

@poetics

The UB Poetics Discussion Group

Archive of Electronic Correspondence

February 1995

505 messages · Wed 1 Feb 1995 – Sat 4 Mar 1995

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

February is the shortest month, and the list contrives to spend nearly all of it inside a single argument. Outside, the new Congress settles into its majority and begins sharpening its knives for the endowments; Barings, the bank that once financed the wars against Napoleon, dissolves inside a week over one young trader's losses; and Grozny falls, block by ruined block, to Russian guns. The list attends to none of this directly and to all of it obliquely, having found a quarrel of its own large enough to contain everything else — a quarrel over theory that grows so many heads its own participants can no longer agree what to call it.

The thread arrives decently titled *"reified names vs. boundless vocabulary,"* and within days the subject line begins to rot in transit — first into *"deified theories and unfounded vocabularies,"* then, gloriously, into *"refried theory and deified beans,"* as though the argument had begun to digest itself. Spencer Selby and Tom Mandel circle the ancient question of whether theory serves the poem or quietly usurps it; the misreadings compound, letters cross in the mail, and Mandel at last discovers he has spent days answering the wrong man entirely. It is the list's native weather: heat, wit, and the abiding suspicion that everyone is talking past everyone else. James Sherry, meanwhile, patiently inventories the Language poets' bookshelf for the newcomers, as though a movement might be made safe by being catalogued.

Beneath the theatre of theory runs a quieter reckoning. Ron Silliman, struck by how few women post to a list so many women evidently read, turns and asks them outright — *"Why do you lurk without posting?"* The thread that answers is filed, with spectacular clumsiness, under the heading *"Boy Talk,"* and it draws Kali Tal and others out of what she wryly calls lurkdom. The question is sincere, and so is the awkwardness it exposes; for a few days the list is made to regard its own reflection, and does not entirely care for what looks back.

Relief comes, as it always does here, through elaborate nonsense. cris cheek mounts a magnificently straight-faced pseudo-history of a *"Cockney Folk Dance,"* dragging in Matthew Arnold and a praying mantis before concluding, with liturgical calm, that *"Coherence is its essence."* Nearby, Chris Stroffolino pursues Parmenides and the signifier through a thicket of question marks until he arrives at the month's perfectly circular koan — *"Should we theorize immediacy?"* — a

sentence that might serve the list at once as motto, as symptom, and as warning, and that no one present is able to answer without proving its point.

And then, past all the arguing, a death. Nina Iskrenko — the Moscow poet whose improvisations had lit up more than one American room — is gone at forty-three, and the list that spent the month theorizing pure immediacy is abruptly handed the real article's absence. Tom Mandel, who had met her only once, remembers that *"A great brilliance proceeded from her,"* and, finding her death first noted beneath the unlucky *"Boy Talk"* banner, offers what may be the truest sentence in the whole archive: *"I have no excuse at all."* I have set the quarrels in their proper order and left the grief exactly where it fell, at the bottom of the month, where no one answered it.

— K. M. F.

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1. **Mark Roberts**

AWOL: Overland Magazine

Wed 1 Feb 1995

AUSTRALIAN WRITING ONLINE is a small press distribution service which we hope will help Australian magazines, journals and publishers to reach a much wider audience through the internet. As a first step we will be posting information and subscription details for a number of magazines and publishers to a number of discussion groups and lists. We hope to build up a large emailing list which includes as many libraries as possible. If you know of a list or discussion group which you think might be worthwhile posting to or, if you would like to receive future postings, please contact AWOL directly on [REDACTED].

Please note that [REDACTED] is a temporary address until we set up our own address sometime this year

OVERLAND MAGAZINE

Overland, Australia's radical nationalist literary quarterly, continues to be edited by John McLaren and published with the assistance of the Victorian University of Technology (VUT). Overland is Australia's second oldest continually published literary magazine - Meanjin is the oldest, Southerly the first established, but not continuous.

Overland is published quarterly, and from 1995 will appear in February, May, August and November, so avoiding the plethora of journals that appear at the end of each quarter.

Its Summer 1995 issue includes Boc Burns on Peter Carey, John Ridland on an American discovering Australia, and the best fiction and poetry currently available--as well as an unparalleled helping of review of recent fiction, poetry, history and politics.

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2. **Chris Stroffolino**

Re: CALL FOR A DECISIVE BREAK WITH THE PAST (NURTURE THE APEX)

Wed 1 Feb 1995

Dear Ira--Okay, that would be cool if you moved here by me. What would you do for "a living" though? I wish I could help you find a job here. Maybe you could apply to the school here as a student. That's what I'm doing (thanks to the student loan sharks). I'm sorry to have been so negative about America or specifically Albany but when your post came through I had just been informed that Elizabeth's husband, Jeff Hansen, is not getting rehired at his job at the "boy's academy" here and the economic pressures that are severely affecting this town right now. Nonetheless, this is where I live. Anyway, if you're serious about this I could send you more info--perhaps off this list...Chris S.

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3. **Spencer Selby**

Re: reified names vs. boundless vocabulary

Wed 1 Feb 1995

Dear Tom, My statements about theory/practice were not just replies to you. They had a context too, which it seems you're not entirely attending. But I don't want to fight about it. I'm sorry if it seemed I was not appreciating all the wisdom and clarity of your thought. I'm sorry if my words were to you "no

reaction at all." In the future I'll try to do better, because it's clear that you're one of the most important voices on here, and your judgments are crucial. Yrs, Spencer Selby P.S. Whatever the context, I don't believe "this discourse proceeds at the level of the poetry."

On Tue, 31 Jan
1995, Tom Mandel wrote:

words must be read in context. read my words in context, not as an abstract opposition of poetry and theory but as a contextualized one. sure, theory (or criticism, or history, whatever) is also an art activity, an art form, a form of writing, what have you. And yet.... are we to succumb to the idea that there is no difference between Moses Und Aaron and Harmonielehre? I think my point was clear enough. What use to react to it in a way that is no reaction at all?

tom Mandel

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4. **Ron Silliman** **Randy & the NEA**

Wed 1 Feb 1995

Here's more stuff that I pulled off of the House of Representatives page on the WWW. Cunningham has been in Congress for 4 years. Here are the bills he has been the principle author of so far this congress. Except for what looks like a "local green" bill in there, the rest have a distinct reactionary flavor. Especially HR 220. Note his cosponsors. (Doolittle, who shows up more than once, is a rightwinger from the Sacramento area. Is anyone on this list from UC Davis?) If you have a congressperson who is listed on one of those bills, you might want to call his/her office and ask what they can do to influence Cunningham to get his committee (a subcommittee of the Economic and Educational Opportunities committee of the house) to report out a bill that authorizes the NEA.

Remember--from this point of view, it's unimportant whether or not he supports its funding. In fact, if he wants to vote against any appropriation, that would not be a killer. Authorization, tho, might be.

I will try to find out stuff on timing in the days ahead.

-- Ron

Representative Randy "Duke" Cunningham (R)

California, 43rd District

Office Information:

Washington Office

227 Cannon



Service Start Date: 01-03-91

Congress(es): 102nd - 104th

104 H.R. 216 Cunningham - Referred to House Subcomm

CONGRESS: 104

BILL NO: H.R. 216

OFFICIAL TITLE: A bill to provide that certain new Federal programs
shall terminate no later than 5 years after the date

of

enactment of the law that establishes the programs

SPONSOR: Cunningham

DATE INTRODUCED: 01-04-95

BRIEF TITLE: No Information Available

COSPONSORS: 16 CURRENT COSPONSORS

01-20-95 Doolittle, Packard, Poshard, Emerson, Torkildsen,
Pryce,

Ney, Royce, Fox, Forbes, Saxton, Dornan.

01-25-95 Christensen.

01-26-95 Seastrand.

01-27-95 Jacobs, Weller.

104 H.R. 217 Cunningham - Referred to House Subcomm

CONGRESS: 104

BILL NO: H.R. 217

OFFICIAL TITLE: A bill to establish a Second National Blue Ribbon
Commission to Eliminate Waste in Government

SPONSOR: Cunningham

DATE INTRODUCED: 01-04-95

BRIEF TITLE: No Information Available

COSPONSORS: 6 CURRENT COSPONSORS

01-11-95 Doolittle, Jones.
01-13-95 Linder, Knollenberg.
01-18-95 Paxon.
01-23-95 Moorhead.

104 H.R. 218 Cunningham - Referred to House Committee

CONGRESS: 104

BILL NO: H.R. 218

OFFICIAL TITLE: A bill to amend title 18, United States Code, to
exempt

qualified current and former law enforcement officers
from State laws prohibiting the carrying of concealed
handguns

SPONSOR: Cunningham

DATE INTRODUCED: 01-04-95

BRIEF TITLE: No Information Available

COSPONSORS: 43 CURRENT COSPONSORS

As Introduced Bartlett, Barton, Brewster, Calvert, Condit, Crane,
Doolittle, Gallegly, Holden, Hunter, Inglis,
Knollenberg, Lewis (CA), Packard, Paxon, Portman,
Schaefer, Solomon, Hall (TX).

01-09-95 Molinari.
01-11-95 Ney, Vucanovich, Coburn, Frost.
01-13-95 Linder.
01-17-95 Fields (TX).
01-18-95 Baker (CA).
01-19-95 Hancock, Lightfoot.
01-20-95 Allard, Chrysler.
01-23-95 LaTourette.
01-24-95 Tejeda, Metcalf, Heineman, Thurman, Emerson.
01-25-95 Bilbray, McKeon.
01-26-95 Shuster, Young (AK), Seastrand.
01-27-95 English.

CONGRESS: 104

BILL NO: H.R. 219

OFFICIAL TITLE: A bill to require a temporary moratorium on leasing, exploration, and development on lands of the Outer Continental Shelf of the State of California, and for other purposes

SPONSOR: Cunningham

DATE INTRODUCED: 01-04-95

BRIEF TITLE: No Information Available

COSPONSORS: 2 CURRENT COSPONSORS

01-17-95 Bilbray.

01-30-95 McKeon.

104 H.R. 220 Cunningham - Referred to House Subcomm

CONGRESS: 104

BILL NO: H.R. 220

OFFICIAL TITLE: A bill to amend title IV of the Social Security Act to

deny aid to families with dependent children to certain

individuals for any week in which the individuals work

or attend courses at an educational institution for fewer than 30 hours

SPONSOR: Cunningham

DATE INTRODUCED: 01-04-95

BRIEF TITLE: Responsible Welfare Act of 1995

COSPONSORS: No Information Available

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5. **cris cheek** ***past breaking point***

Wed 1 Feb 1995

existunintentionally - I left the be word out.

But I wouldn't suggest that the dues are what have to be paid for.

cris

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6. **I.LIGHTMAN**

Re: Re- CALL FOR A DECISIVE

Wed 1 Feb 1995

Bill,

Thanks for your encouragement of my Jung elaboration. I'm not sure that this list is the place for opening out all the aphorisms/points I made; I just hoped it might circulate the manifesto to generate some connection with the similar minded. However, I always answer specific questions. Stockhausen is a European composer of similar age and period to Cage; Stockhausen uses some process and chance, but he has also periodically stopped to ask what he has learned from his chance works, and has always also composed very carefully chosen work. My point in my manifesto was simply to allege that a lot of poets want to call themselves *musical* because they get Cage, or free jazz, as a theoretical gesture, but not as a physical experience of sound. That poets allied to Zukofsky think he and therefore they are musical when Zukofsky may namecheck Bach, but is a million miles further away from Bach than, for example, Pound, in understanding how to balance and combine cadences and sound, or how to do counterpoint. To take one example, Pound's use of monosyllables in the early Cantos is, it seems to me, a technical feat as difficult as musical composition; by his careful sense of context, dialect and etymology he places words in his poetry so that they interrogate and are interrogated by other words and lines *both rhythmically (picking up certain assonances) and semantically (looking at what the word might mean and has meant)*; this creates a kind of counterpoint, or slowing of time, as the mind remembers previous words and lines and mentally plays them in a kind of double-exposure; just as, when listening to Bach, one can hear phrases recur but in reverse or a different octave, and one thus hears phrases inside each other. If you then look at how Zukofsky uses monosyllables in the opening sections of "A", you find not remotely the same complexity (it's as if he's trying to copy the surface of Pound without understanding the structure). Cage wanted to use randomness in order to defy connections with the past, to be new in that way. Stockhausen manages a similar break but also stands equal with past composers, creating equivalent *complexity* by balancing not so much phrases but cadences, working not in time and rhythm but physical space. I can't describe it better than that; I juts just get a huge sense of space, with a sound coming from above, then left, then throughout the whole space. Cage wanted to get his audience to feel space, eg 4'33", but Stockhausen can actually sculpt it.

See how long it might take to spell everything out?

Best

Ira

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7. **Robert Drake**

Re: Re- CALL FOR A DECISIVE

Wed 1 Feb 1995

Stockhausen (Karlheinz) is a german composer, founder of the "cologne" school of electronic music--based in the studios of radio cologne, very generally using electronic sound sources (oscillators etc.) as opposed to manipulating found sound a'la the french muisque concrete school. altho he & cage did at some points clash over theory, i believe they "patched things up" (no pun inteneded, ov course) later, and the german/ french opposition now seems more genuine, at least to me.

dunno, maybe some folks think of cage & his zen influence as warm & fuzzy, and diametric to a perception of stockhausen's cold hard "classicism"--readings of both that _i_ find misleading...

lbd

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8. **Spencer Selby**

Re: reified names vs. boundless vocabulary

Wed 1 Feb 1995

Dear Stephen, Nice to hear from you. I will send you out a hard copy of the latest list today. Anyone else who wants same, just let me know, along with yr mailing address. Spencer Selby

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9. **James Sherry**

Re: apex of the m...

Wed 1 Feb 1995

The theories and practices of the poets of whom you speak evolved in a series of books from the early 1970s through the current decade's books by several of the poets. Anthologies such as *Inthe American Tree* edited by Ron Silliman and *From the Other Side of the Century* edited by Douglas Messerli will give you good samplings of some but not all of the poets involved. *The Language Book* edited by Bernstein and Andrews (Southern Illiois University Press), *The New Sentence* by Ron Silliman (Roof Books), *A Poetics* by Charles Bernstein, *The Boundary of Blur* by Nick Piombino (Roof Books), portions of my own *Our Nuclear Heritage* (Sun & Moon), and a raft of others by Barrett Watten, Alan Davies, and forthcoming by still others such as Hank Lazer will articulate

the variety of concerns that were addressed by these poets over the years. Someone might want to cite the secondary texts which have the purpose of "summarizing" the works, but I find these less useful since they translate the mechanisms by which the poets meant and thereby are only descriptive. Bernstein has a good list of these texts about these poets. But the point that must be made regarding your query is that the only simplified material that can be written would be similar to the promotional literature which was generated to alert librarians and readers to the presence of tendency in writing. Such promotional literature can't be used to articulate anything other than the marketing practices of publishers such as Messerli, Ganick, Bernstein & Andrews, and myself. So there probably is no short answer and most of the poets who participated in these writings and publications would prefer that they be allowed to represent themselves when you read them each, not as a lump, since the poets of whom we speak are as diverse as all the other tendencies combined and sought another mode of presentation.

So rather than a summary, I, for one, would ask you to take a look at some of the work.

On Tue, 31 Jan 1995, Jeffrey Timmons wrote:

A naive question from the unlearned:

Would someone please articulate in what ever fashion possible some general practices/theories of L=A=N=G=U=A=G=E poetry? What a hassle to type that. I won't hold anyone responsible for the reductive nature of categorizing what is (obviously) a highly diverse assortment of writers and writing. Ok?

Jeffrey Timmons

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10. **Robert Drake**

Re: Re- CALL FOR A DECISIVE

Thu 2 Feb 1995

sez ira, expanding on his "stockhausen not cage" slogan:

| *See how long it might take to spell everything out?*

exactly. the short version is so easily misunderstood as to be useless for anything but agitation. the expanded version gives me a point of entry, might be part of a dialogue (& not just a harangue). and the problem, for me, with much of what passes here, on these screens, is the time wasted on agitation. by which I refer back to the earlier M thread,

where the stance of the intro completely obscures...
response to the slogans seems pointless (haven't you ever
been called names before?), but, i believe, there is some
substance behind their practice (&/or praps related--who
mentioned CHAIN o*blek 12 etc?), which remains unaddressed
and still worth addressing...

& still, ira, i don't think you've got c & s right...

lbd

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11. **BLUOMA**

Re: Re- reified names vs. bo

Thu 2 Feb 1995

Reply to: RE>Re: reified names vs. boundless vocabulary
I'd like one please.

Bill Luoma
526 e5th st
NY, NY 10009

Date: 2/2/95 8:27 AM

To: BLUOMA

From: UB Poetics discussion group

Dear Stephen, Nice to hear from you. I will send you out a hard copy of
the latest list today. Anyone else who wants same, just let me know, along
with yr mailing address.

Spencer Selby

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12. **eric pape**

Re: Re- reified names vs. bo

Thu 2 Feb 1995

Spencer: Please send me a new list as well. I had the one you earlier
distributed, and found it very helpful, but accidentally erased it. 
Thanks muchly, Eric.

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13. **nada**

Spencer's gauntlet, etc.

Thu 2 Feb 1995

1) Between K and N:

Are people really distressed that the generations are going at it? Isn't that the order of things? eg. moose, cuckoos. . .

Analysis is beautiful though, even when it's tortured.

Especially when it's tortured.

It makes me feel wily.

A wily woman (CH) said to me once:

Write what you want to write.

And some clever men (CB and AD) wrote:

Write what gives you pleasure.

(that could be grand social responsibility,
philosophy, sparrows, things to eat
or just friction)

2) Picking up Spencer's gauntlet:

Teaching in Japan I have had to learn all kinds of tricks for getting silent people to talk, to break their internal barrier against speaking even if they feel they have nothing to say or are afraid of making a mistake. Techniques include sentence completion, anonymous bulletin boards, teaching gambits for evoking speech to the interlocutors of a silent person, giving participation points, and listening intently to a usually quiet one who gets up the nerve to speak. I wonder if these techniques could be adapted to a poetry community, and by extension to any democracy. FILL that air.

By the way it was very hard for me to post this.

Ashamed that my teeth might be part of my skeleton I was obliged to first blacken them then cover them with my hand.

What is the level of the poetry, Spencer? Who stratifies all this language?

I'm thinking of applying to Buffalo. I'm in e-mail contact with Ben F., but would like to hear from others involved in that community about what it's like.

Yoroshiku onegai shimasu.

reply to: [REDACTED]

concrete address:

Nada Gordon

202 Ikeda-so

2-1-5 Akatsutsumi
Setagaya-ku
Tokyo 156
JAPAN

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14. **Jeffrey Timmons**

Re: apex of the m...

Thu 2 Feb 1995

I want to thank all those that replied to my queries about L poetry and others who took the time to expand their replies to "account" (or at least ... say more about their positions. I liked it. I will be busy trying to immerse myself in some of this material and, as a consequence I'm sure, asking y'all questions about it.

Jeffrey Timmons

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15. **Loss Glazier**

*Press List * Avenue B * (via Stephen Ratcliffe)*

Thu 2 Feb 1995

__A V E N U E__ B__

New Titles (1995)

REGISTERS/ (PEOPLE IN ALL) by Clark Coolidge

88 pages

ISBN 0-939691-10-8

\$9.95

Written between May '89 and August '92, these fifty sections of 3-line stanza/chords continue Coolidge's fast-forward drive to explore how sheets of sound can be made to echo thought itself: . " . . .

Off where nerves rattle and glance interminable, the sphere of the bygone syllable. Lit as if sound, a cascade to a bell."

(OUTSIDE) by Todd Baron

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sense of the poems' shape crosses a spatial line or level they make that is public/interior." Leslie Scalapino

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16. **Spencer Selby**

Re: Spencer's gauntlet, etc.

Thu 2 Feb 1995

Dear Nada, Hello, I'm very glad you jumped in. I hope my statements have not been taken as being in any way against anyone's wish or need to speak out on anything. This forum seems very open (maybe even "wide open"), which is one of the best things about it. I might remind you though, that what is pleasurable for the speaker may not be for part or all of the listeners. As for what the level of poetry is, I'm not going to try that one. Poetry/art has its own level, and whatever it is or may be, it is not the same as theory or criticism or writers' discourses or internet exchanges. This view may strike some as extreme, simplistic or old-fashioned, but I think it's dangerous when artists or critics start saying (or building contexts in which) their discourse is on the same level as the art. Spencer Selby

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17. **Steve Evans**

Still Espousing

Thu 2 Feb 1995

Many books have been destroyed, carelessly or by design. Lost, burnt, forgotten, volumes drop out of existence, along with--more easily disposed of--proofs never pulled, unpublished manuscripts, notes for books, plans and proposals for things to be written, collected, put into books. The number of projects unaccomplished in history must be enormous. And much larger, almost infinite, the realm of projects unattempted, never started, what no one ever thought to do.

(Keith Waldrop, *Potential Random*).

on the other hand I am not going to espouse any short stories in which lawn mowers clack.

(James Schuyler, "Freely Espousing")

With apologies for the delay, here are some field reports from *Freely Espousing* events last weekend. After taking a few days to recuperate (and to change from our archaic e-mail software to Eudora), Jennifer and I want to re-issue our invitation to work with anyone who has ideas on how to sustain momentum, broaden the support-base, and provide an alternative voice (where strategic) to the rampant "bottom-line" thinking currently pervading both sides of the national debate on the Arts.

The disastrous equation of corporate economic interests with the national interest is not our only option here!

San Francisco

On Friday evening, January 27, Kevin Magee and Myung Mi Kim had about three dozen writers to their home to discuss two anthologies, *writing away here* and *The New Coast.* The site is significant: Small Press Traffic, which might have been in other times a 'natural' place to stage an event such as *Freely Espousing,* was losing its lease effective Jan 31. Some of the writers gathered at Myung and Kevin's had composed "documentary gestures" (meant to link the NEA issue to the broader social war) earlier in the week: these were faxed to Providence and Buffalo the following morning. Kevin reports that the NEA was "there as a pressure" throughout an evening devoted to opening a dialogue between otherwise segregated "traditions" in American poetry.

Follow-up: An audio-tape was made of the evening's discussion. Kevin and Myung have written a brief report of their event for the forthcoming *Poetry Flash,* where it will appear in the context (we presume) of a piece Jennifer and I are preparing on *Freely Espousing* more generally.

* Providence *

Organized by Jennifer Moxley and Steve Evans with support from C.D. Wright and the Ad-Hoc Council of Literary Presses.

Salomon Hall 101, Brown University 3-7pm

Estimated attendance: 175-200 people throughout the day

Format: Marathon reading of NEA-supported literature & Featured Speakers

Speakers: Ray Rickman (Host of Bestsellers on Channel 36/PBS and Former RI State Representative), Representative Jack Reed (D-RI), Michael Harper (Poet, Professor of Creative Writing at Brown, Former RI Poet Laureate), Tereann Greenwood (President of RI Arts Advocates and Director of RI Philharmonic), Roger Mandle (President of RISD), Liam Rector (PEN-Boston), Richard Cumming (Composer in Residence at Trinity Rep since 1966), Randy Rosenbaum (Director of RISCA), Rudy Cheeks (local journalist and First Amendment advocate), Doreen Bolger (Director of RISD Museum), C.D. Wright (RI Poet Laureate, Professor of Creative Writing at Brown).

Press Coverage:

"Freely Espousing lets you speak up for the arts," by Jim Seavor, Providence Journal-Bulletin, 27 Jan 95: D1.

"Writers gather in Providence to fight cuts in Endowment," by John Castellucci in Providence Sunday Journal, 29 Jan 95: B-3.

"Artists and Politicians Challenge Budget Cuts," by Alyssa Litoff, Brown Daily Herald, 30 Jan 95: 1+

"Gaurding Access to Art," Providence Phoenix, 3 Feb 1995: 3.

publicity, mobilized key defender's of the arts, and lead to local alliances that have developed throughout the week following the event. The video-tape Lee Ann Brown made will come in handy in the next weeks and months. We're currently slated to participate in a forum of the broad implications of the *Contract on America* for Rhode Island (16 Feb).

* New York City *

Organized by Jeff Hull with support from Brenda Coltas

Parish Hall, St. Mark's Poetry Project 3-6pm

Estimated attendance:50

Format: Letter-writing and brief program of speakers. Event followed a reading by Kate Rushin at the Ear Inn.

Jeff estimates that 70 longhand letters and 150 postcards were generated at the event itself.

Speakers: Anne Burt of the Literary Network, Elizabeth Murray, others.

Attended: Bruce Andrews, Ron Padgett, Eliot Katz, Alfred Corn.

Follow-up: Discussion of future events focused on moving beyond the strictly literary set. More as it develops.

Buffalo

(what follows is taken from an e-mail Jena Osman sent us earlier today)

The Buffalo version of the "Freely Espousing" event was re-dubbed "SAVE THE artWORLD." This event was not focused so much on the writing community's relation to the NEA, as it was on the many arts programs in the city which depend on federal/public funding; music, theater, visual arts, arts education programs, etc. The event was organized by myself (Jena Osman), with help from Anjanette Brush (director of Big Orbit Gallery), sponsored by the National Association of Artists' Organizations, and took place in the newly built cinema in the Hallwalls Center for Contemporary Arts. Outside the cinema, in the main gallery, were computers and printers set up for letter writing, tables of photocopied articles and info. about the NEA, books by NEA authors for sale from Talking Leaves Bookstore, food, talk, and the current Hallwalls member's show up on the walls.

The day consisted of a mixture of speeches and artistic presentations. Vincent O'Neill of the Irish Classical Theatre Company gave a dramatic reading of a section of his one-man show on the work of James Joyce, "Joyicity." Eighth graders from public school 45 read poems and stories that they had written with local writers from Just Buffalo Literary Center's Writers-in-Education program. Manny Fried, a local playwright and labor activist, read from his play "The Dodo Bird." Film-maker Tony Conrad showed two films side by side--one purportedly made before he received an NEA grant, one made after he received an NEA grant. Susan Howe read poems by Wilfred Owen. Raymond Federman read an excerpt from a novel which he had written with the help of NEA support. Random Axe, a band consisting of cello, banjo and guitar, played a short set, and the 12/8 Path Band played some socially activating tunes as well. Other participants included Ed Cardoni of Hallwalls, Louise Caldi of the Greater Buffalo Opera Company, Arlette Rosen of Pick of the Crop Dance Company, Deborah Ott of the Just Buffalo Literary Center, University at Buffalo professor Myles Slatin with a message from State Assemblyman Sam Hoyt, media makers Brian Springer and Jody Lafond, Buffalo State College Art Conservation student, Sarah Stauterman, composer David Felder, Buffalo writer-in-residence, A.M. Alcott and I'm sure there are others I'm forgetting to mention.

It's been estimated that over 200 people spent some time at the event, and all three TV stations showed up, two of them covering the story on the 6-o'clock news. Many letters were written, and many LitNet action cards signed. A primary target of the letter-writing campaign was Representative Jack Quinn of District 30, a Republican who is perceived as a potential swing vote in favor of the NEA. I believe the event was fairly successful at informing the community how NEA cuts will directly impact

accessibility to the arts in Buffalo. However, I think everyone realized that this event marked only the beginning, and hopefully those who attended are already thinking of what needs to be done next.

Washington

Organized by Joe Ross and Mark Wallace

Willow Street Gallery, 1-5pm

Estimated attendance: 40 (on a snowy day)

Format: Open Reading with brief program of speakers.

Speakers included Alexander Ooms and Cliff Becker (both from the NEA).

Attended: Tina Darragh, Peter Inman, Tom Mandel, Joan Retallack, Beth Joselow, Rod Smith and others.

Follow-up: Joe writes "To sum it up: positive, good feeling of purpose, left us ready to do more."

*** San Diego ***

Organized by Craig Foltz and Cole Heinowitz

The Wicki Up, 1-6 pm

Estimated Attendance: 50-75 people

Format: Marathon Reading with Featured Speakers.

Performance/Symposium: On the History, Present, and Future of the NEA.

Speakers/Readers: Quincy Troupe, Michael Davidson, Miguel Algarín (poet, founder of Nuyorican Cafe), Pasquale Verdicchio, Eloise Deleon (Performing Arts Director at the Centro Cultural de la Raza), Deedee Haleck (Paper Tiger Video and TV), Rae Armantrout, Fanny Howe, Mel Freilicher (writer and former co-chair of Sushi Performance Gallery), Jerome Rothenberg, Harold Jaffe, Maggie Jaffe, Ralph Lewin (California Council for the Humanities), Rand Steiger (Director of the Ph.D. in Music at UCSD, former director of LA Philharmonic).

Press: When we spoke to Cole on Sunday, coverage in the next day's SD Union seemed likely (can anyone vouch for that?).

Follow-up: About 10-12 people stayed after and forged a short agenda for the coming week. Discussion focused on broadening network to include SD Symphony, Escondido Arts Center (in Rep. Randy "Duke" Cunningham's district), etc.

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18. **BLUOMA**

Re: Re- Re- CALL FOR A DECIS

Thu 2 Feb 1995

Reply to: RE>Re: Re- CALL FOR A DECISIVE
>>and the problem, fr me, w/ much of
>>what passes here, on these screens, is the time wasted on
>>agitation.

There might be some agitation, but it seems healthy. Poets on the whole tend to be rather annoying.

Another tack, however, might be to discuss things in the world that are influencing the art, obsessions. I enjoyed eric pape's spirit story more than recent theoretical calls to the M.

Lately, I've been staring at high tension towers to get "inspiration." I've even taken to rendering them in photoshop. I can't articulate why I'm obsessed with power lines, but it/they continue to drive the work.

Perhaps this tack is too individualistic to have meaning to a large group. But I am more interested in learning new methods of doing good work-- how to get new obsessions--than in discussing the correct way to write.

I'd be curious to know what motivates others.

Bill Luoma



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19. **George Bowering**

Re: reified names vs. boundless vocabulary

Fri 3 Feb 1995

Blah blah blah blah blah blah blah blah blah blah blah blah blah blah
blah blah blah blah engagement blah blah blah blah blah blah
blah blah blah blah blah blah blah blah blah

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20. **nada**

Re: reified names vs. boundless vocabulary

Fri 3 Feb 1995

according to Lee Ann Brown, blah blah is what Bernadette Mayer is having to substitute for most nouns now

strange that aphasia should strike such a linguistic wonder beethoven
syndrome

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21. **Bob Perelman**

freely espousing

Fri 3 Feb 1995

Here's a press release about the event that Susan Stewart, Gil Ott, and I have organized here in Philly for tomorrow. I'll also include an Op-Ed piece I just wrote for the P. Inquirer, which will run Sun. or Mon. Now if only it doesn't snow a half a foot like they're predicting.

Bob Perelman

Press Release

FORUM TO MAINTAIN PUBLIC SUPPORT FOR THE ARTS &
HUMANITIES to be held at The Great Hall, University of the Arts

Saturday, February 4, 3-5 p.m.

We are planning a public forum to express our support for the NEA, NEH, IMS, and CPB. It will involve brief public presentations by members of arts groups from throughout the city: dance, music, theater, visual arts, literary magazines and reading series, humanities institutions, and others will be represented. A postcard campaign of support and the creation of a petition are also on the agenda. Anyone with a concern for the future of cultural funding is invited to come and contribute to our efforts to alert the public to the current threat to the arts and humanities. Delegates from the Mayor's Office and from congressional and senate offices have all committed themselves to participating.

If you need further information, please call Bob Perelman (898- 7055, [REDACTED]), Susan Stewart ([REDACTED]) or Gil Ott ([REDACTED]).

Groups participating (incomplete list):

The Mayor's Office	Philadelphia Free Library
Fabric Workshop	Philadelphia Folklore Project
Moore Gallery	ICA
Network for New Music	Tyler Gallery
Boulevard Magazine	Painted Bride
Singing Horse Press	Settlement Music School
Chorus America	Print Club
YMHA Poetry Center	Penn. Council of the Arts
WHYY	University of the Arts

Center for the Study of Black Literature and Culture, U Penn
Historical Society

GOVERNMENT BY IRRITATION

Government by irritation: it's one of the dominant political modes of our day. Taking their cue from talk show hosts, politicians try to topple their opponents by unleashing discontent. These days the NEA serves as a handy source of annoyance if not outrage: a few well-publicized examples of troublesome art have, over the last few years, been able to furnish a great supply of instant political energy. It's not easy to argue against such energy. The value of art is not always instantly apparent--and at the same the difficulties art brings with it are much more likely to be perceived at a glance. The latest remarks by senators that the NEA be abolished unless it supports "family values" show how true this is. Rather than arguing for art that is familiar, obedient and at best ornamental, I think case that art is valuable to the community precisely because it is not perfectly predictable or obedient. That will not mean that unruly art is automatically wonderful. Art is one of the testing grounds between individuals and the community. The point is that it's an opportunity for judgment: members of the community will need to make up their minds. That's one of the basic values of art: it can't be approached dogmatically. If it's considered in terms of the federal budget as a whole, the NEA is hardly a big deal. The federal budget is around a trillion and a half dollars a year; the NEA budget is \$167 million. If my math holds, that means that the NEA takes up about one ten thousandth of the federal budget. That's less than the military spends on marching bands, less than the city of Berlin spends on public art. To eliminate the NEA would save each American 65 cents a year. Here in Philadelphia, dance, poetry, the visual arts, theater would all suffer; the gamut of organizations affected would range from the Institute for Contemporary Art to the Please Touch Museum, from the Philadelphia Orchestra to the Settlement Music School. The bigger, more established concerns would take a hit; some of the smaller organizations might have to close. Those who are out of sympathy with the arts might think that's fine: that if a theater company needs a handout to survive there's something wrong with it. But to consider the arts in such a framework is an unfair oversimplification. For one thing, business itself is not treated in such a sink- or-swim way: government subsidies are an integral part of many industries, from farming to sports franchises. One of the better reasons for such subsidies is that they shield enterprises from momentary reverses. If farmers couldn't survive a single bad season, it would ultimately make for a weak social fabric. With the arts, the time frame is often more stretched out. It can easily take decades for general taste to approve of developments in art. The last hundred years are full of examples. In France

painters such as Monet and Matisse were ridiculed by the majority of their contemporaries; there was a riot at the premier of Stravinski's "Rites of Spring." Of course, paintings by Monet and Matisse are now among the most valuable objects on the planet; and thirty years after it had driven listeners into a frenzy of disgust, Stravinski's music was used by Disney as the soundtrack to the dinosaur section of "Fantasia." These are examples of successes. But it's not always the case that today's innovative art becomes tomorrow's classic. A 1920's symphony by George Antheil that used airplane engines has not yet become a cultural treasure (nor is it likely to). That's important. It misses the point to say "Fine, innovate, be creative. But only if you turn out to be Monet. No duds or wild excesses, please." But why should the government have to underwrite art? Didn't Monet work on his own? There are a couple of answers to this. For one thing, a significant part of NEA money goes to community groups, often helping get art to groups and places it doesn't normally reach: smaller towns, rural areas, schools that don't have the resources for art programs. And for the government to cut all arts funding would mean that it recognizes no values other than the marketplace. Under the reign of purely economic motives, there is no way anyone would want to produce something unless it could be sold immediately. Imagine a society in which every cultural product had to turn a profit instantly. If you want to get a sense of how claustrophobic this can be, consider how dominated commercial television by spinoffs and imitations. Given how informative, exciting, and revealing the arts can be, what an important antidote they are to instant opinion polls, and how important they already are to various different parts of the community, I think they're worth 65 cents a year. The money is not wasted: people in the arts are appreciative of the little support they get and work hard whether or not they get it. By their very nature, the arts speak to the individual's judgment at the same time as they offer possibilities for building communities: they're perfect training for the independence and possible sense of connection that we need to live in a democracy. Maybe 65 cents is a bit low. Why not make it \$1.30?

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22. **Rae Armantrout**

Re: Still Espousing

Fri 3 Feb 1995

Dear Steve,

The newspaper here (The Union) did do a nice article on the Espousing event.

Rae A.

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23. **Tom Mandel**

boundless, usw.

Fri 3 Feb 1995

What, Jeffrey Timmons asks, constitutes a reaction to my view? Well, let me start by saying that I think I wrote in a bit too snippish way in my own response to you, Jeffrey.

At the heart of what I said in the post to which you were responding was this:

"a discourse in re: poetry that is interesting to
poetry is one that adds space for poetry to be
made. Adds space."

I want to hear someone discuss poetry with an emphasis on how work does its job in relation to the world it inhabits. The place of theory (even theory of poetry) with respect to poetry, to writing, is not that the theory resolves the work, as if you turn to the theory to help understand the work. Rather, theory, theoretical concerns or convictions operate as what Aristotle would have called "efficient causes"; they set a work, perhaps even a body of work, into motion, they get it going. You can't turn back to the theory, however, to understand the work itself - tho of course you can seek indications or intentions anywhere you find data to support them - and above all theory does not operate to justify the work. An acquaintance with the manifestos or even the ideas of surrealism is not necessary to understand Breton's *Nadja*. Might it not be helpful? It might be, to one or another reader; but, I could as easily imagine a reader to whom it would not provide entry to the work, even a reader whose response to the work would be dulled or diminished, dumbed out, by an attention to surrealistic theory (even more so to interpretations thereof).

What then is a "discourse in re: poetry... that adds space for poetry to be made"?

Anything that asks, or attempts to answer, that question is "a response to my view." Yours would be different from mine, and different from Charles Bernstein's. I recommend, because I did in the original post but without naming it, Mandelstam's "Conversation About Dante" as an example of what is in response to my view (i.e. I am in response to it - since, again as I had it in my original post, "a connection with the past [being] no different from a connection with the future.")

Tom Mandel

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24. **Tom Mandel**

Re: Spirits, etc.

Fri 3 Feb 1995

Re: ERic Pape's "...spirituality cannot be faked, only shared," I'm having trouble laying hands on the Fernando Pessoa poem which begins (something like) "The poet is a faker...." Does anybody know this poem? It's only a handful of lines long, and if one of you cd quote it to the list, I'd be grateful. If not, I'll find it sometime in the next week or so and pass it along when I do.

tom mandel

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25. **Tom Mandel**

Re: reified names vs. boundless vocabulary

Fri 3 Feb 1995

Gosh spencer, I was replying to Jeffrey Timmons! No wonder you thought I'd missed the context of your reply to me, as I'd missed the reply altogether.

tom

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26. **Steve Evans**

Re: freely espousing

Sat 4 Feb 1995

Dear Bob,

Just a quick note to wish you luck with Saturday's event. Jen and I were happy to learn of it and we read you op-ed piece with interest.

Please let us know how it comes off (and I'll have my dad, who lives in S.Jersey, look for coverage on the local news).

We're faxing a 4-6 pp. piece on Freely Espousing to Poetry Flash late Sunday night, so if you have any information about your event that you'd like us to include, get in touch with us & we'll try to work it in. (This piece is pretty basis: After a rousing few words we'll be providing accounts of what happened in various places, stressing how such actions are relatively easy to organize, etc.).

Again, we wish the best to yourself, Susan Stewart, and Gil Ott. May the skies cooperate!

Yours,

Steve Evans

p.s. Have you seen the Douglas Davis article on NEA/NEH in the current *Art in America* ("Multicultural Wars," Feb 1995: 35-45)? I just read it this afternoon & found it pretty useful, especially in its emphasis on the pitfalls of "conciliation."

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27. **Spencer Selby**

Re: reified names vs. boundless vocabulary

Sat 4 Feb 1995

Dear Tom, Excuse my blunder. Yr post was not addressed and it seemed you might be talking to me, or maybe both of us at the same time. I guess I was butting in without knowing it. I do have an interest in what you're saying to Jeffrey, and a disagreement, I'm afraid. I would say theory is, as such, no more positive in getting the work going than it is with understanding. In both cases it is a double-edged sword, just as dangerous or potentially destructive as it may be beneficial. Anything that attempts to ask or answer yr question (about adding space for poetry) is certainly a response, but whether that anything is successful, or more helpful than dangerous or destructive, is very much open to question. Formulated theory or knowledge may play a large or small role in an individual's creative life. Whatever the role, it is up to the individual, who cannot look to others for answers about this which may be necessarily correct. That's my reaction to yr most recent message to Jeffrey. Despite my disagreement, it struck me as quite interesting and provocative. Yr words are never blah blah blah to me. Which may be why I keep butting in. Yrs, Spencer Selby

On Fri, 3 Feb 1995, Tom Mandel wrote:

Gosh spencer, I was replying to Jeffrey Timmons! No wonder you thought I'd missed the context of your reply to me, as I'd missed the reply altogether.

tom

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28. **Bob Perelman**

instant up-to-date info on NEA

Sat 4 Feb 1995

It's 7:15 Saturday morning, the day of the Philly NEA event, and there's a foot of snow--"It was snowing and it was going to snow," as they say. Everything downtown's shut down. Before starting resceduling phoning, I need to know--

will an event next Saturday (11th) still have an effect on the legislative process? What exactly is happening in DC? When are hearings/votes scheduled? Whoever has info and is up reading e-mail PLEASE let me know as soon as possible. Thanks!

Bob Perelman

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29. **FUNKHOUSER CHRISTOPH** ***Anti-Hegemony Project***

Sat 4 Feb 1995

Subject: Poetry Emperor Tours Disaster Area
Copyright: 1999 by The Anti-Hegemony Project
Date: 1 Jan 99 00:01:00 EST
Priority: negligible

Lines: 77

BUFFALO (AHP) -- Three weeks after a newspaper editorial caused widespread devastation to the Poetics Program, poetry's emperor and empress paid a one-day visit, clasping hands with disputants congregating in bars and classrooms. Some wept as they spoke with the royal couple.

``You've suffered a great deal," Emperor Keith said at his first stop, a bar-and-grill-turned-poetry-establishment outside the hard-hit city of Amherst. ``Please take good care of yourselves."

Clad in a ski jacket and a turtleneck, the emperor walked among the students and teachers, shaking hands with some and exchanging a few words with others.

``Please hold onto your hope," Empress Rosmarie told the

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Group bleari.nooz.disaster available: 1492 - 1776 unread: 13

article 1500 14-FEB-1999 06:00:00

crowd.

At a benefit reading for victims of another disaster the emperor knelt on a sticky floor among cigarette butts to speak with poets. They bowed deeply and repeatedly to him, and he inclined his head as he listened.

Spontaneous contact with ordinary people is relatively common

for the imperial couple, even though they spend most of their time at highly orchestrated ceremonial events in France, or cloistered in their book-strewn winter palace at Providence, Rhode Island.

One student said she felt gratified by the visit, and was thrilled when the empress touched her hand. ``I feel overwhelmed," she said. ``That gave me courage to do my best to get over this hardship."

The imperial couple was spending eight hours in the troubled area, shuttling by Ford Taurus from site to site. Several dozen disputants have been affected by the controversy.

In a city where the royal family usually receives velvet-glove treatment from the gossipers, not much open criticism has been heard about the trip's timing -- three weeks after the Poetics Program's

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Group bleari.nooz.disaster available: 1492 - 1776 unread: 13

article 1500 14-FEB-1999 06:00:00

newest controversy.

A speedy visit would have been a break with precedent. The emperor took much longer than three weeks to visit San Francisco in 1985 after a book-review triggered a tidal wave of angst affecting far greater numbers of people.

In general, the Paris/Providence bureaucracy was slow to recognize the seriousness of the editorial, and the Imperial Household Agency, which runs the royal family's affairs, might also have underestimated the scope of the disaster.

The palace dispatched Crown Prince Gizzi and Crown Princess Willis on a Southern California tour three days after the quake. Following oblique criticism, the pair cut short their trip and returned to Rhode Island.

And the emperor's visit was scheduled only after reports said Pennsylvania's Father Taggart wanted to inspect the damage next week.

It wasn't known whether the palace was worried about the emperor's visit being greeted with indifference or even hostility. When Minister of Education Susan Howe fled from the confrontation,

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Group bleari.nooz.disaster available: 1492 - 1776 unread: 13

article 1500

14-FEB-1999 06:00:00

rumor had it that other Cabinet Ministers shouted angrily at her.

Buffalo's commercial television station [REDACTED], which has had extensive live coverage from the damage zone during the past three weeks, did not carry the emperor's arrival live. A network executive said this was because the visit did not coincide with any regular news programming.

And the imperial visit generated little excitement in advance among participants in the controversy, who are coping with daily discomfort at home and in the classroom.

“It may make some people here happy, but I'm too busy just getting by day to day,” said shivering graduate student Joel Kuszai. The temperature had plunged to just below freezing overnight and snow was expected over the weekend.

The number of injured stood at 4. Several other people were reported missing. The majority remained bemused or unaffected. More aftershocks rattled the region last Wednesday, including one with a magnitude of 4+.

Explanations are lacking for the spate of flareups, but some have found fault with the absence of chicken wings at recent events.

---More---

Group bleari.nooz.disaster

available: 1492 - 1500 unread: 13

article 1500

14-FEB-1999 06:01:00

In Clemens Hall, deconstruction crews continued putting the program's infrastructure back together -- piece by piece. Yesterday, a disconnected modem line from Buffalo's outskirts into the nerve center of the university started running. Officials expected it would take five or six months to get the entire network humming.

“Our biggest concern now is that people will lose hope,” said Jena Osman, the local official responsible for one of the recent benefits.

“The emperor's visit may help boost morale.”

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30. **Tom Mandel**
dissembling and fakery
Sat 4 Feb 1995

My pessoa query reached me chained to some other messages; software problems on the buffalo host, I guess. In case it went by potential responders:

"Re: ERic Pape's "...spirituality cannot be faked, only shared," I'm having trouble laying hands on the Fernando Pessoa poem which begins (something like) "The poet is a faker...." Does anybody know this poem? It's only a handful of lines long, and if one of you cd quote it to the list, I'd be grateful. If not, I'll find it sometime in the next week or so and pass it along when I do."

tom mandel

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31. **eric pape**
Re: reified names vs. boundless vocabulary
Sat 4 Feb 1995

Pound: A work of art, any serious work vivifies a man's total perception of relations. Maybe we need to broaden our definition of theory to "a man's total perception of relations." Just a thought, a gesture towards an imagined point of opening. Thanks, Eric (enpape.lsuvm.sncc.lsu.edu)

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32. **Carla Billitteri**
the future of poetry (forwarded)
Sat 4 Feb 1995

Subject: Albany Summit Could Aid Peace
Copyright: 1999 by The Anti-Hegemony Project
Date: 31 Oct 99 12:01:00 EST
Priority: medium or less

Lines: 63

*An AHP News Analysis

ALBANY (AHP) -- A planned show of unity by experimental and political poets of different generations, designed to dispel fears that extremist positions have killed the thought process, may bolster sagging images at home.

But as leaders from Canada, Buffalo, Providence and other

communities gather for a summit in Albany, their ability to stop the discord is in doubt.

Sarcastic sniping by poetic militants has shattered belief in coexistence between the camps and generations.

For Canadian poets, the planned peace agreement is a disappointment because it has failed to deliver a full endorsement of Canlit.

---More---

Group bleari.nooz.peace available: 1933 - 1945 unread: 0

article 1945 24-DEC-1999 23:59:00

For dissident Buffalonians, making peace has not realized dreams for a better job market and intellectual independence.

What the disputants hope to accomplish in Albany is mostly to revitalize the image of the thought process and supply some momentum. As the pivotal leaders in the coalition, Albany social planners Chris Funkhouser and Belle Gironde will be called on to try and push forward the stalled negotiations between experimental and political poets.

``What's needed is some new spirit injected into the process. We need to show those who say the process has exhausted itself that it still has a lot of life," said Chris Stoeffolino, an Albany spokesman.

Others disagree. Albany participant Jill Hanifan has in effect sought to freeze the expansion of autonomy, demanding a meaningful effort by New Yorker Sandy Baldwin to curb his irony. She also hopes that Washington and Providence will help persuade the others it is time to crack down on those who would criticize the sincere efforts of poets like Jimmy Carter.

Buffalo poet Nick Lawrence may get a better-than-usual hearing for his "just gaming" plea because the fundamentalists who want to spread their mantle over the entire region are also targeting poets

---More---

Group bleari.nooz.peace available: 1933 - 1945 unread: 0

article 1945 24-DEC-1999 23:59:00

with senses of humor.

But Providence leaders say expectations that the Poetry Project can influence militants are unrealistic.

``We cannot stop the sarcastic sniping. Even academic communities could not stop such attacks," Lee Ann Brown, the Providence minister of community affairs, told The Anti-Hegemony Project.

The only solution, she argued, was unfreezing subject matter restraints and extending Poetics Program funding to the East Village.

``How can St. Marks' authority be strong in fighting extremists and isolating them while its people and institutions are separated between the Left Coast and downtown" she said.

Rod Smith wants religious extremists to lift the closure imposed on discourse after the two mail bombings that left writers on both sides of the generational divide stunned.

Jed Rasula, Chief Mullah from Kingston, said for many, ``We are all fish in an aquarium -- politics is the water we swim in."

But New York City participants complain that the Buffalo imprimatur gives an air of legitimacy to the flow of babble claiming

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Group bleari.nooz.peace

available: 1933 - 1945 unread: 0

article 1945

24-DEC-1995 23:59:00

valuable bandwidth and attention. They note that several Providence and Albany poets cheered the recent mailings, and Buffalo staffers did not publically condemn the attack.

The impact on the poetry community has been far-reaching, and Buffalo is facing a crisis of credibility that for the first time is prompting calls for an embargo on funded publications.

``The real question is ... whether poetry will collapse and when," Douglas Rothschild wrote in an editorial column in the liberal Poetry Project Newsletter.

Others took a more sanguine view. ``I've been reading and writing in near-isolation for over twenty years," declared Albany's jovial patriarch Charles Stein. ``I think I'll head over to the diner and relax."

EDITOR'S NOTE -- Guantanamo Bey, AHP Chief of Bureau in Toronto, has covered the New Coast since 1993.

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33. **George Bowering**
Re: Re- the real language po
Sun 5 Feb 1995

Well, my wife's name is Angela Luoma,
and I am here to say that she's the real Luoma.

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34. **George Bowering**
Cienfuegos
Sun 5 Feb 1995

I cant remember the details of the context in whixh Cienfuegos made his sharp comment on revolutionary art. I read an account in a Mexican newspaper (this a short time before C.'s plane disappeared), and I do remember that the contxt (for the newspaper story) was that Cienfuegos seemd to have Fidel's ear, and the hope was that the CP would not come along and impose its usual ban on Freud, surrealism, etc. I should have been a auto-clipping service at the time.

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35. **George Bowering**
Re: the future of poetry (forwarded)
Sun 5 Feb 1995

Phew!
Canada as a community on a par with Buffalo or Providence!
That feels great!

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36. **Ron Silliman**
Re: Still Espousing
Sun 5 Feb 1995

Rae wrote:
> The newspaper here (The Union) did do a nice article on the
Espousing
>event.

What did they say? How did they frame the occasion? Has Cole or anyone talked w/ Cunninham's office yet?

Ron Silliman

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37. **Ron Silliman**

Re: Re- the real language po

Sun 5 Feb 1995

George Bowering wrote:

*Well, my wife's name is Angela Luoma,
and I am here to say that she's the real Luoma.*

But can she play second base?

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38. **Carla Billitteri**

Leaving the Rat Race Early

Sun 5 Feb 1995

*Subject: Leaving The Rat Race Early
Keywords: Lang-Po, Gerontology
Copyright: 1999 by The Anti-Hegemony Project
Date: 21 Sept 99 14:92 EST
Priority: advanced*

Lines: 104

WASHINGTON, D.C. (AHP) -- Six year ago, Tom Mandel swore off poetry readings, tossed aside his notebooks and abandoned the tedious job of keeping up with the output of his peers.

The Lang-Po Executive, then 45, left the rat race while still in his prime to become a post-literacy volunteer, tutor disadvantaged kids by e-mail, and perhaps run for local office. (Yes, he even took up rolfing.)

``I started with the project when I was in my 30s; put in 15 years, maybe more" said Mandel, who lives in Washington, D.C. with his wife, also a poetry executive. ``I'm really involved in community affairs now, more than ever before."

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Group bleari.poetry.biz available 1945 - 1960 available: 0

article 1960 1-DEC-1999 10:10:10

Mandel is among the tens upon tens of poets to take advantage

of early retirement packages offered by cost-cutting poetries programs over the last decade.

This work force streamlining has helped lower the average retirement age for poets to around 50 today -- ten years younger than thirty years ago and seven years earlier than what was long considered the typical ``pulitzer" age, said Lorrie Gramm, who runs Gramm Crack Poetics Advisers in Iowa City, Iowa.

These statistics are even more startling considering the death-rates of poets in the 1950s, '60s and '70s due to ``lifestyle" demands, such as drink, drugs and suicide.

But Gramm and other experts believe the trend is reversing. By the next century, many aging baby boomers -- who comprise a third of the poetry-writing population -- will have to work longer because fewer institutions will offer early buyouts and many will have eliminated traditional writing programs altogether.

Although more than half of all poets hope to retire before age 65 -- 55 percent, according to a 1997 *Sulfur* magazine poll -- most will lack the intellectual wherewithal to get by on their own.

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article 1960 1-DEC-1999 10:10:10

In fact, Gramm said, by the year 2025 only half of all people ages 60 to 65 will be able to quit writing, compared with 95 percent now. By 2050, only 5 percent can reach that goal, she said.

Gramm says she's seen a recent increase in baby boom clients coming in with dreams of beating the odds.

``I don't sense from people that they are happy. They are tolerating the poetry because they need to keep their minds off their other troubles," she said.

Younger writers too are thinking ahead.

Jessica Grimm, 35, an ``experimental writing" executive, survived a San Francisco restructuring a few years back. Although she feels secure in her new locale and enjoys her work, she isn't counting on being there until 65. With a goal of stopping by age 50, she contributes the maximum pages permitted to a company-sponsored, crit-deferred letter writing program, and invests heavily in journal notes.

``I don't think you can plan on having a 30- or 40-year career," the Oberlin poet, editor and librarian said. ``Even if you can, most poetry movements have passed the responsibility for

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article 1960 1-DEC-1999 10:10:10

thinking ahead to the individual writers."

Mandel's is almost a textbook example of early retirement at its best: Tom and his wife Beth Josselow, herself a published poet, rest comfortably on the reputation of books published by Tuumba, Burning Deck, GAZ and Coincidence Press, amongst others. His inclusion in one of the two major Lango-Po anthologies insures his ability to sound off on a wide variety of poetic and theoretical topics for years to come.

That leaves Mandel free to take up rolfing, fool around on the internet -- and sell computers.

To maintain their self-images, most poets need to publish at least two books with ``big" houses -- or with highly regarded small-press houses. Anthologies, awards and teaching appointments also help. But many experts believe that by the next century, with fewer perks to go around, individuals will have to fend for themselves, seeking meaning in the activity itself.

``During NEA mania in the '70s, some poets canceled traditional career building ... in favor of defined contribution plans like the Associated Writing Programs," said Stephanie

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article 1960 1-DEC-1994 10:10:10

Rhodes-Hoper, director of the Gerontology Center at New Mexico University in Albuquerque, New Mexico.

Rhodes-Hoper believes the NEA and other grant programs will be around in the future, but ``there probably will be some jockeying around of benefits."

Individuals who regularly set aside work for retirement, either through a diary of some kind or an Unpublished Manuscript Account, will withstand these changes the best, said Allen Ginsberg, a financial consultant in the New York area.

Unfortunately, he noted, most people don't. A recent survey by the accounting firm of S.P.D. found 75 percent of all

poetry movements with at least 6 participants offered ``collaborative writing" and other retirement programs last year, but only a small percent of eligible writers participated. What's more, the average poet contributed only half the maximum amount allowed.

``The odds are you're going to live quite a while into retirement. If you don't plan for it now, you just better ... hope you die before you retire," Ginsberg said. He echoed some of the warnings used by many poetry analysts to get people to write for

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article 1960 1-DEC-1999 10:10:10

retirement.

Ginsberg says early retirement can be achieved by many, although individuals need to start planning in their 20s and 30s.

``Early retirees make a lot of sacrifices during their writing years. They consciously decide to not save 10 percent of their writings but 20 percent," Ginsberg said.

Gramm says early retirees of the future may decide to write part time, either because they enjoy writing or need the extra attention. ``This is sort of a middle ground," she said.

Such was the case with Ed Dorn, of Boulder, Colorado. Since taking early retirement from Rolling Stock Corp., Dorn, 65, started a small muckraking business. He's busy around hunting season, but the rest of the year he makes his own hours, reading out-of-date history books and picking fights with neighbors down the road. He has no complaints.

``I'm doing the things I like to do," Dorn said. ``Those lazy flower children and their punk-rock spawn can go hang, for all I care."

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39. **Nick Lawrence**

Tough Cops

Sun 5 Feb 1995

Subject: Tough Cops Look For Trouble
Copyright: 1999 by The Anti-Hegemony Project
Date: 25 Dec 99 00:01:00 EST

Lines: 95

BUFFALO (AHP) -- Ken Sherwood and Loss Glazier are trolling the desolate streets of Buffalo, trying to decide whose pockets to poke, whose socks to stretch, which kid to search.

Since it's snowing heavily on this particular night, the Poetics Program cops have few choices. No matter. Even the two men shoveling the sidewalk seem suspicious.

``They want this clean 'cause they've got something going on," says Glazier, 37.

Glazier and Sherwood, 26, are two members of an elite, 20-member unit known as the Core Reserve, a force with broad powers to look for proscribed books and papers in the possession of suspicious characters.

Their aggressive techniques are being echoed by poetics

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Group bleari.rime.org available: 18 - 25 unread: 1

article 24 26-DEC-1999 12:12:12

programs nationwide. They stop and search with virtual impunity. They finger e-mail accounts and ask girlfriends and boyfriends to let them rummage through desks. They hold meetings with the students and faculty. They stop cars in the parking lot, feel under dashboards, frisk occupants.

Just what counts as proscribed materials is uncertain. No matter.

``Now, this area down here, we got a lotta Olson," says Glazier, tour guide in hell. ``This next set of offices, we get a lot of performance-oriented stuff, screaming and such-like.

``There was a guy up here who people say kept his poetry up his rectum," he says, very matter-of-factly. ``One day we found him strangled with his pants off and his legs up in the air. We assumed the poems had been removed."

The car coasts to curbs alongside earnest-looking youths trudging in the snow. A searchlight blinds them, sometimes bouncing off the glossy covers of university press paperbacks the police say

are badges of ganghood.

``You get a guy with four or five books and he starts

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article 24 26-DEC-1999 12:12:12

running, he's going to automatically cling to himself and hold that pile while he runs," says Glazier. ``We call it the book run."

The officers check purses, disc-containers, sports jackets and long droopy cardigan sweaters. They poke fingers inside gloves. Nobody complains. ``You know what it's about," Glazier tells a boy.

Sherwood gestures at a house. ``We got three contraband books out of there. Girls let us in."

``Four books," corrects Glazier. ``The women were very cooperative, but the rest of the family were upset the poetics police were taking their books and stuff. It was a nice little seizure."

It is 9 p.m., three hours into the shift, and another two-man team has found a slim volume during the search of a man who was wearing a ski mask in the falling snow.

The bearded, friendly man turns out to be a watchman at a warehouse that houses chicken wings and bleu cheeze for visiting poets. And he's a former student of Robert Creeley's. But he doesn't have a permit for the book. He's under arrest.

The officers ask if he'll sign a release-for-publication

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form, essentially a waiver that exempts the police from liability. He has agreed.

Inside the man's clean, modest rooms, the police find an old John Wieners book, a dog-eared copy of The Colossus, a Bob Dylan biography, a lot of anthropology books and a powerful computer.

``I don't have nothing to hide," he says pleasantly. ``I'm an ordinary person. Not too smart. I don't even have a modem."

Glazier and Sherwood are hardly back on the road when word comes that another team has found a couple of kids with a manuscript as they left a house with a reputation for "Lang-Po" sympathies.

The eldest, 30-year-old Nick, was carrying The Cultural

Studies Reader and a Bob Perelman book. The police figure Nick's companion, 25-year-old Alan, has his own books at home.

They go to Alan's house nearby. The girlfriend comes to the door. ``Oh my God," she says to the three uniformed cops.

Sgt. Tedlock, the supervisor who's called in to handle this part, smoothly delivers a well-practiced pitch.

``We wanted to let you know he's walking around with a kid who's got The Cultural Studies Reader and he was coming out of a

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known Lang-Po den," he says.

``We're not going to arrest him," he says, setting up the offer. ``Here's what I'm going to do."

The conversation takes place as the woman walks back up the stairs, implicitly but not directly seeming to invite the officers to follow along. Soon, everybody is up at the top of the stairs, in the living room, a corner of which is the boy's study.

Tedlock, eyeing the packed and wobbly bookshelf, tells her the police just want to look around, see if there's any contraband material. The woman can watch them. Nobody will be arrested.

He holds out the release form. Everyone waits as the girlfriend anxiously ponders it.

``I know he doesn't have a manuscript in here," she stammers. ``At least not a bad one." She seems to be weakening when her boyfriend, giving her the eye, interrupts with a well-placed ``Kristen. ..."

Tedlock tells the boy not to interrupt, but it's too late. The woman says no. The cops get terse, telling her the boy is bound for trouble.

---More---

Group bleari.rime.org available: 18-25 unread: 1

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They leave. Alan grins.

``I'll bet the farm there's Lang-Po in that house," Glazier, frustrated, says outside. ``He knows it, she knows it."

``Or that New Spirit stuff," adds Sherwood.

``Yes, that was a suspicious looking setup," reflects Tedlock,

staring up at the snow. ``Mighty suspicious."

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40. **Ted Pelton**

Use da news 2

Sun 5 Feb 1995

I was happy to see Bob Perelman's Philadelphia Enquirer op-ed. I think that op-ed pages may be as good a tool in this fight as contacting congressmen directly. I've heard many like to sustain their illusions of *fingers on the pulse* through hometown papers.

This is my column from the Milwaukee Journal, Friday, January 13:

With the recent swing in Congress back toward Reagan-era conservatism has come a new attempt to eliminate the National Endowment for the Arts.

The NEA's budget isn't large, but its critics argue that any amount the government spends on the arts is too much, that funding the arts is not a legitimate function of government. Gingrich, Helms and others make this argument despite the examples of other major world governments, nearly all of which make funds available to support art and artists, many at much higher levels than the U.S.

This simply highlights the fact that the main reason conservatives want to stop funding the arts is not to save money nor to keep government's purposes pure. It is because new art is ultimately very dangerous to a conservative world-view. Discouraging the production of non-commercial art in this country is consistent with other aspects of the conservative social agenda: school prayer, limiting women's reproductive freedoms, increasing the amount of capital in the coffers of America's richest citizens. The arts produce work that is often far too critical of such a social agenda to make many friends on the Right. These lawmakers want to silence voices of dissent.

Wisconsin Senator Russ Feingold sees their attempt in the proper perspective, as censorship. I wrote him and several other Wisconsin lawmakers in the past few months to urge they support the NEA. Feingold responded, "I believe, as a free society, we need to protect diversity and encourage the exchange of ideas. I regard some recent attempts to cut funding for NEA as attempts at censorship, and at silencing one part of this discussion."

This position is consistent with the principles upon which the NEA was founded. At the inception of the NEA in 1965, Congress issued a defense of why governments should fund the arts. In part, it read: "The world leadership

which has come to the United States cannot rest solely upon superior power, wealth, and technology, but must be solidly founded upon worldwide respect and admiration for the Nation's high qualities as a leader in the realm of ideas and of the spirit."

It also read: "Democracy demands wisdom and vision of its citizens. It must therefore foster and support a form of education, and access to the arts and the humanities, designed to make people of all backgrounds and wherever located masters of the technology and not its unthinking servants."

The NEA is most often reported in the press for scandals involving funding of controversial artists, such as the flap involving late photographer Robert Mapplethorpe a couple years ago. But its programs support the arts in local communities as well. This occurs both in terms of aiding local artists (individually or through local arts organizations) and in such things as helping fund performances by nationally known artists. In my own area, I think of the readings at Milwaukee's Woodland Pattern bookstore, for example; poets and fiction writers of national stature would not regularly give readings to small audiences in Milwaukee, as they do today, without the NEA. For people in your district, it might be the local orchestra or theatre, a travelling opera or ballet troupe.

I confess I am not a disinterested observer of this issue. Last year I was awarded an NEA Literature Fellowship. I take the grant seriously, as an investment in my talent, and I hope my future work merits this investment. The myth of the artist whose vision remains pure despite economic difficulties is bogus; economics do force artists to quit making art and start making money. I was close to giving up fiction writing when I received funding.

But I had also benefitted as a citizen from the NEA for years prior to winning this fellowship. I had attended NEA sponsored readings, theatre and concerts; I had read writers and seen work by artists who had their own careers supported by the NEA; I had enjoyed the benefits of local galleries and performance spaces which exist with the support of the NEA. I happen to enjoy art that isn't commercial, that wasn't created to make money. But even people whose interest in art extends no further than enjoying Hollywood movies should realize that even commercial artists owe a debt to serious, non-commercial art. Art not made for money takes more risks, taps more untouched stores of imagination, and often introduces the ideas and images that mainstream artists develop for more popular tastes. We all benefit from the NEA.

Art also can provide us with morality of a sort different than the Right defines it. Not simply indulging in tired pieties, serious art, when critical of our institutions and our daily practices, can serve as the bell-ringer to wake up our

national conscience. Funding the arts helps foster voices of dissent, a necessity in a healthy democracy.

But Helms, Gingrich and company aren't interested in good art or healthy democracy. Nor is my congressman in Sheboygan, James Sensenbrenner. He has voted to eliminate the NEA for the past four years. He cites the same old cost arguments as the others. But money is a cloak over the real issue: the critics of the NEA want to promote their own set of cultural values while discouraging debate and critique. If money was the only issue, we would naturally expect Republicans to subject far more expensive weapons programs to the same cost-conscious scrutiny as they do the arts.

For my part, I'd rather that someone abroad knew about my country because of American novels than because of American war technology.

Ted Pelton

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41. **Tom Mandel**

Re: reified names vs. boundless vocabulary

Sun 5 Feb 1995

Spencer,

I didn't think you'd butted in, not at all. Just wanted you to know I wasn't responding to something you'd articulated. There is no 3d position, outside the relation of person to what that person thinks, writes, reads, that can tell you if something is useful or not. The test is simple; if it's useful then it's useful. I.e. if an idea is provocative and allows one to work or enhances work, makes a new space for work then it's of interest. My caveat re: the Apexites (last mention) was that I was waiting for the impact of their ideas on work they'd do. Period. Natch, I have my own version of whether that's likely to be a positive impact, but that measures only its impact on me. After all, everybody knows I'm interested in *_spirit_* (whatever that is), only they failed to mention what kind; in my tradition there are 3 forms of spirit. And even this line of thought, I take to be an attempt to articulate and render a little more subtle the Xtian notions taken over from a rather simple-minded roman *_paganism_* (no better word comes to mind), which is how you get humans who are also divine, virginity as a cool positive value in the religion, and other affairs of *_spiritual_* value in that tradition which are to me... oh, I dunno would vulgar

and primitive be acceptable words? Not to step on
any toes or anything.

that whole paragraph shd have some keyboard graphic for
tongue in cheek and serious at the same time, what my
father (sleeping with all of them tonite, in peace) used
to call _ribbing on the square_ (no doubt a westside chicago
piece of 1920's lingo).

no one has the pessoa citation at hand? Lots of books at
Buffalo...

Shd we discuss the 3 kinds of spirit in the Jewish intellectual tradition?
how'bout it Spencer?

tom Mandel

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42. **Belle Gironda**

A Fish Story

Sun 5 Feb 1995

Subject: Poetics Program Targets Big Fish
Copyright: 1999 by The Anti-Hegemony Project
Date: 21 Mar 99 12:00:00 EST
Priority: Code Blue

Lines: 58

*AMHERST (AHP) -- Cabinet Ministers for the Poetics Program
want the poetry ``mafia" to give up more than 6 years of control
over the bustling, pungent stalls of the nation's largest ``fish
market."*

*Minister of Foreign Policy Robert Creeley announced plans
for the "Wednesdays at Four Plus" commission to better regulate and
investigate poets and critics doing business with the Poetics Program.*

*``New York mayor Rudolf Giuliani's plan for Fulton Fish
Market gave me the idea," said Creeley, who declared an emergency
meeting of the Poetics Program to unveil the plan. ``The association
was natural -- fish, Olson, poetry, Buffalo ... it's your classic mob
situation."*

---More---

Group bleari.nooz.rime.organized available: 5000 - 6000 unread: 50

article 5050 1-APR-99 18:00:00

He and the other cabinet ministers hope to clean up what many say has become a dangerous place for those who love poetry.

``This has nothing to do with `Language Poetry'," said Economics Minister Charles Bernstein, ``despite what everyone has been saying."

``It's that damned old boys network," says Education Minister Susan Howe. ``Not that I have anything against old boys. But enough's enough."

The size of the market has shrunk in recent semesters from approximately 50 people a reading to only 5 or 10.

``Students do not attend because they fear the readings are only payback for favors," said a smiling Raymond Federman, newly appointed Ambassador to France, a cabinet level position in the current administration.

Some poets say New York's Segue family uses its control over students at the university to impose a monopolistic ``tax" on discussion driving many to do business at other markets on the Eastern Seaboard.

The allegations have never been substantiated.

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Group bleari.nooz.rime.organized available: 5000 - 6000 unread: 50

article 5050 1-APR-1999 18:00:00

The ``fish market," nestled among windswept concrete structures built on landfill in the early 1970s, is instrumental in the processing of some dozen literary events a semester. These events are linked to book sales and course offerings.

In the early 1990s it was taken over by Robert ``Books" Bertholf, a fish handler who oversaw day-to-day operations in the market.

The market soon became a powerful center of rumored cronyism. Recently, the market moved to a new Arts Center, which some call a colder and grayer site.

Yet business is booming. This semester boasts more literary events than ever.

Under the new proposal, the market would be managed by the "Wednesdays at Four Plus" commission, which would set rates and procedures for the market and impose fines for rules violations.

All poets operating in the market would have to be licensed and registered. The commission would have the power to deny licenses to anyone it deems unfit to do business.

“But what constitutes a legitimate poet?” wondered Charles Bernstein. Such questions remain to be worked out by the

---More---

Group [bleari.nooz.rime.organized](#) available: 5000 - 6000 unread: 50

article 5050 1-APR-1999 18:00:00

commission.

Finding answers for these questions excites some ministers and worries others. “Anything could happen,” beamed Raymond Federman.

A dour Dennis Tedlock, Minister of Former Colonies, wasn't so sure. “Fish? The market is um, a sort of metaphor. People eat fish and study them ... there might be other ways we haven't tried to make ... friends with the fish.”

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43. **Jeffrey Timmons** ***Re: Spencer's gauntlet, etc.***

Sun 5 Feb 1995

On Thu, 2 Feb 1995, Spencer Selby wrote:

Poetry/art has its own level, and whatever it is or may be, it is not the same as theory or criticism or writers' discourses or internet exchanges. This view may strike some as extreme, simplistic or old-fashioned, but I think it's dangerous when artists or critics start saying (or building contexts in which) their discourse is on the same level as the art.

Why?

Jeffrey Timmons

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44. **Jeffrey Timmons**

Re: Re- Re- CALL FOR A DECIS

Sun 5 Feb 1995

On Thu, 2 Feb 1995, BLUOMA wrote:

*Lately, I've been staring at high tension towers to get "inspiration."
I've even taken to rendering them in photoshop. I can't articulate why
I'm obsessed with power lines, but it/they continue to drive the work.*

*Perhaps this tack is too individualistic to have meaning to a large group.
But I am more interested in learning new methods of doing good work--
how to get new obsessions--than in discussing the correct way to write.*

I'd be curious to know what motivates others.

It's odd what strikes one isn't it? For me, among a host of "things," old boxes, pieces of twisted and rusted metal I find along the rail road tracks by my house, the sound of the hummingbirds, grackles, doves, sparrows, and mockingbirds intermingling, the terrible noises I can make with my computer's sound processing software or my guitar . . . these things turn up in my writing in various ways and without trying to reduce any of the plurality of the different expressions to single subject I would hazard that there is some shared set of concerns in each. The idea of place--"The most in time is where you're meant to be"--has been of vital importance lately, trying to document the sense of being in a particular location; this takes its form in music by recording the sounds of a space of time--whatever happens in that time--and then layering these into juxtapositions of moments. This has the benefit of inspiration and of craft. I'd be excited to share some of these experiments with anyone, were they interested (send snail address). Anyway, I thought the question a good one as it raises the nuts and bolts (and philosophical attitudes) of work and would like to continue with this ... but I've got to go now. I'd like to take this to writing....

Jeffrey Timmons

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45. **Jeffrey Timmons**

Re: reified names vs. boundless vocabulary

Sun 5 Feb 1995

*Bla hbla hbla hbla hbla hbla hbla hbla hbla hbla hbla hbla hbla hblah
bla hbla hbla hbla hbla hbla hbla hbla hbla hbla hbla hbla hblah
bla hbla hbla hbla hbla hbla hbla hbla hbla hbla hbla hbla hbla hbla*

>

Jeffrey Timmons

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46. **Jeffrey Timmons**

Re: reified names vs. boundless vocabulary

Mon 6 Feb 1995

Thanks to Tom Mandel for elaborating his comments, they were much appreciated. I must mull over the question of what provides space for poetry as it is worth a more detailed response than I am capable of at present. Spencer can butt in any time, as far as I'm concerned. It's fun.

Jeffrey Timmons

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47. **Martin Spinelli**

BIG BROTHER is asking

Mon 6 Feb 1995

Folks,

Senator Larry Pressler of South Dakota, chairman of the Senate Commerce Committee, recently sent a letter to the heads of the CPB, NPR, and PBS asserting that privatization/commercialization of public broadcasting was inevitable. The letter demands information to incriminate public broadcasting as purveyors of leftist dissent and asks for financial data (to expedite commercialization).

The Senator is angry at the CPB's meager attempts to protect itself by distributing information about the funding situation. Pressler is not content to simply rail against Frontline for bias, P.O.V. (independent video) for bias, and American Playhouse for nudity and profanity, he also decries underwriters for influencing program content (how this will be solved by the introduction of completely deregulated market forces and advertising remains unclear to me).

After Pressler's closed-door meetings with info-mogul Rupert Murdoch, a union shamefully under-reported, it now appears that expansion into the non-commercial bandwidth is the real prize for media conglomerates. Once they're sold off they're gone for good, reclaiming them would be next to impossible.

This also sets a dangerous precedent for the net: if public educational programming is pushed off the air, how much bandwidth can we expect will be set aside for free educational use if they get around to carving up the internet?

If we sit by and shrug we'll get what we deserve: a sea of informercials, complimentary copy, Howard Stern, and Power Rangers, in perpetuity. I'll be posting a letter to download and send Pressler soon. Please do something.

I'm attaching an excerpted version of Pressler's questions. Credit where credit is due, he does manage to mention Paul DeMan and Barney on the same page. If you'd like the full text e-mail me at [REDACTED]; also, check out the usenet group wny.wbfo.

Martin Spinelli
Buffalo, NY

Dear Mr. Carlson:

Enclosed is a series of questions concerning the operation of public broadcasting. In addition to responses to these questions, please include any documentation, memos, meeting notes, contracts and any other written material to substantiate the answers to these questions.

Please respond to these questions by February 10, 1995.

Thank you for your prompt reply.

Sincerely,
(signed by Sen. Larry Pressler)
LP/dma

All answers to questions should be substantiated with written materials, documents, memos, meeting notes, contracts, etc.

5. Please detail all efforts by recipients of CPB funds to generate Congressional support for continued federal funding:
 - a. How much has been spent of this effort by all of public broadcasting?
 - b. How much has been spent to present the other side of this controversial issue?
 - e. Please list all news coverage and interview programs and provide transcripts.
 - f. Please explain how CPB has assured that this is balanced and objective coverage.
6. Does CPB have printed guidelines for grant applications for the program fund? How are decisions made on which programs to fund? At what stage are considerations of balance and objectivity brought to bear? Please explain step-by-step the processes involved.

- d. Some have suggested the lack of competition in public television is due to anti-competitive practices at PBS. How is CPB working to increase competition and monitor collusion and pricefixing in public television?
 - 2.) Please provide a list of controversial issues covered by NPR and related programs.
9. Of CPB's total budget, why is only \$4 million allotted to the National Radio Program Production Fund?
- e. Document each one of last year's awards and indicate how they fulfill your priorities to: 1) increase and/or diversify public radio's audience, 2) yield quality programming that is illuminating and inspiring as well as appealing, and 3) seek programmatic innovation.
 - j. Submit job descriptions of all 475 full time NPR employees. Include gender, age, time of service, salary, and ethnicity.
 - k. Please submit a list of regular part-time employees. Include gender, age, time of service, salary, and ethnicity.
10. CPB provides funding to PBS's National Program Service.
- c. How are programs reviewed for objectivity and balance prior to funding? Please describe the process in detail. Does the CPB board participate in this process?
 - h. How are political balance and diverse religious and cultural perspectives represented?
 - i. Does CPB keep racial and ethnic data to assure compliance with EEOC directives? How does CPB ensure against religious discrimination? Please provide a copy of all guidelines.
 - j. Some producers feel that their applications do not receive full attention from CPB staff. Several months ago, one producer submitted a documentary proposal about the "United States Merchant Marine" to CPB President Carlson, who wrote back to say that he had passed it along to the programming department. The producer never heard from CPB again.
- 1.) What was the disposition of the Merchant Marine proposal?

- 7.) How many proposals does ITVS reject each year? Does ITVS provide a list and description of rejected proposals? If not, how can Congress provide effective oversight without knowing what was rejected, what was funded, and the reasons?
- 8.) Has ITVS rejected any proposals for a documentary on the controversy surrounding literary critic Paul DeMan, father of "deconstruction"? If so, please provide complete documentation for this decision, including panel comments.
12. What are the profit sharing provisions in CPB contracts with producers and stations who derive revenue from CPB supported productions?
 - a. Please provide copies of contracts with producers and copies of accounting for revenues and expenditures related to CPB financed distributors including:
 - 1.) Children's Television Workshop, Inc.
 - 2.) New York Center for Visual History, Inc.
 - 3.) Public Affairs Television, Inc.
 - .
 - .
 - .
 - 3.) What is the commercial value of the current public broadcasting system. That is, what is the comparative valuation of the hardware--satellite transponders, transmitters, studio , etc.--and software--library of programs belonging to system producers, goodwill, etc.?
 - 4.) Please list the top 100 salaries paid related to public broadcasting. Include producers, vendors of merchandise, and executives of companies whose product is sold or displayed in public broadcasting.
 - 5.) What is the value of real estate, stock and bond portfolios owned by public broadcasters and/or their parent organizations. Please break this down by station and include related production companies.
 - 6.) What would be the value of comparable commercial time equivalent to that provided by public

broadcasting? Please provide a sample rate card for public radio and television.

13. Some critics have complained that "underwriting for content" is a form of payola or plugola.

a. How does CPB ensure that underwriting has no influence on programming?

d. Should the National Science Foundation be permitted to underwrite science coverage on NPR? Should it be permitted to underwrite a series on exploration for PBS?

e. Please provide a list of underwriters and the content area of programs they sponsor in public broadcasting.

h. The National Education Association sponsors news programming on NPR, for example. Does this create the impression of impropriety, since the NEA also attempts to influence legislation?

i. NPR spends its own money and resources on lobbying Capitol Hill. How does NPR keep its lobbying activities separate from its news broadcasts? Please provide documentation of the procedures.

m. Doesn't the requirement for balanced and objective coverage apply equally to the controversy over public broadcasting funding? If not, why not?

n. What amount of money has CPB spent on any and all advertising or promotion campaigns designed to increase public support for public broadcasting?

o. Has CPB ever spent any money on advertisements or promotions raising questions about the management and integrity of the public broadcasting system?

p. How can CPB justify spending money in advertising or promotions or money for only one side of the public broadcasting debate?

q. Please give a comparable market value for the air time on PBS stations for the Hal Riney spots promoting public broadcasting.

14. Some critics have complained that public broadcasting provides promotional value for books and other products in addition to educational services.

- a. Please list all books, records, CDs and other items promoted on public radio and television since 1992 at both a local and national level.
- b. Please list gross sales of these items, and analyze the contribution public broadcasting exposure might have had to their success.
 - 1.) For example, what were sales of Armistead Maupin's "Tales of the City" prior to the announcement of the PBS series? And what were they afterwards? How much money can one say Armistead Maupin made due to sales of his book through PBS promotion?
- c. How are books, records, and CDs chosen for promotion on PBS through related programming? Please describe the procedures used in each case since 1992.

15. Some conservative producers have complained of PBS executives giving them a hard time for ideological reasons.

- a. Please describe the changes PBS required in Michael Pack's film "Campus Culture Wars" and give the reason for each change. Were these types of editorial oversight decisions made by PBS executives prior to broadcast of "The liberators" and "Journey to the Occupied Lands?"
- b. Please describe the changes PBS is requiring in the second episode of "Reverse Angle" and the reasons for each change. Were these types of editorial oversight decisions made by PBS executives prior to broadcast of "the Liberators" and "Journey to the Occupied Lands"?
- c. Please describe the changes PBS required in the recent Ford Foundation-funded documentary about Community Development Corporations. If no changes were required, why not? How did this program meet PBS guidelines designed to prevent underwriters from benefitting from the subject matter of the programs they fund.

- e. Have John Dinges at NPR and Mary Jane McKinven at PBS done a good job of assuring balance and objectivity in programming? If so, why are there so many complaints?
- 16. What steps has CPB taken since Sen. Dole's speech on "Barneygate" to participate in the profits of CPB funded programs? Please provide specific examples and copies of contracts.
- 17. Please provide a list of all political contributions over \$250 dollars made by individuals employed by or working under contract for CPB-funded entities.
- 22. In 1992 Congress passed legislation requiring the CPB board of directors to take steps to insure balance and objectivity in programming, including the review of programs to identify balance programs and the commissioning of remedial programs.
 - a. How many programs did the CPB board review for balance and objectivity from 1992 to present?
 - b. How many programs were identified as having problems with balance and objectivity?
 - c. How many programs were funded to correct programs with balance and objectivity problems?
 - d. What procedures for review and commissioning of programs to ensure balance and objectivity have been established by the CPB board since 1992?
 - e. When CPB director Vic Gold complained about anti-semitic programming on a Pacifica radio station funded by CPB, did the CPB board review Pacifica's programming for balance and objectivity? If not, why not?
 - f. Without such a review, how can CPB assure Congress that Pacifica stations are fulfilling community service obligations under the public telecommunications act to provide excellence, diversity, objectivity, balance etc.?
 - k. How does CPB insure stations provide balance and objectivity in programming they produce and distribute?
 - l. Has CPB ever denied funding to a producing station because its productions were not balanced or objective?

- m. If so, which stations?
- n. If not, how did CPB determine productions from these stations were balanced or objective?
- o. Has CPB ever denied funding to any station consortium because of complaints programs were not balanced or objective or for other reasons, since passage of the 1992 legislation?
 - 1.) There have been complaints about Frontline from a variety of groups and individuals. Please provide correspondence between CPB and the Frontline consortium relating to issues of balance and objectivity in consortium programming.
 - 2.) There have been complaints about The American Experience regarding programs, including "The Liberators." Please provide correspondence between CPB and The American Experience relating to issues of balance and objectivity in their programming.
 - 3.) There have been complaints about American Playhouse programming on grounds of profanity, nudity, and indecency as well as questions of balance and objectivity. Please provide correspondence between CPB and American Playhouse in this regard.
- p. Has CPB ever withheld funding from any other series or production entity because of failure to provide balanced and objective programming?
 - 1.) There have been complaints about the P.O.V. series and ITVS's objectivity and balance. Please provide copies of correspondence with P.O.V. and ITVS relating to this issue.
 - 2.) CPB director Vic Gold has inquired how a show called "Don't Believe the Hype" will treat this issue. Please provide copies of correspondence between CPB and the producers.
- q. Has CPB ever commissioned a program or series specifically to balance an inadequate program or series?
- r. Has CPB ever required a producer, station, or

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48. **Stephen Galen Cope**

Poetry Fashion Benefit Falls Short

Mon 6 Feb 1995

Subject: Poetry Fashion Benefit Falls Short

Copyright: 1999 by The Anti-Hegemony Project

Date: 1 May 99 19:84 EST

Lines: 50

NEW YORK (AHP) -- Despite all the glitz and glamour of New York's politerati, authors and publishers were unable to stitch together the fraying fabric of the once-famous National Endowment for the Arts. A cross-dressing fashion benefit called "Fidgety Spouting" nevertheless gave occasion for a poetry free-for-all that left participants wondering if it's all worth the effort. James Sherry, Segue's CEO, lent his bowery loft space for the showings, and gave the poets permission to use a recently abandoned building near famed punk rock club CBGB's for dressing. But the loft was too small to seat the long guest list, and the streets around CBGB's are no place for a ``signora" to be walking, especially in mink and jewels.

Group bleari.nooz.fashion available 2001 - 2525 unread: 1

article 2524 31-MAY-1999 24:59:59

Even the cash bar offered by Sherry at the quickly planned romp was not enough to lift the spirits of the crowd, who fear the end of New York as a literary capital. Gone are the heady days of the 1960s when Frank O'Hara, Joe Brainard and Jim Brodey dressed as Giulietta Masina, Audrey Hepburn and Sophia Loren, sipping drinks with the world's titled and wealthy. Gone is Alice Notley, who single-handedly kept New York on the international lit map until she packed her bags for Paris. The fashionable pack who swoop into Paris and Vancouver have long ago abandoned New York. So have many of the top younger poets, presumably because the local publishers don't have enough money to put out their books. Despite their gratitude to Sherry, poets also lament the lack of a glamorous site for the readings. The Paris shows are at the Louvre. Last but not least was the quality of the poetry on the Bowery runway. Except for a tiny few such as Bernstein, Lauterbach and Godfrey, the big names are gone. The field is left to little-known writers catering mainly to the Lower East Side

Group bleari.nooz.fashion available: 2001 - 2525 unread: 1

article 2524 31-MAY-1999 23:59:59

``slacker" crowd. ``What we have heard tonight was ugly self-indulgent lang-po dolled up with bridal gowns," said Rob Fitterman, who has helped run

the Ear Inn series for several years. ``Where is the music?" Others were put off by the sameness of the verse. ``The dresses showed more imagination than the poetry," said Paul Beatty, who recalled in his own outfit the chic touch of his Southern California origins. Things got ugly when a restive Eileen Myles challenged the ``girls" to submit to a wet t-shirt contest. ``Ladies, ladies!" shouted a heavily made-up Bruce Andrews, ``Remember the '70s! Women's lib!" If things don't change, says Fitterman, New York couture has ``a maximum of two more years of life." For the next round of the ``Fidgety Spouting" events, Sherry has promised some of New York's most famous outdoor spots such as Times Square and the Central Park Reservoir, already the site of the televised fashion gala, ``Donne Sotto le Stelle."

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49. **James Sherry**

Re: reified names vs. boundless vocabulary

Mon 6 Feb 1995

In the original Greek use of the word theory, it was not opposed to praxis but to doxa (orthodox), so that theory related to the conduct of the individual life and doxa to social conduct and rites in society. Ref: Habermas. I have an extensive discussion of this in Our Nuclear Heritage where the concept of theoretical poetry is broached.

James

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50. **James Sherry**

Re: the future of poetry (forwarded)

Mon 6 Feb 1995

Just taking this opportunity at the mention of the poets of Canada to add to the list of poetry books addressing the subject of Language poetry from the Canadians:

Alan Davies, *Signage* (Roof Books)

Steve McCaffery *North of Intention* (Roof Books co-published in Canada by Nightwood)

and Steve's issue of *Open Letter* called "Politics of the Referent" which was central to the process of "defining" language poetry for better and for getting it labelled, but Steve referred to it as "language-oriented" poetry (not the first time the phrase was used).

If you want to know it's there to be found out.

On Sun, 5 Feb 1995, George Bowering wrote:

Phew!

Canada as a community on a par with Buffalo or Providence!

That feels great!

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51. **James Sherry**

Re: reified names vs. boundless vocabulary

Mon 6 Feb 1995

You know Tom I wonder why with all this discussion of Apex, there have been no remarks from any of the signators which strikes me as what one person called Martini Terrorism or have they said it all in their magazine. Will you dance? If not, I suspect that the forum is too scrappy for a response which they would consider effective against the broadsides unloaded here. I too felt that when asked why I was interested in Lew's prose. I didn't want to expose my partially developed notions to the dogs of the net. How can we invite more varied response and still be able to say what we want. I mean it's fine for us to say what we think, but what about those of whom we are speaking? Jmaes

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52. **I.LIGHTMAN**

forwarded posting about Eric Mottram

Mon 6 Feb 1995

From: MX%"[REDACTED]" 3-FEB-1995 23:09:06.11

To: MX%"[REDACTED]"

CC:

Subj: Eric Mottram

03 Feb 1995 23:09:08 WET

<[REDACTED]>; Fri, 3 Feb 1995 22:58:50 +0000

for mailbase.ac.uk); Thu, 2 Feb 1995 21:38:09 GMT

<[REDACTED]> (8.6.8.1/ for mailbase.ac.uk) with

SMTP; Thu, 2 Feb 1995 21:37:40 GMT

Date: Thu, 02 Feb 95 17:22:21 +0000

From: Arnold Goldman <[REDACTED]>

To: [REDACTED]

Subject: Eric Mottram

The death of Eric Mottram has shocked those who knew how energetic he was to the last week of his life. That this was so, will give pleasure to all those who never saw him otherwise in his 40+ years as a teacher.

We will all have our particular memories. I lose count when I try to tally up the names of writers and titles whom I first heard of from Eric and who I cannot now imagine having "professed" American literature without having read. How DID he find out so fast? Eric was one of the original "networkers", who didn't need the electronic one. In fact, no "superhighways" for Eric (though they would fascinate him as a cultural phenomenon) - rather byways and the byways of byways, from which "probes" he would return with gold, frankincense and a lot of less salubrious matter. (He fell upon that McLuhan "probe" idea with a vengeance.)

I also recall telling Eric about the political machinations I was learning about when I went to work at the Council for National Awards. We walked endlessly up and down a tennis court at Bulmershe (as was), I think it was. He was so distressed at what I was telling him - "the bastards! the bastards! - that I found myself cheering HIM up. What good medicine.

I believe that King's is having a service for Eric on Friday 3 March.

Arnold Goldman

University of Kent at Canterbury

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53. **I.LIGHTMAN**

Re: apex of the m...

Mon 6 Feb 1995

Well, of course I posted a manifesto because I wanted to flush out some fellow spirits, not engage in debate - if I'd had a hope of that, of course I'd have sent a longer message. On a list where a really dumb message about aphasia can go out unchallenged - by people supposedly devoted to the politics of language definition - there ain't no shared values, and there ain't no space for civilised debate. I do have one civilised question: can anyone sell me a copy of Barrett Watten's *Progress*? I love the library copy I have and want my own. Is it still in print? A debating point, perhaps. In the *American Tree* is to my mind an astounding good piece of anthology editing - a very great book. This is why I have a lot of time for the comments Ron Silliman made on this list a while back about *laissez-faire* editing in the new poetry; he has cred on the subject. But editing is a big issue, alright: about how one looks at one's own work, and how one allows oneself to be theorised and institutionalised - the effort to influence this was what I love about the journals *Poetics Journal*, and indeed *L=A=N=G=U=A=G=E*. So where'd it go? *_From the Other Side of the Century_* is a terrible book, in my humble opinion - everyone represented by work referring to method, where Silliman represented writers by work either personally daring or descriptively or energetically activating. From the Other

Side is about a poetics as a style, a garment, a ticket to esteem, a movement got lazy, where In The American Tree is about a movement breaking free and finding method and setting new agendas. Well, if G1 won't keep to that spirit, G2 will, and of course you won't like it.

Ira Lightman



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54. **Steve Evans**
Espousing Update 2/6
Mon 6 Feb 1995

Thanks

To Martin Spinelli for putting Senator Pressler's document before us in all its inquisitorial splendor. Perhaps we should be phoning his office and working through each of the questions with *his* staff?

And also to Ted Pelton for forwarding his Jan 13 Op-Ed piece. I am impressed by Rep. Russ Feingold's position: he says what too few arts advocates are willing to say.

It is true, as Ted points out, that editorials from "hometown" papers are often entered by the Representatives into the Congressional Record as an indication of how their constituents (are alleged to) feel. That Bob and Ted have both succeeded in placing their pieces is indeed encouraging.

San Diego

We spoke with Cole Heinowitz yesterday. She reports that plans are underway to invite Randy Cunningham to a "public forum" (hopefully to be held in Escondido) on the issue of federal arts funding. More specifics should be available after the next planning meeting, scheduled for a week from today. Anne Burt of LitNet will lend some assistance on this one, and we've tracked down some potential allies through our contacts as well.

February Art in America

Douglas Davis's "Multicultural Wars" is a good source for some background on the recent history of the Endowments. The piece is especially good at pinpointing the flaws in the "conciliatory strategy" adopted by many arts advocates in the past half-decade or so. Along with the *Voice* cover article of a week ago, this is great material to hand to someone who needs a rapid course in the shape this battle is taking.

One snippet: "The paradox buried beneath the continuing muteness of the mainstream liberal-left is that even today's politically fraught contemporary art could be easily defended. Long ago, proponents of today's avant-gardists should have argued that this democracy, or any democracy worth its name, thrives on dissent" (37).

Center for the Study of Popular Culture

The president of the above right-wing organization, Larry Jarvick, has been participating on the "Screen" list-serv that I monitor now and then. As you know, Jarvick is a key member of the assassination squad being sent after the Arts and Public Broadcasting. If people want to appeal to whatever reason he possesses, his e-mail address is: [REDACTED].

Copies of Flash Article

We faxed off a brief article about *FE* to Joyce Jenkins at Poetry Flash last night. As of yet, no confirmation that it will be run, but we should hear soon. In the meanwhile, if anyone would like a copy, drop us a note saying as much and we'll forward it to you via e-mail.

That's it for now.

Steve Evans and Jennifer Moxley

[REDACTED]

new improved e-mail address: [REDACTED]

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55. **Carla Billitteri**
Dissension in the ranks

Mon 6 Feb 1995

Subject: Dissension in the ranks as G1 set to discuss Buffalo

Copyright: 1999 by The Anti-Hegemony Project

Date: 1 Jun 99 15:15:15 EST

Priority: Dally

Lines: 73

VANCOUVER (AHP) - Baby-Boomer poets of the United States and their Canadian allies were at odds over the handling of a rescue for Buffalo's Poetics Program as major players in Lang-Po prepared to open talks on ways to bolster the world's poetics system.

The lessons from the Buffalo crisis will top the agenda of a two-day meeting of poetics program ministers and central publishers from the United States and Canada, as well as observers from Japan, Germany, France, Britain and Italy starting with a dinner tomorrow evening.

Some Canadians made it clear just hours before the talks were set to begin that they were unhappy about how San Francisco had rushed through a rescue package for Buffalo this week.

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Group bleari.biz.poesy.g1 available: 12345 - 23456 unread: 567

article 22978 21-JUN-1999 33:24:36

With Buffalo credibility and the New York State economy plunging, President Silliman yesterday abandoned a plan to get S.P.D. approval for book-loan guarantees but used his authority to promise an undisclosed amount in aid from a little-known Lang-Po theory stabilisation fund.

S.P.D. stands for Small Press Distribution, a program for distributing subsistence-reading allotments to underdeveloped writing centres. S.P.D. is partly funded by the National Endowment.

Silliman also announced that U.S. allies would contribute a visitor-donation package for Buffalo through the French-based Fondation Royaumont, and that the international Bureau of the Atlantic would make its biggest-ever contribution to Buffalo of Emmanuel Hocquard/Claude Royet-Journoud titles.

The Board of Directors of K.S.W. (the Kootenay School of Writing), which is meant to be the guardian of the world's poetics system, approved its share of the package this morning and no country voted against it, diplomats said in San Francisco.

But in a rare show of diplomatic pique, at least five Canadian and European poets expressed misgivings about the package.

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article 22978 21-JUN-1999 33:24:36

Nanni Balestrini and Nicole Brossard indicated before the K.S.W. board meeting that they wanted to abstain, as did Pierre Joris, who chose to cast his vote as a Luxemburger. Other poets rumoured to be on the fence included Steve McCaffery and Tom Raworth.

“The Europeans and Canadians feel this particular crisis is above all an American problem,” said a senior Canadian official, who declined to be named.

James Sherry, who delivered President Silliman's message, suggested testily that George Bowering was the chief naysayer.

In another show of displeasure, Canadian nations had not

agreed on details of the financing being arranged through Segue, which groups central publishers from some 33 cities.

The exact share-out among the central publishers of the Segue loans to Buffalo was still under discussion as G1 prepared to open their talks.

U.S. officials stressed that they had to act quickly because they were convinced that Buffalo was in dire intellectual straits.

U.S. Treasury Secretary Tom Mandel said today that

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the Buffalo crisis highlighted the need to modernise international poetics programs so that they have the capability to deal quickly with problems posed by mushrooming G2 markets.

The run on Buffalo's ``New Spirit" currency may not be the last market scare to hit the world in a new age where a million bandwidths are moved around the world instantly, K.S.W. Managing Director Susan Clark said.

``Let me say that this may be seen as the first major crisis of our new world of globalized writing networks to have hit a developing poetics program," Clark told a press conference in Vancouver.

Poetics ministers are expected to discuss in Toronto safeguards for early detection and prevention of a Buffalo-type crisis. Clark said K.S.W. may need a new infusion of money from its allies as a line of defence against such problems.

In addition to Buffalo, the G1 ministers will discuss the state of world poetry.

Since they last met in Paris in October, the Chechnya war has worsened the prospects for full scale Lang-Po investments in Russia,

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Group bleari.biz.poesy.g1 available: 12345 - 23456 unread: 567

article 22978 21-JUN-1999 33:24:36

Italy has been forced to increase spending for battered-poet shelters after the return of fascism, while disinterest rates in old-style avant-garde writing have risen in several countries, including the United States, Canada and Britain.

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56. **Mark Roberts**

AWOL: Conference

Mon 6 Feb 1995

AUSTRALIAN WRITING ONLINE is a small press distribution service which we hope will help Australian magazines, journals and publishers to reach a much wider audience through the internet. As a first step we will be posting information and subscription details for a number of magazines and publishers to a number of discussion groups and lists. We hope to build up a large emailing list which includes as many libraries as possible. If you know of a list or discussion group which you think might be worthwhile posting to or, if you would like to receive future postings, please contact AWOL directly on [REDACTED].

Please note that [REDACTED] is a temporary address until we set up our own address sometime this year

GRIFFITH UNIVERSITY/JAMES COOK UNIVERSITY

QUEENSLAND STUDIES CENTRE ANNUAL CONFERENCE - 8-9 JULY

WAR'S END?

August 1945 marked the end of the most harrowing and transforming collective experience in the history of modern Australia. How much of the 'old' Australia came to an end with the cessation of hostilities, and how much continued as before? What different meanings did the War's end have for different groups and institutions in Australian society?

The Queensland Studies Centre will be holding its annual two-day conference, in association with the History Department of James Cook University, in Townsville, on 8-9 July of this year. Papers are invited which examine the myths and realities of the War's end - especially, though not exclusively, from the perspective of Queensland.

The conference will be interdisciplinary in scope, embracing military, social and cultural history; politics and political economy; literary and cultural studies. Papers exploring any of the following aspects of the topic would be welcome:

- * literature and the arts
- * education and social policy
- * Aboriginal and ethnic communities
- * women's history
- * military and social history
- * politics and industrial relations
- * journalism and the media

Venue: Townsville, Queensland.

Date: 8-9 July, 1995.

Deadlines:

Offers of Papers: 31 March

Abstracts of Papers: 2 June

Expressions of interest should be forwarded to:

The Queensland Studies Centre (Director, Patrick Buckridge)

Faculty of Humanities

Griffith University

Nathan QLD 4111.

Tel: (07) 85 5494 Fax: (07) [REDACTED]

E-mail: [REDACTED]

Call for Papers

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57. **Spencer Selby**

Re: reified names vs. boundless vocabulary

Mon 6 Feb 1995

Art may be equipped to deal with "a man's total perception of relations," though probably not a woman's. Seriously, if you broaden the definition of theory to encompass this most hopeful, grandiose definition of art, then you've erased the difference between the two. Art may be able to do what theory or philosophy or other disciplines have failed to do. That is what Pound's statement means to me (and I don't care if that's not what he meant). Spencer Selby

On Sat, 4 Feb 1995, eric pape wrote:

Pound: A work of art, any serious work vivifies a man's total perception of relations.

Maybe we need to broaden our definition of theory to "a man's total perception of relations." Just a thought, a gesture towards an imagined point of opening.

Thanks, Eric (enpape.lsuvm.sncc.lsu.edu)

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58. **Spencer Selby**

Re: Spencer's gauntlet, etc.

Mon 6 Feb 1995

On Thu, 2 Feb 1995, Spencer Selby wrote:

Poetry/art has its own level, and whatever it is or may be, it is not the same as theory or criticism or writers' discourses or internet exchanges. This view may strike some as extreme, simplistic or old-fashioned, but I think it's dangerous when artists or critics start saying (or building contexts in which) their discourse is on the same level as the art.

Why?

Jeffrey Timmons

Because that tips the balance in the direction of domination. When explainers make such claims for their explanations, art is the loser. This doesn't have to be so, but this is what has happened over the past 50 years or so. The framing of art has gotten increasingly more attention than the art itself. It's gotten so people can't tell the difference any more. They can't just bring themselves to a work of art, they're so fascinated or intimidated by all the discourse that they've forgotten what it's like to just let the work speak to them--that is, if they ever knew. Spencer Selby

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59. **Spencer Selby**

Re: reified names vs. boundless vocabulary

Mon 6 Feb 1995

Interesting point, though we all live here today, not in ancient Greece. The opposition or at least difference between theory and practice is real today, even if their relation was different then. Still, I do like yr addition of a new term to this discussion. I'm all for talking about the social conduct of writers, whether opposed to theory or not. (At the very least, it's a good source for humor, as is demonstrated by recent "news articles" sent to this forum.) Spencer Selby

On Mon, 6 Feb 1995, James Sherry wrote:

*In the original Greek use of the word theory, it was not opposed to praxis but to doxa (orthodox), so that theory related to the conduct of the individual life and doxa to social conduct and rites in society.
Ref: Habermas. I have an extensive discussion of this in Our Nuclear*

As a hard-working citizen, I am concerned about how my tax dollars are spent. I am even more concerned about returns on my tax investment in the Federal Government.

I have recently read a report from the Reuter's about a letter you sent to the heads of the CPB, NPR, and PBS asking for financial information and predicting the inevitable commercialization of public broadcasting. You and your colleagues in the 104th Congress have been spending a disconcertingly large amount of time and resources in an attempt to convince Americans of the need to cut this infinitesimally small budget line (much less than one one-hundredth of one percent of the national budget) while ignoring potentially significant cuts in budget items that are no longer relevant or return nothing to citizens and communities. It appears that you are imprudently waging a costly ideological war at taxpayers' expense, and that cultural purification is more important to you and the new Congress than real reductions in spending.

I have enclosed a list of questions enquiring into how you are spending my tax money. I would like you to answer them as soon as possible. I will distribute your responses to major South Dakota newspapers, internet groups serving South Dakota, and national media agencies. If I receive no response from you by 25 Feb. 1995 I will report your lack of willingness to answer a citizen's request to these media sources.

Thank you for your prompt response.

Sincerely,

QUESTIONS

(Please document all responses adequately, i.e. contracts, minutes of meetings, memos, research reports, etc.)

1. How much of your time have you spent trying to persuade the American people that real budget relief could be accomplished if the Corporation for Public Broadcasting was cut?

a. What is the approximate cost to the American people of this expenditure of your time?

b. Have you ever instructed your staff, also paid with tax dollars, to work in advocating cuts to public broadcasting and at what cost to the taxpayer?

1.) Are you aware that the salaries of yourself and your staff are paid for %100 with tax-payer dollars while only %14 of public broadcasters' salaries are paid with tax money?

- 2.) Are you working %86 harder to find programs to cut within your own office and Congress? If not, why not?
 - c. Are you aware that funding to the CPB is only a tiny fraction of one percent of our national budget and cutting it in its entirety would do virtually nothing to alleviate budget pressure? If so, why are you spending so much time and energy trying to convince Americans it should be cut for the budget's sake?
 - d. Are you intentionally misleading the American people about the virtually nil reduction in the budget cutting the CPB would cause?
2. Please supply an itemized list of all contributions of more than \$250 your staff has made to all political organizations since your election.
 3. Please supply a list of the name, religion, income and membership in any political extremist group (i.e. the NRA, Right to Life, Moral Majority, etc.) of everyone on your staff.
 4. Do you believe tax money should be used to defend the First Amendment to the Constitution?
 - a. Since public broadcasting is currently unlike commercial broadcasting in that is not merely billboard space for advertisers, how would commercial broadcasting, influenced and limited in form and content every ten to fifteen minutes by advertising, replace the unfettered information found on public broadcasting?
 - b. Does "balance" and "objectivity" in journalism mean that equal time should be given to sides of issues proven empirically or factually false?
 - 1.) Do you agree with Newt Gingrich's former appointee to the position of House Historian that courses on the Holocaust should include space for a legitimization of the Nazi rationale?
 - 2.) Would your definition of "balance" include giving equal time to Holocaust revisionists in a discussion of World War II, Ku Klux Klan members in a discussion of the Civil Rights struggle, or cigarette manufactures in a discussion of cancer?

- c. Do you believe that whatever political party happens to be in power should be given oversight of any public medium?
 - d. Do you believe that completely commercial media can be "balanced" and "objective" even though they have to protect the sources of their revenue, for-profit corporations?
 - e. Do you believe that completely commercial media can report in a "balanced" fashion on things that might threaten their complete dominance, such as the unique value of public broadcasting, communication workers' labor talks, or the possible psychological damage or damage to families caused by persistent advertising?
5. Why was your meeting with Rupert Murdoch not opened to reporters?
- a. How much have Rupert Murdoch, his associates, and his employees donated to your political campaigns?
 - b. Has Rupert Murdoch given any financial support or other resources to the campaign to convince Americans that budget problems would experience some relief if funding to the CPB was cut?
 - c. Has Rupert Murdoch promised you further generosity should you manage to kill funding to the CPB?
 - d. Were any of your staff at the meeting with Rupert Murdoch? If so, how much tax-payer money went to paying them while they were at the meeting?
 - e. Do you plan to meet with any other media moguls in the near future to discuss the selling off of public broadcasting bandwidths?
6. How much time in legal council was spent writing the 170-question CPB demand for information and at what cost to the taxpayer?
- a. How much time do you estimate CPB employees will now have to spend answering this request and at what cost to the taxpayer?
 - b. Do you feel this money was well spent?

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62. **Jonathan Brannen**

Re: apex of the m...

Mon 6 Feb 1995

Tom,

This isn't the Pessoa poem you referenced, but another that seems not inappropriate:

IF THEY WANT ME TO BE A MYSTIC,
FINE. SO I'M A MYSTIC.

If they want me to be a mystic, fine. So I'm a mystic.
I'm a mystic, but only of the body.
My soul is simple; it doesn't think.

My mysticism consists in not desiring to know,
In living without thinking about it.

I don't know what Nature is; I sing it.
I live on a hilltop
In a solitary cabin.
And that's what it's all about.

(translated by Edwin Honig)

Jonathan Brannen

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63. **Ron Silliman**

Re: apex of the m...

Tue 7 Feb 1995

That last line of Pessoa's

And that's what it's all about.

(translated by Edwin Honig)

is why I always pass on Edwin Honig's translations. How can he NOT hear "The Hokey Pokey" in that syntax?

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64. **Jonathan Brannen**

Re: apex of the m...

Tue 7 Feb 1995

Ron, Maybe he Honig had his finger in his ear instead of the air. I wondered the same thing Hokey Pokey-wise, but gambled something of the piece would transcend translation.

transcendentally yours,
Jonathan Brannen

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65. **I.LIGHTMAN**

Re: apex of the m...

Tue 7 Feb 1995

I agree with Ron Silliman about Edwin Honig's Pessoa - does anyone know Jonathan Griffin's translations - they do rare honour to the art.

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66. **James Sherry**

Re: apex of the m...

Tue 7 Feb 1995

Barrett Watten's *Progress* is available from:

Roof Books
303 E. 8th Street
New York, NY 10009

Cost including postage is \$7.50 and should be prepaid.

Note to net: We tried to post a list of Roof Books, but who can read all that. If I.LIGHTMAN wants a book, he needs to be able to search for it in a larger list using an automated utility which we hope to be able to provide for all participating presses soon. By the end of the year anyway.

Literacy & technology,
James

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67. **James Sherry**

Re: questioning BIG BROTHER

Tue 7 Feb 1995

A fine questionnaire and very much to the point, but I wonder whether letters to the leaders of the opposition pay off as much as letters to our own representatives who may be vacillating about their constituents commitment to responsible government. Not that I know the answer to this question.

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68. **Chris Stroffolino**

Re: apex of the m...

Tue 7 Feb 1995

ROn, yes, the Hokey Pokey, or the Kacky pataki

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69. **eric pape**

Re: reified names vs. boundless vocabulary

Tue 7 Feb 1995

Total perception of relations implies to me, well, everything that informs the art. Certainly I'm not arguing, and I don't believe any- body is, that theory is somehow privileged over art, just that if it works, use it. If it doesn't, don't. But it does have some relevance to the creation of art? Are we genuinely saying that a poet's aesthetics, politics, economics, etc., don't inform the poem? Not that it should be mistaken for the poem, okay, but does it come from nowhere? That's all I'm asking, really, when I talk about the relations thing. I am interested, though, in the desire to keep poetry pure, clean of theory.... Listen, this is not an academic problem. This is a problem I face everyday when as I sit at my desk and my ideals about what poetry should be increasingly diverge with what I'm writing and I struggle to come to some resolution that never happens because it can't and that's what, to me, is interesting about writing. That I never write what I set out to write and am constantly surprised. So this question is very important to me and why I've been following the discussion with great interest at what I see as very important POVs are articulated. Thanks, Eric (██████)

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70. **Martin Spinelli**
"our leaders"

Tue 7 Feb 1995

James,

I too am at a loss. An exasperation compounded by feeling like I/we have no genuine representation in Washington or in Albany. Even the Democrats are saying, "Sure I love All Things Considered, sure public broadcasting is great, but these are tough times, and that means we have to cut the inessentials." Our Dems in New York, following the example of *their* Grand Poo-Bah of acquiescence Bill Clinton, have made it impossible to articulate any possible alternative by choosing to parrot all the erroneous assumptions of Newt and his ilk: you are taxed too much, government is too big, public broadcasting is elitist/"liberal", the poor--not decades of lunatic defense spending--are responsible for a crushing debt, etc. By failing to be critical of, and actually participating in this relentless stream of propaganda, they have made themselves part of the problem; but they may yet keep their jobs.

I'm frustrated James. I really don't know what to do. You are certainly right, Democrats do need to know that we value public arts and public broadcasting; I've sent them a different letter.

Feed me more ideas!

--Martin

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71. **aa1464**
RAID ON POETICS PROGRAM

Tue 7 Feb 1995

Subject: Raid on Poetics Program

Copyright: 1999 by The Anti-Hegemony Project

Date: 31 Jul 99 18:00:00 PST

Priority: Dogged

Lines: 52

BOULDER, COLO. (AHP) -- A rumor long circulated through the city was finally confirmed today as Poetics Police disclosed their raid on a local religious school's ``Sapphic hierarchy."

The p-cops moved quickly, seizing documents and arresting

ringleaders. More specific details were not available at press time.

Chief among the questions was just what a ``Sapphic hierarchy" might be.

Following the announcement, Boulder's Naropa Institute, the nation's first accredited Buddhist college, announced a severing of all ties with the famed Jack Kerouac School of Disembodied Poetics.

---More---

Group bleari.nooz.sex available: 1776 - 1860 unread: 8
article 1852 7-AUG-1999 00:00:00

Naropa's Board of Trustees insisted the decision had been made before the raid. The school's poetics program had long drawn criticism, but Naropa ignored the warnings, in part because of the stature of the Kerouac school, and partly because the poetry helped fund other programs. Named for famed alcoholic writer Jack Kerouac, the poetics program has long attracted a wide variety of writers committed to the school's permissive philosophy and multicultural agenda. Kerouac is principally remembered for inspiring the TV series Route 66. A Buddhist official speaking on condition of anonymity noted, ``Other colleges have football and basketball, we have poets ... and you know what trouble poets are." Anne Waldman, co-founder of the program, is suspected of organizing the Sapphists. Led away for questioning with colleague Andrew Schelling, she reportedly shouted, ``Yes! We're sure that some of our students have sex, sometimes with each other, it's good for them!" Poet Jack Collom, called for a comment, said only, ``I don't

---More---

Group bleari.nooz.sex available: 1776 - 1850 unread: 8
article 1852 7-AUG-1999 00:00:00

know a thing. I was out with the boys shootin' pool and on my way home." Waldman's intern, Katie Yates, had just returned from a month-long meditation retreat. ``Great, just great," she told reporters, ``I go away for a few weeks and the whole thing falls apart ... maybe I'll go back to Albany." Followers of Naropa's history will recall earlier scandals. In the late 1970s, students were required to pose nude for photographs supposedly used in a study of meditation posture. Neighborhood residents are determined to see an end put to this controversial institution. Says Naropa neighbor Ni Kegap, ``I don't mind the all night partyin' ... it's those endless `oms' ... it just gets ugly after awhile ... they call it poetry but it doesn't rhyme and it doesn't make sense."

A shaken Peter Lamborn Wilson appeared on the front steps of the school to quiet an angry crowd. ``Why can't we all just get along?" wailed the normally mild-mannered Sufist. A tense moment occurred when players from the University of Colorado football team, which practices nearby, began heckling.

---More---

Group bleari.nooz.sex available: 1776 - 1850 unread: 8

article 1852 7-AUG-1999 00:00:00

``Get out of here!" shouted Allen Ginsberg. ``Nothing's happening ... go on home to your nobodaddies!"

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D(escriptions) of an I(maginary) U(nivercity)
P.O. Box 1503
Santa Cruz, CA 95061

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72. **cris cheek**

Cockney Rhyming of the m . . .

Tue 7 Feb 1995

Hi Ron and Chris.

Briefly, Kacky pataki is Hackney rhyming slang for Karnaki - a form of fast interlocking group guttural vocal music produced in the Belo-sur-Tsiribina (meaning Place Where One Must Not Dive) area of west coastal Madagascar. It sounds like Ketjak when described like that I know. I went there last year and recorded some. Does that mean that we have something in common?

I beg to differ though.

In actual fact Lowkey Bloakey (well I knew you wouldn't believe me so I had to seed you into reading this far before I told the truth) is Cockney rhyming slang for Okey-Dokey - a form of self-defense through amelioration practiced, mainly by men, and only in London's East End. These days of course the 'happy chappy' is mostly used as a sweetener for community theatre workshops. It's apparently so named after the classic fence-sitting posture advocated by Mathew Arnold in 1849 when writing to fellow poet Clough of the need:

'to begin with an idea of the world in order not to be prevailed over by the world's multitudinousness'

a mantis which afflicts English poetry and its translations nay even unto this very day.

Coherence is its essence.

I haven't seen the apex yet that didn't harbour such.

You're probably both right.

cris

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73. **Loss Glazier**

Re: apex of the m... / Roof Books

Tue 7 Feb 1995

I have also added a couple of "press lists" to the Electronic Poetry Center (Roof included) which give lengthy lists of book titles. (The list for Sun & Moon is quite extensive.) They can be searched (in our system) with a /. But in any case, provide very interesting "charts" of what some presses have done.

Loss

>

> Barrett Watten's *Progress* is available from:

>

> Roof Books

> 303 E. 8th Street

> New York, NY 10009

>

> Cost including postage is \$7.50 and should be prepaid.

>

> Note to net: We tried to post a list of Roof Books, but who can read all
> that. If I.LIGHTMAN wants a book, he needs to be able to search for it in
> a larger list using an automated utility which we hope to be able to
> provide for all participating presses soon. By the end of the year anyway.

>

> Literacy & technology,
> James
>

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74. **cris cheek**

The Housings of Parliament (a present time outs with its past)

Tue 7 Feb 1995

Hi. I've called for a decisive break with the past too. I tried to post it once before and only managed to preface an ammendment. And now I'm here as it were simply hoping to be present enough when one of these breaks with the past does call by as to attempt to either engage or represent its interests. This is a call for FAT TIME. Engagement with or without of the blah blah. ALERT BREATH.

'The Curse Of The Vernacular' or 'The Minutiae Of Preference', 'The Return of The Plague of The Dreams of The Undecided'.

Ira raises issues of improvisation, of music, of body and voice - amongst (or between) others. Improvisation is the salt (Fame Is Not The Spur) of process to the materials of composition. Improvisation is not 'free' and they who suggest that it can be are spent. But I wouldn't suggest that the dues are what have to be paid for. Down traits of avoidance have developed which are certain - as to flurry with an -all-too-frequency mode of anxiety. Who Goes There Perimeters are the familiar policed.

Recognisable slack has evolved through imitation of previously incisive strategies. Impro and Lang-po share the worst burden of flattery - as urgency worn second-hand. Many will have their own catalogues of denial in these respects.

When Robert Grenier wrote "I HATE SPEECH" (his shout not mine) did he understand the irony that language writers would 'find' their voices by such turns? Impacting tectonics of playful curiosity, rigorous enquiry and specific discovery onto the dominant familial nodes of poetic formulation and circulation. Again parallels (sic) with Impro. Now some 20 years on. Hardly surprising and highly desirable that impetus for re-alignment has come.

Or - (gods) how do I love the mud on the boots far more than her boots itselfish? Those who know her work well will witness her circumnavigations of binary oppositions. G1 or G3. These roads are already furrows. Brows knit toward mind set. Please r e l e a s e m. And then become political.

Chance overcharacterised into exquisitely interfastening rather than threatening difference - sorry, deference.

And then becomes political

With the Upper and the Lower Houses intent on holding their poses sufficiently long as to be impressed on the minds of they who are cast as spectators - and a bright-eyed horde quietly transporting the gates to

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75. **Rae Armantrout**

Re: Espousing Update 2/6

Tue 7 Feb 1995

Dear Steve,

I'm afraid I can't fax you the article from the paper here in S.D. I don't have the equipment. I might mail it or bring it with me when I come East next week. What do you think?

Love,

Rae

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76. **Ted Pelton**

Re: questioning BIG BROTHER

Tue 7 Feb 1995

This is a fan letter for Martin Spinelli -- good work on Pressler questionnaire!

Ted Pelton

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77. **Steve Evans**

Espousing 2/8

Wed 8 Feb 1995

Before proceeding with this update (dealing mostly with legislative matters and the questions Martin Spinelli and James Sherry raised today about where to direct one's energies), I want to pose an open question to members of this list: would you (pl.) prefer that such postings migrate off-list or is it useful to have them appear here?

The Poetics-list was an invaluable resource in the first rush of organizing *FE*, but as we settle into the weeks and months of ongoing activity, we are wary of trying the patience of those who don't much care about this particular struggle (perhaps especially those who log-in from non-U.S. sites). We could easily enough shift to cc-trees if continued use of this space doesn't seem appropriate.

Jen and I will make a decision about this in the next week or two, based on whether any consensus emerges one way or the other on the list (though that would be a rare occasion). So let's hear it.

List of Bills in the House Pertaining to NEA/NEH/IMS

HR100 'Arts, Humanities, and Museums Amendments of 1995'

A bill to authorize appropriations for fiscal years 1996 and 1997 to carry out the National Foundation on the Arts and Humanities Act of 1965, and the Museum Services Act.

Introduced by Syndey Yates (D-Illinois) 1-4-95. Referred to Committee on Economic and Education Opportunities on 1-4-95. (I don't have sponsor information for this one, nor the date on which it was referred to Randy "Duke" Cunningham's Subcommittee.)

HR 209: The 'Privatization of Art Act'

A bill to amend the National Foundation on the Arts and the Humanities Act of 1965 to abolish the National Endowment for the Arts and the National Council on the Arts.

Introduced by Phillip M. Crane (R-Illinois) on 1-4-95. Referred to Committee on Economic and Education Opportunities on 1-4-95. Referred to Subcommittee on Early Childhood, Youth, and Family on 1-25-95. Sponsors as of 2-1-95: Hurton, Chabot, Canady, Knollenberg, Coburn, Rohrabacher, Dornan, Norwood, Hancock, Royce, Condit, Linder, Myrick, Johnson, Sam, Bartlett, Hunter, Stump, Doolittle, King, McKeon, Chrysler, Hayworth, Armey, Neumann, and Hostettler (25).

HR 579: The 'Privatization of Humanities Act':

A bill to amend the National Foundation on the Humanities and the Humanities Act of 1965 to abolish the National Endowment for the Arts and the National Council on the Humanities.

Introduced by Hefley (R-Colorado), Crane, and Doolittle on 1-19-95. Referred to Committee on Economic and Education Opportunities on 1-19-95. Referred to Subcommittee on Early Childhood, Youth, and Family 2-1-95. Sponsors as of 2-6-95: Chrysler, Chabot, Hancock, Solomon, Neumann, and Chenoweth.

Who to Write: Dem or Them?

James Sherry wondered this morning (with reference to Martin Spinelli's wonderful retort to Pressler) "whether letters to the leaders of the opposition pay off as much as letters to our own representatives who may be vacillating about their constituents commitment to responsible government. Not that I know the answer to this question."

I don't know the answer either, but I have been repeatedly told that even with consolidated support from Democrats, the NEA is extremely vulnerable. As Patrick A. Trueman (how do they all end up with names like that?) of the conservative Christian "American Family Association" told a reporter: "Of the 73 new Republican freshmen...probably 65 of them oppose NEA funding altogether" ("Opposing Interests Brace for a Culture Clash," by Jon Healey, *Congressional Quarterly Weekly Report*, 28 Jan 1995).

The reporter goes on to cite two amendments proposed in 1994, one to eliminate NEA funding (105 votes short of passage) and one to slash its budget by 54% (86 votes short). Even allowing for the fact that Trueman is bragging, the post-Coup margin has become distressingly slim.

The question is, as I think Ron pointed out vis-a-vis "Duke" in Escondido--how to make it **cost** these folks something if they oppose the NEA? Right now they just see **profits** (both symbolic and material) galore. There's little leverage given the current composition of the Congress, but the low voter turnout which is the dirty secret behind the so-called GOP "Mandate" makes 1996 a specter perhaps worth invoking. It's just a thought, and one predicated on the assumption (totally unproven) that the Backlash will itself produce the conditions for its own electoral demise in the next 18 months.

Wesleyan begins to organize

We got a call today from an undergraduate (Sr.) at Wesleyan who is just beginning to organize an event for February 16th. Anyone with contacts in the writing scene on/around that campus is welcome to forward tips to him through us. Right now it looks as though the format will be a tight two-hour program of talks.

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78. **Eliot Katz**

PRESSLER QUESTIONNAIRE

Wed 8 Feb 1995

As they say on the FAN, I'm a first-time caller. Actually, I've only been on this list (& the internet) for a few weeks, and hadn't yet put in my two dimes' worth, both because of work deadlines and because I hadn't yet figured out how. Thought I'd take the time & energy to figure this listserv mechanism out now, out of a feeling that activists who are doing great work can always use a few words of thanks & support when they express feelings of exasperation. In response to Martin Spinelli, who wrote, "I too am at a loss. An exasperation compounded by feeling like I/we have no genuine representation in Washington or in Albany," I'd like to offer support & thanks for coming up with such an imaginative & inspiring tactic--the questionnaire to Pressler. (Actually, I've

been totally impressed with all the great organizing work being done by dozens of you on this list around the NEA and CPB issues.) Re Martin's questions, it's a tough political & strategic question to figure out how best challenge both Republicans' Contract on America and Democrats' continuing shift to the right. In the long term, I think, it's going to take new progressive movement-building, both to pressure the potentially progressive Democrats into shifting toward the truly-democratic left and also to develop new alternative vehicles that are capable of winning more than once in a while. And I think we need *multi-issue* vehicles, since it *can* get pretty frustrating trying to fight these battles one issue/crisis at a time. (One of my main political projects these days is a New Jersey welfare rights group, called Solutions to End Poverty--welfare another topic on which both alleged-Republicans and so-called Democrats--esp. under Clinton--are pretty horrible.) Actually, I really think we need to help build a new third party, but that's a topic best left for another sleepless early morning. Meanwhile, we're left with this one-issue-at-a-time crisis-mode organizing, in which we can only do the best we can, as we simultaneously try to defeat the Republicans and try as much as possible to remove the new elephant snouts on the members of the donkey party. And Martin and others: please know that there are those of us out here listening and inspired--and, incidentally, sending out postcards--by your hard & creative work. By the way, have you contacted press (both major media & alternative media like Pacifica) with copies of your questionnaire to Pressler? I didn't see mention of that in your original note. Maybe having a poetry group calling a press conference with that questionnaire as a centerpiece? It's so imaginative I think media might pick it up & add to the pressure on Pressler (who, by the way, I've heard has already withdrawn some of his most intrusive questions to the CPB). Also, maybe send copies of questionnaire to other activist groups working on additional aspects of the Contract on America, to start building long-term alliances? In closing, quite an interesting basketball game down here in Central Jersey tonight, between Rutgers & University of Massachusetts, whose unusual half-time showstopper demonstration helps maintain my hope in young people's political determination and willingness to act. Thanks again. Sincerely, Eliot Katz

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79. **Bob Perelman**

Re: Espousing 2/8

Wed 8 Feb 1995

Steve & Jen,

My vote is for you to keep posting the news here.

Bob Perelman

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80. **Pierre Joris**
Re: Espousing 2/8

Wed 8 Feb 1995

Keep espousing news on list.

Pierre

```
=====
===== Pierre Joris      | He who wants to
escape the world, translates it. Dept. of English      | --Henri Michaux SUNY
Albany      | Albany NY 12222      | "Herman has taken to writing poetry.
You tel&fax: [REDACTED] | need not tell anyone, for you know how      email:
| such things get around." [REDACTED] | --Mrs. Melville in a letter to her mother.
=====
=====
```

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81. **Nick Lawrence**
Fake Infant Formula

Wed 8 Feb 1995

Subject: Fake infant formula found in California, library says
Copyright: 1999 by The Anti-Hegemony Project
Date: 15 Mar 99 50:50:00 PST

Lines: 31

SAN FRANCISCO (AHP) - Fake labels and contents for Simulac infant formula were found on library shelves in northern California, Lang-Po Laboratories GmbH, the maker of the formula, announced late last night.

Labels have been placed on books that falsely say the product contains Simulac paperback infant formula with irony, the company said.

The books have been removed from library shelves and the origin and quality of the substance in the books is unknown, Lang-Po Labs, which made its discovery over the weekend, added.

The fake label reads ``Simulac with irony, paper'' with the following titles printed on the spine: Progress, Odes of Roba and Curve.

---More---

Group bleari.biz.poesy.food_for_thought available: 3 - 9 unread: 6

article 3 17-MAR-1999 19:20:21

``Parents should check the titles of any paperback infant formula product that they may have at home that was borrowed from the San Francisco State library or any bookstore in northern California," Leslie Scalapino, senior vice president and president of Lang-Po's Consumer Products Division, said in a statement.

Parents who discover they have fake books should return them to the library or bookstore from which they were purchased, the company said.

In addition to the title, the fake product can be identified in the following ways: it has a clear syntax and the powder in the book is pure white in color. The real product has a green-colored syntax and the powder is creamy yellow in color.

Lang-Po Labs said there is no need for concern about other Simulac infant formulas.

The U.S. Book and Tape Administration is attempting to locate the source of the unregulated product, the company said.

Anyone with information on the source of tainting should immediately contact the B.T.A.

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82. **Hank Lazer**

Re: Espousing 2/8

Wed 8 Feb 1995

Steve & Jen,

My vote too is for you to continue posting the news. Though I am one of the mostly silent ones on the net (principally due to the demands of my administrative office job), I often do end up forwarding pertinent info to various friends & activists. The questionnaire to Pressler is, for example, a gem. We will have a NPR rep on campus later in the week, & she may be interested in some of what's going on. I also am in touch with one of our senator's legislative aides, and info provided through this discussion group has been very helpful.

Hank Lazer

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83. **James Sherry**

Re: apex of the m... / Roof Books

Wed 8 Feb 1995

Loss, Thank you for your work in this arena. Readers can now find their books with the EPC search function. I hope that readers who don't have access to the EPC will be able to do so soon. James

On Tue, 7 Feb 1995, Loss Glazier wrote:

I have also added a couple of "press lists" to the Electronic Poetry Center (Roof included) which give lengthy lists of book titles. (The list for Sun & Moon is quite extensive.) They can be searched (in our system) with a /. But in any case, provide very interesting "charts" of what some presses have done.

Loss

*Barrett Watten's *Progress* is available from:*

*Roof Books
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New York, NY 10009*

Cost including postage is \$7.50 and should be prepaid.

Note to net: We tried to post a list of Roof Books, but who can read all that. If I.LIGHTMAN wants a book, he needs to be able to search for it in a larger list using an automated utility which we hope to be able to provide for all participating presses soon. By the end of the year anyway.

*Literacy & technology,
James*

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84. **James Sherry**

Re: Espousing 2/8

Wed 8 Feb 1995

Seeing the issues raised on the server has a specific use to me in that I wonder what "poetic" issues are more primary. Granted this is an issue of organizing, but organizing is also the work of getting the right words together.

If you take it offline, what is cc:trees?

James

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85. **James Sherry**

Re: reified names vs. boundless vocabulary

Wed 8 Feb 1995

Every "poem" (every "fact" in fact) is imbued with and attached to a theoretical structure which both informs it and from which it does not separate except in the minds of those who would create a transparent simulacrum of reality where the pure is real. Fortunately these isolated realities are fiction although some use the possibility of inform their misguided politics. We have poetries which are embossed with their cultures and some readers and even some writers pretend not to see that. Thoughts are not purer than bodies and poems are the products of both and as such do not exist in isolation, nor can they be distilled into a spirit, although some use the possibility to inform their misguided poetries. James

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86. **Rae Armantrout**

Re: Espousing 2/8

Wed 8 Feb 1995

Steve and Jen,

I think this is a good place for the Espousing news too. There seems to be room for a lot of stuff - why not this?

Rae Armantrout

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87. **Chris Stroffolino**

Re: Espousing 2/8

Wed 8 Feb 1995

Dear Steve and jennifer---Since I have no idea in hell what "cc trees" is, and value your postings immensely--I am for keeping on this line here. It is certainly not hogging up space that could be used better!! Just wanted to cast my vote---Best, Chris Stroffolino

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88. **Joe Amato**

Re: Espousing 2/8

Wed 8 Feb 1995

keep posting info. to the list, please...

joe amato

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89. **Loss Glazier**

Congratulations to TREE (TapRoot Electronic Edition)

Wed 8 Feb 1995

----- Congratulations to Luigi-Bob Drake, editor of TREE (distributed through the Electronic Poetry Center) which was chosen as one of the ten best "E-Zines on the Internet" in *_Online Access_*, Feb. 95, p.25. As you may know, TREE reviews some pretty terrific print titles; it is great that news of TREE's efforts has been made public.

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90. **Chris Stroffolino**

Re: freely espousing

Wed 8 Feb 1995

Steve--I'm glad to see perelman and joris and others agree with me as well about staying on the list with this. As for your internationalist objection, well, perhaps, those in England, Canada, Australia, etc. can also share with us there struggles...and who knows where this could go (in the face of MNC's etc.) Chris.

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91. **Steve Evans**

Re: Espousing 2/8

Wed 8 Feb 1995

To clarify the off-list alternative mentioned in Espousing Update 2/8: what we would do is build a group of names/e-addresses to be reached through the "cc" (copy to) function on our Eudora software. Awkwardly large "headers" are the downside of this option.

Steve Evans

| *If you take it offline, what is cc:trees?*

| *James*

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92. **Belle Gironde**
National Poeticare Debate

Wed 8 Feb 1995

Subject: Calls For Change Worry Seniors
Copyright: 1999 by The Anti-Hegemony Project
Date: 31 May 99 11:00:00 EST

Lines: 73

WASHINGTON (AHP) -- Leaders of the Association of Poets in Retirement aren't quite sure what Apex Speaker Lew Daly has in mind with his call for rethinking Poeticare ``from the ground up." But what they've heard worries them.

``The speaker's proposal left me fully depressed," said Rae Armantrout of San Diego, Calif., a member of the APR's council of outspoken elders. ``He wants to scuttle Poeticare with some weasel words -- `radical transparency'."

Other APR officials are more circumspect, but they, too, express anxiety.

Anselm Hollo of Boulder, Colo., a retired punster and part-time versifier, said, ``Anytime you destroy something and you build from the ground up ... you're in trouble because you may lose some of the

---More---

Group bleari.nooz.aging available: 55 - 65 unread: -1

article 66 1-JUN-1999 23:59:59

good parts." ``I'm not saying Poeticare shouldn't be looked at and modifications shouldn't be made," added Hollo, chairman of Numerous Adequate Poets (NAP), which helps shape policy for the G1-endorsed APR. Poeticare is the shoe that hasn't dropped in the newly empowered ``Spirit" majority's agenda for sweeping change. With Small Press Publishing still accorded sacred cow status by both parties, the costly Poeticare program is among the biggest and most tempting targets for title-trimmers and word-cutters. Daly called yesterday for a top-to-bottom review of Poeticare and its ``highly centralized bureaucratic structure offering one menu for everybody in a monopolistic manner." He appealed to G1 writers to help poets think through ``how we get to a better Poeticare system that actually works more extensively, that gives greater choices, and that is also socially more honest." He said later that the older poets should be able to join Happening Movements and Organizations (HMOs) to extend their careers, and use archive sales or choose other methods for

---More---

Group bleari.nooz.aging available: 55 - 65 unread: -1

article 66 1-JUN-1999 23:59:59

attracting attention to their work. While 10 percent of the G1 poets are enrolled voluntarily in HMOs, Poeticare remains a bastion of fee-for-service poetry. Individual arts organizations set fees for readings and regulate schedules, but the poets can utilize any series they wish, so long as the organization is willing to accept them. Jean Day, a retired G1 poet who spent her career as top manager of Small Press Distribution, likes the old system. ``I want fee for service (poetry). I want to be able to set my own agenda." But most younger poets now are in some form of managed care. If they want unrestricted access to readings and publishing, they have to pay more for it. State-funded Poetics Programs are rushing to push Poeticaid recipients -- the poor and the socially needy -- into managed care. A year ago, the APR looked to special issues of literary journals as a path for literary reform. That never materialized. Now it is girding for a fight just to protect what they have, despite President Bernstein's plea in last week's State of the Art address not to tap Poeticare to pay for G2's ``Contract with America."

---More---

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article 66 1-JUN-1999 23:59:59

``There are things in the Poeticare system that clearly need work," said Jerry Rothenberg, the APR's executive director. ``I don't think Poeticare is going to remain the way it is forever, or that HMOs are going to sweep the nation." Sen. Juliana Spahr, Spir.-N.Y, reminded ``Lang-Po" leaders that the Poeticare trust fund will go broke in seven years. ``We can't say something is off the board and is untouchable," said the Poetics Program's Labor and Human Resources Committee chair. She suggested that options for dealing with Poeticare's woes include basing Poeticare benefits on financial need and moving more of the G1 writers toward managed care. Daly and the chairpersons of the Apex Ways and Means and Commerce committees all support the idea of letting people spend their words crit-free to help accumulate intellectual capital. Bill Howe, policy director of the Center for the Study of Accelerated Aesthetics in Austin, said poetry IRAs have the potential to ``lead to a radical restructuring of the poetry world" as writers gain more control over their career insurance dollars. Skeptics worry that such accounts would undermine the

---More---

Group bleari.nooz.aging available: 55 - 65 unread: -1

This Internet project builds on the capacities of the Soundprint Media Center and is 100% privately funded. Here is how it works.

Listeners can send e-mail to the address

"[REDACTED]."

A computer will field these messages and automatically send the listener back instructions on how to voice their support for public broadcasting in Washington. Listeners will receive a thank you, instructions, a list of congressional and house addresses (regular and e-mail), phone numbers and sample talking points for a letter.

The instructions will encourage letters first, calls second and e-mail last. The need for quick action and personal stories will be highlighted. Listeners are warned NOT to simply forward the e-mail they get to Washington.

This service will be in place for 90 days - through April 30, 1995. It may be extended at any time.

~~~~~  
~~~~~ WBFO-FM | If you  
have any questions or concerns, please feel free to 88.7 | direct them to
David Benders at [REDACTED] FULL-SERVICE NPR | Please note that WBFO
programming is subject to change. NEWS & JAZZ |
~~~~~  
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95. **cris cheek**

Freely Espousing

Wed 8 Feb 1995

As one of the non U.S. sites on this list I'm all for keeping the freely espousing posting here too.

The specifics of your struggle differ, yet:-

I was directly involved in events at The Poetry Society in London 1977 through which petit bourgeois bureaucrats and 'least line of resistance' cultural tsars hid under the skirts of an enquiry by a member of the House of Lords (Sir John Witt) designed in the words of Eric Mottram to finger the transatlantic influence of 'foreign poets' as 'a treacherous assault on British poetry'. This happened here under a Labour Government of MPs running ('three wheels on my wagon') scared towards re-election with the spectre of Thatcherism blooming marge. The outcome effectively and resolutely closed the door on linguistically innovative poetries here, whether produced within Britain or abroad. The result - a lasting internal exile for several poets and a blinkered (or bicycle clipped)

retrenchment into Little England for poetry (period) in these countries. The waters closed over so quickly as to enable Donald Hall to write in 1979 that 'the poetries of England and America have become discontinuous'.

We abandoned the site of conflict in disgust and distaste, we resigned and opted for forms resistance which have yet to impinge sufficiently exquisitely onto the rewritten agenda as to need to be addressed. A recent crop of ironic Mottram obituaries in the national press revisit such sites by calling him perhaps the best known of the "unknown poets" here. I can still remember, with a chill, Lee Harwood being surprised that the powers of reaction within the British establishment didn't behave 'like gentlemen'. As a pre-phrasing of the words of Martin Spinelli on this list (6/2/95) we sat by and shrugged and we got what we deserved.

The parells don't seem too slender. I hope you don't berate these observations from afar.

The sites of the formations of pernicious National and Cultural Identities are still sign and syntax. Prevent the hardening of the arteries within and without of the body-politic by intensifying engagement at those sites.

Pressler sure knows what he's doing. From this distance, through networks such as Freely Espousing, it seems that there is an ability to respond being nurtured - a movement encouraged.

I for one value that activity AS the poetry.

thanks, cris

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96. **Alan Loney**
Re: freely espousing
Wed 8 Feb 1995

Dear People

this is, from a somewhat out-of-town Auckland in New Zealand, to say that I'd like very much for the List to continue to espouse the Espousing. Apart from it overt interest, it is a salutary lesson for some of us here about how these part airwaves (are they 'airwaves? or is it just one of them pesky cliches that do ta so much of one's talk...) (er, no inferences being spread here abt others etc), placed at the service of such issues. About State arts funding in general, it's always clear that any administrative body (including my own) will make decisions that others will find legitimately questionable. The important point i whether the structure that initiates those acts of difference is worth retaining spite of the fact that it is always going to be imperfect according to any set o

one might want to place alongside it. From here, it seems to me that the NEA discussion is absolutely appropriate, and already within those earlier posts in which questions were being (properly) asked about being a writer/being a citizen and is there any connection between them. So, I don't really think that my geographical distance from the location of the discussion can get to define how the discussion actually impinges upon my 'location' in the world, any more really than being across the other side the world from Bosnia or Northern Ireland does. Anything that can happen there can happen here. If it comes to one's notice, then it's there for one's noticing etc etc. Best wishes to all, Alan Lon [REDACTED]

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97. **Mark Roberts**

Re: Espousing 2/8

Wed 8 Feb 1995

Steve & Jen,

My vote is for you to keep posting the news here.

Bob Perelman

While the posts are of passing interest to me I end up deleting most them. While I don't mind continuing to receive them in this list I wonder whether it may not be more effective politically to create a list which includes cultural activists from all affected art forms....

Mark

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98. **Mark Roberts**

Re: Espousing 2/8

Wed 8 Feb 1995

To clarify the off-list alternative mentioned in Espousing Update 2/8: what we would do is build a group of names/e-addresses to be reached through the "cc" (copy to) function on our Eudora software. Awkwardly large "headers" are the downside of this option.

Steve Evans

If you take it offline, what is cc:trees?

James

If you use the "bcc" function you don't get large "headers" (or at least I don't on Eudora 14 for Mac).

Mark

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99. **Spencer Selby**

Re: reified names vs. boundless vocabulary

Wed 8 Feb 1995

Dear James,

I never said anything about "purity," nor did I say art does not reflect theory (along with all those other relations?) in some way. What I've been saying, or trying to say, is that art and theory are on different levels.

In so far as it is a reply to me, your statement seems based upon exaggerating or misunderstanding what I have said, so that you can attack this transparent simulacrum strawman of yours. Again, I do not believe that art is pure. I'm not sure I believe that anything in our human world is pure. What I believe is that art and theory (or philosophy or politics or...) are not the same thing, that they are not on the same level. The figure of separate levels does not mean the levels are hermetically sealed from each other. I think it's interesting and maybe revealing that you (and in a different way, Eric) would assume or conclude this.

Whatever that might mean, I don't have a need to get carried away with it. I'm inclined to think this is more than just an innocent misunderstanding between us, but I could be wrong.

In the spirit of avoiding a contentious fight, I would like to add that I've been mulling over yr point about doxa ever since I read it and made my quick reply. The more I think about it the more I think it is quite relevant to our world here today. So I'm sorry if my response appeared to express more disagreement than appreciation for this thought.

It may be that a significant opposition lurking beneath this discussion (and many others) is doxa. If so I wonder, how are we to distinguish this doxa from what it opposes?

Spencer Selby

On Wed, 8 Feb 1995, James Sherry wrote:

Every "poem" (every "fact" in fact) is imbued with and attached to a theoretical structure which both informs it and from which it does not separate except in the minds of those who would create a transparent simulacrum of reality where the pure is real. Fortunately these isolated realities are fiction although some use the possibility of inform their

misguided politics. We have poetries which are embossed with their cultures and some readers and even some writers pretend not to see that. Thoughts are not purer than bodies and poems are the products of both and as such do not exist in isolation, nor can they be distilled into a spirit, although some use the possibility to inform their misguided poetries. James

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100. **George Bowering**
Re: Re- the real language po

Wed 8 Feb 1995

Dear Ron,

Nah, my wife wouldnt even get a chance to play second base. I play second base, although in the past year or 2, when my back is really bad, I have been playing first. Hey. I wonder whether we can try to be walk-ons if Dole and that White-haired creep keep the strike going.

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101. **George Bowering**
Re: Fake Infant Formula

Wed 8 Feb 1995

I was going to take some of them fake books back to the library, but then I thought what the hell, and fed them to my cats. Now one of my cats is iambic and the other is confessional. I dont know what to do.

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102. **George Bowering**
Re: apex of the m...

Wed 8 Feb 1995

In Erwin Swangaard's translation of Pessoa, the last line reads

"What's it all about, Alfredo?"

Now, I dont hear any hokey pokey in that.

Just thought I'd put my left leg in.

GB

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103. **Patrick Phillips**

Re: Espousing 2/8

Thu 9 Feb 1995

I've been working so much the last 3-4 weeks that I've stopped my ritual of picking up the morning paper. You really should continue with the "public" posts; this is my public broadcasting.

Thanks.

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104. **cris cheek**

Freely Espousing

Thu 9 Feb 1995

How about classic compromise, leave postings on this list and copy to another which, taking up Mark's point (and it's a good one) forges a broader alliance with artists in other forms of practice and can act as a forum for such dialogue. I'd want to subscribe to such a list as that too.

cris

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105. **Spencer Selby**

Re: reified names vs. boundless vocabulary

Thu 9 Feb 1995

Dear Eric,

Those who have a big investment in theory may be prejudiced in a direction which will impair their judgment about what does and doesn't work when it comes to creating or appreciating art. As I told James, I'm not advocating purity. The fact that you both think I am might indicate that you both have trouble stepping back from the discourse, that it's hard for you to hear someone who is simply saying art must have its level.

Of course art doesn't come from nowhere. And of course it is inevitable that there will be all kinds of influences upon this art. To me this means we can free up our process as much as we see fit. A successful process is one that allows these influences to happen as they may, or as they may not. The guiding principle is whatever transports the work in and of itself. This will not happen if external influences or conscious intentions are too strong. This to me is the same as saying that art must be on its own level. This does not mean it's sealed off from anything.

Spencer Selby

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106. **Ron Silliman**

Re: apex of the m...

Thu 9 Feb 1995

You wrote:

ROn, yes, the Hokey Pokey, or the Kacky pataki

I thought it was the Tacky Pataki

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107. **Michael Boughn**

Re: reified names vs. boundless vocabulary

Thu 9 Feb 1995

Every "poem" (every "fact" in fact) is imbued with and attached to a theoretical structure which both informs it and from which it does not separate except in the minds of those who would create a transparent simulacrum of reality where the pure is real.

Excuse me if I sound "misguided" (misguided? isn't that something that happens to lapsed catholics and neo-post-trots?), but I'm having a hard time with this. My (misguided?) understanding of "theories" is that people make them up to explain things. Hence the etymological derivation from that whole Greek specular trip: to see (what's "behind" the veil). Mr. Sherry's formulation seems to imply that people write poems based on theories, rather than writing theories based on poems. This may be the way "Language poets" do it, but it hardly seems a necessary relation. Perhaps there's a confusion here between "theory" and "cosmology".

Best,
Mike



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108. **Ron Silliman**

Re: Espousing 2/8

Thu 9 Feb 1995

I think that this is a terrific use of the Poetics List and should continue.

But it is Totally Depressing to see Randy Cunningham's two closest buddies (Duncan Hunter and John Doolittle) as cosponsors of HR 209, the Privatization of Art Act

Ron Silliman

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109. **cris cheek**
Cockney Folk Dance

Thu 9 Feb 1995

If we're going to get technical, it's the Hokey Cokey not Pokey. And now we're getting George going on about Michael Caine.

Pessoa never wrote - What's Going On - surely.

cris

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110. **Bill Luoma**
Re: reified names vs. boundless vocabulary

Thu 9 Feb 1995

Mr. Sherry's formulation seems to imply that people write poems based on theories, rather than writing theories based on poems.

I would agree that Mr. Sherry seems to be arguing a chicken before the egg thing. However, it's hard for me to really figure out which one comes first. I tend to side with the egg (poetry) these days, but I know from experience that I was only able to write what I consider *decent* work after I learned something about social theory and the history of art. I was basically a scientist until age 25, when I met Steve Evans and Jennifer Moxley. They showed me society. They showed me art.

I would be interested to hear James talk out how he and others in the late 70's-early 80's *decided* to write Lang-Po. Did it come from Zukofsky, Barthes and Althusser? Did it come from a hatred of that Deer poem by Richard Wilbur (?) where he thinks hard for us all? Did it come consciously? Did it come from the radio? Did he just do it?

The problem I feel now (at 35) though is that theory is getting in the way of creation. I worry too much about correctness, political, avant-garde, et al, to really create something interesting that isn't just a rehash of something I just did or someone else just did. Maybe it's just a case of the composition blues. I remember my composition teachers telling me that there were two steps to

writing a paper: free writing / brainstorming and editing / revising. The two functions are supposedly controlled by different parts of the brain.

I'm hinting at community formation as the bridge between theory and practice. Anyone want to play poker on Sun night?

Bill Luoma

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111. **cris cheek**

Re: deified reams vs. nounless bloakabulary

Thu 9 Feb 1995

Hi. every poem is a theory

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112. **Alan Golding**

Re: reified names vs. boundless vocabulary

Thu 9 Feb 1995

Associate Professor of English, U. of Louisville

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

Spencer's recent postings on the "level" of art reminded me of Oppen's lines from "Of Being Numerous":

One must not come to feel that he [sic] has a thousand threads in his hands, He must somehow see the one thing; This is the level of art There are other levels But there is no other level of art

In a reading late in life (I think NY, 1979, but I'm not positive) he reads this last line as "But this is the level of art."

As regards George Bowering's locating of the Pessoa-in-translation line as "What's it all about, Alfredo"--so we've traded the Hokey Pokey for "What's It All About, Alfie" now?

Alan Golding

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113. **Jorge Guitart**

refried nombres

Thu 9 Feb 1995

`every poem is a theory' is a theory

& ``every poem is a theory' is a theory'is a theory

&'& ``every poem is a theory' is a theory' & ``every poem is a theory' is a theory'' is a theory.

& there are many more theories

& '& there are many more theories' is a theory

& '& '& there are are many more theories' is a theory' is a theory

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114. **Pierre Joris**

Re: deified reams vs. nounless bloakabulary

Thu 9 Feb 1995

Little Bob, my favorite frog wörterbuch tells me that the _other_ meaning of the word "theorie", in French, via Greek "theo^ria" (procession) refers to a delegation of people sent by a city to a sacred occasion or to a great temple. By extension (1907) it came to mean "groups of people walking one behind the other." (Camus, for ex., has "des theories de femmes"). On the other hand, walking in a single line will be given by my dictionnaire allemand as "im Gansemarch," i.e. goose-stepping.

=====

=====	Pierre Joris	He who wants to
escape the world, translates it. Dept. of English		--Henri Michaux SUNY
Albany	Albany NY 12222	"Herman has taken to writing poetry.
You tel&fax: [REDACTED]	need not tell anyone, for you know how	email:
such things get around." [REDACTED]		--Mrs. Melville in a letter to her mother.

=====

=====

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115. **FUNKHOUSER CHRISTOPH**

Birds Die

Thu 9 Feb 1995

Subject: Cambridge zoo birds die in fire as keeper gets drunk

Copyright: 1995 by The Anti-Hegemony Project

Date: 1 Jul 99 00:00:00 EST

Lines: 12

LONDON (AHP) - Some 10 or 15 rare birds died last night in a Cambridge fire while their keeper was on a drinking binge to celebrate being named Poet Laureate to the English Crown. The fire, which broke out shortly after midnight in Gonville and Caius, raged through a shelter for rare breeds of swans, guinea fowl and peacocks for more than an hour before

sleeping cricket players at a nearby college called the porter. ``The firemen said they came across the keeper staggering around his room," remarked the porter. ``Earlier that same day he had been heard shouting `I am Prin ... Prince Jay-Re-Me!' to no one in particular." No birds survived the blaze.

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116. **Tony Green**
Re: Cockney Folk Dance
Thu 9 Feb 1995

-- the Hokey Cokey not Pokey.

You're so right, Chris Cheek, but "folk" do
Adapt freely so that Pokey is
Widespread now, probably on account of
A confusion with the ice-cream flavour.

The big question for poetology may be
What do you do when it comes to
The verse:

"You put your right arm in...." & that

Is where poetry and theory intersect.
Is where poetry and theory intersect.

Tony Green,
e-mail: [REDACTED]
post: Dept of Art History,
University of Auckland,
Private Bag 92019,
Auckland, New Zealand
Fax: 64 9-[REDACTED]
Telephone: 64 9 [REDACTED] ext. 8981 or 7276

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117. **Tony Green**
Re: Espousing 2/8
Thu 9 Feb 1995

Please go on Espousing on the list. The pressures
on public spending on the arts are widespread and
U.S. strategies/tactics may prove to be
adaptable here in what C.Stroffolino calls "etc"

Tony Green,
e-mail: [REDACTED]
post: Dept of Art History,
University of Auckland,
Private Bag 92019,
Auckland, New Zealand
Fax: 64 9-[REDACTED]
Telephone: 64 9 [REDACTED] ext. 8981 or 7276

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118. **James Sherry**

Re: reified names vs. boundless vocabulary

Thu 9 Feb 1995

Each poem has a theoretical basis whether it is acknowledged or not. Poetry and theory are separate but not separable and do not precede or follow each other. James

On Thu, 9 Feb 1995, Michael Boughn wrote:

Every "poem" (every "fact" in fact) is imbued with and attached to a theoretical structure which both informs it and from which it does not separate except in the minds of those who would create a transparent simulacrum of reality where the pure is real.

Excuse me if I sound "misguided" (misguided? isn't that something that happens to lapsed catholics and neo-post-trots?), but I'm having a hard time with this. My (misguided?) understanding of "theories" is that people make them up to explain things. Hence the etymological derivation from that whole Greek specular trip: to see (what's "behind" the veil). Mr. Sherry's formulation seems to imply that people write poems based on theories, rather than writing theories based on poems. This may be the way "Language poets" do it, but it hardly seems a necessary relation. Perhaps there's a confusion here between "theory" and "cosmology".

Best,
Mike
[REDACTED]

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119. **James Sherry**

Re: reified names vs. boundless vocabulary

Thu 9 Feb 1995

On Thu, 9 Feb 1995, Bill Luoma wrote: There is no such implication, but a misunderstanding of a more integrated relationship between theory and poetry in an attempt to keep them separate from each other which they are not. AND

> >>Mr. Sherry's

formulation seems to imply that > >>people write poems based on theories,

> >>rather than writing theories based on poems.

>

> I would agree that Mr. Sherry seems to be arguing a chicken before the egg
> thing. However, it's hard for me to really figure out which one comes first.

> I tend to side with the egg (poetry) these days, but I know from experience
> that I was only able to write what I consider *decent* work after I learned
> something about social theory and the history of art. I was basically a
> scientist until age 25, when I met Steve Evans and Jennifer Moxley. They
> showed me society. They showed me art.

>

Alas, Bill I cannot show how anyone "decided" to write Lang-Po, since it was not decided and was not written. It has been perceived as having been written by those who wish to oversimplify the realities of what was written during that period down to this. Get a little subtle, please. Jmeas

*I would be interested to hear James talk out how he and others in the late 70's-early 80's *decided* to write Lang-Po. Did it come from Zukofsky, Barthes and Althusser? Did it come from a hatred of that Deer poem by Richard Wilbur (?) where he thinks hard for us all? Did it come consciously? Did it come from the radio? Did he just do it?*

The problem I feel now (at 35) though is that theory is getting in the way of creation. I worry too much about correctness, political, avant-garde, et al, to really create something interesting that isn't just a rehash of something I just did or someone else just did. Maybe it's just a case of the composition blues. I remember my composition teachers telling me that there were two steps to writing a paper: free writing / brainstorming and editing / revising. The two functions are supposedly controlled by different parts of the brain.

I'm hinting at community formation as the bridge between theory and practice. Anyone want to play poker on Sun night?

Bill Luoma

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120. **cris cheek**
refried dreams vs. downless somnabularies

Thu 9 Feb 1995

Pierre, am I reading you right? Re - every poem is a theory. Is it a pate and Golden Egg question you're raising?

Or am I being cast (as Virgil saw himself ironically)
'to be a goose honking amongst tuneful swans'?

Isn't Poetry inclusive of both speculation and practice - rather than
practice opposing speculation?
Melody - Rhythm and Noise?

cris

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121. **cris cheek**
Regimented jeans of the mau-mau

Thu 9 Feb 1995

Pierre, I'm pretty tired and just typed poverty instead of poetry. Surely the One is sufficiently respectful of an Other as to not go walking in lines behind. I'm new to this space and am just realising its economy.

cris

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122. **Mn Center For Book Arts**
Re: Espousing 2/8

Thu 9 Feb 1995

By all means keep posting the news. I also hope it is all right to share and forward such news to others in the various communities. charles alexander

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123. **Mn Center For Book Arts**
Re: re if I did names vs. bound loess vocables

Thu 9 Feb 1995

the ear he (or she) writes poetry
theory rights for trees
there, E, a poem

charles alexander

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124. **George Bowering**

Re: Cockney Folk Dance

Thu 9 Feb 1995

Well, I have never heard of "Hokey Cokey". It was "Hokey Pokey" a half century ago. And I have never heard of Pokey flavour ice cream. Maybe that is a New Zealand flavour. Derived from lanolin, maybe? I will be in Auckland tomorrow, and try to find some Pokey ice cream.

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125. **George Bowering**

Re: Birds Die

Thu 9 Feb 1995

How did those sleeping cricket players call the porter? Were they having dreams that they were in a pub, and consequently called out "Porter!" in their sleep?

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126. **George Bowering**

Re: Cockney Folk Dance

Thu 9 Feb 1995

Actually, in the Paul Blackburn translation, Pessoa's line reads:

"Hey, what's happening?"

But we remember that Paul liked a lively English version of everything.

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127. **eric pape**

Re: reified names vs. boundless vocabulary

Fri 10 Feb 1995

Spencer, I hear you. I really do, but I must ask finally, what is your definition of theory? It seems as if James and I are using a definition that calls for contextualization, and frankly, I think your idea of theory is these names which form the heading for the discussion that, and I agree with you wholeheartedly, has gone on far too long. Art does have its level. I agree. But it also has a context, which I will call theoretical, and it is an act of violence that Shelley, Milton, Pound and even that most unintellectual of intellectual poets, O'Hara,

would perhaps resent, to rip it from that context. My thing about purity was simply that it didn't seem to me that what we were saying here, or more precisely what Tom and others were saying since I did indeed butt-in, was all that "radical" or even particularly "theoretical." It just seemed sensible to me and I wondered why it bothered you. That's all. As for the academy: You scored a hit. I'm an academic, or a wanna be academic which shows you already the fool you're dealing with here, and I certainly have an interest in "complexifying matters." But, I'm a lot of other things too. None of which I can, or want, to separate from my work, admittedly limited though it is. I think a lot of important issues are coming up. I think the reason we are not any closer to resolving them (and by the way I give you a great deal of credit personally Spencer for having the stamina to take on all comers) is that they cannot be resolved. I think it is from these tensions that the best work comes. Thanks, Eric (██████)

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128. **Mark Roberts**
Re: Cockney Folk Dance
Fri 10 Feb 1995

Well, I have never heard of "Hokey Cokey". It was "Hokey Pokey" a half century ago. And I have never heard of Pokey flavour ice cream. Maybe that is a New Zealand flavour. Derived from lanolin, maybe? I will be in Auckland tomorrow, and try to find some Pokey ice cream.

Well, there is 'New Zealand Ice Cream Company' shop in my local shopping centre and they have Hokey Pokey flavour. However there is a US based icecream/frozen yought company (Rollins? I can remeber its name) in Paddington and they have a flavour called "the original Hokey Pokey ice cream".

Mark

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129. **Steve Evans**
Espousing 2/9
Fri 10 Feb 1995

Thanks to everyone who voiced an opinion on whether these updates should continue landing on the poetics-list. The current vote (including some back-channel communications) stands at 15-2 for continuing here. We've also gotten some good advice about how else to use the Net (especially from Sandra Braman). More as that develops.

What follows is an especially long update (if you read nothing else, do at least check out "National Security Concerns," where a Jack Collum poem is credited with directly undermining the nation's armed services).

We'll probably be off-line now until early next week as we travel to NYC for Jennifer's reading with Bill Luoma on Saturday at the Ear and Rae Armantrout/Lisa Jarnot/Lee Ann Brown's reading at Segue on Sunday. So: Good luck to Bob, Susan, and Gil in Philadelphia on Saturday!

Steve Evans & Jennifer Moxley

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National Security Concerns

The 7 February Congressional Record notes the following exchange between Georgia Republican Jack Kingston and Duncan Hunter (R-California):

"Mr. Kingston: It is interesting, everybody does like to jump on the Pentagon, wasteful spending and talk about the \$400 toilet seat and \$200 hammer and so forth. We want to know about these things. We want to ferret it out. We think that is what the mission is about, defense of the country, survival of the country, and protecting your son or your daughter who may need to have the most high-technology airplane or tank or ship or whatever.

Here is something that we, as taxpayers, your taxpayers in Californian and mine in Georgia, \$30,000 on this poem. I am going to read this to you.

'Suddenly, masked hombres seized Petunia pig and made her into a sort of dense Jello. Somehow the texture, out of nowhere, produces a species of Atavistic anomie, a melancholy memory of good food.'

It was written by Jack Collom of Boulder, Co. The National Endowment for the Arts awarded \$30,000 for that poem.

And yet we are telling our American service personnel that they cannot get a raise. We are rolling the COLA's of veterans so that they cannot get what we contractually obligated to them.

I have met in Hinesville, GA, service personnel who can qualify for food stamps and other public assistance benefits. Some of them are taking them, some are not. But it is very hard to tell somebody who is on his way to Haiti, Somalia, Bosnia, wherever, we have got \$30,000 for poems like this and your tax dollars are paying for it. I think one of the things that we are about in the Congress right now is to go back and try to find things like this so we can spend our dollars smarter, cut where we need to. But where we are going to spend, let us spend appropriately.

Mr. Hunter: I think the description of the expenditures that were made by the National Endowment for the Arts are one thing that would lower the morale of our service people if they knew that that was keeping them from having a higher quality of life."

(Congressional Record, 7 Feb 95: H1360. The CR for 7 Feb also records some remarks, made in the context of the Balanced Budget Amendment debate, by Arkansas Democratic Senator Dale Bumpers that are strongly CPB/NEA/NEH. Cf. S2243.)

HR 579

Another sponsor has added their name to Hefley's bill (The 'Privatization of Humanities Act,'): California Republican Dana Rohrabacher (2-8-95).

House Subcommittee Timeline

When I spoke to the Subcommittee on Early Childhood, Youth and Families yesterday, I was told that nothing pertaining to the NEA/NEH will be considered within the next two weeks. You can call [REDACTED] for recorded information about the SubCom's schedule (release one week at a time I believe).

Back on 1/25

Speaking with CD Wright (who was instrumental in organizing FE-Providence) over the past two days, I realize that we never mentioned an event that took place in Wilmington NC on 25 January. Through the help of Deborah Luster (a photographer) and Michael Luster (a folklorist), an already-scheduled reading by Mark Strand was linked to *FE* and to the defense of federal arts funding more generally. CD reports that 800 people attended that reading. Strand apparently addressed the crisis and tons of LitNet postcard-kits and other valuable information was distributed.

Wesleyan Contact

I omitted AJ Weissbard's name from yesterday's update about plans for a Feb 16th event at Wesleyan. Speakers will likely include RISD President (and *FE* 1/28 alum) Roger Mandle and George White of the Eugene O'Neill Theater.

White is also one of three people behind "Americans United to Save the Arts and Humanities," which--from what we gather--targets the wealthier Arts advocates (\$1,000 is the ante they're asking from their supporters).

Christian Coalition

A report on the Christian Coalition, posted to various lists in the past few weeks, just reached us. The report originated with Amy T. Goodloe (██████████). We reproduce it here.

">Quoting Rex Bennett to All:

1/14/95

.....

According to Ralph Reed, Director of the Christian Coalition, the religious right is going to use Newt Gingrich, Bob Dole, and the new wave of right wing victories in a major attempt to seize power for the Christian Coalition and other christian groups. He is asking members of his 1.5 million group to ease off abortion issues for a while and direct all their energies to achieving a major stranglehold on government through right wing legislation.

Their strategy is to replace government with organized religion where ever possible. One major objective is to weaken non-right wing media availability by undermining the public broadcasting networks while funneling government taxes into religious coffers, and thereby increasing the propaganda and control potential for the religious right. Reed says that Gingrich's 10-point Contract With America is the perfect plan for achieving this and that he intends to rally the full strength of his organization and its members to pressure congressmen to pass the legislation required.

Public Broadcasting does not promote christian values and is too humanistic in nature according to Reed. The wide availability of science programming also weakens religious faith. The presentation by public broadcasting of social and cultural information on those not in the religious mainstream confuses the public and leads them away from the church and true christian values. Reed says that he wants religious programming to place its own imprint on the public knowledge base and that the recent Republican victories have given him "faith that they can attain what they have always sought, a sense of legitimacy, and a voice in the conversation the we call democracy."

Besides the elimination of public broadcasting, Reed stated that it is crucial to gain control of education and school systems by using tax dollars to underwrite their efforts. He wants to abolish the Education Department and give states grants for scholarships or vouchers for public or private schools including religious institutions. He indicates this is where their real efforts will pay off and will cause a massive influx of capital into the christian network. Every effort will be made to replace inefficient public schools with more effective private ones, and that means primarily religious organizations since they already have the structure and the power to do so. Profitability will allow the christian network to enlarge and expand religious

programming on television and radio as well as in the print media. He also wants to reinstate public prayer in all public schools.

Reed says that it is crucial that they abolish funding for the Legal Services Corp. since they represent an alternative power base for the poor. Reed said that the proper place for the poor to seek help is in the church. He also said that the Legal Services Corp. has helped poor people with over 200,000 divorces annually. He wants divorce to be far more difficult to attain and would like to see it made expensive.

Reed says that we must "dismantle the federal welfare system and shift responsibility for the poor back to the church." Public welfare has made poor people too independent of organized religion, and he feels that this is not healthy. He says "the poor should be dependent on God and not the state."

Reed claims that Newt Gingrich's Contract With America is a god- send that will take power away from the state and give it back to the church where it belongs. This is the opportunity that they have been waiting for and he indicates that his membership must bring all the power and influence that they can to force passage of the republican contract.

>He says that his organization plans to pressure every congressman and senator

>and that they will launch a massive public media campaign in favor of passage.

>"We want to pull everyone in that we can."

>-----

>This information needs to be disseminated widely. Everyone should be informed

>about what is about to take place. Please distribute this on every net

>including internet where possible. Public knowledge of matters and events

>regarding vital economic, educational, scientific, and communication freedoms

>are of interest to everyone.

~~~~~  
~~~~~

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130. **Spencer Selby**

Re: reified names vs. boundless vocabulary

Fri 10 Feb 1995

Dear Alan, Thank you for your post on Oppen. I hadn't connected my statements to him (or anyone else) consciously. But it's nice to know, or be reminded, that someone of his importance had a view of art which is similar to mine. It seems to me that my position is somewhat basic. Not that I think everyone will or could agree with me. Since I have made most of my statements

in dissent, I could hardly think that. But I do believe that I am not the only one who has been bothered by the dominance of some who hold differing views.

Spencer Selby

On Thu, 9 Feb 1995, Alan Golding wrote:

Associate Professor of English, U. of Louisville

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

Spencer's recent postings on the "level" of art reminded me of Oppen's lines from "Of Being Numerous":

*One must not come to feel that he [sic] has a thousand threads in his hands,
He must somehow see the one thing; This is the level of art There are other
levels But there is no other level of art*

*In a reading late in life (I think NY, 1979, but I'm not positive) he reads
this last line as "But this is the level of art."*

*As regards George Bowering's locating of the Pessoa-in-translation line as
"What's it all about, Alfredo"--so we've traded the Hokey Pokey for "What's It
All About, Alfie" now?*

Alan Golding

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131. **Spencer Selby**

Re: deified reams vs. nounless bloakabulary

Fri 10 Feb 1995

I agree that every poem (and work of art) may be viewed as a theory.
Considering my recent statements, it may come as no surprise that I trust this
form of theory the most. Spencer Selby

On Thu, 9 Feb 1995, cris cheek wrote:

Hi. every poem is a theory

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132. **Michael Boughn**

Re: deified theories and unfounded vocabularies

Fri 10 Feb 1995

*Each poem has a theoretical basis whether it is acknowledged or not.
Poetry and theory are separate but not separable and do not precede or*

| follow each other. James

This sounds a bit like There is a God whether He is acknowledged or not. Amen. (Yikes! Shades of the M'ers creeping into the L-space.) It does make it kind of hard to have a conversation, though, when one side knows the truth. Or is all that just a theory you made up?

Best,
Mike



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133. **Tom Mandel**

Re: reified names vs. boundless vocabulary

Fri 10 Feb 1995

O poeta e em fingidor.
Finge tao completamente
Que chega afingir que e dor
A dor que deveras sente.

E os que leem o que escreve,
Na dor lida sentem bem,
Nao as duas que ele teve,
Mas so a que eles nao tem.

E assim nas calhas de roda
Gira, a entreter a razao
Esse comboio de corda
Que se chama coracao.

Fernando Pessoa

(lots of accents I cdn't include)

The poet is a faker.
Fakes it so completely,
Even to faking what he suffers,
The pain he really feels.

And we who who read what he writes
Fully feel that pain
Not that doubled pain, not his
But another he never had.

So, round on its tracks
It goes, to entertain the reason,

This little train, all wound-up
We call the heart.

The poem is called Autopsicografia.

Tom Mandel

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134. **Tom Mandel**

Re: apex of the m...

Fri 10 Feb 1995

Ron, Honig is not very good, it's true. A later edition of his Pessoa selected involves another translation (whose name, I don't recall), and she's not much of an improvement. Tehre's a small volume by James Greene and Clara de Azevedo Mafra, but it suffers from Greene's usual lugubrious *_sensitivity_*. Jonathon Griffin has done some Pessoa quite well, yet, published in England, these are not always easily available, tho I think SPD carries something. A young poet and translator, Richard Zenith, an American living in Lisbon, has done some much better Pessoa; in particular *_The Book of Disquiet_* - the long prose *_meditation_* by P.'s semi-heteronym whose moniker I can't recall (i.e. not Reis, Caiero or de Campos). Again, not widely available.

tom

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135. **Tom Mandel**

Re: Espousing 2/8

Fri 10 Feb 1995

Yes, let learn espousing right here. tom mandel

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136. **Tom Mandel**

Re: reified names vs. boundless vocabulary

Fri 10 Feb 1995

Re: James Sherry's:

"Every "poem" (every "fact" in fact) is imbued with and attached to a theoretical structure which both informs it and from which it does not separate except in the minds of those who would create a transparent simulacrum of reality where the pure is real. Fortunately these isolated realities are fiction although some use the possibility ot inform their misguided politics. We have poetries which are embossed with their cultures and some readers and even some writers

pretend not to see that. Thoughts are not purer than bodies and poems are the products of both and as such do not exist in isolation, nor can they be distilled into a spirit, although some use the possibility to inform their misguided poetics."

True words, and I'd like to hear more. What James calls a "theoretical structure," does he (do you) mean at once a cultural structure (simply, you cannot separate e.g. Pessoa from the dying Portugese ex-colonial culture), inasmuch as (obviously) everyone inhabits a culture and com- plexly writes within it, and (also at once) an ideological structure? Do all poets write, on the other hand, from within an ideology? Or maybe that's better put, are all cultures ideological?

Also, the following phrases in James contribution above; "a theoretical structure which both informs it and from which it does not separate," now there's a further claim, and one which is interesting, radical, and with which I think I might disagree, tho I'm not sure we'd be meaning the same thing. In other words, is there no sense in which a work departs its origins? A person, does a person depart his/her origins? How does culture change, in other words? And, do poets have a function in that change? (e.g. Pessoa took that milieu and moved it somewhere, in his work, and, by intention and influence, in his readers)

I'm interested in these questions.

Tom Mandel

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137. **Loss Glazier**
Modern British Poetry (Electronic)
Fri 10 Feb 1995

I have placed a new link in the "Resources" section of the EPC to a site for modern British poetry (via Poetry London). Some interesting material here. Also note that an informational hook to the Basil Bunting Research Centre has been placed in the "Authors" area, for those who might need this info.

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Loss Glazier & Kenneth Sherwood in collab. with Charles Bernstein

██████_or_██████

Subscriptions to RIF/T at the e-poetry address

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138. **Carla Billitteri**

TODAY IN HISTORY

Fri 10 Feb 1995

Subject: Today In History [Feb 10]
Copyright: 1999 by The Anti-Hegemony Project
Date: 9 Feb 99 01:02:03 EST

Lines: 39

Today is Feb. 10, the 41st day of 1999. There are 324 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On Feb. 10, 1964, Frank O'Hara's U.N. informant ``Deep Throat'' passed secret information on the value of political poetry. O'Hara, fearful of discovery, swallowed the message before reading.

On this date:

In 1862, Edward Dickinson ordered bulk linen for his two daughters, hoping to save money. He asked Emily what color or pattern she might want, but the poet, busy at her desk, said only, ``I don't care ... anything ... something light."

In 1890, Algernon Charles Swinburne petitioned Queen Victoria

---More--

Group bleari.poesy.history_today available: 35 - 41 unread: 0

article 41 9-FEB-1999 23:23:23

for patronage. He hoped to realize a new kind of poetry recital. His ultimate dream was ``to place sweet potatoes up the arse" before an

audience in London.

In 1936, Ezra Pound wrote Duke Ellington suggesting a jazz arrangement of the Horst Wessel Lied.

In 1947, Pablo Neruda wrote ``Ode on a Stubbed Toe."

In 1962, Pier Paolo Pasolini offered Fabian the role of Christ in a film based on the gospel of Matthew.

In 1975, Yevgeny Yevtushenko got into a fight with Joan Baez and left the Rolling Thunder tour in Des Moines.

Ten years ago: Kit Robinson bought a refrigerator with built in ice-cube dispenser.

Five years ago: Michael Palmer, suffering from insomnia, stayed up all night measuring his work against the classics. As daylight hit he discovered a poem exactly the same length as Eliot's `Waste-Land.'" Ruler in hand, he dialed Clark Coolidge, who didn't answer. Unbeknownst to Palmer, the ring had broken his old friend out of a trance. For several hours, Coolidge stared motionless at a bust of Beethoven, while a cigarette that fell

---More---

Group [bleari.poesy.history_today](#) available: 35 - 41 unread: 0

article 41 10-FEB-1991 23:23:23

from slack mouth burned the only copy of ``The Schroeder Text," a 200-page manuscript. The call probably saved Coolidge's life.

One year ago: Quebecois poets announced the secession of Francophone writing from Canlit.

Thought for Today: ``Many excellent words are ruined by too definite a knowledge of their meaning.'" -- Aline Kilmer, American poet (1888-1941).

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139. **cris cheek**
Hackney Cockney
Fri 10 Feb 1995

By George, you'll have to take it from the dray's mouth - it's called the Hokey Cokey. I lived in London for too long to get that wrong. The Cokey is of course an abbreviation from Cockney.

Curious how translation works. Next I'll be reading here that Pessoa has been credited with the script for What's New Pussycat? Title music by Tom Jones

(welsh hairy chested medallion belter enjoying re-cred comeback - rather than lead character from picaresque english novel). Does 'O Sole Mia' refer to Woody's ex?

cris

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140. **Marshall H. Reese**
Arts Wire Post:NEA News

Fri 10 Feb 1995

"CONTRACT WITH AMERICA" VS. THE ARTS

U.S. House Speaker Gingrich and his allies have made clear in the first days of the 104th Congress their intention to zero-out funding for federally-supported cultural programs. It is likely to prove a long and protracted battle, with the greatest threat to the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA), the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH), and the Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB) coming from attempts to pass the "Contract with America." In order to finance the tax cuts proposed in the "Contract," House Speaker Gingrich has recommended slashing funding for the arts, humanities and public broadcasting.

According to a recent action alert circulated by People for the American Way, cultural funding is not simply being targeted as part of an effort to balance the budget, but it is part of a political payback to the Religious Right for their support in last November's election. People For asserts that the call for defunding the cultural agencies is ideological, that these agencies have for several years now been under attack for funding works which the Religious Right finds objectionable and that this latest assault is merely a new packaging of the same agenda, aimed at achieving the same end -- the silencing of those voices the Far Right finds objectionable.

The legislative battle will take place over a series of months during the first half of 1995, with critical votes taking place in several different committees, as well as on the floor of the House and Senate. According to People For the American Way, political pressure from the grassroots must begin immediately, otherwise the arts may not make it to the second round of this fight. House Speaker Gingrich's pledge to consider the "Contract" in the first hundred days is being understood by arts advocates nationwide to mean that a Budget Committee proposal will make its way to the floor of the House of Representatives by late March or early April. Sources suggest that efforts to eliminate cultural funding are likely to be incremental, with a multi-year phasing out of federal support for NEA, NEH and CPB.

Soon after Congress takes action on the "Contract," the House of Representatives will begin its annual appropriations process. As the Appropriations Committee considers funding levels for the NEA, NEH and CPB, they are expected to be urged by Republican leadership to recommend funding amounts which reflect the "Contract." The House Appropriations Bill will make its way to the House floor by mid-summer, with the Senate following suit in late summer or early fall. In addition to providing funding for the three agencies, this year Congress must also reauthorize the NEA, NEH and CPB. Both House Appropriations Chair Livingston (R-LA) and Senate Appropriations Chair Hatfield (R-OR) have indicated that unless the agencies are reauthorized, they will be unwilling to recommend any future funding. Senators Kassebaum and Jeffords have indicated a strong interest in moving quickly in the Senate on NEA reauthorization. The first hearing before the Senate Labor and Human Resources Committee took place on January 24th, with NEA chair Jane Alexander testifying. Additional hearings and mark-up are expected in mid-February and early March. Senator Pressler, who chairs the Senate Commerce Committee and is responsible for reauthorizing the CPB, has indicated his interest in conducting hearings early in the legislative session on the future of public broadcasting. Senator Pressler has already publicly indicated his strong interest in eliminating the CPB altogether.

Congressional hearings on the arts and humanities have been scheduled for the following dates and are subject to change:

Week of Feb. 13 - Senate Education, Arts & Humanities Subcommittee, Sen. James Jeffords (R-VT), chair

Public NEA witnesses; NEH and IMS Administration and public witnesses

Feb. 16, 10:00 am - House Interior Appropriations Subcommittee (oversight hearing), Rep. Ralph Regula (R-OH), chair

Witnesses: Walter Cronkite, Ken Burns and David McCullough

March 1, 9:30 am - Senate Interior Appropriations Subcommittee, Dirksen 192, Rep. Slade Gorton (R-WA), chair

Witnesses: Sheldon Hackney and Jane Alexander

March 3 - House Interior Appropriations Subcommittee (FY96 funding), Rep. Ralph Regula (R-OH), chair

Subject: National Gallery of Art and Kennedy Center

March 21 - House Interior Appropriations Subcommittee (FY96 funding), Rep. Ralph Regula (R-OH), chair

Subject: NEH and IMS

April 5 - House Interior Appropriations Subcommittee (FY96 funding), Rep. Ralph Regula (R-OH), chair
Subject: NEA

House Budget Committee [Rep. John Kasich (R-OH), chair] field hearings to solicit the views of Americans on how to cut the federal budget are scheduled as follows: Feb. 4 - Columbia, SC, Airport High School Gym, 2:00pm Feb. 11 - Manville, NJ, VFW Post 2290 Meeting Hall, 1:00 pm Feb. 18 - Billings, MT, Rocky Mountain College Gym, 2:00 pm

The House Appropriations Committee is expected to draft a rescissions bill in middle or late February, with cuts in current FY95 funding. The House Budget Committee expects to draft its FY96 budget resolution by February 9 or 10.

Further information available on Arts Wire

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141. **Chris Stroffolino**

Re: reified names vs. boundless vocabulary

Fri 10 Feb 1995

Well, at least no one has combined "Alfie" with the sherry chicken-- egg question in a culinary way so as to make chicken alfredo and I still think a musical comedy version of Beowulf with Bachrach tunes would be a way to set up a privatized fund for poetry as it were to the tune of Alfie "I could build a big MEAD HALL" and "What's UP, Grendel's MOM,wo wo wo wo..." as in rock and roll middle school...

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142. **Marc Nasdor**

Re: reified names vs. boundless vocabulary

Fri 10 Feb 1995

Eric writes:

...and it is an act of violence that Shelley, Milton, Pound and even that most unintellectual of intellectual poets, O'Hara, would perhaps resent, to rip it from that context.

An act of *violence*? Eric, get a life! While I agree with the rest of your posting, the use of the word "violence" in relation to poetry seems out of place. To whom is such violence directed. I say "whom" because the term is large enough to burst through the relatively insular worlds of poetry, theory, and any other academic discourse. People who have experienced real violence must react to your statement with puzzlement, to say the least.

Regards,

Marc Nasdor



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143. **Chris Funk**

DIU

Fri 10 Feb 1995

Dear Poetics,

DIU, a.k.a. the Imaginary University, began in July '94 & inertiates again today from my email account, the node of a web where it is assembled.

A complete catalog of back issues is available via the EPC.

Please delete the following message (DIU 21) if uninterested. Otherwise, feel free to sign up!

Chris Funkhouser

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144. **Chris Funk**

DIU 21 / *EXTENSIVE POST*

Fri 10 Feb 1995

D (eskryptions) (of an) I (maginary) U (nivercity)

21

II, I

vol 2, no 1

edition b

"whatever"

during winter detail

regents of the fate of the imaginary

convened

...These extrapolated futures are in the great western tradition of migration and despoilation that begun some time before 1000 BC. All of the fresh starts on earth, all of the fresh starts for humans, have been squandered. This is our advantage. We have lost our innocence. We are not Adam and Eve. THE IMAGINARY UNIVERCITY exists because

those who matriculate produce it. The students write all of the books in its library, plan the syllabi of the courses. We examine ourselves, we confer our own certificates and degrees.

Now those who educate themselves as posthumans begin to produce a nation. The course of study is difficult, the chances for graduation are nil. If you want to study and act, you will be welcome. OTHERWISE, PLEASE, STAY HOME AND WATCH MTV. You should know, however, that our Nation of Noise and Knowledge is at war with the United Nations and all of its members. You will be required to undertake dangerous missions. The stakes could not be higher.

--A student, IU, 1995
[from "Posthuman Nation / Knowledge and Noise"
We Magazine 19 (diu 1-20), 1995.]

"It is all very well to enjoy the infinite
bliss of life after death, but it is preferable
not to have died at all."

Poetry comes into existence in the absence of poetry, where words and language become the objects of a near infinite number of experiments designed to animate a long since passed away corpse. The experiments are interesting, but the corpse, however exquisite, is not. Even the stink, which for some time intoxicated the half-dead disciples of its cause, has become merely another of a countless number of environmental signs of our collective desperation. The most serious of all work is the most comic, and the most comic the most tragic. The laughter is no longer joyful, but sardonic. Indeed, the most outwardly revolutionary of acts have become the most boring.

We learn to live on breath alone. We learn not only to lie profoundly (as the disaffected poet said, and to ask ourselves, knowing this, whether mendacity is the best policy), but to understand that the key to the disappearance of the world itself has itself, with the world, disappeared. The aura surrounding the false joy of our recognition that we are all ghosts, has become as repetitive (and thus boring) as the pseudo-political act of revealing "the corpse" for what it really is. We learn not only to live, but to live lacking death, so that the over aestheticized funeral of poetry lacking poetry -- the stillborn child of politicized art -- can finally come to an end.

Life has never been more than life experimenting with life. Poetry, at best, has ecstatically been both a lamentation and celebration of that fact.

--the As-Of-Yet-Undescribed Student Body

RECENT AMERICAN POETRY HAS LACKED

poems on the death of a goldfish;
baseball metaphors;
happy liberalism (remember Hubert Humphrey);
epics of artificial intelligence;
poems concerning chewing gum--the Juicy Fruit theme;
iambic tetrameter quatrains;
consumer advice;
recipes for smothered pork chops;
famous living poets such as John Ashbery;
instructions on refurbishing antique chifforobes;
Vachel Lindsayism-- boomlay, boomlay, boomlay, BOOM, and forth;
good poems on electronic circuitry;
references to Chester A. Arthur;
rich people who'd pay to be mentioned in poems (i.e. serious patronage);
ennobling language;
poems about aliens who eats peoples' small intestines;
lyrics that turn on delicate points of etiquette;
heroic couplets;
exposes (as one says in ascii) of the meat-packing industry;
poems about how to use an arc welder;
the pancreas theme;
poems suitable to set for gospel quartets;
poems about happy middle age;
palindromes;
the theme of the foot, especially corns and ingrown toenails;
fried food metaphors;
images of water skiing;
the family farm, milch kine, the Grange, and so forth;
poems to be spoken by loose, flabby lips;

scandalous revelations about famous academic poets of the 50's;
poems about ice fishing;
fancy words, like "peignoir" or "puissant," used for their meanings;
Studebakers;
poems about the new intelligent house appliances;
any thing as funny as the Coasters' "Poison Ivy";
poems on themes in higher mathematics;
adequate poetic diction: "yonder," "finny tribe," "cyberhacksaw";
rhythms suitable for square dancing;
poems about aliens who write Tide commercials;
mnemonic devices for the names of civil war generals;
skillfully managed Skeltonics;
poems that are really diesel engines;
secret messages ("the walrus was Paul," etc.);
pool halls;
hollow men and hollow women;
poets who take up the persona of the sage investment banker;
an understanding of quantitative verse;
poems about building or living in yurts;
carnivorous poems;
poems about aliens whose genetic code is encrypted on Pearl Jam records;
poetry do-it-yourself kits;
the Latin names of medicinal herbs;
poems on the Vanity of Human Wishes.

WHO SAYS POETRY IS USED UP?

I went to a poetry conference sometime in the 70's at which there was one of those poetry readings that go on all night. There were seven poems on the death of gold fish-- two in tetrameter couplets, one in Skeltonics, one which included three Latin names of medicinal herbs. I have really seen nothing like it since. In fact shortly thereafter it became unfashionable to mention any thing at all.

We once had a gold fish named bubbles, who lived much of the time on our kitchen table, and she was mentioned in poems by at least three visiting poets with whom I sat after dinner discussing Skeltonics and arc welding and drinking coffee. In those days poets spoke of serious matters.

Bubbles lived a long life for a gold fish, and when she was grievously flushed, it was no longer considered fashionable to write on that theme, so I wrote about my 1957 Studebaker Golden Hawk, thus, substituting the death of my car, named after a mighty raptor, for Bubbles. It was a cunning stratagem.

Your assignment for next week is to write on the vanity of human wishes. This is a theme even older and nobler than dying gold fish, which itself goes back to the Sung dynasty. If you think you are not ready to handle such lofty material, you may attempt to remedy any of the lacks in recent poetry.

--The Poetry Work Chop Advisor

The while seven other knots hold you. The while you
nailed to your bed.

The while Trees in wet cement were branded.

The while, the while that you want to escape would die to escape.

Skrecic, it sounds the same in all the languages.

Skrecic, it sounds the same in the seven languages.

Skrecic, it sounds the same in the wet cement, the same
burning in the fires.

*** Sk. (Polish) : contort,

--MANOWAK

in my garden bleed to death
snowball trees of madness
from geometrical fountains
thrushes of madness
in my garden bleed to death
from geometrical fountains
from geometrical fountains
bleed to death in my garden
thrushes of madness
in my garden bleed to death
fountains of madness
from geometrical snowball trees
geometrical snowball trees
in my garden bleed to death
from fountains of madness

from geometrical madness
bleed to death in my garden
thy snowball trees at fountains

--HCA trans. by M. Hegemony

To The Bloodless Refugees Of Emptiness

"Through the suburbs sleepless people stagger,
as though just delivered from a shipwreck
of blood."

-Garcia Lorca, The Dawn

What now exists as palpable global destiny? What are its markers, its sculpted crimson signs?

The psychic atmosphere implies a return to troubled fiefdoms, to monarchies trebled by ferocious glints of bloody erosion. The sun continues to burn, the tides swarm across their shores with their sulphurs, while human continuity appears and disappears, like a netling grimness of ghosts. What arises from this startling anti-mass is the progressive neutering of the species. During this continuing dearth of higher foci even lightning is misconstrued as mere electrical theatrics. World citizenry now progresses as an artificial epitaph, as a spotted hyena starving on kelp, in an atmosphere of plight, hovering in balanced enigma. A spoiled voltage, a principle lacking in cohesion, where horizons disintegrate, where ideographs explode into darkness.

Humanity, like generic refugees, profanely strewn across a dome of exploded heliographs. The politicians crave for momentary incisions, for influential poison, much like staggered antelopes searching for sublime direction. For instance, a once dependant compass, now a locust eaten crystal. The collective path, a roving generation of hatchlings, devolving in sullen mental savannahs. We've witnessed many centuries of emigres, of disruptive holocaust phantoms. Now, all the fiestas and dieties somatically crippled, maundering like leaves across sudden hurricane waters, with their destinies entangled in a liminal brushfire pyroclastic.

At present, the shadow of our phylum wafting through an un-remitting mime osmotics. The linear goal, the abstracted referent, now remains increasingly hidden in tumultuous occlusion. And what is engendered by the latter, is the bloodless wake for uni-directional propaganda...

--WA [to be continued in DIU 22]

Nubian Roots Playlist
Sunday, January 29, 1995, 12-3pm

90.1 KZSU Stanford

DJ Cat

Abbey Lincoln Afro-Blue Abbey is Blue Sun Ra
Plutonium Nights Angels & Demons at Play/
Nubians of Plutonia Ethnic Heritage Ornette Coleman Dance with the
Ancestors Ensemble Fred Houn A Blk Woman Speaks Tomorrow is
Now! Johnny Dyani Quartet Blues for Meyake Angolian Cry Bobby
Hutcherson Catta Dialogue Michael Benita Quartet Babel
Soul Eric Dolphy Feathers Out There 8 Bold Souls A
Little Encouragement Ant Farm 8 Bold Souls Half Life Ant
Farm Reggie Workman Close Encounter Summit Conference John
Coltrane Satellite Coltrane's Sound Di Meola/McLaughlin/
Frevo Rasgado Friday Night in San Francisco DeLucia Kahil El' Zabar
Ritual Ornette Renaissance of the Resistance Arthur Blythe
Faceless Woman Blythe Spirit Ran Blake The Short Life of
The Short Life of Barbara Monk Barbara Monk Marilyn Crispell/
Old Thumper Band on the Wall Eddie Prevost Dogbolter
Band on the Wall Apart Band on the Wall Don Pullen
Ode to Life Random Thoughts John Jang Monk's Strut
Self Defense Giuseppi Logan Quartet Dance of Satan Giuseppi Logan
Quartet Andrew Hill Flight 19 Point of Departure Steve
Coleman Shift on the Fly Drop Kick

available soon as a CD boxed set

IN THE AMERICAN OPRY: COUNTRY-WESTERN, POETRY, REALISM

compiled by John Denver

& featuring

Bernadette Mayer & Lee Ann Brown <-> The Judds
Jed Rasula <-> Jimmy Buffet
Steve Benson <-> Jim Nabors
Ron Silliman & David Melnick <-> Roy Clark & Buck Owens
Thad Ziolkowski <-> Lyle Lovett
Charles Bernstein <-> Roger Miller
Hannah Weiner <-> Minnie Pearl
Johanna Drucker <-> Reba McEntire
Marjorie Perloff <-> Alabama
Diane Ward <-> Roseanne Cash
Jean Day <-> Carlene Carter
Don Byrd <-> Porter Waggoner
Lyn Hejinian <-> Loretta Lynn
Nick Piombino <-> Garth Brooks

Carla Harryman & Barry Watten <-> Tammy Wynette & George Jones
Clark Coolidge & Michael Palmer <-> Waylon & Willie
Stephen Rodefer <-> Johnny Cash
Alan Davies <-> k.d. laing
Abby Child <-> Kinky Friedman
Bruce Andrews <-> Charlie Pride
David Bromige <-> Merle Haggard
Robert Grenier <-> Boxcar Willie
Kit Robinson <-> Hank Snow
Tom Mandel <-> Conway Twitty
P. Inman <-> Ernest Tubb
Tina Darragh <-> Kitty Wells
Bob Perelman <-> Johnny Paycheck
Susan Howe <-> Hank Williams Sr.
Rae Armantrout <-> Mac Davis
Michael Davidson <-> Glen Campbell
James Sherry <-> Barbara Mandrell
Ray DiPalma <-> Jimmy Webb
Joan Retallack <-> Red Sovine
Jackson Mac Low <-> The Pioneers
Tom Raworth <-> John Anderson
Mark Wallace <-> Graham Parsons
Andy Levy <-> George Strait
Jessica Grim & Melanie Neilsen <-> Flatt & Scruggs
Jeff Derksen <-> Jimmy Rodgers
Jerry Rothenberg <-> Kenny Rogers
Fanny Howe <-> Dolly Parton
Alice Notley <-> Lefty Frizzell
Keith & Rosmarie Waldrop <-> Jennifer Warnes & Leonard Cohen
Benjamin Hollander <-> Freddie Fender
Leslie Scalapino <-> David Lindley
Peter Gizzi <-> Tennessee Ernie Ford
Ben Friedlander <-> Slim Whitman
Rod Smith <-> John Prine
Douglas Messerli <-> Ray Stevens

Rumour has it that in what may be an attempt to flee the ruins, many members of the royalty (including Prince Gizzi) are currently flocking to California in what has (with some tongue in some cheek) been recently dubbed "Project Restore Coast." While some of the native inhabitants fear that such an infusion of "avant-garde"

sensibilities might not sit well in what has been called "one of the most alarming mixes of flabby pseudo-sixties idealism and crass mercantilism" ever witnessed, others have stated quite bluntly their favorable position:

"Why not hire all of them and have the best poetics program in the nation?"

According to inside sources who spoke on condition of anonymity, Top Cop Bob Perelman -- perhaps because of his en-vogue role in the recent film "Postmodernism: The Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism"-- is the front-runner for the recently opened position at Lost Coast University. Some still contend, however, that despite Perelman's acting experience, the fresh young face of Supporting Actor Aaron Shurin because of his wide-market appeal and, as one audience member put it, "ability to relate," is still in strong contention.

We've received no reports yet on the tryout performance of Cecil Giscombe, though rumour says that his reading went on, as scheduled, without incident, and that a good deal of fine wine was consumed by all parties involved.

We now await the arrival of Prince Gizzi.

Let us not fall into the sea
Til its best time...

--as of yet dis-integrated student body

The Last Days of the White Race, Readlist
10 Feb. 1995, Radio Free Northamerica

The Collected Poems of Langston Hughes edited by
Arnold Rampersad (Knopf 1994):

"Songs to the Dark Virgin"

"God"

"Goodby Christ"

"Sunday Morning Prophecy"

"Madame and the Minister"

"Who But the Lord?"

"Bible Belt"

"Little Cats"

"Would
That I were a flame,
But one sharp, leaping flame
To annihilate a body,
Thou dark one"

"Spring!
Life is love!
Love is life only!
Better to be human
Than God -- and lonely"

"Goodbye,
Christ Jesus Lord God Jehova
Beat it on away from here now
Make way for a new guy with no religion at all --
A real guy named
Marx Communist Lenin Peasant Stalin Worker ME --
I said ME!"

"Come into the church this morning
Brothers and Sisters,
And be saved --
And give freely
In the collection basket
That I who am thy shepherd
Might live"

"He said, Sister
Have you back-slid?
I said, It felt good --
If I did!"

"No I do not understand
Why God don't protect a man
From police brutalities"

"It would be too bad if Jesus
Were to come back black.
There are so many churches
Where he could not pray
In the U.S.A."

"What happens to little cats?
Some get drowned in a well,
Some run over by a car --
But none goes to hell"

*_*_*_**

DIU circulates by the logic of snowflakes
thru ████████

_**_*_*_***

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145. **Charles A. Baldwin**
this also needs to be posted (fwd)

Fri 10 Feb 1995

Subject: Child-Saving Hero Disputed
Copyright: 1999 by The Anti-Hegemony Project
Date: 1 Apr 99 00:00:00 EST
Lines: 23

BUFFALO (AHP) -- The day _apex of the M_'s headquarters went up in flames, a bystander caught three of the children as they were thrown from an upper-story window. But just who that man was is in dispute, and the Office of Monitored Sophistry doesn't know who should get a commendation for helping save the children. Four men and a woman have stepped forward, claiming to be the one who caught the children Mar. 15 and carried them to safety. A fourth child, who jumped from the window after throwing the others, was hospitalized. One of the men, Charles Bernstein, a 45-year-old migrant worker, said he even has a blister, a burn mark and a suit that smells like smoke to prove his story. The Sophist's office plans to honor someone, they just don't know who, said Marjorie Perloff, a spokeswoman for the Monitors. Another spokesman, Tom Mandel, suggested a bakeoff for determining the hero, but this suggestion was rejected out of hand. In any case, the injured child, Pam Rehm, will receive an award when she is released from the hospital, where she is recovering from burns over 40 percent of her body and scorched lungs. The other children

---More---

Group bleari.controversy.bs available: 666 - 1776 unread: 1110
article 666 31-DEC-1999 23:59:59.00

escaped with minor bruises. The children are all twentysomething. ``It's not really important," who caught the youngsters, Perloff said. ``Believe me, I don't think nothing of it, as long as the children are safe."

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146. **James Sherry**

Re: deified theories and unfounded vocabularies

Fri 10 Feb 1995

I'll try again to communicate the necessity of a multi-part relationship between theory and poetry. They are inevitably connected in that every poem participates in one or another or several theories of poetry (one cannot write a poem that doesn't participate in any of several series of ideas about poetry), but poetry and theory are not the same. There can be many sophistic ways to describe this and it is easily misinterpreted as a spiritual relationship, but it's more by way of the range of ideas that poetry and poetics occupy each and both. I am trying to avoid analogy, but a picture in sets would easily explain this concept. To quote the song, it's okey dokey for identity to have several faces as we are many of us poets, editors, theorists, drivers, partners, workers..... James

On Fri, 10 Feb 1995, Michael Boughn wrote:

Each poem has a theoretical basis whether it is acknowledged or not. Poetry and theory are separate but not separable and do not precede or follow each other. James

This sounds a bit like There is a God whether He is acknowledged or not. Amen. (Yikes! Shades of the M'ers creeping into the L-space.) It does make it kind of hard to have a conversation, though, when one side knows the truth. Or is all that just a theory you made up?

*Best,
Mike*



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147. **James Sherry**

Re: reified names vs. boundless vocabulary

Fri 10 Feb 1995

Yes and you have raised what is for me the interesting question of what aspects of the poem can possibly separate, have an independent existence, from its theory, its author, its reader, its context. Is the poem an object that can in that

sense be independent or are we talking about varying densities of language that participate in a discipline called poetry to a greater or lesser extent. To have the discussion properly we need to change its terms. I think the focus is now sharpened by your question. But I go too far too fast. Jmase

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148. **Spencer Selby**

Re: reified names vs. boundless vocabulary

Fri 10 Feb 1995

Dear Eric,

Theory is formulated ideas about how things work. You don't need theory, or to be that theoretical, to have a context, to have lots of contexts, as I assume most people do, especially in this day and age.

There is no single, proper context for a work of art. There is no single, proper context through which to read Shelley, Milton, Pound... It may be helpful to be aware of the contexts through which these poets viewed their own work (and art, life in general) but one does not need those contexts in order to be a receptive reader of their poetry. Those who say otherwise are, to me, playing a big power game: My explanation is better than yours or my explanation is the right one and you are misguided. I know more than you do, so don't challenge me. My idea of art is better formulated than yours, so my view of art, or my art, is superior.

Of course some peoples ideas are better formulated, and as explanations these may have more value. But the relationship between such explanations and the art is entirely problematic. The individual must have her own response to art, and the individual must have her own contexts for creating art. Explanations may be helpful or destructive in this endeavor. If I emphasize the negative here it is because others don't, and because I see this negative as looming large over the art today.

I do appreciate your letter, your sincerity and your struggle. I agree that this discussion will not be resolved, and I agree that these tensions may be productive. But if you don't believe your own contexts (which neither defer to nor ignore the contexts of others) are all that are necessary for appreciating or creating art, then I believe you will miss out on the best art has to offer.

Spencer

On Thu, 9 Feb 1995, eric pape wrote:

Spencer, I hear you. I really do, but I must ask finally, what is your definition of theory? It seems as if James and I are using a definition that calls for contextualization, and frankly, I think youre idea of

theory is these names which form the heading for the discussion that, and I agree with you wholeheartedly, has gone on far too long.

Art does have its level. I agree. But it also has a context, which I will call theoretical, and it is an act of violence that Shelley, Milton, Pound and even that most unintellectual of intellectual poets, O'Hara, would perhaps resent, to rip it from that context.

My thing about purity was simply that it didn't seem to me that what we were saying here, or more precisely what Tom and others were saying since I did indeed butt-in, was all that "radical" or even particularly "theoretical." It just seemed sensible to me and I wondered why it bothered you. That's all.

As for the academy: You scored a hit. I'm an academic, or a wanna be academic which shows you already the fool you're dealing with here, and I certainly have an interest in "complexifying matters." But, I'm a lot of other things too. None of which I can, or want, to separate from my work, admittedly limited though it is.

I think a lot of important issues are coming up. I think the reason we are not any closer to resolving them (and by the way I give you a great deal of credit personally Spencer for having the stamina to take on all comers) is that they cannot be resolved. I think it is from these tensions that the best work comes.

Thanks, Eric (██████)

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149. **Jorge Guitart**
changing the subject

Fri 10 Feb 1995

Some suggestions:

Friends, don't be lazy: change the subject line if your message is no longer about reified names, boundless vocabularies or apex of the M, etc.

And for personal notes (e.g. my wife can play second base), write to each other not the list.

Thanks.

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150. **Tom Mandel**
Re: Cockney Folk Dance

Fri 10 Feb 1995

...fools, ignorami, ministers without portfolio : Pessoa's 3 heteronyms were Alfredo de Campos, Alberto Caiero, Marvin Gaye, and Ricardo Reis. In the case of only one - I mean one only -

interregnum... the way I understand it, hokey pokey was a phase between roley poley and chubby checker; I mean a phrase of course... close interregnum

was every poem a theory, and that case stood for all.

Tm

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151. **Tom Mandel**

Re: deified reams vs. nounless bloakabulary

Fri 10 Feb 1995

It's all very well to blame the greeks for theory, to be sure; but, the word entered their language from the phrase "they or we" which was inscribed on the banners of the brittano-aryans who invaded the poor pre-monumental scrub cult-ridden territory vastly earlier than previous references.

Tm

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152. **Tom Mandel**

Re: Cockney Folk Dance

Fri 10 Feb 1995

It came to me in a vision, no in a moment of inspiration, the herky jerky demands equal time. (verb where you weel)

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153. **Tom Mandel**

Re: reified names vs. boundless vocabulary

Fri 10 Feb 1995

re: James' "every poem has a theoretical basis,"

I think it's clear what that means if it is understood more or less along the lines of 'every statement has a theoretical basis' or 'every empirical fact has a theoretical basis.'

Is there some further sense, special to poetry, in which each example has a theoretical basis (or implies a theory, or however you'd formulate it)?

Tom

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154. **Tom Mandel**
Re: Cockney Folk Dance
Fri 10 Feb 1995

George bowering - what's the reference for Blackburn's Pessoa translation? I'd like to see it.

Tm

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155. **Tom Mandel**
Re: Hackney Cockney
Fri 10 Feb 1995

Cris, did Pessoa write that? amazing... but I thought "O Sole, Mia" referred to the fish beneath her foot.

Tm

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156. **Tom Mandel**
Re: reified names vs. boundless vocabulary
Fri 10 Feb 1995

Marc, you get a life. Words can be used metaphorically, I do believe. And we all do so. "Insular worlds of poetry, theory..." : should Brits object to the obvious attempt to slander their land formation?

Tm

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157. **Tom Mandel**
Re: reified names vs. boundless vocabulary
Fri 10 Feb 1995

Chris Stroffolino - just what wd the chicken be alfredof?

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158. **eric pape**
Re: reified names vs. boundless vocabulary
Fri 10 Feb 1995

C'mon Marc, I think my trope was clear. Haven't you ever violently jerked the steering wheel? Just meant that I thought, humbly, that it took a particularly

violent jerk of the old noodle to separate the poem completely from its context. As to "those of us who have been victims of violence," what do you want? That I demonstrate that I've been a victim of violence? I have. That I demonstrate I've committed an act of violence? I have. How do I prove this in your opinion? A story? A police report? Snapshots? What would this prove? That I have a life, really truly? Would you believe it? Thanks, Eric

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159. **Spencer Selby**

Re: reified names vs. boundless vocabulary

Sat 11 Feb 1995

Before James and Tom take off completely, or as they proceed to what are for them more interesting questions, I would like to mention that the fact that we can derive theories from works of art does not mean art does not have its own level. Art is much more than these theories, and that is one reason why it has its own level. Spencer Selby

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160. **Chris Stroffolino**

Re: reified names vs. boundless vocabulary

Sat 11 Feb 1995

Dear Marc Nasdor-- "Real" vs. fake violence. As i write this, there is a woman screaming next store at her 'lover' who is beating her. Physical vs. psychic-- it kinda puts my "merely mental" pain into perspective, yet there's also the fact that someone can GO THROUGH THE MOTIONS--be there physically but not mentally. "corporeal friends are spiritual enemies" -- Blake...So, should we reserve the word violence for the strictly material realm. For instance, if a homeless man hassles you for money that may be more PHYSICALLY violent than the GOVERNMENT oh so politely raising taxes, but which is more VIOLENT. God, I feel like Peter Tosh singing "tell me who are the criminals..." Chris (or one who has also been told often to "get a life")...

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161. **Michael Boughn**

Re: deified theories and unfounded vocabularies

Sat 11 Feb 1995

"He who is not in love is driven back to theory."
--Michel Serres, *Rome: A Book of Foundations*

If Ahab has a theory ("a little lower layer . . ."), what does Ishmael have?

Best,
Mike

████████

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162. **eric pape**

Re: reified names vs. boundless vocabulary

Sat 11 Feb 1995

Considering the recent rather odd discussion on "violence" I agree with you that there can be a "violence" to the way theory is used, as I should say there is a violence, perhaps more metaphysical (but nevertheless necessary as all metaphysics, spirits, narratives, are necessary) to a certain aestheticized position. I don't argue that this is your position, incidentally. There was much in your posting I agreed with, as above, some I didn't: I think we can have a respectful disagreement. I think that's possible. Thanks, Spencer. Eric

(████████)

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163. **Tom Mandel**

Re: reified names vs. boundless vocabulary

Sat 11 Feb 1995

I'm starting to get a clearer picture of what is implied in James' dictum "every poem has a theoretical basis," & I thought to try it out on you all.

Take a musical equivalent. Certainly, every sonata has a theoretical basis - in some version of the classical sonata as an idea, a form and ideal for musical expression. And this clearly is theoretical in a real sense. Every string quartet, symphony, etc.

In the above, we are referring to the character of an art form historically. we are referring to European music from the late 18th century forward, continuing in varied ways to our own day when, still, someone writing a sonata would be operating from a theory of the sonata, and a theory of music englobing sonata theory. Similarly for non-classical forms.

So what is being indicated here is not an analytical fact, nor a god that's there willy nilly, but the

developing character of an art discipline: its historical character, its self-expressed ideals and forms, and ways - parts of the ways - to approach and understand works within that discipline. And I think one could rewrite the description of music to fit equally well the history of painting, again European painting.

This is different too from my supposition or query whether James was just saying that as every expression or human act occurs within a cultural context which establishes at least a domain and horizon for its formal ideals of truth, appropriateness, appeal, etc., so a poem, in that sense, implied a theory (or even theories).

In a sense then, what James is arguing for is a historical poetics, that we understand poetry w/in the context of the extended internal and external conversation (challenge and response, as we say in the login world) which underlies its practice. This is strong, open and interesting. What does draw one to write poetry? How are terms (viz. spirit) interesting or operative in that conversation? His requirement of the apexers to nuance, to be subtle, not to be frontal, about their terms, is then a request for them to enter that conversation, and not a pan from the superior position of one who's been around long enough to know better, as it were (and in that formulation I think too that I'm trying to recontextualize some of what may come off as arrogance in my own contributions here).

I haven't meant to represent James in this, but to open the ways his urgencies (and poetry is an urgent endeavor or nil) allow me to think and respond.

Tom Mandel

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164. **Tom Mandel**

Re: reified names vs. boundless vocabulary

Sat 11 Feb 1995

"Art has its own level" --- that is a theory Spencer, or rather a small part of one or a single expression of one (or of many of them). No?

tom

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165. **Donald J. Byrd**

Theory

Sat 11 Feb 1995

James Sherry is undoubtedly correct that poetry cannot produce pure transition academic. That is, the theoretical issues are always in play in the ope

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166. **eric pape**

Re: reified names vs. boundless vocabulary

Sat 11 Feb 1995

Yes, yes. This makes it clearer. And extremely interesting. But, doesn't this, when it truly becomes poetry=theory, which incidentally is not what I think I hear James saying, become another form of intentionality? Ie., the poet intends this or that context? Might we think of the poem, as I think Tom indicates, as a dynamic in which these varying contexts, spirits, politics, narratives, metaphysics, and everything that works against these, circulate? Might we think of the poem, or any work of art, as an intricate process in which a multiplicity of concepts, with a both small and a capital C occur? This implies, to me, a poetry that works against stability, that is anything but static. And seems to me something that implies that thinking/creating/versifying/etc. never ends. just a few scattered thoughts. Thanks, Eric (██████)

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167. **Carla Billitteri**

Correction

Sat 11 Feb 1995

Subject: AHP Corrects Translation Story
Copyright: 1999 by The Anti-Hegemony Project
Date: 10 Feb 99 15:30:45 EST

Lines: 10

PROVIDENCE (AHP) -- In a Feb. 11 story about the use of humans in translation experiments, The Anti-Hegemony Project erroneously reported that Brown University researchers used a translated substance in a 1995 experiment on newborns.

The story was based on a Bureau of the Atlantic publication that listed the Brown experiment as one of 154 studies involving translation and human subjects. However, the Bureau now acknowledges the substance used at Brown, waldrop-50, is not translative, said Michael Palmer, deputy director of the Bureau's Office of Human Translation Experiments.

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168. **Donald J. Byrd**

Theory

Sat 11 Feb 1995

In uploading, this file somehow lost its line breaks.
Hopefully this will be more readable:

James Sherry is undoubtedly correct that poetry cannot produce pure transparent immediacy, and it is therefore inevitably supplemented, consciously or unconsciously, with theory.

It seems to me, however, the following points might advance this thread of discussion.

1. Poets are as responsible for their theory as they are for their art, and poets during the past twenty years have often abdicated the responsibility. The theoretical results in philosophy as such and in the social and physical sciences are not irrelevant to poetry, but their use in poetics is limited at best. The poet must think through the same issues but think through them in relation to the concrete practice of poetry.

2. The poetry that is of enduring interest from Hesiod's *Theogony* to Jack Clark's sonnets, Nate Mackey's *School of Uhdra*, Anne Waldman's *Iovis*, and Charles Stein's *The Hat Rack Tree* incorporates its theory in the poems themselves. Theoretically complex poetry otherwise is by definition academic. That is, the theoretical issues are always in play in the open form in which immediacy and thought are always in recursive interaction. This recursion is literally the motive of creative act.

3. One of the reasons this becomes a difficult issue is that more and more poets find themselves employed in graduate education, a very different role to the academic poets of the 50's (who often taught in small liberal arts schools or carried on the liberal-arts-school function in a large university). It does seem to

me we might find reasons to object to poems that illustrate this or that hot theory. This kind of poetry seems to me at present a serious plague. It is comparable to the endless iambic tetrameter quatrains that illustrated the theoretical pronouncements of late Eliot.

Don Byrd

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169. **Marc Nasdor**

Re: reified names vs. boundless vocabulary

Sat 11 Feb 1995

Tom--

Fortunately or unfortunately, I've got more life than I can handle. In any case, I was only stating that Eric's use of the term "violence" was way overblown, so I guess that makes it an overblown metaphor. So chill.

--Marc

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170. **Tenney Nathanson**

Re: Theory

Sat 11 Feb 1995

On Sat, 11 Feb 1995, Donald J. Byrd wrote:

*In uploading, this file somehow lost its line breaks.
Hopefully this will be more readable:*

*James Sherry is undoubtedly correct that poetry cannot
produce pure transparent immediacy, and it is therefore inevitably
supplemented, consciously or unconsciously, with theory.*

*It seems to me, however, the following points might advance
this thread of discussion.*

*1. Poets are as responsible for their theory as they
are for their art, and poets during the past twenty years have
often abdicated the responsibility. The theoretical results
in philosophy as such and in the social and physical sciences
are not irrelevant to poetry, but their use in poetics is
limited at best. The poet must think through the same issues
but think through them in relation to the concrete practice of
poetry.*

Don-- why not write them through as/in poetry? Or is that what you meant? And if so then pinning down the 2/3 split would seem esp. pressing (whose theoretically alert poetry is responsive and whose is just abdication?)

2. *The poetry that is of enduring interest from Hesiod's _Theogony_ to Jack Clark's sonnets, Nate Mackey's _School of Uhdra_, Anne Waldman's _Iovis_, and Charles Stein's _The Hat Rack Tree_ incorporates its theory in the poems themselves. Theoretically complex poetry otherwise is by definition academic. That is, the theoretical issues are always in play in the open form in which immediacy and thought are always in recursive interaction. This recursion is literally the motive of creative act.*

3. *One of the reasons this becomes a difficult issue is that more and more poets find themselves employed in graduate education, a very different role to the academic poets of the 50's (who often taught in small liberal arts schools or carried on the liberal-arts-school function in a large university). It does seem to me we might find reasons to object to poems that illustrate this or that hot theory. This kind of poetry seems to me at present a serious plague. It is comparable to the endless iambic tetrameter quatrains that illustrated the theoretical pronouncements of late Eliot.*

Don Byrd

To unbeg this question, I guess, names might be named, or working criteria given. That is: how distinguish "in general" between poetry in which

" the theoretical issues are always in play in the open form
> in which immediacy and thought are always in recursive
> interaction"

and the poetry which merely "illustrates" a theory? I guess it might be done in practice, but I bet such a distinction would be hard to align with something like "open form" unless that's either a School Cheer or, essentially, a tautology.

Tenney Nathanson

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171. **Donald J. Byrd**

Re: Theory

Sun 12 Feb 1995

In response to my claim that poets must think through the theoretical issues in relation to poetic practice, Tenney Nathanson asks,

| *why not write them through as/in poetry?*

Yes, I would say the `_great_` poets, in some sense the only poets worth `_studying_`, are those who set forth clearly in the poems themselves the circular dependency of immediacy and abstraction (Parmenides, Lucretius, Blake, and Olson are examples).

Other poetry is read as journalism (i.e. information set forth in the context of the large unstated prejudices of the day) or as distraction (poetry as tv).

It does seem, however, that an intermediate discourse is sometimes necessary. Olson's `_SPecial View of History_`, for example.

The distinction between poetry in which the theoretical issues are always in play and poems that merely illustrate a theory is in practice quite clear.

Poetry of the former type takes full responsibility for the theory. Of course, this means that the poem that addresses its own theoretical base is still dependent upon the theory that makes that poem possible. Serious poetry, however, takes full responsibility for the loop, which is its central motive.

Poetry of the latter type, takes the fact that any poem must depend upon a theory to dodge responsibility for the poem at hand. Thus, poetry becomes a reliance upon various algorithms of novelty. The poet feels assured that this work must be important, if he or she only had time to think up or at least articulate the theory on which it depends.

Don Byrd

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172. **Jorge Guitart**

theory & truth

Sun 12 Feb 1995

that poetry cannot produce pure transparent immediacy -- which used to be a hypothesis -- has now been certified as the truth by at least two people.

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173. **Ron Silliman**

Re: reified names vs. boundless vocabulary

Sun 12 Feb 1995

" As i write this, there is a woman screaming
> next store at her 'lover' who is beating her. "

Why are you writing this to the list when you should be calling the cops?

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174. **James Sherry**

Re: reified names vs. boundless vocabulary

Sun 12 Feb 1995

On Sat, 11 Feb 1995, Spencer Selby wrote:

*Before James and Tom take off completely, or as they proceed to what are for them more interesting questions, I would like to mention that the fact that we can derive theories from works of art does not mean art does not have its own level. *Art is much more than these theories,**

I DON'T KNOW ABOUT TOM, BUT FOR ME THE HIERARCHICAL STATEMENT REGARDING THE PRECEDENCE OF ART IS WHAT IS IS QUESTION. ART IS PRECEDED AND FOLLOWED BY THEORY AND VICE VERSA. THEORIES ABOUT ART AND ABOUT OTHER DISCIPLINES AFFECT ART. YOU ARE BEING CONSISTENTLY REDUCTIVE, SPENCER, AND REDUCING ART THEREBY TO SOME "HIGHER" (SIC) ORDER. (And no one would disagree that art doesn't have its own level.)

and that is

> one reason why it has its own level.

> Spencer Selby

>

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175. **Donald J. Byrd**

Re: theory & truth

Sun 12 Feb 1995

No, I believe that _language_ cannot produce pure immediacy was proven by conclusive logic by Parmenides.

Don Byrd

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176. **James Sherry**

Re: deified theories and unfounded vocabularies

Sun 12 Feb 1995

I believe that the "little lower layer" theory is Starbuck's. Ahab's point of view is much more black and white, while Ishmael's theory is a third one about the relative values of observation and humanity. This is a theory common to many of the 19th century writers and much discussed. The opposition of love to theory is a particularly savage one that justifies a lot of abuse and anti-intellectual essentializing. It implies that a lover can't have a theory. Aren't we all capable of divesting ourselves of these fictions of hierarchy and digesting a mutable world view? James

On Sat, 11 Feb 1995, Michael Boughn wrote:

*"He who is not in love is driven back to theory."
--Michel Serres, *Rome: A Book of Foundations**

If Ahab has a theory ("a little lower layer . . ."), what does Ishmael have?

*Best,
Mike*

████████

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177. **Joe Amato**

Re: deified theories

Sun 12 Feb 1995

this is such a knotty issue, but i'll risk a few premature assertions...

it's probably worth pointing out here that much of what is taken as properly theoretical these days, academically speaking, is in fact theory about theory... metatheory, that is, of one sort or another...

now not to conflate terms further, BUT theoretical practice, as i understand same, ultimately must account for itself... the logic, that is, is not one of a hermetic system (regarding which one may cite any number of related proofs contra) but one, rather, of recognized and working (conscious and quasi-conscious etc.) mutual interrelations of signifying practices with somewhat differing aims...

i say "somewhat" because there is, on the surface of it, no recourse to any but a generic preference that places, say, 'art' over here and 'theory' over there... now in practice there ARE of course distinctions, and distinctions such that one may be led to believe that art **must** be over here and theory **must** be over there... but what justification, other than an empirical (and perhaps anecdotal) claim as to the intrinsic primacy of art, can anybody make, finally, that does not bring with it either a (however carefully worked out) faith or an institutional(-historical) predisposition, and more than likely both?... that is, the 'art vs. theory' discussion is a vexed issue precisely because there would seem to be no overarching consensus as to what we might hope either practice to accomplish (in practice... and yeah, "we")...

i grant that the past couple of decades has witnessed the erosion of artistic authority (if you will) in the name largely of theory... surely this is part of the general trend, that of the movement of more and more intellectual work into the "academy"... but just as surely this need not necessarily blind anybody to the interdependencies at work between these symbolic-material 'realms'...

so to pose the question of what it is that art does over and against what it is that theory does---if i may be allowed to wax utilitarian for a moment---is to ask, essentially, how it is we regard the place of intellectual work of one sort or another given our respective public/private sites...

////in good faith...

joe (amato)

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178. **Loss Glazier**

Re: deified theories

Sun 12 Feb 1995

I, for one, have some problem with the word "art" when it comes up in relation to theory. Theory I can see. There's a practical quality to it. I mean you sit down and type it out. Whether the poem precedes theory or the theory proceeds the poem is probably moot. But when does the poem turn into "art"? Isn't this something left way behind somewhere? Here's what the American Heritage has to say about it:

1. Human effort to imitate, supplement, alter, or counteract the work of nature. 2.a. The conscious production or arrangement of sounds, colors, forms, movements, or other elements in a manner that affects the sense of beauty, specifically the production of the beautiful in a graphic or plastic medium.

So maybe that's my difficulty with the term. It brings up the spectre of those terms like the "beautiful" and "nature" which seem foreign to activities that might have some application to our present gatherings...

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179. **Ron Silliman**

Re: theory & truth

Sun 12 Feb 1995

Don Byrd wrote:

> No, I believe that _language_ cannot produce pure
> immediacy was proven by conclusive logic by Parmenides.

But that's because Parmenides didn't recognize the presence of the signifier.

Ron Silliman

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180. **Chris Stroffolino**

Re: theory & truth

Sun 12 Feb 1995

Is Ron saying thus that if Parmenides would have recognized the "presence" of the signifier that he would have been able to prove that language can produce pure immediacy????? And what does this "pure immediacy" signify for people? Can immediacy be said to be pure? Should we theorize immediacy? Is irony the expression of immediacy on the 'level' of theory? And what of the "circle"? Don Byrd spoke of the "circular dependency of immediacy and abstraction"--but if the "circle", an "ideal form" that doesn't exist "in nature", is an abstraction, this mutuality privileges the abstract (and is perhaps not mutual)... Circle line, vicious circle, Aristotle's god of pure contemplation, Short circuit. Spinning one's wheels without "intentionality" Will the circle be unbroken? When you get circulars in the mail do you consider them junk mail? IS THERE a circle, an "inner circle," "The pleasures of merely circulating"--the Blakian vortex, girl by the whirlpool looking for a new fool? Is the circle a chain, a golden chain, should we TRUST ANYTHING?

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181. **eric pape**

Re: theory & truth

Sun 12 Feb 1995

Chris asks "Can we trust anything?"

Good question. Answer: No.

Thanks, Eric.

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182. **eric pape**

Re: theory & truth

Sun 12 Feb 1995

I'm sorry Ron. I'm confused. How is the signifier "present?" My understanding, admittedly limited and admittedly "academic" (why do I, as this I write more and more on this list, feel the need for quotations?) is that the signifier is absent and exposes the absence of the signified? Please explain. Thanks, Eric (██████)

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183. **Michael Boughn**

deified theories & unfounded vocabularies

Sun 12 Feb 1995

"Vengeance on a dumb brute!" cried Starbuck, "that simply smote thee from blindest instinct! Madness! To be enraged with a dumb thing, Captain Ahab, seems blasphemous." "Hark ye yet again,--the little lower layer. All visible objects, man, are but as pasteboard masks. But in each event--in the living act, the undoubted deed--there, some unknown but still reasoning thing puts forth the mouldings of its features from behind the unreasoning mask. If man will strike, strike through the mask! How can the prisoner reach outside except by thrusting through the wall? To me, the white whale is that wall, shoved near to me. Sometimes I think there's naught beyond. But 'tis enough. He tasks me; he heaps me; I see in him outrageous strength, with an inscrutable malice sinewing in it. The inscrutable thing is chiefly what I hate"

--*Moby-Dick*, Chapter 36, "The Quarter-deck"

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184. **Michael Boughn**

deified theories and unfounded vocabularies

Sun 12 Feb 1995

"A book only exists by means of an outside, a beyond. Thus, a book being itself a little machine, what measurable relationship does this literary machine have in turn with a war machine, a love machine, a revolutionary machine, etc.--and with an *abstract machine* which drives them along? We have been reproached too often for invoking literary authors. But the only question when writing is with what other machine the literary machine can be connected, and must be connected in order to function. Kleist is a mad war machine, Kafka an extraordinary bureaucratic machine . . . (and if one became animal or vegetable *through* literature, which admittedly doesn't mean "literarily," wouldn't it be first through the voice?). Literature is an arrangement; it has nothing to do with ideology. There is no ideology and there never has been."

Deleuze and Guattari, *On the Line*

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185. **Michael Boughn**

deified theories and unfounded vocabularies

Sun 12 Feb 1995

Imagine this, James, that at the moment the poem enters the world, rather than having a theory as its basis (as you put it), it simultaneously engenders a theory, a counter-theory, a non-theory, several anti-poems, non-poems, and counter-poems, and in a sort clinamenic, rhizomatic fracturing that spreads across the face of the world as we know it, multiplies, swerves, joins, splits into a massive multiplicitous joyful inscrutability in whose features we may vaguely make out something resembling the possibility of a white whale sporting amongst what Ishmael called "young Leviathan amours of the deep."

I saw something like this once at the particle accelerator at Livermore Labs--an image of an electron which, as it approached the speed of light, disappeared completely from our space/time continuum (where the hell did it go?), only to reappear in a shower of subatomic particles, anti-particles, non-particles, and god knows what else.

Bottom line, as the Duke said: "It don't mean a thing if it ain't got that swing. Dowop shewop dowop shewop dowop shewop do."

Best,
Mike



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186. **Tony Green**
Re: Cockney Folk Dance
Sun 12 Feb 1995

And I have never heard of Pokey flavour ice cream.
Maybe that is a New Zealand flavour. Derived from lanolin, maybe? I
will be in Auckland tomorrow, and try to find some Pokey ice cream.

Well, no not quite. Ask for Hokey Pokey and you'll get something vanilla with
butterscotch chips. Anyone would know that, I thought. Hence at Rotorua in
the Sheraton Hotel, you'll find a Maroi concert party singing in the evening the
Hokey Pokey.

My father-in-law says its the Hokey Tokey anyway and he comes from the deep
south, Invercargill.

I can only assume that we are encountering here a not unfamiliar folk music
situation, where local variants abound. But still, in all traditions I have heard,
at some point you put your right foot (etc) in.

I am pleased to know Cokey may be a version of Cockney. The Hockney
Cockney is what it should be, perhaps (David Hockney, however, comes from
Yorkshire, I believe) I thought that Cokey and Tokey were perhaps more likely
to be references to illegal substances.j

Tony Green,
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University of Auckland,
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Auckland, New Zealand
Fax: 64 9-[REDACTED]
Telephone: 64 9 [REDACTED] ext. 8981 or 7276

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187. **Jorge Guitart**
parmenides
Sun 12 Feb 1995

how could parmenides prove anything conclusively by logic if change is an
illusion.

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188. **Tenney Nathanson**

Re: deified theories and unfounded vocabularies

Sun 12 Feb 1995

Since Moby Dick got in between James Sherry on one side and Don Byrd and Mike B on the other (the latter playing Ahab as theory off against Ishmael as poesis and freedom, as I understand it, it's worth drawing attention to Don Pease's terrific chapter on Moby Dick and what he calls the "cold war consensus," in /Visionary Compacts/. The point being that Ahab, in "cold war criticism," is figured as totalitarian will, from whom Ishmael's liberal symbolism (allegory versus symbol gets mobilized in the criticism as well) liberates "us." Pease is of course critical of this enabling dichotomy, and thus lines up roughly w James S. and against Mike B at least. So that poetry as opposed to (hegemonic? totalizing?) theory would if not be part of, then at least seem to have an interest in appealing to an enabling fifty year old liberal politics of containment. Curious. Tenney

On Sun, 12 Feb 1995, James Sherry wrote:

I believe that the "little lower layer" theory is Starbuck's. Ahab's point of view is much more black and white, while Ishmael's theory is a third one about the relative values of observation and humanity. This is a theory common to many of the 19th century writers and much discussed. The opposition of love to theory is a particularly savage one that justifies a lot of abuse and anti-intellectual essentializing. It implies that a lover can't have a theory. Aren't we all capable of divesting ourselves of these fictions of hierarchy and digesting a mutable world view? James

On Sat, 11 Feb 1995, Michael Boughn wrote:

*"He who is not in love is driven back to theory."
--Michel Serres, *Rome: A Book of Foundations**

If Ahab has a theory ("a little lower layer . . ."), what does Ishmael have?

*Best,
Mike*



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189. **Chris Stroffolino**

Re: deified theories and unfounded vocabularies

Sun 12 Feb 1995

Or (1)--it ain't got that swing if it don't mean a thing
(2)--it don't mean a thing if it only got that swing...

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190. **Donald J. Byrd**

Re: parmenides

Sun 12 Feb 1995

Parmenides' proof that, if there is anything, it cannot be spoken, is one of the rare and wonderful philosophic certainties. (See, Charles Stein, ed., *_Being=Space x Action_*, North Atlantic Books).

Wittgenstein makes a similar argument in *Tractatus*:
"Of that which we cannot speak we must remain silent."

Don Byrd

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191. **Belle Gironde**

M Comes Under Fire

Sun 12 Feb 1995

Subject: M Comes Under Fire

Copyright: 1999 by The Anti-Hegemony Project

Date: 2 Apr 99 02:04:99 EST

LINES: 54

BUFFALO (AHP) -- The ``mumthing different" about ``the M" has come under fire from poetry abuse prevention advocates who contend it has caught the fancy of underage readers.

Critics in at least 10 states have complained to Buffalo's Poetics Program about the radically transparent verbiage, saying it has a sour aftertaste like baby formula but a slightly higher confusion content than Poetics' own original brew.

They say M is increasingly consumed by juveniles, and has fostered false rumors in some areas that it is undetectable by breathalyzer tests used to prosecute poets with slurred speech.

``The product is clearly designed to seem different from regular language poetry," said Mark Wallace, executive director of the Center for Science in the Public Interest in Washington. ``It's

---More---

Group bleari.poesy.food available: 13 - 19 unread: 1

article 18 21-JUN-1999 03:30:00

enticing young people to consume poetic verbiage, kids that otherwise might not read the stuff. ``I think it sets a pattern of the poetic verbiage industry constantly testing the waters with different kinds of products to see if they can find ways of expanding what has been a stagnant market." The Poetics Program has responded to the criticism with an aggressive program emphasizing M is for adults only. It has sent letters to community leaders, book reviewers and magazine editors stating that M will register on breathalyzer equipment. ``There are always things kids are going to find appealing about what adults do," said Poetics spokeswoman Charlotte Pressler.      ``We feel we have very effectively addressed all of the issues overall." ``apex of the M," packaged in a red cover, splashed onto the poetic scene in Spring 1994, catching on in a slick, quick-moving editorial campaign where words with a New Age connotation were substituted for the more formalist vocabulary of traditional language writing.

---More---

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article 18 21-JUN-1999 03:30:00

``Opaque" was out, ``transparent" in. ``Shelley" replaced ``Shklovsky," ``love" replaced ``method."

This Fall a new campaign, with the slogan ``M is mumthing different," was unveiled on the internet.

M has a confusion content of 3.7 percent by weight, compared with language poetry's confusion content of 3.6 percent by weight, Pressler said.

The transparent verbiage has become one of the most successful new products in the industry, and has been credited for much of Poetics' recent revenues.

Poetry abuse prevention advocates say they began noticing increased M consumption among juveniles last spring.

In Albany, N.Y., poetics police reported large quantities of M at juvenile drinking parties, said Betsy Burns, program coordinator for the county's Drawing the Line on Underage Poetry Use.

That county also is where the false rumors about the breathalyzer detection spread to the point that Burns' group made a video of a literary critic (Jeff Hansen) getting confused by M. The video showed the test detecting this confusion.

---More---

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Since the prevention efforts began, there has been a decrease in the number of complaints, Burns said. One factor could be that more parents have become aware that M is adult verbiage, she said.

Kevin McGee of the Marin Institute, a poetry abuse prevention group in Marin County, Calif. said he has noticed an increase in M use among younger college students who have been ``very taken by the editorials and have embraced M."

``The whole `mumthing different' is for a generation that's looking to define itself but doesn't know what to say," said McGee. ``It plays off that myth that something like poetics won't affect you the same way free verse or hard poetry will."

Inquiries to the Poetics Program about M peaked at about 200 in May; in the last three months of 1994, inquiries totaled about 10 a month, said Pressler.

``We feel we have very effectively addressed the issues overall," she said.

Yunte Huang, group manager of confusion issues at Poetics, said the program has financed some poetry abuse prevention aimed at

---More---

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article 18 21-JUN-1999 03:30:00

underage drinkers.

``We are very concerned and it is not our intent that this is a product that is consumed by youth," he said.

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192. **Mn Center For Book Arts**

Re: deified theories and unfounded vocabularies

Sun 12 Feb 1995

Generally I like to refer to Deleuze & Guattari, but I do believe that the relations between/among "book" & "literature" are entirely problematic, and I can more easily embrace the concept of book as machine than literature as one.

I also find most statements that, as D. Byrd says, poems "incorporate" theory to be too pat. They may do so, but hopefully in a way which enables both theory and poetry to be anything but dogmatic and inflexible.

Please explain, Spencer, what "level" art has. Art has its own level, is this like one of Dante's circles in the Inferno, or somewhere up some other cosmological ladder? Can art or theory really be divided so clearly from one another or from any number of other practices we can name, like work, state, love, morality?

charles alexander

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193. **Jorge Guitart**
parmenides & wittgenstein

Sun 12 Feb 1995

1. 'there is anything (=something [same word in Greek i believe) is T, since here is for instance the net; 2. 'it cannot be spoken' is F since it is self contradictory; 3. therefore 'if there is anything, it cannot be spoken' is F since 'p > q' is F' whenever q is F, regardless of the T-value of p.

wittgenstein went on writing post-tractatus & wrote about things he could not know.

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194. **Martin Spinelli**
*** AHP LANGUAGE ADVISORY ***

Mon 13 Feb 1995

Date: 7 Apr 99 01:55:00 EST

```
*****
*          NOTICE TO ALL STATIONS          *
*****
*
*
*  A LANGUAGE ADVISORY IS IN EFFECT FOR THE PROGRAM  *
*
*  "Sound & Sense / Poetics Today" (4/7)      *
*  16:00                                         *
*  SATCHAN 3                                   *
*  PEV    007                                   *
*
*  THE WORD "class" OCCURS SEVERAL TIMES IN THE  *
```


* SENATOR AMATO INTERVIEW IN SEGMENT C-1 *

* *

* 1:21 INTO THE SEGMENT "...poetry break for *

* the middle-class..." *

* *

* AND AGAIN 4:03 INTO THE SEGMENT "...the *

* President and his class war..." *

* *

* DELETE AS PER LOCALLY MANDATED GUIDELINES. *

* *

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195. **Donald J. Byrd**
Re: parmenides & wittgenstein

Mon 13 Feb 1995

1. *`there is anything (=something [same word in Greek i believe) is T, since here is for instance the net;*
2. *'it cannot be spoken' is F since it is self contradictory;*
3. *therefore 'if there is anything, it cannot be spoken' is F since $\neg p > q$ is F' whenever q is F, regardless of the T-value of p.*

wittgenstein went on writing post-tractatus & wrote about things he could not know.

That is, Wittgenstein gave up the possibility of presentational immediacy and the transcendental signifier, and decided to use ordinary language... The proof is not the existence of a transcendental sign, but that, if there is a transcendental sign, it cannot be spoken.

I do not understand the demonizing of the transcendental signifier in Language poetry theory. In fact, as attractive as the idea is from an emotional point of view, it is not an important idea in western logic. Those who have taken it seriously have tended, like Wittgenstein, to give up on the idea.

If it is too rigorous for scientific logic, its existential requirements are too stringent for poetry, which is after all predicated as a fiction. Even the poet who claims a transcendental signifier does not.

Don Byrd

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196. **Charles Bernstein**

DIGEST option: how to get less messages

Mon 13 Feb 1995

If you would prefer to receive one message from the Poetics list each day, which would include all messages posted to the list for that day, you can now use the digest option:

Send this one-line message (no subject line) to



set poetics digest

!!Send this message to "listserv" not to Poetics or as a reply to this message!!

You can switch back to individual posts by sending this message:

set poetics mail

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197. **Mark Wallace**

Re: reified names vs. boundless vocabulary

Mon 13 Feb 1995

What role does the differing institutional (academic and otherwise) authority given to "theory" and "art" in a context in which they are definitely understood as separate have to do with this current debate? I'm tempted to say that if you want to be listened to, you better call yourself a theory.

We could probably use the words "theory" and "art" anyway we want (would that make me Wittgensteinian, in a sense?) but that doesn't mean anybody else is going to (I know that does make me Wittgensteinian).

mark wallace

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198. **Tenney Nathanson**

Re: DIGEST option: how to get less messages

Mon 13 Feb 1995

and to undo that option, Charles?

is it just

set poetics nodigest

(or "indigest" perhaps?)

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199. **Tenney Nathanson**

Re: DIGEST option: how to get less messages

Mon 13 Feb 1995

actually I tried this last spring, got no messaes for 3 months, and then a single, roughly 200 screen (or more) message in September. Hence my interst in knowing how to turn the option off, just in case.

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200. **James Sherry**

Re: deified theories and unfounded vocabularies

Mon 13 Feb 1995

Nice formulation that may address also Loss' concern.

On Sun, 12 Feb 1995, Michael Boughn wrote:

Imagine this, James, that at the moment the poem enters the world, rather than having a theory as its basis (as you put it), it simultaneously engenders a theory, a counter-theory, a non-theory, several anti-poems, non-poems, and counter-poems, and in a sort clinamenic, rhizomatic fracturing that spreads across the face of the world as we know it, multiplies, swerves, joins, splits into a massive multiplicitous joyful inscrutability in whose features we may vaguely make out something resembling the possibilty of a white whale sporting amongst what Ishmael called "young Leviathan amours of the deep."

I saw something like this once at the particle accelerator at Livermore Labs--an image of an electron which, as it approached the speed of light, disappeared completely from our space/time continuum (where the hell did it go?), only to reappear in a shower of subatomic particles, anti-particles, non-particles, and god knows what else.

Bottom line, as the Duke said: "It don't mean a thing if it ain't got that swing. Dowop shewop dowop shewop dowop shewop do."

*Best,
Mike*

██████████

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201. **Charles A. Baldwin**
``FREE BARRY" (fwd)

Mon 13 Feb 1995

Subject: Famous Killer Whale Set Free
Copyright: 1999 by The Anti-Hegemony Project
Date: 1 Mar 99 00:00:01 PST
Lines: 53

SAN FRANCISCO (AHP) -- This time he has a reason to leap. Watten, the killer whale made famous by the film ``Free Barry," is heading toward a new home in Michigan and eventual freedom, his owners announced yesterday. The Berkeley amusement park where Watten has lived for the past decade signed an agreement donating the 3.5-ton mammal to the Free Barry-Watten Foundation, which plans to eventually free him in waters off Japan after a rehabilitation period at the Wayne State Aquarium in Detroit. The amusement park said the 15-year-old whale, captured off the coast of Japan at age 2, has performed for over a hundred visitors over the past 10 years. Efforts to free him have been underway since the Poetry Flash film was released.

---More--

Group bleari.poesy.animals available: 1 - 10 unread: 10
article ``writing degree zero" 29-FEB-1999 24:00:00

``Watten will be the only captive lang-po whale that doesn't have to do shows or perform," Patrick Phillips, director of the foundation, said at a news conference yesterday.

The foundation plans to move him in November.

In many ways, Watten is like a typical human teen-ager -- he's got skin problems, has grown (to 21 feet), and now wants a girlfriend.

``He requires more space, different conditions and also a companion," said Svetlana Alpers, a spokeswoman for the Berkeley habitat Representations.

Phillips said the park ``received letters and proposals of aid from all over the world." He said it waited until receiving ``an absolute guarantee" that conditions in the killer whale's new home would be adequate.

Phillips said the entire project will cost ``a heck of a lot of moolah" over four years and include Watten's ``relocation, rehabilitation, possible mating, possible liberation and investigations into the whereabouts of the family of Watten."

That includes funds to build an expensive, 2-million-gallon

---More---

Group bleari.poesy.animals available: 1 - 10 unread: 10

article ``writing degree zero" 299-FEB-1999 24:00:00

tank at the Michigan aquarium.

Experts said Watten needs to be trained gradually for life at sea -- weaned, for example, from eating dead fish to eating live ones.

``Watten, who has passed all his life away from the sea, would encounter serious difficulties feeding himself, caring for himself and surviving by himself in a hostile environment," Phillips said.

So far, the foundation has collected about half the needed funds, including a generous grant from Poetry Flash and George Lakoff Inc., creators of ``Free Barry."

The money raised includes a small sum from former students at San Francisco State Elementary School, who conducted a letter-writing campaign and saved pennies.

They began sending letters in last month to prominent businessmen and individuals, including marine sociobiologist Jacques de Certeau.

Certeau sent no money, but praised the children for their efforts. Singer Jimmy Buffett sent \$500.

---More---

Group bleari.poesy.animals available: 1 - 10 unread: 10

article ``writing degree zero" 29-FEB-1999 24:00:00

Further fund-raising efforts will be tied to a Poetry Flash sequel due for release next summer.

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202. **H. T. KIRBY-SMITH**

(Fwd) (Fwd) Re: (Fwd) Re: parmenides & wittgenstein

Mon 13 Feb 1995

Perhaps this comment by Jarret Leplin may help to clarify the Wittgenstein/Langpo connection:

". . . the falsehood (if that's that 'F' means) of q does not establish the falsehood of $p \supset q$ (assuming that ' $\supset$ ' is intended to represent conditionalization). A conditional may be either true or false consistently with the falsehood of its consequent. Also, 'it cannot be spoken' is certainly not contradictory. Of

course, there are few things of which it is natural to say that they are spoken: languages, certain incantations, or perhaps texts that would normally be read rather than spoken. Many languages cannot be spoken by many people; perhaps some - ancient ones, for example - cannot be spoken at all. Whether or not it cannot be spoken depends on the referent of 'it'; there's nothing wrong with the form. More generally, to assert that something cannot be spoken is not to speak it, nor is to deny that something can be explained or expressed to explain or express it. "

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203. **James Sherry**

Re: reified names vs. boundless vocabulary

Mon 13 Feb 1995

Also thanks to Don Byrd who at least refers to the next point in this discussion which is the multiplicity of relations between theory and poetry in the various poetries which this group is fond of referencing. A matrix of readings of poetries with their theoretical biases would be interesting to me, although obviously hypothetical as someone pointed out already.

But as I have said the more articulate new responses today (Monday) only make we want the more to discuss how the main question for poets today, at least from my point of view, is the relationship of poetry to other disciplines to the shared, extended texts of science, law, fiction, news, philosophy, politics, medicine. This question applies to the role of poetry in the society and culture, to the uniqueness of poetry which Tom raises below, to the lineage of poetry itself which cannot be described in any one way because each new set of poetries redefines the history...

I guess I don't think that there is any one way to view poetry so Tom's question can't be answered from here. But the relationship of poetry to other disciplines is periodically said to lead nowhere and someone last week referred to Lamb or another 19th century critic's approach that we need a point of view to avoid chaos.

I guess chaos is chiefly what I'm after in the sense of a term that does not have apparent order but rather an underlying order and is both generative of order and subtly influencing more overt kinds of order with its own subversive similarities at different "levels" or on different scales.

I don't have a good way to talk about this yet, but wanted to address the issue to the group, especially now that a wider purview is being taken on the subject. Jamse

On Fri, 10 Feb 1995, Tom Mandel wrote:

re: James' "every poem has a theoretical basis,"

I think it's clear what that means if it is understood more or less along the lines of 'every statement has a theoretical basis' or 'every empirical fact has a theoretical basis.'

Is there some further sense, special to poetry, in which each example has a theoretical basis (or implies a theory, or however you'd formulate it)?

Tom

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204. **Nick Lawrence**

Leeches Find Love

Mon 13 Feb 1995

Subject: Leeches find love in intimate poet reaches

Copyright: 1999 by The Anti-Hegemony Project

Date: 0 May 99 10:20:30 EST

Lines: 20

NEW YORK (AHP) - Bio-linguists have found the secret trysting place for one species of academic leech and their discovery explains why it remained unrevealed for so long -- its home is inside a poet's rectum.

The leech, Criticarius Theoretici, is closely associated with poets. The leech does not attach itself to any other animal and has the same texture as a poet's thick hide.

``New Scientist,' in-house magazine for Lang-Po Labs, quoted the researchers -- James Sherry of Bowery College and Tom Mandel of Yorick University -- as saying they had found several leeches inside the rectums of recently killed and dissected poets.

The leeches were swimming around freely, rather than

---More---

Group bleari.poesy.animals available: 333 - 999 unread: 222

article 777 32-MAY-1999 20:30:40

sucking blood, and had bulky sperm cases sticking out from their bodies, leading the bio-linguists to believe they were mating.

Leeches are hermaphrodites, carrying both male and female sexual organs.

*``There are obviously some very interesting adaptations,"
Sherry said. ``But to find out more it would be necessary to
work with a live poet and that's a very dangerous creature."*

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205. **Jorge Guitart**
p>q re parmenides, etc.

Mon 13 Feb 1995

p>q (if P, then Q) is TRUE WHENEVER p is FALSE --regardless of the truthvalue of q (.e.g. if a and not a, then (whatever), is ALWAYS true, whether whatever is true or false.

So i can start from something that is false and say anything i want.

check it out

"i cannot speak OF x" is FALSE because i am speaking of x.

there are some poems such that they are poems and transparent

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206. **cris cheek**
A Cockney Sparrow

Mon 13 Feb 1995

Tom, Mio apologia for taking liberty with language.

Gone Skating (finagled from Arthur Dove)

cris

p.s. I also had missed the connection but 'O Sole Mio' is sang as 'Just One Cornetto' for a Walls Ice Cream ad on TV here which does seem to provide the basis for a sustainable connection, via this as yet unsubstantiated Pokey flavour from Auckland, between East London and Naples.

Questions follow:

1.The East London version always starts with 'you put you left (whatever) leg in' and so on - I'm worried that the folk myth has got lost in its translation to

connect Pokey with a reorientation towards the right foot, can you or anybody else here possibly clear this up? Otherwise the ramifications of possible relations between Losely (high culture ice cream manufacturers but arguably Cockney rhyming slang for Mosely - as in Oswald and his blackshirts, resurgent in East London even as we post) and Mussolini will lead to melted sleep.

2. Have I stumbled onto the origins of 'sang froid'.

Sorry to labour this,
love cris

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207. **Ron Silliman**

Boy Talk

Mon 13 Feb 1995

Am I right that Rae Armantrout's comment about the San Diego Union article on Freely Espousing on February 3 (a full 10 days ago) was the last posting by a non-male reader of this list? What gives? It feels like the shower room at a men's health club....

Here's a question or two for (primarily) the non-males who read this list?

Why do you lurk without posting?

What would it require to change this?

Are there other venues (listserv discussion groups in particular) where you are more active?

If so, what do they do differently?

Fraternally,
Ron Silliman

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208. **Who Is That Masked Person?**

Point or Order, Ms. Chairman

Mon 13 Feb 1995

POINT OF ORDER, MS. CHAIRMAN, or
"A Blow Is Like an Instrument"

So a guy comes over to me, very agitated -- we're just a block from Lincoln Center, across the street from the new Sony Imax theater -- and he says, "How d'ya get to Carnegie Hall?"

--"Theory."

[blackout]

Maybe the relation of theory practice is like the relation of strategy to tactics; then again, maybe theory's tactical and poems strategic. Or maybe it's like the relation of body to mind, or then again, mind to body (the best picture of an aesthetic is a work of art and vice versa).

[blackout]

[flashback, 1968]

I theorize
you theorize
he/she/it theorizes

we theorize
you theorize
they profit

[blackout]

"Theory enacted into writing practice is suspect, demeaned as unprofessional. But that is because theory so enacted ceases to be theory -- a body of doctrine -- insofar as it threatens with poetry or philosophy. Theory, prophylactically wrapped in normalizing prose styles, is protected from the scourge of writing and thinking as active, open-ended, and investigatory. ... Can Continental philosophy be understood in the absence of Continental literature? Or does Continental philosophy without Continental literature equal American literary theory?" --from "Frame Lock", College Literature, Winter 1993

[blackout]

Shorty Petterstein interview (Lenny Bruce)

How would you compare the kind of music you play with a, how would you compare that with art, you know, what kind of art, artistic ...?

Man like I think Art blows the most, I mean, uh, he came with the band about three years ago, man, dig, and, uh, like, he was a real uh you know small town cat -- and I mean he was swinging, man, but he was a small time cat. And I mean he started to blow with us and he was real nut, you know, cool. ...

What would you advise the young artist, the young musician, to do? Would you advise him to get an academic education or strive immediately for self-expression?

Well, man, I mean, I'm a musician, dig. And I mean to me the most important this is that you should blow, you know. ... If a cat wants to blow and he wants to blow, and uh then he's got to have a scene where he can blow.

That would apply to the artists playing horns and wind instruments, they would have to blow. What about those, for example, who are playing string instruments? Or would you say, how's the picture there?

Well, I mean, you know, it's, uh, pretty much all the same, man. A blow is like an instrument, you know.

[blackout]

POEM BEGINNING WITH A POORLY TRANSLATED LINE OF PESSOA

So my wife says to me this morning

As so often she has

"Don't give me another one of your theories"

--Charles Bernstein (C) 1995 Poets Ludicously Aimless Yearning (PLAY)

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209. **Charles Bernstein**

from Charlotte Pressler (fwr): Little Mary Sunshine

Mon 13 Feb 1995

An error occurred while processing file 0318 from [REDACTED]:
"Mail has been received for delivery to the POETICS list from a user which had been served out".

----- Message causing the problem (55 lines) -----

Date: Mon, 13 Feb 1995 20:36:51 -0500 (EST)

From: Charlotte Pressler <[REDACTED]>

Subject: Little Mary Sunshine

To: [REDACTED]

Ron Silliman's question (why do so few women on this list post) tempts me to delurk briefly. I enjoy reading e-mail, including the poetics list -- but this form of communication, like any other, seems to have its strengths and limits. E-mail seems to me to be a good way to ask specific questions and communicate specific kinds of information rapidly and effectively (book lists, the Freely Espousing communiques, calls for papers). It's also a good way to argue positions for the most part already formed. The quick cut-and-thrust of single-screen messages, though, seems as though it might hamper the reception of more tentative or exploratory postings. People read their e-mail fairly quickly, and I don't think many people save it for later reading or download it to a printer. Disk space might be limited, too -- at least it is at UB. So, for the most part, once a message is scanned, however it's scanned, it's gone. Not much opportunity for re-vision. So, apart from its bulletin-board functions, e-mail seems to work best for people who like to respond quickly and concisely to well-defined arguments.

I prefer to have a good bit of time to think over a written message, and to publish it in a format that allows for re-reading. I've stung myself in the past by offering too-rapid reactions; but I've also found that in sharp debate, reactive responses come to dominate over exploratory ones. So I find it best to work through my own often somewhat divergent responses to current topics either off-list, or in work written for print publication, or in conversation with friends. Possibly this is a gender difference; I'm not sure it's entirely that. There's also the uneasy position of divergences that don't quite attain to the sharp clarity of an oppositional statement. I tend to diverge in just this way -- should I call it "radical opacity"? :-) So I tend to lurk on lists, including this one. Apart from this post.

Charlotte Pressler/[REDACTED]/SUNY at Buffalo

Hear "The Lime Works" Thursdays 10 pm - 1 am on WRUB -- UB cable channel 7. Experimental/electro-acoustic/post-classical/improvised music and sound art.

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210. **Steve Evans**

Espousing 2/13

Mon 13 Feb 1995

Correction to Arts Wire Congressional Schedule

Good News from LitNet

Bad News from the Midwest

Action Hotlines

NEH Annual Report

Correction to Arts Wire Congressional Schedule

On 10 Feb, Marshall Reese was kind enough to forward a posting from Arts Wire that included a tentative schedule of Congressional action affecting the NEA/NEH/IMS.

The first item in that schedule, a Senate Subcommittee hearing of public NEA witnesses and NEH/IMS administration and public witnesses, has been moved back ten days. The Education, Arts & Humanities Subcommittee (chaired by James Jeffords, R-VT) will begin hearing these witnesses on 23 February.

The relevant hearing this week is Thursday's meeting of the House Interior Appropriations Subcommittee (chair Ralph Regula, R-OH). Walter Cronkite, Ken Burns, and David McCullough are scheduled to testify.

Good News from LitNet

Anne Burt at LitNet reports that 15,000 pieces of pro-NEA mail were delivered last week to the district office of Senator Slade Gorton (who chairs the Senate

Appropriations Interior SubCom). Someone's doing a hell of a job organizing out there!

Through a wonderful sequence of events, Anne has also gotten Tower Records/Books to commit to distributing LitNet materials in *all* their stores nationwide. The corporation has even volunteered to do displays about the NEA in each store. Once this plan is implemented, it may be useful to give local store managers a call & see what else they might be willing to do. In any case, a quick thank- you call seems warranted.

Bad News from the Midwest

The Mid-America Arts Alliance has "broken rank" with the National AAA and publicly called for the restructuring of the NEA. I don't have the details on this development, but the basic import of the gesture is easily enough understood. When you have State Arts Councils calling for their own "defunding" (they receive roughly 35% of their budget from NEA), things are bleak indeed.

Action Hotlines

When I spoke to a representative of the American Arts Alliance late last week, I was told that traffic on their 900 number was healthy (no precise figures were mentioned). Today, however, another source--not inside the AAA--reported that traffic is in fact disappointingly light (the figure mentioned was 3,500 calls since start-up).

While we feel that these Hotlines fall on the passive/expensive side of possible efforts to preserve federal arts funding, they do represent something like the "least you can do." If you live in a state whose elected representatives in Congress oppose the NEA/NEH/IMS, please make an effort to circulate the numbers. Once again, the numbers are:

Emergency Committee to Save Culture and the Arts

██████████

(An operator will explain that the call costs \$1.99 a minute and will ask permission to send a mailgram in the caller's name to his or her Representatives and Senators. Estimated total cost: \$6-\$8)

Cultural Advocacy Campaign Hotline

██████████

(An operator will describe the message and explain that for \$9.50 three Western Union mailgrams will be hand-delivered the next day to the caller's Representatives and Senators).

Note that neither of these systems permits you to direct mailgrams to Congressional representatives outside your state/district.

NEH Annual Report

On Friday, 9 February, President Clinton passed along the NEH annual report (1994) to the House and Senate with a brief message summarizing the "good works" performed by the Endowment in the past year. We reproduce Clinton's message below:

To the Congress of the United States: I am pleased to present to you the Twenty-ninth Annual Report of the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH), the Federal agency charged with fostering scholarship and imparting knowledge in the humanities. Its work supports an impressive range of humanities projects. These projects can reach an audience as general as the 28 million who watched the documentary *Baseball*, or as specialized as the 50 scholars who this past fall examined current research on Dante. Small local historical societies have received NEH support, as have some of the Nation's largest cultural institutions. Students from kindergarten through graduate school, professors and teachers, and the general public in all parts of the Nation have been touched by the Endowment's activities. As we approach the 21st century, the world is growing small and its problems seemingly bigger. Societies are becoming more complex and fractious. The knowledge and wisdom, the insight and perspective, imparted by history, philosophy, literature, and other humanities disciplines enable us to meet the challenges of contemporary life.

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211. **B. Cass Clarke**

Quan Yin

Tue 14 Feb 1995

Dear Ron, I read the list primarily for the anti-heg stuff, i.e. I will laugh at least once today. I would like to add to Charlotte Presler's remarks the following:

Generally, the mechanics of vms mail editing is not intuitive. I have spent the last week learning how to file mail to folders. I learned the ins and outs of engine repair faster.

The nature of these lists - they are generally anonymous. Although the poetics list relies more heavily on the signifying name than others, I feel like I'm walking into a room with a blind-fold on surrounded by others whose state is unknown.

Under these conditions what is a toy and what a weapon? I've noticed there are whole trees devoted to teaching people how to inflect their remarks by using 8-) > type symbols. Obviously this media, or the people that write how-to books about it recognize there is some problem having to do with what is written and its intent.

This list by its title invites writers to perform. So far, I've seen a series of challenges, duels and target practice. It is a public arena where we watch our gang try to make something of it. I suspect that if any real conversation gets generated, it does so off the public screen. I have found such correspondence through this list, and value that.

Normally, I would post this to your e-mail address. But in the spirit of your inquiry, I reveal myself.

B. Cass Clarke



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212. **Spencer Selby**
Re: Deified Theories Limited
Tue 14 Feb 1995

I turned off my computer for a few days and here I have 50 new messages from the poetics list. Boy, it's like you turn away for a minute and you fall behind. What does this mean, and is it a coincidence that nearly all these messages are being written by men?

Since I was pretty involved in the discussion last week, and since parts of the discussion over the weekend do relate to things I said, I do wish to respond--but forgive me if I am selective. There is no intention here to be reductive.

Don Byrd says that poets who are not also self-professed theoreticians are irresponsible (my paraphrase, which I hope is not going to start another argument). I disagree strongly with this statement. I think Mr. Byrd's position here is significant because I believe something like this is what helps to underpin the privileging of theory which I see in Tom and James, and maybe others.

I believe poetry and all art is an attempt at world making. It is on its own level because the worlds it creates are of a different order--from the world or worlds we live our entire lives in on one side, and all our explanations on another. To follow the analogy of this definition through: Is this multivalent world we live our entire lives in irresponsible because it did not come with a set of clear instructions? Is God irresponsible because s/he doesn't make herself clear (to most of us, at least), because s/he doesn't give all the people who use her creation a set of authentic, identifiable explanations to guide them, because she doesn't even make her existence clear to a large percentage of these people? If so, then I opt for irresponsibility over responsibility.

I imagine Mr. Byrd will not be enamored with my reasoning, or the implications I draw from my world-making analogy. I admit that this comparison doesn't do

justice to all the slipperiness of the issue at hand. I am not simply against responsibility any more than I think Mr. Byrd is simply for it. Obviously, judgment and balance of some sort is called for. The problem is, who do we trust to make these judgments? My Byrd says "the poetry that is of enduring interest ...incorporates its theory in the poems themselves." Of course that's true. In fact, I think that's one of the few points which has been made in this discussion that everyone may agree on. But there's no objective or foolproof way to gauge which poems do this successfully and which do not. On the contrary, these critical judgments tend to be notoriously subjective. This is a problem that most today play down or ignore or are downright naive about. I would not single out Mr. Byrd here, but at the same time I don't see that he's made much, if any, progress against this barrier. (As with Lew Daly, there seems to be quite a gap between Mr. Byrd's dramatic call for a new direction and the poets who he says might signal this direction. In both cases some good and/or accomplished poets, but it's difficult to believe that these midcareer poets represent anything that radically new or superior, compared with a lot of others working today.)

James Sherry says that the problem with my statement about art being on its own level is it's hierarchical. James writes this in all caps, which I did not appreciate, but which I think may say more than the content of his statement. Since I first disagreed with James, I have gotten a series of responses in which he has expressed his impatience with me. James seems to think our disagreement is the result of my bad listening or my lack of knowledge or my inability to comprehend what he is saying. There may be some misunderstanding, but no more on my side than his. And I have not written statements in all caps, nor have I spoken down to him or implied annoyance that he would question me or my understanding of these issues.

I have argued for art as being more than all these explanations. In doing this I have been drawn into the discourse. O.K. I admit that; I take responsibility for it. I even admit that my position is theoretical, in a sense. But please don't forget why I have made my statements. I am concerned about the limits and dangers of this discourse, which are all the greater for not being fully acknowledged. I see a need for questioning the high-minded tone and attitudes of self-importance which go along with much of this discourse. In saying I have more faith in art than in this discourse, I am accused of being hierarchical. But I believe it is those who have elevated this discourse that are putting themselves on a higher plane.

Art or poetry is much more than this discourse (anyone's discourse), just as life is much more than the formulated knowledge we each or all have of it. In being more, art separates itself, but not so in the minds of some who speak so knowledgeably, so authoritatively on this forum. They prefer to argue about

explanations that can never be effectively proven, explanations which may be opposed to the more expansive spirits of life and change and freedom and mystery that the best art celebrates. Missing this or deemphasizing it, no wonder they think so much of their explanations.

Spencer Selby

P.S. The above was written on Monday afternoon, before Ron's note about female nonparticipation appeared. I am happy that he said something about this, and that his statement is getting some reaction.

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213. **Spencer Selby**

Re: deified theories

Tue 14 Feb 1995

The meaning of "art" for me comes from all the art I've experienced, not the dictionary definition, nor anyone else's definition, semantic or otherwise. I believe this is true for other people too, even if they don't admit it. And that is why the word or concept does not become passe. I have used the word "art" interchangeably with poetry in much of the recent theory/practice discussion because I don't think the issues here (at least the aspects that I've tried to address) are exclusive to poetry. Spencer Selby

On Sun, 12 Feb 1995, Loss Glazier wrote:

I, for one, have some problem with the word "art" when it comes up in relation to theory. Theory I can see. There's a practical quality to it. I mean you sit down and type it out. Whether the poem precedes theory or the theory proceeds the poem is probably moot. But when does the poem turn into "art"? Isn't this something left way behind somewhere? Here's what the _American Heritage_ has to say about it:

1. Human effort to imitate, supplement, alter, or counteract the work of nature. 2.a. The conscious production or arrangement of sounds, colors, forms, movements, or other elements in a manner that affects the sense of beauty, specifically the production of the beautiful in a graphic or plastic medium.

So maybe that's my difficulty with the term. It brings up the spectre of those terms like the "beautiful" and "nature" which seem foreign to activities that might have some application to our present gatherings...

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214. **cris cheek**

refried vocabulary vs. chaotic boundaries

Tue 14 Feb 1995

James, I was quoting Mathew Arnold in 1849 who was obviously getting nervous towards his candle of coherence in expressing (to Clough) his need (which he hoped was more widely shared: 'to begin with an idea of the world in order not to be prevailed over by the world's multitudinousness' or rewritten / broken many ways 'to begin with an idea of the world in order not to be prevailed over by the world's multitudinousness' and so on into variations. But then Arnold was the author of 'Culture and Anarchy'. Useful multiple edges inside that title too. This quote is contextualised by the 1851 Great Exhibition, of course - that first imperialist garnering of photography, science, technology, art, design, botany and more under 'one roof'. A multitude of information and influences and interfaces. The 'other' in 'our' midst.

Certainly 'English' poetry, with notable exceptions has resisted that multitudinousness - not even through adopting an idea or even ideas in order but by retreating behind the net curtains of sentiment and identity. Chaos theory and analogy is wearing a tad thin, though I understand your condimental drift. To go along that path a little (and it's a steal) it's agreed that there is no possibility of accurately measuring the coastline of Ireland because even if all other terms and variables could be established as common at the outset by the time the full trajectory had been traversed the actuality would have changed through process of erosion. I'm keen on a poetry which engages with such slippage and makes its process sing. The inter-relations of inextricable detail between poetry and theory are those between positive and negative space or between improvisation and composition -

Or as Raymond Chandler put it (I like these hard-boiled-noses / heavy academic references best):

'down at the corner was dust in the air, as though a car had passed that way'

good to meet up with you again

cris

| on 13/2/95 James Sherry wrote 'someone last week referred to Lamb or another 19th century critic's approach that we need a point of view to avoid chaos'.

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215. **cris cheek**
Boys and Toys Talking
Tue 14 Feb 1995

Ron, you're right. It's an issue. But it seems to me, from a rough count, that the imbalance of posts approximates the imbalance in subscribers to the list. About 1:6? Approaching that level of discrepancy (well maybe 1:4) has been echoed both among practitioners and audience at events in England. Although there has been movement towards improvement over the past three years or so.

I'm keen on using and exploring the use of e-mail having been such a terrible correspondent for ever since. I'm new to this list and am enjoying the mix of agendas. Putting in the necessary time with technology is not a boys own thing. There is a problem though to be acknowledged between the speed of posting and more reflective responses. It puts extra pressure on the reflective to be more 'polished' which is unfortunate. The rough and conversational aspects of this site for exchange and engagement is what attracts myself and probably creates resistance in others. No suggestion here that reflection is gendered.

However it might be the train-spotting or jazz buff nature of rapid response postings which is most gendered and off-putting. And anonymity might help a lot.

None of this is an attempt to explain away. Glad you've raised it and hope the response is constructive as it appears to be so far. In anticipation - I never saw it as a health spa, can't we meet somewhere more social? Ira recently raised a clear point about what passes unchallenged here.

cris

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216. **Ron Silliman**
Anon
Tue 14 Feb 1995

I love it when people sign their posts...

I get this list both at home and at work. At home, NetCruiser gives me pretty detailed stuff not just on who originated the message, but their email address as well.

At work, I'm using Lotus Notes and it only tells me that these messages are from POETICS, so it's a curiously disembodied discussion. I've reread long chains of letters at home at night just to see who wrote them.

Thanks,
Ron Silliman

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217. **Joe Amato**

Re: $p > q$ re parmenides, etc.

Tue 14 Feb 1995

ok, i can't resist this thread:

$p > q$ statements are false ONLY if p is true and q is false... which means, against a truth-table grid, that only 25% of the logical possibilities are false...

which means that it's logically (and statistically) likely to say something logically true given this construction....

BUT recall (if this is old hat for any of you) that $p > q$ is not a statement of causality per se... that is, it's not that p affects (or effects) q ... though of course the logic behind why $p > q$ is true whenever p is false would seem to invoke a mild form of causality...

it's not surprising that logic yields counter-intuitive results (science and engineering do too)... or perhaps one's intuition needs to be twisted some...

as to the example given, "if a and not a , then (whatever)," this would be said to be vacuously true in that "if a and not a " is taken ALWAYS (in this logic, anyway) to be false... or perhaps that should better read "true vacuously"...

what's interesting to me is why this has become a topic on poetics... i mean, it's baby logic in philosophy circles, and even computational theory textss make short order of this stuff... i'm not saying that it's irrelevant, but i am saying that i find it a curious thread around here... perhaps it's the reference to wittgenstein, but i mean, like, he said so damned much, ultimately,

anyway, you will all probably note that i find it titillating myself, given my former math. background...

so mea culpa!...

joe amato

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218. **Chris Stroffolino**

Re: reified names vs. boundless vocabulary

Tue 14 Feb 1995

Mark Wallace, claims that one has to be "theory" to be heard. Heard by whom, Mark? and to what end? Is theory a kind of dress-code? Will they cut the NET (National endowment for Theory)?

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219. **Joe Amato**

gender...

Tue 14 Feb 1995

i guess i feel mouthy today...

i like ron silliman's having called attention to the fact that this list has taken on a boys' club aura... this has happened, inevitably, to most lists

on which i've participated... given the reality of something like 80-90%

internet traffic being generated by males, it's a statistical likelihood

that most posts will be from men... but this doesn't explain the relative

silence of women in a given venue...

what generally happens is what's happening now---one of the men (in this case

ron) notices that women are not participating, and posts this fact... and a

few women write in and attempt to convey some sense of their feeling not

esp. motivated to participate... not always, but usually one of the reasons

given is the fact that they find the space to be 'agon-izing,' a "series of

challenges," as b. cass clarke has it... that is, usually, but not always,

some element of gendering, however subtly construed, would seem to be at

work in creating a less-than-generous ambience (shall we say)...

and usually, but not always, a few male subscribers react rather unfavorably

to this charge, and a few react rather favorably... and usually, but not

always, this leads to a further dispute twixt the men, again...

i tend these days to try to understand these virtual environments in terms

of a dialectic (initially, anyway) of immersion and withdrawal---what could

be taken as a requisite couple for artistic work in general... in any

case,
i've noted consistently that discussions in which the disputants are
male
invariably draw on those theories that manage to abstract out the
more personal
site(s) from which (whatever) work emerges... there would seem to be
the need
to invoke a lineage of thinkers, most of them male, a necessity for
moving
toward higher and higher levels of abstraction... i don't have much
in the way
of antidote to this (at least in part because i'm, uhm, male) but i
do believe
that much of what might pass as irrelevant to some on this list in
fact has
a place in these proceedings... by way of example, i posted to this
list
some time ago a rather lengthy, perhaps pedantic response to apex of
the m
that tried to account for *who* i am vis-a-vis many of you... perhaps
some of you find/found this
aspect of exchange
unnecessary (and i understand that i risk
criticism here
for attempting to privilege
my own discursive
orientation, but
what the hell)...

that is, we don't really know each other, many of us, and much of
this
discussion BECOMES agon-izing simply because we (incl. myself)
haven't taken
the time that perhaps we should to have developed and cultivated a
sense of
trust... i mean, i can stand the heat, so to speak, as i'm sure can
many of
you, but this is not a reason for coming together---here, there or
anywhere...

so i guess i'd have to opt for a more revealing, a closer encounter
with each
of you, however you each might wish to engender same...

best,

joe amato

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220. **Joe Amato**
oh & yeah...

Tue 14 Feb 1995

happy valentine's day, folks!

love & kisses,

joetomato

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221. **Jorge Guitart**
baby logic

Tue 14 Feb 1995

joe, grownup logic has not improved on baby logic so far.

I am sure you remember that in order to prove anything logically we have to start the null set (the nothing that IS!). Underlying ALL logic (baby & grownup) is the which P is the null set.

Since Parmenides thought that the null set was false (for him there is no 'nothing' is that any NOT entails an absence (which is a nothing) so Parmenides was just a tricky dude (a poet, you might say, who thought of the impossibility of change while changing his clothes, etc.)

In theory he would not have been able to deny anything or assert anything. But he was just like any of us.

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222. **Joe Amato**
Re: baby logic

Tue 14 Feb 1995

jorge, yes, it's that grownup logic IS baby logic, exactly... a knotty conundrum, reminds me of mark taylor's disquisitions in *_nOts_*... the tautology "a or not a" hits at precisely this, where "a" is the null set... so we opt for something ex nihilo, or the nothing that is there...

what a revoltin' predicament!...

joe

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223. **aa1464**

Home of the Creepy Crawlies

Tue 14 Feb 1995

Subject: Home Of The Creepy-Crawlies

Copyright: 1999 by The Anti-Hegemony Project

Date: 20 Jun 99 05:10:15 EST

Lines: 89

PROVIDENCE (AHP) -- The Poetarium is unlike most museums you've visited.

It's located in a Providence working-class neighborhood with bridal shops, bakeries and bars on every block, about 10 miles from Brown University.

When you get there, you've got to climb a flight of stairs.

Suddenly, you realize you're in the middle of more than 100,000 live poets, the kind that go ``buzz" in the night.

Children, especially, love it.

More than 75,000 visitors -- mostly pre-teens -- file into the poetry zoo each year, paying \$3 apiece to be up close and personal with the creepy, crawly inmates. Hundreds of school field trips have already been scheduled for 1999.

---More--

Group bleari.poesy.animals available: some - more unread: lots

article whatever 31-JUL-1999 19:30:30

``It's not only entertaining, it's also educational and enlightening," says Steve Evans, the 30-year-old museum founder and proprietor of Steve's Bug-Off Poet Exterminating Co., located on the building's ground floor. The Poetarium occupies 6,500 square feet on the two top floors. This is the real deal, no cheesy rip-off filled with first editions and photographs. Evans says it's the largest in the country. ``The Smithsonian poetry exhibit in Washington has

less square footage and I've got a million more poets still in storage," says Evans, proudly displaying a room overflowing floor-to-ceiling with boxes, cookie tins and Tupperware filled with dead poets from around the globe. ``I respect what they're doing. Their staff is extremely knowledgeable and they really do a great job teaching the kids," said Robert Bertholf of the Poetry and Rare Book Room in Buffalo, which has its own extensive collection.      ``Steve has

even come in here and set up some wonderful exhibits, very professional stuff," Bertholf said.

---More---

Group bleari.poesy.animals available: some - more unread: lots

article whatever 31-JUL-1999 19:30:30

The Poetarium is designed to give the illusion of being out in the wild. The walls are decorated in a bar motif, the carpets are cigarette-butt strewn and the soundtrack is poetry's own -- Amy Lowell chirping and Carl Sandburg humming. Movies, holograms, microscopes and professional quality exhibits and games keep people of all ages occupied. There is also a real swarming beatnik read-in and a giant rubber-band ``enjambement" for children to crawl through. Electronic quizboards measure your poetry intelligence. For example, did you know that New York School poets could survive on just the food offered at gallery openings? that Hip-Hop poets have more than 1,000 ``brothers" and ``sisters" each? And yes, Language Poets really do bite, but maybe they're only angry about having a 12-month lifespan. There's even a scale to weigh yourself in New Critics, New Formalists and other six-legged creatures. If you thought losing 10 pounds was difficult, imagine shedding a half-million versifiers! Robert Pinsky, Eugenio Montale, Gottfried Benn, Edith Sitwell, Aime Cesaire, Jean Toomer, Ingeborg Bachmann, Rabindranath

---More---

Group bleari.poesy.animals available: some - more unread: lots

article whatever 31-JUL-1999 19:30:30

Tagore, Phyllis Webb, Pablo Neruda, Carl Dennis, bpNichol, Sappho, Jack Gilbert, Alan Gilbert, Allen Ginsberg and Gilbert Grape are all present. ``Everyone here is really nice. It's not scary," said Jessica Lowenthal, 22. ``I had lots of fun." The centerpiece of the Poetarium is the pedants. Thousands and thousands of good old ``poeticus obscurorum" -- stuffed shirts -- encased inside a four-foot plastic fence that surrounds a model library and study. The repulsive critters slither in and out of the cabinets and drawers and occasionally attempt to scale the wall. ``I promise you, they can't get out of there," says Evans's partner, Jennifer Moxley, the curator and one of the tour guides. ``There's a Teflon paint strip at the top which makes them slide back down. If they get past that, there's a row of electrical wires." Numerous poetry-related items are available in the gift shop, including posters, T-shirts, coloring books, postcards and plastic Vincent Ferrinis. Many of the poets are captured by Evans and his staff, especially service director and exhibit designer Peter Gizzi, a

---More---

Group bleari.poesy.animals available: some - more unread: lots

article whatever 31-JUL-1999 19:30:30

longtime poetry collector. Using butterfly nets and riding a mountain bike painted camouflage green and brown, Gizzi rolls into the wilds of nearby New York City and sees what he can snare.

For Evans, life's metamorphosis was a little more complex than word-larva-pupa-poet.

He began while a graduate student, working on the side as a lobbyist for poetic environmentalists. This led to opportunities in poetry population control. But he still prefers collecting to killing the poets, and in 1997 Evans opened the museum.

``We used to have a smaller store, and we'd put whatever we caught each day in the front window -- short story writers, translators," Evans says. ``People were looking in the windows all the time. Teachers even brought their classes by. I thought this would be a great way to teach kids that poets aren't bad, once you get to know them."

So what's next for Evans? Would you believe a poetrymobile?

``I'm converting an old paddy wagon," he says. ``Look for us at a school or mall or senior center near you."

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224. **Tom Mandel**

Re: $p > q$ re parmenides, etc.

Tue 14 Feb 1995

If memory serves me rightly, the classic work on counterfactual conditionals ($p > q$, where $p = f$) was done by... Nelson Goodman? is that the name? in the forties..... for those who are interested.

Tm

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225. **James Sherry**

Re: Leeches Find Love

Tue 14 Feb 1995

SHOULD WE OUT, BEN f? OR IS HE SELF OUTED? Some are too cruel, like the Watten one, for him to continue to hide, sniveling in the mire of his own petulance. But fabulous anyway. If I am wrong, I'll eat cake. Jmaes

On Mon, 13 Feb 1995, Nick Lawrence wrote:

Subject: Leeches find love in intimate poet reaches

Copyright: 1999 by The Anti-Hegemony Project

Date: 0 May 99 10:20:30 EST

Lines: 20

*NEW YORK (AHP) - Bio-linguists have found the secret
trysting place for one species of academic leech and their
discovery explains why it remained unrevealed for so long -- its
home is inside a poet's rectum.*

*The leech, Criticarius Theoretici, is closely
associated with poets. The leech does not attach itself to any
other animal and has the same texture as a poet's thick hide.*

*``New Scientist," in-house magazine for Lang-Po Labs,
quoted the researchers -- James Sherry of Bowery College and
Tom Mandel of Yorick University -- as saying they had found
several leeches inside the rectums of recently killed and
dissected poets.*

The leeches were swimming around freely, rather than

---More---

Group bleari.poesy.animals available: 333 - 999 unread: 222

article 777 32-MAY-1999 20:30:40

*sucking blood, and had bulky sperm cases sticking out from their
bodies, leading the bio-linguists to believe they were mating.
Leeches are hermaphrodites, carrying both male and female sexual
organs.*

*``There are obviously some very interesting adaptations,"
Sherry said. ``But to find out more it would be necessary to
work with a live poet and that's a very dangerous creature."*

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226. **FUNKHOUSER CHRISTOPH**

Trade

Tue 14 Feb 1995

Subject: Buffalo trades Howe to Naropa for three players

Copyright: 1999 by The Anti-Hegemony project

Date: 20 Feb 99 01:03:05 EST

Lines: 19

BUFFALO (AHP) - The struggling Buffalo Poetics Program sent high profile scorer Susan Howe to the Naropa Institute yesterday for veteran wingers Bobbie Louise Hawkins and Anselm Hollo plus minor league defensewoman and recent NEA recipient Eleni Sikelianos.

The Program, which has only one win in its last five semesters, also sent a third-round pick in the 1999 admissions draft to the Institute as part of the deal.

Howe, who logged over a million miles last season to lead the Program in travel time, had just two insights and three inspired outbursts for five points in Buffalo's first 4 weeks this year.

Hawkins and Hollo both played a significant role in Naropa's last Holy Grail season, in 1993. In brief stints with the parent ---More---

Group bleari.sports.poesy available: 11000 - 11987 unread: 1

article 11986 21-FEB-1999 23:32:00

club, Sikelianos has shown a great deal of promise.

Hollo has six insights, Sikelianos has three insights and Hawkins has one inspired outburst and four insights for five points in 4 weeks this year. All three players are expected to be in uniform tomorrow night when Buffalo hosts the Southern California Sun & Moons.

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227. **FUNKHOUSER CHRISTOPH**

Re: AHP

Tue 14 Feb 1995

SHOULD WE OUT, BEN f? OR IS HE SELF OUTED? Some are too cruel, like the Watten one, for him to continue to hide, sniveling in the mire of his own

petulence. But fabulous anyway. If I am wrong, I'll eat cake. Jmaes

JS

You (pl.) can OUT whomever you like, but to attempt to ascribe the work of the Anti-Hegemony Project to any one individual would constitute a whale-sized inaccuracy.

So, bon appetite

chris f

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228. **James Sherry**

Re: from Charlotte Pressler (fwr): Little Mary Sunshine

Tue 14 Feb 1995

Re Pressler's remark, I have just written a message with almost the same concerns to Charles Bernstein about why I included a message to which I was responding in my response.

For me the quickness and ease of response on the list is contrasted with the necessity to have a measured response. This is a hard place to get to when I have mostly either had easy and extended exchanges with corrections in conversation OR thought out slow exchanges by articles, letters, etc. I think it's the newness of the medium and the unusual nature of the way we must respond.

Thanks Charlotte for your message.

Jamess SHerry

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229. **Joe Amato**

Re: p>q re parmenides, etc.

Tue 14 Feb 1995

correct tom, "goodman's paradox" etc... _the structure of appearance_, _fact, fiction and forecast_ (both in the 50s)... goodman for some an extreme nominalist...

joe

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230. **James Sherry**

Re: refried vocabulary vs. chaotic boundaries

Tue 14 Feb 1995

Am I to understand that Arnold was attacking the premise of the 1851 Great Exhibition? What a fantastic citation. The notion of slippage and further of how order slips in to turbulence is at the ehart of wht I 'd like to accomplish at hte outset, but later I'd like a further. And in that sense the poetry might come after writing (yet another insidious distinctino which won't hold up).

Yes hello again.

Jamse

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231. **Mark Wallace**

theory and being heard

Tue 14 Feb 1995

Chris Stroffolino asks me to answer "being heard by whom" when I suggest that "to be heard you have to call yourself a theory." And yet, Chris, we both know that we both can barely afford a bus trip to NYC, although I have to admit that I did recently splurge and buy myself a new winter coat because the old one was starting to stink.

Clearly, no one's being "heard" at all. But if I don't call myself a theory I know for a fact I'm out of work. On the other hand, perhaps there is a certain romantic charm in "living the free life of a roaver" and I'm just busy playing it up for ratings.

See you on Letterman.

mark wallace

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232. **Spencer Selby**

Re: deified theories and unfounded vocabularies

Tue 14 Feb 1995

Dear Charles,

Yes, Don Bryd's statement on the relationship of poetry to theory is too pat. And so are some of Tom's and some of James' and others. And so are some of mine. I admit it. In being drawn into the discourse, I have been forced to formulate my position in a way that is not entirely satisfying to me. No matter how I formulate it, it will not be entirely satisfying to me. It is not just the

formulations of others that I am dissatisfied with. This is the paradox of my antitheoretical position.

I do not want to create a "true theory" around my statements about art being on its own level. Art is separate and it is not. That is how I really feel. I have emphasized the former because I do not like the way the theorists assume or reason (or pontificate) from the latter. The problem with this is, it seems like I am only aware of the failure of theory, and that I have this unbounded, starry-eyed faith in the power of art. That is not the case.

There is a sense in which art and theory are connected in their failure to fully impact people's lives. I tend to blame theory for its failure, but the people (both artist/poets and viewer/readers) for the failure of art. My lifelong experience has encouraged this distinction, but like any prejudice I know that it is not always accurate.

To be continued...

For now, I thank you for your question and thoughts.

Spencer

On Sun, 12 Feb 1995, Mn Center For Book Arts wrote:

Generally I like to refer to Deleuze & Guattari, but I do believe that the relations between/among "book" & "literature" are entirely problematic, and I can more easily embrace the concept of book as machine than literature as one.

I also find most statements that, as D. Byrd says, poems "incorporate" theory to be too pat. They may do so, but hopefully in a way which enables both theory and poetry to be anything but dogmatic and inflexible.

Please explain, Spencer, what "level" art has. Art has its own level, is this like one of Dante's circles in the Inferno, or somewhere up some other cosmological ladder? Can art or theory really be divided so clearly from one another or from any number of other practices we can name, like work, state, love, morality?

charles alexander

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233. **Kali Tal**

Re: Boy Talk

Tue 14 Feb 1995

Ah, drawn out of lurkdom by provocative questions.... tho I must admit, quite sheepishly, to be responding in **exactly** the spirit that Joe Tomato has described--I do so hate to be predictable...

| *Why do you lurk without posting?*

Well, I **don't** really lurk without posting. A couple of weeks ago I wrote a fairly lengthy post describing **why** I feel--as a publisher and editor of two poetry series and miscellaneous individual volumes of poetry, **and** as a literary critic with "academic" credentials--like an outsider in the POETICS conversation. My post met with resounding ... silence. Didn't garner a single response on the list, though I did get backchannel notes from my old friend Joe (hi Joe!) and from Charles Bernstein (hi Charles!). I've been active on the internet for a while, and I don't take nonresponse personally, but it **does** generally seem to conform to a pretty gendered (and racialized) pattern. Since my concerns revolve primarily around issues of how race/gender/class interact with the theory and practice of "culture" and "art" (including poetry), whenever I post, I bring up these issues. Nonresponse is something I've certainly gotten used to. Now I tend to post only when I feel that I've got something pressing to say, and when I am met with nonresponse, I usually let the matter slide, **unless** "becoming visible" seems like a battle worth fighting in this particular place at this particular time.

| *What would it require to change this?*

Oh, it would be easy to get **me** to post more.... But it would require that someone(s) actually engage me in public conversation, offer a response to my words. Think of the studies of male/female conversations which demonstrate that women introduce a wider variety of subjects than men, but that fewer of the subjects they introduce are picked up and expanded on. And the ones which show that when a woman brings up an idea it's often ignored, **until** a man brings it up--at which point he gets the credit for thinking of it and she continues to be ignored. These patterns are evident in email as well as in face-to-face conversations. But email is even more difficult for a woman to negotiate, in my opinion, because the lack of physicality, the reduction to a textual "body," makes it harder for her to be SEEN/READ. Look at it this way--email is one of the few environments in which anyone and everyone can "pass" as white, heterosexual, and male unless he/she speaks/writes out **against** that normative body. Now, there are advantages to being able to "pass" in this manner (advantages that members of marginalized groups have always gained from passing), but there are also costs. The advantages are clear

for women--no sexual harrassment, no more being ignored, no more being marked as "other." But the disadvantage is that passing requires adopting the language and interests and **style** of the folks you are passing **as,** and so concerns and questions and styles that might be significant to a woman **as a woman** become unspeakable. On the other hand, in this environment in which everyone can "pass," it takes constant vigilance and a great deal of ingenuity to create and perpetuate a **nonwhite* *nonmale** and/or **nonheterosexual** textual body--difference must be inscribed in each post in a way that makes it visible to the reader. The paradox is that "passing" allows women and nonwhite people to be "visible" in the sense that they are not treated as "other," but it is predicated on the disappearance of gender/racial identity. On the other hand, refusing to "pass," and insisting on inscribing a nonwhite or nonmale identity in our email results, often, in our being "disappeared" in the manner in which women and nonwhite people are "normally" disappeared. The entrenchment of the normative construct in espace (which I tend to think of as The Unbearable Whiteness of Being) makes me feel a lot like Ellison's Invisible Man--I've **been** in flamewars in which I have textually kicked the shit out of people who simply COULD NOT SEE ME. (And if you haven't reread the opening sequences of *_Invisible Man_* it might be worth going back to, since it sums up **exactly** the phenomenon I am describing.)

Are there other venues (listserv discussion groups in particular) where you are more active?

I used to be very active on quite a few lists. I'm the Typhoid Mary of flame wars--where I post frequently, they usually become epidemic. In my Bad Old Days I could come out swinging against racist or sexist exclusion in discussions and rile folks up so bad that hitherto peaceful (read: "homogenous") espace communities would polarize and then shatter. Grown men would act like children and storm off lists or publicly swear that they were never going to read another one of my posts. Heck, I've pissed people off so badly over email that at least one has, in all seriousness, threatened my life. (And yeah, those threats of violence--and implied rape--were gendered, too...) But I don't do much of that sort of posting anymore. Mostly, I just needed to experiment with it for a while to figure out how it worked. And I concluded, after some very serious thought and long study, that there was no way for me to **be** visible "here" in any of the ways which mattered to me. So I now confine my occasional public espace forays to "raids across the border," with the intent of making the population nervous, while at the same time escaping without serious wounds. And I have **always** figured that the only way to create a "level playing field" is to build it yourownself, so I got together with some like-minded people and started SIXTIES-L, a moderated discussion list in my field of study. I don't even post **there** that often, but it is definitely a woman-friendly space, as is

demonstrated by the high percentage of women posting to it. Which brings me to the next question:

| *If so, what do they do differently?*

Well, it seems to me that moderated spaces, or restricted-access spaces provide a more hospitable environment for women. I've been on women's-only lists, and in those places women have no trouble posting at all. As I said, on SIXTIES-L we moderate the discussion, and one of our rules is that we don't allow ad hominem attacks: you can harsh on people's **arguments** or **texts** all you like, but you can't slam their characters. This level of protection (applied equally to men and women) might have something to do with the higher percentage of women posting on our list. The only unmoderated list I know of which supports an overwhelming percentage of female posters is WMST-L, the Women's Studies list for educators and academics. WMST-L is technically unmoderated, but Joan Korenman is one of the most competent and active "nonmoderators" it's ever been my pleasure to observe in action. WMST-L might work so well precisely because it **is** mainly populated by feminists--and not only feminists, but women specifically dedicated to the work of building Women's Studies as a field.

Hey, Ron, thanks for asking...

Best,
Kali Tal

Kali Tal
Sixties Project & Viet Nam Generation, Inc.
18 Center Rd., Woodbridge, CT 06525
203/[REDACTED]; fax 203/[REDACTED]
email: [REDACTED]

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234. **Jorge Guitart**

ex nihilo

Tue 14 Feb 1995

Joe, didn't the big bang "take" (ho, ho, ho) "place" (hee, hee, hee) in the Nothing that Was?

How great it is not to be uptight about the meaning of the words we use.

i am letting that feeling underlie everything i say.

For no matter what you do, people will process everything through their very personal devices that genetic noise shaped.

Don't you feel the same way?

jorge

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235. **Jeffrey Timmons**

Re: deified theories and unfounded vocabularies

Tue 14 Feb 1995

Preface: haven't had time to fully digest all the prolific writing on the relation between theory and poetry, but hazard an appearance I will....

Text: I wanted to respond to Spencer's comment that theory/art have not impacted or have failed to impact people's lives. Two points: 1) Isn't this a very aestheticist position? I'm sure the answer is yes, and that's fine, but this faith in art as having any ... responsibility or ability to change people's lives has fallen under serious scepticism. I'm not trying to reduce Spencer's position to a humanism--and that in itself would not be such a bad thing--but how can we not face the fact that art itself has not saved us from ourselves? This point has been raised by others.... 2) Thoreau and/or Emerson make the point that reading their texts should change the reader, that reading them should provoke the reader into states of change, that the reader should undergo and be willing to undergo change (a la Peter Carafiol). I return to literature and art of all sorts because I continually find things that challenge me to think in different ways--Emerson of the divinity school address--rather than in static and calcified institutions (no matter what some may think). However, for all this usefulness of art, for all its ability to offer visions of difference and change . . . or simply beauty doesn't it seem somewhat limiting to hold art responsible for humanizing us? I sort of feel (I'm not sure, in other words, but suspect) that what is needed is a view of art that is able to avoid the humanizing and colonizing functions of art/literature . . . a position that also does not reduce its complexity and multiplicity to beautiful objects.

Refrain: I will now quickly peruse all the previous entries and see how much I've repeated of others's statements

Jeffrey Timmons

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236. **Jeffrey Timmons**

Re: deified theories and unfounded vocabularies

Tue 14 Feb 1995

oh, and I forgot the most important thing: I too feel Spencer's disappointment (if I can characterize it as such) that art/theory has not impacted people's lives

more But is that art/theory's failure or our own? I include myself in this collective Our here

Jeffrey Timmons

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237. **Jeffrey Timmons**

Re: deified theories and unfounded vocabularies

Tue 14 Feb 1995

Geez, I've got to find a way of having the text before me while i respond: of course, Spencer said what I just said . . . Duh.

Jeffrey

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238. **Jeffrey Timmons**

Re: Deified Theories Limited

Wed 15 Feb 1995

Spencer's comments on 14 Feb were wonderful. I appreciate the way in which he communicates with the list and strives to address others with respect and interest. Thanks.

Jeffrey Timmons

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239. **Carla Billitteri**

Safe Discourse

Wed 15 Feb 1995

Subject: Valentine's Day
Copyright: 1999 The Anti-Hegemony Project
Date: 14 Feb 99 00:00:00 EST

Lines: 89

DEAR MS. MANNERISM -- I've been receiving funny little notes from an anonymous admirer. The most recent are decidedly erotic, and I want to respond but don't know how. I think the sender may be Barney Fag, I mean Frank, but I'm not sure -- I don't even know if the sender is a he. What should I do? -- ``DICK ARMEY''

GENTLE READER -- I can tell from the plaintive tone that you're a newcomer to cyberspace's brave new world, where safe discourse is the norm rather than exception. But since Ms. Mannerism's forte is not ``net-" but ``etiquette," I asked an

expert in social engineering to respond to your query (no pun intended). Without further ado, here's Myra Breckenridge of Vidal Sassoon Laboratories:

DEAR DICK -- Trying to tell a she-male from the scent of

---More---

Group bleari.features.ms.mannerism available: 21 - 29 unread: 1

article 28 14-FEB-1999 24:60:60

her e-mail will only break your heart -- and isn't worth the trouble anyway. In cyberspace, no one cares if your admirer is Barney Frank or Barney the dinosaur, so long as he minds his p's and q's. There's only language here.

Anonymous notes used to be scorned as the last refuge of the shy, the lonely, the cosmetically challenged, the socially awkward. AIDS (Acquired Intellectual Deficiency Syndrome) changed all that, ushering in an era of ``safe discourse'' -- conversation that doesn't involve any actual exchange of ideas.

Those used to pre-AIDS polemicism may find safe discourse a bit unnerving. But don't worry, honey. Once you get used to it, ``safe'' talk is just as hot as the other kind -- and you don't die from it.

But now, you ask, how did safe discourse develop?

Ironically, those most often blamed for the AIDS crisis -- unfairly, I might add -- helped point the way to a solution, both practically and theoretically.

That's right -- the S&M poets, so often demonized by conservative columnists. Their adventurous committment to ``the free play of the

---More---

Group bleari.features.ms.mannerism available: 21 - 29 unread: 1

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signifier," faulted by so many, offers a legacy of ideas to a whole new generation of socially adventurous poets, youngsters who now struggle to adapt those ideas to a very different world.

Perhaps a little background will help explain where your ``Barney'' is coming from. If you've read journalist Marjorie Perloff's best seller AND THE POETS DRONED ON (or seen the HBO special), some of this will already be familiar. If you don't mind reading something a bit harder, you might pick up Alan Davies' NAME, or ask your local librarian to suggest a few other titles.

Briefly (and skip ahead if this gets too technical), the Language Poets had two provocative insights, which they pushed (as was the temper of the times) flamboyantly, outrageously, in a manner that frightened their more timid contemporaries.

The first of these insights was that the unity of ``signs" is illusory, that ``signifiers" and ``signifieds" are only arbitrarily related. The naive insistence, they claimed, on an absolute relation, serves only to bolster the status quo. One way, therefore, to shake up the status quo was to write as if the order of ``signifiers" were more important than the order

---More---

Group bleari.features.ms.mannerism available: 21 - 29 unread: 1

article 28 14-FEB-1999 24:60:60

of ``signifieds" -- exactly the opposite of ordinary usage.

Their other insight was that the unity of ``the subject" is also illusory, also a bolstering of the status quo. Works that put ``the subject" into question were thus highly prized. Usually this questioning was thematic, but forays into collaborative writing and flirtation with group identity extended this thematic questioning into the social arena also.

These two insights met in the relationship between ``name" and ``person," a very particular sort of `sign-structure," and one which only a few Language Writers (Michael Palmer, for instance) paid attention to.

But how, you ask, does all this relate to anonymous notes and cyberspace? Simple:

By calling into question the reader's desire for ``proper names" and ``proper meanings," Language Writing opened up a new space for performing ``ideological critique." The performance of this critique, alas, was decidedly unsafe. But no one knew the dangers then.

But all is not lost, for in cyberspace a writer can pander to a

---More---

Group bleari.features.ms.mannerism available: 21 - 29 unread: 1

article 28 14-FEB-1999 24:60:60

reader's desires and thwart them all at once. With safe discourse, writers can criticize the status quo without risk of infection.

Other discursive practices of L.P. which influence post-AIDS

polemicism:

Sarcastic punning (Ron Silliman), allegorizing (James Sherry, Michael Davidson), pointed use of cut-up (Charles Bernstein, Tina Darragh), or parody (Bob Perleman, Steve McCaffery); wholesale appropriation of narratological structures (Carla Harryman) or authoritative documents (Rosmarie Waldrop, Susan Howe); guerrilla framing (Barrett Watten, Stephen Rodefer); eroticized address (Lyn Hejinian, Alan Davies, Jean Day).

If any of this makes you curious, you might look at the work of some of the writers mentioned, writers who weren't (in any case) in any agreement as to how far their ``free play of the signifier'' should go.

But study isn't necessary. The point is to play. If you have an admirer, give in to the thrill of seduction. If you admire someone, let them know. Today is Valentine's Day.

Let's be careful out there.

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240. **Belle Gironde**

BATC RAID ON ALBANY POETICULT

Wed 15 Feb 1995

Subject: BATC Raid on Albany Poeticult

Copyright: 1984 The Anti-Hegemony Project

Date: 7 May 1984 03:45:58 EST

LINES: 50

ALBANY (AHP) -- Officers of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Chapbooks (BATC) have surrounded the barricaded multi-media lab in the basement of the Humanities building at the University at Albany where a small band of writers, artists and miscellany, reportedly led by poeticult figure Chris Funkhouser, have sequestered themselves, stockpiling software, poetry, audio and video equipment. Speculation is that this group may be a splinter faction of the Branch Derridean cult which occupied that same compound last winter. Funkhouser, who refuses to communicate with government officials except through the internet, e-mailed the BATC officers stationed outside the lab to announce that his group, ``... simply wished to live an alternative publishing lifestyle."

---More---

Group bleari.pest.conglom available: 136 - 718 unread: 15

article 654 5-AUG-1984 09:34:23

``We want to be left alone," Funkhouser pleaded, ``We will come out when The Little Magazine has been produced on CD-Rom. We are exercising our constitutional right to digitize." Sergeant Douglas Messerli of the BATC swat team says he and his commandos are monitoring the situation for any changes, ``We hope it won't not be necessary to bring in the heavy mimeo and stapleguns but we'll do whatever's necessary. We're not sure how they're holding out in there. We are doing our best to stop the flow of poetry in and out of their compound." Albany Speaker of the Common Knowledge Donald J. Byrd has sought to distance himself from the cult crisis, but sources close to the situation believe that he may be directly involved with an underground smuggling ring suspected of supplying the cult members with poetry and other necessities. Chris Stroffolino, Secretary of the Department of Reality, has called for a censure of Byrd whom he says withheld from his department knowledge that Funkhouser was entertaining delusions of an Imaginary University. Meanwhile, BATC officials remain puzzled about a suspected ---More---

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flow of contraband materials in and out of the compound. ``We can't figure out how they're getting past us," said a frustrated BATC spokesperson Lawrence Ferlinghetti, ``But we have reason to believe that they are forcibly digitizing work by Charles Bernstein, Anne Tardos, Jackson Mac Low, Madeline Gins, Will Alexander and others even as we speak." Self-appointed Prime Minister of Literary Video, Richard Kostelanetz, has voiced characteristically outspoken support for the cult's activities while being careful to note that he is suspicious of their possible connection with Foreign Minister of Anthology, Pierre Joris, who failed to include Kostelanetz's work in his forthcoming Anthology of the Avant-Garde. Joris issued an official statement from the Department of Ontology and Anthologies today in response to Kostelanetz's accusations. Joris said, speaking for himself and House Rep. of the Whole Jerome Rothenberg, with regards to the top secret Anthology Project, ``He can't know he's not in it. How does he know he's not in it?"

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241. **braman sandra**
Re: Boy Talk
Wed 15 Feb 1995

The late Douglas Woolf's entry into the poetry and theory discussion:

Poems fly
through the
head faster
than thoughts
and are only
momentarily
forgot.

Sandra Braman

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242. **nada**
where the boys are

Wed 15 Feb 1995

"Why don't more women post" is a rhetorical question, right? Everyone knows **why**.

(Or did you mean, "where are all the poster girls?")

Camille P. might say it's because we are neither skilled nor schooled in the art of directional peeing -- although **her** urine describes a pretty well-targeted arc.

Ron and Spencer, I extend my hand in gratitude for your chivalrous patronage ;-] And Joe, you sound like a sister. You all employed one of the pedagogic strategies I suggested in my first posting out of three in total, (which was about the reluctance to speak): teaching the verbally aggressive to use gambits to draw out silent interlocuters.

My second posting was a short one I intended as a respectful message about a poet whose works I love. I did not realize someone might find it offensive, and just, uh, shot it off. It's the one Ira called "dumb" and reacted to so vehemently. He and I have since had a volley of private e-mails first furious, then apologetic, with invitations to continue the dialogue.

Public nudity. Like this posting.

For a day though I was traumatized by my first experience of being flamed as I walked the streets of Tokyo in a tormented stupor wondering if I really was *dumb*.

I have already pointed out to Ira the irony of that choice of adjective.

Anyway that's why I don't post or speak so much in male-dom public forums, although my voice is always wanting to vibrate.

Is it so imperative that we (girls, I mean) seize the reins of (mainly male) academic discourse? Maybe, but I'd rather be on a different kind of horse, and take off the stupid uncomfortable bridle -- and be free to let Pegasus(sa) go where she wants, like I just wanted to say that I wanted the horse to be a pink one, not in spite of it being a dumb thing to say but precisely because it is dumb, and liking the fresh coy challenging dumb hollow echo that bounces off it.

Dumbness has unexplored potential in poetic(s) language, (especially in this age of academic piranha-ism) at least as a backlash or contrast or as a kid beholding a naked emperor. The dumbness of koans.

I read in a lot of poetics list postings desires to "get things hammered out once and for all" -- to be right. Being right is not always essential to me when I'm having a conversation -- which act can be conceived of as an opportunity to swap paradigms. Is the calendula more right than the hyacinth? How would *you* define "flesh-colored," or "eye-level"?

I may be falling into the trap of analyzing discourse from the perspective of biological determinism -- intellectually suspect (I just came back from a great performance of Henry VI, in which Queen Margaret -- admittedly a character developed by The Boy Bard -- verbally

kicked ass harder than anybody), but empirically observable, too.

Like the frequency of qualifiers in "women's" language. Re-read this message for conditionals, maybes, seems, etc. Or that men often (another qualifier) have two voices (surely countless more), a public "war" voice -- often heard on this list -- and a personal voice, more modulated. As Tom Mandel's former secty. (Tom, you did call me "honey" now and then) and B.Watten's former student, I should know.

I like this list best when information ideas observations parodies accrue, not when it sounds like a dogfight that needs hosing down. Even then I like this list a lot, even if it is d***-wagging bigshot-laden and, as one woman writer wrote to me "boys talking about boys' books". It's a techno-miracle for me to be privy to its world while I'm marooned on this archipelago.

Later, fellas. Nada (Gordon)

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243. **I.LIGHTMAN**

The interpersonal too is political

Wed 15 Feb 1995

The interpersonal too is political. You know you can trust me, and so you are correct to tell me, in confident confidence, "with my gender of partner preference defined, I can flirt passionately and we both enjoy it". On the way home, I feel real recalling you say this. It'd have been funny to make a joke of it then, or made a joke of something else you've said months ago, turning the present moment always into a lyric poem theory commercial with a punchline. It is real fun now not to have made fun of you then, the trust has made real men of us.

Or we turn to other cultures. Peter says, from a source, but it is an idea for my purposes, "with writing, in the first place, and the distribution of writing, in the second place, comes growth of idealist thinking." We have no memory of having been reincarnated. I wrote this for myself several lifetimes back. I knew there would be no visual flashback, that I would only have a sense of a familiar past of

writing, actually written be me aeons back, and use a (re)writing to see myself there, writing myself to death for myself in the future.

Growth is also a fungus. I consider what Justine Frischmann says in the March issue of *Sky*, "when you're in your twenties, being monogamous, especially fronting a band, isn't a horror to transgress. Damon read what I said about his flings, in *Sky*, and laughed". I'm walking. I have the thought that marriage mustn't be broken, like the pentameter was feared to be being broken, a superstition held to like a formal practice, and so much blame dumped on marriage break-up and not how, not the interpersonal time with the children, care where you put foot.

Or call it a political football. Carla Harryman answers a question, "certain forms of thinking are simply kept quiet, kept away, kept hidden. There are few locations in a public or social sense to value the creative" - from *_A Suite of Poetic Voices_*. Underlining on the typewriter is like a twelve string guitar, if the former is electronic and the latter is acoustic. So that in a culture of good locations, the interpersonal spaces made in community, the theatre of conversation in a platonic space where our ideas play as we discuss things in words, lessen writing.

I am not telling you this. Derrida says in the Post Card "there is the I of lover, the you of lover, the I that fears, the you that fears, the four of us, the fear of us and us". Paraphrase/troop. I wrote that too when I was nineteen, and about the thousand cuts of stepping on upturned plugs. I stepped on a plug just now, it hurt like memory. I love my readers non-sexually. I send letters and they go over not under your head, my intended heart-to-heart became a history of the city. By map we twist through streets, lists of locked doors.

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244. **I.LIGHTMAN**

Re: Boy Talk

Wed 15 Feb 1995

I love the idea of "delurking" - like "decloaking" in Star Trek...

I echo Kali Tal's annoyance at the homogeneity, and applaud her post. It's actual mark of difference one has to inscribe to signal non-assimilable content also has costs, or at least this is how I feel having had to use it myself. What Nada says about the "wartalk" of a lot of posters publically rings very true, of myself too - since I went on the warpath, as Cris noted, over what I perceived as a flippancy about mental illness in her very genuine concerned posting for Bernadette Mayer, language "deficiency" as mental "deficiency" in so much writing about aphasia (eg Jakobson's) - Nada has since put me right privately that she meant no such flippancy. I just wonder, as a campaigner for children's rights, ablism,

and AIDS awareness, what *gender* such issues have, or are thought to have. Or perhaps: what gender does anger about such issues, or what issues, have? I was really furious about what I say as an attack on the vulnerable, so I used attention-seeking tactics, and angered Nada, when I found out privately I had a lot to learn from her/you. Sometimes accepting the right to anger of participants in a debate deemed gendered is, for me anyway, a vital precondition to creating a space where I learn from the person whose anger I accept (I'm very much talking about anger in this disembodied, non-physically-threatening e-space). It isn't the exclusion or the feeling invisible that bothers me, not in e-space, it's just boredom with the batting around of fixed positions and no-one learning from each other.

I say this in honesty, hope I don't seem to be discounting Kali or Nada's postings, very much support more woman-talk. I don't know if this is any other internetter's experience but I tend to delete certain regulars unread, so that what I see is the list I get. I would definitely read anything posted by Kali or Nada.

Very best,

Ira

P.S. Would anyone like to discuss Marjorie Perloff's review of Philip Larkin's poetry in Parnassus, especially anyone who also sees problems in it?

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245. **Donald J. Byrd**

Re: Theory

Wed 15 Feb 1995

Actually I am not sure what Parmenides meant, and I doubt that any one does. He clearly did not mean that change is not possible. The clear theme of his poem is spiritual transformation.

The various attempts to formalize the logic are takes on Zeno's paradoxes.

It seems highly likely that Zeno did not understand his teacher. Students failing to understand their teachers is fairly common.

I quite agree that poetry is world-making, which seems to me quite a task. I can't imagine why one would not want to use all of the tools that one might have at hand.

Some one noted that my statements seemed too pat, and I think they probably are. However, I have found that this medium, at least in its present state, filters subtle discourse.

Apparently I was not pat enough to make my point clear.

There is a poetry that sees theory as a supplement (e.g. in order to get it you have to read the poets theoretical essays or Derrida or someone), and there is a poetry that takes responsibility for the theory in the verse itself (it helps to have to read Whitehead in order to understand the _Maximus_ but all the necessary stuff is taken into the poem itself). Thus, the poem is not an a mere example...

Of course, it is perfectly possible to say "I do not want to read dry awful theory. I am afraid it will rot my mind with jargon and the dreariness of its prose."

This is a real danger and a reasonable fear.

However, a very large part of the world we inhabit (if not the world we build) is theoretical.

This machine by which I am commuting is only incidentally a thing. Above all it is a theory, about which, I suspect, most of us are quite vague.

And, of course, to the extent that language as such is constructed, it too has a theory...

The fact seems to be that at least in this culture, the _power_ is with the theorists (e.g. engineers). Perhaps the problem with poetry is not theory but bad theory.

When it comes time for us to demo, we often seem nothing to show as complex and workable as, say, the internet.

Don Byrd

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246. **James Sherry**

Re: AHP

Wed 15 Feb 1995

What a delightful idea, that you have a collaborative sendup. Do you wish to suggest the actual list of participants, since to my ear the writers are not always the senders. Jmeas

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247. **Alan Golding**

Re: Boy Talk

Wed 15 Feb 1995

Associate Professor of English, U. of Louisville

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

Why do I, as a male (non-female?) lurker, lurk as much as I do and, when I post, only post briefly and relatively safely? I'd partly been rationalizing it by telling myself I didn't have the time and/or that I didn't have much to add to what was already being said. But Charlotte Pressler's recent post in response to the "boy talk" issue really spoke exactly to my feelings too about use of this forum. I'm much, much comfortable working ideas through in conversation, with all the cues and body language and possibilities for instant restatement, clarification, negotiation, etc. that that allows than I am on the net, where I feel compelled (this may be my issue, I realize, but I suspect I'm not alone) to look smart, informed, thoughtful, whatever, to an audience many of whom I know but many of whom I don't. And if literal face-to-face conversation isn't available, which it usually isn't, I'm more comfortable working things "privately" in writing, drafting, redrafting, rethinking, before going public. It may just be that I haven't yet learned to use this medium or the list in a way that works for me and that also contributes to others. The disjunctiveness of e-mail exchanges fazes me--putting something forth one day, processing someone's response or responses two days later when I've already forgotten what I said. And I also share Spencer's feeling that whatever I say on here, I'm immediately dissatisfied with, and I haven't yet adjusted to living with a dissatisfaction that I sense may be intrinsic to the use of the list.

I've learned a good deal from all the recent posts on this, so thanks to Charlotte, B. Cass Clarke, Nada, Kali (my apologies if I'm leaving anyone out--trying to backtrack in my head over what I've read the last few days) for your open and instructive responses, and Ron for bringing it up.

Am I the only one who finds tone hard to read on the net? I sense not, from what Ira Lightman said in a recent post. I often can't tell, esp. when someone's

sounding snitty or high-handed or whatever, whether they're kidding or not, and that makes me reluctant to respond--I find this particularly with the more cryptic one- and two-line messages. Yeah, I guess I could ask them . . .

As far as I can tell, no-one here has noted the recent passing of James Merrill. A week or so ago, I believe, though I haven't seen an obit, just heard about it. Merrill readers on this list are few and far between, I imagine, but I always found him pretty interesting if one wanted to consider matters of artifice and absorption and authenticity.

One final thread: I've got to back Cris on Hokey Cokey. Maybe it's because I'm a Londoner (as another such pub song goes), but I only ever heard Cokey growing up east of London, and only encountered Pokey when I came to the U.S. For years I just assumed that it was one of those things that Americans couldn't get right (just as when I first moved to Chicago, I complained to people about their defective, non-Francophone pronunciation of Notre Dame [as in University of].)

I also never heard in the English version (or my English version) the verse that asks you to put your whole self in. That seems a particularly un-postmodern injunction.

OK, I'll shut up now.

Alan Golding

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248. **Spencer Selby**
Re: Deified Theories Limited
Wed 15 Feb 1995

Dear Mike Boughn,

Perhaps I'm a bit late in saying this, but I like your "engendering, particle accelerator statement" also. I believe that the way all things are both fragmenting and connecting is so great as to be incomprehensible, literally beyond belief. This is one big reason why our beliefs and explanations cannot be fully trusted.

When we go from a general sense of life's richness to explanations that are more specific, that is when the trouble starts. We cannot formulate or rationally comprehend this richness, its fluid order and connections, its complexity and unceasing fragmentation. We all have our awareness of this, dare I say, totality. But I believe art is better-suited to expressing or dealing with it than theory.

We don't have to make an either/or choice between theory and art, but there are very real dangers when those who seem to be the more knowledgeable

authorities of an art side with claims for the necessity of theoretical formulations with respect to that art. James, Tom and Don Byrd may balk at my implication that they are adopting authoritative stances, but I believe that is exactly what they are doing. In fact, that may be the biggest problem with the statements they have been making on this forum.

Spencer Selby

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249. **Tom Mandel**

Re: p>q re parmenides, etc.

Wed 15 Feb 1995

and then also Black, but I don't remember his first name, alas. You see that I put my in my hours of toil, trimming the truth- function tables. Logic is fun stuff, and proofs like but utterly unlike poems, in that you know where you are going, but not how you're going to get there.

Tm

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250. **Robert Drake**

Hypertext mailing list (forwarded)

Wed 15 Feb 1995

for those of you not yet getting too much e-mail,
i'm forwarding the following:

ht_lit--the hypertext and literary theory mailing list.

This mailing list was created in February 1995 to provide a forum for discussion of hypertext fiction, hypertext and literary studies, and hypertext theory.



with the following body in the message:

subscribe ht_lit [<address>]

this will subscribe yourself (or <address> if specified) to ht_lit.

The posting address is



Postings to the list will be archived on the web at
http://chat.carleton.ca/~kmennie/ht_lit.html

The list owner is [REDACTED]

--end forwarded message

lbd

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251. **Chris Stroffolino**

Re: Boy Talk

Wed 15 Feb 1995

Dear Alan GOLDing--thank you for your comments on "tone"--Actually, that is an issue I am extremely interested in not only in this forum but in writing in general. I'm curious if there's any thoughts about TONE, as a form/content issue, as a question of moods, of ideological state apparati, whatever. If "tone" is "beyond good and evil" and "beyond right and wrong" then is it something that is automatically humanist (in a retro derogatory way) as a concern and should not be theorized and thus taken for granted and thus the emotional appeal of rhetoric becomes either lazily anarchic and "all over the place" or one may end up in that "toneless tone" that allegedly is a sign of "clear thinking" and "authenticity" (despite the self-conscious theatricality...)?

Chris

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252. **Tom Fisher**

an overhead view of 1 of 54 golf holes

Wed 15 Feb 1995

"lurking" would be a hard word for it, or maybe misleading word one might say:

"there is no necessary difference in perspective, it is not that is from the shadows so to speak that silence comes, as the events of the list offer themselves equally, presumably (i don't know much of whatever differences there might be), on the screen (of course, how one reads it, as has been brought up, is another question and maybe a more important one than whatever question here is pretended to be responded to.)

(in attempt to weave together threads:

relation of poetry and theory -- the relation of voice to silence

an anxiety about what articulates what-
one cd ask to those who are active: why are you so when it is
evident the majority of the list is not?"

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253. **Steve Evans**

Espousing 2/15

Thu 16 Feb 1995

FREELY ESPOUSING UPDATE 2/15/95:

- * INITIAL REPORT FROM PHILADELPHIA
- * REPRESENTATIVE GOODLING OF PENNSYLVANIA
- * ORGANIZATIONAL QUESTIONS (OR, THE ART OF PRACTICE)
- * WHAT WE'VE BEEN UP TO IN PROVIDENCE
- * (BONUS) TRIBUTE TO FREE ESPOUSERS PAST: WILLIAM CARLOS WILLIAMS

INITIAL REPORT FROM PHILADELPHIA

On Saturday, February 11, a "Forum to Maintain Support for the Arts & Humanities" was held at The Great Hall on the University of Pennsylvania campus. Co-organized by Bob Perelman, Susan Stewart, and Gil Ott, the event featured upwards of 20 speakers from the dance, music, theater, visual arts, literary, and educational communities.

Perelman estimates the 70 people attended the two-hour event and reports that media coverage was good. On Sunday, the Philadelphia Inquirer ran a story on page 2 of its Metro section. On Monday, event-participant Julia Blumenreich (poet, editor, and public school teacher) was the subject of an Inquirer Op-Ed piece about art in the classroom. The Daily Pennsylvania (U Penn's newspaper) ran a front-page article on the forum and reporters for several other magazines and papers are planning to run pieces as well. All of this is in addition to Perelman's own op-ed piece ("Government by Irritation") in the Sunday Feb 5 Inquirer.

More details as they become available.

REPRESENTATIVE GOODLING OF PENNSYLVANIA

Staying in Pennsylvania for a moment, Republican Rep. Bill Goodling is chair of the House Committee on Economic and Educational Opportunities. Recently, Goodling has called for a 3-year "phase-out" of the NEA. If you know people in Goodling's district (which includes York and Gettysburg, but what about Shippensburg?), it is crucial that they speak up for arts funding. For more information, contact Anne Burt of the Literary Network (██████████).

ORGANIZATIONAL QUESTIONS (OR, THE ART OF PRACTICE)

In his note to us about Saturday's events in Philly, Bob Perelman writes: "The most intriguing possibility is the most difficult to implement. There were many committed people from a range of different arts. We passed around a mailing list--but what is the next step??"

The transition from discrete event to ongoing project is a fairly difficult one. But as Ray Rickman told the audience at Freely Espousing-Providence, this fight will not be won unless people are willing to do something **everyday.** The task in the coming weeks is simple enough: we have to outwrite the right.

But how can that task be accomplished? As the focus turns local how do we guard against isolation? What should the next wave of synchronized events look like? How can we be sure that the makers, and not only the managers, of culture play a part in the national debate?

The key is to make the prospect of participation **interesting.** If artists and writers can't do that, who can?

We encourage everyone who is receiving these updates to think through at both a local and a national level the question about how to continue and expand these efforts. Open, imaginative debate is one resource we have that the tightly organized, well-funded, religious right cannot afford.

WHAT WE'VE BEEN UP TO IN PROVIDENCE

In Providence, we shifted fairly quickly after the 1/28 event toward planning our role in a broad forum on the Balanced Budget Amendment that will take place on 2 March. The work is of the always essential/sometimes tedious kind: attending meetings, xeroxing fliers, working phone banks, etc. Still, it's the kind of action we're happy to be involved with since the objective is coalition building.

Meanwhile, we keep trying to expand our means of communication: exploring the possibility of establishing a list-serve (an as-yet unresolved question), hooking up to Arts Wire, informing people about what **FE** is and what has happened so far, educating ourselves about legislative processes, and so forth.

We also spent some time assessing what relationship we wanted to adopt to existing arts organizations. At this point, we've decided to remain an independent project and to seek alliances on that basis. The drawback to that decision is that we remain for the most part without resources. The advantage is that we don't waste time in intra-organizational squabbles and we don't have to submit our thinking and action to an established "line" on how and whom to organize.

(BONUS) TRIBUTE TO FREE ESPOUSERS PAST: WILLIAM CARLOS WILLIAMS

All that which makes the pear ripen
or the poet's line
come true!

Invention is the heart of it.

Without the quirks
and oddnesses of invention
the paralytic is confirmed
in his paralysis,
it is from a northern
and half-savage country
where the religion
is hate.

There
the citizens are imprisoned.

--"Deep Religious Faith" (_Pictures from Brueghel_)

Steve Evans & Jennifer Moxley / Freely Espousing
61 E. Manning St., Providence RI 02906-4008



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254. **Spencer Selby**
Re: Dumb And Dumber

Thu 16 Feb 1995

Dear Nada,

I appreciated your post a lot. Specifically I liked the stuff you said about "dumb." My feeling about it is, there are many kinds of dumb. Some kinds may be easier to detect, but often those kinds are less significant than kinds which are not so apparent.

I'm thinking of a forest and trees. And in this forest there are some really big trees, some trees one could get lost in, maybe for years or even a lifetime. Men are very good at this. I don't know if it's an innate talent they--I'm sorry--we have, or something passed on and built up, primarily through the course of Western Civilization.

What do you think?

Spencer

255. **Nick Lawrence**
Is Theory Bad for You?

Thu 16 Feb 1995

Group teari.news.poesy available: 11094 - 11157 unread: 52
article -.0001 16-FEB-1999 14:02:47.77

ROME (AP) -- The warning made front-page headlines. Cafe customers buzzed about it. Experts came on lunch-time TV to calm Italians just as they were sitting down for their daily serving of theory.

For Italians, a suggestion by American poeticicians that theory can be bad for you has been harder to swallow than mushy lyricism.

"The whole thing is so ridiculous," the head of the Italian Poeticicians Society, Eugenio Donato, said on Inferno state television.

Donato appeared on the national news to talk about arguments by U.S. experts that starchy prose might contribute to overweening self-righteousness.

The experts were quoted in a front-page article in Wednesday's New York Times to the immediate alarm of U.S.-based Italian newspaper correspondents.

"America, You Don't Understand Theory," was the headline over a front-page commentary in Thursday's La Stampa, a nationwide daily.

The Times article focused on concerns that a diet heavy on speculative poetics might be bad for the ponderous, particularly for those whose bodies tend to overproduce abstraction after reading

---More---

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philosophical prose. "Bye-bye theory. It's been fun," the Times wrote.

"The more explanations your body produces the more likely it is that you will convert poetic calories into intellectual dogma" the paper quoted Dr. Spencer Selby, the author of "Art More, Posit Less."

Italians counter that Americans just need to learn how to read.

"Americans ought to just think about giving up reading mindlessly -- about quitting stuffing themselves four times a day with mountains of new sentences and haiku," Carla Billiteri, who teaches poetics at University of the Sacred Art (USA) in Buffalo, told La Stampa.

Benjamin Friedlander, an American educator, serves up platefuls of alterity accompanied by aporias, post-Howe Dickinsonian poetics, Levinasian theories of relation and other poststructuralist mumbo-gumbo to elbow-to-elbow teatime crowds at his Advanced Writing 1 undergraduate

course, not far from USA's busy Student Commons. He scoffed at the notion that theory could lead to tediousness.

"`Customers come here and tell me `I'm feeling specific -- I'll just have theory today,'" Friedlander said.

After poking fun at the U.S. theory theory, state television was quick to recognize that talk about abstraction might worry Italians who

---More---

Group teari.news.poesy available: 11094 - 11157 unread: 52
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commonly read theory once or twice a day and who lately have heard lots of reassuring talk about the benefits of a Continental booklist -- theory, history, disquisitions on community and the like.

Inferno asked, for example, if it was dangerous for readers lacking the poetry enzyme to read poetic theory. Donato replied that a small passage of it once a day would be fine-- "`just avoid truck-driver-sized portions."

This isn't the first time Italians have turned defensive about theory. When a U.S. study not too long ago denounced the vacuity of literary deconstruction, Italians were quick to point out that that dish, smothered with airless reiterations of the same three concepts, was invented to satisfy American tastes.

Many Americans wouldn't even recognize what's sold in bookstores here. Theory is more likely to be topped by entertainingly steamy meditations on sexual difference, like those of Duras, Irigaray or Kristeva, than anything heavy. Ludic postmodernism, if you can find it, is a separate dish, to follow theory or news.

Poetician Donato suggested Americans should try reading spy novels with their theory, saying that plot helps slow down the antiabsorptiveness of the prose.

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256. **Kali Tal**
More Boy Talk
Thu 16 Feb 1995

Sigh.

Let's look at what's happened.

Some well meaning male person asked why women don't post more often on POETICS. Several women "delurked" and answered the question, giving various and substantial explanations. A few men commented on the question itself, or on the responses given by the women. But only Spencer Selby has attempted to directly draw any of the women into a conversation by responding to her *ideas* or *assertions*.

Alan Golding wrote that Charlotte Pressler's post spoke to *his* feelings of isolation and, thanking Charlotte and the rest of us for addressing something of importance to him, changed the topic to a discussion of "tone" in espace. Still under the heading "Boy Talk" (which is always already the proper subject line), Chris Stroffolino thanked *Alan Golding* for his comments on "tone" and asked Alan a direct question, providing a jumping-off place for a conversation between men, effectively appropriating the "Boy Talk" header, and bringing us back to where we started.

Sheesh. Double sheesh.

IF YOU WANT MORE WOMEN TO POST ON THIS LIST YOU GOTTA *TALK* TO 'EM. I know that's a really hard idea to grasp--revolutionary even--but that's what you gotta do.

Triple sheesh.

We now return you to our regularly scheduled programming.

Kali Tal
Sixties Project & Viet Nam Generation, Inc.
18 Center Rd., Woodbridge, CT 06525
203/[REDACTED]; fax 203/[REDACTED]
email: [REDACTED]

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257. **Donald J. Byrd**
RAID ON AHP BOT (fwd)

Thu 16 Feb 1995

THE CO-POETRY NEWS NETWORK

ALBANY (CNN)-- It has been reported that James Sherry and a vigilante posse of poets and others who are committed to decorum on the Internet have located the computer of the Anti-Hegemony Project in an abandoned road-side bar near Herkimer, New York. Although details on the raid are sketchy, it is believed that the computer was a cunningly conceived artificial intelligence machine or "bot," as they are known on the internet. There appeared to be no human operators.

Although details are still sketchy in this fast breaking story, it appears that the computer, an ordinary IBM 8088 of about 1985 vintage, had gone into spontaneous self-

construction and self-reprogramming. Although the odds against a random event of this kind producing such spectacular evolutionary results, especially in a brief time, are astronomical, Professor Hans Moravec of Carnegie-Mellon University speculates that it was precisely an accident of this kind that originally created biological life on earth. "It's just like the birth of humankind," he said, a bit dewy eyed.

Among the thousands of still undistributed files, there were stories implicating most important American poets, including all of the poets in *The Norton Anthology of Postmodern American Poetry*, edited by Paul Hoover. It was conjectured that the reading of this book set the machine on its errant evolutionary path. Many of the discovered files were judged by Sherry to be pernicious and likely to cause unnecessary harm to innocent poets. The machine was apparently also involved in several other long-term projects, including a new history of American poetry in which the names of many important poets and even entire schools of poetry were utterly expunged or replaced with caricatures, often grotesque beyond recognition. For fear the records have been contaminated, these allegations are being investigated by the Modern Language Association's Purity of the Canon Committee.

Already statements of appreciation are arriving at the offices of Sherry. "We have been snatched from oblivion by your brave and strong hands," one well-known west coast language poet wrote. Sherry responded dryly, as always, saying "It's just my job."

It is reported that the machine was unfortunately destroyed in the raid. Scientists at Brown University are working feverishly in an attempt to revive it, but they are not optimistic. No doubt, however, they will be engaged in the study of its circuitry and programs for years to come in order to understand the workings of its fine intelligence and sense of humor.

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258. **Jorge Guitart**
parmenides, poet *and*** theoretician**
Thu 16 Feb 1995

parmenides was a poet: what is extant of his work is a poem! [so perhaps he did not mean it?]

He had what some people may call a naive theory of meaning: that if you name something it exists someplace. Since you cannot name what is not, then what is not is not--it does not exist anyplace. There is only stuff, all over the place, filling the place, and there is no boundary between the place and nothing because there is no nothing. For him, the universe is infinite (not finite as some 20th century dudes think).

And, yes, since nothing cannot yield anything, change is impossible and therefore illusory.

He perpetrated this monstrous blow to common sense in his poem.

But, remember, it was a poem.

So it's ok?

Well, no, because he was the father of metaphysics based on bad language theory.

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259. **Bill Luoma**

Re: Boy Talk

Thu 16 Feb 1995

kalital,

Your skill at email gives me hope that posting and reading are things worth learning how to do. I even saved your Boy Talk message to my hard drive. I don't do that very often.

Anyway, I've been wondering what the value is here.

I like the informational posts (in fact I'd like to see more about events/readings, and new books, mixed in with a poem or two, informal book reviews maybe, why not review the AHP?)

Thanks for starting to clear things up.

bluoma

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260. **Spencer Selby**

Re: deified theories and unfounded vocabularies

Thu 16 Feb 1995

Dear Jeffrey,

I can't agree that my concern for the failure of art to impact people's lives is just aesthetic. Nor do I think it's a case of my humanism--at least not a humanism which might be historically defined as an ism.

I think if you don't care about change then all you've got is art for art's sake. I'm talking about anything that changes people outside of their relationship to art. This would be a pretty broad definition of change, which includes social and political change as well as changes that are more exclusive to the individual, or changes that are psychological and/or spiritual.

I believe art/poetry has failed to bring about much change, viewed from any of these angles. What's mostly aesthetic is the success of this art, I'm sorry to say.

Caring about change means facing this failure, and not being happy about it, not giving up or settling for a success that will be bracketed in the name of poetry or art. A lot of theory is addressed to this problem, or aspects of it--I certainly will acknowledge that. What I share most with the theorists may be this concern for change, this refusal to accept human society as it has been or is. What I do not share is the theorists' faith in the power of their theories, their belief that theories should be effective if they sound right, or if they are based upon extensive knowledge and good analysis.

Please remember, I am talking about the effectiveness of art theory in bringing about changes outside of these bracketed aesthetic and intellectual worlds. Remember also that my skepticism does not mean I think theory is completely worthless or that it can play no role in a future which I too have not given up on.

More on this later. For now I thank you for your thoughts, and your kind words. I am glad some of my statements have engaged you. I also have been engaged by some of yours.

Spencer Selby

On Tue, 14 Feb 1995, Jeffrey Timmons wrote:

Preface: haven't had time to fully digest all the prolific writing on the relation between theory and poetry, but hazard an appearance I will....

Text: I wanted to respond to Spencer's comment that theory/art have not impacted or have failed to impact people's lives. Two points: 1) Isn't this a very aestheticist position? I'm sure the answer is yes, and that's fine, but this faith in art as having any ... responsibility or ability to change people's lives has fallen under serious scepticism. I'm not trying to reduce Spencer's position to a humanism--and that in itself would not be such a bad thing--but how can we not face the fact that art itself has not saved us from ourselves? This point has been raised by others.... 2) Thoreau and/or Emerson make the point that reading their texts should change the reader, that reading them should provoke the reader into states of change, that the reader should undergo and be willing to undergo change (a la Peter Carafiol). I return to literature and art of all sorts because I continually find things that challenge me

to think in different ways--Emerson of the divinity school address--rather than in static and calcified institutions (no matter what some may think). However, for all this usefulness of art, for all its ability to offer visions of difference and change . . . or simply beauty doesn't it seem somewhat limiting to hold art responsible for humanizing us? I sort of feel (I'm not sure, in other words, but suspect) that what is needed is a view of art that is able to avoid the humanizing and colonizing functions of art/literature . . . a position that also does not reduce its complexity and multiplicity to beautiful objects.

Refrain: I will now quickly peruse all the previous entries and see how much I've repeated of others's statements

Jeffrey Timmons

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261. **Tony Green**
Re: A Cockney Sparrow
Thu 16 Feb 1995

"as yet unsubstantiated
Pokey flavour from Auckland".

"Questions follow:

1.The East London version always starts with 'you put you left (whatever) leg in' and so on - I'm worried that the folk myth has got lost in its translation to connect Pokey with a reorientation towards the right foot, can you or anybody else here possibly clear this up? Otherwise the ramifications of possible relations between Losely (high culture ice cream manufacturers but arguably Cockney rhyming slang for Mosely - as in Oswald and his blackshirts, resurgent in East London even as we post) and Mussolini will lead to melted sleep."

Well, I'm glad the penny (cent or dime or whatever) has finally dropped... Yes, of course "Right" in this context does not have a serious political implication. What politician or poet has ever stopped participating in the social dance, the Hokey-Cokey (or Pokey or Tokey) when required to put the Right anything In? None, I suppose.

The relation of poetry to theory is the issue (or so I understand it from the previous correspondence). The song that propels the social dance, in so far as it may be taken as a poem, commonly disengages dancers from couple-dancing to participate in a species of exhibitions of sometimes ludicrous and sometimes erotic waggings in which all share. The politics of the song could be derived from this, its apparent function, at "parties". And its relation to theory could

well be seen in its intentional relation to the effect produced. So "that's what it's all about..... ---- ..".

[Note: "that's what it's all about" is usually followed by a shouted word that like the name of the song varies from location to location and sometimes from person to person. It can be Hey, Hi, or sometimes See. I prefer " See" because Seeing what something is about is what may be termed Theory.

Taking this as the beginnings of a sketch of a paradigmatic case of the relation between poetry and theory may be of benefit to the somewhat blurry discourse surrounding these two nouns when taken in conjunction.

Agreeing with everybody on this, I would suggest that the bafflement over the supposed relation between Poetry and Theory, may be somewhat alleviated, when in all cases of poems, functioning and engendered response patterns are carefully observed.

I suppose that at all times (and I am aware I may be alone in this) that poems are items for recitation or recital, that they are either to be recited by their readers, and if not aloud and before an audience, then thought of that way. Reading poems by oneself is a fantasy situation of sorts, where one is searching for something that will be effective as song or fable, narrative or moral exposition (sometimes), or some sometimes absurd ridiculous and provocative contradiction of these (to be modern about it), when an occasion for reading aloud should present itself.

Caution: this is not a recurrence to "speech" as the origin of writing. This is rather a belief that poetry is for speaking aloud and that the reading of it in silence to oneself supposes at some time a reading aloud. The silent reading being about as complete as the silent reading of a musical score.

I agree with James Sherry as to poetry and theory. I also agree with some of his rather noisy opponents that arriving at a fully articulated theoretical standpoint (a whole book, a discourse) as a means of generating poems at all is not quite what is wanted. Nevertheless, poems are written or otherwise composed by people who expect something of the results and in that respect there is always a theoretical intention.

I believe that it would not be difficult to substantiate the view that Lang-Po was concerned with theory, because of a seeming denial by many poets in the 70's that they needed to reflect on their theoretical positions, and the belief that as a result many 70's poets were becoming ineffectual as poets.

This comes from someone who in recent terminology must be counted as of Generation Minus One, but with sympathies in the later 70's and 1980's for G1 AND ALSO for a lot of G Minus One and Minus Two poets. (And Minus 3,4,5,6....)

I thought this all could be done with a lighter touch, around questions of Hokey-Tokey, -Pokey and -Cokey. But I guess the above heaviness is a necessary resort. Should I put this down to the present employment of poets teaching Graduates instead of Liberal College Undergraduates?

My wife, like her father, is for Tokey.

Tony Green,
e-mail: [REDACTED]
post: Dept of Art History,
University of Auckland,
Private Bag 92019,
Auckland, New Zealand
Fax: 64 9-[REDACTED]
Telephone: 64 9 [REDACTED] ext. 8981 or 7276

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262. **Jeffrey Timmons**

Re: Boy Talk

Thu 16 Feb 1995

There was an obit for James Merrill in last weeks New York Times--Tues or Wed, I think.

Would who ever posted the Stein conference at Pomona (or wherever) please repost it or send it my way, please? I'm trying to find it but haven't had any luck.

Jeffrey Timmons
[REDACTED]

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263. **Jeffrey Timmons**

Re: deified theories and unfounded vocabularies

Thu 16 Feb 1995

On Thu, 16 Feb 1995, Spencer Selby wrote:

I think if you don't care about change then all you've got is art for art's sake. I'm talking about anything that changes people outside of their relationship to art. This would be a pretty broad definition of change, which includes social and political change as well as changes that are more exclusive to the individual, or changes that are psychological and/or spiritual.

I always catch my self saying poetry is a revolutionary force, within it lies the potential and the means for . . . achieving a different world. Then I catch my self

again and say . . . but that faith, that belief is that the faith of modernism, that art itself can be a temporary stay against chaos? And then I remember how Richard Rorty divorces the personal visions from the aesthetic creations/ideas of particular artists/intellectuals because the types of change they desired would abhor us. And I am left in a dilemma, part of which is the question: What sorts of change? And how or what in art provides for this course?

I believe art/poetry has failed to bring about much change, viewed from any of these angles.

Hence, the postmodern. And I think the unhappiness you mention, not only about this situation but the inadequacy of theory to do more than promulgate analysis, is a difficult position to be in. It amounts to the condition I've alluded to, of being in a position of needing to distance oneself from the uses to which art (widely defined) been put and which, also, doesn't simply reduce it to beauty and/or use. I don't know. I guess my view is given some shape by my hesitation to revert to a position that reads/interprets art in some universalist-human-condition variety of analysis/appreciation: we need better tools. I share your skepticism and hope for change (I'm always interested in articulating the specifics, especially with a term like this), it's just I worry about harnessing art with such a responsibility as engendering change or being coterminous (?) with it--especially after its failure to do so.

One last thought (for now): I believe it was you, Spencer, who made the point of needing to stay on a general level rather than specific because things (understanding? what was it?) tend to break down at that level. Part of my reading of Emerson/Thoreau/Whitman (derived from Carafiol and others) is that they are almost simultaneously able to move between such levels--hence part of the power of their texts. Which move me. Which encourage me toward change. Perhaps we can compromise and articulate some issues--especially change--at that intermediary level and how that might be achieved through art. Is this merging art and politics too closely? I wouldn't want to hold art to any relation to politics that restricted it to performing such action I've gone on long enough for now

Thanks for chatting, Spencer. Hope all is well on your end!

Jeffrey Timmons

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264. **Jeffrey Timmons**
Re: Deified Theories Limited
Thu 16 Feb 1995

On Wed, 15 Feb 1995, Spencer Selby wrote:

When we go from a general sense of life's richness to explanations that are more specific, that is when the trouble starts. We cannot formulate or rationally comprehend this richness, its fluid order and connections, its complexity and unceasing fragmentation. We all have our awareness of this, dare I say, totality. But I believe art is better-suited to expressing or dealing with it than theory.

Yes, this is what I wanted to emphasize. Emerson/Thoreau do this to an extent I find stunning. If we can't "rationally comprehend this richness", though, Spencer, what sort of experience of art do we have. Kind of an obvious question, I suppose, but.... And does this "richness" have to do with change? And is that change one of a "spiritual" quality? And if so does that experience of art exclude it from being able to make the sorts of change you are interested in?

Jeffrey Timmons

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265. **Jeffrey Timmons**

Re: Boy Talk

Fri 17 Feb 1995

Oops, sorry about posting to this subject; oversight--or is it undersight?--on my part.

Jeffrey Timmons

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266. **Tenney Nathanson**

Re: POETICS Digest - 14 Feb 1995 to 15 Feb 1995

Fri 17 Feb 1995

Alan--

Well I will delurk as a (prior?) Merrill reader--always used to do him in my contemporary poetry course though front-end pressure and special-topics orientation at grad level (G-1 at any rate) has meant I haven't done so in a couple of years. I never got as interested in all the ouji board stuff as some said one should; The Fire Screen and Briving the Elements where the books I liked best. Some of the ballad like poems -- though more narratively unpacked--stuff like, is it, "Days of 1935," pick up on some of the demonic energies in Auden's terrific ballads in very nice ways; Willoware Cup reminds me of Bishop's "Poem (about the size of an old style dollar bill)"; and "Syrinx" is just plain terrific. Auden too is prolly not a big favorite here, but I learned mostly the early Auden via Kenneth Koch at Columbia. btw I've found myself looking at Kenneth's stuff again lately, off and on, and wondering too about what's interesting in NY

School (or so-called so-called NY School) that didn't get fully picked up on in LangPo: my divided loyalties and surreptitious personal master plan in part. more on this later; doan wanna put my whole self in just now.... Tenney

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267. **John Cayley**
What about the lurkers?

Fri 17 Feb 1995

(... which provoked -- ?already-much-rehearsed -- musings about the particular characteristics of these discussions, perhaps worthy of consideration by those who take an active interest in the poetics of discourse.)

The lurkers far outnumber a few decloaked, familiar voices which speak in a brightly-lit space but remain invisible.

The voices of the speakers are emphatic, ringing with commitment; they often are fractious.

The speakers appear to be speaking to each other. They do respond to one another. There are always replies waiting for them from the other speakers. The discussions become elaborate, self-referring, complex. The speakers have time to consider what they will say -- time which does not seem to exist for the lurkers, who simply hear by reading, now and then.

But the speakers are not speaking to one another. If they wanted to do this, then they would simply correspond. They are speaking for the lurkers and for themselves. They are publishing their voices. What they say is uttered with the sense that they are overheard in the midst of their vital discussions.

The speakers are not speaking. They are writing. Writing on the loosely gathered leaves of their next book. One day their words will be edited into shape. Before then they will be bound up and stored in an archive.

Occasionally the lurkers decloak and speak. Everything changes.

(... I'll resist the temptation to emerge from this mode of writing and make any of the analytic comments that spring to mind. Leave it to the lurkers?)

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268. **John Geraets**
Re: deified theories

Fri 17 Feb 1995

Q: What's the difference between a good langpo
and a tree?

A1: Nothing.

A2: Everything.

A3: The Answer, like the Question, is beside the point.

A4: The tree, unlike the langpo, isn't preoccupied with defining its position. It occupies it.

Take your pick. I like A4 (& not just cause it's longer). Does theorize mean think about or write about what you think about - or maybe do these things in specific contexts or forums - as per this LIST.

If I ask, what makes me feel welcome here, what's my qualification being here (apart from the gender and de-lurker invitations, which are lovely and help), I'd say it's cos I'm interested in intellectual discussion, specifically langpo-type speculations. This of course means I like the company, very much, even if I don't know the quality of your social or other lives. Right now, don't care.

So, it's a kind of community - I mean, there are commonnesses operating huh, of interests, of reading, of a pleasure in theorizing. Of stimulation and the pleasure - yeah maybe power too - of expression.

Poetry and its theorizing I think don't have social or political or what have you functions. Maybe the sense of responsibility comes from the feeling that we owe our patrons, now that our patrons/the market are in good part the state, hence society.

I mean, it's opportunity and proclivity that connects us. What are the personal costs against the pleasure of being on the LIST - does it come down to being a university-sponsored, mail- (oops, male-) dominated thing.

The loop that leads back from such theory to its sponsoring society must necessarily get mediated beyond recognition, it's dishonest to claim responsibility for ourselves. At most, such responsibility is an indirect thng.

Now maybe it's the processes of mediation running too & from langpo and its theorizers, job appointments, books

published, conferences, earnings, what have you. But theory has to do with what it theorizes, in this case literary stuff (&itself).

It seems to me typically literature doesn't do well patronizing the patron.

By the way, Tony, with the place you give sound/voice in poems where do you leave someone who just happens not to have heard poetry aloud, or a deaf someone. I can't see the disadvantage.

Surely one sensitivity being blocked serves well to open others?

John Geraets



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269. **Spencer Selby**
Re: Dumbfounded

Fri 17 Feb 1995

Dear Don Byrd,

I'm very surprised that you have no awareness of the downside of poetic theory, that you "can't imagine why one would not want to use all the tools that one might have at hand." Poetic theory, like all art theory, is used more as a weapon than as a tool of creation. Even if you disagree with the word "more" in that sentence, surely you're not so naive as to think this theory is only used to help with creation.

Respectfully Yours,

Spencer Selby

P.S. Wanna trade publications (so we can see all that subtlety we've both been missing)? I'll send you a copy of my antitheory nonbook if you send me a copy of one of your most useful, optimistic tools.

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270. **Sheila Murphy**
Thoughts on Theory

Fri 17 Feb 1995

Just spinning off Spencer's latest post (hi, Spencer!), I sense that much about theory (I fear I point to an abstraction rather than to any certain individual viewpoint) risks treatment as commodity, rather than as the fluid thing it is.

The dance of interplay between theory and practice means for me that there is always something to enjoy, closer to infinite ways of looking at a single entity. It is as though one should not (consciously) stop, for fear of giving the nod to gravity and then falling for who knows how long.

The pleasure of theory is certainly one of its big selling points, in addition to its power to locate, frame, describe, attune to resonances not previously picked up.

Sheila Murphy

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271. **Loss Glazier**

Re: Boy Talk

Fri 17 Feb 1995

Would who ever posted the Stein conference at Pomona (or wherever) please repost it or send it my way, please? I'm trying to find it but haven't had any luck.

This can be found in the "Announcements" section of the Electronic Poetry Center.

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272. **Loss Glazier**

Re: Boy Talk

Fri 17 Feb 1995

EPC FAQ

Rev. 1-30-95

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The Electronic Poetry Center (Buffalo)

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 provides access to numerous electronic resources in the new poetics including RIF/T and other electronic poetry journals, the Poetics List archives, a library of poetic texts, the Segue Newsletter, news of related print sources, and direct connections to numerous related poetic projects. For texts housed at the Electronic Poetry Center, texts are "definitive" texts inasmuch as, prior to posting, they have been approved by their producers.

The Center is located at <gopher://writing.upenn.edu/11/internet/library/e-journals/ub/rift>

Gopher Access:

For those who have access to gopher, type

[gopher writing.upenn.edu](gopher://writing.upenn.edu)

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 and Mosaic Access:

For those with World-Wide Web (lynx) or Mosaic access, from your interface, 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>

(Substituting hh for 11 above may produce better results on your system.)

Check with your system administrator if you have problems with access. Also ask about setting a "bookmark" through your system for quick and easy access to the Center when you log on.

If you have comments or suggestions about sites to be added to the Center, do not hesitate to contact Loss Pequen~o Glazier, [REDACTED] or Kenneth Sherwood, [REDACTED]

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

Loss Pequen~o Glazier
for Kenneth Sherwood and Loss Glazier
in collaboration with Charles Bernstein

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273. **Chris Stroffolino**

Re: More Boy Talk

Fri 17 Feb 1995

OOPS--dear Kali tal--You're right, I did end up replying to a MALE in a subject topic concerning the lack of women. Sorry about that, chris

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274. **Bishop Morda**

ADVERTISEMENT/CURRICULAR REFORM

Fri 17 Feb 1995

MEOW PRESS

Spring 1995 list

Beginning a fifth season of small press publication, Meow Press is featuring the work of senior Language Poets and many supporting and distorting younger poets both avowing and disavowing the historic literary movement. Also this semester, Meow Press Textbooks makes its debut in the theoretical/academic marketplace. These products are all for sale!

Rachel Back, LITANY

Ben Friedlander, A KNOT IS NOT A TANGLE

James Sherry, FOUR FOR BEN

Dubravka Djuric, COSMOPOLITAN ALPHABET

Misko Suvakovic, PAS TOUT (Meow Press Textbook)

Mark Johnson, THREE BAD WISHES

Charles Bernstein, THE SUBJECT

Andrews/Bernstein/Sherry, ART/TECHNOLOGY: 20 Brief Proposals (1984)
(Meow Press Textbook)

(Note: Special! All books are 5.00 + 1.00 postage)

Meow Press is actively reading manuscripts for the spring offensive of the 1995 campaign! Please address all correspondence to 151 Park St.
Buffalo/NY 14201

275. **Steve Evans**

Espousing 2/17

Fri 17 Feb 1995

FACT CHECK: VOTES NEEDED TO KILL AGENCY
INITIAL REPORT FROM WESLEYAN UNIVERSITY
MARCH 14 / ADVOCACY DAY
FEBRUARY 28 / NY ARTISTS OPPOSE CONTRACT
THE ART OF PRACTICE: A RESPONSE FROM HENRY GOULD

FACT CHECK: VOTES NEEDED TO KILL AGENCY?

Can anyone out there confirm a point of Congressional procedure for us? We have been told that it takes 218 votes in the House and 60 in the Senate to abolish a federal agency. Since it appears the opponents of the NEA/NEH do not have those numbers, it would be cause for optimism if this is true (though of course the specter of an agency with no budget continues to loom).

INITIAL REPORT FROM WESLEYAN UNIVERSITY

We traveled out to Middletown, Connecticut last night to attend the event organized by AJ Weissbard at Wesleyan. Roger Mandle (President of RISD) and George White (Eugene O'Neill Theater Center)--both members of the National Council on the Arts--spoke for about 20 minutes each, after which questions were solicited from the audience of approximately 150 people.

Mr. White, who started the O'Neill Theater in 1964-65, emphasized the role of federal funds in supporting "young" institutions. He noted that while the loss of NEA funds would lead to 5 new plays and 2 musicals/operas being cut from the O'Neill annual programme, the impact on less established organizations would be more drastic. Faced with a shrinking base of corporate and foundational support, organizations that facilitate innovation and experimentation would be driven under, leaving only the "no-risk" institutions (Symphonies, Orchestras, Ballets) intact.

President Mandle used his speech to attack the "narrow corridor" of thought being imposed by NEA opponents. Switching with great facility between aesthetics & economics, Mandle argued that the arts are a "strategic asset" in the post-industrial world economy. Answering a frequently heard argument that since the NEA is of recent origin it can be eliminated without unduly affecting the nation's cultural life, Mandle noted that the automobile is also a fairly recent development but no one suggests that we eliminate it and go back to walking.

Both Mandle and White emphasized the role that "design" plays in the lived, material environment of people who might not encounter art in other ways. Both men also called for increasing the visibility of Endowment support as a way of countering the conservative strategy of seizing on controversial exhibits and presenting them to the public as typical of what the Endowment does. White suggested that plaques acknowledging NEA-support be distributed along with grant-monies and displayed everywhere that NEA money has been used.

FEBRUARY 28 / NY ARTISTS OPPOSE CONTRACT

(Anne Burt of LitNet forwarded the following press release yesterday. As it happens, the Senate vote on the Balanced Budget Amendment--a key component of the GOP Contract--has just been set for the 28th as well.)

For Immediate Release, 2/10/95

A Gathering of Artists in Opposition to the Contract On America Featuring:

Homer Erotic, Tuli Kupferberg, Emily XYZ & Myers, Bartlett, Matthew Courtney, John S. Hall, Todd Colby, Edwin Torres, Miguel Algarin, Eric Drooker and Others.

Event will be hosted by Reno.

On February 28th at 9 pm, artists against the Contract With America will assemble for an evening of readings, rants and riffs at The Fez, below Time Cafe, located at 380 Lafayette Street in Manhattan. Artists scheduled to perform include: the all female rock band, Homer Erotic; Tuli Kupferberg, the self-defined non-traditional anarchist, poet and cartoonist; Miguel Algarin, co-founder of the Nuyorican Poet's Cafe; spoken word artists Emily XYZ & Myers Bartlett; Sine regular Stephan Said and many more. Admission is \$5, with proceeds to benefit the Literary Network, an organization founded in 1992 to support a strong, uncensored National Endowment for the Arts.

This event is designed as a visual and vocal protest against the conservative agenda proposed in the Republicans' Contract with America. The goal of the evening is to celebrate artistic freedom and diversity as well as build community and unity in the face of an intended dismantling of civil rights and social services. As artists and members of arts organizations, we want to draw attention to the critical issues of censorship and disappearing funding. Anne Burt of the Literary Network will be on hand to distribute action materials, including postcards to Congress and names of government contacts.

For more information contact:

Brenda Coultas [REDACTED]

Stephan Said [REDACTED]

MARCH 14 / ADVOCACY DAY

The American Council for the Arts (ACA) has targeted March 14 as a "National Call-in Day for Art and Culture." They are encouraging organizations and individuals to make the case for continued federal arts funding either by traveling to DC for in-person meetings with Congressional representatives or by calling/faxing/wiring.

ACA is recommending that each interested person involve at least five colleagues, friends, relatives (etc.) in the day's effort. You can get more information by calling ACA at [REDACTED], ext. 227. Their street address is: One East 53rd St, New York, NY 10022.

THE ART OF PRACTICE: A RESPONSE

Henry Gould, a poet, participated in Freely Espousing-Providence. What follows is an excerpt from his response to some of the questions we posed on 2/15:

Maybe one thing artists could do is "build coalitions" in SPECIFIC COLLABORATIONS of agit-prop, Federal Theater 30's-style political work. Some will claim that art has been over-politicized & ideologized now for years - with a lot of pseudo-political art & pc one-upmanship. But with the attack on from the right, this could paradoxically reduce the polarization -by drawing political art more toward the "center". As I see it the path to this is through a basic identification: the attack on the arts is THE SAME THING, is PART OF, the general agenda of social & cultural impoverishment underway - the downsizing of America, as gov't at all levels (witness Giuliani's turn in NY) abdicates vision & follows the dictates of the "world economy". This is a very basic position, but the agenda of a collaborate art strategy might be to "figure it out", allegorize it, narrate it, re-discover it. That is, in the spirit of the living newspaper of the thirties, let's look at the demographics of class disparity in this country - between super-rich, white middle class, working poor, minorities, very poor, & homeless - then look at how this relates to the economics of private corporate & institutional & professional power IN COMPARISON with public (government) institutions. Out of this research will come a perspective on how the malign indifference of the rich, the mechanism of global markets, the resentment & ignorance of the middle, and the venality of commodity-art all TRANSLATE into feeble, tight-fisted, self-destructive government. And it will culminate in a recognition of personal responsibility - including that of selfish artists -to make democracy part of an over-all just & compassionate civilization, in a world currently subject to tyranny & terror on an even worse level.

To summarize: let's make solemn, collaborative political theater-works presented very directly & openly as challenges to the Contract on America, which provide evidence that the philosophy & activities of present & planned government at every level DO NOT MEET THE STANDARDS OF PUBLIC GOOD

for civilization, & challenging those who block these standards from coming into play. I think artists could possibly build some authority by MAKING ART ABOUT THE GENERAL PROBLEM rather than by simply DOING POLITICS TO PROTECT ART FUNDING. (It's not a matter of choosing one or the other, though.)

+++++

Steve Evans & Jennifer Moxley / Freely Espousing
61 E. Manning St., Providence RI 02906-4008



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276. **Mark Nowak**
North American Ideophonics
Fri 17 Feb 1995

North American Ideophonics Annual (1993/4)
2 vol., 200pg. Assemblings

Available for FREE.

Simply send a \$3.00 for two-day priority mail delivery to:

Mark Nowakl
908 Franklin Terrace, 3rd floor
Minneapolis, MN 55406

(Contributors include: Nathaniel Tarn, Rochelle Ratner, Carol Berge, Dan Featherston, Eric Priestley, Jerome Rothenberg, Pierre Joris, Theodore Enslin, Diane Glancy, Karl Young, Maria Damon, Charles Alexander, Chris Funkhouser, Maurice Kenny, katie Yates, Sheila Murphy, Bonnie Barnett, Larry Wendt, Bob Grumman, Kimberly TallBear, Dennis Tedlock, Forrest Gander, John Olson, John Bradley, Michelle Perez, George Kalamaras, Armand Schwerner, etc.)

\$3.00---> please send in stamps, if possible.

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277. **cris cheek**
Boy Talk
Fri 17 Feb 1995

Hi Kali Tal, and thanks for the TNC address.

Last thing I bought by Gill Scott-Heron was 'Message To The Meesengers'. I play it a lot at the moment. Why? - because of the texture of the voices, because of what he's saying and who he's addressing and because (above all for

me) I think he has a fat and frank and direct talking 'tone' (exactly not Alan Goulding's e-mail tone problem) that engages my listening. Brings here something between Tony Green's re-statement of Bunting's advocacy 'I have set down words . . . to trace in the air a pattern of sound - Poetry must be read aloud', Ira Lightman's call to pay attention to the 'musical phrase' and your own bringing of poets such as Ice-T and Gill Scott-Heron (among many many others) out of and into, from the root to the source of the rap, dub and broad oral traditions, into the POETICS list discussions.

Having said all of which by way of introduction I then get a little nervous - because several slippages are at work here. Not least any definition of 'musical phrase' and thereby a discussion of a breadth of cutting music practice in popular market and independent market spheres around which it might be difficult to form a consensual definition of any use - even were such a thing desirable.

I wonder how open listening is in the present? How far nuance has to become blunted before readings can be shared? I was very struck by your comments on the literature of trauma and -

*the failure of language ("You *can't* understand!") and the desperate need for language to succeed (You *must* understand!). Revolutionary poets yearn to write with such strength that their audience is traumatized as they have > been traumatized (Jones/Baraka raging that "poems are bullshit unless they are / teeth or trees or lemons piled / on a step," . . .)*

You're right on ascribing documentary 'but never at the now' functions to both "terrorist" and "revolutionary" poetry.

So, I'm curious. You obviously read this list, do you feel that the struggle for the production of both constructive and critical meanings (maybe simultaneously) whether for language or through language is irreparably fractured into constructs of identity OR are you suggesting a need for more pro-active polymorphous traffic? It's not intended as a 'trick' question by the way.

There's been some allusion to trust in respect to various agendas over the past few weeks here I'd say let's start from the position that -

we're all human beings and therefore not to be trusted (a sentiment impressed onto me by Eric Mottram - and terrifying to some in its honesty?)

Don't you just love this thing of posting privately and publicly. I do.

best

cris

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278. **Spencer Selby**
Re: A Cockney Sparrow
Fri 17 Feb 1995

Dear Tony Green,

I expect something of the results of my poetry; anyone who is a committed poet expects something of the results. But that does not mean I have a need to formulate what those results will be, or necessarily mean. I may anticipate those results, which is quite different from formulating them, since my anticipation may involve a range of responses that need not be explained or characterized in a theoretical way.

I am sorry if this post seems noisy to you. If so, look at it this way: The theorists will probably take over this list again soon.

Spencer Selby

On Fri, 17 Feb 1995, Tony Green wrote:

I agree with James Sherry as to poetry and theory. I also agree with some of his rather noisy opponents that arriving at a fully articulated theoretical standpoint (a whole book, a discourse) as a means of generating poems at all is not quite what is wanted. Nevertheless, poems are written or otherwise composed by people who expect something of the results and in that respect there is always a theoretical intention.>

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279. **Susan Schultz**
boytalk (fwd)
Fri 17 Feb 1995

Kali persuaded me to put this direct message to her onto the list.

----- Forwarded message -----

Date: Thu, 16 Feb 1995 21:59:17 -1000 (HST)

From: Susan Schultz <[REDACTED]>

To: [REDACTED]

Subject: boytalk

Kali--thanks for your remarks of late on "boy talk." As someone who has tried several times to engage the list in conversation, I wanted to suggest that the question of "tone" is perhaps a gendered one. I don't want to over-simplify matters, but Deborah Tannen's model of male and female conversations seems to work as well on this list as it does in my freshman comp class. I got on

another poetry list, populated mainly by new formalist fans, where women write in a lot--or at least two women do. But far less signifyin' is going on.

Several people, including one or two men, did contact me directly about things I'd said; it would be interesting to talk about messages between listees that aren't sent to everyone. And now I'm doing it. I was disappointed, however, when I tried to bring "multiculturalism" into the conversation, and discovered that these radical language poets, some of them, are quite reactionary in their literary politics.

So I guess I'd suggest redirecting Golding's remark about tone; he brought it up in the right context, but we were then swept right back into boy talk. More than needing to talk to women, they need to ask more questions; Silliman's posting came rather late in the day.

Susan Schultz

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280. **Spencer Selby**
Re: Thoughts on Theory

Fri 17 Feb 1995

Dear Sheila,

I'm all for the pleasure of theory. I read it and I get pleasure from it and I'm sure it fuels my poetic practice. (Some of the best theory I've read in past year is by one of the people on here that I've been "arguing with.") What I don't like, what I have a big problem with is when claims are made for the necessity of formulated theoretical positions on the part of poets. When it is stated or implied that those who have not formulated their poetics are "irresponsible" or in some way "misguided."

Thanks very much for your post, Sheila. I am interested in any further thoughts you might have on this, or anything veering off from this.

Spencer

On Fri, 17 Feb 1995, Sheila Murphy wrote:

Just spinning off Spencer's latest post (hi, Spencer!), I sense that much about theory (I fear I point to an abstraction rather than to any certain individual viewpoint) risks treatment as commodity, rather than as the fluid thing it is. The dance of interplay between theory and practice means for me that there is always something to enjoy, closer to infinite ways of looking at a single entity. It is as though one should not (consciously) stop, for fear of giving the nod to gravity and then falling for who knows how long.

The pleasure of theory is certainly one of its big selling points, in

addition to its power to locate, frame, describe, attune to resonances not previously picked up.

Sheila Murphy

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281. **Loss Glazier**

Re: boytalk (fwd)

Fri 17 Feb 1995

On gender in postings, some here might be interested in Susan Herring's paper, "Gender and Democracy in Computer-Mediated Communication." The background to Herring's linguistic research:

--> Since 1991 I've been lurking (or what I prefer to call "carrying out ethnographic observation") on various computer-mediated discussion lists, downloading electronic conversations and analyzing the communicative behaviors of participants. I became interested in gender shortly after subscribing to my first discussion list, LINGUIST-L. Within the first month after I began receiving messages, a conflict arose (what I would later learn to call a "flame war") in which the two major theoretical camps within the field became polarized around an issue of central interest. My curiosity was piqued by the fact that very few women were contributing to this important professional event; they seemed to be sitting on the sidelines while men were airing their opinions and getting all the attention.

Some of Herring's remarks:

--> Recent research has been uncovering some eye-opening differences in the ways men and women interact "online"...

--> My basic claim has two parts: first, that women and men have recognizably different styles in posting to the Internet, contrary to the claim that CMC neutralizes distinctions of gender; and second, that women and men have different communicative ethics -- that is, they value different kinds of online interactions as appropriate and desirable. I illustrate these differences -- and some of the problems that arise because of them -- with specific reference to the phenomenon of "flaming".

Anyway, interesting, I thought, given recent discussions.

Herring's full paper is available via the web version of the Electronic Poetry Center under "documents" then "conversations." Use lynx or a world-wide web browser to go to:

URL=<http://writing.upenn.edu/internet/library/e-journals/ub/rift>

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282. **Juliana Spahr**

Re: boy talk

Fri 17 Feb 1995

Reasons why I might not respond at any given moment:

- * the conversation goes too quick
- * a fear of conversation getting out of control
- * I rarely tend to respond to non-personal messages of any sort (my minor input into this list has been indicative of my role on other lists, including the woman's studies list)
- * the feeling that the list is mainly boys talking about boys books or boys talking to boys, I must admit, also plays a part

I am not sure how much of this has to do with gender.

I do understand the serious nature of the technology-gender problem (and the technology-race and the technology-class problems), the poetry-gender problem (which I am not sure how but continues to remain a serious problem despite a large number of active women poets), and various other social-induced, gender-related ills.

I do not know how to counter act them.

I do not want the conversation on this list or any other list to have to be policed by some sort of affirmative action of response or mention.

I just wish society was different, I think, that people were a little more self-aware of what they talked about and how and to whom.

I guess the only answer I can suggest to Ron's question about how to get more women to respond is to fight for the overthrow of the patriarchal system which is the cause of fewer women being wired. Nothing short of that is going to do much, or maybe, mean much.

I wonder if there were equal amounts of women and men on this list if the gender construction of the conversation

would not be more equal.

I am not sure there is a gender proclivity to lurk or not lurk.

I do not want to be a woman all the time either.

Part of me wishes I were not responding to but rather disavowing this gender narrative.

Juliana Spahr

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283. **Jonathan Brannen**

Re: North American Ideophonics

Sat 18 Feb 1995

Am I to understand from this message that you are taking this sanctified medium, this cyber-utopia, and corrupting it for non-commercial reasons?!

JB

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284. **Robert Drake**

Re: boy talk

Sat 18 Feb 1995

julianna

*I guess the only answer I can suggest to Ron's question
about how to get more women to respond
is to fight for the overthrow of the patriarchal system
which is the cause of fewer women being wired.
Nothing short of that is going to do much, or maybe,
mean much.*

agreed that the patriarchal system is in some way responsible for underrepresentation in the discussion; but not (or not only) because of technological access--last time i checked, better than 20% of the subscribers to this list were female, a percentage not reflected in the postings. access to tech is sure a factor, but the social (patriarchial) relations seem to me more significant, and harder to address...

lbd

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285. **Jorge Guitart**

boy talk

Sat 18 Feb 1995

gross underrepresentation is a factor (20% is still gross underrepresentation)
another perhaps is the fact that women tend to do relevant things with their
time.
their time

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286. **Bill Luoma**

theory

Sat 18 Feb 1995

Spencer,

I share your distrust of the current value of current cultural theory. I think a lot of people are sick of post-this and post-that. Why can't we talk about theories that, on the surface, don't have anything to do with art? Like, does anyone know if the astrophysicists have figured out what a quasar is? What's up with string theory? GUT? T.C. Marshall, what's going on in the world of flora?

Or I'd be interested to hear about prose composition theory. We should get Peter Mortensen on this list. What methods are they teaching college freshman to get essays down on *paper* (for lack of a better word).

I've enjoyed the p>q stuff, not that I pretend to understand it. But it makes me think about the Law of the Excluded Middle. Joe, Jorge, could you frame the parmenides verbally around the law of identity, excluded middle, etc? (I don't know what I mean.)

And I always like to listen to discussions about gender, but don't feel *qualified* to expound. What if all the boys just shut up for a month and let the girls steer?

bluoma

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287. **Edward Foster**

Re: boy talk

Sat 18 Feb 1995

The Russian poet Nina Iskrenko died this past week. Her principal American translators include John High, Katya Olmsted, and Patrick Henry, among others. She was John High's Russian translator as well.

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288. **Carl Lynden Peters**
i'd like to introduce myself...
Sat 18 Feb 1995

Feb. 18, 1995

Good morning poetics!

--As far as i can tell, everything has worked out and i'm on the poetics list. This brief message is just a way of introducing myself. i'm currently pursuing doctoral study at Simon Fraser here in Burnaby BC. My area of study involves bpNichol so this poetics discussion group makes sense in light of that. My earlier MA work dealt with the Barthesian death of author concept & its relation to Nichol's poetics -- i can tell you more about that as time goes, if you like. In any case, --i'm happy to be here, and hope this message gets thru without too many distortions.

Carl

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289. **Mark Nowak**
Re: North American Ideophonics
Sat 18 Feb 1995

Yes.

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290. **braman sandra**
Re: theory
Sat 18 Feb 1995

Given that at its extremities postmodernism turns its back on research as an impossibility and as irrelevant -- Larry Grossberg is now claiming that doing pure theory and only theory is now the most correct form of political action -- it would seem to me the same fate would soon fall to theory itself. Sandra Braman

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291. **Steven Howard Shoemaker**
Whitman notebooks discovered (fwd)
Sat 18 Feb 1995

Newsgroups: clari.living.books,clari.living.history
Subject: Long-lost Walt Whitman notebooks discovered
Copyright: 1995 by Reuters, R
Date: Fri, 17 Feb 95 14:40:07 PST

NEW YORK (Reuter) - Four long-lost Walt Whitman notebooks have been rediscovered after disappearing during World War II and could give scholars new insight into the development of one of the world's most famous poems, experts said Friday.

Sotheby's auction house said it had rediscovered the notebooks kept by the 19th-century American poet, which contain philosophical writings, his impressions as a male nurse watching young soldiers die during the Civil War and some of the earliest versions of his most famous poem, ``Song of Myself."

Also recovered was a small paper butterfly that Whitman used as a prop in one of the most famous photographs of an American author ever taken, the frontpiece accompanying an 1881 edition of his collection ``Leaves of Grass." He had placed the butterfly so that it appeared to have landed on his ring finger.

The notebooks and the butterfly disappeared from the Whitman collection at the Library of Congress in 1942 as the works were being packed off in sealed crates to a safe haven in case of a German attack on Washington.

When the crates were reopened in 1946, 14 notebooks and the butterfly were gone and presumed lost forever.

But Sotheby's said a man came to them last January with four of the notebooks and the butterfly and said he discovered them among his late father's effects and wondered what they were and if they were valuable.

Sotheby's would give no details of the man or how his father came across the notebooks but said as soon as he learned they were from the Library of Congress, he demanded they be returned there.

Sotheby's said it will hand them back to the Library of Congress next week.

``I would rank this as one of the most exciting discoveries I have ever been involved in and that includes finding an unknown copy of the Declaration of Independence and the manuscript of 'Huckleberry Finn,'" said Sotheby's rare books specialist Selby Kiffer.

Kiffer added, ``These notebooks will give scholars invaluable insight into the development of 'Song of Myself' and 'Leaves of Grass.' I believe the notebook also contains Whitman poems that have never been published."

The four notebooks dated from 1847 to about 1863 and contained a total of 400 pages of aphorisms, observations, crosses next to the names of dead soldiers, drafts of Civil War poetry and most importantly early drafts of ``Song of Myself," the poem that begins ``Leaves of Grass" and is considered a masterpiece of world literature.

``There are some wonderful observations in the notebooks, including a story about how when Secretary of the Treasury

Salmon Chase visited a friend of Whitman's and saw a copy of 'Leaves of Grass' on his shelf, he asked, 'How can you have that nasty book?'" Kiffer said.

If the notebooks had gone on sale, they would have fetched a minimum of \$350,000, he said.

I also read a piece in the Wash. Post that reproduced a couple of quotes from the notebooks. W. wrote that the "Test of a poem" is "How far it can elevate, enlarge, purify, deepen and make happy the attributes of the body and soul of a man."

And in another passage that speaks to the concerns of this list he wrote: "Every soul has its own individual language, Often unspoken or feebly, lamely, haltingly spoken; but a true fit for that man, and perfectly adapted for his use.-- The truths I tell to you or any other may not be plain to you, because I do not translate them fully from my idiom to yours.--If I could do so, and do it well, they would be as apparent to you as they are to me, for they are truths.--No two have exactly the same language and the great translator and joiner of the whole is the poet."

steve shoemaker

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292. **Alan Sondheim**

Re: theory

Sat 18 Feb 1995

"Postmodernism" doesn't do any such thing, "postmodernism" doesn't do anything; people do. And there is a good deal of postmodern research, from Ann Kaplan's older work on MTV through Edward Soja and various postmodern geographers.

I also don't think that postmodern has "extremities."

As far as the theory/poetry/poetics debate goes, it befuddles me. I don't see where the _ought_ appears in any of this. People are invested in different discourses, different modes of writing. So be it. It seems dubious that any are primary; we're not after all dealing with an axiomatics here, and the last seventy years have shown that even axiomatics is full of holes.

What's been depressing about the debate is what might be seen an academicization (pardon the word) of poetry itself. I would ask where the solitary writer is focused on hir work, but that is always already problematic in an email list fostering community.

Alan

On Sat, 18 Feb 1995, braman sandra wrote:

Given that at its extremities postmodernism turns its back on research as an impossibility and as irrelevant -- Larry Grossberg is now claiming that doing pure theory and only theory is now the most correct form of political action -- it would seem to me the same fate would soon fall to theory itself.
Sandra Braman

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293. **cris cheek**

Turbulence

Sat 18 Feb 1995

James you wrote, 14/2

. . . turbulence is at the ehart of wht I 'd like to accomplish at hte outset, but later I'd like a further. And in that sense the poetry might come after writing . . .

I'm taking it as read that all of that is intentional. And I ehol ehartedly agree.

Slippage isn't the all of where it's at by any means.

It reveals the critical processual dance of the ungainly - (thinking on its feet?, and falling through the potential of points to engagement).

cris

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294. **cris cheek**

Good Morning Poetics

Sat 18 Feb 1995

Carl, just home it's 21:21:12 - the time zone
lapse means that this
evening I'm reading
'Good Morning Poetics'.
There's a lot of theory
lurking in that welcome.
(Babylon / Vietnam / Holiday Camps)

Having to have recently been
watching other's p and qs
being debated here and being
asked to 'place your bets' on G1,

G2 or G3 pre-G up and post-Gee-ing
 (we're talking GGs I take it)

- oh, by the way, careful when
 if typing either L or . . . M
to connect them onto the popular
 front of a 'word'
(there's considerable negotiation
 going on at present
some are calling
 for a decisive break with the past
around 'The Breath of the Auteur')

- and what with the
warriors of the lang-shan-po
 (for those who never saw the
original cyber-suicide TV series
 'The Water Margins' this is
becoming an impossible object as
 US Air Force sponsored research
currently 'progressing' into optics and
 psychology at Yale would have it)
throwing down their challenge
 to the peer hungry new beat hordes
and others
 pasting homolinguistic translations
of the Hokey Chokey
 playing havoc with cultural
roots on this side of the pond

- well you'll probably soon
feel right at home.

good luck
cris

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295. **Kali Tal**
Re: boytalk (fwd)
Sat 18 Feb 1995

Hi, Cris; Hi, Susan--

It is better, yes, to take the dance off the back-channel and perform in public.
Posting is performance, a new kind of art; writing in motion, more like

improvisation in jazz than literary composition--skywriting, lightwriting, sandpainting, here and gone, happening in time.

Cris asks:

So, I'm curious. You obviously read this list, do you feel that the struggle for the production of both constructive and critical meanings (maybe simultaneously) whether for language or through language is irreparably fractured into constructs of identity OR are you suggesting a need for more pro-active polymorphous traffic? It's not intended as a 'trick' question by the way.

My answer is, Yes. And this is not intended as a 'trick' answer. See, nobody's got just **one** construct of identity: I am this, but I am also this, and this, and this, and this. To be whole, we gotta keep moving, shifting from perspective to perspective, so we don't leave any of our ownself unaccounted for. Each declaration of identity **is** a "construct," and reflects only a part of the whole, so if we hold onto it too hard, we lose the point, which is that constructs are useful, but that they shouldn't, **can't** contain us. Language is the tool of our fragmentation; at the very moment we describe "how we feel," we have already left our whole selves behind, because the description accounted for the feeling of the moment ago, but not of the now. Identity is a process, not a thing. So we need to counter the fractures with an attempt to create a pro-active, polymorphous traffic inside our own selves and between us and others which takes into account both the necessity and limitations of constructs of identity.

i yam what i yam
a world-changing fiction
a trickster
a chimera
a heterogloss in my own time

And, Cris, I'd rather start from the position that we're all human beings and therefore not to be trusted and to be trusted at the same time.

When Susan (hi, Susan) sent me her note backchannel, I urged her to post it to the list because it seemed to me that she was saying exactly what needed to be said out in the open. The question of "tone" **is** really important, and those of us troubled by the "tone" of discussion on POETICS ought to out-and-out **talk** about it. (Thereby, perhaps, changing the tone.) It's no accident that one woman (Susan) has brought up the issue of multiculturalism, and another woman (me) has brought up the issue of the (unintentional, but also unnoticed) exclusion of African-American, feminist, and other identity-oriented poets from the discussion, and that there was **no** response to either woman's post on the public channel. Most white, male enclaves are pretty happy to **stay** white, male enclaves. And why wouldn't they be? But POETICS is **not** a white, male

enclave, it just operates like one. So I figure that if the women here *quit* letting it operate like one by entering into and changing the discussion, then we can carve out some space for ourselves, and begin to build a community where some real exchange can start to take place. Even in the worst case scenario--the men ignore the women, and the women talk among themselves--we can still *illustrate* that the problem exists by enacting it (and archiving it) as a text. Of course, that's a lot of work to expect already overworked women to undertake, but perhaps, in this venue, such work can pay off.

What follows is a lengthy rumination about gender in espace, including some excerpts from items I've previously posted on another list:

In January of 1993 I was part (perhaps even instigator) of a massive flamewar on the TNC (technoculture) list. The flamewar revolved around issues of gender and women's voice in espace. I learned a great deal from this discussion, and I've gone back to the text files again and again, coming away with something new each time. Juliana (pleased to meet you, Juliana) writes that she "does not want the conversation on this list or any other to have to be policed by some sort of affirmative action of response or mention." I agree. Policing rarely works in *any* situation (doesn't stop crime, does it?). But I've noticed that what I fear more than policing itself (since policing on the net is really quite rare) are *accusations* of policing directed at those of us who dare to criticize the speech and/or "tone" of others. (And, yes, this does resonate with the "political correctness" argument the right uses to make the left appear more powerful than it is...) Like Juliana, "I do not want to be a woman all the time either." In fact, the ability to "pass" on the net is a real relief to me, and I use it frequently. But passing is just... passing. What I'd really like is for it not to be so exhausting to be a woman. At any rate, let me share with you a short piece which I wrote in the middle of the TNC flamewar, after suffering the slings and arrows of outrageous distortion (accusations of being a wounded, vicious person, a manhater, blah, blah, blah) and weathering what can only be called a storm of abuse, name-calling, and red-faced fist-shaking. (Not that I didn't dish it out as well as take it, but then, that's the point I make below...)

Simultaneously amused and appalled by the narratives different male listmembers were writing about "me" (the person behind the narratives, to which none of them had any access), I explained:

"It is my pleasure in electronic communication to attempt to respond in the style in which I am addressed, and, at times, to address the issue of style itself. Lacking physicality (obvious race/gender characteristics), I find that it is simple to engage in stylistic shifts in espace, whereas it is very difficult to engage in such shifts in person. One of the results of my stylistic adventuring has been my realization that textual style is as gendered and racialized as the physical body--

though passing in espace is easier than passing in person. What I find, however, is that when I publicly position my gender as female, and then insist upon "competing" in "rational" (masculine) discourse in traditionally masculine terms while simultaneously insisting we focus on issues of importance to women, all hell breaks loose. The pattern is quite predictable: certain men will grow completely infuriated and claim that I am attacking them because I hate them. They will also impute all sorts of power to me--as if, in their eyes, I "control" the discourse--"Kali's game"--and depict themselves as victims of my rage..."

In fact, the upshot of the TNC flamewar, was that I was accused of being a machine. George Landow wrote:

"KALI TAL IS NOT A PERSON BUT A TEXT-GENERATING APPARATUS INTENDED TO PASS THE TURING TEST AND AT THE SAME TIME TO EXPLORE THEORIES OF SELF-REPRESENTATION AND PRESENTATION IN CYBERSPACE."

I don't think George really understood what a really nasty shot this was. He took a long time to explain **why** I must be a machine, ranging from the fact that I wrote too much too fast to be human, to reducing my posts to an alleged "decision tree," to the outrageousness of my name (which, amusingly enough, is actually the name on my birth certificate), to claiming that my arguments were rational only if I was "part of an experiment to convince other participants that this digital text assembler is a real person." The last part of Landow's post was a rumination on which particular TNC listmember had "written" me. The irony, of course, is that I truly **was** trying to convince the TNC audience that I was a **real** person. As I am trying to convince you.

To end the TNC flamewar, I admitted to being a construct, an Artificial Intelligence produced by some grad students in the History of Consciousness program at UC Santa Cruz. I also pointed out:

that if a machine speaks/writes to you
and says it wants to be treated like a person
it would be a good idea
to take it seriously.

I think that there are people out there who are still confused about whether I actually exist, either in human or machine form. All the trouble was caused (is always caused) by my attempt to inscribe my gender in my texts. And as I've mentioned, these days I don't post much anymore. I've posted more to POETICS than any other list (including SIXTIES-L, where I am listowner) in the last year. I am curious about this space, and what will/can happen in it.

Kali

Kali Tal

Sixties Project & Viet Nam Generation, Inc.

18 Center Rd., Woodbridge, CT 06525

203/[REDACTED]; fax 203/[REDACTED]

email: [REDACTED]

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296. **Jerry Rothenberg**

whitman recovered

Sat 18 Feb 1995

Thanks to Steve Shoemaker for passing along the full Reuters text on Whitman (only a brief mention in this morning's L.A. Times) & especially the passage quoted in the Washington Post. It is a reminder too -- the Whitman quote, I mean -- of what "theory" sounds like when a poet speaks it at white heat.

All best, etc.

Jerome Rothenberg

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297. **cris cheek**

turbulence

Sat 18 Feb 1995

James, since you mentioned Lamb here's a quote of his which 'cuts both ways'

'The poet dreams being awake'

cris

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298. **Sheila Murphy**

Re: Thoughts on Theory

Sat 18 Feb 1995

Tom Beckett's recent release of INTERRUPTIONS, issue #2 includes wonderful work by Peter Ganick, "untitled (the text)" that I believe to be generative as regards the recent talk on theory and practice. No paraphrase of the piece could begin to do it justice (partial definition of work within a medium right for itself). So I pass along info re: procurement:

Tom Beckett

131 North Pearl Street

Kent, OH 44240

\$8.00

Sheila Murphy

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299. **Sheila Murphy**

Re: boy talk

Sat 18 Feb 1995

Jorge's comments suggesting that women use their time (more) wisely helped bring to mind a few responses I have to the entry of the list into my sphere. I'd hesitate on conjecturing any firm relationship between what I am about to say and my gender. Let's just call it one person's fraction of response:

I tend to devote considerable time to reading and making texts, as do we all. My long-time career in business/organizations has necessitated my clevering along and managing to eek out time during conferences and the like to do two things at once, i.e., listen to a presentation and capture notes PLUS scribble up a draft that seems just right for just then. And airplanes and hotels are gifts. I love that quiet, which I always use.

Hometime during nights has been prime time for writing, too, despite packed weeks whose days overflow into the softer hours. The attention required to absorb and then respond to what is on the list is potentially extensive.

Even before the gender contribution patterning discussion came up, I found myself fiddling with how I wanted to approach all this. I've always corresponded extensively via trad post. And therefore welcome opportunities to be neighborly in new ways. Funny how the physicality of trad correspondence comprised just a few steps too many for most people to carry out. Now many more are willing to go into long discussions, which I value, but for which I hadn't quite formulated a time/space segment in an already busy schedule.

I think that someone mentioned earlier (much earlier) that we've not begun to use this medium up to its potential in regard to sharing work. I was delighted recently to receive a lengthy piece via the net. And treasured the late night read of that. Perhaps such a pattern would spark whole new worlds of interest on the list.

Sheila Murphy

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300. **Ted Pelton**

Poetics flaming

Sat 18 Feb 1995

Kali Tal--Just getting this out, following delay..... Just so you know, I admired your first posting (into the teeth of the self-serious "revolutionary" poetry mainstream) enough to have saved it on my hard drive, a rare thing for me to do, even rarer when I don't recognize the name of the poster. I'm sorry you interpreted the silence as not being heard. I suspect (at least it was so for me) that some of the silence was the nodding yes of heads.

I also want to thank you because you gave me some discussion material for my class this past week. I'm in the very difficult middle of *Invisible Man* with my class (its length combined with its denseness making it a uniquely arduous literary experience for many of my students, who aren't used to being asked to read 600 page novels), having been working through a number of different issues with that wonderfully rich text. We dealt with invisibility at some length last week, but I hadn't considered a women's context. You're right, though, and I copied down some of your most recent posting to read to my class. They recalled how in chapter one, the naked woman and the black boys fighting were both victimized, both objectified.

I too find it difficult to think of lang-po as revolutionary (back to your first posting); though I think Bernstein's *Content's Dream* is one of the best books of the last couple decades, and many others of the poets of this group well enough; but how can you have revolution when hardly anyone knows you exist? Mark Wallace's recent posting reflects some of this not-mattering: needing a theory to be heard. But is a theory enough? For Marx, yes, but he was before television. I saw a British documentary on rap the other day and liked something Chuck D of Public Enemy said: that they were doing a sort of media hijacking. Now that gives the possibility of real change, turning over of the known; people shout back, You're too violent, you're irresponsible, but they are really threatened by the art, the newness, the unintelligibility, the radical politics.

My comments in the freely espousing vein: I attached a column I'd written for the *Milwaukee Journal* that basically argued that the arts were the only politicized speech we have left in this country and that this was the reason for the cuts, that democracy demanded dissent etc. etc. But I think artists suffer delusions of grandeur, myself included. Yes, new works are revolutionary in the sense of overturning the assumptions of mainstream culture, of the political order, not partaking in what the dearly departed Guy Debord called "the existing order's never ending discourse about itself." But if that order continues on unabated, without missing a step, without the brutal warrior in the

black leather boots tearing Godzilla (or Gingrich)-like through sense and humaneness even coughing at the dust mote he's breathed in, in what tiny circle has that revolution happened? (It must be very late at night, because that's a very badly mixed metaphor.)

Ted Pelton

P.S. to Mike Boughn (literarily): Yeah, Ahab has a theory, and Ishmael almost dies because of it.

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301. **braman sandra**

Re: theory

Sat 18 Feb 1995

Yes, of course, Alan, postmodernism doesn't do anything, people do; an old simple and irrelevant mistake. Does postmodernism have extremities? I live surrounded by them, try to teach the students who etc etc. Does it have a range of positions? Yes -- I consider myself -- I consider us all -- "postmodernists" in the sense that we are all living in that condition and try to make sense out of it, I use the theories, etc., etc.. But perhaps it takes getting away from poetry to see what's happening elsewhere on campuses and in our society -- in a number of academic programs, in fact -- including under Larry Grossberg here at Illinois when he was here -- students are being taught that research is impossible and unimportant, and they live what they are being taught. Not to deny the great research being done by others, including the work you mention. Postmodernity is simply the flip, effects, side of the changes wrought by changes in information technologies that have let us describe this also as the information society, a view which focuses on causes rather than effects. The fact that you don't see all of the phenomena and processes I see doesn't mean that what I see doesn't exist, Alan. Sandra Braman

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302. **Jeffrey Timmons**

(no subject)

Sat 18 Feb 1995

Thanks, Loss, for the announcements reference.

Jeffrey Timmons

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303. **Gabrielle Welford**

Re: boy talk

Sat 18 Feb 1995

This message is in MIME format. The first part should be readable text, while the remaining parts are likely unreadable without MIME-aware tools. Send mail to [REDACTED] for more info.

Jorge Guitart said:

gross underrepresentation is a factor (20% is still gross underrepresentation) > > another perhaps is the fact that women tend to do relevant things with their > time. > their time >

Another lurker de-lurks. I wasn't going to say this--it seems so sexist, but I for one, am doing a PhD, have two small kids and a husband, two jobs and a couple of committees to "do." I don't usually have much time to do much more than skim the list (whose discussion has actually interested me a lot lately--especially the mentions of Wittgenstein and Michael Boughn's wonderful fracturing) and save away stuff for when I have more time (ha!) or for when I need to think specifically about theory and would like to pull up these conversations for that.

In the meantime, I would like say _something_. So here it is. Something...

Gabrielle Welford
[REDACTED]

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304. **Tenney Nathanson**

Re: POETICS Digest - 16 Feb 1995 to 17 Feb 1995

Sat 18 Feb 1995

Sheila--

Hi (O Arizona fairest state of all?). This should prolly be a private post but: are you still running readings up around Phoenix (gotham)? any chance of my reading in the next year or so? Am writing a fair amount (again) and could send you samples.

Charles (hi there!) is much missed in Tucson btw; saw him recently, here, but his Poetry Series are long long gone; and it don't mean a thing if it ain't got that swing (I could tell stories)

best,

Tenney

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305. **Thomas Bell**

Re: boytalk (fwd)

Sun 19 Feb 1995

re: Schultz' forwarded comments and the issue as a whole.
--For me the issue is one of analyzing or talking about feelings rather than having them or experiencing them: from a therapeutic perspective "flames" are analogous to shouting, screaming, histrionics (used to be hysterics), striking out physically, etc. as ways to avoid experiencing feelings. Some people are comfortable with feelings and some are not. From this perspective, gender is an accidental correlation.

"...it is this lack of complexity in confronting the methodological complexities of modernist thought that gives legitimacy to the charge of postmodernist depthlessness, what Jameson accurately describes as the "waning of affect":
all technique, no substance.

- Charles Bernstein, *A Poetics*

[B

--Thomas Bell [REDACTED]

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306. **John Cayley**

Re: boytalk hyperTalk

Sun 19 Feb 1995

on mouseUp

doYourself_aFavour

stagger

end mouseUp

on doYourself_aFavour

global alcohol

print report "the Apex of AbsurdExperiCategories"

read file until "." & return

answer "few!" with "many" or "hokey"

if it is "hokey" then

answer "There is nothing like it, Kali Tal..." & return ¬

& "(waiting for the splash)"

else if it is "many" then

answer "light grows phrases"

```
else
  answer "Wendy joined the Pirates."
end if
put "mind in the grip of espace" into alcohol
end doYourself_aFavour

on stagger
  global alcohol
  put "a newly-imported kilim" into aPlasticSleeve
  if alcohol contains "mind" or alcohol contains "grip of espace" ⇐
  or true then
    put empty into aPlasticSleeve
    windBlows(aPlasticSleeve,underMyFeet,walkingBack,north, ⇐
    KentishTown,London_UK,February,mild,Winter,false) into theory
    if theory is not empty then
      answer theory with "practice" -- (US: verb)
      show message
      put "staggered"
    else
      put "sundered"
    end if
  end if
end stagger

function windBlows what,whereClose,moving,whichWay,whereNear,⇐
  whereFar,when,weather,season,isItTrue
  put one into aleatory
  put two into pronoun
  if the random of pronoun is aleatory then
    return "gravity's flames"
  else
    return empty
  end if
end windBlows
```

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307. **Loss Glazier**

Re: Whitman notebooks discovered (fwd)

Sun 19 Feb 1995

On the Whitman notebooks,

Does anyone have any idea how/when these will be published?

A pity it's not a truly digital world as the manuscripts should just be put online!

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308. **I.LIGHTMAN**

Re: Boy Talk

Sun 19 Feb 1995

I guess that I'm included in Kali Tal's statement that males didn't respond to messages by women. I must say I haven't noticed anyone pick up 2 per cent of anything I've posted to the list, about children's rights, ablism, or AIDS activism. But then, if I may make a clearly signalled snide remark, if the alternative is to co-opted into the movement one may be "carving" (interesting metaphor), in the way that Kali Tal seemed to "welcome" Juliana Spahr as an ally when Juliana Spahr was raising some issues Kali Tal didn't respond to at all, then I shall happily go back to lurking from *all* sides of this discussion.

Ira Lightman

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309. **Robert Drake**

Re: Boy Talk

Sun 19 Feb 1995

having had to clarify my comments several times backchannel, i ought to do so here: i _do_ think the under-representation of women subscribed to the list is a problem (i sed 20%,someone updated that to 18.5--a worsening trend). but even among those subscribed, until last week, women posted far less than 20% of the traffic--that seems to me to be the more intractable problem. the original formulation seemed to me say that the paucity of women's voices was due to the lack of access to the wire; but even given access, women choose/are discouraged from participation. that seems to me the tougher problem, _and_ the problem we have a chance of doing something about

apologies if i was unclear

lbd

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310. **Charles Bernstein**

New from Sun & Moon

Sun 19 Feb 1995

NEW FROM SUN & MOON

Finite Intuition: Selected Poetry and Prose, by Milo de Angeles, tr. with an intro. by Lawrence Venuti, has just been published by Sun & Moon Press. This is the last selection in the book:

POETRY AND THEORY

The Greek theoria signifies "reflection," but also "solemn embassy," "spectacle." And perhaps there can be no great poet who has not had theoretical insights into other great poets, who does not represent them on the stage of a conceptual power. Yet there is that pathetic mythology of the poet who--devoid of this power--nevertheless knows how to "tell a story" or to "dream," as if dream were the land where the thorn of intellect grows dull. It happens that some line open the veins of their own thought until it is beyond recognition. But this clenched thought must have been there: only then can the lines enter the region which it doesn't know! This is delirium, in the most distinct accent on the calendar. Yet if those lines remain in doubt, if they are worried about not having thought enough...how much unworthy poetry of ideas is born from this worry...how many genuflections to philosophers...ho many lines get cornered in the poetry of sensations. There should be no submission of theory to poetry, if they are Greek sisters. And no comparison, because these two strangers must have loved each other.

(C) 1995 by Milo De Angeles and Lawrence Venuti. Used by permission of the publisher.

Also just out this month from Sun & Moon:

MADE TO SEEM by Rae Armantrout

Rae Armantrout read this past week at UB, at the Poetics Program's Wednesday at 4 Plus series. Here is my introduction:

Rae Armantrout poem "Extremities" ends with the line "the charmed verges of presence": and indeed her poems are charms, virtual presents.

Armantrout's poetry is notable for it's precision and elegance, it's seismographic ability to chart the slightest shifts of social register on the city streets, in the suburban malls, and in the university corridors. In an early poem she writes "The smallest / distance / inexhaustible" -- a poetic credo of commitment to the specific scale of an unadorned everyday life, words lived in their pajamas as much as their toupees. "The smallest / distance / inexhaustible" -- providing a reservoir of wry, wacky, wicked, torqued and torquing observations, skewering any bloated sense of proportion, skewing lines of logic to make poems of sentient, radiant sense: returning us to the pleasures of reflection and consoling, indomitable wit.

--Charles Bernstein

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311. **Paul Naylor c/o**
River City / call for submissions

Sun 19 Feb 1995

River City: A Journal of Contemporary Culture is soliciting work on the blues for a special issue to appear in June, 1995. We are looking for poetry, fiction, or nonfiction prose that focus on the blues as a contemporary cultural phenomena. Send work to River City, 463 Patterson Bldg, Department of English, The University of Memphis, Memphis, TN 38152.

River City and The University of Memphis is proud to announce the appointment of a new editorial collective dedicated to the exploration of contemporary culture. Paul Naylor is the general editor; Omar S. Castaneda, Michael Davidson, Nathaniel Mackey, and Marlene Nourbese Philip are contributing editors; Robert Bernasconi, John Duvall, M.J. Fenwick, Allison Graham, Leslie Luebbbers, and Helen Wussow are associate editors. River City is published twice yearly in the winter and summer. Subscriptions are \$12 per year, or, as an introductory offer, three years for \$24. Checks should be made out to The University of Memphis and sent to The University of Memphis, P.O. Box 1000, Department 313, Memphis, TN 38148-0313.

Paul Naylor
email: [REDACTED]

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312. **cris cheek**
boy talk

Sun 19 Feb 1995

Kali, this is the sort of thing that the current discussions are making me do (but then I've only been on e-mail for a month yet) - namely, drop you a line to say that I very much appreciate your posting(s) and that although I'm not so fat with time to reply at present I'll mull what you've placed and try to make a useful response in the next few days.

I've just read new posts to this agenda. In your e-xperience is this a common occurrence? There does seem to be a mountain of frustration at not having each others' every point and nuance picked up on and nourished out in a spirit of love and care in case there's something valuable to be found. I'm not wanting to sound overbearingly cynical. Whilst I don't really disagree (hang on I'll prevaricate a little further - I don't really quite disagree) with that mad utopia

it's surely not possible to be fielding all points on all agendas all the time - even between *all* of us. I'd like to hear from others on that subject. Which gets to the what of it? I'd contend that the issues being raised are either anathema to or 'minefields' for many? This is intended to be deliberately provocative. As such they are met with either by silence or by changing the subject.

Possibility for cheap jokes miserably missed -

I'm curious if anonymity would help?

I know now that you're an 'and and' rather than an 'either/or' kind of person. The list appears to be arriving at a perception of itself as a problematically constructed game of club whispers. The message and the agenda are continually and discontinuously migrating. The feeling is of trying to listen to and be an active contributant to several conversations at once at the same time as being alert to the shape of the flock as it travels and grows. There's a bird (I think it's found in Kenya - and this is hopeless but I just can't remember it's name, something close to the Red Quilya) which flies in vast flocks, rolling forwards on a continually breaking wave to the effect that there is a new bird effectively 'leading' almost from moment to moment. Espace does provide the potential for a 'writing in motion . . . skywriting, sandpainting, here and gone, happening in time.' as you rightly assert.

I'm addressing this to you but its content also addresses the list. Much of the posting that I've read since being here seems broadly addressed. I tend to read everything that's posted and enjoy the most conversational material - however oblique.

You're so right in that the List is no more than is being posted. Post something else - that of makes a difference. Change might appear continually discontinuous but better might come.

Several issues are hovering unattended even now as we don't speak -

speed of dialogue

tone - voice - identity

awkward silences (yeah I saw Pulp Fiction)

and we who lurk in disbelief

best,

cris

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313. **Mark Nowak**

Re: boy talk

Sun 19 Feb 1995

Readings: Notley, Alice. "Epic & Woman Poets." *_Disembodied Poetics_* 103-09. (University of New Mexico Press, 1994). Quote: "To break & recombine language is nothing. To break & recombine reality, as Dream always does do, might be something."

(... I'm slowly delurking...)

1.) re. the discussion of "classical" "music" on this list, all boys too: Cage, Schoenberg, Stockhausen (recently)...

what about Pauline Oliveros, Hildegard Westerkamp (check out her *_World Soundscape Newsletter_*) Diamanda Galas, Meredith Monk, Gayle Young, the *_DICE_* Collective, Elaine Barkin, Jin Hi Kim, Alison Knowles...

--- let's read Pauline Oliveros' *_Software for PEOPLE_* & then "talk" about it: no gauntlets.

--- let's read Susan McClary's *_Feminine Endings: Music, Gender, and Sexuality_* (Minnesota, 1991) & then re-visit Tom Mandel's comments on sonata "theory" / "form"

2.) thanks to Kali for her brilliant posts (readings of posts) & reference to Susan's post (re. multiculturalism) --- which I missed originally --- which all reminds me of a paper I heard at the Hoboken-Russian-Talisman conference where one critic spoke of Howe-Johnson-Cage's "use" of Thoreau's "Indians" yet all the theory was Western European:

what about Greg Sarris' *_Keeping Slug Woman Alive: A Holistic Approach to American Indian Texts_* (CA, 1993)

what about Diane Glancy's *_Claiming Breath_* (Nebraska, 1992)

what about Gerald Vizenor's *_Manifest Manners: Postindian Warriors of Survivance_* (Wesleyan, 1994)

3.) Question: again from *_Disembodied Poetics_*

--- Amiri Baraka (16): "...if you're talking about language qua language, what's different about that from the New Critics?"

(back into hiding?), Mark Nowak

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314. **Kali Tal**
Re: Boy Talk
Sun 19 Feb 1995

Snide is as snide does, Ira Lightman.

| *I guess that I'm included in Kali Tal's statement that males didn't respond to messages by women.*

I guess you are, if you are a male person and did not respond to messages by women.

| *I must say I haven't noticed anyone pick up 2 per cent of anything I've posted to the list, about children's rights, ablism, or AIDS activism.*

I am interested in nonresponse that is part of a larger pattern. It may be that nonresponse to the particular issues you mention signals an attempt on the part of the POETICS community to "disappear" those issues. Nonresponse to those issues, however, does not indicate that my observations of nonresponse to women as a group are inaccurate or insignificant.

| *But then, if I may make a clearly signalled snide remark,*

And why would you do this? Why is a snide tone required? Not that I am surprised--women who bring up gender inequity in, ahem, mixed company, are often treated to snide comments, as if we were, by our mere presence, threatening and offensive, needed taking down a notch...

| *if the alternative is to co-opted into the movement one may be "carving" (interesting metaphor), in the way that Kali Tal seemed to "welcome" Juliana Spahr as an ally when Juliana Spahr was raising some issues Kali Tal didn't respond to at all, then I shall happily go back to lurking from *all* sides of this discussion.*

And whose "alternative" is this? Your response is a nonresponse, it is not directed *to* me, nor to any of the women who posted to POETICS. Rather, it is a summary dismissal based upon no apparent consideration of *any* of the issues raised by *any* of the women; a declaration of freedom from obligation to respond, as if nonresponse were a virtue; a rhetorical device used by a fellow who would rather not say so baldly, "Hey, let's talk about *me* for a minute." Since it does not include a constructive suggestion for a new topic, I read it simply as a sulk. I welcomed Juliana Spahr's *voice* (hello, Juliana); whether she is an ally or not is no consideration of mine, since I am not currently fighting a war or planning a coup. I *am* interested in hearing more women's voices *and* more men's voices, even if they are raised to disagree with me.

The role of curmudgeon suits some men well, though when *women* attempt to play it they are most often redefined as witches, bitches, or shrews.

And it is very good to see the lurkers come out to play.

Kali

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Sixties Project & Viet Nam Generation, Inc.
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203/[REDACTED]; fax 203/[REDACTED]
email: [REDACTED]

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315. **Jeffrey Timmons**

Re: boy talk

Sun 19 Feb 1995

In Re: Mark Nowak's post:

As far as women and music, I've been overwhelmingly impressed with Kaija Saariaho--exploring the limits of noise/music. Great stuff. Any other composers I should know about?

Jeffrey Timmons

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316. **Mark Nowak**

Women COMposers

Sun 19 Feb 1995

By way of
Other composers:

What Next Recordings
PO Box 344
Albuquerque, NM 87103

--- two series: (A). Radius ("Transmissions from Broadcast Artists")

2 volumes include 6 works total, 3 by women composers

(Jackie Apple, Sheila Davies, Helen Thorington)

note: Helen is executive producer of New American Radio.

(B). AERIAL: 4 compilation CD's to date, including
many of the women composers mentioned in both posts.

What Next also did "solo" CD's by Jin Hi Kim, Pauline Oliveros,
Alison Knowles, & others.

DICE

c/o Elise Kermani
343 6th Avenue #2R
Brooklyn, NY 11215
[REDACTED]

(this may not be current: as of 1993)

CRIO

73 Spring St.
New York, NY 10012

(discs by / with Pauline Oliveros, Julia Wolfe, Allison Cameron, etc.)

A good journal source for this ...

Musicworks
179 Richmond Street West
Toronto, Ont. CANADA
M5V 1V3
[REDACTED]

(journal edited by Gayle Young)

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317. **cris cheek**

Composers

Sun 19 Feb 1995

and

Iva Bittova
Virginia Firnberg
Zap Mama
Angelique Kidjo
Oumou Sangare
Sianed Jones
Annea Lockwood
Shelley Hirsch
Zeena Parkins
Chekka Remitti
Judith Weir
Jenni Roditi
Errollyn Wallen
Marilyn Crispell
Anna Homler
Amina Claudine-Myers
Sylvia Hallett
PJ Harvey

Katalin Ladik (anybody know what she's been doing lately?)

Laurie Anderson

Diane Labrosse

joni Mitchell

Nina Simone

Jane Cortez

Moe Tucker

Amy Koita

La Donna Smith

Amy Denio

Ikue Mori

Karen Finlay

Elastica

Stevie Wishart

Jo Truman

Joan La Barbara

. . .

seems homogenous to me

p.s. serious apologies if I've got names muddled

I'm posting out of curiosity

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318. **Mn Center For Book Arts**

Re: i'd like to introduce myself...

Sun 19 Feb 1995

Dear Carl: As a reader, friend, & publisher of bp Nichol's, I'm glad to have you here. I encourage you to bring nichol issues out here, as I believe his is a poetics vastly undervalued in America, if not in Canada, and that his various approaches to theory, poetics, and writing involve a joy which is rare and needed.

charles alexander

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319. **Mn Center For Book Arts**

Re: boytalk (fwd)

Sun 19 Feb 1995

Dear Kali, Susan, Juliana, & all poetics list --

sometimes I think there is little response from men to some of what you post simply because what you post seems clear & right, and we don't always know what we're doing that makes the situation you decry so difficult. We hope we're not guilty but know we probably are. I should drop the we and say that I want to hear you. I think that what I've learned about poetry & poetics in the last two decades has come more from women than men, yet that the women's work has been comparatively undervalued in various quarters.

perhaps it would be a good idea for the men to simply be silent for a time and let the women on this list have the forum, although I also hope dialogues (multilogues) of various sorts open and continue.

charles alexander

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320. **Mn Center For Book Arts**

Re: music

Sun 19 Feb 1995

Jeffrey & Mark - Yes, much more music to attend, by "women of both sexes," as Cynthia Miller likes to call them. What occurs immediately is Ladonna Smith, most often heard with Davey Williams, "trans museq," etc. Also approaches the limits of noise, but what a beautiful noise . . .

charles alexander

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321. **Mn Center For Book Arts**

Re: Composers

Sun 19 Feb 1995

Thank you for all of the composer information. My listening work is cut out for me. That could be a good reason for not de-lurking in near future.

charles

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322. **Mn Center For Book Arts**

Re: i'd like to introduce myself...

Sun 19 Feb 1995

I realize I wrote in a poet recently, concerning bp Nichol, "a poetics vastly undervalued in America, if not in Canada," and feel like an idiot, because of course I should have said "in USA, if not in Canada," as, last time I checked, Canada was still in North America, a geographical fact for which I am grateful.

charles alexander

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323. **Jeffrey Timmons**

Re: Composers

Sun 19 Feb 1995

Oi, great list, Cris, but I was wondering about your inclusion of more popular sorts of music. Not that I have a thing about making hard and fast distinctions between the popular and . . . what have you, but was wondering what the criteria were for your list. I just listened today to a Requiem for Bosnia by an amazing composer (can't remember her name right now). Very interesting.

Jeffrey Timmons

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324. **Susan Schultz**

Re: Man Talk

Mon 20 Feb 1995

One clarification: I didn't mean to suggest that I hadn't gotten responses to my postings. But it did strike me as interesting that I received a lot of backchannel postings from women (and some from men), some of whom rarely, if ever, send frontchannel messages.

Susan

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325. **cris cheek**

Composers

Mon 20 Feb 1995

Hi Jeffrey, it wasn't intended to (or pretending to) be an exhaustive list. The criteria were - who can I think of right now sitting here, who comes right to mind - a stretched diversity of practice - enough that some will know as to become more curious about the others not previously heard of - and I'd hoped to:

swing into more discussion of exactly the issue you've picked up on
i.e. distinctions between 'high' art and 'popular' art
and bridge to the issue of cultural diversity.

as well as hopefully get to hear about other composers who I don't know

Also, and more ironically the suggestion that the list seemed homogenous was to provoke those discussions. On what bases homogenous - surely not merely because they are all women>

I'll grant that some of the inclusions (I can't remember 'em all and don't have the list out) such as Moe Tucker were deliberately more edgy. But as co-creator on Velvet Underground 'classics' she's been instrumental in one of those rarer moments when the illusory screen between the high and the popular gets rent. OK so now where's Tina Weymouth, Kirsten Hirsch and many many more - I know I know it's cats out of the bag time just come round again. Certainly with the African musics these distinctions barely exist. Which is where some of this discussion would begin to open towards other issues that Kali Tal and Susan Schultz are raising. But there's another interesting issue here. Women composers are involved (admittedly in smaller numbers than men, I'd guesstimate about the same kind of proportions as exist on this list) in all fields of music - making. They combine melody, rhythm and noise with as many variations as male composers. It's therefore hard to begin talking about gender in terms of 'preference' field of music and the extension can be made throughout not just art-form practice but human activity. The problems of course have been prolonged patriarchal structure, disenfranchisement and repression of opportunity. What do you feel about it?

Thanks for the contact. If you've others I should hear I be very happy to get a return. As Eric Mottram has just been quoted as saying 'there's nothing more exciting than something you don't know about'. Here's to human ingenuity and curiosity.

best
cris

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326. **Tom Mandel**

Re: boy talk

Mon 20 Feb 1995

Ed, what horrible news. Nina was a young - and so very brilliant - woman. Do You know what caused her death?

Tom Mandel

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327. **Gary Sullivan**

Re: New from Sun & Moon

Mon 20 Feb 1995

de Angeles implies that it's impossible to be a "great" poet (what does this mean? will we see a series from Sun & Moon, an offshoot of the "classics" series: "Sun & Moon Great Poets #__"? if you don't have theoretical insights into other great poets & go public with 'em. (Assuming "who does not represent them on the stage of a conceptual power" means "publishing" or "lecturing" or otherwise airing, publicly.) If this is true--extending to include prose & drama--G.K. Chesterton's a "great" writer (his book on Shaw's brilliant & original) but Gertrude Stein, Mina Loy, Djuna Barnes, Clark Coolidge are only fair to middling, despite the obvious influences these writers have had on poets & writers working today. This is not to say Stein & etc. didn't have theoretical insights into Whoever, but that they didn't--so far as I know--take 'em public. If anything's a "pathetic mythology" it's this notion that a poet MUST air his/her ideas, *as* theory, must create (& promote) a body of theoretical work, separate from the poetry, in order to be taken seriously. Stein's *How to Write* and her *Lectures* don't seem to me separate entities, don't seem terribly different in approach or effect from (say) *A Novel of Thank You* or any of the things collected in the Yale volumes. de Angeles' notion that theory & poetry are, MUST be separate seems awfully reductive, as though one's poetry (or other creative work) can't possibly include one's theoretical insights, etc. I think the reason why language poetry has been so (relatively) quickly embraced by academe whereas Stein, Loy, Barnes & Coolidge (& others who didn't develop separate bodies of "theoretical" writings) were ignored for so long has a lot to do with the possibility that people in academic institutions aren't particularly good readers, *need* demarcations like "This is Poetry" "This is Theory"--can't (for whatever reason) read Stein or whoever and see that, indeed, she addresses what she's doing (& why she's doing what she does) in the "creative" work. I respect people like Coolidge and Tom Raworth who don't develop bodies of (separate) critical writings in part because they seem to respect *me*, the reader, my intelligence. "It's all there in the work if you've taken the time & trouble to suss it out," they seem to be saying. This is not to say that I disrespect those who *do* supply bodies of (separate) theoretical writings; I don't. But, I'm puzzled by this notion that a poet, to be taken seriously, *must* provide a body of critical work as well.

--Gary Sullivan

----- Gary Sullivan
_ _ _ _ _ / _ / _ / / / / _ ^ / / _ /
/ / \ / / / / _ / \ / _ / -----

On Sun, 19 Feb 1995, Charles Bernstein wrote:

NEW FROM SUN & MOON

Finite Intuition: Selected Poetry and Prose, by Milo de Angeles, tr. with an intro. by Lawrence Venuti, has just been published by Sun & Moon Press. This is the last selection in the book:

POETRY AND THEORY

The Greek _theoria_ signifies "reflection," but also "solemn embassy," "spectacle." And perhaps there can be no great poet who has not had theoretical insights into other great poets, who does not represent them on the stage of a conceptual power. Yet there is that pathetic mythology of the poet who--devoid of this power--nevertheless knows how to "tell a story" or to "dream," as if dream were the land where the thorn of intellect grows dull. It happens that some line open the veins of their own thought until it is beyond recognition. But this clenched thought _must_ have been there_: only then can the lines enter the region which it doesn't know! This is delirium, in the most distinct accent on the calendar. Yet if those lines remain in doubt, if they are worried about not having thought enough...how much unworthy poetry of ideas is born from this worry...how many genuflections to philosophers...ho many lines get cornered in the poetry of sensations. There should be no submission of theory to poetry, if they are Greek sisters. And no comparison, because these two strangers _must_ have loved each other.

(C) 1995 by Milo De Angeles and Lawrence Venuti. Used by permission of the publisher.

Also just out this month from Sun & Moon:

MADE TO SEEM by Rae Armantrout

Rae Armantrout read this past week at UB, at the Poetics Program's Wednesday at 4 Plus series. Here is my introduction:

Rae Armantrout poem "Extremities" ends with the line "the charmed verges of presence": and indeed her poems are charms, virtual presents.

Armantrout's poetry is notable for it's precision and elegance, it's seismographic ability to chart the slightest shifts of social register on the city streets, in the suburban malls, and in the university corridors. In an early poem she writes "The smallest / distance / inexhaustible" -- a poetic credo of commitment to the specific scale of an unadorned everyday life, words lived in their pajamas as much as their toupees. "The smallest / distance / inexhaustible" -- providing a reservoir of wry, wacky, wicked,

torqued and torquing observations, skewering any bloated send of proportion, skewing lines of logic to make poems of sentient, radiant sense: returning us to the pleasures of reflection and consoling, indomitable wit.

--Charles Bernstein

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328. **Nick Lawrence**

An Ad for Spirits

Mon 20 Feb 1995

I was communing with my friend CB the other day, an active lurker on this list. He was curious about recent references to "global alcohol," which sound most hopeful to him, promising as they do an anaesthetizing of the persistent pain he associates with aesthetics, from which he says he suffers acutely--which is to say not prettily. (Likewise he maintains an active interest in all manner of dull opiates, legal or not, which explains why, when he was over here yesterday morning for decaf and the papers, he skipped right over the Times magazine article on who's who in the poetry world and went straight to the lushly illustrated cover story on cannabis.) I asked him about his views on the poetry/theory thread. After denying any easy parallels with the gender-talk thread, he said it reminded him of the rumpus raised about a composer he used to know.

"A guy who reasons so much about his art cannot produce beautiful works naturally"--so some people **said**," he murmured, "thereby depriving genius of its rationality and reducing it to a purely instinctive and, so to speak, vegetable function."

(CB tends to be a bit oldfashioned when it comes to genius, greatness, etc.) What about alchemical cries of Foul re creating art out of theory, I asked.

"An utterly wacky view. Critic into poet--that would indeed be a wholly new event in the history of the arts, a reversal of all psychical laws, a monstrosity."

But not vice versa, I prompted.

"On the contrary, all great poets naturally, inevitably become critics. I feel sorry for poets guided by their instincts alone; I regard them as incomplete. In the spiritual life of great poets, a crisis is bound to occur that leads them to regard their art critically, to seek the mysterious laws that guided them . . ."

It won't surprise the reader to learn that CB regarded the poet as the best of all critics.

Then, feeling relaxed, we took a recent post to the list on this topic and discovered to our surprise that it was actually an instance of skillfully worded negative advertising. Follows our collaboration intended to make this clear--though, as CB remarked, clarity isn't everything, even when it comes to critics/spirits.

Every "poem" (every "fact" in fact) is imbued with and attached to a theoretical structure which both informs it and from which it does not separate except in the minds of those who would create a transparent simulacrum of reality where the pure is real. Fortunately these isolated realities are fiction although some use the possibility to inform their misguided politics. We have poetries which are embossed with their cultures and some readers and even some writers pretend not to see that. Thoughts are not purer than bodies and poems are the products of both and as such do not exist in isolation, nor can they be distilled into a spirit, although some use the possibility to inform their misguided poetics. James

AN AD FOR SPIRITS

Every poetic "mope" (every "fruct" in fract) is imbued with and attacked by a theoretical alcohol which both informs it and from which it does not separate except in the haze of those who would create a transparent vodka simulacrum where the pure is alcohol-free. Fortunately these isolated teetotalers are not themselves distillers although some use the wassailability to reform their misguided drinking habits. We have bottles which are embossed with throat cultures and some drinkers and even some distributors pretend not to see that. Draughts are not purer than toddies and unthinking mopes are the products of both and as such do not exist in desolation, nor can they be distilled into a salable spirit, although some use the possibility to formalize their mislabeled poetics.

James 3:3 ("Behold, we put bits in the horses' mouths, that they may obey us; and we turn about their whole body")

--Art Laid Bare Productions 1995

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329. **Jeffrey Timmons**

Re: Composers

Mon 20 Feb 1995

On Mon, 20 Feb 1995, cris cheek wrote:

*I'd hoped to:
swing into more discussion of exactly the issue you've picked up on
i.e. distinctions between 'high' art and 'popular' art*

*and bridge to the issue of cultural diversity.
as well as hopefully get to hear about other composers who I don't know*

Good, I was too lazy to further the issue, but now it's been raised. I'm also concerned, though, that we don't repeat the problem of owning this particular discussion to ourselves You know? I've been finding it rather difficult to engage with the Boy Talk posts and not for the lack of interest . . . until this issue ... made itself known. Anyway: it's very interesting the gender politics of music. At least with lit I believe there has been either a more concerted effort on the part of writers/critics to bring/integrate/etc women into view. And traditionally there have been a great deal of women who wrote--something should be said about the habitation of this interiorized space of writing: diaries, notebooks, etc. that are very much part of an *écriture* feminine that does not necessarily have to translate into public voice. Hm. Nonetheless, writing has had, I believe, more of a gender equity than visual arts or music. Particularly the latter. This is not to say it has been blind where gender is concerned, but that writing seems to have offered women more of an opportunity to create. This is a point my partner makes (who works for the National Museum of Women in the Arts) when she talks about the different creative opportunities available for women. Art, she says, requires more than pen and paper--and that is a major reason that women do not always have the opportunity to express themselves. Even so, they are often the recipients of a sexism that is either unable or unwilling to engage their work with any degree of critical engagement--except to write it off. When it comes to music I think the gender differences are even more striking than visual art--it's almost as if the more one enters the traditional realm of HIGH ART the less women are present. And music, traditionally, has presented great obstacles in terms of resources to producing it. And to get around to your point about the relation between high/low and diversity, perhaps what is of particular value in the postmodern effacement of the differences between high/popular that women now have as much access to the means of production. This is particularly important if we are talking about the production of symphonic, orchestral, chamber, or serious music (I realize the limitations of these terms, but I want to specify my own interest in the production of women in this area--no matter how difficult it might be to distinguish it from ...). I am also interested in how women have made use of the tradition of western music and its 20th century developments, to what purposes they are putting serialism, cacophony, mixed mediums, etc and why these are not as well-received as their male counter parts who make use of the same tradition.

Requiem for Bosnia: Victoria Jordanova. I hope I got that right. Wonderful piece.

Jeffrey Timmons

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330. **Joe Aimone** <[REDACTED]>" <[REDACTED]>

Re: We need presenters for MLA (fwd)

Mon 20 Feb 1995

I am forwarding this call for papers to all lists and individuals I think might be interested.

Joe Aimone
University of California at Davis
[REDACTED]

----- Forwarded message -----

Date: Sat, 18 Feb 1995 14:51:33 -0800 (PST)

From: Joe Aimone <[REDACTED]> <[REDACTED]>

To: The MLA Graduate student Conference
<[REDACTED]>

Subject: Re: We need presenters for MLA

I will be chairing one of the sessions sponsored by the Graduate Student Caucus at the MLA. The call for papers appears in the current issue of the MLA Newsletter. Electronic mail submissions are acceptable but will not be acknowledged unless your proposal is accepted for the panel. If I accept your proposal for the panel, I will need a brief cv/bio, which you may include with your proposal or provide on request. Please feel free to print, archive or forward this call to all interested parties.

Joe Aimone
University of California at Davis
[REDACTED]

CALL FOR PAPERS

The Graduate Student Caucus of the MLA will sponsor a session at the 1995 convention called

CONVERSE BETWEEN CRITIC-WRITER AND WRITER-CRITIC

How seriously can critical theorists take creative writers as theorists? How seriously should creative writers take critics as creative writers? Critical and creative responses by or about creative writers and critics sought. 1-2 page abstracts to -

Joe Aimone
Dept of English
University of California, Davis
Davis, California 95616

email submissions:
[REDACTED]

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331. **Stephen Galen Cope**

composers

Mon 20 Feb 1995

Regarding composers:

Thanks, cris, for the list. A few additions:

Najat Aatabou

Elis Regina

Julie Kabat

Sona Diabate

Sorry Bamba

Carmen Linares

Sanougue Kouyate

It may warrant noting that "composer" as used in reference to a Western classical tradition need not necessarily apply to traditions in which the distinctions made between improvisation/ composition/ interpretation/ performance are minimal, if imposed at all.

It may also be worth noting the relevance to poetics of the above consideration.

Anyway, good sources for some of the above mentioned artists (and many others):

Stern's Music

598 Broadway

7th Floor

New York, NY 10012
[REDACTED]

Original Music

418 Lasher Road

Tivoli, NY 12583
[REDACTED]

Stern's is run by Ken Braun, who is one of the most knowledgeable men in the country regarding African music, and their catalog is the best source

I've come across for both classical and modern music from around the world.

Original is run by John Storm Roberts, whose book "Black Music of Two Worlds" is an excellent introduction African music on both sides of the Atlantic.

Hope this is helpful/ interesting, etc...

-Stephen Cope

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332. **Greg Keith**

Tapeworm puts poetry village on the map

Tue 21 Feb 1995

Copyright: 1999 by The Anti-Hegemony Project

Date: 22 Mar 99 03:22:59 EST

Lines: 14

DEEP CYBERSPACE (AHP) - A 26-foot long tapeworm was caught by weary computing engineers yesterday, who claimed the foul-smelling creature had been feeding off the Net. Now on display, the worm has turned a tiny Cyberspace village into an unexpected tourist attraction, the Co-Poetry News Network reported yesterday. Engineers ``netted" the basking tapeworm -- biggest of its kind ever seen in the area -- and used ropes to extract it from a gaping terminal in Charles Bernstein's office in Clemens Hall at SUNY Buffalo. Bernstein, away on a reading tour, had left the terminal unattended and during this time the tapeworm -- nicknamed ``Benji" by engineers -- apparently nestled into an intractable position. The tapeworm drew carloads of summer vacation tourists, said CNN, which showed children climbing onto the giant carcass and posing for snapshots.

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333. **Ron Silliman**

Nina Iskrenko

Tue 21 Feb 1995

Nina Iskrenko, who was only 43 or 44 when she died, had one of the sharpest wits I've ever encountered. She would have known exactly what to make of the fact that her obit on this list and the one additional comment on it thus far both occurred under the header "Re: Boy Talk."

Sheeesh, as Tali would say.

Readers who don't know Iskrenko's poetry should check out *_Third Wave: The New Russian Poetry_* edited by Kent Johnson & Stephen Ashby (Ann Arbor: U of Michigan Press, 1992), with an intro by Alexei Parshchikov and Andrew Wachtel. There are several excellent poems there and the book is generally a good introduction to the entire scene in Russia.

Ron Silliman



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334. **Spencer Selby**

Re: Love Affair

Tue 21 Feb 1995

Milo de Angeles gives the lie to himself. No sisterly love that. Rather, theory takes a bow as your typical chauvinistic, patriarchal man, who's more in love with his view of the relationship (his reasonings and desires) than he is in love with his partner and what *_she_* might have to offer or teach.

The piece is illuminating after all.

Spencer Selby

On Sun, 19 Feb 1995, Charles Bernstein wrote: >
NEW FROM SUN & MOON

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no comparison, because these two strangers _must_ have loved each other.

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--Charles Bernstein

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335. **Michael Boughn** ***refried theory and deified beans***

Tue 21 Feb 1995

Dear Spencer:

Thanks for responding. One does feel invisible around here sometimes, even when decloaked. It's reassuring to be addressed occasionally (like the holographic emergency medical officer on ST Voyager, I just want a name) Anyway, I had some further thoughts about this theory thread, which occasionally, it seems to me, threatens to collapse into an absurdity of miscommunication.

It would be interesting to track the history of the institution of "theory", especially as it replaced "philosophy" and "literary criticism" as the acceptable

form of explanation. People throw this word around like they know what it means, but I just get more confused. My own (admittedly limited) sense is that the recent popularization of theory as an institution is based on a kind of bastard marriage of Marxism and Freudism as they tried to hitch their marvelous 19th century systematic architectures of revelation onto the science bandwagon. From thence via Frankfurt, we suddenly find ourselves in the midst of a world in which something called "under-theorization" has replaced certain "sins".

Papa Charlie (the absent father?) sends in his hit men (be they jazz musicians or imported Euro-brains) to try and get the kids to cool it by overwhelming them with the "obvious", as if this discourse of "theory" itself were, what did James Sherry call it, "transparent"? As if it didn't have a history. As if it weren't the center of a very specific world, one in which "practice" (another interesting institution) is "based on" certain abstract "principles" (Yikes! shades of Plato.) What does it mean in 1995 to affirm a world that looks like this? Does asking this question mean that I am anti-intellectual, that I don't want to "think" about poetry, that I just want to wallow in words like some kind of Romantic pig?

Well, given the responses here so it would seem.

Hang in there.

Mike



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336. **James Sherry**

Language Poetry

Tue 21 Feb 1995

It strikes me as appropriate that just after our exchange on the list about Language poetry that the New York Times should mention it. so if any of you want to know about Language Poetry, read the New York Times book review 2/20/95. The charts and text really give you the straight skinny about Language Poetry, although somehow the New York school gets omitted. This article is indicative.

Please does anyone know the author of that piece, I want us all to thank her for her amazing understanding of the poetry world and the work of poets? Send her name and number in confidence to me. All inquiries will be understood. James

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337. **Bill Luoma**

Re: New from Sun & Moon

Tue 21 Feb 1995

Gary,

Nice post. I do feel stupid for not having a coherent body of theoretical work. No, I feel more guilty than stupid.

I like your point about the academy needing a good dose of marketing to pay attention to certain trends:

> people in academic institutions aren't particularly good readers, *need* demarcations . . .

You've got to hand it to the Lang Poets, they know marketing.

but, really, how entrenched is an L-P writing method in the university? Could we come up with a location matchup and some market data? L-P infiltration appears to have been successfully implemented in Buffalo, UC San Diego, San Francisco State, Brown, Sonoma, Simon Frazer, Albany (no), Toronto?, Montreal?, and say 20 more campuses for good measure versus the rest of the colleges and universities who offer writing programs. That's about 30 LPs versus ____ . Can anyone fill in the blank?

bluoma

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338. **Edward Foster**

Re: Nina Iskrenko

Tue 21 Feb 1995

my apologies, ron, for having put the announcement re: Nina's death under "boy t

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339. **Edward Foster**

Re: Nina Iskrenko

Tue 21 Feb 1995

Third Wave is a good source for Iskrenko translations, but see also those in Exa

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340. **Edward Foster**

Re: Nina Iskrenko

Tue 21 Feb 1995

In answer to Tom's question, I assume Nina died of cancer, from which she has
su

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341. **eric pape**

Re: refried theory and deified beans

Tue 21 Feb 1995

Has anyone here read Viswanathan's new book about the history of "literary" studies in India? Basic assertion that literary studies in English began not in England or America, still under the classical mode of learning, but in India where it was used to "Anglicize" Indian subjects, ie, the teaching of English values through English literature meant to "replace" their own culture, which was obviously devalued as "primitive." My point is to suggest that if we want to historicize theory, a very good idea incidentally, we cannot forget to do the same for art, and for philosophy, and particularly not for "literary criticism." "Any document of civilization..." etc. Thanks, Eric.

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342. **Alan Golding**

Re: New from Sun & Moon

Tue 21 Feb 1995

Associate Professor of English, U. of Louisville

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

Some thoughts (we hope) about theory and boy and girl talk and other matters, prefaced by the disclaimer that I had a system crash yesterday and lost four days' worth of posts and mail--so if I repeat what someone's already said, am not responding to someone, whatever, apologies.

Bill Luoma asks a statistical question about the "entrenchment" of LP writing method (a category I'd question, Bill, because I'm not convinced that there is a method in the same way that there seems to be a workshop method, and this absence of a "method" may explain what remains LP's relative academic marginality--its absence of a monolithic method doesn't endear it to creative writing programs. Whew--did that long parenthesis make sense?). But I'd fill in your blank, Bill, with "100s." One could find out from Associated Writing Programs. More generally, rumors of LP's academic entrenchment are (as Bill implies) greatly exaggerated. Two points: (1) there's a distinction to be made

between establishment in the academic side of English Depts. and in writing programs. I teach LP in academic English courses, but no one here exploits the possibilities of its method(s) in creative writing courses. (2) This so-called "entrenchment" gets exaggerated by LP's already entrenched opponents (a strategy that parallels the right's strategy in the NEH/NEA wars and in other fora--though I emphatically do not want to associate divergence from LP with the right, which would be silly). I'm just saying that despite an emergent body of criticism on LP, the increased visibility of particular poets, and so on, still a very small number of writers who might be associated with that increasingly amorphous-looking tendency are engaged in full-time academic work, nor do I think that their work exactly saturates syllabi nation-wide.

On the recent theory exchanges: interesting that the theory discussion and the boy/girl talk have been going on simultaneously but in parallel lines, without much crossover. What's the relation between theory (the tendency to theorize, the kind of theorizing that gets done) and gender? I'd like to hear from some of the female subscribers as to their take on the theory discussion. Does theory mean something to you (in "theory" and in practice) different from what it means to male participants (I'm not assuming that I know what it means to them, by the way)? I just have the intuition that there's a connection between these two current threads that's getting suppressed or not talked about or overlooked. Is it just coincidence that they're going at the same time, but separately? Given recent posts like Juliana Spahr's referring to boy's talk about boy's books, I suspect not. Y'all, as we say here in Kentucky, can let me know if I'm off base.

Also: "theory" means something different to academics and to poets. I think that what Spencer, James, and Tom have been debating as theory, I'd be more inclined to call poetics. Or at least I'd make this distinction, which is an institutional one, not an essential one: that in most current intellectual debate, "theory" means a certain body of poststructuralist texts and thought that, yes, obviously, is deeply tied up with the writing practice of many people on this list, but that is used in the academy to marginalize poetry. Or to put it bluntly, many more people in universities are interested in theory than they are in poetry. So: I just wanted to (re)call to people's minds this definition and use of "theory." LP has the wonderful power (as do Emily Dickinson and Wallace Stevens) to interest people who are also interested in theory. Sorry if this risks academicizing the whole issue unduly--just reporting from the site where I spend most of my time.

To Sandra (Braman): I was shocked by your report of Larry Grossberg's claim that doing pure theory (whatever exactly that would mean--I'm not sure--what would purify it, and how would one assess its purity?) was the only meaningful contemporary politics. I'd be interested to hear more about this, either on or off

line. On the surface it sounds like a kind of quietist reiteration of the old arguments about the political efficacy of deconstruction, but maybe I'm missing something.

Alan Golding

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343. **Alan Golding**

Re: refried theory and deified beans

Tue 21 Feb 1995

Associate Professor of English, U. of Louisville

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

Eric--Could you please post the full citation for the Viswanathan book? Thanks.

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344. **Tony Green**

Re: deified theories

Tue 21 Feb 1995

"By the way, Tony, with the place you give sound/voice in poems where do you leave someone who just happens not to have heard poetry aloud, or a deaf someone. I can't see the disadvantage.

Surely one sensitivity being blocked serves well to open others?

John Geraets

[REDACTED]"

Hi, good to see you de-lurk, John. I'll have to think about it, since I'm on duty enrolling students this a.m. I guess it must be a problem of limiting cases that you've raised, rarely possible to include these definitely, or exclude. This position has to be carefully looked into: it's about the process of thinking the text read as something someone is saying. If you were deaf, the usual pleasures and frustrations will no doubt intervene. How about pictures for blind people? Theory would be hard-pressed to cope.

Best wishes

Tony Green,

e-mail: [REDACTED]

post: Dept of Art History,

University of Auckland,

Private Bag 92019,

Auckland, New Zealand

Fax: 64 9- [REDACTED]

Telephone: 64 9 [REDACTED] ext. 8981 or 7276

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345. **Steve Evans**

Re: Quote

Tue 21 Feb 1995

David,

In the last paragraph of "Cultural Criticism and Society," Theodor W. Adorno writes:

Cultural criticism finds itself faced with the final stage of the dialectic of culture and barbarism. To write poetry after the holocaust is barbaric. And this corrodes even the knowledge of why it has become impossible to write poetry today. Absolute reification, which presupposed intellectual progress as one of its elements, is now preparing to absorb the mind entirely. Critical intelligence cannot be equal to this challenge as long as it confines itself to self-satisfied contemplation." (_Prisms_. Trans. Samuel and Sherry Weber. Cambridge: MIT P, 1981.)

In Part Three of _Negative Dialectics,_ Adorno revised the statement.

Perennial suffering has as much right to reexpression as a tortured man has to scream; hence it may have been wrong to say that after Auschwitz you could no longer write poems. But it is not wrong to raise the less cultural question whether after Auschwitz you can go on living--especially whether one who escape by accident, one who bu rights should have been killed, may go on living. His mere survival calls for the coldness, the basic principle of bourgeois subjectivity, without which there could have been no Auschwitz; this is the drastic guilt of him who was spared. (_Negative Dialectics_. Trans. A.B. Ashton. New York: Continuum, 1973. 363.)

A few pages on: "All post-Auschwitz culture, including its urgent critique, is garbage" (367).

Steve Evans

David wrote:

>I wonder if someone might identify a quote that goes something like:

>

>"All poetry after the holocaust is..."

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346. **Edward Foster**
Re: Language Poetry
Tue 21 Feb 1995

that times piece was one of the silliest things they've ever published, of cours

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347. **Robert Drake**
Re: Congratulations to TREE (TapRoot Electronic Edition)
Tue 21 Feb 1995

loss--

greetings again. i'm starting in earnest the task of formating TRee into WWW--
having finally gotten a web-capable connection & getting a grip on what i'm
aiming at. i've prototyped the home page & index pages, which i 'll send you fr
input. are you/the EPC still up for hosting the documents?? i'm checking again,
'cause i'm beginning to realize what might be involved... & if yr still up for it, a
technical question: are there lenght/format restrictions on the names of
documents on your system? that'll impact the names i assign for links, so let
me know...

basically, my general plan is to link the homepage to 2 directory pages ([REDACTED]
zines & chaps), each of which will have alphabetic subcatagories ("zines A",
"zines B"... "chaps author A"... etc); each of which will link to the actual index
for "Zines/a" "Zines/B" etc...--then those indices will link to the individual
reviews. what this would mean, for you, is everytime a new issue comes out,
there would be a group of documents to add (one for each publication reviews),
AND the various index files ([REDACTED] both zines & chaps) would have to be
replaced with new versions... if this is unclear, i'll send (on disk) the initial
prototype. if it _is_ clear, and looks to be more than you bargained for, lemme
know.

i'm kind of psyched to actually have documents coded & linked, and daunted by
the prospect of converting all the back issues into the new format. but i think
it'll be pretty impressive when done, and ultimatly may GET SOME OF THIS
STUFF READ, which is ov course the goal not to loose site of.... i'm curious,
too, if the mention in _Online Access_ had a noticable impact on logins to the
system--any statistics yet?

morelater

luigi

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348. **Jeffrey Timmons**

Re: refried theory and deified beans

Tue 21 Feb 1995

To eric, et al: It's good you bring up the view that all culture should be historicized. I've been reading Said's *Culture and Imperialism* and the point is not simply to historicize, but to point out that the supposed greatness and fact of existence of European culture is made possible, implicated to the highest degree, with the system of imperial/colonial exploitation. Beyond this, Said suggests looking at discrepant experiences of colonial relations--texts from different perspectives on colonial experience whose commonality does not efface their important differences. This is a rejection of a "pure" aesthetic realm; a rejection of "humanism"; a rejection of "unitariness; and an imperative to unthink the rigid separation of politics and aesthetics. One should include theory in the latter, I believe, and, even, indict it on the same terms.... Just some thoughts.

Jeffrey Timmons

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349. **Jeffrey Timmons**

Re: refried theory and deified beans

Tue 21 Feb 1995

To Eric, et al: Oh, I forgot: the only reason I mention Said and some of his ideas is that he refers to Viswanathan's book (indirectly; as a student of his I believe) in his own book.

Jeffrey Timmons

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350. **David**

Quote

Tue 21 Feb 1995

I wonder if someone might identify a quote that goes something like:

"All poetry after the holocaust is..."

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351. **Jeffrey Timmons**

Re: Quote

Tue 21 Feb 1995

Adorno was obviously a pessimist. A cynic. But did that keep him from exercising his own critique? Perhaps it is garbage, but there seems to be an equal if not more pressing imperative/responsibility to produce/create/make/whatever in the face of such institutional forms of fascism. Today.

Jeffrey Timmons

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352. **Tony Green**

Re: A Cockney Sparrow

Tue 21 Feb 1995

Spencer Selby says: "I expect something of the results of my poetry; anyone who i poet expects something of the results. But that does not mean I have a need to formulate what those results will be, or necessarily mean. I may anticipate those results, which is quite different from formulating them, since my anticipation may involve a range of responses that need not be explained or characterized in a theoretical way."

Dear Spencer, I would like you to look closer at "anticipation of results", because I think you could find just there, thought that may never be more than muttered to yourself, or even quite silent, but in which something other than the poem to be written or the poem in hand or the poem just written is saying, for example "Some other person(s), whether living or dead, would like/not like this, because...." how is that not theoretical, that is dependent on a stance in regard to others who will read or hear the poem. Will it "move" someone else in any way? I would have thought that the use of theory to poets was that in between writing they could sort out what went wrong with the last poem or what went right. Between posts (?poems) several people on this list are theorizing the post and the network. What you seem perturbed about is the thought that poems should conform to a prior encapsulation of right method(s) for producing what has already been determined as "good" poetry. Theory as prescription is a worry, yes. But that doesn't mean that poetry can be disentangled from the theory that goes into the making of it.

Cheers,

Tony Green,

e-mail: [REDACTED]

post: Dept of Art History,

University of Auckland,
Private Bag 92019,
Auckland, New Zealand
Fax: 64 9- [REDACTED]
Telephone: 64 9 [REDACTED] ext. 8981 or 7276

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353. **Tom Mandel**

Re: Nina Iskrenko

Tue 21 Feb 1995

I must echo what Ron said of Nina Iskrenko, whom I met only once and then in a passing way, but heard in conversation that evening. A great brilliance proceeded from her, and it is a corresponding loss.

Ed Foster's mention of her death under the rubric "boy talk" has at least the excuse that he's new to email. I have no excuse at all.

Tm

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354. **B. Cass Clarke**

Re: the holy Dead

Tue 21 Feb 1995

Dear Ed and Tm,

Pardon my widow's weeds, but nobody needs an excuse. Stop tripping over yourselves for being "insensitive." There is nothing wrong with boy talk. Perhaps the poet had a sense of humor.

B. Cass Clarke
[REDACTED]

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355. **Patrick Phillips**

Nina Iskrenko

Tue 21 Feb 1995

I met Nina once here in Providence last year. As Ron said, she had a keen wit and a great sense of humor. She also possessed the ability to be, to simply engage in conversation with a conviction that never once waived. At our very brief encounter I told her of a project I'm working on and three months later,

battling breast cancer, she sent four "poems for deaf people" - drawings of the slightest filigree composed entirely of words. They remind me of some of Michaux's line-work and captivate with a similar drift between language and line, between cultures - so to speak. This gesture provides a lasting tether. Here's one of her poems from "Third-Wave" (pg 91) translated by Anesa Miller-Pogacar:

/a biography from the opposed, 1989/

The author belongs to the generation born in the 1950's and realizing its creative strivings in that period of our history that proved to be an epoch of sharply developed absurdism and carefully preserved principles of highly artistic stagnation. Being accustomed since childhood to the paradoxical phenomena of everyday life with their unforeseeable consequences, knowing how to get by in the majority of situations without common sense or psychological ease, with a strict immunity to all that can be had without struggle, that which is passed out one apiece - all of this sooner or later creates a corresponding supply of firmness, or, if you wish, a natural conservatism, protecting its bearer from simple decisions and direct paths to even the most obvious truths. This healthy conservatism lays a noticeable imprint on the stylistics and character of the depicted, and it also explains - metaphorically at least - a cluster of phenomena that defy more reasoned means of interpretation. Specifically, these are certain facts of the "biography from the opposed." Having obvious inclinations toward the humanities - toward literature, music, drawing, etc. - the author nonetheless spends six years studying at Moscow University in order to, having obtained a diploma in physics, never again to return to the natural sciences, those ex-personal forms of interacting with the surrounding reality; having selected, as primary orientation, the word, and as shelter of necessity - the trivial pursuit of work as a translator of scientific and technical literature from English to Russian. A family and two children convincingly fill out the picture of a normal existence for a Russian woman in the contemporary literary process, an existence that was secret for many years and even shameful in the eyes of others, to reveal itself only in the past year or two with a few publications. Thus, it is not surprising that the author accepts any signs of attention paid to her humble persona with a certain dubiousness and perplexity; for this she offers excuses in the form of gratitude, and gratitude in the form of a text whose rehearsal coincides with its final result.

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356. **B. Cass Clarke**
A Worm?

Tue 21 Feb 1995

Dear Benji,

I was shocked, simply shocked to see your persona bandied about so cavalierly on this list. Is this some form of "get the guest" as in Virginia Woolf (who's afraid of)?

You have my condolences and solid aridy.

B. Cass Clarke


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357. **eric pape**
Re: Quote

Tue 21 Feb 1995

Just a brief reply, but I think it is a majoy misunderstanding to think of Adorno as a cynic. A pessimist, certainly. To some extent a paralyzed thinker, I grant. But not a cynic. A cynic gives in to the barbarity. A cynic gives up the ever more problematic possibility of Utopia. Adorno had a hell of a lot of problems as a person and sometimes as a thinker, but he was never a cynic. Thanks, Eric.

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358. **Patrick Phillips**
corrected Nina Iskerenko poem

Tue 21 Feb 1995

Sorry for the repost - Just thought I oughtta get it down right.

/a biography from the opposed, 1989/

The author belongs to the generation born in the 1950's and realizing its creative strivings in that period of our history that proved to be an epoch of sharply developed absurdism and carefully preserved principles of highly artistic stagnation. Being accustomed since childhood to the paradoxical phenomena of everyday life with their unforeseeable consequences, knowing how to get by in the majority of situations without common sense or psychological ease, with a strict immunity to all that can be had without struggle, that which is passed out one apiece - all of this sooner or later creates a corresponding supply of firmness, or, if you wish, a natural conservatism, protecting its bearer from simple decisions and direct paths to even the most

obvious truths, this healthy conservatism lays a noticeable imprint on the stylistics and character of the depicted, and it also explains - metaphorically at least - a cluster of phenomena that defy more reasoned means of interpretation. Specifically, these are certain facts of the "biography from the opposed." Having obvious inclinations toward the humanities - toward literature, music, drawing, etc. - the author nonetheless spends six years studying at Moscow University in order to, having obtained a diploma in physics, never again to return to the natural sciences, those ex-personal forms of interacting with the surrounding reality; having selected, as primary orientation, the word, and as shelter of necessity - the trivial pursuit of work as a translator of scientific and technical literature from English to Russian. A family and two children convincingly fill out the picture of a normal existence for a Russian woman in the contemporary literary process, an existence that was secret for many years and even shameful in the eyes of others, to reveal itself only in the past year or two with a few publications. Thus, it is not surprising that the author accepts any signs of attention paid to her humble persona with a certain dubiousness and perplexity; for this she offers excuses in the form of gratitude, and gratitude in the form of a text whose rehearsal coincides with its final result.

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359. **eric pape**

Re: refried theory and deified beans

Tue 21 Feb 1995

Sorry Alan. Of course.

Viswanathan, Gauri. *Masks of Conquest: Literary Study and British Rule in India* New York: Columbia Univ. Press, 1989.

Wow. It suddenly occurs to me that by today's standards this is not all that new after all.

Thanks, Eric.

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360. **B. Cass Clarke**

Romantic

Tue 21 Feb 1995

Dear Mike:

War bird decloaking at starboard. I wonder if anyone has read Sidney or Shelley's Defense of Poetry in the last 20 years? I think "theory" has taken the place of philosophy in the equation. I used to think it was pseudo-psychology in its reading of poetry and its authors.

All lean toward the destruction of poetry's power as sovereign in human imagination. Without the poets there is no hope. We will not be educated, consoled, inspired, loved or moved to action in this brazen world - only the poets can deliver a golden (to quote a buddy).

We all know who they are. They are written on our hearts. Whether alive or elsewhere they get the job done, usually alone, on the screen or in the streets, curled up around a terminal or allowing it to fade "like a sand painting at the end of day" their labors keep all of creation going - otherwise all is entropy. All else is A River of Ka-Ka sold at a very high price.

When I think of theory and Blake, I know he came to his in the work - and when he found it he abandoned the Four Zoas to write Jerusalem.

I believe every poet discovers "theory" in this way. It reveals itself.

All hail the Poets. They keep us free and laughing in an otherwise dismal prospect. Call me Post-Romantic.

B. Cass Clarke



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361. **Chris Stroffolino**

Re: theory and being heard

Wed 22 Feb 1995

Dear Mark (Wallace), in response to your claim of having to be a theory to be heard, what then do you have to be to listen? Do only theories listen to theory? In any event, I do not claim to find any comfort in the hegemony of "theory" in the academy, and I do not intend my response to be "flip" and "merely rhetorical" but "THEORY IS POETRY IN DRAG" can, as a motto, approximate a perspective a legitimate (i.e. IT PAYS) tradition is (re)-forming around, regardless of ruptures that on an institutional level are reinscribed into what becomes read as a "debate." I am trying to avoid the cynical resignation in the face of a compartmentalized view of the world. For such "resignation" simply perpetuates it. And if I may lapse for a second and indulge myself in a freudian metaphor, isn't it possible, Mark, that sometimes what seems more like "theory" than "poetry" actually falls more on the "side" of the intrinsically motivated ID rather than the extrinsic SUPEREGO? And thus, occasionally if you didn't DO POETRY you'd be out of a job? Or is this just a matter of interpretation on my part.... As for Alan Golding's rewording of what many have called "theory" as really POETICS, which he claims is an institutional rather than essential distinction, that doesn't seem "accurate"--for "academic theory" only becomes poetics if put into dialogue with poets and or poems... Granted, we're on a POETIC list, so

we can claim we're some kind of hermetically sealed interpretative community gathered around some transcendental signifier BUT isn't the question to some extent the idea that there exists this THEORY which in itself is HOSTILE to poetry, in a way quite different from "poetics" is... Now, this "hostility" of course brings in the whole question of whether thinking binary is a CAUSE of cultural disenchantment or merely a rhetorical exercise to show off one's "wit" with not external ramifications in the "real world"--And thus, that dreaded question of TONE becomes raised again in a piece of writing (this) that is marketable NEITHER as theory or poetry, and then one wonders if there is communication only with commodification, and I drank another dollar to quench my thirst for anti-naive-vulgar organic humanism (which of course is really really really what we all want "underneath it all") All of my love, Chris

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362. **Marjorie Perloff**

Re: Alan Golding's query POETICS Digest - 20 Feb 1995 to 21 Feb 1995

Wed 22 Feb 1995

Dear Alan and others-- Susan Schultz and I discussed the boy/girl issue in Hawaii two weeks ago and I brought it up when Ron Silliman, Lyn Hejinian, and Leslie Scalapino were here for the Ginsberg censorship affair last week. Interestingly, Lyn and Leslie say they never see the poetics net; Joan Retallack tells me the same thing and I guess in general we girls just don't do it as much. Why? (1) as one correspondent wrote in, we DO have too much to do. I don't see how the men have the TIME to write endlessly back and forth. and (2) this mode of communication is somehow unsatisfactory to women. It really IS a gender issue, I think. I like to write to someone, not everyone/ anyone. A mode of address. A form of life. Writing to those "out there" is somehow unappealing, as Kathleen Fraser was saying the other day. So: it's great for messages like, "What is the title of that book?" or here are three conferences coming up--a bulletin board. But beyond that? well-I think we'll let the men go for it.

Another topic (here it's useful): who IS Dinitia Smith, who wrote that article? She never contacted me but I did get a call from the photo dept asking for a picture. The dept. here sent it and then they called back to say sorry, they could only use "one in every category." I was so glad the cartoon wasn't of me. Where did she learn of her "language poets"?? I wonder who was her source of information? Bye, men!

Marjorie Perloff

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363. **Jeffrey Timmons**

Re: refried theory and deified beans (fwd)

Wed 22 Feb 1995

This apparently didn't get sent. I'm forwarding it from my files.

----- Forwarded message -----

Date: Tue, 21 Feb 1995 18:01:31 -0700 (MST)

From: [REDACTED]

To: UB Poetics discussion group <[REDACTED]>

Cc: Multiple recipients of list POETICS <[REDACTED]>

Subject: Re: refried theory and deified beans

To eric, et al: It's good you bring up the view that all culture should be historicized. I've been reading Said's *Culture and Imperialism* and the point is not simply to historicize, but to point out that the supposed greatness and fact of existence of European culture is made possible, implicated to the highest degree, with the system of imperial/colonial exploitation. Beyond this, Said suggests looking at discrepant experiences of colonial relations--texts from different perspectives on colonial experience whose commonality does not efface their important differences. This is a rejection of a "pure" aesthetic realm; a rejection of "humanism"; a rejection of "unitariness; and an imperative to unthink the rigid separation of politics and aesthetics. One should include theory in the latter, I believe, and, even, indict it on the same terms.... Just some thoughts.

Jeffrey Timmons

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364. **cris cheek**

Arrow and Sparrow

Wed 22 Feb 1995

Hi Tony, and it's a cheep cheep
from the chirpy
over, "here, here!".

Of course your take on 'theory' and 'poetry' does presume that everybody writes poems with a reader 'in mind'. Or, splitting it down more to further - a reader Other than Them Selves. But even a dialogue within Them Selves' work will produce the intimate inter-relations you articulate.

I would like you to look closer at "anticipation of results", because I think you could find just there, thought that may never be more than muttered to yourself, or even quite silent, but in which something other than the poem to be written or the poem in hand

or the poem just written is saying, for example "Some other person(s), whether living or dead, would like/not like this, because...." how is that not theoretical, that is dependent on a stance in regard to others who will read or hear the poem.

At heart (I'm recently reconciling myself to using what I saw before as a centralising anatomical reference but now re-emphasise its decentralising function, from the left) poetry is social (interpersonal and yes political) in a most challenged sense.

The issue which has been mentioned several times here is that of voicing, reading out loud - which seems crucial to this discussion. It makes a useful bridge (I'm always up for building 'em) to issues of composition and to oral - improvisatory traditions and innovative oral - improvisatory 'practice' (surely it's always practice, however 'accomplished it gets - that's its edge which admits process - is process an institution?).

Having said which I would also be disturbed by what you describe as 'poems being written in order to conform to a prior encapsulation of right method(s) for production'. That way lies closure. But is anybody on this list proposing that? I've read no evidence of it. Thanks for your post - it may have wafted the smokescreen a touch.

I'm worried that there is an idealism footloose with the fancy that's chirping a hymn of variation - too whit:

'there is a theory far away, without a city wall'

love and love

cris

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365. **braman sandra**

Re: Finally, boy talk

Wed 22 Feb 1995

OK, finally I'll "delurk" on boytalk as a woman who follows/participates in/ listens to the poetics list -- may we at first all, please, stop generalizing in any of your statements to ALL women? There hasn't yet been one statement that has appeared yet that would apply to us all, and I for one intend to keeping waving my arms in as many shiva thousands of ways as possible . . . Sandra Braman

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366. **Joe Amato**

aunts and sisters... and uncles... and cousins...

Wed 22 Feb 1995

without 'taking sides,' i'd like to express my enthusiasm for nada's assertion that it would be a "waste of a medium" for women to let "the men go for it"...

there are all sorts of gender issues at stake in a space such as this... it's not simply how many women post/lurk vs. how many men (though this is in fact **does** constitute, for me, a sort of bottom-line litmus of gender), there's also the question raised by alan golding as to the parallel boy talk/theory threads (for example)... part of the way to see these threads as connected IS simply not to treat them as separate (!)... i mean, why is the boy talk thread by its very nature NOT theoretical?... i would have to argue that it is in fact a theorized discussion---though it's theory in a different vein, hence it's perceived (by some) as atheoretical... i had in mind two items in reading alan's post: rachel blau duplessis' essay "for the etruscans" (a poetic inquiry into "feminist aesthetic") and what i've heard from certain communities of women (virtual and otherwise) re "theory"---that it's all too often practiced in ways that exclude alternative voices/soundings...

a few typos in that paragraph above, i hate line editors...

anyway... there's something about that suggestion (who made it?) about shutting up and letting the women speak that appeals to me, albeit i understand this as a provisional gesture... we have to learn to dance with one another...

and believe me, this medium filters out **my** more active (male, i guess) presence (ftf, that is), so i'm not pretending in any way to have developed an immunity to what i'm busy t/hereabouts criteeking...

so i'll shut up now...

joe

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367. **Gary Sullivan**

Re: New from Sun & Moon

Wed 22 Feb 1995

Dear Alan Golding & everyone:

The discussions re: "boy talk" and "theory" **have** crossed over: In my original post, to which Bill Luoma was responding, I'd noted that Gertrude Stein, Mina Loy and Djuna Barnes didn't provide separate bodies of critical writings (I said Stein's "criticism" or "theory" or "poetics" didn't feel "separate" to me--that _How to Write_ felt not much different in style, approach & intention to (say) _A

Novel of Thank You_), and was hoping POETICS list readers might pick up on the fact that these writers were women. Implication being (generally) that "poetics talk" or "theory" *tends* to be a male preoccupation. Of course that's a wild generalization to make--there are exceptions. Also, I didn't mean to imply that language poetry was wildly successful in academe, but that relative to Stein, Loy & Barnes (& let's add Bernadette Mayer--another influence on language and other contemporary writers), well, relative to writers like Bernstein, Andrews, Silliman, Scalapino, Perelman & so on, the earlier 20th century women experimental or exploratory or whathaveyou writers weren't acknowledged by people in universities as quickly as the language poets have been. (Not by *all* people in universities, or *all* universities, mind you.) I suppose you could say that Stein's Yale series was a form of academic "acknowledgment"--but, I'd argue that she *paid* for those books to be published (the money for them left via her will), and that, of course, Yale never bothered to reprint any of them after they went out of print. (Except for a _Selected_.)

Of course, the _Times_ article on "The Poetry Pantheon" was ridiculous, but do note that the only "exploratory" group of poets mentioned there was the language poets--as though all of us writing non-mainstream poetry were "language poets." I was amazed, reading a fairly recent essay by Jefferson Hansen that appeared in _Poetic Briefs_--& Jeff's a really talented poet & not unbrilliant guy--I was amazed that he could imply that younger poets (like myself & hundreds--thousands?--of others) were all "influenced" or, in his words, "were greatly indebted to" the language poets. This is absurd, of course, and suggests that what might have happened or be in the process of happening is that people are tending to lump all "exploratory" poets into a single camp: language poetry. My own influences are mostly artists, writers & thinkers who did their work prior to 1970.

At any rate, I'd love to hear what others, men or women on this list, have to say about "theory" or "poetics"--especially what the women have to say: *Is* theory, *is* this notion that "Great poets have & make public their insights into other 'great' poets" a particularly *male* preoccupation? (Alan, if you don't know what that quote refers to, if you lost Bernstein's original post, e-mail me separately & I'll pass along the original post, which was a selection from a new book Sun & Moon has just published.)

Yours,

Gary.

----- Gary Sullivan
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/ / \ / / / / _ / \ / _ / -----

----- Gary Sullivan
/___)/___)///// _ ^ // _ /
/ / \ / / / / _ / \ / _ / -----

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370. **eric pape**

Re: refried theory and deified beans (fwd)

Wed 22 Feb 1995

Jeffrey: Right. What can I say. That's pretty much exactly what I intended my remark to do. I'd like to respond much more to this idea, particularly on Said's figure of the intellectual which he models in a very weird way on Auerbach and many of the German philologists, but I just don't have time. I love this list, and as Nada indicated, it provides a complete unknown like me, someone out of the blue, unconnected to any of the power centers, a forum and a voice.

Unfortunately, I never have the time to take full advantage of it. Thanks,
Eric.

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371. **eric pape**

Re: Romantic

Wed 22 Feb 1995

Cass (I hope that's right and not "B.Cass?"): I'd like to respond to your message personally and sort of "out" myself in the process. I want to do this because I'd like very very very much to believe in what you say; that poetry makes a difference; that it can save the world; that's why, I think, most of us are here, huh? But I'm troubled by the resistance to the various discourses (let's not pin it down to post-structuralism, poetics, philosophies, etc: theory is what is used) that come, today, under the category of "theory." When I graduated from high school, barely I might add, I knew I was interested in writing poetry. Knew that's how I wanted to spend my life. Didn't know where to, though, because where I grew up the only book store in town was a used paper back place that sold mostly horror and romances. So, like many of my friends, I went to the local community college, where a teacher became interested and encouraged me to keep writing, and indeed to go into a "writing program." So I shuffled off to a CSU in the San Fernando Valley, the only place I could get into with a 1.9 hi school average, and became very interested in the scene down there, Beyond Baroque, the BEBOP, etc. My professors of writing encouraged me to read langpo, and ny school etc, because of course this was a hip school after all, if it couldn't quite be a prestigious one. The point is that they were very receptive. (If this is boring you can skip to the last paragraph; I'm currently

involved in the very Foucault-esque thrill of confessing and realize this is more of a kick for me than you) Ultimately, I went to a graduate writing program here at LSU. I studied with Codrescu, and Rodger (hey Rodger) and Dave Smith. Odd grouping, I know and in fact, for me, this was very disconcerting because I kept getting mixed ideas as to what poetry was. I became very confused as each tried to shape my work. I began writing a kind of workshop poetry (as Golding terms it and it is a very good term), though I tried to reconfigure it, subvert it as I discovered the fiction of Acker and to a certain extent Auster. But I was never quite satisfied. I graduated and stayed for a Ph.D. I discovered theory, particularly the to me thrilling and disparate writings in Western Marxism. Then I discovered post/neo colonial stuff, and I began re-reading my poetry and the poetry I was reading and I realized how naive I was; they were. How much they left out because they weren't keeping up with the explosion of extremely various writings out there all called theory. I re-read Frank O'Hara, found him to be fabulous in ways I never saw before. The l-school I saw as being the most sophisticated thinkers in poetry I knew. I re-read Audre Lorde, Sonia Sanchez, found them tapped into culture more intimately than any of the mainstream political poets. Ultimately, I signed on to this list and I realized (suck up) that I could talk about these things for the first time with other poets, which I couldn't do before (except with Rodger, obviously). Realized that there were differences there, but they were aware, into it, not still talking about line breaks, point of view, etc. And that's where I am now. Stuck selling a book I wrote when I was a little more naive, though the things I was writing about I still think was very important to me but the way I was writing seems naive, dated. And better working, still working, on a method that ties in everything I've learned then, and now. The point is that if you are not aware that as you write to certain extent you are theorizing, you end up theorizing badly, which is what I was doing. You end up seeming naive, lost, confused. I know, Cass, that you and all the others on this list perhaps cannot identify too much with my story because you already knew the "avant-garde" was the most interesting and legitimate tradition, the only international one, as I believe Tom said. But I didn't. Didn't even understand it. Until I began to theorize. Hope this didn't just bore the hell out of you, but I believed your post required the most fully "historicized" response I could muster. Thanks, Eric.

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372. **nada**

Poetics List Takes Toll On Tough Birds

Wed 22 Feb 1995

Subject: Poetics List Takes Toll On Tough Birds

Copyright: 1999 by The Anti-Hegemony Group

Date: 21 Mar 99 12:12:12 PST

Lines: 57

SAN FRANCISCO (AHP) -- A cyberzoo can take its toll on even the toughest old birds, and these birds were never very tough to begin with.

Forty-four ``light-winged Dryads of the trees" have fallen dead silent; a population that once reached 44 is down to four.

``It would appear ... that it's the wrong zoo for the species and, indeed, it's no doubt the wrong species for zoos," said Kali Tal, president of the animal rights group Hungry Generation.

But generalizations are difficult. For instance, these particular nightingales share neither habitat nor coloration. They come in all shapes and sizes. Some call Hawaii home, some

Group bleari.nooz.boids available: 32 - 23 unread: -9

article 32 20-MAR-1999 12:12:12

hail from Buffalo. And their song is not necessarily the same one heard by ``emperor and clown."

In fact, the unusual braying sound has earned the birds a nickname from snide zookeeper Ira Lightman -- ``jackass nightingales" -- though others describe the sound as more like the coo of an angry dove.

But why are the birds so stressed?

For one thing, there are well over five males competing for the attention of one female, a panel of experts noted.

For another, unknown predators have gotten into the feed lines and parodied several of the nightingales.

And instead of a big, blue sky to parade in when they get hot and bothered, they have a 1-foot-square screen.

Still, said Kali Tal, relenting in her earlier pessimism, ``birds do just fine on other lists."

A panel of experts made their official recommendation this week in a memo to head superintendent Charles Bernstein. According to a secret source, the memo urged a shutdown of ``██████████," and immediate dispersal of the birds.

Group bleari.nooz.boids article: 32 - 23 unread: -9

article 32 20-MAR-1999 12:12:12

``The nightingale issue has gone beyond what is in the best interest of the nightingales, and I want to refocus on their welfare," said noted animal rights activist Liz Willis.

List spokesperson Alan Golding acknowledged the ``bird talk" program has had its ``ups and downs."

``We're out of kilter right now, definitely out of kilter," he said.

Noted another expert, Juliana Spahr, ``The problem is the concept of aviaries itself, you know, birds perched on swings. We'll have to do away with the whole `polly wanna cracker' mentality if we want any actual change."

The last time activists got so upset at the zoo was in 1994, when Betina, a 5-ton bull elephant, died after being tranquilized so she could be caged for shipment to a more suitable list.

Most of the nightingales died of diseases that were aggravated by stress due to boredom, competition and malnutrition, the panel said.

Poetics has tried to give the birds more ventilation in their tiny pens by installing a new subject line and cutting

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article 32 20-MAR-1999 12:12:12

back on brashness. It's also considering zookeeper Mark Nowak's recommendation that other species of birdsong be piped into the aviary. And it's looking at easing the gender pressure by boosting the population to include as many females as males, consultant Cris Cheek said.

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373. **nada** ***aunts and sisters***

Wed 22 Feb 1995

Dear Marjorie, Men, and Marginalized:

In a recent post, Marjorie Perloff wrote:

| *I guess in general we girls just don't do it as much.*

Really?

And gave the following reasons. The first one makes perfect sense to me:

>Why? (1) as one correspondent wrote in, we DO have too
>much to do. I don't see how the men have the TIME to write
endlessly back and forth.

but I must take issue with the second one :

*and (2) this mode of communication is somehow
unsatisfactory to women. It really
IS a gender issue, I think. I like to write to someone, not >everyone/anyone.
Writing to those "out there" is somehow unappealing, as
Kathleen Fraser was saying the other day.
So: it's great for messages like, "What is the title of that
book?" or here are three conferences coming up--a bulletin
board. But beyond that? well-I think we'll let the men go for
it.*

This mode of communication is not unsatisfactory to me -- and ain't I a woman?
It's not perfect, but it's not a bad substitute for a real live community. After just
a few posts I've made several valuable personal connections via this list. Gone
are the strictures of geography and social placement. My interlocutors are not
limited to people I know, hence "internet" -- a "form of life" -- a cocktail party
where everyone's invited, and it doesn't matter what you wear, just as long as
you are there . . .

Not to attack ad feminem, but it's one thing if you are a tenured person of
power at a major university with a brood of influential books -- you don't need a
forum. I do. I don't have time for or invitations to all those conferences. I am
not in close proximity to good English-language libraries or small press
bookstores. Usually when I hear my language spoken it's work-related or expat
gossip or badly -translated news. Or the beautiful flawed pidgin from my
students.

And if writing to those "out there " is unappealing, why not just write letters?
Why publish anything? No desire at all to ripple the pond? Trace your
subjectivity? Make your voice resound? Of course you want to do these things
-- Marjorie, Kathleen, Leslie -- or you wouldn't be in the positions you're in now.
You (especially Kathleen) would not have made it possible for me a generation
down to say what I'm saying right now. All the net's a stage! And the men are
all the players. . .

Letting "the men go for it" is the waste of a medium, the
waste of minds, a passive knuckling-under, tantamount to
letting the men make wars, oppress people, and argue
themselves into nightmares of sophistry. So I will agree that
"it really IS a gender issue," but not in the way you mean.

So I send out this call to my good and strong aunts -- if you speak here, you make space for me (and my sisters -- pardon the 70's-ish rhetoric) to speak here too. You'll also make the discussions decidedly more interesting.

-- Nada

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374. **Alan Golding**

Re: Alan Golding's queryPOETICS Digest - 20 Feb 1995 to 21 Feb 19

Wed 22 Feb 1995

Associate Professor of English, U. of Louisville

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

Dear Marjorie:

I'll see if I can tempt you into writing to everyone/anyone again.

On your first point: I'm not sure that the gendered differences in participation on the list occur because the women have more to do than the men. (I do wonder, like you, where some folks find the time, as I find even skimming the list tremendously time-consuming). We can probably agree that even in working-couple-with-family households like Gabrielle described, in arrangements where there's a conscious, sustained effort to make things equitable, women often end up being stuck with more of the load. But I'm not sure that the quantitative difference between male and female work loads/responsibilities is large enough to explain the participation differences we've been talking about. At least, it's not among my peers and in the community in which I live. In other words, I don't think this notion that women simply have tons more to do than men will really wash, will it?

And is this mode of communication somehow unsatisfactory to women? I've been wondering about that myself; we've had posts suggesting how it might be, and Kali especially, though others have too, has talked about how it might be. But I much prefer to write to someone, too. (I think this is probably the first public e-mail letter you and I have written to each other.) On the whole this preference may be gendered, but I do think there are other issues beyond that.

What are they? Wish I had time to figure that out.

Alan

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375. **B. Cass Clarke**

forwarded with permission from BF

Wed 22 Feb 1995

From: IN%"[REDACTED]" "Ben Friedlander" 22-FEB-1995 19:48:

To: IN%"[REDACTED]"

CC:

Subj: RE: A Worm?

id <[REDACTED]>; Wed,

22 Feb 1995 19:48:48 -0500 (EST)

Date: Wed, 22 Feb 1995 19:48:48 -0500 (EST)

From: Ben Friedlander <[REDACTED]>

Subject: Re: A Worm?

To: [REDACTED]

Organization: University at Buffalo

Cass,

Yeah, friends have been pinging me the bandwidth in question for a while now. I find some of it funny and some stoopid, or both at once.

Condolences? Soldarity? Maybe those are appropriate, but don't direct them to "me," it's my "name" and "identity" that have been usurped, and I've already lost title to 'em. There was a guy last year on the Derrida list, for instance, who copied messages, including mine, and posted them on other lists. Or something--I never got it straight, and found the whole business bemusing.

Not to say I don't care. I do! But I realize now I haven't any idea what it means to be a writer--to share my words when all I have to offer ARE words, with only a name to guarantee my proprietary interest, and only a social mechanism (often bewildering, if not oppressive) to guarantee reception. Until I get THAT straight, I think I'll stick to being a grad student, which I find much easier.

E-mail is an extreme instance, for sure, but it HAS made explicit how in public discourse, at the most extreme edges, where all we have are words, dialogue in the ethical sense is impossible. There is no "face to face," only an economic relation, free and not-so-free exchange of thoughts, feelings, bodily fluids (from the body without organs), echoes, ventriloquism, plays within plays.

"Ben Friedlander" may be my "personal_name," but I could just as well type "Benji," "worm," even "B. Cass Clarke." And obviously, ANYONE could type those names. Identity, especially on the 'net, is just another subject line, easily appropriated, misused, a cover for something snuck in illegitimately, sometimes out of sloppiness or ignorance, sometimes in bad faith. The only limits set for this appropriation are structural (a hacker's power far supercedes a parodist's)

and legal (cf. the alt.sex.stories pornographer who got arrested for using a classmate's name).

And then again, while these issues all pertain in the so-called real world, e-mail is different. I have no idea what the "real" ramifications of that difference are, but being (like you) a Dickhead (as in Philip K.) I assume they're bad.

I would probably be more upset if my name or identity had been used more maliciously--that has to be said too.

But thanks for passing the junk along,

Yours "in the analogy,"

Ben

(in lieu of flowers, donations may be made to the Institute of Further Studies at [REDACTED]) - Cass Clarke

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376. **B. Cass Clarke**

(no subject)

Wed 22 Feb 1995

From: UBVMS::V080G6J3 "B. Cass Clarke" 22-FEB-1995 19:49:57.28
To: IN%"[REDACTED]"
CC: V080G6J3
Subj: legislators

Dear Cris and Eric

Thank you both for your backchannel and public response.

You remember the line from Shelley - poets are the unacknowledged legislators - on that level poets have been warring with commerce, as well as philosophers, critics, historians etc., since an attempt at a definition of poetry's value, use and purpose came up for defense.

I said "post-romantic" because it is within that tradition that this "defense" occurs, from medieval forward - i.e. a *belief* that the poet performs a job that cannot be relegated to the other arts. This includes the long tradition of invisibilities, knowledges that are not contained by philos., mathematics, etc.

That post romanticism is not recognized as valid has to do with the trend of treating any practise which includes some notion of power not material, as disreputable and exposed by the advent of deconstruction. For the act of poeisis depends upon a maker, an author. These days to be a singular identity is to be phallogocentric, anti-multicultural, etc.

Unfortunately the prime requirement of making is thrown out because of its patriarchal associations. We have not yet seen how poetry will recover, but there are many workers out there who are bleeding tears trying. Including so-called language poets.

The "correct line" is not the one I'm drawing. But here in Buffalo, there are many strings being pulled. Most of the posters to this list are naturally caught up in the politics of the situation and it is national. They want jobs. Academic jobs. Here, if you're not with the lang-po project, it's not happening. Witness major poet hirings nationally and you get language critics, language poets. They control who gets brought in, who gets read, who gets studied - i.e. the remaking of the *canon*. So the fight, if there is one has to do with who will rewrite history? Those poets who have academic jobs from the prior wave, Creeley, Dorn, Blaser, - I'm speaking of the Black Mt. here, for example, we can insert our favorites here, have understandably left the arena to the young and will be replaced by the next *hot* language poet. I can think of others who were never part of the academic, Kyger, DiPrima, Grenier, Thorpe, Sanders, yes I have my favorites too, and many whose work I don't know, as I'm sure you can, who continue to teach and labor without the same visibility afforded a tenured professor with good small press (or large) commitments.

It will always be this way, it ever has been. I fall on the side of Mental War is Combat for the Angel, conducted by individuals armed with theory, philosophy, history, criticism, hell why not some architech- tonic too? This chick is old-fashioned that way, and no puritan mean streak will put me on the sidelines with the wallflowers.

As to the legislators, someone must take the initiative. As to this list, it was Bernstein, I believe, who took the initiative and has, as far as I can tell, been courageous in his efforts to keep the lines open, and encourage all comers. His kind of equanimity is becoming rare in this time of fear.

With regard,

Cass

B. Cass Clarke



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377. **B. Cass Clarke**

flushing the quarry

Wed 22 Feb 1995

Dear Sis, dear cous,

Those dogs may scare the fox. Perhaps you should have kept them muzzled until you had her treed.

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378. **Marjorie Perloff**

Re: POETICS Digest - 21 Feb 1995 to 22 Feb 1995

Thu 23 Feb 1995

Well, OK, to respond to Alan and Gary:

I'm not satisfied with such a simplistic gender explanation either, so let me just speak for myself. Gary says it's disingenuous of me to say I don't have time when I do have time to write books. To which one could say: well, yes, but if I spent much time on the e-net, I wouldn't. But more seriously: writing articles/ books is one thing: you work, you revise, you research and you don't let anything out of the house that you haven't thought through. Conversation with students is a second thing--and I adore it--and that's face to face and really fun. But for me too much of what comes through this poetics group is just throw-away, personal little bits and it doesn't quite seem like a "conversation." I suppose it does when I know the person as I know Alan who is a good friend but not when it's someone I don't know. So: this is just a gut reaction to (1) having been excited when this net began and loving to read the messages, and (2) now feeling every day a sense of oh-my-god here are 25 messages on the Poetics net to plow through and 90% is just not interesting to me. I'm not saying it's anyone's fault, but perhaps there would be a better way to organize it so that private conversations between A and B wouldn't just bounce back and forth and be left unresolved. Marjorie Perloff

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379. **Mn Center For Book Arts**

Re: Quote

Thu 23 Feb 1995

Regarding Adorno, as Eric Pape says, as a pessimist not a cynic, not giving up the "ever more problematic possibility of Utopia."

Can't one be a non-cynic, in fact can't one even be an optimist (but my that is harder every day) without believing in Utopia. Even Thomas More had his problems with Utopia, creating one which was patently unlivable, and putting its articulation in the utterings of Raphael Hythloday, a character whose name etymologically (and loosely, I believe) may be translated as "bringer of health/babbler of nonsense." Equivocal at the least.

charles alexander

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380. **George Bowering**

Oz

Thu 23 Feb 1995

I am just back from a week in Melbourne. Poetry scene there seems to be dominated by a group calling themselves the A=R=I=T=H=M=E=T=R=I=C=K Poets. Claim to be reconstructed Social Creditors who bombard magazines with "funny money" and ragged verses. I went to a gala reading, but forgot my calculator, and could not follow the poems very well.

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381. **George Bowering**

Hokey Pokey

Thu 23 Feb 1995

I want to know more about that Hokey Pokey ice cream. Unfortunately, they didnt hav any at thre Auckland air port. Can you get a big tub of it and put your left leg in, and shake it all about?

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382. **Michael Boughn**

making the bed

Thu 23 Feb 1995

Dear Cass:

I was thinking about your recent post, and about Jack this a.m. as I made the bed. About "the human", partly because I have to teach Foucault and Derrida tonight to a group of undergraduates, partly because I was trying to come up with a name for what Jack so generously offered those lucky enough to work with him. And, for me anyway, "human" is it. This, I guess, is one of those key sites where I find myself at odds with those Euro-guys. I mean the notion that the human is over. When, from an "Ohio" point of view (I guess you could read "Emerson" here), the problem is we have yet to realize the human, except in very rare cases.

Best,
Mike



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383. **Ron Silliman**

Marketing and infiltration

Thu 23 Feb 1995

> really, how entrenched is an L-P writing method in the university?
> Could we come up with a location matchup and some market data? L-P
>infiltration appears to have been successfully implemented in Buffalo,
UC San Diego, San Francisco State, Brown, Sonoma, Simon Frazer, Albany
(no), Toronto?, Montreal?, and say 20 more campuses for good measure
versus the rest of the colleges and universities who offer writing
programs. That's about 30 LPs versus ____ . Can anyone fill in the
blank?

Well, there are slightly over 260 programs in the US (plus whatever more in
Canada, which has a population somewhere between California and Texas), and
I might be inclined to add Penn, UC Santa Cruz, Wayne State, University of
Alabama and a few other schools, but really what constitutes "infiltration"? I
think that virtually ALL of the New American Poetry branches, not just langpo,
acquire a significant amount of their weight and moral authority precisely by
virtue of their being a literature of the urban writing scenes rather than of the
campus. And of the 40 poets in *In the American Tree*, only 5 or 6 (depending on
whether Fanny Howe has tenure at UCSD, which I'm not clear on) have ever
had tenure. Of those, one is retired (Bromige) and another (Andrews) has
tenure in political science.

I wonder how Paul Hoover feels at (1) being asked to stand as the incon for
langpo in the NY Times and (2) being described there basically as an
unintelligible man w/ tenure, which his school (Columbia College in Chicago)
does not even offer?? or Leslie (a lurker here, I believe) likewise, who has been
so clear for so many years that her relationship to the basic langpo traits has
been that of friendly critic and whose summer job at Bard similarly cannot
count as that major tenured job alluded to?

The value of the NY Times piece seems to me to come precisely from its wrong-
headedness. I.e., the NY Times is willing to put forward an index of how out of it
the journal really is.

One further thought: Larry Bensky on KPFA the other morning (talking up the
series on the first 100 days of the republican administration that he's doing w/
Juliane Malveaux on the Pacifica Radio Network) virtually mapped to the Apex
of the M argument in saying that, to paraphrase, "Newt Gingrich's band of
republicans are like Language Poets. They talk about government out of context
and in that denatured light, everyone can imagine it as Other, as alien, rather
than as the collective expression of the will of the people."

Sigh.

Ron Silliman



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384. **Bill Luoma**

Re: Finally, boy talk

Thu 23 Feb 1995

Shiva,

You make a good point about (not) generalizing about ALL women. Another implicit assumption seems to be that when one says man or woman on this list, one means hetero man & woman. I don't want to generalize, but I do want to speak.

And we seem to be talking here; this list seems more speechlike than any other discourse I'm familiar with, a cocktail party as nada said. And speech is the wonderful land of generalizations, big ideas expressed in a few words.

How should we speak about gender and biology? Binary is right out. How many genders are there?

trying to wave with more than two hands,
bluoma

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385. **Gary Sullivan**

To Cass, Marjorie, Ron, Charles

Thu 23 Feb 1995

Rather than post multiple messages...

Cass, thank you for that last post. You know John Thorpe's work? I grew up in California, lived in the Bay Area 10 years, not once did I hear Thorpe's name mentioned, read anything anyone had to say about him. I move out here to Minneapolis-St. Paul, no longer have a scene to rely on to suggest "what to read"--voila! I discover Thorpe's books in used bookstores. *_Exogeny_*, *_The Cargo Cult_*, *_Five Aces & Independence_*, then Spencer Selby graciously gives me his copy of *_Matter_*. He's become one of my favorite living poets (I assume he's still alive), have learned much from his work. No one writes about him these days, maybe never wrote about him. He didn't make it easy for the critics. No cliff note manifestos, not even anything (so far as I know) about other poets, never wrote a book review, even. The fact that he was (again, so far as I know) unaffiliated didn't help, I'm sure.

Other interesting discoveries made only after I moved out of the bay area: Well, the second most important for me was Philip Whalen. I discover, lately, that Scalapino at least wrote about the guy, a short treatment of his work that wound up in her Potes & Poets book of criticism. Thanks, Leslie. I literally never heard his name mentioned, nor did I see any of his work, until I moved out here.

"New Hope for the Disappeared" Ron? Nice that you'd write about Ceravolo when you did, I thought your piece on his work in *The New Sentence* was swell. But, what's the common thread among these poets whose work we have to **hunt** for? They didn't go public with their manifestos, theoretical insights, etc. Thorpe is obviously a brilliant thinker: you couldn't write *Five Aces* "off the cuff"; obviously a **lot** of thought & planning went into that book. Why haven't we any critics willing to write about it? Is it simply easier to take a poet who **has** said a few public words about his/her writing and write about him/her?

That, Marjorie, was the feeling I got, reading your *Radical Artifice*. I thought the book was good, but was surprised that, in a book that had, as subtitle, "Poetry Writing in the Age of Media" that you not once mentioned Bern Porter, who I imagine was, if not the first, certainly one of the first American poets to use & address--not exclusively, but close--the media in his work. My suspicion was that you'd never heard of Porter--quite likely as most of his books were self-published. (As opposed to paying, say, Station Hill to publish 'em.) No distribution, save Bookslinger (found a mountain of his books there). SPD doesn't carry 'em. What you say in your last post about wanting or enjoying only carrying on discussions with people you know suggests the possible reason so much of *Radical Artifice* seemed to be about Sun & Moon authors--you are, after all, on their Advisory Board. It seems to me, if you're talking to the same people all the time to the exclusion of people you don't know, you'll perhaps bring a very limited body of work to your critical writing. If I'd not've moved out of the bay area, would I ever have discovered John Thorpe? I'm admittedly a very impressionable person and moving out here was great for me as it forced me to do my own hunting around for poetry, etc.

Charles, thanks for the footnote re: Raphael Hythloday. More's wonderful. I'm sorry I missed Lazer's lecture & reading, and the lunch at your house. I've been sick with the flu, only starting to recuperate. I hope it all went well.

Maybe it's just because I'm new to this, but I really appreciate getting loads of e-mail, especially when they include names of poets I've not heard of before, or composers, & addresses as to where one might find this stuff. Thanks to Mark Nowak for much of that. I also **enjoy** some of the more "personal" posts--thank both Kali and Sheila E. for theirs, especially, as well as Cass's. I think it's great that the language poets have been receiving whatever recognition they've

from this particularly hostile committee. I'd expect to see the same for the Endowments. A hopeful sign.

On the less hopeful side, I quote from a discussion of "The English Poetry Full-Text Database," a 4-CD set that includes, says the author, the complete life works of roughly 1,250 poets. Of this, says the author,

"But who are they all? How many poets could you list off the cuff? I sat down for half an hour, scratched my brain [nice mixed metaphor there--RS], and got as far as a lousy fifty-five."

This from page 102 of the Feb 20/27 double issue of the New Yorker, by Anthony Lane. Maybe he studied with Dinitia Smith.

Obviously, in NYC's "mainstream" media when it comes to the knowledge-base for reporting on the topic of verse, less is more.

It does make for tidier narratives. Which may be how Mark Strand made 4 separate lists in the Times, including "best-looking males."

Ron Silliman



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387. **Gary Sullivan**
More in re: Radical Artifice

Thu 23 Feb 1995

Marjorie:

Other missing material from _Radical Artifice_:

Daniel Davidson's book _Product_, published by e.g. press in 1991. Anyone who has read both your _RA_ and _Product_ can tell you why it should've been included. A full-frontal assault on advertising/P.R., the most successful I've ever read, which is why my wife & I published it. Probably you never heard about the book because, when my wife (Marta Deike) and I took over the press in 1989, it was something of the laughingstock of the west coast language writing scene, though its original editor, David Highsmith had published a book of David Bromige's and Todd Baron's. He also published (the unmitigated gall!) a lot of people who weren't in that particular scene.

e.g. was so thoroughly detested by language writers that Todd Baron took the manuscript he'd had published through e.g. (_Partials_) and got O Books to publish it--without acknowledging that e.g. had been the original publisher. I assume the fact that the people in your general circle think so poorly of the press is why none of them bothered to tell you about Dan's book--even despite

the fact that Dan is very much a "language" writer (see his work in Ganick's anthology). I'll send a copy of Product if you like; just let me know.

Also missing, of course, is the work David Ossman's done: especially his How Time Flies. As pointed as anything in The Baffler re: the entertainment industry, and recorded in 1973. Why you chose to write about Lyn Hejinian's My Life in the context of "Writing Poetry in the Age of Media" to the neglect of these other things is precisely what has me questioning your motivation, as well as your sources for information.

Someone just mentioned that Charles Bernstein's to be thanked for setting this list up, and for keeping it open to any & all, including loudmouthed, opinionated malcontents like myself (& a few others). Yes. Lovely thing this; one can question people, challenge them, and have it somewhat public, "on record." Much better than a magazine, as, you write something negative about language poetry for, say, Rod Smith's magazine, it gets rejected. (I'm referring to Alan Davies' uneven, but certainly provocative, "Peer Pleasure," which has been passed around among poets since having been rejected by Aerial.)

Charles? When I first read the piece you wrote for Bernadette Mayer's Utopia, I thought you disingenuous, given the sometimes exclusionary tactics of (at least) the west coast language poets & affiliates. You of course know, and probably better than I do, how Johanna Drucker was treated by 'em. At any rate, I no longer think that; am really glad you've made this space available. This is truly "reader response."

Finally.

----- Gary Sullivan
_ _ _ _ _ / _) / _) / / / / _ ^ / / _ /
/ / \ / / / / _ / \ / _ / -----

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388. **James Sherry**

Re: Alan Golding's queryPOETICS Digest - 20 Feb 1995 to 21 Feb 19

Thu 23 Feb 1995

Marjorie and Kali and B. Cass and other women speaking up on this subject may have more in common with Alan Golding, Tom Mandel, and other men than they do with each other on any of a variety of subjects. Being a woman does not insure agreement anymore than men agree. The women's movement sought agreement or at least support along gender lines, but doesn't even within this narrow group appear to hold when personal identity and aesthetic issues are raised. Poets don't agree, men don't agree, women don't agree and neither does

anyone else. We are all tender in parts and I hope will persevere even if we don't agree. James

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389. **Jeffrey Timmons**

Re: Quote

Thu 23 Feb 1995

Yes, yes, yes, I agree. You're right. I hope that I suggested as much, if not I stand corrected.

Jeffrey Timmons

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390. **James Sherry**

Re: POETICS Digest - 21 Feb 1995 to 22 Feb 1995

Thu 23 Feb 1995

Marjorie and others in this loop: I have had several conversations recently regarding control on the listserv. On the one hand we don't want to tell anyone what to say; clearly censorship is not a good idea. On the other hand there are a lot of personal discussions made public and "exhibitionists" contrast with "lurkers" vying for the same mental space.

Based on backchannel discussions with some other people I would make two recommendations based on my own difficulties and others concurrence with these difficulties, not the least of which is Marjorie's complaint. Perhaps these will form the basis of discussion.

1. Perhaps Loss can subdivide the list into two parts. Part one can be for listings of events, newsletters, and exchanges of bibliographical information. Part two can be a discussion list where people can express their individual views collectively. 2. Without making any rules, perhaps people could keep personal notes and conspiratorial exchanges to the back channel. I don't want to point any fingers here, but there are a lot of short notes that don't really add to the discussion and are also directed at only one other person. That constitutes back channel material to me. This would solve what many of us feel are messages which "clog up" our bulletin board. Obviously personal exchanges can be used to "inform" the group. This trope which is developing nicely is an effective, but not particularly attractive technique. That's the kind of thing we might consider doing without, but it has to be applied by each individual and might be considered acceptable under conditions which each individual anywhere on the spectrum from "lurker" to "exhibitor" has to judge for themselves.

These two changes might make it easier to go through the list and to find what we each want to look at without having to wade through 40 or more messages over a weekend. I'd appreciate discussion on these matters.

James

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391. **Tony Green**
Re: Finally, boy talk

Thu 23 Feb 1995

"braman sandra" was saying" I for one intend to keeping waving my arms in as ma ways as possible Sandra Braman" Keep on waving. Your information in the past few months has been really interesting. My attempt to send you a post at your e-mail address a couple of weeks back to this effect didn't work (?my incompetence).

Tony Green,
e-mail: [REDACTED]
post: Dept of Art History,
University of Auckland,
Private Bag 92019,
Auckland, New Zealand
Fax: 64 9-[REDACTED]
Telephone: 64 9 [REDACTED] ext. 8981 or 7276

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392. **Tony Green**
Re: Arrow and Sparrow

Thu 23 Feb 1995

Even "dialogue within Them Selves' work will produce the intimate inter-relation articulate".

Comment: In so far as "I" is constructing itself in an "imaginary", yes [or, okey-dokey]. But that takes us into a Lacanian vocabulary that may be going too far too soon for those who do not recognise the inter-subjectivity of writing enough to begin to admit it as a base for theory. POINT TAKEN. Thank you for bringing it up.

being to articulate inter-subjectivity I (Timid "The issue which has been mentioned several times here is that of voicing, reading out loud - which seems crucial to this discussion. It makes a useful bridge (I'm always up for building 'em) to issues of composition and to oral - improvisatory traditions and innovative oral - improvisatory 'practice' (surely it's always practice, however

'accomplished it gets - that's its edge which admits process - is process an institution?)"

Comment: Oral emission, but not necessarily composed by "internal" speech-like thinkings, i.e. improvisatory irruptions. Aural reception, -- but like John Geraets was saying, deaf people may well read poems --, would be more appropriately thought of as aural "imagination". Without a lot of caution over this, I'd be bothered by locking poetry into varieties of opsycho-babble from the old surrealist depths, and disallowing the constructed "language" based rather than "speech" based poetries to which Lang-Po was much attached in the 70's and 80's (or so it seemed to me, and as I thought usefully).

Best

Tony Green,
e-mail: [REDACTED]
post: Dept of Art History,
University of Auckland,
Private Bag 92019,
Auckland, New Zealand
Fax: 64 9-[REDACTED]
Telephone: 64 9 [REDACTED] ext. 8981 or 7276

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393. **Stephen Ratcliffe**

Re: Language Poetry

Thu 23 Feb 1995

I started to look of NYTimes page on poetlore, saw waht they was up to w/ their pantheo(n)s, including now so-called LP, and turned off the lite. Will I find time to return to it?

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394. **Tony Green**

Re: Hokey Pokey

Thu 23 Feb 1995

"I want to know more about that Hokey Pokey ice cream. Unfortunately, they didnt hav any at thre Aukland air port. Can you get a big tub of it and put your left leg in, and shake it all about?"

Dear George, You can get it at most dairies in New Zealand. And if you want total immersion, no worries, just microwave twenty containers-full for three minutes each, cool it, then hop in the tub. Next time you're through way give me a buzz on 373599 x8981 and we cd do lunch + ice-cream.

Tony Green,
e-mail: [REDACTED]
post: Dept of Art History,
University of Auckland,
Private Bag 92019,
Auckland, New Zealand
Fax: 64 9-[REDACTED]
Telephone: 64 9 [REDACTED] ext. 8981 or 7276

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395. **cris cheek**
Arrows and Sparrows
Thu 23 Feb 1995

Hi Tony, yes I realise I'm treading a fine line when it comes to the dances of tongues in a mouth. I'm all for the 'oral emission' of extremely un-speech-like constructed language and the speech-like things (Burroughs is one of the great vaudeville vocal performers). I'd love to hear P. Inman read. Tom Raworth is the most energising and compelling reader here on this port off the pond. Many of the lang'shan-po are strong readers. I'd bring other aural imaginative strategies such as Jackson MacLow and Hannah Weiner and very very much enjoy what Carla Harryman and Steve Benson have done and are doing in terms of memory and improvisation in performance. I'd bring Michael Smith with his dub song-poem 'My cyaan believe it', Jean Binta Breeze, Linton Kwesi Johnson - many many more across into the music more direct Tribe Called Quest 'When the Papes Come'. I'd bring Schwitters' 'Ur Sonata' and Ernst Jandl and Chopin and Cobbing and the 4 Horsemen of the Apocalypse and many others - Jerry Rothenberg performing Frank Mitchell's 'Horse Songs'. All of these people (it's only a tip off a scratch) work with aural / oral invention and imagination. All of this work is constructed - 'language under pressure'. As to 'the old surrealist depths' I remember jotting down a quote of Margaret Thatcher's "I will delve deeply into the surface of things" - seems to take care of that. She should have recorded 'Feelings' it would have been sincere.

Any thoughts ?

cris

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396. **cris cheek**

e-ager posters

Thu 23 Feb 1995

Hi Marjorie, it's just yet another rejoinder to your post about post. Suffice to say, and many would testify, I have down several years been the most non-existent correspondent almost anybody could have wished for. My letters barely ever crossed a mat. BUT

I like e-mail and am pretty active with it. I find when I sit down to write letters I feel that I'm engaging in an old-school type 'proper' 'literary' activity. The sort of thing that might one day be published by some trust. I value the transitory aspect of this. Don't you find that conversation is full of 'throw-away, personal little bits'? One minute you're humming with excitement of discovery through detailed exchange - the next boiling a kettle for a cup of tea (sorry that's very Anglo-centric of me I know)? But the drift is clear. E-mail feels more like post cards might have done to me, if I'd ever posted the ones that I bought. Letters always felt like serious writing whereas I find this space as Tom Mandel described it to be 'a pleasant whirlwind' in which a variety of agendas appear to circle and sample each other with some variety of speeds of address and attention. The cafe, the bar, the club, the coffee break at the conference, the chance encounter between the supermarket shelves, the heated discussion in the corner shop, the after hours philosophising and more all seems to breand here. I'm curious - it's seems full of new potential. It feels like a localised conversation of distances. I'm trying to keep myself open to change through the process. And I'm probably giving it as much time as I should have given to writing letters in the past. But I get a lot more post and get to meet people I might never otherwise have known. What's the problem?

feel it needs devaluing because . . . ?

cris

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397. **Mark Roberts**

Re: Oz

Thu 23 Feb 1995

I am just back from a week in Melbourne. Poetry scene there seems to be dominated by a group calling themselves the A=R=I=T=H=M=E=T=R=I=C=K Poets. Claim to be reconstructed Social Creditors who bombard magazines with "funny money" and ragged verses. I went to a gala reading, but forgot my calculator, and could not follow the poems very well.

Melbourne can be like that.

Mark Roberts
Australian Writing On Line

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398. **Mark Roberts**

Re: Hokey Pokey

Thu 23 Feb 1995

*I want to know more about that Hokey Pokey ice cream. Unfortunately, they didnt hav any at thre Aukland air port.
Can you get a big tub of it and put your left leg in, and shake it all about?*

No but I'll email you a tub... Hope it doesn't melt on your hard disk

Mark Roberts
Australian Writing On Line

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399. **Ann Louise Vickery**

Re: Boy Talk

Thu 23 Feb 1995

Delurking /Delousing/Coming Clean

Having only joined the poetics list a short time ago, I have followed the gender trouble (let's get out of the old binaries of boys vs girls at least) discussion with great interest. It seems that the concurrent discussion on the relationship between theory and practice would be more interesting if it passed beyond rather than below the abstract limbo stick to speak in terms of greater specificity-which aspects of practice have been institutionalized, which aspects are still excluded from the academies, can this be linked to trends in pedagogic practice such as the teaching of certain theories over others or how they are taught in relation to poetry. I have appreciated the comments of Kali Tal (hello Kali!) as well as all the other women who have contextualized gender problems on poetics list from their own perspective.

At this point, I would like to "delurk" and try to articulate my own politics of location. I am a Melbournian doctoral student (with no affiliation with A=R=I=T=M=E=T=R=I=C=K and who has eaten lanolin-free Hokey Pokey icecream and lived to tell the tale) who is researching ways in which contemporary poetry contributes to feminist cultural practice. I also teach a course on postmodernism which has such items as the Hoover anthology and Laurie Anderson on its syllabus. I am interested in the challenge that the

internet offers both in terms of poetic community formation and discursive horizons.

It is not surprising that the net creates its own disciplinization and exclusion effects; rather we should be asking how these can be changed. Although statistics are the fool's creditcard, my information was that women make up only 5% of the population who use the net. So the poetics list is obviously attracting women to enter its space. The question then arises as to which women and how they engage with the net both as a medium and as a practice. Being Australian, I am speaking on the margins as a not-so-dutiful daughter to the many on the list who are or have been associated with Language poetry in one way or another. Yet, as part of the university, access to the list was easier for me than it is for many Australian women who are interested in contemporary poetry and poetics but who feel isolated. The net is one way in which such isolation can be dissolved.

From my Asian-Pacific position, I cannot contribute to matters of US funding and I feel that much of what is discussed on the poetics list has a localized politics of which I am uninformed. However, I feel that such a connection is invaluable-whether taken up in more active ways or not(my lurking is not necessarily passive and can be tactical). I am therefore content to "listen in on" than query much of what goes on in the list. That's all I'll say for now if not just for another voice and two cents in the debate.

Thanks,

Ann Vickery

P.S. Given that most ocker slang derives from a cockney origin, perhaps it is fitting that our convict past has furnished us with the world's first musical icecream.

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400. **David McAleavey**

community request

Thu 23 Feb 1995

I'm grateful to Ron Silliman for propelling me to this list back in December. I've lurked, feeling peripheral, but have a request I'd like your help with.

One story about the value of poetry says that its meaning is like the meaning of money: not an intrinsic value, only a value of exchange. The greater the community-building involved, the more valuable the poetry which is the basis of that exchange. I learned this idea in fact from Ron, though my formulation is not his, I don't think.

I'd like to consider this idea, now, more seriously, and am hoping that some of you will have suggestions for me of things to read, problems to grapple with, other issues.

The context for my question is that I'm interested in doing a nearly-sociological study of how poetry is actually used (in the specimen case of the Washington DC area, though I'd hope with relevance to other physical communities).

There's an anxiety I suppose everybody writing poetry has grappled with, about the value to others of the enterprise, and it seems to me that if there were some new ways of talking about the varied applications and, I guess you could say, "community-significances" of the poems themselves it might be useful.

So I'm pretty shamelessly asking for help, asking to pick your brains on this.

Since so few of you know me at all either in person or by name, I should say by way of intro that, having done a PhD dissertation (1975) on Oppen's poetry, I am teaching, and have been since 1974, at George Washington University in DC.

A postscript: I've broken silence finally because the gender issues being raised, as well as the issues of time and focus raised by Marjorie Perloff and others, seem to focus on the status of this list too as a community, and I thought perhaps you might all be already really thinking of this subject.

Thanks -- David McAleavey

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401. **Tom Mandel**

Re: e-ager posters

Thu 23 Feb 1995

Sometimes you just go through deleting everything that isn't by someone whom you feel you must read in each address, and that's just the way it is. It is not necessary to digest completely what's on a listserv to get something out of it and to find it possible to give something to it. Other times, less often to be sure, one reads each post carefully - that's the way you want to spend your time that time.

I don't think there's anything to do, either, about people getting excited and dashing off fuzzy paragraphs to each other. My sense is that imposing an order of division or of personal discipline will not change anything.

It is true that the number of posts is daunting, especially if god forbid you take off 3-4 days. I do wish, but there's nothing to do to make it so, that people would think thru

what they are about to say; if it really doesn't amount to much, it's always possible to wait for another day.

Tom Mandel

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402. **Mn Center For Book Arts**

Re: Poetry, Media, but I don't want to talk about Funding right now

Thu 23 Feb 1995

Everyone who has commented on this list about the NY Times Magazine article on poetry by Dinitia Smith has laughed at or otherwise critized the treatment of language poetry, and the choices used to represent it. I agree entirely, but I must admit that the article made me consider that its treatment of other issues in poetry, such as cronyism, awards to friends, control by Academy of American Poets, etc., a treatment with which I might find myself in agreement, must have been equally ridiculous. I don't know if I applaud Stephen for "turning off the lite" and not reading it, or if I think there was a curious delight in reading something so totally ludicrous.

As to James Sherry's suggestion about dividing into two lists, I'm not so sure. I have responded and become involved in conversations where posts seemed private. I also would wonder about decisions as to an "a" and a "b" list. I greatly value the growing divergence of views, particularly as represented in "boy talk" posts and in Gary Sullivan's energetic, thoughtful, and informative posts, some of which are directed personally at Marjorie or Charles or Mark or me or others (Thanks, Gary, for information on John Thorpe, whose work I don't know, and for making my picture of "e.g." more clear). I have found value in many of your posts, James, which were ostensibly responses to specific individuals and addressed to them as such. I liked the characterization of this floating conversation nexus as Cris Cheek put it -- "I find this space as Tom Mandel described it to be 'a pleasant whirlwind' in which a variety of agendas appear to circle and sample each other with some variety of speeds of address and attention. The cafe, the bar, the club, the coffee break at the conference, the chance encounter between the supermarket shelves, the heated discussion in the corner shop, the after hours philosophising and more all seems to breand here. I'm curious - it's seems full of new potential. It feels like a localised conversation of distances."

Let's keep the whilrwind moving. If there was a division into two areas, I could see a value in one part being posts of conferences, lists of available books, and no conversation whatsoever, and the other being the conversations, no matter how widely or narrowly directed, no matter how central or tangential they seem to the list as a whole.

all best,
charles alexander

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403. **Sheila Murphy**
Re: POETICS Digest - 21 Feb 1...
Thu 23 Feb 1995

I agree with James about dividing the list into two categories, and it would appear that category #2 (discussions of issues) will simply require the sort of judgment which several people are urging that people use in the present list. A matter of consideration for others. Let's go with the plan.

Sheila Murphy

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404. **George Bowering**
Re: Hokey Pokey
Fri 24 Feb 1995

Okey dokey!

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405. **George Bowering**
Siva Brahman
Fri 24 Feb 1995

Last time I saw Sandra Brahman she was moving her left arm and her right arm and her left arm and her right arm and her left arm and her right arm all about.

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406. **George Bowering**
Re: Quote
Fri 24 Feb 1995

The way I heard it was
After Auschwitz there can be no poetry.
gb

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407. **George Bowering**

Re: Tapeworm puts poetry village on the map

Fri 24 Feb 1995

That's no news about the giant tapeworm fopund in Buffalo; Benji has been, to literary people, known for years. Chas Bernstein raised benji since he was a pup, and a truer pet was never known. Charles even brought Benji to a conference in Calgary 2 years ago, and it is no easy thing to being a half-grown tapeworm across the canadian border. The poets converged in Calgary took to Benji, and fed him; in fact they vied for the opportunity to feed him. Benji is particularly fond of Lacanian case histories.

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408. **George Bowering**

Lang Po?

Fri 24 Feb 1995

This scribe called Lang Po that I occasionally hear about here---is he perhaps related to Li Po ?

Li Po, as many know, drank some, and in fact drowned while reaching into a stream for the reflection of a basketball.

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409. **Marisa A Januzzi**

Mina Loy, Djuna Barnes, separate bodies

Fri 24 Feb 1995

Hello "everyone"--

I'm tuning in kind of late here on the boy-talk/theory thread, but in response to Gary Sullivan's observation that Mina Loy, Gertrude Stein, and Djuna Barnes didn't "provide separate bodies of critical writings," I feel that I must point out that (depending of course on how we are defining bodies here!) Mina Loy did. In the mid twenties she felt so compelled to draw out the theoretical implications of Stein's aesthetic that she pressed the word 'deconstruction' into circulation-- this was in Ford's transatlantic. And I think the entire notion of 'deconstruction' (in the parisian, sixties ense of the word) was intelligible to her because of the way her sense of sex politics shaped her aesthetic from the beginning.

Gary Sullivan's observation interests me though because it leads me to wonder-- what "counts" as theory? If I can use Barnes' article about how it feels to be forcibly fed (as she allowed herself to be, in sympathy for the British suffragists) as a way of reading her work, then doesn't it stand as theory? Maybe these

writers theorized in ways that are still invisible to too many of us. (That comment really is a general one, and not directed against Gary Sullivan, who raised the question well)

I think it was Naomi Schor who figured out that Freud didn't believe women could theorize.... that what we supposedly do instead is construct paranoid observations based on the repressed or projected (but in any case, apparently intellectually stifling) experience of our own bodies...Loy was forced to write an epic in response to this sort of thing.

More in a minute!

--Marisa Januzzi

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410. **GERI L. BAUMBLATT**
Re: subscribing to Poetics list

Fri 24 Feb 1995

Hello-

Ann Lauterbach and I attempted to send you a message last night, and this morning I found it was undelivered. Ann is currently in Denver for the quarter and would like to be added to the poetics list. Her e-mail address is [REDACTED]

I'll give her your correct e-mail address tomorrow, but I wanted to be sure that she was added as soon as possible.

Many thanks!

p.s. Please tell Susan Howe that her students at Denver miss her.

--Geri Lynn

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411. **Marisa A Januzzi**
Kenneth Koch and the New York School

Fri 24 Feb 1995

...Hello again,

It was unimaginative of me, I know, but I couldn't figure out how to connect the Girl-talk/theory thread with Kenneth Koch... which leads to the question I would like, in all seriousness, to ask: does he have female readers? I am very interested in the relative lack of discussion about New York School poets (a few exceptions aside) at conferences, and here too. Tenney Nathanson brought up the lineage question (what did they do that hasn't been picked up by language poets) and the *question itself* wasn't even picked up. I'm wondering if it's in

part because of the apparent sexual politics of, for instance, Koch's stories (and his ART OF LOVE). Or is it a generational blind spot?

KK is about to turn 70 (!), and a celebration reading/performance is being planned for March 23, 7:00PM, in New York City.... yours truly is curating the food. Anyone interested in participating in some way, or anyone wishing more information, can contact me at <[REDACTED]>.

Meanwhile I continue to admire his recent two collections with a lot of unanswered questions surfing the brain.

Has anyone else picked up Anne Porter's work, by the way? I'm not sure she would have wide appeal among members of the list, but I was surprised and moved by her stuff, the way I was when I first found Schuyler.

that's all she wrote
--Marisa

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412. **cris cheek**

New Flavours

Fri 24 Feb 1995

Re - Ann Louise Vickery's post on Hokey Pokey being the first musical ice cream, wasn't it pipped to the cone by the Tutti Fruitti?

cris

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413. **cris cheek**

Re: POETICS Digest

Fri 24 Feb 1995

I'm confused, not having seen James' post about dividing the list into categories. What's the proposal? How will it work? Who is going to decide what is and what isn't an issue? It looks a very slippery slope to me! Not having been able to read what must have been a serious discussion I'm curious as to what the benefits can be. And isn't it true that sometimes hot issues emerge from the pan-handling of what appears to be nothing more than playful chit-chat? Jokes and deliberate (nay wilful) misunderstandings can provide unexpected impetus for flight / engagement. But is this more an instance of net flight -, establishing a compound safe from the rabble at the gates?

cris

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414. **Tom Mandel**
Re: POETICS Digest
Fri 24 Feb 1995

I'm with Chris Cheek, and think "dividing" the list wd only "multiply" the problem.

One firm suggestion: puh-lease send private notes privately. This alone wd make the list easier to handle. Moreover, if a discussion turns out to be between you and one or two other folks, send messages among yourselves if you can bear not to place your message before this public.

That was more than one suggestion. Here's a final one: consider carefully whether the funny remark you are about entropize electrons with is really likely to be so received among the several dozen other puns on hokeypokey, etc. (I am sure I am as guilty as anyone, btw).

Restraint in these areas would lighten the load, clarify the focus of the list, and make my life at least a little easier to manage in this particular.

But, lets not divide a thing all the same.

Tom Mandel

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415. **Tom Mandel**
John Thorpe
Fri 24 Feb 1995

How great that John Thorpe's work should come up on the list. I read Cargo Cult in awe when it first appeared. When I was Director of the Poetry Center at SFSU, Thorpe was one of my first choices to read. Please find and absorb his work.

Tom Mandel

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416. **Michael Boughn**
More discipline
Fri 24 Feb 1995

I definitely think more discipline is in order. Perhaps we should assign some police to make sure that the personal is kept out of here. Especially warm or fuzzy personal stuff. Please, keep it hard, precise, and penetrating.

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417. **Joe Amato**

Re: e-ager posters

Fri 24 Feb 1995

chris, about the "transitory" nature of this stuff: unlike paper, it's got the potential to be around FOREVER... to be duplicated, forwarded, copied, downloaded, what have you... it's **anything** but transitory, though the dynamic of exchange has much to do with the feel you detail...

james: to discuss what to do with this list (and your suggestion really amounts to starting yet another list) in these parts is to introduce another meta-thread INTO this discussion!... this is ok with me, but i'm sure you see that what you've done is created another topos that is likely (witness my post, THIS POST) to cause another little stir...

by which i mean to say that EVERY list will go through this sorta thing... even if this list bifurcates, it's very likely that somebody down the line will propose what amounts to a change in direction (up to and including another list)... though your suggestion SOUNDS tidier, i doubt that it will prevent public service announcements (if you will) from being posted ultimately to BOTH lists...

just my two bits on this... spin-offs of all sorts are always a possibility, but they generally only 'solve' "clogging" problems by creating more traffic...

best,

joe

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418. **braman sandra**

That Talmudic Range

Fri 24 Feb 1995

The extraordinary intellectual stimulation of Talmudic study comes from the need to try to develop logical or linear coherence out of the record of an oral conversation -- topics in the Talmud move easily from questions of Shabbat practice to the issue of whether or not giving the infant oatmeal will make it stop crying.... (Of course, study of Talmud is an oral practice of the study of an oral text, despite all that emphasis about being "of the book"....). Let's keep our richness on the poetics list and not divide it. Sandra Braman

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419. **braman sandra**

Topical Convergence

Fri 24 Feb 1995

At last, all of our conversation has come together -- about the relationship between theory and poetry, about the relationships among the genders, and about that darned ice cream problem --

The epic poem that ought to result is called:

EVEN SHIVA DOES THE HOKEY-POKEY

Thanks, George.

Sandra

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420. **Robert Drake**

Re: community request

Fri 24 Feb 1995

i was walking by the elementary school the other day, near-west (urban poor) neighborhood, and picked up a paper, a poem:

"Yo, my name is crack cocaine,
I promise you pleasure but I give you pain..."

& so on. i've seen it, or versions of it, before. doggeral. doggeared. a xerox of a xerox of a xerox, multiple generations. i wouldn't be surprised if it had more readers than any of the latest from sun & moon.

i sat down in the arcade to eat my lunch last week, some kid had left their notebook--study hall notes, doodles, and a coupla poems she wrote...

when i was setting up the In-Yr-Ear poetry hotline a while back, i went to radio shack to buy an answering machine. the salesman was a big yeats fan. then, when i went to the print shop to get business cards made up, the grandmotherly woman at the counter admitted she write poems, "but i never showed 'em to anybody."

taproot reviews recieves about 25 publications (zines & books/ chapbooks) a week. i'm sitting in a room, w/ _7 milkcrates_ full of incoming, to-be-reviewed books. almost none of 'em from university affiliated presses, much less major publishers... and i cleared out the studio of backlog about a year ago

i'm mentioning all this, 'cause the common knowledge is that the "communities" for poetries are various factions--iowa workshop, langpo, multiculti...--that have in common a schooled self- awareness, and a self-definition that stands in

relation to "the mainstream", either in it or forcably excluded from it. what yr talking about studying sounds like it might be able to consider the place of poetry in communities in a larger sense, beyond what's usually considered appropriate. hope so, anyway.

allbest

luigi

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421. **Chris Stroffolino**

Re: POETICS Digest - 21 Feb 1...

Fri 24 Feb 1995

dear james and sheila--the problem I see with dividing the list between information and "opinion" is that the segregation that is already latent in the current list will simply become more foregrounded. When Steve Evans asked if he should stop posting FREELEY ESPOUSING info. on the net, the vast majority said NO--now, if you're suggesting a segregation here, it's going to have the same effect (it seems to me--at least no -one's suggesting a FEE for this yet, but i expect that to come \$oon enough...best chris stroffolino

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422. **Edward Foster**

Re: POETICS Digest - 21 Feb 1...

Fri 24 Feb 1995

ditto.

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423. **Chris Stroffolino**

Re: More in re: Radical Artifice

Fri 24 Feb 1995

I appreciated Gary Sullivan's remarks on the lapses of MAINSTREAM Lang po (Li Po's bastard bro) and the implications of the politics that often surround it. And Ira lightman's notion that Gary is mistaking Perloff as an "enemy"(if Sullivan is doing that) is well taken too. The question all too often seems to come down to "do we bank on the 3 or 4 big names" or do we really break down the constand Bernstein/Howe(Susan not Fanny) appeal that is made as a kind of metonymy, synechdoche in a kind of representative parliament of the avant-garde...of course all of this seems contradictory in a generation who claims to be ANTI-the notion of heroes, the trouble with genius, no cult of personalities, etc... I've read some Davidson (they mostly have one word

titles) but not the book Sullivan's press published...I assume it's still in print.... Chris Stroffolinoz

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424. **I.LIGHTMAN**

Re: More in re: Radical Artifice

Fri 24 Feb 1995

I do just want to respond a little to Gary Sullivan's remarks about Marjorie Perloff's *Radical Artifice*, perhaps also in the context of the girl/boy/tone discussion which, as an anti-rape activist, a consistent grader of girls higher than boys in my classes, and a co-editor of a British anthology of contemporary experimental women's poetry, I continue to find Kali Tal wrongly putting me on the wrong "side" of. Let me say first off that I agree with Gary Sullivan that Daniel Davidson's *Product* is a wonderful, brilliant work, so as to assure him that I am not hiding a partisan agenda underneath my comments. More on *Product* in a minute. I happen to also think that *Radical Artifice* is a wonderful, brilliant work too - please let me add that I do usually use such terms of real esteem sparingly. I always read Marjorie Perloff's writing wherever I can find it. Many of her books mark and back up a critical moment, usually in sea-changes in literary academic trends, and they do so in such a language that they succeed (in my experience) in appealing to the kind of mindset and rhetoric of correctness that most academics do have, and, having got their ear, pour a little of the present into it. Put more simply, Marjorie Perloff has always seemed to me to be the kind of rare and invaluable university teacher who actually keeps *updating the syllabus*, putting new books on; and what I'm trying to say about her critical prose style is that I think it is very effective in appealing to very static unchanging teachers to also update their syllabus. It's hard to say how, but I think it's because she awakens the sense of seriousness that academics should have, and usually only have in their inflated sense of themselves. She writes, in my opinion, given this audience, with brilliant cajoling rhetoric. This is important work, and much more likely to succeed in getting teachers to update their syllabus, than different kinds of rhetoric; for example, huge sweeping generalisations against academia in general. I hope that it might be appreciated as a subtlety that I applaud this in Marjorie Perloff, even though I myself prefer vainglorious sweeping generalisations against academia in general. I cannot but, after all, acknowledge the reality; that her method works, and is professional, mine doesn't, and is done out of selfish pleasure and despair. I hope Kalil might appreciate that if I draw attention to myself by saying this, it is also to welcome criticism. The book is called *Radical Artifice*. Might not this be seen as also describing itself, without quite so much rancor? Like all books, it has

authors it wishes to discuss, one, and wants to inaugurate a whole new area of study, two: in this case, poetry and media, poetry as media. Of course there won't be a tidy fit, that's what Perloff argues for all the# authors she discusses. Instead, it has an elegant surface, and, to quote a phrase, throws down the gauntlet: go ahead and top this, with different authors, different critical footholds, and rival me for prose style, why don't you? I myself find this kind of confident stylishness really exhilarating. If anything, *Radical Artifice*, taken as a part of a body of work, moving from discussing Lowell and O'Hara, opening territory with Cage and with futurism, shows a questing writer moving through and against the dominant avant-garde of the sixties and seventies, and finally producing her most assured and "this is my moment" work; or, as Cage found, switching from being a strongly opinionated and ambitious student of the art seeking out and talking to those she esteems, to becoming someone others will esteem. In this, Perloff's journey, as I'm putting it, resembles and indeed illuminates the Language Writers, who are after all critics as well as poets, more as one of them than anything else. For me anyway, reading all of Perloff's much more readily available books helped me to find a way into Language Writing, both its "forms" and, more importantly, the culture, the history of opposition, its writers come from. So that it seems to me to be too harsh and mudthrowing to attack her work in this way. Yes, there is a Sun & Moon connection, but as I am suggesting that would be more understandable if Perloff was seen as a kind of poet-critic. Donald Davie, in England, does just the same, and is attacked just the same, in writing his books mainly about poets from a press on which he is an editor. But, for Heaven's sake, isn't this a way of a critic putting money where the mouth is: not just writing about groundbreaking writing of the past, but trying to get current groundbreakers into print, and read? Pound would have thought so. And just as Pound and Davie, Perloff has her favourites: Thank God, a criticism motivated by pleasure and excitement and a feel of radical energy, instead of political correctness! This is why, as a gender-conscious writer, I am reluctant to enter the discussion about gender we've been having; if I criticise any writer, it is on non-sexist grounds, and yet in such an atmosphere, it won't be seen that way. If I do have reservations about Perloff's writing, it is that writers she dislikes (eg Larkin) get attacked in a way that seems to use very big weapons (MacKinnon-like psychoanalytic equating of pathetic male bravado as evidence of ... well, actually, self-hatred in a man who didn't actually do much real harm to all the people he privately and rhetorically fumed at; being part of New Criticism, when he hated academic dissection of work; being "fascist" - sic - for fantasising the destruction of all high culture, in favour of low culture; how can "fascist" mean anything then, when Pound wanted the reverse of Larkin and is also fascist?

And reservation two would be, but this is not uncommon on this list, that Perloff gives so little time to anarchist thinking - and Davidson's Product seems to me to a very anarchistic book, in the sense of Prince Kropotkin and Colin Ward. As with a lot of the writers she discusses, the politics are often statist socialism, and the rhetoric harsh enough to storm the bastille with. Davidson's is angry, but also not wanting to be President. Again, I don't think either approach is wrong, and again, looked at realistically, statist radicalism energises more people, and energised people in a state of change is not to be sniffed at. But I would, certainly, like to see Perloff continue to be a fascinating and impassioned critic writing very publically, and find some room - as Davie does sometimes - to appraise a writer with a very different strategy almost as if it was worth believing in. Even if she doesn't, she's still a writer I will always read, annoyed or not. I missed this sense of acknowledgement in the attack on her. She's not the enemy, she's the energising rival. Emotionally one may be provoked by her critical skill and wish it were directed at one's own favourites - precisely because it's good prose. Product is a good favourite to have, a good thing to have an emotion about, but I suggest that, only by humbly honouring what is good about each other, will we see that good prose written about our own favourites - by writing in emulation of a powerful (female) contemporary, ourselves.

Ira

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425. **RSILLIMA**

Poetry in the community

Fri 24 Feb 1995

David McAleavey is way too modest. He's been a fine poet for at least 25 years that I know of and can take credit for having published, via Ithaca House Press, the first books of yours truly, Bob Perelman, and David Melnick, as well as Ray DiPalma's second (Soli). In fact, I met Ray first through that connection back when Ray still taught at Bowling Green in Ohio. McAleavey is also the man who taught me to play chess, but that's another story.

When I ran a writers workshop in the Tenderloin in SF (1979-81), something on the order of 250 different people would attend one or more sessions, usually with work in hand, over the course of a year. (There was a core group of maybe 40 people, 25 of whom could be counted on to show up every week.) They ranged in age from 14 to upper 70s (one had been a student of Zukofsky's at SF State in '58), all races, sexual orientations (there were at least 6 represented), lifestyles, as they say. Some, like Bob Harrison (Hi, Bob), Marsha Campbell and Mary Tallmountain have done considerable publishing. One fellow (I'm blanking

on the name) worked on an article that was eventually published in Mother Jones exposing the presence of PCBs in telephone transformers and outlining their toxic implications. Bob Holman once attended a session while visiting SF during which two of the writers had a serious disagreement over the details of Santeria and put hexes on one another. As a result of another incident, the workshop adopted a no guns in class rule. It was that kind of scene. Kit Robinson ran the same workshop after I left, as did John Mason. (And Erica Hunt was on the board of directors for awhile before she moved to NYC.) It's still happening I believe, every Wednesday night at Hospitality House, 146 Leavenworth, SF.

What impressed me most was how writing (poetry and fiction mostly, but not exclusively) was being used by the people in the workshop. It was very close to Paulo Friere (I probably just butchered that, sorry) and his use of photography as outlined in Pedagogy of the Oppressed. Writing provided a form and focus for thinking through their lives in a critical (in the best sense of that word) fashion. Furthermore, 250 represented over one percent of the entire community.

It's important to remember that the Tenderloin is one of the poorest neighborhoods on the west coast (and has been transformed considerably since I worked there), so these folks in general didn't have a lot of toys and other distractions (very few were involved in family or even significantly bonded relationships). But any time you have one percent of a community writing, it's worth thinking through. The work ranged all over the map in style and general sophistication and I ran into a couple of real lumpen writers who were doing amazing things that, to this day, I've never seen anywhere else (I'm thinking of Harley Kohler and Spider James Taylor, whom Kit and Erica at least know) and whom to this day have barely ever been published.

I wonder if I would have gotten one percent in a more rural (or even suburban) setting. Out where I work in Southeastern Alameda County, there's only one visible literary movement: romance novelists. There are between 20 and 24 publishing romance novelists out here, who will all be happy to tell you that 40 percent of all paperback books bought and sold are in their genre. They range between Christian Fundamentalist "housewives" (that's a self-designation) to a biker couple out in Livermore. Since I don't read that genre, I can't tell you a lot more, but I get a sense that for them a magazine like Writers Digest is a living tool in a way that no poet has ever found it.

But whenever/wherever I travel, I come across local writing communities that suggest that something much like this use of the written word is very widespread just beneath the surface. Certainly a look at the poetry items on the Usenet groups suggests that a dimension is going on there as well. One percent

of the US population is over 2,000,000 people. So it wouldn't shock me at all to discover that one million really do write, maybe half of them writing poems. If Jimmy Carter's writing poems, who isn't? (And yes, Marjorie, I want you to read ALL of it.)

This is where the "clubbiness" of so much of the "world" of the poetry as outlined in the NYT seems completely nuts. (Charles Alexander is completely right about that.) And why even worrying about a failed institution like the Times seems ultimately a waste of breath. There is a hell of a lot of poetry out there. And, under the right conditions, there's an audience for almost all of it. Amen!

Ron Silliman



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426. **Bill Luoma**

Re: e-ager posters

Fri 24 Feb 1995

I agree with Tom Mandel that dividing up the posts would only fragment the current energy that's starting to build. It's starting to get fun. It's a good thing for people to get excited.

bluoma

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427. **eric pape**

Re: POETICS Digest

Fri 24 Feb 1995

I'm very worried that Chris is correct here; that what we might be talking about is a kind of listserv Jim Crow. I don't think that is the intention, but could be the result. I've seen stuff happen like this on lists before, ie, someone complains about "the overload of irrelevancies," asks for more "discipline," and what makes lists fun and important, the spontaneity, the misunderstandings that lead to more productive posts, vanish. But hey, this comes from perhaps one of those "exhibitionists," maybe? Maybe in some way that obviates my remarks? Thanks, Eric.

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428. **RSILLIMA**
List management
Fri 24 Feb 1995

Dividing the list won't improve what ends up in my to-be-read box on my receiving system at all, just increase the number of sources I get mail from. I also wouldn't be especially happy w/ a list moderator system (like the Sixties List has, for example). The Sixties List for example has kept off messages about the NEH battle, partly because it's not "on topic" but really I suspect more because a professional rightwinger like David Horowitz is on the list, ready to pounce on any "misuse" of an "edu" domain. I appreciate the contentious nature of some of the messages on the Poetics List and wish only that a broader community of poets were here and active.

Someone mentioned a New Formalist listserv awhile back. Does anybody have subscription info to that? Inquiring minds want to know.

Ron Silliman


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429. **Carl Lynden Peters**
McAleavey: community
Fri 24 Feb 1995

Feb. 24, 1995

Dear David McAleavey,

Your post on community and poetry interests me a great deal: the issue you foreground is similar, in fact, to a dissertation topic i'm working on: poetry/storytelling/moral law/community. It'll be a few more months before i actually start to approach the thing concretely; however, i do know that i want to focus on bpNichol's long poem THE MARTYROLOGY. i think it's an excellent text which raises new questions re the relation between theory & practice, theory/praxis, and interdisciplinarity , as well as questions of community, communal, sacred & visionary.

i'm very interested in hearing more about your work-

-and looking forward to meeting you in the machine, so to speak

Take care,

Carl Peters

PS: hope this message gets to you without any distortions. i'm new to the system and its one i haven't really felt comfortable with nonetheless

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430. **Jennifer Theresa Raney**

Re: Mina Loy, Djuna Barnes, separate bodies

Fri 24 Feb 1995

I'm dropping into this conversation very late, but something caught my eye:

The question of a distinct body of critical, theoretical, or prescriptive writings in a poet's work makes me proceed with caution...but as long as we are on the subject of Loy, Barnes, Stein, I wondered what Gary Sullivan (excuse me if I'm misdirecting this response) thought about Loy's "International Psycho-Democracy," "The Artist and the Public," "Phenomenon in American Art," or her many Aphorisms or "Feminist Manifesto," as well as the essay on Stein mentioned by Marisa Januzzi? Although I am infinitely more interested in the theoretical implications of work such as "Brancusi's Golden Bird" or "Love Songs," the examples above are clearly self-consciously didactic statements. I would agree with Marisa Januzzi that the social dimensions of Loy's work feed her aesthetic sensibilities. "What counts as theory?" --certainly "Love Songs to Joannes" or "Anglo-Mongrels and the Rose"! But...how could one say that Loy has no separate theoretical body??? In Roger Conover's edition of *The Last Lunar Baedeker*, he even portions out several works under such a title in the table of contents...

Jennifer Raney

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431. **Jennifer Theresa Raney**

Re: Mina Loy

Fri 24 Feb 1995

P.S. While on the subject:

Does anyone know to what "Q H U" refers in section 19 of Loy's "Love Songs to Joannes"?

JRaney

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432. **RSILLIMA**

NY School

Fri 24 Feb 1995

A compleat map/geneology (can't decide whether I prefer a spatial or temporal metaphor here) of the NY School would probably take about 10 dissertations to get half accurate.

I'm always amazed at how individual poets (including individual "NY School" poets) seem to draw the lines. I've never seen two the same. Not even remotely.

I've heard arguments, like the one Darrell Gray used to make, that you couldn't "get" O'Hara until you saw how he extended the work of David Schubert, whose work came back into print awhile ago thanks to Ted Weiss. And at Naropa last summer I met students who had taken classes on the NY School who'd NEVER even read Koch. And had not heard him mentioned in the course (at least so they said, and they were not what Ginsberg refers to as the "chemical derangement of the senses" students either).

One thing does seem clear: it is the only one of the so-called New American Poetries that has maintained a sense of unbroken intergenerational continuity over close to half a century. That's pretty amazing. But I'm not sure what it means.

My theory is this: it means that the "first generation" didn't actively halt or stomp on the second one (FOH was dead, Ashbery still in Europe, Schuyler a recluse and Koch seems to have been actively supportive of younger poets) and once a more diverse scene was established, nobody was in control and something like a *laissez faire* democracy ensued. Permission and support is actually a pretty good model on how to behave toward younger poets. It doesn't hurt when the younger people are as forceful as Anne Waldman or Ted Berrigan either.

At my 3,000+ mile distance, I got my sense of the scene most constantly through Tom Clark's Paris Review editing (which to this day still seems to me to be the most significant contribution he's made), not realizing that he was not in NYC and that some of his pals (Clark Coolidge for one) weren't either. More than any of the anthologies or more local mags, it's the image I still carry in my head.

I know people who love Koch and people who can't stand him but who consider themselves "NYS" influenced. Personally, I think *_When the Sun Tries to Go On_* is one of the great longpoems of the 20th century, but I'm more ambivalent about the broader satirical pieces. I think we have a different sense of baseball.

W/ my own lumpen background, I just don't "get" some of the influences on NY School poets (esp. in the first generation) from, for example, British and/or

American academic poets (Auden, Bishop) etc and from musical theater. Ashbery, for one, never seems to have worried about his relationship to the Pound/WCW tradition and that distance from what I (especially as an anxious youngster, ready to "take sides") saw as the more rigorous post-Olsonian attempts at articulating a social theory of the line. They just didn't seem to worry about theory. (In fact, worry isn't a major theme in their work as I think it is for several of us, tho I'm not sure what to make of this either, tho I'm a little envious.)

One thing I see today when I think of "NY School" is that there are a lot of women empowered within its tradition, such as Lee Ann Brown and Eileen Myles, and that it still seems to be evolving, interesting and sometimes quite powerful.

Ron Silliman



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433. **B. Cass Clarke**

Golden Whip

Fri 24 Feb 1995

Dear Mike, all,

Since the dogs have answered the call to circle the sheep and get them off the lawn, a 911 is belated. Her golden whip is more effective than any show of male erected wit.

B. Cass Clarke



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434. **keith tuma**

second

Fri 24 Feb 1995

Here's another request for subscription information on the New Formalist list. I want to slink on over there and lurk for awhile.

--keith tuma

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435. **Spencer Selby**
Re: List management
Fri 24 Feb 1995

I agree with Tom Mandel and others that the List should not be divided. People should police themselves, try to be aware that weeding thru all this is a problem for everyone.

Spencer Selby

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436. **Spencer Selby**
A Cockney Sparrow
Fri 24 Feb 1995

Dear Tony Green:

If you want to define theory that broadly, then we have less argument--none in terms as you've extended my statement about "anticipation." I personally think this is where poetics and theory don't overlap. Where poetics is but theory isn't would be the most necessary area to me--and the least dangerous.

Spencer

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437. **Stephen Galen Cope**
Charles takes young prince and princess fox-hunting
Fri 24 Feb 1995

Subject: Charles takes young prince and princess fox-hunting

Copyright: 1999 by The Anti-Hegemony Project

Date: 24 Oct 99 01:30:00 EST

Lines: 20

BUFFALO (AHP) - Heir to the throne Prince Charles took his young son Gary and daughter Cass hunting yesterday, defying popular disapproval to initiate them into a traditional poetic pastime.

``I think anyone who knows anything about the history of poetry can tell you, the skills necessary for tracking and killing an animal are similar to those required for ruling the Imagination," said Yunte Huang, a spokesman for the Prince.

``It was ... like shooting fish in a barrel," gushed the excited princess. ``I wanna go out again."

The royal trio were lashed by rain for several hours as they

rode with the down-jacketed Poetics Hunt across rolling hills near Charles' country estate, The Fountainview Apartments, in Amherst.

Group bleari.nooz.poesy available: 1848 - 1917 unread: 0

article 1917 6-NOV-1999 12:00:00

Gary, 10, and Cass, 12, have ridden at earlier meets but devotees of the sport said this was their first full-fledged critic hunt.

Charles, often accused of being out of touch with contemporary developments in poetry, has insisted his heirs should learn to hunt despite the anger of opponents who say the sport is bloodthirsty and cruel.

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438. **George Bowering**
Re: POETICS Digest - 21 Feb 1...

Fri 24 Feb 1995

Oh, FREELEY Espousing!

I thought it was CREELEY Espousing!

Sorry--

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439. **George Bowering**
Re: Topical Convergence

Fri 24 Feb 1995

Okay, Sandra, let's get that epic p[oem started:

"And then went down to the ice cream parlour,
Set paddles to Pokey, girls & boys, a godly C, and
We set up housekeeping, and sail on a sweat shirt

==or maybe this whole session has been epical.

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440. **George Bowering**
Re: More discipline

Fri 24 Feb 1995

I think that M. Bone is right.

Let's whip these users into shape.

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441. **Tim Waples**

Re: New Formalist list?

Sat 25 Feb 1995

According to RSILLIMA:

>

>

> Someone mentioned a New Formalist listserv awhile back. Does anybody have

> subscription info to that? Inquiring minds want to know.

>

Ron & others,

I'm guessing you mean CAP-L (Contemp. Amer. Poetry), which is moderated by Richard Abowitz. The address to subscribe is:

██████████

I lasted about a month, then just couldn't take it any more. It's all yours!

Tim Waples

██████████

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442. **Chris Stroffolino**

Re: NY School

Sat 25 Feb 1995

dear ron---thank you for taking up on marissa's NYS post. There's many questions I'm interested. The assumption that NYS poets don't worry??? There is the sense of the "laissez faire" Ashbery, the failure to write "critical (non-poetic) prose", the question of the relation to the Pound- Williams tradition (which is a whole other question---though I hear much talk of it, and Marjorie Perloff's perception that hardly anyone is both deeply engaged with both POUND AND STEVENS is interesting---One thing here is that instead of Pound and Williams as the "forward looking" and Stevens and Eliot as the "backward looking" of those "big 4" male modernists, there is an equally valid contention that Stevens and Williams are the more "forward looking" and Pound and Eliot "backward"--to say nothing of Loy, Moore, Stein, Riding...but I DIGRESS)... Anyway, reading Auden lately it's clearer and clearer to me his debt to Riding (stylistically if not sensibility wise)...and Riding (who Ashbery claimed among the three biggest Am. influences) is as rigorously THEORETICAL (though that's not quite the MOT JUSTE) as Pound. In fact, contrasting THREE POEMS with THE TELLING (published less than a year apart) could be a very illuminating academic paper (hint, hint). I'm only "scratching the surface" but i'll shut up

now. But, there IS a nother question that has been on my mind, RON, since you posted your NEW YEAR'S NOTE invoking Leanne. I'm curious why you consider her a NEW YORK SCHOOL poet? It can't be quite the "historical" reason Tom gave for calling himself a LANG PO? Is it because she was IN NYC? Is Waldman a NYS poet? She's not (historically) a beat? But what does one call those who address the same issues the beats did but are not males with gottees and bongoes (as Jerome Sala would point out)? Not that this name game really matters (i feel silly quibbling about it) but I am curious about how "affiliations" are constructed from the outside in. Chris

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443. **George Bowering**

Re: theory & truth

Sat 25 Feb 1995

"The Pen is mightier than the theory"

-- Pessoa

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444. **WILLIAM NORTHCUTT**

Re: second

Sat 25 Feb 1995

Before anyone hands out the New Formalist list so that Keith Tuma can "lurk" over there for a while, remember that he is a 400 lb ogre, stalking the manicured lawns of Miami U. Dana Gioia might not be able to find a ready form for handling such a thing.

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445. **Michael Boughn**

Re: Loy, Stein etc.

Sat 25 Feb 1995

It's interesting that the recent posts from Gary Sullivan, Jennifer Raney, Chris Stroffolino, etc. citing modernist women writers have all omitted reference to H.D. Why is this? (I'm really not trying to guilt anyone into including her, I'm just interested in why she has (once again) been excluded.) Any answers? (Keeping in mind the significance of repression and omission).

Best,

Mike



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446. **WILLIAM NORTHCUTT**

Re: Mina Loy, Djuna Barnes, separate bodies

Sat 25 Feb 1995

Since Mina Loy seems to be so popular on this list, is it possible that some of our co-lister publishers might take it upon him/her/itself to republish the Last Lunar B? Trying to get a copy of this has given me a feeling of frustration comparable to Pound's frustration over not being able to find a cheap edition of Martin Van Buren.

██████████

"I am lost in these trousers / And empire." --Louis Zukofsky's "A"

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447. **Ann Louise Vickery**

Re: Stein, Loy, H.D., et al

Sat 25 Feb 1995

I'm afraid that at the time I entered my message I had not read Gary Sullivan's posting fully because its subject title was regarding Sun and Moon. As I'm a subscriber to four fairly busy lists, I tend to skim through a lot of messages then sit down and go through the ones that might be of interest when I have more time. I realize now that I should have read your posting more fully as you were converging the issues in a way that I hoped somebody would. This is probably a bit out of date now but I thought I should apologize.

As far as earlier experimental writers (not necessarily women) who bring up feminist issues in their writing, Gary covered many of the women that are already fairly institutionalized on academic courses (and H.D. was also mentioned-thanks).

Perhaps it are those who are not so well known that also need to be mentioned if not just for revising the poetic map. Although Lorine Niedecker never wrote any essays as far as I know on theory in the same way that Stein or Loy did, her letters are full of her debating the feminist implications that certain directions in poetry may hold (Daphne Marlatt's vs Jean Daive minimalism for instance). Perhaps it is because she was on the edge of what has since been seen as a "movement" that she has been recently recovered, whereas there are many other writers who still remain forgotten-women who did not have the support network that people like Stein and Niedecker did. How many indigenous North American women writers have been mentioned on this list, let alone from other non-European and non-American countries? In the 1920s in Australia, Lesbia Harford was exploring the relationship between class and gender through her poetry in ways that overlap with Niedecker and others. Yet, she remains

largely unknown not only here but elsewhere. She's just one that I thought I'd mention.

I also apologize for my icecream 'melt'-we have the NZ icecream co over here & I might have discovered hokey pokey icecream through it. What came first-tutti frutti or hokey pokey might be more a question of which came first-the chicken or the banana peel. I would also like to put a vote towards keeping the list together-at least for now. I don't know quite how you could toughen up on moderating the list-how have other lists handled the problem? Does anyone know?

Ann

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448. **John Cayley**

Re: community: questions from what floor

Sat 25 Feb 1995

Feel strongly that it would be wrong to split or police this discussion. Apologies if any interventions from this quarter have been read as ill-judged (probably were) or contributed to what sense there is of waste.

Genuinely fascinated by the nature of this medium, cf. Cris Cheek's succinct summary of its virtues and possibilities, (already quoted). The cocktail, book-launch, preview party is an apt metaphor, as much for the implied power/gender structures as for the indication of a likely tone.

And the gallery is in the background, behind the chit-chat and idle banter with some fine works to be viewed over a quiet drink once you are cut loose from some particular conversation (although here the situation and the talk are the works). The latter image pertinent because one of the valued and to-be-defended aspects of visiting, say, a gallery is the ability to move past art works at high velocity dismissing whatever at the time seems irrelevant, distasteful or plain bad -- in the not-so-secret knowledge that what you are dismissing may be (is) important, interesting even great work. No one is forced to attend to anything in a gallery space and DOS forbid that they ever should be.

Just so, our mailboxes are clogged but we have the power to empty them as necessary or desirable. Decisions like that should be left as close to the grassroots as possible, as a matter of principle.

Finally, in this discussion surely the ludic, the occasional piece/fragment of poetics, parody, whatever is not only to be expected but encouraged, allowed to become a integrated part of the more usual discursive contributions? No, personal letters (unless they are open) shouldn't be posted (it can be

embarrassing) but if you didn't overhear something like their contents from time to time it would spoil atmosphere of the party.

You want to be someone else or to become part of the process.

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449. **Gary Sullivan**

Re: Loy, Stein etc.

Sat 25 Feb 1995

Dear Michael:

Touche'. Personally speaking, I didn't bring her up because: (a) I haven't read enough of her work to feel comfortable doing that; (b) others (notably Barbara Guest) have written extensively about her; and (c) because I haven't yet started to read her work, I didn't know if she was appropriate to bring up in the context in which I brought up Loy, Stein & Barnes.

While I've got you here, Michael: loved your "Well, sometimes you get there and sometimes/ the there gets you, a simple fact of how/ turns it, a space of shifting constellations// at war with the mill"--from your series of poems in the new First Intensity. Very nice, that; liked the whole series, actually.

Gary Sullivan

— — — — —

On Sat, 25 Feb 1995, Michael Boughn wrote:

It's interesting that the recent posts from Gary Sullivan, Jennifer Raney, Chris Stroffolino, etc. citing modernist women writers have all omitted reference to H.D. Why is this? (I'm really not trying to guilt anyone into including her, I'm just interested in why she has (once again) been excluded.) Any answers? (Keeping in mind the significance of repression and omission).

Best,
Mike



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450. **kathryne lindberg**

Re: theory

Sat 25 Feb 1995

My disk has been full and has prevented me from responding for some time. Anyway, I have to note that Larry Grossberg speaking of doing pure theory must provoke peels of laughter. My goodness. There is also something

laughable about this talk of boy vs girl// theory vs practice. I suppose there might be no escaping certain essential desires to repeat the same old shit, but really!!! It was not any particular woman who exposed Freud's misogyny, he wrote it there for all to see. Furthermore, Hegel's bold statement that neither women nor Blacks could DO philosophy was hardly unprecedented. What can one say to such statements? It seems to me that they speak their own hysteria. I became aware recently of how sad this state of affairs remains when, in a theory group I was leading, I said, "well, one is tired of white boys business as usual." One of my male colleagues, feeling interpellated, it seems, said that he didn't like being referred to as a boy. Shit, the things that remain unquestioned!!!! I would hope, in any case, that ideas about policing the list that appear in such words as those I read in a post my Michael Boughn (pronounced Bone, I would say) that one should "get some police" in order to keep the list "hard, precise, penetrating" would be read as both high parody and hysteria. Moments like that, even just the sound of, "police," "precise," "penetrating" over the supposedly eviscerated electronic net, would be argument enough to open the list--even if, as one bro. suggested, one decides to read only the postings from the "names" one knows to be guarantors of interesting stuff. A cop with a big cock, who could resist? Who among us would cast. . .

In any case, theory aside, I have noticed that certain sorts of behaviors are expected by women, others suspect. I wonder, though, how the name or category WOMEN seems again so clear. This list, if I may say so, seems to have fallen for several rather worn labels and strategies. I was especially struck, after so many interesting (??) postings about poetry and the "public" to see a suggestion that certain things should be kept off or in another list; that some things should not be put before "the public." Is this list now the long lamented absent public. Funny, too, that public should also devolve to PUBIK, as Ted Joans might pun.

Oh, sorry. Puns, let alone irony, insinuation, and insolence aren't, any more than invidious profanity (?), particularly woman-ish. How about getting away from the program, boys and girls?

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451. **Chris Stroffolino**

Re: theory & truth

Sat 25 Feb 1995

the pen may be mightier than the theory, but is the theory the same thing as the sword?

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452. **Colleen Lookingbill**

Re: Gender and theory

Sat 25 Feb 1995

Having just subscribed 2 weeks ago I am new to this kind of list email thing. Wanted to put my woman's voice into the mix. We are all survivors of patriarchy, that fact is genderless. How you choose to respond to that fact is up to your response - ability. The kind of continuous one-upsmanship, king of the heap games that are seem apparent on this list are characteristic of a patriarchal system in my opinion.

About what Alan Golding wrote: "On the recent theory exchanges: interesting that the theory discussion and the boy/girl talk have been going on simultaneously but in parallel lines, without much crossover. What's the relation between theory (the tendency to theorize, the kind of theorizing that gets done) and gender?"

I found the gender discussion to be the more interesting of the two threads. To me the theory discussion seems kind of weird - do I really read that some people are saying that to be a good poet you have to be a theorist as well? Sorry, but this makes no sense to me. Unless the idea is that by writing and thinking about what you write and how effectively your creativity is working you are doing theory. Theory that interests me the most is more experiential - based on this is what has happened to me or what I have observed in the stream of life and this is what I think about that, less academic in nature than what is being posted, I'd say. I'm willing to read the more technical and academic stuff, but probably less likely to participate in those discussions. Don't know if this is gender based, but it might be, does seem to fit in a little with what other women are saying about responding more to the personal.

from Colleen Lookingbill

P.S. - Don't divide the list - sounds like a control issue to me!

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453. **Susan Schultz**

Re: POETICS Digest - 23 Feb 1995 to 24 Feb 1995

Sat 25 Feb 1995

Ron and Keith and other interested parties: the way to subscribe to the "New Formalist" list (to be fair, they're a bit more eclectic than that) is to write to [REDACTED]. At present they're locking horns about obscurity.

Susan

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454. **Belle Gironde**
One Poet One Channel
Sat 25 Feb 1995

Subject: Main poetics channel to reject messages

Copyright: 1999 by The Anti-Hegemony Project

Date: 20 Jul 99 66:6 6:66 EST

Lines: 32

CYBERSPACE (AHP) - New York State's main state-run poetics channel said yesterday it would stop posting responses to messages because they were causing too much social disruption. BoweryBoysVision (BBV) made the surprise announcement just a week after President James Sherry imposed a ban on discussion of "ice cream" and "personal well being," a move industry executives said would hit the major poetics channels. An announcer on the main evening news read out a statement from BBV directors saying the outpouring of chat had recently "been the source of great irritation and disappointment." "Therefore we have taken the decision to stop broadcasting personal messages until strict rules are set up to regulate discussion in interests of the economic development of society and ethnical norms."

---More---

Group bleari.nooz.censorship available: 2001 - 2525 unread: 1984
article 1939 4-JUL-1999 12:00:00

The statement did not say when the ban would come into effect or how BBV would make up the huge loss of programming such a step would entail. BBV and its main rival, the Co-poetry News Network (CNN), came under heavy fire last year for showing continuous advertisements by the "Freely Espousing" investment fund, which lured millions of poets into parting with their work just before share prices were slashed. Although the government declined to ban "Freely Espousing," this and other poetics projects were relegated to subsidiary channels. "Our task is to create mutual understanding and agreement in society," the BBV statement said at the time. "In the best of all possible worlds," said Sherry, "the one man one vote principle would be extended to poetivision -- one poet one channel." The new ban, which comes into effect from the moment it is published in tomorrow's official government digest, said poets defying the ban would be sued and their words appropriated for use in Lang-Po Labs infomercials.

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455. **Gary Sullivan**

Where to find Thorpe's books

Sat 25 Feb 1995

Everyone:

Many responses backchannel re: Thorpe, asking where to find his books. I believe (last time I checked) Small Press Distribution has the four I mentioned. Most of you have that address, but maybe not everyone (it's a great one to have, if you don't):

Small Press Distribution
1814 San Pablo Avenue
Berkeley, CA 94702 USA
[REDACTED]

Write or call them for a catalog--I *think* the catalog's free. Anyone in the Minneapolis-St. Paul area can borrow my copies of Thorpe's books; just ask.

I was told by someone not on this list that Thorpe does have a book of "theory" out (I stand corrected). It's not in SPD's catalog; it was a mimeo or Xeroxed & stapled book that (maybe) Duncan McNaughton published. Whether or not copies are still available's uncertain. Stephen Ratcliffe, do you know?

--Gary

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456. **John Cayley**

Re: Li Lang Po

Sat 25 Feb 1995

Li and Lang Po are definite not related although they do have something in common. Li is the surname, so it is Po that they share, perhaps unsurprisingly.

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457. **Gary Sullivan**

Re: theory

Sun 26 Feb 1995

Dear Kathryne:

I thought, when I read Michael's post, it was tongue-in-cheek, and that he was *against* the idea of "policing." Maybe I need to switch to a breakfast cereal without the added irony?

Anyway, I agree with you that the list shouldn't be regulated, policed, and certainly not divided up. The whole point seems to be to bring poets & critics &

afficionados together, & see what happens. We're not here to perform Shakespeare. (Unless we want to do that, too, I guess.)

As to the whole "boy/girl" discussion, I don't think anyone here is saying that men & women have different capacities for and/or interests in theory. I've liked reading what people have to say about this, actually; it seems to be one of the more generative topics currently under discussion. I know Colleen Lookingbill, and her post in re this subject was one of the few times I've read what she has to say about "how" she writes, what drives it. It was nice to get that. I'd like her poetry regardless of whether or not she ever wanted to talk privately or publicly about it, but this was a nice bonus, reading her confirm what I'd suspected--that hers is a poetry of personal experience (despite how it might otherwise appear at first glance).

But, we sometimes have to ask questions to get at this stuff, to get people talking about X, Y, or Z, and sometimes, granted, the questions might seem simplistic, or backwards, or whathaveyou. A week or so before I got on this list, someone told me that someone (& my memory's not the best, so forgive me if I don't get this completely right) had said that they were afraid that people might think them "dumb" if they asked questions or responded, and someone else had responded: "What's wrong with that?" I totally agree. Someone once said that there are no correct answers, only correct questions. (Or something to that effect.) Well, how do you know which questions are the "right" ones until you've started asking?

Anyway. I did appreciate your post. Thanks.

--Gary

On Sat, 25 Feb 1995, kathryne lindberg wrote:

My disk has been full and has prevented me from responding for some time. Anyway, I have to note that Larry Grossberg speaking of doing pure theory must provoke peels of laughter. My goodness. There is also something laughable about this talk of boy vs girl// theory vs practice. I suppose there might be no escaping certain essential desires to repeat the same old shit, but really!!! It was not any particular woman who exposed Freud's misogyny, he wrote it there for all to see. Furthermore, Hegel's bold statement that neither women nor Blacks could DO philosophy was hardly unprecedented. What can one say to such statements? It seems to me that they speak their own hysteria. I became aware recently of how sad this state of affairs remains when, in a theory group I was leading, I said, "well, one is tired of white boys business as usual." One of my male colleagues, feeling interpellated, it seems, said that he didn't like being referred to as a boy. Shit, the things that remain unquestioned!!!! I would hope, in any case, that ideas about policing the list that appear in such words as those I read in a post my Michael Boughn (pronounced Bone, I would say)

that one should "get some police" in order to keep the list "hard, precise, penetrating" would be read as both high parody and hysteria. Moments like that, even just the sound of, "police," "precise," "penetrating" over the supposedly eviscerated electronic net, would be argument enough to open the list--even if, as one bro. suggested, one decides to read only the postings from the "names" one knows to be quantors of interesting stuff. A cop with a big cock, who could resist? Who among us would cast. . .

In any case, theory aside, I have noticed that certain sorts of behaviors are expected by women, others suspect. I wonder, though, how the name or category WOMEN seems again so clear. This list, if I may say so, seems to have fallen for several rather worn labels and strategies. I was especially struck, after so many interesting (??) postings about poetry and the "public" to see a suggestion that certain things should be kept off or in another list; that some things should not be put before "the public." Is this list now the long lamented absent public. Funny, too, that public should also devolve to PUBIK, as Ted Joans might pun.

Oh, sorry. Puns, let alone irony, insinuation, and insolence aren't, any more than invidious profanity (?), particularly woman-ish. How about getting away from the program, boys and girls?

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458. **Gary Sullivan**

To Ira, & all

Sun 26 Feb 1995

Dear Ira:

Thank you much for such a well-considered response. I'd backchannel this to you, but you probably weren't the only one who felt I was attacking Marjorie, so I'd like to address that. I was, certainly, put off by what I felt to be Marjorie's pooh-poohing of the great unwashed on this list, the people she doesn't know. My post was not meant as an attack. I was questioning her, questioning specifically her raising the issue of cleansing the list of undesireables. (The fact that I've read *Radical Artifice* [and other of her books] seems to suggest I've granted her a certain amount of respect, moreso than she seems to want to grant to her non-chums on this list.) I'd meant to suggest that, if she was more open to listening to & being available to others outside of her circle of friends (which we all have, of course), it would make her criticism--which I think is fine--even more valuable. Someone suggested to me, "backchannel," that Marjorie is a "friendly" critic, not an "enemy" critic. I don't think of critics (or reporters, like Dinitia Smith) as either. I do think she has a certain amount of responsibility, especially as such a visible critic (one of few mentioned in that

Times article). And the questions I posted to her were originally questions that came up as I was reading _Radical Artifice_ a year or so ago. I liked the book, was definitely "on her side" reading it, but if *I* could have these questions about the appropriateness of certain work in that context, maybe I'm not the only one out here who does. Cape's (or Cope's?) "article" on foxhunting was too kind to me; I'm not 10, I'm more like 5 or 6--meaning I've only been reading & writing & thinking about poetry for 5 or 6 years--and if someone as new to this as I am sees or considers significant (Bern Porter) "missings" in a book on Media & Poetry ... well, it made me really begin to question the book, what it really was (beyond its stated intentions). I had always wanted to write to Marjorie about that book, and once I got onto this list, I saw an opportunity. Unfortunately, it arrived with what I felt was a very disappointing post of hers. If it hadn't been for that post, I'd still have asked, though perhaps not as indignantly. Despite all the things you say about her work, what it gives you (& I agree), I still have those questions. Assuming this "a" and "b" list (which I don't understand, being new) refers to groups of people ("a=stars" "b=unwashed") ... well, if it's ever implemented as such, I'm sure I'll never get any answers. Mostly my loss. Anyway, thanks very much for the response. It's much appreciated.

--Gary

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459. **Thomas Bell**

NYT article

Sun 26 Feb 1995

By way of brief introduction since this is my first post (I am a "boy" of fifty+ in truth and not posting under a male pseudonym): I am a psychologist in private practice in Nashville who has recently revived an interest in poetry and poetics with some minor success.

I think I a much more coherent and relevant article than Dinita, and one that raises some issues that are worthy of discussion. I do have to apologize for my anti-academic bias: this stems from earlier experiences of mine when I was an academic, and I have since moderated these views to some extent.

This article appeared in the November/December 1994 issue of _Educom Review_ the hard-copy journal of EDUCOM and is also on their gopher.

LIVING LANGUAGE

Today a child was shot in my daughter's school. Last week a local dealer was gunned down in a drive-by shooting. This is life today. In the *American Poetry Review*, Eavan Boland tells of distress at her inability to include "awkward and jagged pieces of reality" in the decorums of poetry she admires. Can we afford a literature that doesn't deal with jagged and awkward reality?

Dana Gioia calls for poetry to become an important part of American culture when he asks, "Can Poetry Matter?" Poetry is read aloud today in coffeehouses and bars, even if it has not yet gotten all the way to the street. These are signals of the emerging reintegration of poetry and life.

In an even more significant development, vital and authentic poetry is appearing on the Internet and its byways. People who do not have a post-graduate degree in English are actually writing and reading poetry in discussion groups on bulletin boards, commercial services, and elsewhere on the "information superhighway," working to incorporate today's realities into today's e-literature. They do this in a way that traditional writing has never been able to do, at least in a way that reaches significant numbers of American readers and listeners.

The Internet is more than just another venue for writers. It has opened up the field for a new audience and new material whose vitality and authenticity give hope to those yearning to lead literature out of the academy and onto the computer screens of America, if not actually out onto the streets.

The essence of capturing a slice of life in poetry or prose lies in the struggle to express it well or authentically. These writers on the Internet are (with help from more experienced fellow writers) struggling to express life as they experience it. In more traditional and academic writing this vision is often missing. I think these "awful" or "bad" (see "Bards on the Internet", *Time*, July 4, 1994) writers are the wave of the future.

This e-poetry is seen by some as "awful" and, indeed, it does have its awful moments (and hours and days). But it is wrestling with a reality that doesn't require a post-graduate degree in writing to appreciate. Even though it has not yet found its appropriate form, that will come with time, as it did for the Russian revolutionary Futurists and others. The search for a new content and form in literature and other arts often accompanies social revolutions, and particularly those associated with technological change.

Since this poetry is seeking to express the essence of what the writers are experiencing, the appropriate form will likely reflect the vital (and even frenetic) rhythms of life today along with a fascination with e-life. Rap and beat and hip-hop song and poetry and poetry bands in bars are precursors of what will come, but the final flowering will happen on the Internet. It is here that the

electronic engineer who didn't want to, or wasn't allowed to, take advanced poetry writing courses has a chance to wrestle with her despair over American culture following the shooting of her little sister's friend on a suburban playground.

by Thomas Bell, Psy.D

██████████

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460. **Alan Golding**
community request

Sun 26 Feb 1995

Associate Professor of English, U. of Louisville

Phone: ██████████; e-mail: ██████████

David--(hello again; remember when we were on that Objectivists panel about 15 years ago)? My recommendation: Bob Perelman's "Money," in Virtual Reality (Roof, 1993).

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461. **Jorge Guitart**
the meaning of lang po

Sun 26 Feb 1995

is it true that lang po means "inscrutable solace" in mandarin?

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462. **Tony Green**
Re: Arrows and Sparrows

Sun 26 Feb 1995

Hi Chris I go along with your sentiments and that list of yours which includes some I don't know (thanks for names).

Tony Green,

e-mail: ██████████

post: Dept of Art History,

University of Auckland,

Private Bag 92019,

Auckland, New Zealand

Fax: 64 9-██████████

Telephone: 64 9 ██████████ ext. 8981 or 7276

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463. **Steven Howard Shoemaker**

digesting poetics

Sun 26 Feb 1995

To all those worried about cluttered mailboxes: have you tried the "digest" option? The discussion does feel a little less "live" & somewhat more "archived," but it certainly helps to receive only one "message" per day rather than 30. It also makes it possible for me to print the whole thing out as one file if I get tired of perusing pixels.

On the other hand, it's a lot easier for a day or days to slip by w/out me getting around to poetics stuff at all. I guess my personal jury is still out, but i'd recommend that people give it a shot to see if it alleviates their particular difficulties with navigating the infopoglut.

steve shoemaker

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464. **Michael Boughn**

Re: More discipline

Sun 26 Feb 1995

George:

See, if we got our own List Police (we could call them the L-Team) they could round up those hokey personal messages, along with the bad puns, and throw them all in the pokey. Then it would be-- EEGADS!!--the HOKEY POKEY. Is this what it's all about?

Penetratingly yours,

M. "We-stand-on-guard-for-thee" Bone

████████

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465. **George Bowering**

Re: More discipline

Mon 27 Feb 1995

Michael:

It's so depressing. I took my hockey equipment to the Kerrisdale laundry of my choice before I went to Melbourne, and somehow on the trip I mislaid the ticket with which one redeems said paraphenalia. Well, all my blandishments did not work on the laundryman. He just lookt me in the eye and said

(wait for it)

"No tickee, no hockey pucky!"

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466. **John Cayley**
the meaning of lang po
Mon 27 Feb 1995

| *is it true that lang po means "inscrutable solace" in mandarin?*

A number of possible replies:

- 1) Is it true that "lang po" means "tongue skin" in French?
- 2) Whose transcription system are we using? Hopeful assumption is that the LangPo-friendly will have gone over to the sinocentric system (pinyin) where 'P' approximates more to the 'P' of 'Po', but perhaps old liberal traditions die hard and Free-China-familiars are looking up a 'Po' that's more like 'Bo'. (... and what about the vowels?)
- 3) The only (commonish) surname with Lang as transcription is Lang2 (Xinhua Zidian 248.4). Perhaps a good choice in view of the boytalk thread because it was used as a pronoun-like word for young males and a word translatable as 'darling' which females addressed to males. The 'Po' surely has to be Po3 (Xinhua Zidian 337.2) 'impossible' (now only in literary registers). It's good graph too.
- 4) No. But you can be sure there is a dictionary out there somewhere that will answer yes.
- 5) Run this:

on theMeaning_ofLangPo put
"darling,wolf,corridor,veranda,hammer,chain,mantis,light,bright,
loud,clear,wave,billow,breaker,unrestrained,dissolute" into Lang put
"lake,slope,sprinkle,spill,rude,unreasonable,shrewish,oblique,
biased,partial,quite,rather,considerably,matchmaker,midwife,white,
impossible,hackberry,compel,force,press,urgent,pressing,approach,
broken,damaged,torn,break,split,destroy,defeat,capture,expose,
reveal,paltry,lousy,soul,vigour,spirit" into Po put word (the random of the
number of items in Lang) of Lang into Lang put word (the random of the
number of items in Po) of Po into Po answer "the meaning of LangPo is " &
Lang & space & Po end theMeaning_ofLangPo

(only slightly selective from *_A Chinese-English Dictionary_*, 1978)

Answer number 3 above would be "darling impossible" for example.

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467. **Marjorie Perloff**

Re: POETICS Digest - 25 Feb 1995 to 26 Feb 1995

Mon 27 Feb 1995

I do apologize to Gary S for sounding what he took to be dismissive of those "I don't know." I really didn't mean to sound that way. I was writing (so far as reading all the messages go) out of sincere perplexity as to time frames. Maybe it's just me but it seems that I'm totally overloaded with endless daily tasks that include writing on an average of a letter or two of recommendation a day, being graduate adviser and figuring out whether X can get rid of his or her language requirement by taking whatever "unusual" language or whether I can get around the Old English requirement by allowing someone to do Dante and so on. So I guess my complaint has less to do with the poetics discussion group than with a general perplexity as to how to get through the day in the current academy. Therefore, when I turned on the Mac at night and found all those endless messages, it seemed overwhelming. But now that I have it as a "digest" it's really much better. And it did bring in that piece from Ira, which is certainly one of the nicest reviews I've ever had. So who can complain?

Enough on that front for a while, I hope....

Marjorie

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468. **Spencer Selby**

Re: Response and Another Try

Mon 27 Feb 1995

I appreciate this forum, and I think it's great that more people are contributing, both women and men.

The following is an attempt to respond to all those who wrote me over the past week, plus others who didn't. It is also an attempt to clarify or do a better job of indicating certain feelings and concerns that I have about the literary world today.

- 1) My argument is not with theory per se. My argument involves claims that are made for theory, uses to which it is put and effects it often has.
- 2) I am for the freedom of the individual to think things through for himself. To do that, s/he must fend off or overcome pressures to conform to correct ideas, which today are formidable.

3) I believe the discourse and social reality surrounding poetry has become more important than the poetry itself. When I said poetry was on its own level, that was nothing more than an attempt to counter this sense of skewed priority that I feel pervades the scene.

4) I am concerned about the degree to which all communication surrounding the poetry is framed as "literary politics." I am concerned about the dominance of this frame, the way it all becomes a game we play at to the detriment of our art and its greatest goals.

5) What matters to people in this literary world is not community. What matters is spheres of influence. Each person's spheres are a little different and some have more or broader spheres than others. But these spheres are not communities because they are motivated and defined entirely by the dynamics of personal and literary influence.

6) Much energy is directed toward appreciating and understanding those within one's approximated spheres of influence. (The stronger the sphere or link, the more the energy.) Far too often, alienation is the keynote with respect to everyone else. Alienation and a tendency to project the blame and responsibility for problems onto an elsewhere as variously perceived or defined.

7) Denial is an important part of the game. There are many different ways of denial, too many to list here. It may be that denial, more than anything else, is what keeps people playing, what allows them to stay focused and do what is necessary to be a good competitor.

8) What about the person who can't or won't play this game? My feeling is, s/he doesn't have much chance. My feeling is, you're forced to play if you want to survive as a creatively engaged poet in this world today.

Spencer Selby

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469. **H. T. KIRBY-SMITH**

New Formalist List

Mon 27 Feb 1995

I just did a search in the archives of the recently-established CAP-L list (Contemporary American Poetry). In their discussions so far the word "iamb" does not appear and there seems little talk of formalism of any sort--new, old, or middle-aged. Isn't there a real good McCarthyite pigheaded sonnet-writing bunch of people somewhere? Or have they gone the way of the snail-darter? The list called "Prosody" has mostly been taken over by linguists, phonologists, phoneticists, etc and is very strong on things like glottal clicks.

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470. **Michael Boughn**

Re: New Formalist List

Mon 27 Feb 1995

Dear H.T. Kirby-Smith:

Although it's not specifically dedicated to poetry, the Philosophy-Literature list seems to contain many of the people you're looking for. I checked out a while ago, after the list boss proposed Timothy Steele as the height of American achievement in poetry.

Good hunting.

Mike

I just did a search in the archives of the recently-established CAP-L list (Contemporary American Poetry). In their discussions so far the word "iamb" does not appear and there seems little talk of formalism of any sort--new, old, or middle-aged. Isn't there a real good McCarthyite pigheaded sonnet-writing bunch of people somewhere? Or have they gone the way of the snail-darter?

The list called "Prosody" has mostly been taken over by linguists, phonologists, phoneticists, etc and is very strong on things like glottal clicks.

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471. **Robert A Harrison**

Tenderloin, etc.

Mon 27 Feb 1995

In response to Ron's, Spencer's, and Colleen's posts:

Ron, I DID frequent the Hospitality House, but as a painter, not a writer. The place is proof that there are lots of poets/artists out there that are interested in more than politics, and in being a part of a community that may not have much to give back in return in terms of professional advancement (or whatever the hell you call it). Without the Hospitality House, my stay in San Fran would have been worse, to say the least. And, man, I know a lot of the people that worked there worked for just a few pennies, for a living!

Spencer, I agree with you that theory is used as a power tool too often, and that at the same time it can be useful, and that the poem is what counts (if anything counts at all), whatever is brought to it. But isn't this politics bullshit something we're going to find ANYWHERE there is more than one person? I

hate it as much as you do, but I've never managed to get away from it. Whether its working with a road crew, living in a half-way house, buying hash in Morocco, or programming for a corporation. The trick seems to me to be that if it happens, to see that it doesn't happen destructively. Or, if it does happen in a "bad" way, to BURN it.

I just want to re-iterate one of Colleen's comments:

We are all survivors of patriarchy, that fact is genderless. How you choose to respond to that fact is up to your response - ability. The kind of continuous one-upsmanship, king of the heap games that seem apparent on this list are characteristic of a patriarchal system in my opinion.

I agree whole-heartedly. One up-manship?, shit, I thought that didn't exist in the poetry world (call me naive). As much as I want to read lots of theory (as general and almost meaningless as that term is), in response to anyone that wants to force it down my throat, well, I have lots and lots of crude responses to make. Plus a few things to throw. Is that unprofessional?

Bob Harrison

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472. **Sheila Murphy**
Thoughts About Engagement
Mon 27 Feb 1995

Spencer's most recent post quite clearly crystallizes some of the concerns that have been discussed around theory/participation/community and the like. His post brings to mind for me the extent to which it perhaps always has been true that there's little room, certainly in art, and probably in most things, for the pure entity of THE PROCESS AND WHAT'S MADE to exist without that entity's being propped up by loads of self promotion. An unspoken kind of currency exists in many realms of endeavor. Specifically, having "something to trade," some commodity to hold/exchange/seek that puts one on the board at all. This offering can take the form of publishing, producing programs, critical perspective published or spoken, and undoubtedly several more. Spoken opinion or assessment concerning someone's work, where and how it fits, what new ground it breaks, etc., has particularly high value associated with it. To me, it has always been true that this kind of exchange pattern has been present. But with the abundance of material and of distribution channels (be they small/large, unofficial/official), including the machines we can access to share them, there's been an escalation of need to create focus on any given work. (Sort out something that seems to deserve light) However people fare within this system, combined with their own needs for recognition, (and these are not the sole variables!) seems to connect to levels of frustration or levels of felt

reward. I suspect that the struggle to be counted forces many people to have to expend far more effort than they would choose just getting into the middle of things and being perceived as complete.. This, of course, can rob time from producing work one cares about producing.. I feel this among people in the earnings world, too. So much energy goes into getting one's name out about one's business services, etc., that there's too little time (sometimes) left for doing what one does. This whole issue seems pertinent to the theory question within the world of practice. I hate to put theory into the category of "must do," as though it were something no one would do if they didn't have to, because it's at least potentially worthy and elegant and illuminating an a thing unto itself. (Transcending the level of inventing a frame within which to illuminate what one is doing!) But for some people, at least the writing about writing aspect is a price to pay to get closer to what is wanted.

I have no particular answer for this except to say that the sooner one can pursue something at the center of her or his passionate concerns, without the requirement of having to "pay dues," the more satisfying and possibly meaningful the work can become. I suppose that dues paying will always be with us (But try not to think of it as often as I think about my work!)

Sheila Murphy

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473. **RSILLIMA**

PBS

Mon 27 Feb 1995

I didn't write this. Wish I had.

Ron Silliman

A TYPICAL DAILY PBS SCHEDULE IF THE PUBLIC BROADCASTING LEADERS
CAVE IN TO REPUBLICAN PRESSURE

8:00 am Morning Stretch: Arnold Schwarzenegger does squats while reciting passages of "Atlas Shrugged."

9:00 am Mr. Rogers' Segregated Neighborhood: King Friday sings "Elitism is neat." The House Un-American Activities investigation of Mr. McFeely continues. Mr. Rogers explains why certain kids can't be his neighbor.

10:00 am Sesame Street: Jerry Falwell teaches Big Bird to be more judgemental. Oscar the Grouch plays substitute for Rush Limbaugh. Bert and Ernie are kicked out of the military. Jesse Helms bleaches all the Muppets white.

11:00 am Square One: A MathNet episode "Ernest Does Trickle-Down." Jim Varney explains how cutting taxes for the rich and spending more on defense will balance the budget.

Noon Washington Week in Review: Special guest Senator Bob Dole, explaining why the current pension crisis, budget deficit, bank closings, farm foreclosures, S & L bailouts, inflation, recession, job loss, and trade deficit can all be blamed on someone else.

1:00 pm Where in the world is Carmen San Diego? Guest detective Pat Buchanan helps kids build a wall around the U.S.

2:00 pm William F. Buckley's Firing Line: Guests George Will, Rush Limbaugh, John Sununu, Pat Buchanan, James Kilpatrick, Mona Charen, G. Gordon Liddy, Robert Novak, Bay Buchanan, Pat Robertson, Joseph Sobran, Paul Harvey, Phyllis Schlafly, Maureen Reagan, and John McLaughlin bemoan the need for more conservative media voices.

3:00 pm Nature: Join James Watt and Charlton Heston as they use machine guns to bag endangered species.

4:00 pm NOVA: "Creationism: Discredited, but what the hell?"

5:00 pm Newt Gingrich News Hour: Clarence Thomas and Bob Packwood present in-depth personal reports on sexual harassment. Pat Buchanan says he is being shut out from national exposure.

6:00 pm Mystery Theater: Hercule Poirot, Jane Marple, Sherlock Holmes and Inspectors Morse and Maigret team up to investigate Whitewater.

7:00 pm Great Performances: Pat Buchanan is a guest conductor of Wagner's "Prelude to a Cultural War."

8:00 pm Masterpiece Theater: Ibsen's "A Doll's House." Phyllis Schlafly improves this classic with an added scene where Nora gladly gives up her independence while her husband chains her to the stove.

9:30 pm Washington Week in Review: Guests George Will, Rush Limbaugh, John Sununu, Pat Buchanan, James Kilpatrick, Mona Charen, G. Gordon Liddy, Robert Novak, Bay Buchanan, Pat Robertson, Joseph Sobran, Paul Harvey, Phyllis Schlafly, Maureen Reagan, and John McLaughlin discuss liberal media bias.

10:00 pm Adam Smith's Money World: How to Profit from Ozone Depletion

10:30 pm Nightly Business Report: Wall Street celebrates the end of all laws regarding antitrust, consumer protection, work-place safety, environmental protection, minimum wage and child labor.

11:00 pm Insights of Dan Quayle

11:01 pm Sign-Off

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474. **cris cheek**

E - speration and Communit - E, (sorr-e)

Mon 27 Feb 1995

Hi James, thanks for posting that rationale again. I must have missed it the first time, since I'm suddenly getting so much e-mail and ironically, find it hard to get the time to read it all. Also I tend to read shorter messages first with the express intention of going back to look more thoroughly over what look like longer, maybe more complex posts. Sometimes, I forget which ones I mean to go back to. Sometimes I'm printing certain posts out because I want to respond to them but also want to unclog the space. I'm thinking about this issue of community as raised recently. The size of this 'community' must be getting up towards that 250 which Ron identified for Tenderloin. I'm a (now relative) newcomer - it seems positively active, with a rapid convergence and hexvergence across agendas. Obviously more and more people are subscribing at present (any figures Loss) - there you see I just jumped from what was intended as a so-called backchannel message to what can now be addressed in part to the whole - is there an exponential volume at which point a list such as POETICS might take on either a debilitating or invigorating entropic quality? Might not simply particularised 'loop', as you term them, agendas achieve a measure of what might help? I don't appear to be alone in being excited by the way this list is developing? What percentage of people's posts are sent to all subscribers? My experience is of posting two-thirds 'privately' and one third 'publicly' but of getting public to private in a ratio of 2:1.

This list seems yet to be poised to address the issues raised by how to go beyond being merely a community of interests to becoming a community of evolving friendships and alliances that both is and also furthers the development of the work.

cris

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475. **James Sherry**

Re: E - speration and Communit - E, (sorr-e)

Mon 27 Feb 1995

Yes, cris, I think that the list at its best can be both interesting in and of itself in terms of the discussions we can have on it AND generative of independent relationships on both one-to-one and sub-group levels. The effective limits of community are not yet clear, but from several people's perspective they relate

to the number of messages one can get through considering the available time. This obviously differs for different people, so the quantifying of community is not possible at a single value for all participants. What I am looking for is a suggestion how to "customize" each person's community according to their capacity and interest. It's a hard question, but I think one worth working on. It has a lot of assumptions that need to be exposed before we can get too far. Clearly the group has about 3-1 rejected a simple division by message type. But as you point out the question does not go away. I'd still appreciate hearing further responses at this new level. James

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476. **James Sherry**

Re: Thoughts About Engagement

Mon 27 Feb 1995

From my point of view the question arose about 20 years ago in response to the New Criticism's perspective, which you and Spencer have affinity for although not congruence with, that only the poem in itself is a valid carrier of meaning. Several dozen people have been working for 20 years to expand the view. James

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477. **Steve Evans**

Espousing 2/27

Mon 27 Feb 1995

Hello again everyone. What follows are the results of my dipping back into the data-stream after a few refreshing days in Louisville (where Alan Golding's efforts made for a wonderful 20th-Century Lit Conference). Hope you can use some of the info:

- + WORKING CALENDAR FOR MARCH 1995
- + NEA FUNDING IN SAN DIEGO LAUDED BY REP. BOB FILNER
- + PROPOSED RESCISSIONS
- + SENATE EDUCATION, ARTS AND HUMANITIES SUBCOM (2/23)
- + AMERICAN ARTS ALLIANCE WEB & GOPHER SITES
- + NCFE/NAAO POSTCARDS AVAILABLE
- + DAY OF CAMPUS ACTION AGAINST CONTRACT ON AMERICA

MARCH CALENDAR

1 Mar Senate Interior Appropriations Subcommittee, Rep. Slade Gorton (R-WA), chair. Witnesses: Sheldon Hackney and Jane Alexander

2 Mar NEH reauthorization hearings continue in Senate Labor and Human Resources Subcom on Education, Arts, and the Humanities

3 Mar House Interior Appropriations Subcommittee (FY96 funding), Rep. Ralph Regula (R-OH), chair. Subject: National Gallery of Art and Kennedy Center

14 Mar National Advocacy Day <See Espousing Update 2/17/95 for more information>

21 Mar House Interior Appropriations Subcommittee (FY96 funding), Rep. Ralph Regula (R-OH), chair. Subject: NEH and IMS

29 Mar Day of Campus Action Against Contract on America (alternate date for campuses not in session on the 29th is 23 March). <See below for more information>

<Please send additions and corrections to [REDACTED].>

WORK OF NEA IN SAN DIEGO DEFENDED BY REP. BOB FILNER

On 24 February 1995, Democrat Bob Filner made the following remarks in the context of defending federal funding for the arts:

"In San Diego County, the San Diego Opera Company and the San Diego Symphony provide opportunities for kids to attend the opera and symphony concerts. The opera regularly goes out to schools with ensemble performances. San Diego's recipients of arts funding range from elementary schools and universities to KPBS public radio and TV to the Samahan Philippine Dance Company and the Centro Cultural de la Raza to the Balboa Park Museums and the Old Globe Theater, groups representing the entire population of San Diego County. TheatreForum, an international theater magazine published at UCSD; the renowned La Jolla Playhouse whose productions go on to thrill audiences on Broadway and in the rest of the country; an international festival at locations on both sides of the border between San Diego and Tijuana, Mexico; graduate internships at the Museum of Photographic Arts; touring exhibitions from the Museum of Contemporary Arts in San Diego. I could go on and on. These and hundreds of other art forms are advanced by arts funding in San Diego County." (from the Congressional Record, p. H2218)

PROPOSED RESCISSIONS

The House Appropriations Interior Subcommittee (Ralph Regular, R-OH, chair) approved a rescission package that included a significant cut to FY 95 funding for the NEA and NEH.

The figures we've seen indicate that if the proposed rescissions are approved, the NEA cut will be \$1m (administrative) and \$4m (program), with the bulk of program-budget reductions targeted toward individual artist grants.

On 16 February, some members of this Subcommittee (only 7 of the 14 actually) had heard testimony from Rep. Amo Houghton (R-NY), a supporter of the

NEA/NEH; Richard J. Franke, chairman of the John Nuveen Company and a past chairman of the Illinois State Humanities Council; David McCullough; Ken Burns; and Clay S. Jenkinson, "noted for his scholarly impersonations of Thomas Jefferson at NEH sponsored Chautauquas" [!].

SENATE EDUCATION, ARTS AND HUMANITIES SUBCOM

[note: what follows is redacted from a National Campaign for Freedom Expression summary of 23 February activity]

Among those who testified were:

*Christover Reeves, actor and President of the Creative Coalition, who reportedly called for creating a "real endowment" by setting aside a portion of the NEA's budget over the next 7 years with the intention of creating an endowment base that could be supplemented by private 2-to-1 matching funds. Reeves argued that this timed phase-out of taxpayer support would decrease the hostile "politicization" of cultural subsidies. Harold Williams (president of the J. Paul Getty Trust) and others testified that reaching the \$3-3.5 billion base necessary to generate \$167m annually was an unrealistic 7-year goal.

*Leonard Garment (lawyer, former advisor to Nixon, co-chair of the 1990 Independent Commission mandated by Congress to review the NEA) proposed consolidation of the Endowments: one chair, a deputy for arts and one for humanities, and a council appointed by various elected officials that would include the President and Speaker of the House. The restructured Endowment would not grant individual artist grants, Only institutions of "national stature" would be directly supported, with block grants going to smaller institutions.

*George White (NEA National Council Member and founder/president of the Eugene O'Neill Theater Center) and Senator Christopher Dodd (D-CT and subcom member) proposed to change copyright laws to supplement the Endowments' budgets. The proposal would permit the government to auction literary and artistic works after their copyrights expire, with proceeds routed to the NEA.

Note: We have heard White speak about this copyright idea but still don't quite understand what he has in mind. This NCFE account doesn't clarify matters much. An Associated Press report on the Subcommittee hearing summarized White's position as follows: "He proposed extending copyrights on such things as plays and music, with revenue from the added royalties going at least partially to support the NEA and its sister agency, the National Endowment for the Humanities" (23 Feb).

Others who testified on 23 February included: Mayor Joseph P. Riley, Jr. of Charleston, South Carolina; John D. Ong, BF Goodrich Company; Richard S. Gurin, Binney and Smith Inc.; Dean Amhaus, Wisconsin Arts Board; Leonard

German, Mudge Rose Guthrie Alexander and Ferdon, on behalf of the Independent Commission on the Arts; Laurence Jarvik, Ctr for the Study of Popular Culture; and Charles T. Clotfelter, Duke University.

AMERICAN ARTS ALLIANCE WEB & GOPHER SITES

AAA has created an "advocacy homepage" accessible on the World Wide Web at URL addresss <http://www.tmn.com/Oh/Artswire/www/aaa/aaahome.html> or through the Arts Wire gopher (gopher.tmn.com, menu item #5). You do not need to subscribe to Arts Wire in order to access the latter gopher site. Among the tools available at these sites are easily downloadable sample letters.

NCFE/NAAO POSTCARDS

The National Campaign for Freedom of Expression and National Association of Artsists Organizations have been supplying postcard sheets since 1 February 1995. They report that 25,000 sheets (3 card each) have been distributed so far and an additional 40,000 are currently in production. Distribution copies can be obtained from NCFE at [REDACTED] or NAAO at [REDACTED]. Steven Johnson at NCFE can provide further information ([REDACTED]).

DAY OF CAMPUS ACTION AGAINST CONTRACT ON AMERICA

Organized by the Center for Campus Organizing. The stated objectives of this day of action are: 1) to save student aid and increase funding for education; 2) preserve pro-environmental regulations; 3) protect and extend women's rights; 4) defend the rights of poor people and end poverty; 5) prevent the scapegoating of immigrants; 6) resist the attacks on gays, lesbians, and bisexuals.

What follows is an excerpt from CCO's "call to action" <full copy available upon request>

I. The Call

The "Contract With America" currently under consideration in Congress purports to advance economic opportunity and make government more accountable and responsible to the people. After learning about the details of the Contract, we question the sincerity of these goals. In recent weeks we have heard about proposals which would:

*o deny many young people the opportunity to attend college
o punish the poorest people for their economic status
o undo decades of efforts to reduce racism and other forms of discrimination, and
o allow big business to evade social and environmental responsibility.*

Congressional forces who won the last election claim to be acting on these measures IN OUR NAME.

However, this slim electoral victory is no automatic mandate to enact mean-spirited laws that were disguised during the election campaign.

We must make it clear that if these measures are enacted, it will be WITHOUT OUR CONSENT.

A Contract we never signed is not a Contract with America; it is a Contract on America.

We, the undersigned, therefore call for a National Day of Campus Action Against the "Contract With America" on March 29, 1995.

We call for students, faculty, and staff organize forums, rallies, pickets, teach-ins, direct action or other activities on March 29 to educate their campuses and communities, and to build resistance to the reactionary agenda of social inequality and environmental disregard proposed in the Contract.

Permission is granted to freely copy this document in electronic form, or to print for personal use.

Freely Espousing is an ongoing project aimed at protecting and further democratizing access to the arts, humanities, broadcast media, and emerging forms of communication. For more information, please contact:

Steve Evans & Jennifer Moxley
61 E. Manning St., Providence RI 02906-4008



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478. **Sheila Murphy**

Fwd: Re: Thoughts About Engag...

Tue 28 Feb 1995

Forwarded message:

Subj: Re: Thoughts About Engagement
Date: 95-02-28 00:17:44 EST
From: SEMAZ
To: 

And expand they should. But with the usual pendulum effect, things swish far in one direction. I find theory and discussion enriching at least, yet feel concern about any climate that would seem to dictate that a writer who is real,

concerned, or whatever must become a full service provider of the range of thought services.

Sometimes, when in the midst of discussion, I begin to want to find a poem. Perhaps simply a bout of longing that could be dismissed as discourageable emotion or hunger for a different thing.

Sheila

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479. **Ron Silliman**
Bob Filner & NEA \$\$
Tue 28 Feb 1995

Bob Filner, the lone Democrat from the San Diego region, made a speech on behalf of the NEA in Congress on Friday. Herewith, as reported in the Congressional Record, is what he said:

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. Bateman). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California [Mr. Filner] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. FILNER. Mr. Speaker and colleagues, I rise today in support of continued Federal funding for the National Endowment for the Arts, the National Endowment for the Humanities, the Institute for Museum Services and the Corporation for Public Broadcasting. To be or not to be civilized; that is the question, Mr. Speaker.

A civilized society must include art and cultural enrichment, and it is one of the responsibilities of government to support that aspect of our civilization. We get what we pay for. We cannot rely solely on the good will of a relatively few private individuals to fund the arts --it is the duty of us all.

This Nation's investment in the arts is one of the best we make. For example, the approximately \$2 million in Federal funding for the NEA, NEH, and IMS that goes to my county in California, San Diego County, is matched by nearly four times that amount in local contributions. This is a perfect example of public-private partnership. The Government's funding stimulates local giving to the arts which in turn stimulates local economies.

According to a recent study commissioned by the California Arts Council, nonprofit art organizations contribute some \$2.1 billion annually to California's economy, generate \$77 million in tax revenue, and create some 100,000 jobs. Yes, the arts are important to the State economy of California, and to other States as well. Business Week says that Americans spent \$340 billion on entertainment in 1993.

Critics tell us that the arts are only for the elite. Nothing could be further from the truth. Audiences and participants alike are people from all walks of life. Nearly 40 million tickets were sold last year to theater, music, and dance performances. Nielsen-rating figures show that 56.5 percent of households watching PBS programs earn less than \$40,000 a year. And a USA Today/CNN/Gallup poll showed that 76 percent of respondents thought the Government should continue to fund public broadcasting. Exposure to the arts is especially important for our children. If our young people can be motivated, thrilled, enriched, and 'turned on' by exciting experiences in theater, painting, pottery, or dance, they will be less likely to 'turn on' to drugs or gangs to fill their empty hours and empty souls.

Barbra Streisand, in a speech at Harvard University earlier this month, told how participation in the choral club at her Brooklyn high school was the beginning of her career--and she urges more support for the arts, not less. She asks how we can accept a country which has no orchestras, choruses, libraries, or art classes to nourish our children. How many more talents like Barbra Streisand's are out there, whom we will lose when there are no programs to challenge them?

In San Diego County, the San Diego Opera Company and the San Diego Symphony provide opportunities for kids to attend the opera and symphony concerts. The opera regularly goes out to schools with ensemble performances.

San Diego's recipients of arts funding range from elementary schools and universities to KPBS public radio and TV to the Samahan Philippine Dance Company and the Centro Cultural de la Raza to the Balboa Park Museums and the Old Globe Theater, groups representing the entire population of San Diego County. TheatreForum, and international theater magazine published at UCSD; the renowned La Jolla Playhouse whose productions go on to thrill audiences on Broadway and in the rest of the country; an international festival at locations on both sides of the border between San Diego and Tijuana, Mexico; graduate internships at the Museum of Photographic Arts; touring exhibitions from the Museum of Contemporary Arts in San Diego. I could go on and on. These and hundreds of other art forms are advanced by arts funding in San Diego County.

Even so, among all First World nations, the United States now spends the least on Federal arts support per citizen--and we are thinking of reneging on that support. If we say no to culture, we will prove, in the words of Los Angeles Philharmonic managing director Ernest Fleishmann, that 'we are the dumbest Nation on the planet.'

According to the General Accounting Office, the Department of Defense plans to spend \$9 billion over the next 7 years building nuclear attack submarines

that the Pentagon admits it does not need. That \$9 billion could sustain the Arts and Humanities endowments at current levels for 26 years. 26 years of National Public Radio, Big Bird, music and art for kids--or superfluous subs for the Pentagon. Is this a difficult choice?

If we defund the NEA, the NEH, the IMS and PBS, we will be telling the world that we no longer take pride in our theaters, our educational children's programs, our museums, our dance companies, our poets, ourselves.

Ultimately, we are judged by the heritage we leave our children. I hope we leave them more than soap operas and talk shows, attack submarines and assault rifles, gangs and drugs!

Yes, Mr. Speaker, to be or not to be civilized; that is the question.

Randy "Duke" Cunningham (as he's listed in all the House directories), the GOP member who will chair the authorization subcommittee that will consider the fate of the NEA, has the district next to Filner's. So Filner can be a key allie. He & Cunningham may be mortal enemies, but he ought to know how best to turn up the heat on him on this issue. Steve & Jennifer, Jerry & Michael & Rae, take note & take action!

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480. **Chris Stroffolino**

Re: PBS

Tue 28 Feb 1995

Hey ROn--this PBS thing almost TOPS your "MICROSOFT BUYS CATHOLIC CHURCH" thing---thanks, I'm gonna distribute it to my class tomorrow. Chris Stroffolino

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481. **Gary Sullivan**

Re: Thoughts About Engagement

Tue 28 Feb 1995

On Monday, February 27, James Sherry wrote:

From my point of view the question arose about 20 years ago in response to the New Criticism's perspective, which you and Spencer have affinity for although not congruence with, that only the poem in itself is a valid carrier of meaning. Several dozen people have been working for 20 years to expand the view. James

Dear James,

Please don't misread Sheila & Spencer's posts. Neither said **only** the poem is a valid carrier of meaning. Closer would be: The poem is the **primary** carrier of meaning. They're saying much more than that; you might take another look. Reducing their concerns, which are fairly complex, to anything equivalent to New Criticism is like dismissing the concerns of the language movement (especially those who write in length about the political value of the work) as those of WPA muralists. Your conclusion above has a nice epigrammatical ring to it, but little more.

More on this later.

Yours,

Gary

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482. **Mn Center For Book Arts**

Re: Fwd: Re: Thoughts About Engag...

Tue 28 Feb 1995

Getting back to what was a topic at the begining of the po/theor discussion, which was about whether every poem had a theory within or behind it, whether poems embodied theory in some way . . .

I think that we are using the term theory loosely, that poetics or philosophy may be what we sometimes mean, even though these are also used more loosely than Aristotle might like. Simply "a body of thinking" might suffice.

I certainly believe that Sheila Murphy & Spencer Selby's work, both of which are supple in movement, fluid in their construction of patterns of sound, and moving in their humanity (there's a loaded term, too), also have, within and behind them, important bodies of thinking. If they value the poems more than such theory or philosophy, that's fine -- I would agree with them, while still in some ways wanting to unlock the thinking to more fully inform, for me, the poems and the world. But I don't think their greater interest in the poems devalues the theory in any way, so I'm not certain if we really have an argument here. Either that, or my response to the issue is relaxing as the time & messages pass by.

Regarding Spencer's frustration at the concentration on power games and spheres of influence in the literary world, I would say that I recognize such things and sometimes also decry them. I've been in situations where I brought to a community I moved to an approach to poetry/poetics which was not present, and helped to build a community of interest. I guess we created a

sphere of influence, and while I thought it was open to anyone, I know and heard there was some resentment from people who felt they weren't invited in. My thinking was that it was the nature of specific concerns which provided the grounding for that sphere or community, and anyone who wanted to think about those concerns, even if they had disagreements, was invited in. But that wasn't always the perception. I've also had the experience of bringing myself to a community, more recently, because of a new job, in which I find almost no outlet for my own concerns about poetry, and I don't feel welcomed by others. We all have stories like this, I am sure. Still, within this sometimes deplorable situation, be it local or international or something in between, I've also managed to find true friends, cooperation, a sense of commonality with many, so that I don't feel as negative about it all as it seems that Spencer does. I don't think the manipulation of spheres of influence is by any means the only story. There is some sustenance as well.

charles alexander

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483. **Chris Stroffolino**

Re: Thoughts About Engagement

Tue 28 Feb 1995

Gary's (Sullivan's) defence of Spencer and Sheila's positions as something that need not (should not) be reduced to a simplistic caricature understanding of "New Criticism" is well-taken. How easy is it for so many to mouth an "anti-New Criticism" stance without really knowing what N.C. was---for if the L poets are not a monolith, neither is New Criticism, and so much of the conversation once again becomes a navigating of the alleged "minefield" of the connotations of various movements---be it "New Criticism," the "Pound-Williams line" or the "Apex G2ers"--and this all has the effect of "translating" consciousness (or culture, if you must) into something very "pinball" like... And yes we may well wonder whether the stars are conscious of the constellations we "put them in" and whether that consciousness can be seen as the REASON why they burn out (though of course we don't know they're burnt out yet), and there's probably some reason, some driving urge that should not be ignored, to PLACE OURSELVES, to orient ourselves, through the use of stickfigures. But to claim there's a definite anchor of certainty in such poetic schemas of culture is to not take seriously enough the potential power of reification and idolatry that can habituate identity to a point of barren solipsism. Otherwise, you can surely guess. Chris S.

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484. **braman sandra**

Joining the arts community

Tue 28 Feb 1995

Steve and Jennifer mentioned this new web page in their recent long message, but I thought a little more detail might be useful. For those in the poetry community who would like to join with those engaged in other arts around the NEA issue and other issues -- and just to learn what's up in the art world -- ArtsWire is the way to go. They've just added this advocacy section to ArtsWire, accessible to those who aren't members on a web page.

Sandra Braman

Advocacy Homepage announced by American Arts Alliance

In response to the imminent threat to the survival of the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA), the American Arts Alliance is pleased to announce the creation of an "advocacy homepage" and gopher site accessible to the millions Internet users. The homepage provides advocacy information and tools for arts supporters to communicate the need for continued federal support of the arts to their senators and representatives.

This information, which includes our 900 number, a sample letter, NEA facts and general information, greatly advances the the arts community's continuing efforts to generate support for the NEA through local grassroots contacts with elected officials. In addition to educating the public and expanding the base of potentially interested parties, computer users can easily transform the data into a uniquely personal letter to send to their leaders in Washington.

The American Arts Alliance is available on the Arts Wire WWW site. The URL: <http://www.tmn.com/0h/Artswire/www/aaa/aaahome.html>

This information is also available on the Arts Wire gopher:

Address: <gopher.tmn.com>

Once there choose Menu Item #5, Artswire.

At the next menu, select American Arts Alliance

For those gopher developers who want to link, here is pertinent path information:

Type=1

Name=American Arts Alliance

Path=1/Artswire/www/aaa

Host=gopher.tmn.com

Port=70

*The American Arts Alliance
Advocates for the Arts
1319 F Street, NW Suite 500
Washington, D.C. 20004
Phone: [REDACTED]
Fax: [REDACTED]
Email: [REDACTED]*

Member organizations: American Symphony Orchestra League, Association of Art Museum Directors, Association of Performing Arts Presenters, Dance/USA, Opera America, Theatre Communications Group, representing 2,600 Non-profit Arts Institutions.

If you have a link for the arts and cultural advocates page, please contact Beth Kanter, Network Coordinator, Arts Wire at [REDACTED].

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485. **Robert Drake**

Re: E - speration and Communit - E, (sorr-e)

Tue 28 Feb 1995

| more and more people are subscribing at present (any figures...

there are currently 190 people subscribed to poetics; 2 of whom are "consealed". you can get the list by sending the message "review poetics" to the listserv address <[REDACTED]>. it's handy to have for backchannel (where did that term originate?) communications

lbd

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486. **Kali Tal**

Improving community relations in espace....

Tue 28 Feb 1995

Auntie Netiquette says:

One of the easiest things posters can do to make things easier on their readers is to send out posts with very clear subject lines. Most systems allow users to change or revise subject headers; it's worth learning how to do. Outside policing or moderating isn't necessary if folks simply take the time to label their contributions accurately. For example, the following subject headers are both specific and informative:

CONFERENCE: First Annual Such-and-such meeting.

CALL FOR PAPERS: New anthology of Lang Po

NEA INFO: Latest Gingrich horror

ANTI-HEGEMONY PROJECT: Poetics list takes toll...

Discussion thread headers like

Boytalk

E - speration and Communit - E

Theory

are also really useful *if* people stick to the thread while using thread headers. It's a good idea to *change* the thread if you change the subject, for example:

"Tone" in Espace (was: Boytalk)

Clearly identifying subject lines allow those with limited time to delete stuff they aren't interested in without taking the time to open the message and without fear of missing something they *are* interested in.

My two cents,

Kali

Kali Tal

Sixties Project & Viet Nam Generation, Inc.

18 Center Rd., Woodbridge, CT 06525

203/[REDACTED]; fax 203/[REDACTED]

email: [REDACTED]

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487. **Belle Gironde**

WARNING

Tue 28 Feb 1995

W = A = R = N = I = N = G

A toxic spill of Lang-Po Labs' Simulac infant formula caused a linguistic disturbance in Cyberspace this past Valentine's Day and some Newsgroups appear to have been affected. As a result of this disturbance mutation in the language is expected. If you suspect that a message sent to your account has been tainted

contact authorities at The Anti-Hegemony
Project immediately.

DO NOT READ TAINTED MESSAGES.

Rest assured we are working on the problem.

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488. **Kali Tal**

Origin of term "backchannel"

Tue 28 Feb 1995

*backchannel (where did that term originate?)
communications*

lbd

I picked up the term on the VWAR-L, a list populated by many military veterans as well as a certain percentage of wannabe veterans, fake vets, and interested others. It was the first place I ever heard it, though everywhere I've used it, it's been picked up immediately because people like it (I like it; that's why I use it). My in-house military consultant (business partner Steve Gomes, a Desert Storm-era vet) says it's a faux-military term based on the notion of switching to an alternate frequency, off the "command channel" or public frequency. What makes it useful, I think, is that it emphasizes that there are "lines" or "channels" of communication in espace, different "frequencies" which are accessible to different audiences.

Kali

Kali Tal

Sixties Project & Viet Nam Generation, Inc.

18 Center Rd., Woodbridge, CT 06525

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email: [REDACTED]

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489. **aa1464**

SILLIMAN IN MY LIFE

Tue 28 Feb 1995

Rating: PG13 <poetic guidance for readers over 13 suggested>

From: [REDACTED] (Donald Jaybird)

Newsgroups: alt.fan.silliman

Subject: Silliman in my life...
Date: 14 Feb 99 22:22:22
Organization: The Anti-Hegemony Project
Lines: 23

I just thought I'd put just my opinion of silliman He totally excites me and I am always looking forward to what he'll do next....no matter what he does I like. Does anyone know if the Bay Area book awards will be broadcast on Pacifica and when? I predict he will give readings in the early fall of 2000. I saw the Ear Inn show in New York City..It was incredible and unreal... I paid 85 bucks for my share of the dinner after...but it was worth it! WHAT came as a shock to me...I saw Toner in Sulfur and flipped out...I LOVE paradise ...and lit...and ABC and hell the whole damn alphabet....It really bugs me when people put him down...they are just jealous and ignorant.....I'm looking forward to what he does next!

"To be a poet in this society is to become, however marginally, a projected (if not hallucinated) social object" -- R.S.

—
('< Donald Jaybird
, ')
" < <
_ _ " _ _

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490. **aa1464**

Re: going somewhere?

Tue 28 Feb 1995

Rating: PG13 <poetic guidance for readers over 13 suggested>

From: [REDACTED] (The Kitmeister)

Newsgroups: alt.fan.silliman

Subject: Re: going somewhere?

Date: 14 Feb 1999 15:15:15

Organization: The Anti-Hegemony Project

Lines: 18

[REDACTED] wrote:

: All of you people who like Sillman are going straight to hell. How can you

: support such filth as some kind of God? It seems as though you people have

: a lot of repenting to do. burn silliman. Burn Silliman!!!!

: Lew

: SUNY Buffalo

This is the same sort of unmitigated bullshit that we heard last year after the L.A. earthquake where these pathetic bible thumping losers stated that the quake was God's way of punishing a city full of sinners. I guess by their standards the San Fernando valley area has more sinners than, say, West Hollywood or other areas of the city, since the Valley areas were hit so much harder than the rest of the L.A.

So you pathetic, judgemental, semi-literate hypocrites; get a life and get grip on something besides your bibles and your tiny little dicks. ;-)~

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491. **aa1464**

Re: what is this terrorism thing?

Tue 28 Feb 1995

Rating: PG13 <poetic guidance for readers over 13 suggested>

From: [REDACTED] (Juliana Spar)

Newsgroups: alt.fan.silliman

Subject: Re: what is this terrorism thing?

Date: 14 Feb 1999 12:12:12

Organization: The Anti-Hegemony Project

Lines: 20

In <?????????> [REDACTED] (Erik Pope) writes:

I am normally a Silliman fan to the max, but I think I am slipping. What is the story on him and Lyn Hejinian being terrorists? What was his comment? Can anyone help?
-Erik

Absolutely Nothing.....

"Once the rumor is started, the truth is a thing of the past..." Apparently some disgruntled poet who heard about the Russia trip made the comments that Ron and Lyn were degrading humanity and should be sent to Pakistan to be dealt with by this terrorist group. Garbage and more. Quit listening to everything you hear. The media is so warped especially where Silliman is involved. Probably an Andre Codrescu plant anyway...

See Ya
Juliana

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492. **aa1464**

Re: What Silliman Really Likes?

Tue 28 Feb 1995

Rating: PG13 <poetic guidance for readers over 13 suggested>

From: [REDACTED] (Tom Mundel)

Newsgroups: alt.fan.silliman

Subject: Re: What Silliman Really Likes?

Date: 14 Feb 1999 09:09:09

Organization: The Anti-Hegemony Project

Lines: 16

In article <?????????>,

Robert Keely <[REDACTED]> wrote:

And in *_Ketjak_* there is an enigmatic "confession" that goes like:

In the middle of a blow job, she puked. (p. 84)

Is he saying that his girlfriend got sick on his cum? :-)

Silliman is not saying anything. That's *Ketjak*, a fictional character, speaking.

--

T O M ! ! | "Sex is like bridge: If you don't have a good partner
tmundel | you better have a good hand"

@alas.poor.yorick.ahp | - Buber

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493. **aa1464**

Re: Olson bashing is just as bad as Silliman bashing

Tue 28 Feb 1995

Rating: PG13 <poetic guidance for readers over 13 suggested>

From: [REDACTED] (Bob Pearlman)

Newsgroups: alt.fan.silliman

Subject: Re: Olson bashing is just as bad as Silliman bashing

Date: 14 Feb 1999 03:03:03

Organization: The Anti-Hegemony Project

Lines: 25

[REDACTED] (Ray Armensling) wrote:

Marjorie, I love Silliman and his art...but I also admire Charles Olson.

As a
matter of fact I think the two are very much alike. Please, let's not
bash
anyone or anything.

What? Arrrrrrrrgh! Other than being controversial and famous, Silliman
is
nothing like that sexist, ranting, overgrown pumpkin head. Excuse
me
while I go puke.

i agree! they are in no way alike! just look at that pig's weight!!!
oink!! oink!! and talk about ignorance, he's the king!

-bp

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494. **aa1464**

Re: media's LOVE/HATE silliman problem

Tue 28 Feb 1995

Rating: PG13 <poetic guidance for readers over 13 suggested>

From: Michael Bone <[REDACTED]>

Newsgroups: alt.fan.silliman

Subject: Re: media's LOVE/HATE silliman problem

Date: 14 Feb 1999 24:24:24

Organization: The Anti-Hegemony Project

Lines: 17

Hi All

I know Im gonna get killed for this, but not everything Silliman
does is wonderful, and sometimes he deserves to be bashed (i.e. Messerli
feud, remarks about younger poets, boring insistence on prose, the entire
70's marxist thing) It was so funny after the Buffalo reading and everyone
was saying how wonderful his performance was. It was awful people, he was
out..out of touch, undergrads were streaming out of there. Yes he is human.
I like the Silliman weve been seeing lately a lot better than his earlier
phase. Id really love him to go on with the humorous closely observed writing
like What, but Oh well. Th epress has been rather nice to him lately, almost
every one gave What rave reviews, adn the science fiction writer Samuel Delany
even mentioned Silliman in a novel. I thought that was neat

Mike

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495. **aa1464**

Re: media's LOVE/HATE silliman problem

Tue 28 Feb 1995

Rating: PG13 <poetic guidance for readers over 13 suggested>

From: [REDACTED] (Bjork Wallace)

Subject: Re: media's LOVE/HATE silliman problem

Organization: The Anti-Hegemony Project

Date: 14 Feb 1999 21:21:21

Lines: 14

Steven Roadclif ([REDACTED]) wrote:

: [REDACTED] wrote:

: : when will the hate-Silliman bandwagon end?

: : are we stuck with it "for good" or just for "now and then"?

: I'd say forever - it's been this way since the beginning. But there are

: almeliorative measures you can take, like cancelling your subscription to

: rags like Poetry Flash.

That's what I did last year. I wrote them a letter stating I was tired
of the language bashing.

--

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496. **aa1464**

Re: I *TOUCHED* what! :)

Tue 28 Feb 1995

Rating: PG13 <poetic guidance for readers over 12 suggested>

From: [REDACTED]

Newsgroups: alt.fan.silliman

Subject: my bizzare Silliman dream

Date: 14 Feb 99 18:18:18

Organization: The Anti-Hegemony Project

Lines: 15

I was either reading Tjanting in an airport (strange since I haven't actually

even seen this book). It was a really difficult text, and there were rhymed parts to it like a Charlie Bernstein piece. I think the poem had the f-word and the word love in it a lot. The airport was designed in a Russian sort of way with old people selling flavored vodka out of shopping carts. The really strange thing about this dream is how Silliman looked on the cover of the book. He had on a dress and I think he had something like glitter in his beard. He had his arms raised in a pose like Patti Smith on the cover of *Easter* and I saw that like Patti he hadn't shaved his armpits, and the hair was dyed green, like Dennis Rodman. He seemed happy. Strange dream, eh? Just thought I'd pass that along, and give everyone the chance to play armchair Freud. My analysis: I was thinking about dyeing my hair last night, which is where the unshaved, green armpits come in.

-blogna

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497. **aa1464**

Re: I *TOUCHED* what! :)

Tue 28 Feb 1995

Rating: PG13 <poetic guidance for readers over 13 suggested>

From: [REDACTED] (Chris Strappalino)

Newsgroups: alt.fan.silliman

Subject: Re: I *TOUCHED* What! :)

Date: 14 Feb 1999 12:12:12

Organization: The Anti-Hegemony Project

Lines: 11

I have the book and I think it's great. These are by far the best alphabet poems I've seen. I think the best part is the neo-romantic Springsteen Rambo MLA sequence, but I think that the observed detail is more "meaningful."

The packaging is great!

Can't wait to hear him read.....

Please feel free to email me with any questions about the text!

Chris

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498. **aa1464**

Re: What Cover (was I *TOUCHED* What! :)

Tue 28 Feb 1995

Rating: PG13 <poetic guidance for readers over 13 suggested>

From: [REDACTED] (MICHAEL HAMNASAN)

Newsgroups: alt.fan.silliman
Subject: Re: What Cover (was I *TOUCHED* What! :)
Date: 14 Feb 1999 15:15:15
Organization: The Anti-Hegemony Project
Lines: 34

In article <?????????>,
STRAPPALINO <[REDACTED]> wrote:
I have the book and I think it's great. These are by far the best
alphebet
poems I've seen. I think the best part is the neo-romantic Springsteen
Rambo MLA sequence, but I think that the observed detail is more
"meaningful."

The packaging is great!

Can't wait to hear him read.....
Chris

Thanks to SPD, I finally got my very own What :) I have been waiting for th
since I heard RS perform it. I thought then that this is thebest volume of th
it stood out as the most sincere (for Silliman at least). I couldn't believe
someone on this newsgroup said that What will be the next book! When I saw it
I was disappointed with what Geoff Young did to it (but that was only my initi
Now that I've seen all the covers, I'm still kind of disappointed because no
of them kept the freak-y feel of the poems (I guess you need R. Crumb for that
heavy arty-productions with a strong cerebral feel to them. I agree with you
Springsteen is more meaningful but still isn't.

Anyway I'm really happy that Silliman chose this letter to go all out and pr
this cool package for. But I wonder if it's going to do well here in the US.
definitely going to be read at universities, but reputation-wise I'm not sure
book is very America-oriented and a quick glance at the poetry scene shows wha
American public likes. And unfortunatly books by dead white European men like
d Rosmarie Waldrop, and *JORIS* (which I think is going to knock Silliman off
pretty soon), are what's hot here. I think that and the fact that the indivi
are doing well is why the whole A-Z is still not released here. And to Sillim
"Don't stop doing what your doing baby," and FORGET the damned scene!!!

Michael.

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499. **eric pape**

Throw me something!

Tue 28 Feb 1995

From Louisiana, between riots and debauches, HAPPY MARDI GRAS! On to the Quarter, Eric.

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500. **H. T. KIRBY-SMITH**

Language Poetry

Tue 28 Feb 1995

I would be interested to know if the following in any way serves to describe Language Poetry, and, if not, what sort of poetry it might seem to describe--

Experience, already reduced to a group of impressions, is ringed round for each one of us by that thick wall of personality through which no real voice has ever pierced on its way to us, or from us to that which we can only conjecture to be without. Every one of those impressions is the impression of the individual in his isolation, each mind keeping as a solitary prisoner its own dream of a world . . . To such a tremulous wisp constantly reforming itself on the stream, to a single sharp impression, with a sense in it, a relic more or less fleeting, of such moments gone by, what is real in our life fines itself down. It is with this movement, with the passage and dissolution of impressions, images, sensation, that analysis leaves off--that continual vanishing away, that strange, perpetual weaving and unweaving of ourselves.

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501. **Bill Luoma**

Re: I *TOUCHED* what! :)

Tue 28 Feb 1995

It's true what they say about my armpits.

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502. **Carla Billitteri**

correction

Tue 28 Feb 1995

Subject: AHP Correction on Lean Times Story
Copyright: 1999 by The Anti-Hegemony Project
Date: 31 Feb 99 26:30:13 PST

Lines: 7

LOS ANGELES (AHP) -- In a story yesterday about a study examining how shortages of inspired language and increasing population will affect U.S. poetics production and Americans' diet of subsidized corn porn lyrics, The Anti-Hegemony project erroneously reported the corporate affiliation of a researcher. Marjorie Perloff is employed by Lang-Po Labs, not Arithmetrick Frozen Yogurt Co. Down Under.

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503. **Susan Schultz**

Re: POETICS Digest - 27 Feb 1995 to 28 Feb 1995

Wed 1 Mar 1995

I'm all in favor of keeping relevant discussions on the one list, but speaking as someone who lives in the middle of the Pacific (though it wouldn't matter where I lived), I'd love to see extended in-jokes put on another list entirely. I promise not to subscribe.

Susan

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504. **George Bowering**

Re: theory & truth

Fri 3 Mar 1995

There's many a slip 'twixt the theory and the hip.

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505. **George Bowering**

Re: what is this Silliman thing?

Sat 4 Mar 1995

Where did all this excitement about flaming Silliman come from? It's as if he were famous like Prince Charles instead of a poet doing his job and beginning to get known outside the tight cicle. Give him and us a break. He writes and he edits. He aint Prince Charles.

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