues.

I hope to hear from you.

Sincerely,
Mark

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58. **Joe Amato**
anthologies...

Fri 29 Jul 1994

for alla this talk contra anthology, which i do 'preciate & understand, still:

1. if somebody wanted to anthologize my work ("me") i'd be tickled pink... perhaps i wouldn't feel this way after countless such 'events'... on the other hand, i think it would be an Immensely Satisfying ego-massage... some of you who have had the dis/pleasure can comment here on this---do it feel as good as it looks?... 2. as i think it were john fowler pointed out, the net represents to those with access places to distribute foc... use at your own in/discretion... for you academics out there (like moi): this will of course not help your tenure case in any causal sense (as things currently stand)... 3. what "counts" as an anthology in poetry is perhaps a different construction (say, in historiographic terms) than similar compendia in, say, fiction... 4. let's not gloss the less-than-scholarly-and-entirely-human tendency to want to see one's friends families oneSelf in print, side-by with other perhaps more famous names... i refer here to the tendency for editors to plain & simply play faves... which is simply an extension of any such editorial stance (& it happens ALL the time)... which is again one rather obvious reason why ANYTHING gets published in the first place, whatever the merit... 5. anthologies, as a few folks have suggested, are useful in pedagogical terms... if you make your own you're not necessarily more disinterested---the impulse may very well be precisely the same... luigi-bob's comment re purchasing five or six 'little books' strikes me as on the mark... yet there do seem to be a need now & again for some sweep, some 'representational' grid of who's who in institutional terms (& in accord with one's sense of institution)... anthologies are texts... that is, they have contexts... they are not static, they emerge (jed & alan & ___ are probably most familiar with this argument) against a specific set of cultural exigencies... hence they oughtta be used in light of this... if intro'd this way, anthologies can be seen as the normative constructions they in fact are... 6. & of course, back to emedia,

what of the digital-form issues at stake in this process of amalgamating?... we take work composed with pen pencil typewriter wordprocessor & lord knows what new software, we convert it to print-bound matter, & we publish accordingly... perhaps this seems a moot point---to those who view these letters as just that---but i find it more problematic in poetry than, say, in publishing paperbacks of victorian prose... owing to my sense of things poetic, attention to formal constraints etc... & because there has been for some time now, all over the net, ongoing discussion of dislocations slippages etc. as a consequence of emedia, alphabetically speaking...

so so... just some random noninklings, bubbling up through...

joe

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59. **Steve Evans**

Re: Yau's Review

Fri 29 Jul 1994

Just a couple of quick points in reference to Marc's post. I take the point that whites no longer monopolize the exercise of domination, though I don't happen to share Marc's view that the middle-class is "dominant" in the national or the global economy. I invite Marc to provide an explanation for the "whiteness of the avant-garde" that is more solidly grounded than the one I gestured towards. In schematic terms I simply tried to suggest that: avant-garde cultural production tends to be an option in the universe of subjects socially positioned nearer to economic power; as the terms of access to that power get redefined, so will the terms of access to the avant-garde project. I draw this inference from looking at the composition of actual avant- garde formations since the mid-nineteenth century, but I will be the first to rethink the position if people present good reason to do so.

On the question of "credentials": here I'm afraid that it's your turn to be disingenuous, Marc. I was explicit in my criticism of turning credentials into the central point of contention in the Weinberger-Yau debate. However, as a genuine set of questions about tradition underlies the manic debate about Canon, so a genuine set of questions about competence underlies the debate about credentials, or so I would contend. The bridge term in each case seems to be institution(s), since they convert traditions into Canons and competence into Credentials. But perhaps I overestimate, here at my university-subsidized internet link, the importance of the institution?

As for the crumbling of "the crumbling of the priesthoods"--please don't mention it to Salmon Rushdie, since such comments must tempt his patience. The "old" ones are still here, and there are new ones in addition to that. As

Andy Levy remarked in a series of posts several months ago, the Net itself is, more likely than not, one of these new ones. There is plenty to be vigilant about, agreed, but not only up ahead.

Regards,

Steve Evans

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60. **Chris Funk**

synnerlyptium

Fri 29 Jul 1994

d i u 4

All persons interested in text-based virtual realities:

Describers of an Imaginary Univercity will meet
in the living room on lambda-MOO, Monday August 1st 10 pm
east coast time. To accompany: telnet lambda.xerox.com 8888
If you are unfamiliar with this medium, you might experiment before-
hand, and obtain a "Character" if possible. C you there.

"XXXX OOOO EH" incites us to imbibe the "strong, costly wine" of Robert
Herrick's verse, but students here at DIU should know just how strong and just
how costly a whine it is:

UPON SOME WOMEN

by Robert Herrick

Thou who wilt not love, doe this;
Learne of me what Woman is.
Something made of thred and thrumme;
A meere Botch of all and some.
Pieces, patches, ropes of haire;
In-laid Garbage ev'ry where.
Out-side silk, and out-side Lawne;
Sceanes to cheat us neatly drawne.
False in legs, and false in thighes;
False in breast, teeth, haire and eyes:
False in head, and false enough;
Onely true in shreds and stuffe.

--Patriarchal Poetry

*** REQUEST FOR INFORMATION ***

For a study on the "objectivist poets" in preparation for DIU Press I would appreciate any anecdotal information (including letters, photographs, first person accounts or copies of memoirs) that would shed light on the brief marriage of Lorine Niedecker and William Carlos Williams. I am also seeking information on Joyce Hopkins, in particular the circumstances that brought her to reveal "Louis Zukofsky," "Charles Reznikoff" and "George Oppen" as Niedecker's pseudonyms. Lastly, if anyone knows the whereabouts of Robert Creeley, I have been trying to track him down. I understand he is the last living member of the original "objectivist conspiracy," and that he went into hiding shortly after the coup but remained within the borders of the old United States.
--Kimberly Filbee

CLASS ANNOUNCEMENT FOR "AMERICAN POETRY"

What does it mean to be an American? I have presumed to regard this question as an historical one.

Yet Marianne Moore suggests our historiography lacks something in the way of truth. Do you agree?

In the way of truth stands history itself, blocking the light. History in the form of an author casts its shadow on our reading. What to do?

As we begin our reading of Whitman's "Drum Taps," let's presume to imagine that Whitman himself is listening in on our conversation. Can we provoke him into stepping aside, that the light might return to the page?

The dark is good to dream in, but to dream in the light is better still.

"He comprehended that the effort to mold the incoherent and vertiginous matter dreams are made of was the most arduous task a man could undertake, though he might penetrate all the enigmas of the upper and lower orders: much more arduous than weaving a rope of sand or coining the faceless wind."
(Jorge Luis Borges)

Discuss.

--Black Hole Sun

from: SLICES OF KNOWLEDGE

Never despair. Let macerate longer.

*

An inn of soft muds for fish who spend the night out of the water.

*

A beggar, but he governs a beggar's cup.

*

Mornings, if one is a bee, no mucking about, one has to pilfer.

*

Funerals should take place in swamps. Wouldn't it be just that the
living, who follow the dead, should also be in difficulty?

*

The birds' delirium does not interest the trees.

*

It is not the crocodile's job to yell: "Watch out for the crocodile!"

*

He who hides his madman, dies voiceless.

*

Even if it is true, it is false.

*

- What would a distillation of the whole world be like? - asked a man
in amazement, drunk for the first time.

*

The caravans want respect.

*

There is no proof that the flea, which lives on the mouse, is afraid of
the cat.

*

The blood of the ox, put into a tiger, would give the latter nightmares.

*

Evil traces, good floods.

*

That one uses his vice to jerk off his virtue.

*

--HM translated by PJ

Let us recall the Kent State massacre. What was at stake? Why
was the National Guard shooting down middle-class young
people in middle America?

Their ancestors were enthralled by the utopia sublime. Right there in Ohio, in Akron and Cleveland, they were in the thrall of the absolute. So utterly were they taken up by what their self-repression might gain them that, when the Cayuga River caught on fire and burned, they did not understand that it was a sign.

The children were lured by beauty--forms that were available to the senses, not crumbling between a lost origin and an infinitely receding goal.

I or I would recall the virtue of Herbert Marcuse in this connection:

"Before the court of theoretical or practical reason, which has shaped the world of the performance principle, the aesthetic existence stands condemned. However, we shall try to show that this notion of aesthetics results from a 'cultural repression' of contents and truths that are inimical to the performance principle. We shall attempt to undo this repression theoretically by recalling the original meaning and function of aesthetic. This task involves the demonstration of the inner connection between pleasure, sensuousness, beauty, truth, art, and freedom--a connection revealed in the philosophical history of the world aesthetic."

--Thus, Albert or Hubert

Playlist, Conference of the Birds, KZSC, Santa Cruz 7-11-94

Silvio Rodriguez/ Sueno Con Serpientes/ Dias y Flores

Mercedes Sosa/ Los Hermanos/ en Argentina

Ketama/ Creo/ El Arte de lo Invisible

Ismael Miranda/ Aventura/ Por El Buen Camino

...

Don Cherry and Ed Blackwell/ Roland Alphonso/ El Corazon

Old and New Dreams/ Mopti/ Playing

...

Cesaria Evora/ Sodade/ Trance Planet

Songhai/ Africa/ Songhai

Seleshe Damissae/ Sewnetwa/ Seleshe's Collection

Hrant Kenkulian/ Dilerum Sen (Past Sarki)/ Udi hrant Kenkulian

...

Salim Halali/ Nlaguik Ellila/ En Tunisie

David Murray/ Patricia/ NYC 1986

Oppong/ Anadwo Bea/ 1960's Highlife

...

Franklin Kiermyer/ Peace on Earth/ Solomon's Daughter

Andrew Cyrille, Jimmy Lyons, Jeanne Lee/ In These Last Days/ Nuba

Julius Hemphill/ Rites/ Dogon A.D.

...

Alemayehu Eshete/ Ambassel/ Addis Ababa

The Tahitian Choir/ Morotiri Nei/ Trance Planet

...

Youssou N' Dour/ Woma/ Bir Sorano Juin '93

Orchestra Reve/ El Ron pa Despue/ La Explosion del Momento

Rabab/ (title in arabic)/ Best of Rabab Vol 2

Khaled/ Hebou/ N'ssi N'ssi

...

Nasida Ria/ Janikan Anak Asuh/ Keadilan

Ornette Coleman/ What Reason Could I Give/ Science Fiction

...

Thelonius Monk/ untitled solo piano/ Blues Five Spot

James Booker/ Lawdy Miss Clawdy, Ballad at the Maple Leaf/

Ressurrection of the Bayou Maharaja

"errata" diu 3: line 9 --Patriarchal Poetry should read "construction is precisely what is leading us to (ecological) crisis." rather than "destruction...". phrase in line 16 --XXXX OOOO EH should read "punch not" not "puncnot". the editors humbly apologize for such ghosts.

please send thought pleasures & correspondence to



diu is (c)irculated weekly by the logic of snowflakes
"nodal extension" of wepress

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61. **Jed Rasula**

Re: Yau's Review

Fri 29 Jul 1994

I think Steve Evans has come up with a useful formulation: that institutions convert traditions into canons and competence into credentials. You could also say that institutions *define* competence as the ability to convert traditions into credentials. In the end it comes to the same thing: who gets accredited to speak on behalf of, and in the name of, others. The anthologists' familiar ploy of gesturing towards the contents and saying "the poems will speak for themselves" is an old ventriloquist stage trick. I'd welcome a return of the old mode of the commonplace book (the last author to publish one that I'm aware of was Auden), in which a patchwork of citations pretends to be nothing less than (in

Emerson's term) "colossal autobiography". Where all this gets wearying is in the overinvestment, on the part of editors, in the pretence that a "community" or a "tradition" is somehow being preserved--which is not the same, by the way, as the case (like Allen's NAP) of an anthology inaugurating the conditions for a community that only retrospectively identifies itself in the past conditional, which is precisely what Weinberger, Hoover, and Messerli propose to do: "if we had been there all along, 'we' would have ended up looking like this."

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62. **Alan Sondheim**

Submission

Fri 29 Jul 1994

The Trouble I had with Poets

What I remember about the poets and the trouble I had with them was first the time Anne called and I picked up the phone and said Anne, knowing it was her. But Bernadette said that I was involved with Rosemary to get closer to Vito and Vito had told Rosemary I was a pest, which he also told to Dara who Vito told me was a pest. In short order, pests were everywhere. My ex-wife went to Bernadette's ex and there were fights all around. Keith seemed to put up with me and once when I was crying around midnight told me I was a real artist. Jackson saw the tape that Kathy and I did and said it took courage. Meanwhile Vito saw the tape and said I wasn't a real artist and Laurie saw the tape and said I was. Allison went up to Kathy by the way and said she was married to me and Kathy told Allison I was crazy. Rosmarie I don't think ever liked me although I liked her with a great aplumb. Meanwhile David just about stopped talking to me and Aram thought I should focus more and was just impossible. Clark and I talked all night long early on and I owe him for that, but I felt used and abandoned towards the end. When I first read Allen that was all the Allen there was, but Dan told me that Vito said he never wanted to end up like me. Still Alan told me I wasn't as arrogant as he had heard, and Krister hated me for reading Lacan until later when she read Lacan and more, according to Henry, and then just hated me. So anyway, I.A. said I had surprising talent, orphaning me, and quite a few years later I saw Robert stand up, which I had not seen him do before, although there was no reason for him not to do it. I fell in love with someone who lived with Diane probably because she lived with Diane or maybe she didn't. I published Michael in some early work, and Robert wanted to publish my translations from a language I didn't know. I am never sure about poets, about these poets. Poets trick me a lot and I always fall for the same old things. Susan always walked around in her underwear and it did tricks on me. And like everyone else, George had severe doubts, but Tom at least published some things as bad poetry. Now I look back and see that I should have listened

to Peggy, but how was I to know the difference between heroin and heroine? Ed wrote all too well, and Charles I am sure had his doubts, although Karen wrote America's greatest unpublished poetry. Ed was never particularly supportive, part of a group I viewed with jealousy and dismay. I could never believe in anything after hearing all of them, reading all of them - I could never believe in poetry ever again, including my own; I can never use 'poetry' without shuddering. I get suspicious of poetics which always seems to invoke Charles or someone like Charles. If not Charles, William or Robert, all those anglo names coming in from small-town crater America. Always I wonder what the rest of the planet and the other Roberts are up to, and more and more identify with Violette Leduc and her malaise. I have weaned myself from aphorism or metaphor, rhetoric or the bon mot that gains a pause, a witticism in a foreign language. I am a pariah for the poets if they even remember me, a nuisance or a pest refusing to settle down, half-male, half-thing. I doubt they remember me or would care to if given the choice. They were the troubles of my life.

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63. **Alan Sondheim**

Submission

Fri 29 Jul 1994

GOD

I am a fifteen-year-old girl who is also a fifteen-year-old boy and I have both a penis and a pocket to put it in. And I have no hair there yet so I can see myself when I put it in and someday I will have a baby because my friends have babies. I will have a baby soon and I know this because I am always wet because I can do things to myself.

But I don't sleep very good and I always think about God and I don't think that God really cares for me because she is a he and he can't give birth to anything because he doesn't have a pocket. And it doesn't make sense that he would make a pocket because if he could do that he could make himself like me and I don't think he would like that.

But I don't think God really cares for anyone either because what is the point of all those prayers just thanking and thanking him for everyone's misery because they really don't like anything that's happening to them, that's for sure. So if he did care then he's not so powerful because he's a he and because he doesn't seem to do anything about it. And if he wanted to do something about it and didn't then he wouldn't be very good, he would be evil. I would hate to think that God is evil but I just can't thank him for anything.

Besides, if God made everything, then who made God? I think that people like the idea of God coming first because God is something like people, even weak like them, and I think that weakness making something is better for people than strength making something, especially if it's strength they don't have. But anyway, there's this to think about, that God would be made by people, because people would want to make something not like them at all, but different, but not so different as, say a mountain. So I think that God would be just different enough to say that he is there forever or doesn't have to obey the rules, and I think he doesn't even know what the rules are.

So if he doesn't know what the rules are, then what is the point, if you ask me, for God, because why not just let things alone, and if you need something to let things alone, then you are living in a dream because there is nobody to tell you to stop touching yourself. And if I stopped touching myself down there, I would never have a baby.

(Oh, I forgot to tell you that I love to tell you about myself because I know you love to think about me touching myself there and it will make you forget all about God who will never punish me because he will be busy with your prayers and everything and will never know.)

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64. **Alan Sondheim**

Submission

Fri 29 Jul 1994

KARL KRAUS COMPRESSION MACHINE

"There are writers who can express in as little as twenty pages what I occasionally need as many as two for." (Karl Kraus)

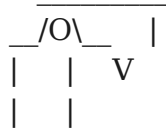
To force a rhyme which, lying on its back, flounders
All legs, thrusts the loss of hope and energy
Against the sun or moon, as if a tendency
Returns this spatial clot upon its back.

Tendency is towards, and not to mix a metaphor,
Which I won't do, is towards something which
Is not where it could be before the tendency,
Such as fascism, for everything

Flies on the surface of an enormous rope
Pulling its own weight behind its legs, dull gleam

Ahead, as if something were there, which it is not
Or rather, the fleeing tendency of time.

You might have known I write beyond the speech
Of which ridicule has barely parted, continuous work
On subject and its objects, of nothing in that space
Beyond the names. This beyond is my written leg,
Just one, falling everywhere beside the point,
Crippled in every direction, but there at least
A gesture in every direction, which I am not against.



The mechanism on the left contains a `_cylinder_` with a spherical bearing held in place. An arm extends from the bearing with an attached secondary arm at right-angles. Even with a limited degree of rotational freedom, the secondary arm is capable of alignment with any given point in three-space.*

Playing fields are drowned by words or dreams because
They bend, rip, are torn asunder, sodden, dull, because
They are not there but made from sentiment, because
Death works hard on them, returns a loss become a loss because
Victory is a young girl or boy hard upon a playing field because
The field is all their world laid out before the names because
The names don't amount to much at all because
They're not there, and nothing is intended because
The boy and girl are dead and no one plays there because
Playing fields are drowned.**

"How much material I would have if nothing happened!" (Karl Kraus)



*To penetrate the labia of god is perfect harmony, writing played out against the lips of god murmuring of afterbirth.

****The fearful world. The terrible language. The sun a brilliant red. The Romantic blue deer. The violence of cement.**

-----end K2-----

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65. **Robert Drake**

Re: Submission

Fri 29 Jul 1994

jeez--

i've always, so much, unjoyed the phraseology ov "Submission"; and, one version ov truth be told, always enjoyed being in thee editor's ship, and having authors/others "Submitting" to me; and ('nother version ov thee a4mentioned "truth") thee author submitting to thee Editorial _We_. We are, actually, rather a-mused.

& now, on thee net, yr all yr own editors.
'ow wonderful, 2 bad.

luigi

EDITOR (& don't you ferget it)

TapRoot Remiews

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66. **Marjorie Perloff**

Re: Submission

Sat 30 Jul 1994

I'm seeing if my new program will work.

Best regards, Marjorie

Z

echo

/

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67. **Marjorie Perloff**

Re: Submission

Sat 30 Jul 1994

Here I am est testing again but I can't figure it out.

Anybody have help on the SUNIX system and how you create messages?

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68. **sondheim**

Submission

Sat 30 Jul 1994

Ah, in relation to some response to _submission_, yes, I was aware of the masochistic tentation of the word which was deliberately poised above the

three... _submissions_ and is not my usual heading - in other words, _submission_ is part of the contents of the posts which begin after all in their heading.

Alan Sondheim

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69. **Tom Mandel**

Flavia

Sun 31 Jul 1994

1. If the dog won't let go the trouserleg, it must taste good. 2. Anthology - bunch of flowers - a selection of "choice" items, in both senses. I choose these, because they are so wonderful, and I want you to have them. There's no way around that. It's up to readers to tell us which they like (sorry, no way around that, either). 3. Oh sure, most anthologies are terrible; I mean, it's one person's taste, and in the kingdom of poetry - an absolute monarchy in which each one is monarch, subject to none, and none a subject - you start by having a completely different view from everyone else. 4. Yes, institutions and committees and all other formations of professionalism manipulate, mold, warp if you like the mirage which is our view of the art at this or any time, but there is no better committee to substitute, and such a substitution is all I see offered, not just in this debate or on this forum, but most (a polite formulation for damn near all) the constructed social critique is a demand for allocation of space to *my* brand of frogs in the existing pond. Viz. the only alternate university herein discussed proclaims itself imaginary: here's where I would drive if I had a car. But the only valid critique of a form of life is a different form of life. A poem can answer a poem, naught else. Nor is an alternative link equal to an alternative community. If you are a grad student or a professor, start a different university to teach something different. 5. Sometimes an anthologist is lucky (it is always better to be lucky than to be smart), viz. Don Allen. But, no one (perhaps Jed R.) has pointed to the social context of Allen's anthology: people living and doing something evidently and definitively different from a prevailing life. The authenticity of the anthology - which needed to make no self-eliminating "argument" ala Weinberger - was in the stuff. (I don't at all mean that Don Allen was lucky *not* smart, by the way, just that he was fortunate to be faced with such a potent task to which to commit his smarts). 6. The same operations which enable a canon and credentials enable the critique of that canon. There is a struggle for power and life and space and the crowning of these in a sense of worth for what one has done and chosen. If the canon we debate arose because the classical languages were moved out of the center of education (i.e. worse housing = bigger bombs), then what would happen if we all read greek again ((don't get

me wrong, it doesn't have to be greek, just a horizon and to replace all this margin-making wch replaced a sense of the horizon and its beyond))? But, we will always be empowering something larger and more abstract than the works we read, and will furiously unmake the beds we refuse to sleep in. 7. Grad students, quit school. Professors, resign your jobs. Talk about "avant garde" formations, that'd do it. Is a university a place where new art has traditionally formed (credentially formed)? Of course, if you have a family to help support (or you'd like to), then... just as you were, keep up the good work. But, can we move on to another topic? 8. Somewhere near Pittsburgh is a small town called Harmony; it began in a utopian gesture sometime near the middle of the 19th century. I turned toward my Dodge Dart toward it one day in I think it was 1973, but when I arrived it was a dim steeltown suburb black with oil and soot of the rivers that mingle thereabouts to (at the time) carry away what was not wanted in making the steel. I'm trying to remember whether I've ever looked at a map and seen a town called Rhyme.

tom mandel

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