

@poetics

The UB Poetics Discussion Group

Archive of Electronic Correspondence

November 1995

517 messages · Wed 1 Nov 1995 – Thu 30 Nov 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

November's news is uniformly grim — a writer hanged in Nigeria, a prime minister buried in Jerusalem, the United States government padlocked over an unpassed budget — and the list, as if for shelter, turns inward to the one quarrel it is actually equipped to adjudicate: what poetry is doing, or failing to do, inside the university.

The thread 'Condition of Poetry in the Academy' runs the length of the month. Marjorie Perloff, briskly hopeful, reports of the undergraduates that *"all they need is a little exposure"* — they love poetry, she means, until a graduate seminar teaches them otherwise. Maria Damon, the month's most prolific voice, presses the harder case, relaying the older faculty who deride theory and its engagements even as their students drift toward them.

The argument keeps discovering new partitions to dispute. Wystan Curnow, eyeing a bookshop's wall between POETRY and FICTION AND LITERATURE, asks *"How significant is this division?"* — and the list, which loves nothing so much as a taxonomy to quarrel with, sets to. Jeffrey Timmons registers a surprise that several hurry to second: his dismay at hearing careful scholarship *"written off as hating literature."*

Once, though, the world declines to stay off-list. When Ken Saro-Wiwa is hanged on the tenth, Ric Caddel supplies the sober particulars — *"an environmental campaigner on behalf of the Ogoni tribe,"* executed with eight others for protesting Shell's despoiling of their land — and for a handful of messages the debate about poetry's uses yields to a plainer reckoning of its costs, and its helplessness.

The academy quarrel is, naturally, left unresolved; it is the list's oldest and most renewable resource, and it will spill unfinished into December. I have set the month's letters in their order, drawn the black bars across every address and telephone, and left the great question open exactly where the listers left it — whether poetry belongs to the university at all, or is merely, for the present, boarding there.

— K. M. F.

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- 517. Ron Silliman — Re: Brathwaite's book

1. **Chris Stroffolino**

Re: dunno but

Wed 1 Nov 1995

Tenney--I wasn't actually saying that it was a BAD or DECADENT or IRRSPONSIBLE thing that "the sort of conjecture [you] brought up is akin to the solipsism of a purely aestheticizing discourse" only that in recognizing the similarities between so-called "aesthetic" and so-called "responsibly social" poetries is itself an interesting conjuncture (oops, I said conjecture above--I meant conjuncture)--and an important one if the "personal (and the impersonal for that matter) is the political"-- Because, for instance, perelman foregrounds money and the culture industry so much, it's hard to resist the temptation to see that as but his OSTENSIBLE subject--just as when a blues song ostensibly about a woman mistreating almost DEMANDS to be read as ALSO (if not "REALLY") about the injustice a black (and, in some instances, lower-class white) man is victim of in American society. Perhaps this is because I've "been trained" (though not by my institutional teachers per se) to look for "hidden meanings" too much. But doesn't the poetics of "FACE VALUE" assume that? ED (Foster)-- I am not entirely sure I understand you, but it seems you prefer an economy of "essentialism" to an more "relativistic" or at least "perspectival" economy that you claim dominates poetics today as it dominates "late capitalism." Yet you seem to link "essentialism" to "laissez faire economics"(?!?) and eventually "alchemy". How does THE ESSENTIAL justify LAISSEZ-FAIRE economics? I know it has been USED this way ideologically in the past--but if you are claiming to prefer such a poetical mode, and contradicting it with the arbitrariness of value in late capitalism, doesn't your distinction ultimately collapse on itself (insofar as both "economies" ultimately support exploitive economic relations)? Then you claim that THE MOVE FROM NOUN TO VERB (which you recognize as a historical shift of emphasis; which I may not want to claim but that's partially because my idea of "history" when it comes to poetry is probably more emersonian than poundian; more steinian than olsonian) is somehow analogous to the move from ESSENTIAL economies to more arbitrary ones. But, as I wrote in a poem once, "VERB IS A NOUN" and even though Stein, for instance, distrusted NAMES and to a lesser extent NOUNS, boy did she USE them (though was also USED by them, and in the process USE became a trope and information-bearing language co-exists with more "musical" elements---though I think it's an open question which ULTIMATELY gets the "upper hand" in both Stein as well as Shakespeare). As for "alchemy"---Again, I appeal to THE MERCHANT OF VENICE-- an absolutely intriguing play for anyone interested in the "intersection" of poetry and money--and though there's way too many issues there to get into here, let me consider the

CHOICE OF THE LEAD CASKET over gold, etc. When rejecting the Lead casket Bassanio calls Gold "HARD FOOD FOR MIDAS" and in such is recognizing (at least verbally, though of course his ACTIONS in the play contradict, or fail to live up to this insight-- which may ironically comment on the "insight" as well) one of the problems with Alchemy. It seems to me that many poets are very interested in the same thing Shakespeare is here: the idea that even if you "choose lead," that which threatens most, like Dickinson choosing Death because (in part) the name of God has been debased, like Blake's marriage of heaven and hell, like Stein's and Riding's and Loy's projects of de-alienating "beauty" from the "irritating" (and even in the contemporary climate say harryman's attempt to "distribute narrative rather than deny it"), the problem is that this "lead" can always turn back into "gold" that one rejected. Whether the significance of this can be as effective on a "vulgar political" plane as well is something I must save for another time. At present I see a certain incommensurability that perhaps could be called "the contradictions of capitalism"--- Later, chris

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2. **Joe Amato**

Re: the Hypertextual possibilities

Wed 1 Nov 1995

beth, intriguing notes on landow!... i esp. liked your sense of repetition in his text as "an ironic commentary on the nature of computer replication itself "...

you might wanna check out the more recent collection of essays he edited, *_hyper/text/theory_* (johns hopkins, 1994)... perhaps the most thorny *theoretical* critique of ht offered in this latter volume is martin e. rosenberg's "physics and hypertext: liberation and complicity in art and pedagogy"... this argument is taken up within the volume in stuart moulthrop's piece, "rhizome and resistance: hypertext and the dreams of a new culture"... but all the essays are worth having a look at...

and while i'm at it, i simply must mention michael joyce's *_of two minds: hypertext pedagogy and poetics_* (u of michigan, 1995), perhaps the most elegant treatment to date of many of these issues...

all best//

joe

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3. **Loss Glazier**

"Net Work"/Langton/S.F.

Wed 1 Nov 1995

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Loss Pequen~o
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I PARTICIPATED IN THIS READING AND TALK, along with Steven Shaviro, as part of Small Press Traffic's "Small Press Partners Series." The series is a great idea, promoting the work of small presses by sponsoring readings of persons involved with the presses in different venues in the Bay Area. Future events in the series will include Chax, Hard Press/House of Outside, Kelsey Street, O Books, and Talisman House. I think it quite visionary that the organizers, Dodie Bellamy specifically, thought of the electronic press as a "bona fide" small press and thus included us.

A geographic digression: Let the rest of this nation be envious yet once again, the weather was unbelievable, with delicate sun and clear blue skies. The swimming pool at the hotel was still swimmable and I was whisked to the evening reading by my friend Robert Anbian, dashing through streets south of Market in a Fiat convertible. All he could say, short of bragging about the weather was to snicker, "I hope your hair isn't getting mussed."

At the reading, the New Langton Arts space (downstairs gallery) was really terrific. Good lighting, a great sized room with seating (do you call this "bleacher" seating when the seats are on successively higher steps?) on two sides. The turnout didn't surpass, say the average Rolling Stones concert, but the people who came were terrific. The way the reading was arranged allowed

for a lot of dialog between the presenter and the attendees. It was quite remarkable how the audience was so attentive, incredibly so, during the reading and then--was it the space or more a fact of this reading culture?--that afterwards the gathering opened into conversation as natural as if in someone's living room.

Kevin Killian (who hosted the event for Dodie. She was fulfilling a residency in Milwaukee on this date) was a consummately gracious and charming host. More than simply introducing the readers (which he did with great style and warmth), his presence and interest truly contributed to the ambiance of the evening.

I read my piece-in-progress "Jumping to Occlusions," a call for electronic space to be seen not only as a mode of poetic production but (thinking, for example, of the way the xerox influenced the making of poetic texts a generation earlier) AS A POETICS IN ITSELF. I discussed the EPC, hypertext poetry, partly in the context of my online poem, E (<http://writing.upenn.edu/epc/authors/glazier>), and read from the recently issued The Parts (Meow Press, 1995--published by Joel Kuszai in Buffalo).

Steven Shaviro discussed, then read from his online novel "Doom Patrols" (<http://dhalgren.english.washington.edu/~steve/doom.html>) a novel or writing constantly weaving through fictions and the discourses of postmodernism. Very interesting is the fact that Shaviro, who has had a couple of significant book publications from major publishers (Passion and Excess and The Cinematic Body) decided to issue his latest work for free on the Net, declining the academic accolades that come from major press issuance of a work. I got the sense that one of the principle reasons for this was speed of publication.

The question and answer period--or maybe better put--"after-reading conversation" was extraordinary. People still sat as a group in the gallery space and questions branched out from the technical to the speculative. What was the place of this "new" writing? How is Net discourse a different discourse? (One woman made a strong point of having encountered much more abusive casual conversation in her Net experiences.) And how do people *read* here? (One man mentioned that research had shown--for people are already doing marketing and system analysis research on how consumers "read" on the Net) that it has been determined that information should be located no deeper than four screen in, otherwise people will give up the search.--And I took this to mean, unless he also said this, that texts should only fill one screen--you know, as opposed to those screens that scroll forever downward.) And there were others--especially younger attendees--that worried about the future of reading and its cultures in the electronic environment.

Of course the only answer to this last question is to READ the work-- rather than simply be absorbed into the hypnosis of its flickering light--which was why we'd gathered. ~It must be read as work,~ was my argument.

The discussion period went on for some time. It was especially useful to get so many different perspectives. My strongest feeling--something perhaps we don't have on this list--was that people had radically different Net experiences (Usenet groups, commercial providers, the Sausalito stuff--maybe in the absence of an apparent "center" for West Coast electronic writing??), as if each person inhabited totally different *extremes* of the Net, with little overlap.

For the moment, however, I would be content to get back in the convertible. After all, it was Saturday, and North Beach was not far off, with its temperate and delicious night air. Enough of the Net, I thought, for one evening. Time for some deep fried lemon calamari, and pile the plate high...
.....

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4. **Judy Roitman**

Re: the Hypertextual possibilities

Wed 1 Nov 1995

And I agree that there are differences between traditional _text_ and hypertext and Ladow does talk a bit about the Hypercard program "by opening the text-processing program [Hypercard], or editor, as it is known, you can take notes, or you can write against my interpretations, against my text. Although you cannot change my text, you can read the readerly text in two ways not possible with a book.."

Beth Russell

You can annotate books as you read, and even go back and argue with your own previous comments -- Fermat's last theorem is perhaps the most famous annotation by a reader ("I do not have the space to put the proof in the margin...")

Nothing against hypertext. But books can do some of that stuff too.

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5. **Edward Foster**

Re: dunno but

Wed 1 Nov 1995

chris: my claim is that there is always something essential; it may be change as such or a particular kind of change (alchemy). as for preference, it's true that i'm very interested in that which remains constant in a given system, whether a

poem, mathematics, or what have you. it's that one often finds the flaw (or, in much contemporary poetics, bad faith) as opposed to simple inadequacy. my sense that certain poetics and capitalism are linked comes from a suggestion in mallarme. alchemy in this case means simply that the result is more than the sum of its parts, which can be as true of money in certain circumstances as it is in (to choose examples at random) of montage or collage. -- once again, i have to apologize: this ridiculous computer (we're very primitive here) doesn't allow revision, so i can't go back and slip a "there" between the "it's" and the "that" in the fourth. the computer, operating on more conservative principles, knows nothing of alchemy, only simple inadequacy. likewise, i can't remove the "of" in the 10th line or correct "principples."

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6. **Edward Foster**

Re: dunno but

Wed 1 Nov 1995

chris: you suggest i'm defending laissez faire economics and a certain corresponding poetry. i protest; it is not so. but i do enjoy watching the devil at work, and enjoy watching poems move in a realm they ostensibly deny. and what, essentially, is hypertext, for instance? when do we really get to escape?

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7. **Daniel Bouchard/College/hmco**

Re: more flamingos

Wed 1 Nov 1995

50 Flaminos secretly set up before 6 am for the ultimate surprise (home or work). Includes personalised sign. Lasts all day at \$70. Any Occasion.

"Any Occasion," as in, can you think of any occasion where you would pay someone to do this? Perhaps the ultimate surprise would be if the flamingos came alive and attacked your pets. That might be interesting.



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8. **Tony Green**
more flamingos

Wed 1 Nov 1995

FLAMINGO
MESSAGES

50 Flaminos secretly set up before 6 am for
the ultimate surprise (home or work).
Includes personalised sign. Lasts all day at
\$70. Any Occasion.

Ph: (64 09) 0800 42 5050
all hours

---- ad in (NZ) The TV Guide this week

Tony Green,

e-mail: [REDACTED]

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9. **Charles Alexander**
Re: more flamingos

Wed 1 Nov 1995

*50 Flaminos secretly set up before 6 am for
the ultimate surprise (home or work).
Includes personalised sign. Lasts all day at
\$70. Any Occasion.*

*"Any Occasion," as in, can you think of any occasion where you would pay
someone to do this? Perhaps the ultimate surprise would be if the flamingos
came alive and attacked your pets. That might be interesting.*

Actually, when I lived in Madison, Wisconsin in the late 1970's and the student senate of the University of Wisconsin was controlled by a comic group, one morning all awoke to find the extremely large hill leading up to the main administration building being covered with pink flamingos, probably several thousand of them. I thought it was a grand occasion.

charles

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10. **Alan Golding**

Rich

Wed 1 Nov 1995

Associate Professor of English, U. of Louisville

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

Does anyone have an address/number for Adrienne Rich?

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11. **Jorge Guitart**

renga report I

Wed 1 Nov 1995

(By Cris Cheek, Tom Bell, George Bowering, Jordan Davis,
Jorge Guitart, Sheila Murphy, and Gabrielle Wexford, as of
November 1, 1995)

Does this ever happen to you?

The rose was blue,opaque,low,light,narrow,and rectangular

Although they although they seemed randy seemed randy

Over hill&dale they wore galoshes slowly

By the time I get to Ypres

you may be Victor the Vector but I am Pierre Par Excellence

Random rhinos know little or care exercised

How homilies are revived, sacrosanct lunch:

Grownups say of themselves before very short takes:

What child is this, who laid to rest

Togas on the baseboard, the three-ring dodgems filled

because the unspeakables are piling up

I just knew that events would couple with dependency:

Tiny kings of our dance port the lodging and

Isn't that just like a fern.

You know, I've never been on a helicopter raid

On the off-off-chance, memorial gematria,

On the lip of leaving the firm boggles her

yet not severance but bits of icy names.

Lonely rhinos only prance primrose and fell

They say my horse is all in my temples and

Captain Tomorrow's raving covered the walls

By the excelling disbelief of whateverness

she sells Cshells and gelcaps the acid edge away

and/or did they radiate bagness over the fragments of blots,

or ramrod strait-laced hoping for a jolt of lightning out

or exchanged their blind letter for a parapetal posture
but like the strong and weak forces mostly they
gossipped of souvenirs of deliriums of proctors & priests
and they too were skeptical of the value of the face
of the calcined sheriff and each to each tongues and balls
a face to sell a magazine, a face to turn to the side
unavoidably becomes an image of a nation without a
true face a rubble of history in the grass where a
decapitated statue of scar tissue recording the grain of
farm house timbers behind the exterior of the city was an
interior composed falling on the Concerns box & a sob
distant as adventure capital diverts attention from wars in
three voices and the steady rain of hemlock
completely set on the sea as so much crabbiness
passacaglia without the prefab little knobbed things
on them where wrote was written, stepping one four nine
nutting nothing a-merrily over my dead bodies in
abandon or tremolo, finding the shores awash with alphabet,
proclaiming nothing libretti, salted with much, much more
than roughage added to taste empowering scores of liberated
mozos intent of Lacanian of Palookaville & the dead heroes
of Guadalajara. In the books were dreams and in the dreams
were books which have been fumigated. Silverfish blue
rockets sourdough that the essential unity is pissed off
about unless we're a bit of rough tatti
totalizing the egress of shimmering luck data
to boot. Sack me down with a mess of points
vertical short-changers, beesting exchequers
by providing the type of diffidence no one writes about
rhinos today who sang elegiacally in tuinol the moth, and
the long wooden staircase to a white vertebral in mines
vertical. But do not climb the flagpole during the tourney

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12. **Tom Beard** ***dunnot but / late capitalism***

Wed 1 Nov 1995

Chris wrote to Ed-

ED (Foster)--

*I am not entirely sure I understand you, but it seems you prefer an
economy of "essentialism" to an more "relativistic" or at least*

"perspectival" economy that you claim dominates poetics today as it dominates "late capitalism." Yet you seem to link "essentialism" to "laissez faire economics"(?!?) and eventually "alchemy". How does THE ESSENTIAL justify LAISSEZ-FAIRE economics? I know it has been USED this way ideologically in the past--but if you are claiming to prefer such a poetical mode, and contradicting it with the arbitrariness of value in late capitalism, doesn't your distinction ultimately collapse on itself (insofar as both "economies" ultimately support exploitive economic relations)?

Excuse my ignorance of both economics and post-whatever theory, but isn't the contemporary idea of relativism closely related to capitalism? I.e., there is no "essential" moral yardstick by which one can judge one culture to be superior to another; and there is no "essential" value inherent in any object, just its exchange value, which is subject to the vicissitudes of the market. Value in the marketplace is fundamentally relative, so I'm also puzzled by the idea that the "essential" justifies "laissez-faire economics" - or that it can be "justified". It's like justifying gravity or natural selection.

Which is why I'm also puzzled by the term "late capitalism". It's one of those terms that pretends to establish its speaker's point simply by existing - for capitalism to be able to have a "late" period, it has to be a phenomenon of finite duration, and by using the term "late" capitalism (as opposed to "recent" or "contemporary" capitalism) one implies that that duration is nearing its end. I presume that whoever coined this term had already convincingly established the demise of capitalism - can anyone give me a reference to the origins of this phrase?

Tom Beard

I/am a background/process, shrunk to an icon. | Tom Beard I am/a dark place.
| [REDACTED] I am less/than the sum of my parts... | Auckland, New Zealand I
am necessary/but not sufficient, | <http://metcon.met.co.nz/> and I shall
teach the stars to fall | nwfc/beard/www/hallway.html

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13. **List Maintenance Services**

Getting current e-mail address of subscribers

Wed 1 Nov 1995

If you need the current address of a Poetics List subscriber send a message to

[REDACTED]

that says simply:

review poetics

you will get back a complete subscriber list, with currently active addresses (bad or old addresses are quickly deleted from a list of this volume). Though you haven't heard from most of them, there are currently 280 subscribers to the list. ALL subscribers are reminded to post information about their new publications, as are publishers; people who coordinate reading series are also asked to post information.

Loss has also compiled a directory of poets at the EPC, from which you can send messages directly. Over time, some of these addresses may no longer be valid, so notify Loss of any changes of address if you want to keep this listing accurate.

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14. **Patrick Phillips**

Re: dunno but

Wed 1 Nov 1995

Don't all poems move in a "realm" they ostensibly deny? Surely some more, or better than others.

Having and enjoying a brief and rich discussion a month back with Rae Armantrout (here is an intertextual hello, Rae) about irony and we both agreed, or well, I suggested that the only good irony is that that don't capitulate to rhetoric, that gets back to that "use" thing. Work that we can use. Perelman is good at this. Armantrout is good at this: the irony of a street sign she talked about along the CA/Mexico border depicting a small family running - a family crossing sign - doesn't get stuck in the mill of the said. It goes out quickly to the social and the economic and to the economy of language and the social. It seems to me a task of poetry to de-essentialize language/diction so that it goes out to use. It sometimes, or always in some very real measure fails at this, either at the beginning, or after its been around awhile. But there really is a reason and a material need for that sign - and not just so you avoid running them down.

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15. **Aldon L. Nielsen**

Re: latter day lateness

Thu 2 Nov 1995

The term "late capitalism" is no more dependent upon the end of capitalism being already in sight than the term "late evening" is dependent upon evening's in fact being over. It does, no doubt, indicate some form of faith on the speaker's part that this will not turn out to have been "middle capitalism" after

all. It is a form of wishful thinking, no doubt, but does not require proof that capitalism has ended or will next week.

I am still unsure how the general understanding that poststructuralist theories are "relativist" came about. To claim that value is produced by social activities, not inherent as a property in an object as such, or to argue that there is no transcendent a priori realm of truth by which human utterances may be measured, is not necessarily to assume what is popularly known as an absolute relativism. This is really more an argument about what truth and value are than a claim that it's all relative. In Limited Inc, Derrida, sounding a bit exasperated, remarks that "from the point of view of semantics, but also of ethics and politics, 'deconstruction' should never lead either to relativism or to any sort of indeterminism." Derrida, and I only use him as an example because he is so often blamed for having loosed this relativism upon criticism, argues not against the value of truth; instead he reinscribes it in "larger, more stratified contexts." He does not say, anywhere that I can find in his writings, that there is no reality, no referent, but that one cannot refer to this "real" except in an interpretive experience. The antiessentialist position is generally easily confirmed by the existence of items taken by speakers of the language to belong to the same category that do not, at the same time, seem to share that "essential" characteristic. Thus, to use one immediate example, if Clarence Thomas is not "really" a black person, then the color of a person's skin must not be an essential trait of social blackness; and if he is really a black person, then many of the cultural traits taken by people too numerous to mention as being "essential" to blackness must not be essential after all.

Admittedly a bad example --

but it was Genet who once asked "what color is a black man?" and he hadn't been reading Said, Fish, or Foucault on that day either --

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16. **Tom Beard**

relatively late

Thu 2 Nov 1995

Thanks for the reply, Aldon - it's answered some of my questions and, not unexpectedly, raised a few more.

I am still unsure how the general understanding that poststructuralist theories are "relativist" came about.

Maybe through reader-centred theories of literature, at least in my case. I got the impression that (at least in their most extreme varieties) these theories hold that every reader's viewpoint is as valid as any other's, including that of the

author. This seemed to parallel the idea, borrowed from Special Relativity, that "there is no privileged frame of reference".

To claim that value is produced by social activities, not inherent as a property in an object as such, or to argue that there is no transcendent a priori realm of truth by which human utterances may be measured, is not necessarily to assume what is popularly known as an absolute relativism. This is really more an argument about what truth and value _are_ than a claim that it's all relative.

I guess that I assumed a binary opposition between "absolute" & "relative", based upon the dictionary definition of "absolute" being "not relative", whereas poststructuralist thought attempts to bypass this division. Is that what you're saying? What _are_ truth & value, if they are neither "[a] transcendent a priori realm of truth" nor dependent upon the perceiver? Or is my definition of "relativism" astray? I have friends who would claim that we all have our own "truths", each as valid as any other - perhaps this is more a New Age belief, based upon second-hand misreadings of Quantum Mechanics, rather than any form of poststructuralist theory.

Derrida ... argues not against the value of truth; instead he reinscribes it in "larger, more stratified contexts."

I'm intrigued by this. Could you elaborate upon what he means by these contexts?

The antiessentialist position is generally easily confirmed by the existence of items taken by speakers of the language to belong to the same category that do not, at the same time, seem to share that "essential" characteristic.

It could be argued that, in a crude sense, the speakers are not speaking the same language. Of course, the reductio ad absurdum of that argument is that we _all_ speak different languages, but the borders of what constitutes "a" language are impossibly fuzzy. If one person defines "blackness" by purely genetic or chromatic criteria, and another by purely cultural criteria, then they are speaking different languages (of course this happens all the time); when the cultural criteria have been associated with chromatic ones, and then both sets of criteria start to blur and (literally) blend, we end up with real confusion.

In the case that you mentioned, "blackness" might be treated in fuzzy logic terms - the extent to which person A can be described as "black" depends upon the number of those "essential" traits that he or she exhibits. We could certainly do with a less "black & white" (so to speak) view of ethnicity and cultural belonging. I have certain characteristics that would lead me to being culturally identified as an Englishman, others that would classify me as a New Zealander, and still others that fit nowhere. It might be simplistic, but can we view someone

as being neither "really" black nor "really" white, and not somewhere inbetween; but as an individual with personal traits that hail from (say) Africa, England, ancient Athens and Japan, independent of their own cultural upbringing and genetic composition?

Tom Beard,
late in the evening (which is going to end soon).

I/am a background/process, shrunk to an icon. | Tom Beard I am/a dark place.
| [REDACTED] I am less/than the sum of my parts... | Auckland, New Zealand I
am necessary/but not sufficient, | <http://www.met.co.nz/> and I shall
teach the stars to fall | nwfc/beard/www/hallway.html

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17. **Chris Stroffolino**

Re: dunno but

Thu 2 Nov 1995

Of recent postings I am most intrigued by Pat Phillip's (in part because I know of the sign of which you and Rae spoke, Pat---Hey Pat, does RAE have a POEM on this sign? If so, I'd love to see it.) Though this sign of an illegal immigrant family crossing may not get stuck in what you call "the mill of the said," it has been MADE INTO a T-SHIRT (I'm absolutely serious about this) and the irony here assumes an idea of authorial intention. I don't quite know how to "read" it--IS the sign designed to be analogous to DEER CROSSING signs ("WARNING: ILLEGAL IMMIGRANTS---like those "SLOW CHILDREN signs) or is it blatantly sinister in intention (as if to say STOP YOUR CAR AND PLEASE ENGAGE IN VIGILANTE ACTIVITIES and round up these "nonpersons" so the price of fruit may go up, etc). Anyway, your point is well taken Pat, A point of poetry is to de essential-ize. Of course, that's not the only point, and Aldon's reading of Derrida's non "relativism" is astute (I mean "task" not "point"). As is the complexity Pat points to through his recognition of inevitable failure in going "out to use". Part of the problem is that the word "use" in Pat's formulation is implicitly contrasted with "exchange" and thus seems it must be read as similar to "essential" in contrast to the relativity of exchange. This is useful (sorry) up to a point, but then the word "use" has been used in so many ways--and though it may seem to be some kind of archimedian point beyond "the mill of the said", in other contexts the word has decidedly more negative connotations. When Stevie Wonder sings "where he lives they don't use colored people" there is on one level a complaint about unemployment and on another level a critique of the systematic USE of employees in general. As if to say "THEY DON'T EVEN USE US" and calling

attention to the doubly disenfranchised status. To the extent, that the political implications here are seen in opposition to each other--insofar as wanting to be USED and wanting to DO AWAY WITH USE as such are contradictory urges foisted upon people by "economic necessity" poetry may seem to fail--but the double meaning in Wonder's use of USE may be said to be a kind of Alchemy (as Foster understands it): the sum greater than the parts.

chris s.

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18. **Judy Roitman**

Re: dunno but

Thu 2 Nov 1995

*the irony of
a street sign she talked about along the CA/Mexico border depicting a small
family running - a family crossing sign -*

This sign appears on I-5 between LA and San Diego, where I-5 goes through Camp Pendleton. Its combination of caring (don't run over these people) and condemnation (these people are *aliens*) goes far beyond irony, well into that brilliant hell where good people who work in bureaucracies -- your average social worker, for example -- construct their daily, necessarily compromised lives.

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19. **Herb Levy**

Re: more flamingos

Thu 2 Nov 1995

Tony Green writes:

*FLAMINGO
MESSAGES*

*50 Flaminos secretly set up before 6 am for
the ultimate surprise (home or work).
Includes personalised sign. Lasts all day at
\$70. Any Occasion.*

*Ph: (64 09) 0800 42 5050
all hours*

---- ad in (NZ) The TV Guide this week

Anyone the list know how much Eleanor Antin "charged" for 100 boots, an art precursor to this, um, business venture?

But I guess this is just another example of popularizing (or commercializing) an art form.

Herb Levy



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20. **Eryque Gleason** *...too much magic bus...*

Thu 2 Nov 1995

on the scenic south side of chicago, where the only visible artistic endeavors are graffiti, some of the city buses have a poster series called "street stories" or something very much like that.

In the last two weeks i've seen Michael McClure, Lorine Neidecker, and Wallace Stevens on the bus while riding through the projects...

...beats the shit out of flamingoes!

eryque

Eryque "Just call me Eric" Gleason	If I weren't a monkey, there'd be
71 E. 32nd St. Box 949	problems...
Chicago, IL 60616	



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21. **Edward Foster** *Re: dunnot but / late capitalism*

Thu 2 Nov 1995

tom: you're absolutely right; the connection is real. as for the "late" in "late capitalism," so far that's wishful thinking, tho you'll find argument to the contrary. in any case, the oddity is that such claims, unless they be merely wishful, return one to logos, logic, history, and other muddled realms of the essential. i love foucault but wish he'd been a poet. -ed

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22. **Edward Foster**

Re: dunno but

Thu 2 Nov 1995

ah, yes, irony: for some, and as a late device, when the rhetoric is set, but it can be precious and cloud the particular.

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23. **Beth Russell**

hypertextual understanding

Thu 2 Nov 1995

Judy, yes, of course there are things one can _do_ with the _physically_ tangible book; the marginalia, drafts, notes and arguments via notes, seems to me to be very significant methods of _challenging_ a text. HT/hypermedia certainly extend these possibilities. My particular problem (and it may not even be a problem, but more an inevitable dilemma) concerns the movement of technology (gies) within society, before _we_ (as a social body enacting laws or rules) have had a chance to understand the theoretical implications of what it is we are doing...what I'm trying to get at is an understanding of how we can _look_ at these _new_/moving technologies w/out becoming blindly accepting of the mediums; it seems that there has been an anti-analytical tradition going on in pre-capital--through--late-capital social structures, which ignores the implications of the theoretical--and then, it is too late to analyze...for example, the television has radically changed the world, but was there ever any questioning of tv at its beginning stages, of potential problematics? or the washing machine, or microwaves or electric blankets....absurdly speaking, perhaps. It seems that we move after the technology, rather than before or _with_ it, in understanding.

beth

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24. **Joe Amato**

Re: hypertextual understanding

Thu 2 Nov 1995

beth, part of what you say reminds me of the old anon. saying, that "science owes more to the steam engine than the steam engine to science"... another way of putting which is to observe that the steam engine predates the science of thermodynamics, that theoretical practice, as it were, often lags behind other sorts of practice...

the anxieties you allude to have been with 'us' for a long while... one resurfacing occurs in eisenhower's allowance, during the fifties, that our technologies, esp. the atomic bomb, have outstripped our capacity for dealing with same (see that midnight madness flick, if you haven't already, _the atomic cafe_)...

artists in this century seem to me to have in many cases expressed a profound ambivalence about alla this...

all best//

joe

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25. **Judy Roitman**

Re: hypertextual understanding

Thu 2 Nov 1995

*It seems
that we move after the technology, rather than before or _with_ it, in
understanding.*

beth

I think that's a given, I think it's true for everyone in all cultures, and I think it's true not just for technology but for anything (even the attempts of people to hang on to old stuff has unanticipatable consequences).

Which is not of course saying that we shouldn't try to at least think about it. We just need a little humility is all.

(Those of us who lived through the fifties may remember those incredibly self-assured comics that predicted the future -- got any monorails suspended up in the air in your neighborhood? -- and managed to completely miss major changes then under way such as the near-death of the inner city and the growth of exurbia.)

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26. **Aldon L. Nielsen**

Re: signs taken for wonders

Fri 3 Nov 1995

on my way to Santa Barbara, so only have time for a couple quick notes --

--that sign of the nuclear family in flight is also the cover art for the anthology from Duke edited by Alfred Arteaga and titled, if I remember it right, _In Other Words_ -- a good read

My own wonder was always elicited by that other crossing icon, the striding profile pedestrian that appears on signs beside the road -- some of these symbolic pedestrians seem to be missing hands and feet, which has always caused me to take them more as a warning to walkers than to drivers --

Quickest place to see Derrida trying to be clear about that larger context for truth is in the cited *Limited Inc* --

Haven't actually seen the question of "validity" crossed with the question of "relativism" in much reader response work that I've read -- For American reader respondnets of the Holland type, the question of "validity" doesn't really apply -- It does apply very much within European reader response critics, such as Iser, but there, given the background of phenomenalism, "relativity" doesn't have much currency.

In any event -- part of the confusion seems to arise from people assuming that because there are an infinite number of possible interpretations, any interpretation can be "valid." I don't know of anybody who makes that claim seriously (which does not mean that such people don't exist.) There is an infinite number of possible prime numbers, but not all numbers can be prime numbers -- for example --

The problem with the "it's all relative" stance is that it essentially brings a halt to any useful conversation about the interpretations -- We can examine interpretations in relationship to their own inner logics, and we can certainly place "competing" interpretations alongside each other in varying reading contexts and ask ourselves how they do the work that they perform, all of which can lead to interesting discussions that have the effect of causing us to rethink and recontextualize our modes of reading --

But the upshot of this is that the folks who complain that poststructuralist theories are relativist aren't really interested in having that kind of conversation -- they want, instead, to make one of the parties to the conversation go away --

Now I have to go away for the week-end -- but the various ghosts in my machines will collect the digests for me and I'll weigh in again soon --

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27. **R I Caddel**

Re: magic bus

Fri 3 Nov 1995

Those poetry posters on the buses: would that be STREET FARE JOURNAL? If so I've seen several of them - they're edited/designed by George Evans and there's been some good'uns. Decently designed - which puts them way ahead of

our "Poetry on the Underground", which look as if they were selected by the Department of Education and Employment and designed by the Department of Transport.

I'd still prefer the flamingos: saw one solitary one once (an escapee) on an estuary in East Anglia, grazing next to "native" waders (avocet, redshank etc) which would have looked gaudy in any other company...

I'd like to have made up "Department of Education and Employment", but I didn't. x

x x Richard Caddel,

E-mail: R.I.Caddel @ durham.ac.uk x x Durham University Library, Phone:

0 [REDACTED] x x Stockton Rd. Durham DH1 3LY Fax: 0 [REDACTED]

x x

x x "Words! Pens are too light.

Take a chisel to write."

x x

- Basil Bunting

x x

x

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28. **Tom Beard**

Re: signs taken for wonders

Fri 3 Nov 1995

Aldon -

In any event -- part of the confusion seems to arise from people assuming that because there are an infinite number of possible interpretations, any interpretation can be "valid." I don't know of anybody who makes that claim seriously (which does not mean that such people don't exist.)

Most of my high school English teachers claimed this, saying that "everyone has their own truth, each of which is equally valid". I don't know if they learnt this through some form of theory, or whether it is part of the Zeitgeist that grew up along with the theory. There was also a controversy here recently when the Museum of NZ had an exhibit ("Voices", I think) portraying the origins of NZ, and the "voice of the Maori" was presented alongside the "voice of science" as equally valid truths about the origin of the earth and its landforms. This seemed akin to the Southern state (Alabama? Tennessee?) that decreed in the 80s that "Creation Science" had to be taught alongside evolution in classrooms.

Anyway, it seems that the distinction between "response" and "interpretation" is vital here. There is no such thing as an "invalid" response - to claim so would be nonsense. When a reader/perceiver projects that response back upon the text and attempts to draw conclusions about it, then questions of (in)validity come into play.

As a very crude example, I might read a poem as making a comparison between an apple and a lightbulb, and I might be struck by this image. This response

cannot be judged as valid or otherwise. If, however, I then interpret the poem as meaning that apples & lightbulbs share the property of edibility, I might be in for a painful demonstration of the invalidity of this interpretation.

*But the upshot of this is that the folks who complain that
poststructuralist theories are relativist aren't really interested in
having that kind of conversation -- they want, instead, to make one of
the parties to the conversation go away --*

Perhaps ... but that's just you're interpretation.

But seriously, as you say, both extremes (I'm right & you're wrong; vs. well, we're all right in our own ways, aren't we?) will end the conversation. Perhaps we need some sort of Popperian approach to interpretation: each viewpoint is tentative & cannot be proven, but should be open to falsification if it is to be considered. This might keep the dialogue open.

Tom Beard.

I/am a background/process, shrunk to an icon. | Tom Beard I am/a dark place.
| [REDACTED] I am less/than the sum of my parts... | Auckland, New Zealand I
am necessary/but not sufficient, | <http://www.met.co.nz/> and I shall
teach the stars to fall | nwfc/beard/www/hallway.html

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29. **Tenney Nathanson** ***do know but?***

Fri 3 Nov 1995

(no I don't know but I'm getting embarrassed at seeing over & over again a title I originally slapped on a message to designate fumbings or fake fumbings, who knows at this point....)

*Date: Thu, 2 Nov 1995 10:29:11 -0500
From: Chris Stroffolino <[REDACTED]>
Subject: Re: dunno but*

Of recent postings I am most intrigued by Pat Phillip's....

*Part of the problem is that the word "use" in Pat's formulation
is implicitly contrasted with "exchange" and thus seems it must be read
as similar to "essential" in contrast to the relativity of exchange.
This is useful (sorry) up to a point, but then the word "use" has been
used in so many ways--and though it may seem to be some kind of archimedian
point beyond "the mill of the said", in other contexts the word has
decidedly more negative connotations.*

Right, I think, on the supposed archimedean point. I think the term "use" got abused pretty badly in some early euphoric Language-writing theory for just that reason. The use/exchange dyad got marshaled in strange ways in the seventies. The hasping to "use" strikes me as odd, too, in Pat Phillip's post since so much of it hovers over the Derrida interchange w Searle, where the use/mention dyad Searle clings to from Austin comes in for Derrida's most manic dissecting. So, Pat: if not (?) use versus exchange or use versus mention, then use versus what? Or do you have use/exchange in mind?

Tenney

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30. **Tenney Nathanson**
too, too late ?

Fri 3 Nov 1995

Date: Thu, 2 Nov 1995 15:04:50 -0500
From: Edward Foster <[REDACTED]>
Subject: Re: dunnot but / late capitalism

tom: you're absolutely right; the connection is real. as for the "late" in "late capitalism," so far that's wishful thinking, tho you'll find argument to the contrary. in any case, the oddity is that such claims, unless they be merely wishful, return one to logos, logic, history, and other muddled realms of the essential. i love foucault but wish he'd been a poet. -ed

so that even the disclaimers in Jameson's pomo book sound disingenuous

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31. **Eryque Gleason**
Re: magic bus

Fri 3 Nov 1995

| *Those poetry posters on the buses: would that be STREET FARE JOURNAL?*

Those are the ones...

if anything as colorful as a flamingo ever showed up at 22nd and State, no one would know what to do with it.

Busload of flighty creatures? Sounds like the mall bus to me...

Eryque "Just call me Eric" Gleason !
71 E. 32nd St. Box 949 If I weren't a monkey, there'd
Chicago, IL 60616 be problems.



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32. **ULMER SPRING**

Re: hypertextual understanding

Fri 3 Nov 1995

who you gonna bomb hum bomb i think about technological anxiety and autism - a shutting off of feeling and adoption of mechanical/robotic function. in the case of bettelheim's study of Joey, a boy who needed the idea of machines in order for him to live. he ate by hooking up his "wires" to the table, slept with a steering wheel, etc. When do machines run us? The collaboration between human and machine, perhaps an alternate cyborg, is both deadly and promising. when I read the listserv mostly i am struck dumb, wish to revert to a silent blob, feel hostility towards others - I hate this reaction - don't understand whether i bring my own bad mood to the screen, or whether i want talk about poetry to mean more. or whether i get bumed out because there are virtually less women contributors and wonder whether the forum and the way in which most examples are spoken is something I am just less interested in than writing poetry, in which case i should probably take the listserv less seriously. knowing it is not gender specific language, but a strange world in which speaking is constructed via machine waves. much more satisfying for me this goes back to an earlier comment, to communicate - instead of pass information along - although i definitely think passing information is important. hmmm. I may just be caught in the dreg. spring

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33. **Pierre Joris**

ASJA Contracts Watch (fwd)

Fri 3 Nov 1995

Forwarded message:

Date: Thu, 2 Nov 1995 09:03:52 -0500 (EST)

From: Lucy Komisar <[REDACTED]>

To: PEN Listserv <[REDACTED]>

Subject: ASJA Contracts Watch (fwd)

Content-Length: 7790

----- Forwarded message -----

Date: 02 Nov 95 01:05:45 EST

From: Dan Carlinsky <[REDACTED]>

To: Lucy Komisar <[REDACTED]>

Subject: ASJA Contracts Watch

I don't know if you see our occasional dispatches on rights matters for freelancers. Here's the most recent. Can you tell me if there's an Echo spot for such news to be posted for interested writers?

Dan Carlinsky

Chair, Contracts Committee

American Society of Journalists and Authors (ASJA)

ASJA CONTRACTS WATCH

CW951101

Issued November 1, 1995

[The American Society of Journalists and Authors encourages reproduction and distribution of this document for the benefit of freelance writers. Reprint or post as many items as you wish, but please credit ASJA for the information and don't change the content.]

+ + + + + + + + + + + + +

Pandemonium on the Thames: A planned copyright grab by EMAP BUSINESS PUBLISHING, a leading UK house of business and computer magazines and professional journals, may be in for rough sledding. Internal memos just leaked by the UK's National Union of Journalists detail the publisher's plan to force freelance contributors to give up "copyright and all other rights throughout the world ... in all media." Editors were summoned to an October 26 "seminar" to chat about the move with management and receive instruction in the fine points of coercing writers. Instead, according to a report from the NUJ, virtually every editor in attendance spoke against the copyright grab, and just an hour into what was scheduled to be a three-to-four-hour session, the meeting "closed in an uproar with 30-40 editors shouting for their questions to be answered" as senior management beat a hasty retreat.

At the NEW YORK TIMES, editors are perhaps somewhat less demonstrative but clearly unhappy-bordering-on-angry over how they're being forced to treat freelancers; a staff meeting on the plan to take copyright and all rights from outside writers was described by a participant as "raucous." Since then, disgruntled editors at several sections have been dealing with certain reluctant writers by ignoring the management directive and allowing them to write without a signed contract. Management, for its part, is stepping up its strategy of Divide and Conquer. Originally, the Magazine, Book Review and op ed section were declared exempt from the rights-grab order; now, the editors of Travel and Arts & Leisure reportedly have been told they may spare important contributors. The form of dispensation for the favored few varies. Most of those who write for Book Review, for instance, are left very nearly as bad off and insulted as the mass of Times freelancers; they're expected to let the publisher

sell and resell their property via syndication and electronic means forever, without being cut in. Other writers get a pretty clean, almost bare-bones contract. At the Times, one size does not fit all.

Meanwhile, more and more publications seem to be doing it right. SKI Magazine (of TIMES MIRROR MAGAZINES), has begun a World Wide Web venture called SkiNet, consisting of articles from the magazine and daily reports from race circuits and elsewhere in the ski world. Writers happily report that Ski has agreed to pay an extra fee equal to 10 percent of the article price for the right to include a work in the new venture. And an editor confirms that the magazine will take a fair approach by limiting the license to SkiNet only, for just one skiing season. "If we want to do something else, like a CD-ROM," says an editor, "we'll come back to you." Visits to the Web site are already being tracked per article; as traffic and revenue increase, editors say, the magazine will raise the fee for SkiNet or start paying a per-hit royalty.

Freelancers' paperwork from GENERAL MEDIA (which publishes PENTHOUSE, LONGEVITY and others) arrives with a cover letter warning: "Please do not make changes to our contract." Not everyone listens and behaves. Some Penthouse writers report making contract improvements, including changes to the warranty and indemnity, addition of author consultation on editing, and earmarking of 10 percent of the fee for electronic rights. The editor of a sister General Media magazine, FORUM, is more generous with contract fixes. One recent deal reported by a Forum freelancer eliminates some of the extra rights requested and calls for negotiated payments for all others, including electronic.

Add CHILD (a GRUNER + JAHR title) to the list of magazines that try to get writers to accept a work-made-for-hire contract, then retreat and mail "the right contract" on request. The second-try contract needs fine-tuning; as with other G + J titles (such as McCALL'S, FAMILY CIRCLE and YM), writers who stand firm with CHILD can make substantive changes in several clauses. Hardest for G + J to give up, apparently, is the claim for free electronic rights. The boilerplate asks for a three-year license, and editors routinely try to insist on a "compromise" of one year for free. Writers who won't back down, however, are able to cancel the clause entirely. Absent proper compensation for the rights, that's just what they should do.

THE GLOBE AND MAIL, the national newspaper of Canada, has released a new freelance agreement demanding permanent nonexclusive world rights for all media. The Periodical Writers Association of Canada has blasted the rights grab with a blunt statement accusing the publisher of "bullying," calling on writers to refuse, and urging those who have signed without thinking to rescind their OKs. John Mason, PWAC's national president, quotes with irony a line from Junius on the Globe masthead, which urges that loyal subjects "neither

advise nor submit to arbitrary measures." Mason suggests writers protest to executive editor Earle Gill, 444 Front Street West, Toronto, ON M5V 2S9, fax [REDACTED]. ASJA president Janice Hopkins Tanne has joined PWAC's effort by writing to Gill: "Writers have no problem with granting you the extra rights beyond first use that you may need, but not for free."

Yet another writer has told Contracts Watch of turning down a request from a READER'S DIGEST editor to submit story ideas. After reading the Digest's contract demands, the writer responded: "As a professional writer, I simply cannot sign a contract that demands `all rights' on print and electronic media as well as `the right of first refusal' on all other rights." Other RD magazines--AMERICAN HEALTH, NEW CHOICES and TRAVEL HOLIDAY--do not ask all rights. And on electronic rights, they offer, for example, either a share of income or a flat fee for restricted e-rights.

And a writer passes on this comment from a READER'S DIGEST BOOKS editor trying to line up a large number of contributors to a group effort: "Every time I talk to a writer, all he wants to talk about is the contract."

[The American Society of Journalists and Authors is the national organization of leading freelance writers. Inquiries from all are welcome: Contracts Committee, ASJA, 1501 Broadway, New York, NY 10036, tel [REDACTED], fax [REDACTED], e-mail [REDACTED]

[To receive each edition of ASJA Contracts Watch automatically by e-mail, send the following e-mail command:

TO: [REDACTED]

TEXT: SUBSCRIBE ASJACW-L

[You'll receive only occasional official dispatches: no reader responses or junk mail, no flooded mailbox.

[Many ASJA members and others send a steady stream of contracts, information and scuttlebutt so that these ASJA Contracts Watch dispatches can be as informative as possible. To thank all contributors individually would be impossible. You know who you are. So do we.]

=====

Pierre Joris | "Poems are sketches for existence."
Dept. of English | --Paul Celan
SUNY Albany |
Albany NY 12222 | "Revisionist plots
tel&fax: [REDACTED] | are everywhere and our pronouns haven't yet
email: [REDACTED] | drawn up plans for the first coup."
[REDACTED] | --J.H. Prynne

=====

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34. **Loss Glazier**

EPC.Live

Fri 3 Nov 1995

Poetics Live and in Real-Time

E P C * L i v e !

November, 1995

What is EPCLive!

POETICS LIVE & FACE-TO-FACE (well, in temporal sync that is), that is the promise of EPC's new venue, EPCLive!

What is it? Through a couple of simple commands (no more than four, really) to connect -- and through the use of about two to four commands while in the EPCLive, real time gatherings are now at your doorstep. Call it a virtual coffee house, a town hall for the town of Poetics, or just a place for you when you want to hang out with other Poetics folk, this space now extends the possibilities of the EPC and RIF/T magazine.

Thanks to Kenneth Sherwood who, as a special project, has arranged for the use of an IRC channel as this private public space for the EPC, we now have access to the live "community center" for our community on the Net.

Live, Volume 1

Last night, a test virtual gathering -- the first test of this space -- was undertaken as a local event.

Everything went off without a hitch. Though the turnout was less than say, your average Rolling Stones concert, and there were occasional small lags in response time, the "live" feeling, and the actual interactivity of the Net were full swing in the service of Poetics.

(We are just one of many live forums, of course. Interesting that other "live forums" occupy such different social space. There is one called "Hot Tub." There are others that are openly based on differing fetishizations of sexuality, human and otherwise. The list is endless. Having EPCLive however, is like

having our own coffee house on a street where there are no zoning restrictions. Where freedom of "circulation" has its own poetic foothold.)

The energy was intense as those of us present fired poetic statements, questions, possibilities into this shared space, the umbrella of this electronic writing environment. The possibilities for a number of simultaneous interested voices were astonishing.

Testing 1-2-3

I would like to offer, for those of you would might want to try out this space, my availability for any "test" sessions. Simply backchannel me (██████) and we can set up a time (I will coordinate with Ken. Or feel free to write directly to Ken at ██████) Our feeling last night was that there might be some who are a little uncertain about slinging quatrains in this new medium. So my thought is, just let us know what time might be good for you. We can be there. Let's run a couple of very informal test excursions into EPCLive.

Stay Tuned

And this, of course, as a prelude to many marvellous events forthcoming in this space. ***A LIST OF EVENTS SOON TO BE POSTED!*** There will be interviews, public gatherings, questions and answers (LIVE of course) with those working on recent major poetics projects. It is my own hope to have EPCLive open for an hour weekly, in addition, so that we may, in the pure space of poetics, informally chat with each other there, talk about particular events, themes, authors. It's here. Let's extend our sense of community into this newly dedicated town hall--standing above the municipality of poetics. As public space, it's there for us all.

Respectfully submitted,
Loss Pequen~o Glazier
for Loss Glazier & Ken Sherwood
in collaboration with Ch. Bernstein

Appendix I

EPC.Live!

Directions for signing on (by Ken Sherwood):

UNIX

>From your system prompt, type:

irc <return>

Then type the following two lines:

/serv undernet.org <return>

/join #EPCLIVE <return>
(you should now be able to type and read whoever is there)
VAX

Type:

telnet telnet1.us.undernet.org 6677 <return>
Return several times and follow prompts; when asked for
which channel you want to join, choose '0'. Then type:
/serv undernet.org <return>
/join #EPCLIVE <return>
(you should now be able to type and read whoever is there)

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35. **Charles Alexander**

Re: Nonlinear paradigms

Fri 3 Nov 1995

I am forwarding this message from a book arts list, and, given recent discussions of hypertext here on Poetics, I am hoping someone (Jim Rosenberg or Loss Glazier or Joe Amato or John Cayley or others) may be able to point this message-sender in some helpful directions.

Date: Fri, 3 Nov 1995 09:25:18 -0500
collecting" <[REDACTED]>
collecting" <[REDACTED]>
From: Grendel <[REDACTED]>
Subject: Re: Nonlinear paradigms
To: Multiple recipients of list BOOK_ARTS-L
<[REDACTED]>

Hello, I am in the process of writing a book-length creative work in hypertext form. I have been largely unsuccessful in finding suitable examples of hypertexts (electronic form please) to use as references or source material. It seems like the readers of this list are quite familiar with not only the principles of hypertext (which everyone seems to have an opinion on) but actual hypertexts, which I had come to think were very rare. (Please note that I am not interested in things like the Talmud, which may display principles of hypertext; I am interested in things which were written self-consciously as such, preferably by a single author.) Please point me toward some hypertexts.

-Gregor Delisle

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36. **epc**

Re: Nonlinear paradigms

Fri 3 Nov 1995

Why don't we compile a list of very striking hypertexts (and I will send a copy to Gregor and post to this list.) I like this distinction, hypertexts consciously conceived as such. Would Jim, Joe, John, Ken, and others like to send me their recommendations back channel? I'll make a little bibliography, just ten or twelve items total, put it on the epc and also post here. You folks interested? --

Loss -----

I am forwarding this message from a book arts list, and, given recent discussions of hypertext here on Poetics, I am hoping someone (Jim Rosenberg or Loss Glazier or Joe Amato or John Cayley or others) may be able to point this message-sender in some helpful directions.

Date: Fri, 3 Nov 1995 09:25:18 -0500

collecting" <[REDACTED]>"

collecting" <[REDACTED]>"

From: Grendel <[REDACTED]>

Subject: Re: Nonlinear paradigms

To: Multiple recipients of list BOOK_ARTS-L

<[REDACTED]>

Hello, I am in the process of writing a book-length creative work in hypertext form. I have been largely unsuccessful in finding suitable examples of hypertexts (electronic form please) to use as references or source material. It seems like the readers of this list are quite familiar with not only the principles of hypertext (which everyone seems to have an opinion on) but actual hypertexts, which I had come to think were very rare. (Please note that I am not interested in things like the Talmud, which may display principles of hypertext; I am interested in things which were written self-consciously as such, preferably by a single author.) Please point me toward some hypertexts.

-Gregor Delisle

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37. **Joseph Zitt**

Wilmington, Hardcopy, and Chainsaw Flamingoes

Fri 3 Nov 1995

I've just plowed through about 1.5 Meg of stacked up Poetics posts. *Whew*! A few things popped out (aside from the general fascinatingness of the conversation when viewed in a more compact mode):

Ron Silliman asks whether any poets have ever lived in Wilmington. Assuming you mean Delaware, errrrr, yeah. I was there for five months last year -- and the damn city was so stifling that I fled back to Texas. The state of Delaware is designed and run BY business FOR business, and the fact that there are *residents* seems to be viewed as, at most, a minor detail. The only arts there are those which businesses like to contribute to; thus there is an opera company, ballet, Broadway-like theatre, and very close to absolutely nothing on a grassroots level. (The one exception was a very good community-based dance/theatre piece that Liz Lerman did in a church downtown.) When I described my arts activities in Texas to my coworkers, they asked if that's what people do when they have too much time on their hands. The only poetry in the state, it seems, was a once-a-month slam in Claymont. (To compound the disaster of the entire experience, the "friend" who I trusted to help finish my move (since I didn't have a chance to finish packing), quickly disappeared, along with my VCRs, my microwave, my collection of about 500 CDs, and my guitar... but i can't necessarily blame him on Delaware, since he lived in Philadelphia.)

Reading the talk of writing in the margins of books and hypertext, I got to wonder if any libraries anywhere had a section of their collection in which the readers were *encouraged* to write in the margins, as a form of community conversation. Probably an old idea, but fun to consider.

I also wonder who would be stuck with the damage bill if someone on whose lawn a flock of flamingoes (flamingos? flamingi? Mr Quayle?) was inflicted would humorlessly take a chainsaw to them. (Well, odds are the flamingim (?) would no longer be stuck to *their* bills..) -----1-----1-----1-----1-----

1-----1----- |||/ Joseph Zitt =====  ===== Human Systems \\\| ||/

Organizer, SILENCE: The John Cage Mailing List \\\| |/Joe Zitt's Home Page\\|

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38. **Robert Drake**

Re: signs taken for wonders

Fri 3 Nov 1995

My own wonder was always elicited by that other crossing icon, the striding profile pedestrian that appears on signs beside the road -- some of these symbolic pedestrians seem to be missing hands and feet, which has always caused me to take them more as a warning to walkers than to drivers --

which reminds me of the ped crossing signs i saw in saudi arabia many years ago, which were headless. the reason being, a muslim taboo on representation of human form (an act reserved for allah); but doubly visioned fr me, 14 years old, being exposed to a culture that still practiced capital punishment by public decapitation...

lbd

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39. **Loss Glazier**

Poetics Log Files

Fri 3 Nov 1995

Poetics log files through Oct. 1995 are now available via the EPC. I have divided recent log files into two sections due to their large size. You may still need to leave and re-enter your browser each time you wish to view one. (They are *big*!)

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40. **Thomas Bell**

Re: hypertextual understanding

Fri 3 Nov 1995

spring,

i think that there is a great deal of significance in what you are saying - i don't think it is a gender issure - however i would not call it technological anxiety but rather anxiety technological - anxiety leads to the resort to technologies as a way of coping with the anxieties of the times - the difficulty arises when technol;ogy is used to avoid the feelings rather than express or make them meningful.

Tom

spring writes:

*who you gonna bomb hum bomb
i think about technological anxiety and autism - a shutting off*

...

*feel hostility towards others -
I hate this reaction - don't understand whether i bring my own
bad mood to the screen, or whether i want talk about poetry to
mean more. or whether*

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41. **Loss Glazier**

Poetics Log File -- a note

Fri 3 Nov 1995

For those who have asked, the log file for January 1994 has been rebuilt (there were some portions of it missing) and is now available and complete.

*Poetics log files through Oct. 1995 are now available via the EPC.
I have divided recent log files into two sections due to their large
size. You may still need to leave and re-enter your browser each time
you wish to view one. (They are *big*!)*

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42. **Patrick Phillips**

Re: do know but?

Sat 4 Nov 1995

Tenney and Chris and others, my hope in "Re:dunno but" was to point to a knot. Irony, a rhetorical mode, is at once bound by rhetoric and, in Rae Armantrout and others, rejects it. Irony is used in a kind of exchange that is intent on questioning that process of exchange, but also is bound by the frame of its argument argument as a self-satisfying and in some ways unquestioning thing -- word as both liberatory and vain.

But this is not a clear examination of exchange-value vs use-value. I do want to see rhetoric as an instance of self-satisfaction that can be likened to the moment use-value is made distinct from exchange-value. Word as vehicle for argument, argument as commodity. But in Armantrout's work I see rhetoric's bag turned inside out. Language is de-privatized, made social, all-the-while moving in the contour of thought, ear, the personal. The personal as social - exchange as indistinct from use.

In many ways this is a vital mode of lang-po. But it is also a marker of a problem poeties that are particularly liberatory. In many ways we are hemmed in when we go out to use. The liberatory moment of language is in many ways kept - an irony. By not capitulating to rhetoric, poetry that persists in calling out the social allows the word to persist - we tactically use. Rhetoric introduces exchange value. In this I want to reject rhetoric in-as-much as I would like to reject form. Perhaps an impossibility.

As to mention/exchange and the Searle/Derrida thing, Tenney I'd like to know more about it.

I can only assume, perhaps wrongly, that some of the "exchange" can be collapsed into Derrida's notion of gift. That at the moment of exchange, before the pact is set, before the hands part, there is evidence of the impossible. I sense this "impossible" too as an extrapolation from the intent of the gift. The exchange here only being a before- and after-image of the flash of the impossible. Bah, Counterfeit money. I would guess "mention" takes up a similar space, and inter-spoken space, kind of like Barthes hiatus. I think the fabrication of these spaces a post-structuralist dance of desire and that use super-imposes itself upon such spaces - or, it's better that we go out into the social, and take our licks.

Chris, I don't think Rae has a poem about that sign. She just mentioned it in the course of her reading.

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43. **Steve Carll**

Re: signs taken for wonders

Sat 4 Nov 1995

>Aldon -

>

>>In any event -- part of the confusion seems to arise from people assuming
>>that because there are an infinite number of possible interpretations,
>>any interpretation can be "valid." I don't know of anybody who makes
>>that claim seriously (which does not mean that such people don't exist.)

>

Tom Beard:

Most of my high school English teachers claimed this, saying that "everyone has their own truth, each of which is equally valid". I don't know if they learnt this through some form of theory, or whether it is part of the Zeitgeist that grew up along with the theory.

Gilles Deleuze points out, in both *_The Fold_* and *_What Is Philosophy?_* (probably elsewhere as well), that what the partial observer in Einstein

represents is "not a relativity of truth [which is what Tom's teachers claimed], but, on the contrary, a truth of the relative." This is elaborated on in terms of Deleuze's interpretation of monads, each of which, he says, "express the entire world, but only clearly express one particular area."

There was also a controversy here recently when the Museum of NZ had an exhibit ("Voices", I think) portraying the origins of NZ, and the "voice of the Maori" was presented alongside the "voice of science" as equally valid truths about the origin of the earth and its landforms. This seemed akin to the Southern state (Alabama? Tennessee?) that decreed in the 80s that "Creation Science" had to be taught alongside evolution in classrooms.

There seems to be a difference in the mode of presentation here, though, in that "the voice of the Maori" doesn't present itself as science but myth, with a mythical truth that IS as valid in the realm of myth as the voice of science is in the realm of science. What creation science wants to do is to present mythical truths AS scientific ones; and further, as BETTER scientific truths than evolution attains to.

Anyway, it seems that the distinction between "response" and "interpretation" is vital here. There is no such thing as an "invalid" response - to claim so would be nonsense. When a reader/perceiver projects that response back upon the text and attempts to draw conclusions about it, then questions of (in)validity come into play.

As a very crude example, I might read a poem as making a comparison between an apple and a lightbulb, and I might be struck by this image. This response cannot be judged as valid or otherwise. If, however, I then interpret the poem as meaning that apples & lightbulbs share the property of edibility, I might be in for a painful demonstration of the invalidity of this interpretation.

Yes, if you were to interpret the poem as saying that apples and lightbulbs share the property of edibility *outside the frame of the poem.* Within that frame, the distinction between a response and an interpretation (which would seem to me to always begin at the response--correct me if I've neglected something--) is much blurrier.

But seriously, as you say, _both_ extremes (_I'm_ right & _you're_ wrong; vs. well, we're all right in our own ways, aren't we?) will end the conversation. Perhaps we need some sort of Popperian approach to interpretation: each viewpoint is tentative & cannot be proven, but should be open to falsification if it is to be considered. This might keep the dialogue open.

This makes good sense.

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44. **Eryque Gleason**

Transbluesency

Sat 4 Nov 1995

Just picked this up off the new titles rack at 57th St. Books...

Transbluesency: The Selected...Amiri Baraka 1961-1995

272 pages for eighteen bucks, starts with "Preface to a Twenty Volume Suicide Note" and ends with "Wise, Why's, Y'z"

Eryque "Just call me Eric" Gleason ! If I weren't a monkey, there'd
71 E. 32nd St. Box 949 be problems.
Chicago, IL 60616



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45. **ULMER SPRING**

Re: hypertextual understanding

Sun 5 Nov 1995

Excellent, Tom. Yes. I agree. Thank you!
Spring

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46. **William M. Northcutt**

Jameson...

Sun 5 Nov 1995

Been doing a lower GI recently on Jameson's Marxism and Form--for the first time--and I came across an interesting section in which he praises the ideals behind Surrealism, even if he finds the ideals much more interesting than the content. And on the other hand, he rips Perelman's China, in Postmodernism. Jameson says in Marxism and Form, to paraphrase, that since the world has been fragmented by commodification, the sort of fragmentary of the 20s can't work today.

At least that's his explanation in Marxism and Form, and I suppose that's what he's thinking when he calls Perelman's work "schizophrenic" in Postmodernism.

As I've read through Marxism and Form, I thought of Charles B's "...and the Artifice of Absorbtion," and it occurred to me that perhaps Jameson is hung up terribly on "use value" in a very literal way.

I've read only one rebuttal of Jameson's theories about language poetry, but I'm interested in what some of you who are familiar with Jameson think about his particular stance on the "new" poetry.

Wm Northcutt

----- "If you want to get laid, go to college. But if you want an education, go to the library." --Frank Zappa

"Damn, these onion rings make my tongue bleed." --Ukelele Dave

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#### 47. **Yunte Huang, your Comrade**

**Re: Jameson...**

Sun 5 Nov 1995

I'm not too familiar with Jameson's particular stance about "new" poetry, but I once heard him making some judgment about Amwrican "new" poetry in relation to another poetry culture, which I think might be helpful to understanding his real take if he has one.

Two years ago I translated a collection of American Lang. poems into Chinese, and managed to take two of the poets across the P Ocean for some real Chinese food (see our report in the current issue of \_Central Park\_). We met Jameson in Beijing when we were holding a discussion with some Chinese poets, critics and scholars. I can't remember if Jameson said anything particular about Lang poetry because I was busy translating for everyone (I still have dreams about the content of that meeting which I will never be able to recuperate). But at the dinner table, Jamson (Jameson, typo) said to me over the wine glasses and chicken feet dishes: "In China, this kind of poetry you've just translated will only be liked by hooligan poets." By "hooligan," in the ci By "hooligan," in the context, I think he meant "bohemia," referring to a group of young and rebellious Chinese poets and artists who are doubly marginalized: first by the Communist establishment and official verse culture, second by the first generation of anti-commu and "humanitarian" poetry which is now well represented in the West (such as Bei dao's). But as a Chinese who might loosely belong to the category of "hooligans," I don't see Jameson's comment as correct. First, his categorization of that group of Chinese poets as Hooligans is questionable; it might indicate his take on American poets (?). Secondly, in terms of what kind of poetry will be liked or not liked by Chinese, it's not just a

matter of the nature of the kind of poetry, it has a lot more to do with the imperialist power of American culture (including poetry) and the change of cultural environment in China (structure of feelings?). Well, this is too vague, but I don't want to dig into the details here since it's already a digression. But I hope the jamesonian anecdote might be helpful. Long live hooligans! --Yunte Huang

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#### 48. **Rae Armantrout**

##### ***Re: dunno, but***

*Sun 5 Nov 1995*

---

Dear Pat,

Hi, the poem Chris was referring to is "Visibility" in MADE TO SEEM. I refer indirectly to the infamous sign in the last section of that. Oh, and thanks for your book. I probably won't be able to read it until Winter break so more anon

Dear Wm Northcutt,

I've written an essay which is partly about Jameson and his attack on Perelman. It's called "Irony And Postmodern Poetry." It hasn't been published yet, but I think it will be.

Yours,

Rae Armantrout

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#### 49. **Patrick Phillips**

##### ***Re: Jameson...***

*Sun 5 Nov 1995*

---

There are other treatments of this "now notorious essay" as George Hartley put it, but you may want to see his "Jameson's Perelman" in *\_Textual Politics and the Language Poets\_* for a post-Lacanian interpretation. In a nut-shell, Hartley contrasts J.'s schizophrenia analogy with the position that Perelman is suggesting, among other things, that "there are alternative ways of structuring (constituting) our experiences. Such alternatives "foreground" our social relations, not reify them.

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50. **James Banton Rolins**

**Re: POETICS Digest - 30 Oct 1995 to 31 Oct 1995**

Sun 5 Nov 1995

---

Does anyone have an email address for info about the Orono conference? Please post it if yes. Many thanks.

Bart

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51. **Beth Russell**

**gory story**

Sun 5 Nov 1995

---

Dear poetics folks,

    this may seem strange however it really  
    happened today on sunday november fifth 95  
and i dont know if anyone will care, but i'm sure  
you will be sensitive to this. outside of my window  
at about eleven thirty in the am i witnesses a  
sorry, that was "i witnessed" a  
    rotweiler (sp?) rip to shreds a fluffy white  
dog, about the same size as the violent beast--  
    went right for the jugular and wouldnt let go  
    i ran to the phone, called 911, called my local  
division police--panicked, didnt know what the hell  
to do. the owner of the white fluffy dog being ripped  
apart at the neck was an older lady (seemed very  
mild mannered) she didnt know how to get the  
"rot" off of her dog. the owner of the "rot"  
    was banging the rot w/a chair, didnt apparently  
    know how get the teeth off of fluffy. neighbors  
came to the street, staring in horrific amazement  
    what to do what to do..i was angry..i ran out  
into the street and yelled at the owner of the  
    rot and said "you should know that those dogs  
    have been known to kill people and other  
    animals, its fucked up!" he didn;t make  
eye contact with me. blood running down the public  
sewer hole. fluffy's snout poking out from a  
    back in his yard. animal control van  
    takes him away. fluffy is gone.  
this was kurtz's horror right in front of

my very eyes. this was carnage in the  
street. this was horror.  
violence seeming to \_breed\_ violenza.

beth russell

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52. **Charles Bernstein**  
**Giles Deleuze 1925-1995**

Sun 5 Nov 1995

Date: Sun, 05 Nov 1995 22:55:44 -0500

From: Ben Friedlander <[REDACTED]>

Subject: Deleuze

Sad news--

*Group clari.living.books  
article 2255*

*PARIS (AP) -- Prominent French philosopher, writer and university professor Gilles Deleuze committed suicide by leaping from the window of his Paris apartment, his family said Sunday.*

*Deleuze, whom French philosopher Michel Foucault once called ``the only philosophical mind in France," died Saturday. He was 70.*

*The author of one of the world's best selling philosophy books, ``The Anti-Oedipus," had suffered for years from a serious respiratory illness and recently underwent a tracheotomy.*

*Deleuze was born in 1925 into a conservative Paris family, but spent his life as a leftist and considered himself almost militantly so. He became a familiar figure in the city's bohemian Latin Quarter, his trademark felt hat cocked at a rakish angle.*

*Deleuze began his academic life in 1955 as a teaching assistant at the Sorbonne and taught later at the university at Vincennes, retiring in 1987.*

*In 1972, he and longtime friend Felix Guattari published ``The Anti-Oedipus," a scathing look at the concepts and ``schizo-analysis" of Sigmund Freud and Melanie Klein.*

*In 1993, he published ``Critic and Clinic," in which he explored the works of Herman Melville and Lewis Carroll, among others.*

*Throughout his long career, Deleuze refused to appear on television, but he agreed earlier this year to develop a philosophy-oriented program for France's arts-oriented Arte channel.*

*Details on Deleuze's survivors were not immediately available.*

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53. **Aldon L. Nielsen**

**Re: bulbous**

Sun 5 Nov 1995

---

Just back from my week-end with Saint Barb, and reading posts accumulated -- absolutely agree with last paragraph of Tom Beard's reposnse to my last response -- but confused again by distinction there betwixt response and interpretation -- reading a poem as being about light bulbs certainly strikes me as an act of interpretation -- one with particular currency in my Department -- recent MA exam candidate read Robert Lowell's "La Lumiere" as being a poem about the invention of the light bulb --

Which, for me, is where the importance of your last paragraph comes in -- I think it is possible to have an illuminating (sorry!) discussion about how that response arises and what it is in the poem that makes me want to reject that response -- what is required of both in the discussion is a willingness to examine our readings, our ideologies, our aesthetics,,, and how we go about locating ourselves in relationship to the text we're both reading -- validity doesn't hover ober the text or in the text,,,, we make intepretations valid as a social act encompassing ourselves, the texts, and other readers --

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54. **Alan Sondheim**

**Re: gory story**

Mon 6 Nov 1995

---

And Deleuze died yesterday, throwing himself from a window.

Alan

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55. **Kevin Killian**

**Re: EPC.Live**

Mon 6 Nov 1995

---

Dear Loss & Ken,

For Mac users, can't we just use the program Homer (rather than using telnet) and get on the undernet to join channel EPCLIVE?

Dodie Bellamy

*EPCLIVE*

*Directions for signing on (by Ken Sherwood):*

UNIX

From your system prompt, type:  
irc <return>  
Then type the following two lines:  
/serv undernet.org <return>  
/join #EPCLIVE <return>  
(you should now be able to type and read whoever is there)

VAX

Type:  
telnet telnet1.us.undernet.org 6677 <return>  
Return several times and follow prompts; when asked for  
which channel you want to join, choose '0'. Then type:  
/serv undernet.org <return>  
/join #EPCLIVE <return>  
(you should now be able to type and read whoever is there)

-----

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56. **Pierre Joris**  
***Final deterritorialization***

Mon 6 Nov 1995

>  
>Subject: Deleuze is dead  
>Sent: 11/05 1:31 PM  
>From: Melissa McMahon, [REDACTED]  
>To: [REDACTED]  
>  
>Tonight it was announced on French radio that Deleuze has committed  
suicide  
>(one report said that he 's'est defenestre').  
>  
>

=====  
=====

Pierre Joris | "Poems are sketches for existence."  
Dept. of English | --Paul Celan  
SUNY Albany |  
Albany NY 12222 | "Revisionist plots  
tel&fax: [REDACTED] | are everywhere and our pronouns haven't yet  
email: | drawn up plans for the first coup."  
[REDACTED] | --J.H. Prynne



=====

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57. **Eryque Gleason**

**Re: EPC.Live**

Mon 6 Nov 1995

dear dodie,

being a mac user, can you tell me what homer is and where i can get it?

eryque

---

Eryque "Just call me Eric" Gleason      !  
71 E. 32nd St. Box 949                      If I weren't a monkey, there'd  
Chicago, IL 60616                          be problems.  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

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58. **William M. Northcutt**

**Re: Jameson...**

Mon 6 Nov 1995

Many thanks to Rae, Patrick, Juliana, and to Junte Huang--yes, long live the hooligans!

My problem with Jameson is that I agree with him in the big picture, but I think he wraps himself up in a literalism that clashes with his admiration for Benjamin and Adorno. It seems to me that there's some anti-intellectualism underneath it--puritanism or just Lukacs?

At any rate, thanks for the responses. William

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59. **Edward Foster**  
*new terrific talisman book*

Mon 6 Nov 1995

NEW ARRIVAL!

SIMON PETTET'S \_SELECTED POEMS\_ from talisman house, for \$9.95

in the terrific bookstores now or soon, or from INBOOK or SPD

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60. **Aldon L. Nielsen**  
*Re: Transbluesency Express*

Mon 6 Nov 1995

If these last minute phone calls I'm getting work out, I'll be in New York over the week-end for a retrospective program on Baraka and his work at the Schomburg Library.

Whether I'm there or not, y'all New Yorkers should know that this program goes on Friday & Saturday with readings, interviews etc. -- If I make it, I'm to conduct a discussion with Baraka and the audience about fiction from 2:00 to 4:00 on Friday --

Don't know where I'm staying yet, but will try to post that info. in case anybody wants to try to meet for breakfast sunday or maybe get together Sat. night --

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61. **Charles Alexander**

***Items of Interest on the ABAA-booknet Web Server***

Mon 6 Nov 1995

I'm forwarding this from a book arts list, just that the first item listed may be of interest to any Charles Olson scholars.

charles alexander

<http://www.abaa-booknet.com/>

WHAT'S NEW ON THE ABAA-booknet SERVER?

*Here are recent changes or updates that you may not have seen.  
Offerings by various ABAA members are "hot-linked" directly to their  
ABAA-booknet home page.*

TEN POUND ISLAND BOOK CO. (11/4/95)

*Ten Pound Island Book Co. of Gloucester, MA announces Maritime  
List 100, a special catalog of old, scarce and out-of-print  
maritime books with many exceptional 18th and early 19th  
century titles to mark this, their one hundreth list in  
eighteen years of operation.*

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62. **cris cheek**

***the pusher***

Mon 6 Nov 1995

SOUND & LANGUAGE present:- rhythm, language, sound and light

s l a n t

CRIS CHEEK      PHILIP JECK

SIANED JONES    JON WILKINSON  
sonic glimpses from their forthcoming CD 'mono lake'  
'a beautiful sweet and sour chaos'

~

guest drummer / percussionist  
NICK MURCOTT  
who featured on 'the canning town chronicle . . .' CD

~

CAROLINE BERGVAL  
and    KAFFE MATHEWS  
live text-sound    'Don't push it'

~

premier screening of ROS MORTIMER'S film  
"BLOOD SPORTS FOR GIRLS"

~

balcony film installation  
TIM FLITCROFT  
all at

THE UNION CHAPEL

Compton Ave

Islington London N1 23D

Box Office 01712261686

(nearest tube - Highbury & Islington)

Friday 10th Nov 8.00pm in the studio

Tickets. £7 (£5 concs)

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### 63. **Kevin Killian**

#### ***Re: EPC.Live***

*Mon 6 Nov 1995*

---

Eryque Gleason wrote:

| *being a mac user, can you tell me what homer is and where i can get it?*

Homer is a program that allows you access to the IRC, the internet live chat channels. Homer has a lot of neat features, including sound and color. The undernet is sort of an alternate IRC, smaller, but basically the same as the large one. You sign on to it in Homer using an undernet server, such as:

davis.ca.us.undernet.org

sanjose.ca.us.undernet.org

There are other servers too. Homer is available from many ftp sites. I did a search for it on Anarchie, and this is what I found.

Dodie

<ftp://bobby-sands.llc.org//pub/ClicNet/Mac/homer-094.hqx>  
<ftp://wuarchive.wustl.edu//systems/mac/info-mac/comm/tcp/homer-094.hqx>  
<ftp://wuarchive.wustl.edu//systems/mac/info-mac/Old/rec/homer-094.hqx>  
<ftp://castor.iro.umontreal.ca//externe/macintosh/Applications\_Internet/  
homer-094.hqx> <ftp://ftp.sunet.se//pub/mac/info-mac/comm/tcp/homer-  
094.hqx> <ftp://drjones.next.com.au//Macintosh/Internet\_Tools/homer-  
094.hqx> <ftp://metten.fenk.wau.nl//pub/mac/info-mac/comm/tcp/homer-  
094.hqx> <ftp://nic.switch.ch//mirror/info-mac/comm/tcp/homer-094.hqx>  
<ftp://plaza.aarnet.edu.au//micros/mac/info-mac/comm/tcp/homer-094.hqx>  
<ftp://akiu.gw.tohoku.ac.jp//mirror/info-mac/rec/homer-094.hqx>  
<ftp://sics.se//mirror/info-mac/comm/tcp/homer-094.hqx>

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64. **Eryque Gleason**

**Re: EPC.Live**

Mon 6 Nov 1995

---

gravy, thanks dodie

|                                    |   |                                |
|------------------------------------|---|--------------------------------|
|                                    | ! |                                |
| Eryque "Just call me Eric" Gleason |   | If I weren't a monkey, there'd |
| 71 E. 32nd St. Box 949             |   | be problems.                   |
| Chicago, IL 60616                  |   |                                |
| ██████████                         |   |                                |
| ██████████                         |   |                                |

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65. **Chris Stroffolino**

**Re: do know but?**

Mon 6 Nov 1995

---

Dear Pat Phillips--thanks for elaborating on your poetics-- but what are these non lang-po "problem poetries that are particularly liberatory"? I am curious if you might want to be more specific. Feel free to backchannel. Chris S.

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## 66. **Loss Glazier**

### **EPC.Live**

Mon 6 Nov 1995

---

*For Mac users, can't we just use the program Homer (rather than using telnet) and get on the undernet to join channel EPCLIVE?*

Dodie, Did you try this and it works? If so, we will go ahead and append this to our instructions ...

Thanks!

Loss

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## 67. **Charles Alexander**

### **Re: Giles Deleuze 1925-1995**

Mon 6 Nov 1995

---

This from Jack Sinclair, and containing his message which came to him from Melissa McMahon, appeared on the book arts list in response to my forwarding the note there about Deleuze's death.

charles alexander

>My introduction to Deleuze was in a critical theory class trying to  
>ascend A Thousand Plateaus, co authored by Felix Guattari. Interestingly \*the  
>book\*, was likened to a record in that we were told there would be parts that  
>we would like or understand and might repeatedly return to, while other parts  
>we would want to skip over and completely ignore. Forever. Thinking back it  
was

>sort of a hypertext use of the book. Anyway, it was noted in the forward by  
>translator Brian Massumi that Deleuze felt that as artists we are all  
>philosophical thinkers to the extent that we explore the potentials of our  
>respective mediums and break away from the beaten paths. Ideas that  
certainly

>coincided with his concept of nomadic thought, and, seem to be just as  
>relevant today in our ongoing discussions of the future of \*the book\*.

>

>As a follow up to Charles' post regarding the suicide of Deleuze I offer  
>the following which was forwarded to me. For those of you that find this off  
>topic I would only suggest that you read \*the book\*.

>

>Date: Mon, 06 Nov 1995 10:36:38 +0100

>From: Melissa McMahon <[REDACTED]>

>

>Below is a translation (rapidly, stutteringly done this morning) of a piece  
>included in the issue of *\_Philosophie\_* dedicated to Deleuze. Obituaries  
>give me the horrors a bit - something *\_fatal\_* about them, like wanting to  
>end death, or silence it with endless words. This, importantly, was written  
>before his death, thus is not an obituary, and has a taste for the  
>singularities (rather than molar categories) and the power of the false  
>(rather than that of 'summing up') that are so lacking in the newspaper  
>articles...

>

>SUIDAS

>Andre Bernold

>*\_Philosophie\_* no.47, September 1995 (issue dedicated to Deleuze)

>

>*\_Deleuze\_*, philosopher, son of Diogenes and Hypatia, spent time in Lyon.  
>Nothing is known of his life. He lived to a very old age, even though he was  
>often very sick. He illustrated what he himself said: that there are lives  
>where difficulties approach the extraordinary. He defined as active all force  
>which goes to the limit of its power. This is, he said, the opposite of the  
>law. It is thus that he lived, going always further than he would have  
>thought possible. Although he explained Chrysippus, it is above all his  
>constancy which makes him worthy of the name Stoic.

>

>He was one of the most remarkable orators of his time, and the greatest of  
>those who made it their profession to teach philosophy. He was only  
>understood by a few. He was persecuted; the object of a jealousy which never  
>disarmed him. He despised these miseryguts, because of the joy of his life,  
>which was to philosophise.

>

>Of a lofty temperament, he tolerated only the people. But formidable was his  
>irony. His voice was one of the most extraordinary. Athena compared it to a  
>grater, then to a torrent of pebbles. His elocution was of an extreme  
>distinction, a little tired, his diction slow and sweet. Appollodorus  
>compares his voice to that of a wizard. He was a man of perfect nobility,  
>who had a horror of all that belittled.

>

>He wrote much, perhaps more than anyone, when one considers the density  
>of his works. While he treated amply the subjects of logic and morality, he  
>must be placed among the ranks of physicists, indeed among the first  
>rank. He left behind him an *\_Of Nature\_*, that Stobee ranked with those of  
>Heraclitus and Lucretius, relating an oracle: in a very distant future,  
>nothing so great will have appeared, if not a certain *\_Ethics\_*, which is not  
>Aristotle's.

>

>He said that three anecdotes are enough: the place, the time and the  
>element. His own place found him towards the east. As for the time, it is  
>that of the deepest twilight: for there is much terror in his books. Even  
>the sky suffers of its cardinal points and constellations, he says. As for  
>the element, we can permit ourselves to hesitate, for he speaks of all of  
>them with a rare splendour. He passionately loves the earth; Aratos says  
>that he was a troglodyte. He celebrates the hairy lines of the waters, and  
>fire, according to him, is soluble. His element however is aerial,  
>overhanging, suspense, and profound fall.

>

>He was also a doctor, the last to treat medicine as an art. We can cite two  
>books on monsters, two on wounds and the most famous, on the oedema of  
the  
feet.

>

>We read in Aristoxena his Treaty of the Refrain, whose boldness is extreme.  
>One can also find De linea, and Of sublime images.

>

>Proclus copies out a very obscure passage on "the Virgin, the one who was  
>never lived, beyond the lover and beyond the mother, coexisting with the  
>one and contemporary with the other." In the same place, he says that all  
>reminiscence is erotic. Strabo maintains that he was an astonishing  
>"geologist". With Felix, he composed, besides Against oedema, which also  
>contains a Politics and a Geography of which it is said that never  
>have such mad ones been seen: On strata, which also contains a Strategy.  
>This latter seems never to have been understood by anybody, among  
>philosophical circles.

>

>In geometry, he discovered the pulsation of spirals. He professed that the  
>love of children for their mother repeats other loves of adults, in regard  
>to other women.

>

>There was a multitude of other Deleuzes.

>

>Here is a list of his works: Of the event, in 34 books. Of the  
>constellations which run through us. Of the impassibility of  
>incorporeals. On the wounds received while sleeping. Symptoms. On the  
>jump of demons. Of tubercules. Of the noble man. On the ugliness of the  
>human face. Of idiots. Of the invisible witnesses. The Prince of  
>philosophers. On degrees. Of the three testaments. The Galician, or  
>Of cold, or Of cruelty. Of larvae. Of the Idea which watches us.



>\_Misosophy\_. \_Of the egg\_. \_Of the clear and obscure\_. \_Of the universal  
>spider\_. \_That allintensity is tearing\_. \_Of the sardine\_. \_On the question  
>"who?"\_. \_Of the orgy\_. \_Of nobody\_. \_On universal foundering  
(effondrement)\_.  
>\_Eulogy of Lucretius\_. \_Of viscera\_. \_Of complication\_. \_Resume of twists\_.  
>\_That it is better to not explain oneself too much\_. \_Of the singularities  
>which ruffle us\_. \_Of the cloacal\_. \_Of the triumph of the slaves\_. \_The  
>hammer\_. \_What belongs to us upon a subtler prompting\_. \_Of absolute  
depth\_.  
>\_Of unknown joy\_.

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68. **Tom Beard**

***Re: signs taken for wonders***

*Mon 6 Nov 1995*

---

Hi, this is in response to both Steve & Aldon's posts,

Steve wrote-

>Yes, if you were to interpret the poem as saying that apples and lightbulbs  
>share the property of edibility \*outside the frame of the poem.\* Within  
>that frame, the distinction between a response and an interpretation (which  
>would seem to me to always begin at the response--correct me if I've  
>neglected something--) is much blurrier.

& Aldon -

>[I'm] confused again by distinction there betwixt response and  
>interpretation -- reading a poem as being about light bulbs certainly  
>strikes me as an act of interpretation

I guess I was sloppy with my defn of interpretation. Yes, in most cases (the exceptions being sound poetry, some langpo etc) a response presupposes an interpretation, eg by mapping the words "apple" & "lightbulb" onto objects outside of the poem. I was counting this "small" sense of interpretation as being a response, and using the term "interpretation" in a "larger" sense, meaning the drawing of conclusions "outside of the frame" of the poem from the poem itself. What becomes blurry here is the frame - how do we define what is inside & outside of the poem?

Going back to my rather clumsy example, I'll try to show what I meant by "response" vs "interpretation". Let's say that a poem contained the line "The apple glowed - it was a low-watt light-bulb" (please god don't let me write a line like that!). To nod with appreciation, to shiver with fear, or to suddenly remember a moment 10 years ago when an apple glowed thus on your windowsill; these are all responses. They depend upon the "low-level"

interpretation of the terms "apple" & "lightbulb" - if you think that an apple is actually a breed of dog, then these responses will not be possible for you. But to then draw conclusions outside of the frame of the poem, by thinking "this poet's obviously nuts - he thinks apples are the same as lightbulbs", or "Hmm, I could use a Granny Smith to replace the 100W bulb in the hallway", or "Hey, this poet must have been in my room with me 10 years ago", or "this guy's read far too much Craig Raine"; this is what I mean by interpretation.

In a less artificial, and more loaded, context, consider the following. A reader comes across a line that offends her - it appears racist to her. This feeling of being offended is a response; to conclude that the author is racist is to make an interpretation. The latter is (to some extent at least) open to falsification, but the former is not. In some cases a person may change his or her response in different circumstances, but the original response was neither valid nor invalid - it just was.

A more personal example: when I first read The Hollow Men, I was struck by the lines "waking alone, at the hour when we are trembling with tenderness, lips that would kiss form prayers to broken stone" (approximate rendition from memory). To me as I was - a lonely, rather sentimental adolescent - these lines were extremely powerful, and spoke to me. Later, when I read Southam's notes, I discovered that the poem was supposed to be about Guy Fawkes, Conrad's Heart of Darkness and the assassination of Caesar. This doesn't invalidate my original response (and I carry it with me still), but if I'd written in an essay that "This poem was written by a lonely 18-year old boy desperately in need of a good bonk" then I could expect my interpretation to receive an F.

Aldon wrote -

>"the voice of the Maori" doesn't present itself as science but myth,  
>with a mythical truth that IS as valid in the realm of myth as the voice of  
>science is in the realm of science.

I'd still view this as a form of relativism: the assertion that the realm of myth is as valid as the realm of science. To respond to a text (our land & its lifeforms) by telling a story that fits within the realm of myth is neither valid nor invalid, and is not open to disproof. But to interpret the land this way leaves one open to more rigorous questioning. For example, believing that there is a god called Ruamoko who lives under the ground and causes earthquakes is a personal response. But to act upon this belief by attempting to appease the god (for example) brings one into conflict with a scientific view that might attempt instead to predict high-risk zones by mapping fault lines, identifying land that is prone to liquefaction and designing buildings to cope with earthquake stresses. There are areas where these two interpretations are incompatible, and at least one of them is invalid. (No prizes for guessing where I stand on this issue).

Thanks for your responses and interpretations,  
Tom Beard

---

I/am a background/process, shrunk to an icon. | Tom Beard I am/a dark place.  
| [REDACTED] I am less/than the sum of my parts... | Auckland, New Zealand I  
am necessary/but not sufficient, | <http://www.met.co.nz/> and I shall  
teach the stars to fall | [nwfc/beard/www/hallway.html](http://nwfc/beard/www/hallway.html)

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69. **Aldon L. Nielsen**

***Re: bearded***

*Tue 7 Nov 1995*

---

actually, tom, it was not aldon who wrote the response about the voice of the maori, though it "sounded like him," and, being myself aldon, my first response was that I could have written something like that -- but i didn't

as you redefine "response," i don't see how "validity" ever would be a question when discussing "response" -- but I'm sure there would be many questions to pursue looking at why some responses occur in the presence of some poems -- i don't think there is ever a non-interpretive moment, and your clarification does, in fact, clear that up for me --

I'm not sure \_any+ statements about the origins of the earth would be truly falsifiable; but most statements about processes which "might" have resulted in the earth's origin should be falsifiable in a way that such statements as "god made man in his own image" is surely not --

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70. **Ron Silliman**

***Fwd: EFFector Online 08.18 \* Net Censorship & Surveillance Alerts!***

*Tue 7 Nov 1995*

---

FYI,

The proposed legislation, discussed in lengthy detail below, potentially could impact many of us on this list.

Ron Silliman

=====

===== = \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_^

/\_\_\_\_\_\ ^\_\_\_\_\_\ \\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\

68

\* See <http://www.eff.org/Alerts/> or [ftp.eff.org, /pub/Alerts/](ftp://ftp.eff.org/pub/Alerts/) for more information on current EFF activities and online activism alerts! \*

-----  
Subject: ALERT: Net Censorship, and Christian Coalition v. Human Rights  
Watch -----

CAMPAIGN TO STOP THE EXON/COATS COMMUNICATIONS DECENCY  
ACT (SEE THE LIST OF CAMPAIGN COALITION MEMBERS AT THE END)

Update: -Latest News:

The Christian Coalition is pushing Congress to censor  
the net more heavily than even Sen. J.J. Exon ever  
imagined.

There is the very real possibility that they may succeed.

You should be very worried. We are.

-What You Can Do Now:

Follow the directions below and call House Speaker  
Gingrich and Senate Leader Dole. Implore them  
to allow parents to make choices for their children,  
instead of government censors.

Volunteer to join the fight by helping organize in your  
home town.

CAMPAIGN TO STOP THE UNCONSTITUTIONAL COMMUNICATIONS  
DECENCY  
ACT

Nov 2, 1995

PLEASE WIDELY REDISTRIBUTE THIS DOCUMENT WITH THIS BANNER  
INTACT

REDISTRIBUTE ONLY UNTIL December 1, 1995  
REPRODUCE THIS ALERT ONLY IN RELEVANT FORUMS

---

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The Latest News

What You Can Do Now

The letter & suggested legislation from Ed Meese and the Christian  
Right

Chronology of the CDA

For More Information

List Of Participating Organizations

---

## THE LATEST NEWS

Since the very first day that Senator J.J. Exon (D-NE) proposed censorship legislation for the Internet, the Christian Right has pushed for the most restrictive regulations they could think of.

The Religious Right (which does not necessarily speak for all religious people concerned with this issue) recently tipped their hand in a letter to Sen. Larry Pressler (R-SD) and Rep. Thomas Bliley (R-VA) requesting a new and more restrictive net censorship proposal.

There are essentially three new dangerous elements of their campaign to shut down cyberspace:

### INTERNET PROVIDERS, ONLINE SERVICES, AND LIBRARIES CRIMINALLY LIABLE FOR EXPRESSION ONLINE

The Religious Right has proposed to hold anyone who provides access to the Internet or other interactive media, including online services providers, ISP's, BBS's, Libraries, and Schools, criminally liable for all speech carried on the network.

In order to avoid liability under this provision, service providers would be forced to monitor user's electronic communications to be assured that no "indecent" material is transmitted across their networks.

This proposal is MORE RESTRICTIVE than the Exon Communications Decency Act, or any other net censorship legislation currently in Congress.

In their letter to Congress, the Religious Right says:

[Providers] would simply be required to avoid KNOWING violations of the law. [emphasis added]

However, the "knowing" standard is vague enough that the mere knowledge that such material exists could be sufficient to trigger criminal liability. A single complaint or even a news report could force a service provider to take down a web page, remove posts to chat rooms or other discussion forums, or shut down listservs in order to avoid going to jail and facing huge fines.

**A STANDARD FOR INDECENCY** The proposals pushed by the Christian Coalition relies on the unconstitutional "indecent standard". Like the Exon Communications Decency Act, the Christian Coalition seeks to regulate all indecent speech online.

Indecency is a broad category that includes everything from George Carlin's "seven dirty words" to such classic novels and "The Catcher in the Rye" and "Lady Chatterly's Lover".

The Supreme Court has ruled that restrictions on indecent speech are Constitutional only if they rely on the "least restrictive means". Broad indecency restrictions on interactive media do not satisfy the "least restrictive means" test, because interactive media allows users and parents tremendous control over the information they receive.

Any legislation which attempts to apply an indecency restriction to the Internet is unconstitutional on its face.

The Christian Coalition's proposal that relies on an indecency restriction contemplates dumbing down every conversation, web page, newsgroup, and mailing list on the Internet to the level of what is not offensive to children.

What kind of discussions between adults are possible in an arena where everything has been reduced to the level of the Lion King?

**UNPRECEDENTED CONTROL OVER ONLINE SPEECH FOR THE FCC** The Christian Coalition would give the FCC broad jurisdiction over cyberspace. It would allow the FCC jurisdiction over your online speech, and over the design Internet software, such as web browsers and filtering programs that parents can use to control their children's access to the Internet.

The Internet has developed from a government project to a market-driven economic boom for thousands of businesses. Giving the FCC authority over this medium would significantly hinder the growth of this new industry.

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## WHAT YOU CAN DO NOW

1. The proposals from the Religious Right will literally destroy online speech as we know it. The odds of stopping this are not certain.

There is a very real chance that this legislation will pass, and we will experience a period of uncertainty and chilling of speech while an appropriate test case attempts to reach the Supreme Court (should it even get there!)

The Religious Right has a strong grass-roots network. We need to counter their energy and ensure cyberspace is not lost due to them.

IMMEDIATELY CALL House Speaker Gingrich (R-GA) and Senate Leader Dole (R-KS) and urge them to oppose the Christian Coalition's proposal.

| Name, Address, and Party  | Phone | Fax   |
|---------------------------|-------|-------|
| =====                     | ===== | ===== |
| ===== R GA Gingrich, Newt | ===== | ===== |
| R KS Dole, Robert         | ===== | ===== |

If you're at a loss for words, try one of the following:

Please oppose the recent proposal from the Religious Right to censor the Internet. The only effective way to address children's access to the Internet is through parental control tools outlined by the Cox/White/Wyden approach.

or

As a religious person and a parent, I oppose the Religious Right's attempts to censor the Internet. I am the best person to monitor my child's access to the Internet using parental control tools as outlined in the Cox/White/Wyden approach.

2. Join the online fight by becoming a volunteer for your district!

Check to see if your legislator is in the list below. If they are not, consult the free ZIPPER service that matches Zip Codes to Congressional districts with about 85% accuracy at:

URL:<http://www.stardot.com/~lukeseem/zip.html>

The conference committee legislators are: House: Barr (R-GA), Barton (R-TX), Berman (R-CA), Bliley (R-VA), Boucher (D-VA), Brown (D-OH), Bryant (D-TX), Buyer (R-IN), Conyers (D-MI), Dingell (D-MI), Eshoo (D-CA), Fields (R-TX), Flanagan (R-IL), Frisa (R-NY), Gallegly (R-CA), Goodlatte (R-VA), Gordon (D-TN), Hastert (R-IL), Hoke (R-OH), Hyde (R-IL), Jackson-Lee (D-TX), Klug (R-WI), Lincoln (D-AR), Markey (D-MA), Moorhead (R-CA), Oxley (R-OH), Paxon (R-NY), Rush (D-IL), Schaefer (R-CO), Schroeder (D-CO), Scott (D-VA), Stearns (R-FL), White (R-WA) Senate: Burns (R-MT), Exon (D-NE), Ford (D-KY), Gorton (R-WA), Hollings (D-SC), Inouye (D-HI), Lott (R-MS), McCain (R-AZ), Pressler (R-SD), Rockefeller (D-WV), Stevens (R-AK)

If your legislator is on the conference committee, you have a chance to influence their vote on this issue with your power as a constituent. Volunteer



to help educate your legislator by sending mail to [REDACTED]. A coalition volunteer will be in touch with you.

You can start working to help spread the word in your district by sending this letter to five friends. Ask them to call Dole and Gingrich as well.

3. The People for the American Way (PFAW) and the American Civil Liberties Union are organizing a letter from ORGANIZATIONS to the Conference Committee to oppose the censorship provisions.

If you are a representative of an organization that would like to sign on to this letter, you should contact [REDACTED] IMMEDIATELY.

4. We can't suggest relaxing at this point. The stakes are too high, and the risk is too great. Everything now hangs in the balance.

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#### THE LETTER & SUGGESTED LEGISLATION FROM ED MEESE AND THE CHRISTIAN RIGHT

October 16, 1995

The Honorable Thomas J. Bliley, Jr. Chairman  
Committee on Commerce  
United States House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Larry Pressler, Chairman  
Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

Re: Computer Pornography Provisions in Telecommunications Bill

Dear Mr. Chairmen:

We are writing to urge the conference committee seeking to reconcile the telecommunications bills passed by the House and Senate include in the final bill the strongest possible criminal law provisions to address the growing and immediate problem of computer pornography without any exemptions, defenses, or political favors of any kind accorded to those who knowingly participate in the distribution of obscenity to anyone or indecency to children. While there is no perfect solution to the problem of computer pornography, Congress could not hope to solve this problem by holding liable only some who are responsible for the problem.

The recent Justice Department prosecution project targeting those who violated federal child pornography law using America On-Line is instructive in this

regard. More than ninety individuals were targeted for prosecution although many others, perhaps as many as 3,000 according to one press report, were originally targeted by the Department of Justice as potential violators of child pornography laws. Apparently due to a shortage of investigative and prosecutorial resources, the project was limited. Since there are insufficient resources to investigate and prosecute but a fraction of those that are trafficking in child pornography by computer, then there will likely be even fewer resources available to investigate and prosecute those involved in obscenity and indecency.

Thousands of individuals both in this country and abroad are regularly placing obscenity and indecency on the Internet. It is not possible to make anything more than a dent in the serious problem of computer pornography if Congress is willing to hold liable only those who place such material on the Internet while at the same time giving legal exemptions or defenses to service or access providers who profit from and are instrumental to the distribution of such material. The Justice Department normally targets the major offenders of laws. In obscenity cases prosecuted to date, it has targeted large companies which have been responsible for the nationwide distribution of obscenity and who have made large profits by violating federal laws. Prosecution of such companies has made a substantial impact in curbing the distribution of obscenity, with many such offenders going out of business altogether. So too will prosecution of access providers which knowingly traffic in obscenity have a substantial impact, a far greater impact than just the prosecution of a person who places one or a few prohibited images on the Internet. Such a person could not traffic in pornography without the aid or facilitation of the service or access providers. Indeed, if Congress includes provisions protecting access or service providers in whatever bill is finally passed, it is likely that most in this country who are trafficking in indecency to children or obscenity would continue to do so since the threat of prosecution would be minuscule, given the numbers of those currently involved in this activity. It is also likely that those outside our country who are engaged in these activities would continue to do so since it would be nearly impossible to extradite them to the United States for prosecution. Thus, unless all who knowingly participate in such matters are subject to the law, the Internet will remain the same and Congress will have failed in its responsibilities to the children and families of America.

Federal law has traditionally assigned equal liability both for those who commit a crime and those who aid and abet a crime. See Title 18 U.S.C. Code Section 2: "(a) whoever [sic] commits an offense against the United States or aids, abets, counsels [sic], commands, induces, or procures its commission, is punishable as a principal [sic]." Service or access providers who knowingly participate in the distribution of indecency to children or in obscenity to anyone are aiders and

abettors in the commission of those crimes and thus should have liability under any law Congress passes. Current federal law on child pornography provides no exemption or defense for access providers. Thus, the child pornography law provides a strong deterrent against trafficking in child pornography for those who would otherwise knowingly participate in its distribution by computer whether pedophile or access provider.

The changes in law which we support would not hold an access provider criminally liable for all illegal pornography on the Internet which their services may be used to obtain. Nor would it require that access providers check all communications to ensure that no violations of the law are occurring. They would simply be required to avoid knowing violations of the law. This is an obligation imposed on all citizens. Technology exists today for access providers, through a simple process, to target or flag and remove files containing objectionable material.

We support the House-passed language insofar as it addresses obscenity by amendment Title 18, Sections 1462, 1465, and 1467 of the United States Code. The provision restricting transmission of indecency in the House-passed bill, an amendment to Section 1465, is inadequate, and we urge that it be substantially revised.

Attached is the specific language we support which includes the House passed language on obscenity and includes revisions on both the House passed language on indecency, which would amend Title 18 and the Senate-passed language on indecency, which would amend Title 47. The combination of these provisions, we believe, would provide effective laws to curb obscenity and indecency on the Internet by establishing that all who knowingly participate in the distribution or facilitation of obscenity to anyone or indecency to children would be subject to the law.

Thank you for your concern and attention to this matter.

[signed]

Edwin Meese III

Ralph Reed

Christian Coalition

Donald E. Wildmon

American Family Association

Alan Sears, Former Executive Director  
Atty General's Commission on Pornography

Phyllis Shafly  
Eagle Forum

Beverly LaHaye  
Concerned Women for America

Reverend Louis P. Sheldon  
Traditional Values Coalition

Jay Sekulow  
American Center for Law and Justice

Paul Weyrich  
Free Congress Foundation

Paul McGeady  
Morality in Media

Len Munsil  
National Family Legal Foundation

Robert Peters  
Morality in Media

Kenneth Sukhia  
Former United States Attorney, N.D., FL  
Former Chairman, Atty General's Advisory Committee  
Subcommittee on Child Exploitation and Obscenity

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Section 1465 of Title 18, United States Code, is amended to punish distribution by computer of indecent material to minors by adding at the end the following:

Whoever knowingly communicates, transmits, or makes available for communication or transmission, in or effecting interstate or foreign commerce an indecent communication by computer to any person the communicator or transmitter believes has not attained the age of 18 years of age, knowing that such communication will be obtained by a person believed to be under 18 years of age, shall be fined under this title or imprisoned not more than five years, or both.

TITLE IV -- OBSCENE, HARASSING, AND WRONGFUL UTILIZATION OF  
TELECOMMUNICATIONS FACILITY

## SEC. 401. SHORT TITLE

This title may be cited as the "Communications Decency Act of 1995".

## Sec. 402. OBSCENE OR HARASSING USE OF TELECOMMUNICATIONS FACILITIES

UNDER

THE COMMUNICATIONS ACT OF 1934

Section 223 (47 U.S.C. 223) is amended --

(1) by striking subsection (a) and inserting in lieu of [sic]:

``(a) Whoever--

``(1) in the District of Columbia or in interstate or foreign communications --

``(A) by means of telecommunications device knowingly--

``(i) makes, creates, or solicits, and

``(ii) initiates the transmission of,

any comment, request, suggestion, proposal, image, or other communication which is obscene, lewd, lascivious, filthy, or indecent, with intent to annoy, abuse, threaten, or harass another person;

``(B) makes a telephone call or utilizes a telecommunications device, whether or not conversation or communication ensues, without disclosing his identity and with intent to annoy, abuse, threaten, or harass any person at the called number or who receives the communication;

``(C) makes or causes the telephone of another repeatedly or continuously to ring, with intent to harass any person at the called number; or

``(D) makes repeated telephone calls or repeatedly initiates communication with a telecommunications device, during which conversation or communication ensues, solely to harass any person at the called number or who receives the communication;

``(2) knowingly permits any telecommunications facility under his control to be used for any activity prohibited by paragraph (1) with the intent that it be used for such activity,

shall be fined not more than \$100,000 or imprisoned not more than two years, or both."; and

(2) by adding at the end the following new subsections:

``(d) Whoever--

``(1) knowingly within the United States or in foreign communications with the United States by means of telecommunications device makes or makes available any indecent communication in any form including any comment, request, suggestion, proposal, or image, to any person under 18 years of age regardless of whether the maker of such communication placed the call or initiated the communication; or

``(2) knowingly permits any telecommunications facility under such person's control to be used for an activity prohibited by paragraph (1) with the intent that it be used for such activity,

shall be fined not more than \$100,000 or imprisoned not more than two years or both.

``(e) Defenses to subsections (a) and (d), restrictions on access, judicial remedies respecting restrictions for persons providing information services and access to information services--

"(1) It is a defense to prosecution that a person has complied with regulations designed to restrict access to indecent communications to those 18 years old or older as enacted by the Federal Communications Commission which shall prepare final regulations within 120 days of the passage of this bill. Until such regulations become effective, it is a defense to prosecution that the person has blocked or restricted access to indecent communications to any person under 18 years of age through the use of verified credit card, adult access code, or adult personal identification number (PIN). Nothing in this subsection shall be construed to treat enhanced information services as common carriage."

"(2) No cause of action may be brought in any court or any administrative agency against any person on account of any activity which is not in violation of any law punishable by criminal or civil penalty, which activity the person has taken

in

good faith to implement a defense authorized under this section or otherwise to restrict or prevent the transmission of, or access

to,

a communication specified in this section.

(f) Nothing in this subsection shall preclude any State or local government from enacting and enforcing laws and regulations

which do not result in the imposition of inconsistent obligations  
on

the provision of interstate services. Nothing in this subsection  
shall preclude any State or local government from governing  
conduct

not covered by subsection (d)(2)."

(g) Nothing in subsection (a), (d), or (e) or in the  
defenses to prosecution under (e) shall be construed  
to affect or limit the application or enforcement of any other  
Federal law.

(h) The use of the term 'telecommunications device' in this  
section shall not impose new obligations on (one-way) broadcast  
radio or (one-way) broadcast television operators licensed by the  
Commission or (one-way) cable services registered with the  
Federal Communications Commission and covered by obscenity and  
indecentcy provisions elsewhere in this Act.

#### Sec. 403. OBSCENE PROGRAMMING ON CABLE TELEVISION.

Section 639 (47 U.S.C. 559) is amended by striking "10,000" and inserting  
"\$100,000"

#### Sec. 404. BROADCASTING OBSCENE LANGUAGE ON THE RADIO.

Section 1466 of Title 18, United States Code, is amended by striking out  
"\$10,000" and inserting "\$100,000".

#### Sec. 405 SEPARABILITY

"(a) If any provision of this Title, including amendments to this Title of [sic]  
the application thereof to any person or circumstance is held invalid, the  
remainder of this Title and the application of such provision to other persons or  
circumstances shall not be affected thereby."

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### CHRONOLOGY OF THE COMMUNICATIONS DECENCY ACT

Sep 26, '95    Sen. Russ Feingold urges committee members to drop  
Managers Amendment and the CDA from the Telecommunications  
Deregulation bill

Aug 4, '95    House passes HR1555 which goes into conference with S652.

Aug 4, '95    House votes to attach Managers Amendment (which contains  
new criminal penalties for speech online) to  
Telecommunications Reform bill (HR1555).

Aug 4, '95    House votes 421-4 to attach HR1978 to Telecommunications  
Reform bill (HR1555).

- Jun 30, '95 Cox and Wyden introduce the "Internet Freedom and Family Empowerment Act" (HR 1978) as an alternative to the CDA.
- Jun 21, '95 Several prominent House members publicly announce their opposition to the CDA, including Rep. Newt Gingrich (R-GA), Rep. Chris Cox (R-CA), and Rep. Ron Wyden (D-OR).
- Jun 14, '95 The Senate passes the CDA as attached to the Telecomm reform bill (S 652) by a vote of 84-16. The Leahy bill (S 714) is not passed.
- May 24, '95 The House Telecomm Reform bill (HR 1555) leaves committee in the House with the Leahy alternative attached to it, thanks to Rep. Ron Klink of (D-PA). The Communications Decency Act is not attached to it.
- Apr 7, '95 Sen. Leahy (D-VT) introduces S.714, an alternative to the Exon/Gorton bill, which commissions the Dept. of Justice to study the problem to see if additional legislation (such as the CDA) is necessary.
- Mar 23, '95 S314 amended and attached to the telecommunications reform bill by Sen. Gorton (R-WA). Language provides some protection, but continues to infringe upon email provider privacy and free speech.
- Feb 21, '95 HR1004 referred to the House Commerce and Judiciary committees
- Feb 21, '95 HR1004 introduced by Rep. Johnson (D-SD)
- Feb 1, '95 S314 referred to the Senate Commerce committee
- Feb 1, '95 S314 introduced by Sen. Exon (D-NE) and Gorton (R-WA).

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## FOR MORE INFORMATION

### Web Sites

URL:<http://www.vtw.org/exon/>  
URL:<http://epic.org/>  
URL:<http://www.eff.org/pub/Alerts/>  
URL:<http://www.cdt.org/cda.html>  
URL:<http://outpost.callnet.com/outpost.html>

### FTP Archives



URL:ftp://ftp.cdt.org/pub/cdt/policy/freespeech/00-INDEX.FREESPEECH

URL:ftp://ftp.eff.org/pub/Alerts/

Gopher Archives:

URL:gopher://gopher.panix.com/11/vtw/exon

URL:gopher://gopher.eff.org/11/Alerts

Email:

██████ (put "send alert" in the subject line for the latest

alert, or "send cdafaq" for the CDA FAQ)

██████ (General CDA information)

██████ (Current status of the CDA)

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## LIST OF PARTICIPATING ORGANIZATIONS

In order to use the net more effectively, several organizations have joined forces on a single Congressional net campaign to stop the Communications Decency Act.

American Civil Liberties Union \* American Communication Association \* American Council for the Arts \* Arts & Technology Society \* Association of Alternative Newsweeklies \* biancaTroll productions \* Boston Coalition for Freedom of Expression \* Californians Against Censorship Together \* Center For Democracy And Technology \* Centre for Democratic Communications \* Center for Public Representation \* Citizen's Voice - New Zealand \* Cloud 9 Internet \* Computer Communicators Association \* Computel Network Services \* Computer Professionals for Social Responsibility \* Cross Connection \* Cyber-Rights Campaign \* CyberQueer Lounge \* Dutch Digital Citizens' Movement \* ECHO Communications Group, Inc. \* Electronic Frontier Canada \* Electronic Frontier Foundation \* Electronic Frontier Foundation - Austin \* Electronic Frontiers Australia \* Electronic Frontiers Houston \* Electronic Frontiers New Hampshire \* Electronic Privacy Information Center \* Feminists For Free Expression \* First Amendment Teach-In \* Florida Coalition Against Censorship \* FranceCom, Inc. Web Advertising Services \* Friendly Anti-Censorship Taskforce for Students \* Hands Off! The Net \* Inland Book Company \* Inner Circle Technologies, Inc. \* Inst. for Global Communications \* Internet On-Ramp, Inc. \* Internet Users Consortium \* Joint Artists' and Music Promotions Political Action Committee \* The Libertarian Party \* Marijuana Policy Project \* Metropolitan Data Networks Ltd. \* MindVox \* MN Grassroots Party \* National Bicycle Greenway \* National Campaign for Freedom of Expression \* National Coalition Against Censorship \* National Gay and Lesbian Task Force \* National Public Telecomputing Network \* National Writers Union \* Oregon Coast RISC \* Panix Public Access Internet \* People for the American Way \* Republican

Liberty Caucus \* Rock Out Censorship \* Society for Electronic Access \* The Thing International BBS Network \* The WELL \* Voters Telecommunications Watch

(Note: All 'Electronic Frontier' organizations are independent entities,  
not EFF chapters or divisions.)

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End Alert

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Subject: ALERT: Digital Telephony Action - Nov. 15 Deadline!

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In Oct. 16's Federal Register, the FBI published a request for public comments \*due November 15 1995\* and a request for surveillance capacity. This is the first major step, since passage of the Digital Telephony legislation in 1994, in setting up the FBI's dream and our nightmare: forced compliance with law enforcement and intelligence demands to make

all communications networks wiretappable.

\* Background: FBI Draft Capacity Requirements

The 1994 "Digital Telephony and Privacy Improvement Act" (DT), passed as the

more honestly-titled "Communications Assistance to Law Enforcement Act"

(CALEA), did add significant statutory privacy protections and public oversight provisions for surveillance actions, but in essence requires telecommunications carriers including "plain old telephone service" companies and related telphonic services, to make their networks wiretap-friendly. There are several steps to implementation:

1) Approval of capability requirements (can the network be tapped?) 2)  
Approval of capacity requirements (how many wiretaps can be done?) 3)  
Approval of funding to pay for this mess

The subject of the FBI's request, reproduced below, is capacity. The capacity request specifies the number of simultaneous wiretaps (by which term we simplify a bit: it includes actual communications intercepts, pen register (dialed number) information captures, and trap-and-trace actions) the government estimates that it will need to conduct authorized surveillance. Telecom companies will have 6 months to respond to this final notice published after the public comment period, and outline what part of their systems are not wiretap-

friendly, at which point the government may opt to pay for a system to be "upgraded" or decide to let it slide.

The demanded capacities range from .05% of "engineered capacity" (which according to the FBI initially means the maximum number of subscribers to a particular service or facility) to a full 1% of engineered capacity. In a worst-case scenario this could mean that 1 person on every residential city block could be wiretapped at all times - or, enough to wiretap 20,000 people at the same time in New York City alone - one of the cities targetted for the higher capacity. According to industry executives, there have never been more than 7 simultaneous wiretaps conducted from a single US telco location. Current wiretapping activity is roughly one tap per 170,000 phone lines. Isn't increasing wiretapping capacity more than a thousand times over a just a wee bit excessive? Clark Matthews,

writing for The Spotlight estimates that under the current proposal, as many as 500,000 to 1,500,000 simultaneous wiretaps could be conducted nation-wide, given sufficient law enforcement resources. Compare this to the average of less than 1000 court-authorized wiretaps annually (though up to 1730 in 1994), less than half of them done for federal law enforcement.

Recent reports indicate that there may have been an error in someone's figures somewhere (perhaps even in the Fed. Register notice, which pretty clearly states "1%"), and that the real number is 1 out of 1000 \*lines\*, but 1 out of 100 phone \*calls\*. Even if this is true, that's a staggering increase in wiretapping capacity.

Considerably after-the-fact, the FBI revised its statements of what "engineered capacity" means, saying it means "total number of simultaneous phone calls" rather than subscriber lines. This appears to be a smokescreen, and is irrelevant anyway: the capacity to tap 1% of all ongoing phone calls is still frighteningly Big-Brotherish. And EPIC claims that the FBI's estimate of how many calls correspond to how many lines may be at least 100% less than the real figures.

Even using the lowest of the percentages, .05% in rural areas until 1998 (five times that, later), the Bureau wants the capacity to conduct surveillance on 1 out of every 20000 lines, and one out of every 2000 calls. Again, the current ratio is 1 to 170,000 or thereabouts. Even in the deepest woods of Maine or the deserts of Nevada, the FBI wants to tap more than 8 times as many people as it currently can spy on - 40 times as many in 1999.

FBI director Louis Freeh continues to deny, deny, deny, saying "We have not and are not asking for the ability to monitor 1 out of every 100 telephone numbers or any other ridiculous number like that. To obtain that many court

orders and conduct that extent of wiretapping would be nearly impossible." His denials, however, simply don't match the Fed. Register notice, and furthermore ignore the fact that warrants only need be sought when the evidence to be gained from the surveillance is to be

used in court (to quote from the statute itself: wiretaps conducted "pursuant to a court order \*or other legal authorization\*", emphasis added.) Not to mention that this legislation isn't for this year, it's for the future. Who knows what will be possible under a bloated FBI budget in future years?

An AP article quotes Deputy Attorney General Jamie Gorelick as saying, "There is no intention to expand the number of wiretaps or the extent of wiretapping ... . I don't think the American people should be worried about that."

Well, please forgive us if we "worry". The capability to tap one out of every 100 or 1000 phone lines simultaneously, even in "high crime areas", is truly wretched excess, even presuming that wiretaps are a good idea in the first place. As Brock Meeks reported ("Riding a Straw Horse", Cyberwire\_Dispatch, Sept. 13 1994), "In 1991, the latest year figures

are available, most Americans, across all age groups, disapproved when asked the question: 'Everything considered, would you say that you approve or disapprove of wiretapping?' Some 67% of all 18-20 year olds

gave the thumbs down, as did 68% of the Gen[eration]-X crowd...Boomers disapproved of wiretapping almost 3-to-1 while 67% of those 50 and over disapproved."

The New\_York\_Times reports that the FBI refuses to elaborate on its internally perceived need to increase wiretapping capacity to this extent, saying only that "The full implementation is absolutely essential for law enforcement and public safety. We are in ongoing discussions with the communications industry. Therefore it would be inappropriate to comment further at this point." Apparently the FBI considers their discussions more important than your rights. And those discussions may even be on the subject of negotiating, outside of public review, for even \*more\* wiretapping capacity that the Bureau has already asked for in the Federal Register. Enough is enough.

DT/CALEA's \*capability\* requirements are still under development. In short, the FBI will state what it wants, and the industry must try to comply with this, within certain limits, including the right of members of the public to challenge the requirements before the FCC.

The funding issue: Congress authorized but did not appropriate US\$500million to implement CALEA in 1994. The Justice dept. has proposed that a 30%-40% extra fine ("surcharge") be attached to all civil and criminal penalties and fines to pay for this, and has attached this proposal to both the stalled and in many cases unconstitutional anti-terrorism legislation, and a pending appropriations bill.

EFF is committed to opposing any such funding efforts for the wiretap bill's provisions.

#### \* What You Can Do Now

See the FBI Federal Register notice below. It includes instructions on how to submit comments. Remember, these comments are part of the public record. The FBI cannot hide them, and they *\*do\** matter. THE DEADLINE IS NOV. 15! Act now, or perhaps forever hold thy peace!

Remember that FBI director Louis Freeh himself states:

"There is no intention to expand the number of wiretaps or the extent of wiretapping. Those who use the public comment notice to argue the contrary are wrong."

If your comments focus on a the (nonetheless quite reasonable) proposition that the FBI intends to wiretap an order of magnitude more people that they do now, your comments may end up being disregarded. Instead, criticize the ridiculous draft requirement for this much wiretap capacity in the first place if the FBI doesn't intend to use it. Remember, you have them, either way. The current proposal is simply senseless.

Next steps: Contact your legislators, and keep an eye on the progress of bills that the FBI has attached DT/CALEA funding language to - sending letters to the members of committess examining such legislation is important.

In your letter to your own Senators and Representatives, please stress that

- \* the FBI has not shown that it effectively uses wiretapping to prevent domestic terrorism, despite its claims and despite this being the prime reason the FBI has expressed for this legislation;

- \* the FBI has not provided the public or Congress any of the information

- that it claims supports its outrageous requests for wiretapping capacity,

- orders of magnitude greater than present-day capacity in some areas;

- \* the FBI may be, counter to the specifications of CALEA, entering into negotiations with telecom industry leaders that are hidden from the public;

- \* the FBI has shown no evidence to back up its claims that digital telephone technology is actually thwarting effective law enforcement;
- \* FOIA-obtained documents from the FBI itself indicate that the above-mentioned Bureau claim is a complete fabrication anyway;
- \* Citizen privacy is not to be stripped for the convenience of law enforcement.

Congress contact information is available at:

[ftp.eff.org, /pub/Activism/Congress\\_contact/](ftp://ftp.eff.org/pub/Activism/Congress_contact/)  
[gopher.eff.org, 1/Activism/Congress\\_contact](gopher://gopher.eff.org/1/Activism/Congress_contact)  
[http://www.eff.org/pub/Activism/Congress\\_contact/](http://www.eff.org/pub/Activism/Congress_contact/)

A list of Congress-member email addresses is available at:

<gopher://una.hh.lib.umich.edu:70/00/socsci/poliscilaw/uslegi/conemail>

#### \* Congress May Just Not Buy It

The FBI did not once seek a warrant for a wiretap in cases involving "weapons, arson, or explosives" since the 1980s. Yet they claim that one of the main motivations for CALEA is to combat domestic terrorism. Where were they when the Oklahoma City federal building was blown up?

Investigations are also underway into the decidedly poor law enforcement handling of several cases, such as the Waco incident and the Randy Weaver siege.

In the wake of CIA honcho Aldrich Ames's rooting-out as a traitor, the same \_NYT\_ issue that covered the FBI Fed. Register notice also reveals

that the CIA and other intelligence agencies - the same national security

interests behind DT and crypto key "escrow" - have lied consistently to

the President and Congress, and have been riddled with Soviet and other

double agents for decades. The article suggests that the CIA is a "laughingstock" in Washington right now.

The new Congress may at times be only too willing to censor, but we can hope they won't fall for this surveillance rigamarole.

#### \* House Rejects First DT/CALEA Funding Attempt

On Oct. 25, the House of Representatives voted to \*not\* include the FBI's

CALEA funding language in the Omnibus Budget Bill (which is expected to

be vetoed anyway). This version of the measure called for a 40% "surcharge" to be added to all criminal fines, to raise US\$500mil. to pay for implementation of

the "upgrades" to telephonic equipment that the FBI hopes to require. Other versions of the FBI legislation are, however, still appended to various appropriations and terrorism bills - the Bureau can be said to be hedging its bets.

The Electronic Privacy Information Center reported this event as a victory, though others have suggested that the reason the measure was rejected was not because of privacy concerns, but rather because some arch-conservatives consider the suggested funding measure to be a form of tax increase. The anti-tax conservatives may have been "thrown a bone"

on a bill expected to die anyway, so they'll have already played their cards when the issue comes up in other bills.

Whatever's really going on in Congressional minds, (and a New York Times article tends to, believe it or not, support *\*both\** viewpoints), the FBI's loss here certainly remains cause for very guarded celebration. But the issue *\*will\** be back.

*\* Sen. Leahy Definitely Not Buying It*

Nov. 3, Senator Patrick Leahy (D-VT) sent a public letter to FBI Director

Louis Freeh. It stated in part:

The Federal Bureau of Investigation recently published in the Federal Register a proposed notice of law enforcement's capacity demands predicated upon an historical baseline of electronic surveillance activity and an analysis of that activity. The Federal Register notice did not include publication of those two documents.

Please provide me with copies of those two documents, which I also urge you to release to the public and publish in the Federal Register to ensure the fullest dissemination of the information.

I appreciate your prompt attention to this matter.

EFF joins CDT in commending Sen. Leahy for his no-nonsense approach, and for his consideration of the public interest in making this request. EFF, EPIC, or any other organization could obtain this information via Freedom of Information



Act lawsuits, but that could take years, and it'd be much better if the FBI released the information voluntarily.

The full text of Sen. Leahy's letter is available at:

ftp.eff.org,  
/pub/Privacy/Digital\_Telephony\_FBI/leahy\_freeh\_110395.letter  
gopher.eff.org, 1/Privacy/Digital\_Telephony\_FBI,  
leahy\_freeh\_110395.letter  
[http://www.eff.org/pub/Privacy/Digital\\_Telephony\\_FBI/leahy\\_freeh\\_110395.letter](http://www.eff.org/pub/Privacy/Digital_Telephony_FBI/leahy_freeh_110395.letter)

#### \* Canadian Law Enforcement Taking the FBI Hint

Electronic Frontier Canada reports that Canadian police chiefs are clamoring for some kind of "back door" into citizen communications, right on the heels of many other governments put under pressure by the US Administration to support its privacy-invasive policies.

Canadian law enforcement may be shying away from Clipper-like crypto key

"escrow" (possibly because they realize what a ridiculous idea it is?),

but are already considering a ban on cellular phones that prevent eavesdropping.

The 90th Annual Conference of the Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police (Regina, Saskatchewan, August 24, 1995) produced numerous policy recommendations and resolutions, including an unsupported decision that

"violent" media programming has "no" value at all and should be banned (including an explicit recommendation that online material that "exploits violence" be attacked); that "the Internet System [sic] is devoid of any standards and controls necessary to regulate the nature of information being disseminated worldwide", that anonymity should be banned, and that the Canadian government should "enact legislation that will effectively control and regulate the Internet System" [sic]; that roadway video surveillance be instituted; that crime \*suspect\* be subject to "DNA warrants" and have their genetic information added to a federal database; and (surprised?) that "new communications technology is threatening the ability of...police agencies to conduct court-approved electronic surveillance". This is the same, unsubstantiated, claim being made by the US Federal Bureau of Investigation.

The Canadian proposal continues: "the telecommunications systems and networks are often used to further serious criminal activities, including drug trafficking, terrorism, organized crime, extortion, corruption, and money



laundering" [not unlike cars, fingers, shoes, etc. And they forgot that favorite buzzphrase: "child molestation and pornography".]

The rest of the recommendations regarding police surveillance and modern communications is all but plagiarized from the FBI's statements and legislation, and concludes, "the Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police urges the Government of Canada to enact the appropriate legislation requiring that all present and new telecommunications technologies contain capabilities that will provide law enforcement agencies with the technical assistance necessary to accomplish court-authorized interceptions pursuant to the applicable sections of the Criminal Code of Canada (s.184.2, 184.3, 186, 188, 487.01, 492.1, 492.2)."

To our northern neighbors: Be afraid.

The full text of the CACP recommendations can be found at:

<http://insight.mcmaster.ca/org/efc/pages/law/doc/cacp.24aug95.html>

\* The Text of the FBI's Federal Register Notice

[Federal Register: October 16, 1995 (Volume 60, Number 199)]

[Notices]

[Page 53643-53646]

>From the Federal Register Online via GPO Access [[wais.access.gpo.gov](http://wais.access.gpo.gov)]

DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

Federal Bureau of Investigation

Implementation of the Communications Assistance for Law  
Enforcement Act

AGENCY: Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI).

ACTION: Initial notice and requests for comments.

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SUMMARY: The FBI is providing initial notification of law enforcement capacity requirements as mandated in section 104 of the Communications Assistance for Law Enforcement Act. Comments regarding this initial notice will be considered in the development of the final capacity notice.

DATES: Written comments must be received on or before November 15, 1995.

ADDRESSES: Comments should be submitted in triplicate to the Telecommunications Industry Liaison Unit (TILU), Federal Bureau of Investigation, P.O. Box 220450, Chantilly, VA 22022-0450.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Contact TILU at [REDACTED]. Please refer to your question as a capacity notice question.

I. Background

On October 25, 1994, the President signed into law the Communications Assistance for Law Enforcement Act (CALEA) (Public Law 103-414; 47 U.S.C. 1001-1010). This law presents law enforcement's requirements for the surveillance of wire or electronic communications. The primary purpose of the CALEA is to clarify a telecommunications carrier's duty to assist law enforcement agencies with the lawful interception of communications and the acquisition of call-identifying information in an ever-changing telecommunications environment. To ensure that law enforcement agencies can continue to conduct authorized surveillance of wire or electronic communications, the CALEA states that telecommunications carriers must meet the assistance capability requirements set forth in section 103 of the Act (and restated in Appendix A of this notice).

Section 104 of the CALEA mandates that the Attorney General of the United States provide notice of estimates for the actual and maximum number of pen register, trap and trace, and communication intercepts that law enforcement agencies may conduct and use simultaneously.

The definitions for "actual capacity" and "maximum capacity" are included below:

**Actual Capacity**--notice of the actual number of communication interceptions, pen registers, and trap and trace devices, representing a portion of the maximum capacity that the Attorney General estimates that government agencies authorized to conduct electronic surveillance may conduct and use simultaneously by the date that is 4 years after the date of enactment of the CALEA" (CALEA, section 104(a)(1)(A)).

**Maximum Capacity**--notice of the maximum capacity required to accommodate all of the communication interceptions, pen registers, and trap and trace devices that the Attorney General estimates that government agencies authorized to conduct electronic surveillance may conduct and use simultaneously after the date that is 4 years after of enactment of the CALEA" (CALEA, section 104(a)(1)(B)).

This Federal Register announcement serves as the initial notice of the government's actual and maximum capacity requirements. These requirements will aid telecommunications carriers in developing and deploying solutions to meet the assistance capability requirements set forth in section 103 of the

CALEA. A final notice will be issued in accordance with the CALEA requirements after considering comments to this initial notice.

The actual and maximum capacity requirements were developed by the FBI in coordination with law enforcement. By order of the Attorney General of the United States, as codified in 28 CFR 0.85 (o), government implementation responsibilities under the CALEA were delegated to the FBI. The FBI, in turn, is establishing TILU to carry out the government's implementation responsibilities, including the publication of capacity notices.

For the purposes of this document, the terms defined in section 2510 of title 18, United States Code, and section 102 of the CALEA (section 1001 of title 47, United States Code) have, respectively, the meanings stated in those sections. Additional clarification of terms is provided in Appendix B of this notice.

## II. Introduction

The capacity figures in this notice reflect the combined number of simultaneous pen register, trap and trace, and communication interceptions that law enforcement may conduct by October 25, 1998. All telecommunications carriers must, within 3 years after the publication of the final notice of capacity requirements or within 4 years after the date of enactment of the CALEA, whichever is longer, ensure that their systems are capable of accommodating simultaneously the number of pen register, trap and trace, and communication interceptions identified in the actual capacity requirements. Furthermore, all telecommunications carriers shall ensure capabilities exist to expeditiously accommodate any increase in the actual number of pen register, trap and trace, and communication interceptions that authorized agencies may seek to conduct and use, up to the maximum capacity requirement. Some carriers may not need to make modifications to their equipment, facilities, and services in response to this notice because they currently meet all law enforcement capacity and capability requirements for electronic surveillance.

The capacity requirements are not intended to specify, required or prohibit adoption of any particular system design or configuration by a telecommunications carrier, equipment manufacturer, or support services provider. These entities must develop an appropriate solution to comply with the capacity requirements set forth in this notice and with the assistance capability requirements found in section 103 of the CALEA. In developing solutions, carriers should consider the effect that particular services and features may have on capacity requirements. For example, the required number of ports, lines, or other network resources may vary depending upon the use of particular services and features by an intercept subject. The FBI, along with other law enforcement agencies, will be available, through the consultative process, to discuss these engineering issues.

In accordance with the intent of the CALEA, carriers must ensure that their equipment, facilities, or services that provide a customer or subscriber with the ability to originate, terminate, or direct communications are capable of meeting the capability and capacity requirements mandated by the CALEA. These requirements apply to existing and future telecommunications carriers.

### III. Capacity Requirements Derivation

The capacity figures that are presented in this initial notice were derived as a result of a thorough analysis of electronic surveillance needs. Information regarding electronic surveillance activities for a specific time period was obtained from telecommunications carriers, law enforcement, U.S. District Courts, State Courts, State Attorneys General, and State District Attorneys to establish a historical baseline of activity.

The historical baseline of electronic surveillance activity was determined after examination of both the location and occurrence of each electronic surveillance reported. The historical baseline was then analyzed to derive the total and simultaneous electronic surveillance activity by switch and within specific geographic areas. Future capacity needs were then determined after consideration of the impact of demographics, market trends, and other factors on the historical baseline.

The analysis indicates that electronic surveillance activity varies by geographic area. Therefore, the capacity requirements will vary by geographic area. The capacity requirements are reported by category, with each geographic area being assigned to one of three distinct categories. The use of categories enables capacity requirements to be stated in a manner that reasonably represents law enforcement electronic surveillance needs in all geographic areas, yet does not overburden the telecommunications industry by holding all carriers to the same level of capacity.

Category I (the highest category) and Category II (the intermediate category) represent those geographic areas where the majority of electronic surveillance activity occurs. Only a few of the most densely populated areas, which have historically been areas of high electronic surveillance activity, are grouped into Category I. Other densely populated areas and some suburban areas, with moderate electronic surveillance activity, are grouped into Category II. The numbers for these categories were derived based on the analysis described above. Category I and Category II apply to approximately 25 percent of the equipment, facilities, and services covered by the survey over the time period.

Category III (the lowest category) represents law enforcement's minimum acceptable capacity requirements for electronic surveillance activity. This category covers all other geographic areas. The numbers for Category III were derived by analyzing areas of historically low electronic surveillance activity

and projecting future needs in order to establish a requirement for a minimum level of capacity for electronic surveillance.

All telecommunications carriers are expected to meet the minimum capacity requirements of Category III. Carriers will be individually notified of those specific geographic areas within the areas they serve that exceed Category III and warrant a Category I or Category II capacity requirement. The individual carrier notifications will occur contemporaneously with the publication of the final notice. It is anticipated that the majority of the area served by a carrier will fall into Category III; however, if Category I and Category II capacity requirements are necessary, they are likely to affect only a small portion of their area served.

This initial capacity notice includes the actual and maximum capacity requirements for Categories I, II, and III. After considering comments to this initial notice, a final notice will be published. Future changes to the maximum capacity requirements issued in the final notice will be published in the Federal Register, as necessary, in accordance with section 104(c).

#### IV. Initial Statement of Actual and Maximum Capacity

The actual and maximum capacity requirements are presented as a percentage of the engineered capacity of the equipment, facilities, and services that provide a customer or subscriber with the ability to originate, terminate, or direct communications. Engineered capacity refers to the maximum number of subscribers that can be served by that equipment, facility, or service.

Frequently, the percentage is applied to the engineered subscriber capacity of a switch, however, the percentage can also apply to nonswitch equipment (i.e., network peripherals) involved in the origination, termination, or direction of communications. Percentages are being used rather than fixed numbers due to the dynamics and diversity of the telecommunications industry. The use of percentages allows telecommunications carriers the flexibility to adjust to changes in marketplace conditions or changes in the number of subscribers, access lines, equipment, facilities, etc., and still know the required level of capacity.

As a result of extensive consultation with federal, State, and local law enforcement agencies, telecommunications carriers, providers of telecommunications support services, and manufacturers of telecommunications equipment, the FBI proposes the following capacity requirements for Categories I, II, and III:

##### Category I

##### Actual Capacity

Each telecommunications carrier must provide the ability to meet the capability assistance requirements defined in section 103 of the CALEA for a number of simultaneous pen register, trap and trace, and communication interceptions equal to 0.5% of the engineered capacity of the equipment, facilities, or services that provide a customer or subscriber with the ability to originate, terminate, or direct communications.

#### Maximum Capacity

Each telecommunications carrier must ensure that it can expeditiously increase its capacity to meet the assistance capacity requirements defined in section 103 of the CALEA for a number of simultaneous pen register, trap and trace, and communication interceptions equal to 1% of the engineered capacity of the equipment, facilities, or services that provide a customer or subscriber with the ability to originate, terminate, or direct communications.

#### Category II

##### Actual Capacity

Each telecommunications carrier must provide the ability to meet the capability assistance requirements defined in section 103 of the CALEA for a number of simultaneous pen register, trap and trace, and communication interceptions equal to 0.25% of the engineered capacity of the equipment, facilities, or services that provide a customer or subscriber with the ability to originate, terminate, or direct communications.

##### Maximum Capacity

Each telecommunications carrier must ensure that it can expeditiously increase its capacity to meet the assistance capacity requirements defined in section 103 of the CALEA for a number of simultaneous pen register, trap and trace, and communication interceptions equal to 0.5% of the engineered capacity of the equipment, facilities, or services that provide a customer or subscriber with the ability to originate, terminate, or direct communications.

#### Category III

##### Actual Capacity

Each telecommunications carrier must provide the ability to meet the capability assistance requirements defined in section 103 of the CALEA for a number of simultaneous pen register, trap and trace, and communication interceptions equal to 0.05% of the engineered capacity of the equipment, facilities, or services that provide a customer or subscriber with the ability to originate, terminate, or direct communications.

##### Maximum Capacity

Each telecommunications carrier must ensure that it can expeditiously increase its capacity to meet the assistance capability requirements defined in section 103 of the CALEA for a number of simultaneous pen register, trap and trace, and communication interceptions equal to 0.25% of the engineered capacity of the equipment, facilities, or services that provide a customer or subscriber with the ability to originate, terminate, or direct communications.

When translated from percentages to numbers, capacity requirements should be rounded up to the nearest whole number.

#### V. Carrier Statements and Consultation

As set forth in section 104(d) of the CALEA, each telecommunications carrier is required to provide within 180 days after publication of the final capacity notice a statement identifying any of its systems or services that do not have the capacity to meet the assistance capability requirements stated in section 103 of the CALEA. These carrier statements will be used in conjunction with law enforcement priorities and other factors to determine the specific equipment, facilities, and services that require immediate modification and that may be eligible for cost reimbursement. The FBI will consult with telecommunications carriers to establish a template for responding to the capability and capacity requirements.

Dated: October 10, 1995.

Louis J. Freeh,  
Director.

[FR Doc. 95-25562 Filed 10-13-95; 8:45 am]  
BILLING CODE 4410-02-M

[editor's note -- Appendicies have been deleted to save space. The entire text of this document can be found at EFF's and CDT's Digital Telephony Web Pages. See "For More Information", below.]

#### \* For More Information

See the following Internet sites:

[ftp.eff.org, /pub/EFF/Privacy/Digital\\_Telephony\\_FBI/](ftp://ftp.eff.org/pub/EFF/Privacy/Digital_Telephony_FBI/)  
[gopher.eff.org, 1/EFF/Privacy/Digital\\_Telephony\\_FBI](gopher://gopher.eff.org/1/EFF/Privacy/Digital_Telephony_FBI)  
[http://www.eff.org/pub/EFF/Privacy/Digital\\_Telephony\\_FBI/](http://www.eff.org/pub/EFF/Privacy/Digital_Telephony_FBI/)  
<http://www.epic.org/privacy/wiretap/>  
<http://www.cdt.org/digtel.html>



[Portions of this alert based on material from CDT, EPIC and VTW,  
various  
articles, and several independent reports.]

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Subject: Newsbytes  
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\* EFF Relocation Complete

Our new, permanent contact info is:

The Electronic Frontier Foundation  
1550 Bryant St., Suite 725  
San Francisco CA 94103 USA

██████████ (voice) <-- That's 436 9EFF

██████████ (fax)

██████████ (or, for "canned" general info, ██████████).

Bernstein- or Scientology-case queries should go to EFF Staff Counsel Shari  
Steele (██████████), ██████████.

Other Press and legal queries should go to EFF Staff Counsel Mike  
Godwin  
(██████████), ██████████.

\* EFF Rated in Top 5% of the Net by Point Survey

Point Survey, one of the most comprehensive WWW site review services on the  
net, <http://www.pointcom.com>, rated EFFWeb as one of the top 5% net sites.  
Their review calls us a "great resource for those who want to protect  
cyberspace." The full review is available at:

[http://www.pointcom.com/gifs/reviews/10\\_29038.htm](http://www.pointcom.com/gifs/reviews/10_29038.htm)

\* Commerce Dept. IPWG Report on Online Intellectual Property Meets  
Resistance

The Information Infrastructure Task Force (IITF) of the National  
Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) was created by the  
executive branch of the U.S. government to recommend policy and legislation  
on the "Information Superhighway". In the wake of the LaMacchia case, The  
IITF set up a working group to make recommendations

on copyright law and intellectual property. The "White Paper" is the report of  
this working group. The legislation recommended in the White

Paper was sent to Congress on Thursday, September 28, 1995. The White  
Paper is based on a 1994 draft, the "Green Paper", both strongly influenced by



the Intellectual Property Rights Working Group chair, Patent & Trademark Office Commissioner Bruce Lehman.

The recent White Paper version is available at:

[ftp.eff.org, /pub/Intellectual\\_property/ipwg\\_nii\\_ip\\_lehman.report](ftp://ftp.eff.org/pub/Intellectual_property/ipwg_nii_ip_lehman.report) [gopher.eff.org, 1/Intellectual\\_property, ipwg\\_nii\\_ip\\_lehman.report](gopher://gopher.eff.org/1/Intellectual_property/ipwg_nii_ip_lehman.report)  
[http://www.eff.org/pub/Intellectual\\_property/ipwg\\_nii\\_ip\\_lehman.report](http://www.eff.org/pub/Intellectual_property/ipwg_nii_ip_lehman.report)

The Green Paper version was the subject of strong criticism from many sides, including Prof. Pamela Samuelson, who opposed the attempt to pass off sweeping recommended changes as "minor". Samuelson, in her critique, states that the Green Paper's recommendations "would abolish longstanding rights that the public has enjoyed to make use of copyrighted works, rights that have been consistently upheld in courts and in the copyright statute."

The draft (Green Paper) version, and Prof. Samuelson's critique are available at (respectively):

[ftp.eff.org, /pub/Intellectual\\_property/ipwg\\_nii\\_ip\\_lehman\\_report.draft](ftp://ftp.eff.org/pub/Intellectual_property/ipwg_nii_ip_lehman_report.draft)  
[gopher.eff.org, 1/Intellectual\\_property, ipwg\\_nii\\_ip\\_lehman\\_report.draft](gopher://gopher.eff.org/1/Intellectual_property/ipwg_nii_ip_lehman_report.draft)  
[http://www.eff.org/pub/Intellectual\\_property/ipwg\\_nii\\_ip\\_lehman\\_report.draft](http://www.eff.org/pub/Intellectual_property/ipwg_nii_ip_lehman_report.draft)

and

[ftp.eff.org, /pub/Intellectual\\_property/ipwg\\_nii\\_ip\\_report\\_samuelson.comments](ftp://ftp.eff.org/pub/Intellectual_property/ipwg_nii_ip_report_samuelson.comments)  
[gopher.eff.org, 1/Intellectual\\_property, ipwg\\_nii\\_ip\\_report\\_samuelson.comments](gopher://gopher.eff.org/1/Intellectual_property/ipwg_nii_ip_report_samuelson.comments)  
[http://www.eff.org/pub/Intellectual\\_property/ipwg\\_nii\\_ip\\_report\\_samuelson.comments](http://www.eff.org/pub/Intellectual_property/ipwg_nii_ip_report_samuelson.comments)

EFF Board of Directors Chair Esther Dyson and Vice-Chair John Perry Barlow have written forward-looking pieces on online "i-p", both pointing in directions strongly at odds with IITF's vision of intellectual property's future. These articles can be found at (respectively):

[ftp.eff.org, /pub/Publications/Esther\\_Dyson/ip\\_on\\_the\\_net.article](ftp://ftp.eff.org/pub/Publications/Esther_Dyson/ip_on_the_net.article) [gopher.eff.org, 1/Publications/Esther\\_Dyson, ip\\_on\\_the\\_net.article](gopher://gopher.eff.org/1/Publications/Esther_Dyson/ip_on_the_net.article)  
[http.eff.org/pub/Publications/Esther\\_Dyson/HTML/ip\\_on\\_the\\_net.html](http://www.eff.org/pub/Publications/Esther_Dyson/HTML/ip_on_the_net.html)

and

[ftp.eff.org, /pub/Publications/John\\_Perry\\_Barlow/idea\\_economy.article](ftp://ftp.eff.org/pub/Publications/John_Perry_Barlow/idea_economy.article)  
[gopher.eff.org, 1/Publications/John\\_Perry\\_Barlow, idea\\_economy.article](gopher://gopher.eff.org/1/Publications/John_Perry_Barlow/idea_economy.article)  
[http.eff.org/pub/Publications/John\\_Perry\\_Barlow/HTML/idea\\_economy\\_article.html](http://www.eff.org/pub/Publications/John_Perry_Barlow/HTML/idea_economy_article.html)

The new "White Paper" version of the IITF report doesn't seem to have fixed anything. Most criticisms that applied to the Green Paper draft hold for the final version. The National Writers Union says of the report, "We are struck by the remote character of the report in that it

misses the daily realities of the individual writer, artist or other creator...we must voice concerns that favor the rights of information users at the same time that we seek fair compensation for our work." NWU suggests that the report points fingers at individuals and libraries for copyright infringement, when the real culprits are media conglomerates, and calls the working group's bias against the public interest and toward media centralization "a disconnection from reality", and a failure to uphold the public's fair use rights. NWU closes by saying, "Legislation and regulatory action on intellectual property and the National Information Infrastructure must do a more complete job than has been done by this report to include the concerns of the creators of intellectual property and of the general public."

The full NWU comments can be found at:

[ftp.eff.org, /pub/Intellectual\\_property/nwu\\_ipwg\\_paper.comments](ftp://ftp.eff.org/pub/Intellectual_property/nwu_ipwg_paper.comments)

[gopher.eff.org, 1/Intellectual\\_property, nwu\\_ipwg\\_paper.comments](gopher://gopher.eff.org/1/Intellectual_property,nwu_ipwg_paper.comments)

[http://www.eff.org/pub/Intellectual\\_property/nwu\\_ipwg\\_paper.comments](http://www.eff.org/pub/Intellectual_property/nwu_ipwg_paper.comments)

The Commercial Internet eXchange (CIX) has criticised the white paper as

well, in a draft position statement, pointing out that IPWG would criminalize

all service providers for the illegal actions of their users.

CIX's response paper states in part, "CIX members transmit nearly half a billion messages each day, and cannot realistically be expected to monitor the content of those transmissions. Moreover, the instantaneous

nature of digital communications precludes access providers from viewing, judging, monitoring or editing the content of most messages posted or accessed by their subscribers. Finally, [Internet Access Providers] are

similar to common carriers in that they have no control over which members of the public use their facilities or the content members of the public choose to transmit. For these reasons, access providers should not be treated as a publisher [sic] for copyright purposes. Unfortunately, that is precisely what the Working Group has proposed by including in its suggested revisions to the Copyright Act the undefined word 'transmit' as part of the definition of 'publish.'"

The full CIX comments can be found at:

ftp.eff.org, /pub/Intellectual\_property/cix\_ipwg\_paper.comments gopher.eff.org,  
1/Intellectual\_property, cix\_ipwg\_paper.comments  
[http://www.eff.org/pub/Intellectual\\_property/cix\\_ipwg\\_paper.comments](http://www.eff.org/pub/Intellectual_property/cix_ipwg_paper.comments)

The IITF report recommended that the Copyright Act "be amended to expressly recognize that copies or phonorecords of works can be distributed to the public by transmission, and that such transmissions fall within the exclusive distribution right of the copyright owner." This portion of the suggested legislation has already been passed by both houses of Congress.

Whether other aspects will find their way into law remains to be seen. They probably will, though. Criticism of the White Paper is common and

solid, but this does not seem to be dissuading legislators from taking the Report's conclusions and recommendations at face value and running with them.

\* IPWG Report's Suggested Legislation: Passed and Pending (+ Canada Tie-In)

Samuelson, CIX, Barlow, NWU, Dyson, Jessica Littman, and numerous others

have pointed out, in articles and at conferences, an almost uncountable

number of flaws in the IITF NII intellectual property report. Some have

labelled it "a wolf in sheep's clothing", which systematically ignores cases which don't support its extreme positions in order to make its radical proposals look more reasonable. At this early stage, the White

Paper's endorsement of criminalizing traditionally protected behaviors such as private, non-commercial copying is not well understood. Nor is

it well understood how biased a document it is, or how it supposes a view of the world in which every information transaction can be subject

to a private tax with the threat of criminal sanction behind it.

Critics of the report suggest that its drafting process is heavily dominated by special interests to such an extent that a fair outcome is

unlikely - the lobbyists (and former lobbyists like PTO Commissioner Lehman), may be motivated by fear that digitalization will mark the end

of the economic hegemony of certain media interests, who seek to bend the law to their exclusive advantage with no regard for the traditional balance in intellectual property law between i-p rights holders and the

public.

Then again, others, such as the Software Publisher Association complain

loudly of lost profits in the billions due to online copyright violation, and even the NWU supports major changes to current intellectual property law.

Few seem to doubt that current law is quite right for the state of modern communications. The disagreement seems largely about what changes must be made, and perhaps more to the point - whether now is a good time to change them or on the other hand whether anyone proposing immediate changes has any idea what they are doing.

Senators Orrin Hatch and Pat Leahy think they do, and introduced S. 1284, the "Information Infrastructure Copyright Act of 1995" in September. the IICA is based heavily on the IITF White Paper, and comprises sections. The first, the "NII Copyright Protection Act of 1995", explicitly covers digital transmission of copyrighted works, as one might expect. It also makes it a crime to alter or provide false "copyright management information" on someone else's intellectual property, or to circumvent copy protection schemes or provide software or hardware to do so ("copyright management information" being author and copyright holder name and contact info, terms & conditions of use),

Not particularly disturbing? Until you consider that reverse-analysis of software, including copy protection, is useful and legitimate, as are utilities to update one's own information stored by the copy protection features in software. Or until you consider that many copy protection schemes are poorly designed, and essentially require one to break the copy protection to make backups or to install a new copy of the software from backup disks. Or until you get to the section that lays the burden of proving innocence on the accused. Or until you realize that the only way to enforce these provisions would be for system operators (and libraries and other services) to act as "net cops" and spy on users continuously and in great detail. Fines are up to half a million dollars and/or 5 years in prison.

The bill panders to large-scale copyright holders, and fails to balance their rights with those of authors & creators, not to mention the public's right of fair use. A coalition of organizations, individuals and a companies, the Digital Future Coalition, further criticizes the bill as

hindrance to the development of tele-education and general market innovation.

EFF is considering joining DFC and endorsing their upcoming letter to the sponsors of this bill.

Ironically, it was Sen. Leahy who said (referring to the Digital Telephony bill) in April 1994, "The part that frightens the hell out of me is the government deciding where technology goes."

Should this legislation pass, it is likely that the actual authors and creators (as opposed to corporate copyright holders) will make less money than ever from their works, and that information vendors (and access providers - unless and until we have a common-carrier-like liability protection for them) will have to make redoubled efforts to check the copyright and royalty/licensing situation of any information their services provide. This could be the next step on one of two paths: increasing "net.cop" behavior on the part of access providers, or increased civil disobedience of unenforceable laws that are almost physically impossible to abide by for system operators.

Senator Leahy, this time with Sen. Feingold, is interested in even more changes to intellectual property law. They introduced S.1122, the "Criminal Copyright Improvement Act of 1995" in August, making it an offense to assist others in the reproduction or distribution of an infringed work, and allowing prosecutors to go after bulletin board operators and other service providers when the end-user cannot be tracked down. Leahy's bill, the inspiration for which appears to be highly questionable statistics from software manufacturers' trade associations, poses fairly clear threats to all system operators that do not track users and get a variety of verified personal information from all customers. In a speech at a conference, Leahy tied S.1122 into his and Sen. Orrin Hatch's new bill to combat the counterfeiting of goods, S.1136, proposing fines up to US\$1,000,000. S.1122 has language related to faked goods, including software, as well. It may be that the two bills are intended to be merged.

S. 1122 is intended to snare system operators whose systems are used for software piracy by customers. One section states"

SEC. 2. CRIMINAL INFRINGEMENT OF COPYRIGHTS.

(a) DEFINITION OF FINANCIAL GAIN- Section 101 of title 17, United

States Code, is amended by inserting after the undesignated paragraph relating to the term `display', the following new paragraph:

`The term `financial gain' includes receipt of anything of value, including the receipt of other copyrighted works.'.

(b) CRIMINAL OFFENSES- Section 506(a) of title 17, United States

Code, is amended to read as follows:

`(a) CRIMINAL INFRINGEMENT- Any person who infringes a copyright

willfully either--

`(1) for purposes of commercial advantage or private financial gain; or

`(2) by the reproduction or distribution, including by transmission, or assisting others in such reproduction or distribution, of 1 or more copies, of 1 or more

copyrighted

works, which have a total retail value of \$5,000 or more, shall be punished as provided under section 2319 of title

18.'.

EFF currently has no position on this legislation, but may take one.

The

Center for Democracy and Technology will support the bill, provided it is

modified (See CDT Policy Post for more info.)

On the one hand, few doubt that allowing a system to be used as a sort of "pirated software clearinghouse" should be illegal even if the sysop does not profit from this activity (Cf. the LaMacchia case). However, this bill would appear to be insufficiently narrow, and may hold criminally liable system operators whose users exchange software, audio files or other material copyrighted by others, even without the permission or knowledge of the system operator. EFF remains committed to establishing a form of common-carrier-like liability protection for online service operators so that sysadmins and BBS sysops are not fined or imprisoned for crimes committed by users. The bill also does not appear to adequately take into account the people's rights of fair use.

At a conference, Borland Sr. VP Robert Kohn and author of a treatise on online music licensing, pointed out for the audience Internet sites devoted to recording artists such as Frank Sinatra, and noting that they probably were not licensed to have the copies of song lyrics they offered from their sites. As if mirroring Kohn's sentiments, SOCAN, roughly the Canadian equivalent of US music intellectual property clearinghouses BMI and ASCAP, have filed a proposed tariff which will allow licensing of music transmitted over the Internet or BBSs, so that

SOCAN can collect royalties for online uses of sound clips or lyric texts. The Society of Composers, Authors and Music Publishers of Canada's Tariff 22 is

entitled "Transmission of Musical Subscribers [sic] via a Telecommunications Service not Licensed Under Tariff 16 or 17". The proposed Tariff provides a licence fee of \$0.25 for every subscriber on

a service that does not earn advertising revenue. For services that do earn revenue from advertising, the licence is based on 3.2% of gross revenues, with a minimum fee of \$0.25 per subscriber. A correspondent, John Lax, contacted SOCAN for more details, and found that SOCAN plans that anyone wanting to make online use of songs controlled by SOCAN would have to be licensed by the organization, and be subject to audits and inspection by SOCAN.

While some note that sites like IUMA, providing online but copyrighted music information such as song lyrics, should have to pay royalties, the administrator of one such site says that the artists involved are, in at least some cases, not at all pleased by moves like SOCAN's, and will end up paying any SOCAN fees \*themselves\* because the Internet music sites provide free advertising for them, resulting in far more income from new sales than incoming lost from uncollected penny-ante royalties for online lyric reading or soundclip downloads. This is fairly interesting in light of NWU's criticism of the Lehman paper, that the report reflects not the interests of creators at all, but rather the interests

of media mega-corporations who thrive on royalty percentages.

While there's no direct tie-in between SOCAN's proposed tariff and the IETF i-p report, there's an indirect one, in the form of a bill which recently passed both the US Senate and, unanimously, the House of Representatives. H.R.1506, the Digital Performance Right in Sound Recordings Act of 1995", gives copyright holders the authority to collect royalties each time a sound recording is transmitted in digital form. Measures that were suggested independently by both SOCAN and IETF are about to be the law of the land in the US, despite the fact that little

debate on this matter has occurred, and some content producers think this will cost, not save, them money.

The bills referred to above are available at:

[ftp.eff.org, /pub/Legislation/Bills\\_by\\_number/](ftp://ftp.eff.org/pub/Legislation/Bills_by_number/)  
[gopher.eff.org, 1/Legislation/Bills\\_by\\_number](http://gopher.eff.org/1/Legislation/Bills_by_number)  
[http://www.eff.org/pub/Legislation/Bills\\_by\\_number/](http://www.eff.org/pub/Legislation/Bills_by_number/)

NOTE: IETF is not to be confused with IETF, the Internet Engineering Task

Force, which is a non-governmental volunteer standards body.

[Some text in the above two articles borrowed from CIX, SOCAN, and NWU statements; Computer Law Report #11 was also used as source material, as were several action alerts and posts by participants on EFF and EFC mailing lists.]

\* Upcoming Articles

Bernstein Case - Update  
Public Govt. Info Online - Update  
Scientology v. Critics - Update  
A Look at Internet Domain Name Fees and Alternatives to InterNIC  
EFC Opposes Bell Canada Trademark on "The Net"  
Arthur Halavais Censored from Internet by Judge  
Minnesota v. the Whole Wide World  
PROFS Case - Update  
Tony Davis Case - Update  
Lorne Shantz Case - Update

Some of these were expected this issue, but have been put off due to the size of the articles in the current issue.

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Subject: Upcoming events  
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This schedule lists events that are directly EFF-related. A much more detailed calendar of events likely to be of interest to our members and supporters is maintained at:

ftp: ftp.eff.org, /pub/EFF/calendar.eff  
gopher: gopher.eff.org, 1/EFF, calendar.eff  
http://www.eff.org/pub/EFF/calendar.eff

Nov. 7 \* European Summit on the Information Superhighway; Amsterdam, Netherlands. Speakers include EFF co-founder John Perry Barlow.

Nov. 9 \* Doors of Perception Conference; Amsterdam, Netherlands. Speakers include EFF co-founder John Perry Barlow.

Nov. 23-25 \* HyperMedia Conference; Oita Japan. Speakers include EFF boardmember David Farber.



Nov. 27 \* Internet Society Japan Conference; Kobe Japan. Speakers include

EFF boardmember David Farber.

Nov. 29 \* Japan Ministry of Posts and Telecom. Annual Conference on Advances in Communications; Tokyo Japan. Foreign Keynote speech

by EFF boardmember, David Farber.

Jan. 17-

18 \* Innovation Now; Oregon Convention Center, Portland Oregon.

Sponsored by American Electronics Association's Oregon

Council,

et al. Speakers include EFF chair of the board Esther Dyson.

URL: <http://www.innovationnow.org/>

-----  
Subject: Quote of the Day  
-----

"You are all optimizing against the imaginable, not the probable. And the imaginable, especially the imaginable evil, has no inertia at all. There is no limit to what it might do and therefore, there is no limit to what one must do to prevent it...If we are to design all of our policies around the worst thing that could possibly happen, if we are trying to achieve a world of such absolute safety that no one in power can ever be blamed for a human-caused catastrophe, we will have to endow law enforcement with powers of surveillance which will make a police state not just imaginable but probable."

- EFF co-founder John Perry Barlow, in a letter to Administration staffers

regarding the Clipper and Digital Telephony surveillance scheme, on which the Administration refused to back down, citing fear of terrorists

using untappable communications to plan a nuclear bombing of the World Trade Center, and the reaction the voting public would have toward the Administration in the event of such terrorism.

Find yourself wondering if your privacy and freedom of speech are safe when bills to censor the Internet are swimming about in a sea of of surveillance legislation and anti-terrorism hysteria? Worried that in the rush to make us secure from ourselves that our government representatives may deprive us of our essential civil liberties? Concerned that legislative efforts nominally to "protect children" will

actually censor all communications down to only content suitable for the playground?

Join EFF!

Even if you don't live in the U.S., the anti-Internet hysteria will soon be visiting a legislative body near you. If it hasn't already.

-----  
Subject: What YOU Can Do  
-----

\* The Communications Decency Act & Other Censorship Legislation

The Communications Decency Act and similar legislation pose serious threats to freedom of expression online, and to the livelihoods of system operators. The legislation also undermines several crucial privacy protections.

Business/industry persons concerned should alert their corporate govt. affairs office and/or legal counsel. Everyone should write to their own Representatives and Senators, asking them to oppose Internet censorship

legislation, and write to the conference committee members to support the reasonable approaches of Leahy, Klink, Cox and Wyden, and to oppose

the unconstitutional proposals of Exon, Gorton and others. See the first

article in this newsletter for more detailed info.

For more information on what you can do to help stop this and other dangerous legislation, see:

[ftp.eff.org, /pub/Alerts/](ftp://ftp.eff.org/pub/Alerts/)  
[gopher.eff.org, 1/Alerts](gopher://gopher.eff.org/1/Alerts)  
<http://www.eff.org/pub/Alerts/>

If you do not have full internet access, send your request for information to

██████.

\* Digital Telephony/Comms. Assistance to Law Enforcement Act

The FBI is now seeking both funding for the DT/CALEA wiretapping provisions, and preparing to require that staggering numbers of citizens be simultaneously wiretappable.

To oppose the funding, write to your own Senators and Representatives urging them to vote against any appropriations for wiretapping. To oppose the FBI's wiretapping capacity demands, see the FBI Federal Register notice at the end of the second article in this newsletter, which contains instructions on how to submit formal comments on the ludicrous

and dangerous proposal.

#### \* Anti-Terrorism Bills

Numerous bills threatening your privacy and free speech have been introduced this year. None of them are close to passage at this very moment, but this status may change. Urge your Congresspersons to oppose these unconstitutional and Big-Brotherish bills.

#### \* The Anti-Electronic Racketeering Act

This bill is unlikely to pass in any form, being very poorly drafted, and without much support. However, the CDA is just as bad and passed with flying colors [the jolly roger?] in the Senate. It's better to be safe than sorry. If you have a few moments to spare, writing to, faxing, or calling your Congresspersons to urge opposition to this bill is a good idea. If you only have time to do limited activism, please concentrate on the CDA instead. That legislation is far more imminent than the AERA.

#### \* Find Out Who Your Congresspersons Are

Writing letters to, faxing, and phoning your representatives in Congress is one very important strategy of activism, and an essential way of making sure YOUR voice is heard on vital issues.

EFF has lists of the Senate and House with contact information, as well as lists of Congressional committees. (A House list is included in this issue of EFFector). These lists are available at:

[ftp.eff.org, /pub/Activism/Congress\\_cmtes/](ftp://ftp.eff.org/pub/Activism/Congress_cmtes/)  
[gopher.eff.org, 1/EFF/Issues/Activism/Congress\\_cmtes](gopher://gopher.eff.org/1/EFF/Issues/Activism/Congress_cmtes)  
[http://www.eff.org/pub/Activism/Congress\\_cmtes/](http://www.eff.org/pub/Activism/Congress_cmtes/)

The full Senate and House lists are [senate.list](#) and [hr.list](#), respectively. Those not in the U.S. should seek out similar information about their own legislative bodies. EFF will be happy to archive any such information provided.

If you are having difficulty determining who your Representatives are, try contacting your local League of Women Voters, who maintain a great deal of legislative information.

\*Join EFF!

You \*know\* privacy, freedom of speech and ability to make your voice heard in government are important. You have probably participated in our online campaigns and forums. Have you become a member of EFF yet? The best way to protect your online rights is to be fully informed and to make your opinions heard. EFF members are informed and are making a difference. Join EFF today!

For EFF membership info, send queries to [REDACTED], or send any message to [REDACTED] for basic EFF info, and a membership form.

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Administrivia

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time for a copy of the current issue. HTML editions available at:

http://www.eff.org/pub/EFF/Newsletters/EFFector/HTML/

at EFFweb. HTML editions of the current issue sometimes take a day or longer to prepare after issue of the ASCII text version.

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End of EFFector Online v08 #18 Digest

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71. **cris cheek**

*welcome the worlds of lost renga*

Tue 7 Nov 1995

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posted as 'work in progress' currently being developed by:

Jorge Guitart / Gabrielle Welford / Jordan Davis / Sheila E. Murphy cris cheek / Thomas Bell / George Bowering

in the books were dreams and in the dreams were books. "It's a small world" ripe for macroscopes to pump or slice or butterfly away from that ardent bugged heliotrope and pledge allegiance through ostension--we stopped short of the shortstop's hot stigmatum this time pencilled in as tangly wisps instead of memory detonations: but don't forget to dismember the doloroso I left in the rain by mistake whilst on business vocation the night I told you to stop referring to me as Ontology Boy and you replied all shrouded in epistemology that it was glue we lacked "ckab ouns frert cdl-fdl!!" with elvis projecting "uhhhh, daarlin' I'm all stuck

on metaphors that the folks at the contagious hospital  
thought we might be weaned of early, late, whatever,  
but I am taking the broken glass as a token of my first epiphany  
to split scintillas in the mist  
of lathering first frost blue noon comes on like torqued weed  
sucking on the indescribable and taking the ineffable, for a walk  
to Paris via seed cigars and chicory and plantain butts  
mixed with automaton condolences nixed by Dr. Reynolds

crecheward into sweet line drawings clothed to world our  
words for water, falling four blocks away, finally, a gulf  
between perceived and rinsing wafered, shroud and comforter,  
flogging proud wet stones with patchwork flags making tenement hum  
and let it get too cold, "Hey,  
tell us apart", "The name is trace, pal"  
spun on painted heels, then "vanishing, not varnishing!" her smile

made by Chevettas sliding off the I5 south of Tacoma  
monikered bellwether of the pall  
top crash, whose running gag was meat

leaf stems whirl about as hobbyist pauses to consider  
lunch as a pearl of sanitized dung in relation to  
mythology's transference of lettuce, permission to unleash

in the epoxy I used to cement my relationship w/ Thou, the Dead Quaker who  
who traipses a paradigm sweat under lights and then fixes

doughboys & doughgirls, behaving like superfluous enigmas  
puzzling in contagious ways over the simplest rides to  
the grotto of our Lady of Corollaries during the Feast of the Enormity  
with widgets handprinted by obvious mistakes in limited editions  
shrink-wrapped to keep-out dangerfields unfurled before

"The hell we were!"

a seachange to order as happy as money could meld me a rope

pitchpipe with its squeal subtracted and the dotted-line relationships that sing  
"I Love Time but I love Your Spatial Simulacra So Much More" for brevity  
inferred and for the latchkey touch more like a feather drizzling ribs trained  
sultry moments gathering to migrate south no one so maybe-ed became an  
ornament

maimed, my parents won't let me play with density  
because its quantity is known, and they prefer unknowns  
to Belarus stockmen deflowering everything in sight, grim

Homolkaesque behaviourists - buttoned quality refrigerators:  
forensically "I seem to be a verb"  
but meteorologically i am an anominal clitic

the empress of rice dream, wrote  
impossibly relaxed when thinking about pain beside the capability of boredom  
by the volcano that was sacred on the basis of size and not-on merit

"books were closed, dreams were cancelled, the inverted  
poplar was set  
                    right, the cardinal was killed"

looking

for false grit and the dogma of autonomous syntax overwhelmed 'em when  
striking from base-camp their paraffin tongues in the cauldron of sylvia's  
morning during the time that ted was devising a way to narrate implied memory  
for newly-learned novel objects well, now we've met the eremite and he is sour

where wrote was written, stepping  
without the prefab little knobbed things on them  
completely set on the sea as so much crabbiness  
diverting attention from wars in three voices and the steady rain of hemlock  
falling on a Concerns box & bull sobbing distant as adventure capital  
behind the exterior of the city was an interior composed  
of scar tissue recording the grain of farm house timbers  
a rubble of history in the grass where a decapitated statue  
unavoidably becomes an image of a nation without a true face  
ugh gotta change that line

creased, cemented, spun from claustrophobia the way that glitches suggested  
themselves as sexuation near the border of profundity where drudges still are  
visible but begin to matter less than duality or the boyishness of dusk. I, too,  
miscast as a hand-me-down protractor caught out napping on the boss's desk  
feel the sign Aliens make for "concocted in the lability of H.P.Grice" who  
serendipities all morning after frost has cinched its lag time comes humming by  
the torment wing of the museum of facades where remedies steam windows  
other than our own and we immerse ourselves in voice of ice loud as the night  
priest convenes gnomes who weather what they do in disbelief because  
abstraction crushes their

palpitations as preambles to the rust we might someday finagle into the market  
of dwarfs' shortcomings that are longgoings in the thrust of memorized vibrati  
larkish and unpoised though frequently amiss in the slump of confetti being so  
much the memento that we cried under the dandelions where no pulse was

original enough for the dog to be plankton or the nurse a gate in an iron dress  
as pressed as any moment striped with platitudes and pain

When gaze is glass and deletion is tossing

scouring the housings for meaningless dripping. How pleasure moves in and  
through the breath of anyone is a division problem, and how the grammar of  
namely formed water & spark

a face to sell a magazine, to turn to  
the calcined sheriff and each to churn through tongue and balls  
they too were skeptical of the value of their face  
of souvenirs of deliriums of proctors & chests  
but like the strong and weak forces mostly they gossipped  
in deference to regression to the mean, interpreted as law a million roses  
can't subtract from the effect of reference leaking from mention  
as we all do when evaporating on the line in an unfocused row

just as the embassy bequeathed bones to every sailor  
the penitent dragged his textbooks in burlap over concrete.

soldering the fatherly clavicle to a theory of colors  
wounded round and playful although never sleek  
swimming in the northblood channel and evening being a paperweight  
we sift the rough as fingers reek a favorite color  
in the lettering of gestures, from a meadow

we attract like breath mint severally fastened to our angels and our motors of  
romance. What can cut across the lake of secretion when

speaking as the reflection that the diving frog shatters  
the wave mechanics of a clam's locomotion as her masters thesis  
no wonder she now finds rinds lascivious, or bipeds  
oleaginous, hawaiaan geese, I'm trucked to fleece numismatic events  
and there collect ideas on ash and lime for their own appeasements sake

or exchanged their blind letter for a parapetal posture  
a pine forest, travelling as daughters through the lines  
of clattering chat, minds to fill and erase  
a peaceable that confers with waters thin and deep  
varnishing enthusiasm, till the propitious flames lie still  
the way we have entrusted them to lie, pink flavored little rhomboids  
that prove Euclid a yellowish garment plus scatteredness

wounded round and playful although never sleek Parliament? the punchlines  
might have faded but the words sound 'good' with the kind of sand that words  
make during spasms skittering and thanking tonal textures for the wash and for



the winged ram that hoards awareness as we turn during the dustfest, yet you  
pinch yourself to test how far the dust can be removed from you and propelled  
toward us in sadness by the plateful for the sake of voice

but I doubt it. I find a library card is enough

To bind agency moving the passionary in the direction of the skid is like  
character taking possession of land during colonisation.

Fear is much like a possession & a handful of rust is locative-like  
Frozen fish chutney, subsumed in the task of motherhood relates  
How we played baseball with the performance artists!  
knocko socko in the terrible neighborhood of implants  
Opening festivities, 12:00 o'clock noon.

The glass fish bakes like a brick and sings:

for acting like a lexical structure after puberty  
shuffle? I can't even deal, Betty and then I says  
"I am outa here: I'm tired of recurrences of semblances"

The glass dish struck with a bannermaker sings  
"We were bequeathing our sports skills to the jailor  
"Just as the embassy bequeathed bones to every sailor  
"the penitent dragged his textbooks in burlap over concrete.

with sentences that even score on score in little subtexts which also  
mispredict the transfer of affection after glossing

laminating, defacing, reimposing, embossing, buffing, eliding.

There was a written residue down at the corner, where a car had passed that  
way Lately all my drams have been going north, my dreams I mean. It all boils  
down to motors, mobiles, and places: If you look closely at the surface of this  
puddle, you'll see

From a truculent butcher whose soaking came clean  
Film presaged in humidland. Film also  
Weening drawn one drum that time presents  
Continue now, that the angel storm has passed.  
Film the books were dreams and in the reams were latex books  
What travel we could scrounge from the newspapers

did they radiate bagness over the fragments of blots, or  
did they call home once a week, did they walk to work  
by dint of rod, glove and puppetry that cauterized my mobile phone  
or am I the sealant in the shape you take?

a mere preface to playtex?

Trickster melodies  
trying to feel belief in the teeth of induction  
or bellwether combed, cleaned, fortified toward  
the scene where the parrot of intention lies ice cold  
  
long freighted. Authenticity a crevice for the playful heart which to be  
palpable requires a science of daze. And the continuous  
murmur he wrote  
  
above the buddhist hot dog vendor "make me one with everything" and yet  
proceeded to tear his tongue with her wine-grained books of the rank and file  
  
traced back analysand of yearly planners by forensic  
crockers with water jaws and aspectual extensions beyond the  
pale frontier made reprobate. With more than a tweaking of late  
tomorrowing the mouth that can't be taped with indulgence  
planned more than incised from gestural redress according to the  
swami standing at a fatal distance as an emblem of  
residency, conducted without proper documentation, a prostituted  
calming down in the wrong latitude. The lapdog speaks succinctly:  
  
when it was a joke  
>>> >> >> >> >> >> >> >(privatized)  
  
beyond autonomous behaviours plonked against oblong sleight if you live in a  
miner's cottage  
  
marking, not having, organs that ignorant armies crush by night our rush huts  
flattered by reintegration into ironic worship  
  
totalizing the egress of shimmering luck data  
vending machines and mad hookah  
notwithstanding,  
all for a bit of sorghum, wheeze, and tantrums to replace the  
tangibles like  
  
Massive delusion.  
  
'in snowy weather  
I photocopy my resistance scrapbook  
against better times  
than multiplication tables half erect and blind to caterwaul, drizzle, and  
penury'  
  
and pavement  
rectifies the long wade through  
dabble the merits of solitude tongue with it  
piqued apostrophes and slum coats on the edge of being wings

This this this pow!

scared me but I can't grape juice  
hastening the use of gingerbread to signify torpor  
see see see wrigleys  
on a dot but don't you mind because I've got your  
snicker bar soliloquy  
of sorts. Second on the left and then you

Don't gimme none o that lip!  
Standing around with the flamingoes we realized  
the gnomie is not what it used to be, and  
hanging out with the clones we drizzled  
clothing wasn't a question of necessary,

As we climbed along the rocky shore  
The set of all beliefs did not include any about us.  
With thoughts already darkened by broken clocks  
We walked through, turning off the lights  
In a clearing tacked up to terraces of glue houses rooved with  
Pepper smoke. The majority cleared the room

and nutmeg,  
I know how nauseating the word 'poignant' can be, but  
will the representative from Indiana please sit down?

[↑ Contents](#)

## 72. **Larry Price**

***dunno etc.***

*Tue 7 Nov 1995*

---

Patrick Phillips: "It seems to me a task of poetry to de-essentialize language/diction so that it goes out to use."

Chris Stroffolino: "The political implications here are seen in opposition to each other-insofar as wanting to be USED and wanting to DO AWAY WITH USE as such are contradictory urges foisted upon people by "economic necessity" poetry may seem to fail-but the double meaning in Wonder's use of USE may be said to be a kind of Alchemy (as Foster understands it): the sum greater than the parts."

I'm very intrigued by your notion of failure. As the beginning of a response, I want to quote Charles Bernstein: "Is it, then, possible to have marginality as a value that is not perfused by resentment or Romantic evasion? Insofar as marginality is taken as a positive moral value, this dilemma holds. But it can

begin to be dissolved when marginality is recognized, in contradistinction, as a t(r)opological prerequisite of all utterance."

I take it, Chris, this would be a more optimistic sense of "fail." But I too am troubled by any reliance upon "use" as the term of unanimity. In this connection I'd point out that the circle of instrumentality that Heidegger articulated required - for its percipience - breakdown. It is only when something is NOT zu hande that it (and the circle) emerge into palpability. The implications of that for writing are continually being unwritten. So the question is: "marginaltiy as a t(r)opological prerequisite of utterance."

Tom Beard wrote: "then they are speaking different languages (of course this happens all the time)." But with reference to the issues of instrumentality and the margin, it seems more and more the case to me that there are NOT many languages, that there is only this single instrumental cycling, complicated as it is by the obvious range of technologies, but fundamentally interpretive and/or horizional and furthermore inclined to turn that interpretive horizon back upon itself. The analogy might be 1950s train travel between Country A and Country B. The respective national lines use rails of different widths. But what is most revealing in this scenario is neither the transit nor certainly the equipmental necessities both intra-travel and at the liminal crossing but the sheer incommensurability there at the border. That's the disturbance it seems to me poetry locates again and again within language, It seems impossible to take that into use. (That is, Patrick, I would see, in this case, use itself as the term of the impossible.)

However, ironically (!! ) this breakdown does in fact foreground the technology. And it's interesting that Patrick Phillips dovetailed communication and use. It seems that both terms of unanimity create or at least perpetuate a social formation based on debt, the ultimate restricted economy: the propostion ex nihil. Which leads to experience based on the question: Why is there something rather than nothing? One imaginative experience attempts to answer this wtih assertions of truth. But there are similar, parallel, perhaps equivalent experiences based not on "ex nihil" as an assumption, and so not within an assumed restricted economy, and so on a different question: Since there IS something, why do we labor so aggressively to turn it into nothing? This second order of experience answers with assertions, not of truth, but of agency, as Patrick suggests, the plowing of intention back into the social formation. It is the continual externality then of this agency, plied from the multiple horizons of the present, that gives the lie to the sacred bags and boxes of the essential in poetry.

Larry Price

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73. **Larry Price**  
**Re: Re & Ralph Waldo**  
*Tue 7 Nov 1995*

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Ed Foster:

Regarding noun- vs. verb-based writing: I don't read the difference as the replacement of one economy by another "one." Instead I would argue (with all the usual caveats that the exceptions etc. prove etc.) that the noun as prime carrier occurs in plenary session, the throes of empire's accomplishment. Whereas verbs predominate either in the grasping forward into imperial potential (Emerson) or (as now) in the gasping conflicted aftermath of its redefinition. In particular, I'm not at all convinced by the demi-collapse of the first line of The Kingfishers. Even past the immediate levels of process and action Olson foregrounded, there was the persistent, almost monotonous allegory, so that what nouns were privileged were so only as materiel for the gold machine. Again, the ex nihil of capital.

Larry Price

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74. **Jordan Davis**  
**Re: Re & Ralph Waldo**  
*Tue 7 Nov 1995*

---

Larry Price wrote:

Instead I would argue (with all the usual caveats that the exceptions etc. prove etc.) that the noun as prime carrier occurs in plenary session, the throes of empire's accomplishment. Whereas verbs predominate either in the grasping forward into imperial potential (Emerson) or (as now) in the gasping conflicted aftermath of its redefinition... Again, the ex nihil of capital.

Larry, Could you clarify whether you're still describing the Bruce Andrews-waterworld of language or some other historically-determined landmass/geopolitical metaphorical system for poetry? I agree that there's some mystification going on...

Jordan

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75. **Jorge Guitart**

***Renga Report II***

*Tue 7 Nov 1995*

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Edited by Cris "Turn the Other" Cheek with input from himself, Tom "Ring The Bell, Jordan "River" Davis, George "Mr. Canada" Bowering, Gabrielle "Blow Your Horn" Wexford, Sheila E. "Stabat on Raiser" Murphy, and Jorge "While My Last Name Gently Weeps" Guitart.

in the books were dreams and in the dreams were books. "It's a small world" ripe for macroscopes to pump or slice or butterfly away from that ardent bugged heliotrope and pledge allegiance through ostension--we stopped short of the shortstop's hot stigmatum this time pencilled in as tangly wisps instead of memory detonations: but don't forget to dismember the doloroso I left in the rain by mistake whilst on business vocation the night I told you to stop referring to me as Ontology Boy and you replied all shrouded in epistemology that it was glue we lacked "ckab ouns frert cdl-fdl!!" with elvis projecting "uhhhh, daarlin' I'm all stuck

on metaphors that the folks at the contagious hospital thought we might be weaned of early, late, whatever, but I am taking the broken glass as a token of my first epiphany to split scintillas in the mist of lathering first frost blue noon comes on like torqued weed sucking on the indescribable and taking the ineffable, for a walk to Paris via seed cigars and chicory and plantain butts mixed with automaton condolences nixed by Dr. Reynolds

crecheward into sweet line drawings clothed to world our words for water, falling four blocks away, finally, a gulf between perceived and rinsing wafered, shroud and comforter, flogging proud wet stones with patchwork flags making tenement hum and let it get too cold, "Hey, tell us apart", "The name is trace, pal" spun on painted heels, then "vanishing, not varnishing!" her smile

made by Chevettes sliding off the I5 south of Tacoma monikered bellwether of the pall top crash, whose running gag was meat

leaf stems whirl about as hobbyist pauses to consider lunch as a pearl of sanitized dung in relation to mythology's transference of lettuce, permission to unleash

in the epoxy I used to cement my relationship w/ Thou, the Dead Quaker who who traipses a paradigm sweat under lights and then fixes

doughboys & doughgirls, behaving like superfluous enigmas  
puzzling in contagious ways over the simplest rides to  
the grotto of our Lady of Corollaries during the Feast of the Enormity  
with widgets handprinted by obvious mistakes in limited editions  
shrink-wrapped to keep-out dangerfields unfurled before

"The hell we were!"

a seachange to order as happy as money could meld me a rope  
pitchpipe with its squeal subtracted and the dotted-line relationships that sing  
"I Love Time but I love Your Spatial Simulacra So Much More" for brevity  
inferred and for the latchkey touch more like a feather drizzling ribs trained  
sultry moments gathering to migrate south no one so maybe-ed became an  
ornament

maimed, my parents won't let me play with density  
because its quantity is known, and they prefer unknowns  
to Belarus stockmen deflowering everything in sight, grim  
Homolkaesque behaviourists - buttoned quality refrigerators:  
forensically "I seem to be a verb"  
but meteorologically i am an anominal clitic

the empress of rice dream, wrote  
impossibly relaxed when thinking about pain beside the capability of boredom  
by the volcano that was sacred on the basis of size and not-on merit

"books were closed, dreams were cancelled, the inverted  
poplar was set

right, the cardinal was killed"

looking

for false grit and the dogma of autonomous syntax overwhelmed 'em when  
striking from base-camp their paraffin tongues in the cauldron of sylvia's  
morning during the time that ted was devising a way to narrate implied memory  
for newly-learned novel objects well, now we've met the eremite and he is sour

where wrote was written, stepping  
without the prefab little knobbed things on them  
completely set on the sea as so much crabbiness  
diverting attention from wars in three voices and the steady rain of hemlock  
falling on a Concerns box & bull sobbing distant as adventure capital  
behind the exterior of the city was an interior composed  
of scar tissue recording the grain of farm house timbers  
a rubble of history in the grass where a decapitated statue

unavoidably becomes an image of a nation without a true face  
ugh gotta change that line

creased, cemented, spun from claustrophobia the way that glitches suggested  
themselves as sexuation near the border of profundity where drudges still are  
visible but begin to matter less than duality or the boyishness of dusk. I, too,  
miscast as a hand-me-down protractor caught out napping on the boss's desk  
feel the sign Aliens make for "concocted in the lability of H.P.Grice" who  
serendipities all morning after frost has cinched its lag time comes humming by  
the torment wing of the museum of facades where remedies steam windows  
other than our own and we immerse ourselves in voice of ice loud as the night  
priest convenes gnomes who weather what they do in disbelief because  
abstraction crushes their

palpitations as preambles to the rust we might someday finagle into the market  
of dwarfs' shortcomings that are longgoings in the thrust of memorized vibrati  
larkish and unpoised though frequently amiss in the slump of confetti being so  
much the memento that we cried under the dandelions where no pulse was  
original enough for the dog to be plankton or the nurse a gate in an iron dress  
as pressed as any moment striped with platitudes and pain

When gaze is glass and deletion is tossing

scouring the housings for meaningless dripping. How pleasure moves in and  
through the breath of anyone is a division problem, and how the grammar of  
namely formed water & spark

a face to sell a magazine, to turn to  
the calcined sheriff and each to churn through tongue and balls  
they too were skeptical of the value of their face  
of souvenirs of deliriums of proctors & chests  
but like the strong and weak forces mostly they gossipped  
in deference to regression to the mean, interpreted as law a million roses  
can't subtract from the effect of reference leaking from mention  
as we all do when evaporating on the line in an unfocused row

just as the embassy bequeathed bones to every sailor  
the penitent dragged his textbooks in burlap over concrete.

soldering the fatherly clavicle to a theory of colors  
wounded round and playful although never sleek  
swimming in the northblood channel and evening being a paperweight  
we sift the rough as fingers reek a favorite color  
in the lettering of gestures, from a meadow

we attract like breath mint severally fastened to our angels and our motors of  
romance. What can cut across the lake of secretion when



speaking as the reflection that the diving frog shatters  
the wave mechanics of a clam's locomotion as her masters thesis  
no wonder she now finds rinds lascivious, or bipeds  
oleaginous, hawaiaa geese, I'm trucked to fleece numismatic events  
and there collect ideas on ash and lime for their own appeasements sake

or exchanged their blind letter for a parapetal posture  
a pine forest, travelling as daughters through the lines  
of clattering chat, minds to fill and erase  
a peaceable that confers with waters thin and deep  
varnishing enthusiasm, till the propitious flames lie still  
the way we have entrusted them to lie, pink flavored little rhomboids  
that prove Euclid a yellowish garment plus scatteredness

wounded round and playful although never sleek Parliament? the punchlines  
might have faded but the words sound 'good' with the kind of sand that words  
make during spasms skittering and thanking tonal textures for the wash and for  
the winged ram that hoards awareness as we turn during the dustfest, yet you  
pinch yourself to test how far the dust can be removed from you and propelled  
toward us in sadness by the plateful for the sake of voice

but I doubt it. I find a library card is enough

To bind agency moving the passionary in the direction of the skid is like  
character taking possession of land during colonisation.

Fear is much like a possession & a handful of rust is locative-like  
Frozen fish chutney, subsumed in the task of motherhood relates  
How we played baseball with the performance artists!  
knocko socko in the terrible neighborhood of implants  
Opening festivities, 12:00 o'clock noon.

The glass fish bakes like a brick and sings:

for acting like a lexical structure after puberty  
shuffle? I can't even deal, Betty and then I says  
"I am outa here: I'm tired of recurrences of semblances"

The glass dish struck with a bannermaker sings  
"We were bequeathing our sports skills to the jailor  
"Just as the embassy bequeathed bones to every sailor  
"the penitent dragged his textbooks in burlap over concrete.

with sentences that even score on score in little subtexts which also  
mispredict the transfer of affection after glossing

laminating, defacing, reimposing, embossing, buffing, eliding.

There was a written residue down at the corner, where a car had passed that way  
Lately all my drams have been going north, my dreams I mean. It all boils  
down to motors, mobiles, and places: If you look closely at the surface of this  
puddle, you'll see

From a truculent butcher whose soaking came clean  
Film presaged in humidland. Film also  
Weening drawn one drum that time presents  
Continue now, that the angel storm has passed.  
Film the books were dreams and in the reams were latex books  
What travel we could scrounge from the newspapers

did they radiate bagness over the fragments of blots, or  
did they call home once a week, did they walk to work  
by dint of rod, glove and puppetry that cauterized my mobile phone  
or am I the sealant in the shape you take?

a mere preface to playtex?

Trickster melodies  
trying to feel belief in the teeth of induction  
or bellwether combed, cleaned, fortified toward  
the scene where the parrot of intention lies ice cold

long freighted. Authenticity a crevice for the playful heart which to be  
palpable requires a science of daze. And the continuous  
murmur he wrote

above the buddhist hot dog vendor "make me one with everything" and yet  
proceeded to tear his tongue with her wine-grained books of the rank and file  
traced back analysand of yearly planners by forensic crockers with water jaws  
and aspectual extensions beyond the pale frontier made reprobate. With more  
than a tweaking of late tomorrowing with the mouth that cannot be taped with  
indulgence planned more than incised from gestural redress according to the  
swami standing at a fatal distance as an emblem of residency, conducted  
without proper documentation, a prostituted calming down in the wrong  
latitude. The lapdog speaks succinctly:

when it was a joke  
>>> >> >> >> >> >> >> >(privatized)

beyond autonomous behaviours plonked against oblong sleight if you live in a  
miner's cottage

marking, not having, organs that ignorant armies crush by night our rush huts  
flattered by reintegration into ironic worship

totalizing the egress of shimmering luck data  
vending machines and mad hookah  
notwithstanding,  
all for a bit of sorghum, wheeze, and tantrums to replace the  
tangibles like

Massive delusion.

'in snowy weather  
I photocopy my resistance scrapbook  
against better times  
than multiplication tables half erect and blind to caterwaul, drizzle, and  
penury'

and pavement  
rectifies the long wade through  
dabble the merits of solitude tongue with it  
piqued apostrophes and slum coats on the edge of being wings

This this this pow!

scared me but I can't grape juice  
hastening the use of gingerbread to signify torpor  
see see see wrigleys  
on a dot but don't you mind because I've got your  
snicker bar soliloquy  
of sorts. Second on the left and then you

Don't gimme none o that lip!  
Standing around with the flamingoes we realized  
the gnomie is not what it used to be, and  
hanging out with the clones we drizzled  
clothing wasn't a question of necessary,

As we climbed along the rocky shore  
The set of all beliefs did not include any about us.  
With thoughts already darkened by broken clocks  
We walked through, turning off the lights  
In a clearing tacked up to terraces of glue houses rooved with  
Pepper smoke. The majority cleared the room

and nutmeg,  
I know how nauseating the word 'poignant' can be, but  
will the representative from Indiana please sit down?

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76. **Chris Stroffolino**

**Re: dunno etc.**

Tue 7 Nov 1995

---

Dear Larry Price-- I am not willing to concede that marginality is the prerequisite-- even if figured as a trope--of ALL utterance. This of course is a very attractive view (I am hopefully not exempting myself from part-time adherence--like PART-TIME PUNKS?), in part because it seems to foster (not ed) wonder (not steview). But something (perhaps sinister) resists the universality (or universalization) of marginality and the implication that the central (whether figured socio-economically or interpersonally) is always that which is unsaid. Something wants to break with such endlessly self-qualifying sophistication.

It's no doubt an open question (but even that sentence can be seen to be self-contradictory, if it's an open-question there MUST be room for doubt). But surely there are forms of evasion that are not ROMANTIC (the romantics certainly have no corner on THAT marginalized market), forms that may even be patently ANTI-ROMANTIC. And in the sense that "Romantic evasion" seems to be understood in the Bernstein quote, the very Shelley himself is only some of the time "guilty" of it.

If one is torn between the Scylla and Charbydis of resentment and evasion unless (or until) one does away with the CONCEPT of marginality (as bernstein suggests) and adopts an idea of power that is more Foucaultian than Maxian, then on one very real ("concrete" as they say) level one is being evasive. On another level of course one is being totally honest, sincere, playful, trusting, acting "in good faith" and even potentially empowering (unless one of course RESENTS speaking this language, which only yesterday seemed soooooo grovy, and may seem so again manana). Maybe both levels are equally "valid," need at various times to be "indulged." For even the most resolute Marxist does not ALWAYS conceive "power" in terms of haves and have nots. Though it seems you're suggesting a BLUR of both levels, and a BLUR of resentment and evasion. Why is this preferable (if it is?) to letting resentment have its due, letting evasion have its due. Story writers make them into characters--But what technology (sorry) is involved the poetic representation of resentment and evasion that allows them to be indulged in but at the same time not finalized as the ultimately applicable strategy. I guess I'm more interested than that right now than in the HYBRID BLUR (though my first book WAS going to be called "Better Known as a Blur" and that poem is still in it--funny how our "past" refutes "our present.") Chris S.

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77. **Edward Foster**  
**Re: Re & Ralph Waldo**  
Tue 7 Nov 1995

---

but the argument, larry, is so only within the peculiarities of an economics that just may not be there. i'm not fully convinced by the opening of o's k, but that's ok: the music's real enough. (sorry, that was a dreadful thing to do.) aren't you yourself caught up in a persistent allegory? the cadence comes first tho, some involving repetition (noun) or renewal (verb). -ed

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78. **Edward Foster**  
**Re: new terrific talisman book**  
Tue 7 Nov 1995

---

re: Simon Pettet's selected, new from talisman, John Ashbery says, "Like Beethoven's Bagatelles, Simon Pettet's short poems have a great deal to say, and their seemingly modest dimensions help rather than hinder his saying it. An unorthodox lucidity reminiscent of Schuyler, a certain English dappledness and an oriental concision blend in poetry whose sweet, complex fragrance is Pettet's secret." And Alice Notley: ". . . poems like large beads with words deeply carved in them . . . and so the beads turn from wood to gem in this light: a New York light cast on English speech (English light cast on New York speech?) Perfect poems, unexpectedly." And Tom Raworth, "The lyric poet takes it personally. This I heard talk of jerky black-and-white pullovers. Outside, every signpost said 'love.' The I made a coat of language and chose west. Lo! madrigals drift from a yellow cab on the Lower East Side. Inside, Simon's I speaks elegantly to itself." So, folks, if yr bookstore is not soon stocked with this amazing, 100% terrific book, maybe something serious is amiss. Pettet's one of the best, and this book has the proof.

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79. **Patrick Phillips**  
**Re: dunno etc.**  
Tue 7 Nov 1995

---

*And it's interesting that Patrick Phillips dovetailed communication and use. It seems that both terms of unanimity create or at least perpetuate a social formation based on debt, the ultimate restricted economy:*

Ultimately it is a restricted economy. Not based on debt, for debt conditions the negative. But based on conditions of communication. Circular, yes. But the conditions of communication are based more on resisting and challenging

torpor - communications means. And, how it means. Debt is a precursor to and an extension of loss, an extension of loose. (And the lyric as recuperation is an extension of loss.) But use is conditioned by the possible, not the impossible, not of debt. Of have as opposed to lack. To write from a position of lack is to fetishize the wound - (fresh off a Nate Mackey interview in Talisman 9). Intention presupposes the possible, moving against the agent of looser.

*It is the continual externality  
then of this agency, plied from the multiple horizons of the present, that  
gives the lie to the sacred bags and boxes of the essential in poetry.*

yeah. yeah.

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## 80. **Steve Carll**

### ***Re: signs taken for wonders***

Tue 7 Nov 1995

---

Tom:

Is poetic truth "valid"? In other words, if we interpret a poem as indeed asserting such and such, and that such and such is clearly in conflict with what science tells us is possible for suchness, does that invalidate the poem's assertion? And if not (or even if so, come to think of it), then (if you'll forgive the flipness) what's so important about this particular notion of validation?

Thanks,  
Steve

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## 81. **Kevin Killian**

### ***Re: EPC.Live***

Wed 8 Nov 1995

---

*For Mac users, can't we just use the program Homer (rather than using telnet) and get on the undernet to join channel EPCLIVE?*

*Dodie, Did you try this and it works? If so, we will go ahead and append this to our instructions ...*

*Thanks!  
Loss*

Loss,

Dodie and I just got on the undernet per the instructions Dodie gave to Eryque the other day, and lo and behold, we found the epclive channel, so it looks like

the Homer method does indeed work. But, no one was on it, only the robot named "X." So, how do we know when people are going to get on it? Please publish this in your TV Guide listings.

Yours,  
Kevin

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## 82. **Larry Price**

### ***Indulgence***

*Wed 8 Nov 1995*

---

Chris, it's not that the indulgence of any particular moment is wrong. Evasiveness can be an effective political tool. Resentment can foster clarity. The problem comes when these terms are hoisted into an explanatory register, when they begin to account in themselves as narratives for social formations. The danger that Charles is writing of is the "balkanization of identities," either the retreat up the mountain of marginality away from the historical moment, or, in some ways, worse, a narrativizing of splintered, resentful, marginalized lives as somehow morally pre-eminent. Clearly then, you're right to say: "Something wants to break with such endlessly self-qualifying sophistication."

But the prior point has to be that we not only recognize but willfully embrace this location. Clearly for me as an albeit marginally enfranchised white male to persist in "You go to town, Tonto" heroics would be disingenuous. Obviously, the willful DISenfranchisement of "he need (present) enemy (plural)" is not what I mean. What I do mean is that despite the very real horror that power visits, has visited, will visit upon us, there is nonetheless another very real sense in which Richard Nixon was a palpably simplistic narrative told from the impalpable margins. One circle, the inner circle, may have pulled the strings, but it was the larger circle of instrumentality, the equipmental whole of 1960s America that made it possible by assuming to it as the term of unanimity. It's that impalpability of the assumed that's the horror. It's there that we begin to forget to remember.

Larry Price

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## 83. **Larry Price**

### ***Waldo & O***

*Wed 8 Nov 1995*

---

Ed:

I didn't mean to imply that I'm NOT caught up in persistent allegory, even, as a reader, Olson's. Only that the monotony of it (his or mine or ours) comes probably as a lazy eye, the gap in thought the noun is supposed somehow to fill. As to cadence,

"in! in! the bow-sprit, bird, the beak"

sounds too much like Dylan Thomas for comfort.

lp

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#### 84. **Jordan Davis**

***Re: Waldo & O***

*Wed 8 Nov 1995*

---

On Wed, 8 Nov 1995, Larry Price wrote:

> "in! in! the bow-sprit, bird, the beak"

>

> sounds too much like Dylan Thomas for comfort.

>

a) I like Dylan Thomas. b) it sounds more like Hopkins.

Jordan

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#### 85. **ULMER SPRING**

***Re: dunno etc.***

*Wed 8 Nov 1995*

---

to caress less - feeling more

the way the word breaks down

"economic necessity", typing parallel lines

do away with, yet stay together

the way making is not all there

contradictory urges perhaps not just "foisted"

but perhaps sublinear

because i change my linger.

want to stay, but the ferocious tears

give me away.

double meaning of use is greater than use

i cannot encase marginality, nor do i write there

but write out of

the margin to get my breath heard



is then how i as a margin get my space  
or am read  
when i am stuck with a line between my heart and who hears  
so then i am perfused with resentment  
and of course this is mistaken for my hysterianostalgiamysteriaromanasque  
disappearance  
such a nice disguise for those who can Afford to hide  
marginality as positive with no means to  
and the feelings of being squashed without anger?  
could i live there?  
without feeling?  
no, that marginality has it's upsides down when i write  
that double negative makes a positive or is supposed to  
but my writing stays in the quiet  
or is heard but misplaced

marginality can only be seen as a prerequisite to utterance in that without  
writing (in this day and age) i would not be alive, without the idea to be able to  
talk silently, since no one can hear me, that this voice is louder than all others  
put together.

to be tricked into the margin, to be tricked into silent word  
to be on the page again  
as love is

yes

hard

and how to use such loaded metaphor to distill the triumph to fail optimistically  
this means the silence speaks for itself? that the breakdown is the utter margin  
(that unwritten)

that the margin is injustice "Emancipation from this language must be  
attempted. But not as an attempt at emancipation from it, for this is impossible  
unless we forget our history. Rather, as the dream of emancipation. Nor as  
emancipation from it, which would be meaningless and would deprive us of the  
light of meaning. Rather, as resistance to it, as far as possible." -Derrida

I cannot agree. Resistance yes. And an alternative...

An alternative to that which is historical.

Could it be possible that we dream the real.

social conditions create \_marginalization\_  
(a word vieled in itself)

create pain  
that i do not want to be veiled in.

we need a new language.

"the very neutral medium of information that should enable a truly free choice is already branded by an irreducible violence." -Zizek.

And even though he is a Lacanian, who was a Freudian, and we know how wonderfully Freud was socialized to treat women and did treat women, i like the authority of that sentence.

and that the appropriate withdrawl, or failure, or reveling in the margin, i say can be done only by those who again can afford to.

or don't care to change.

or are like me on the days when i am not in a changing mood. or as a valid suggestion to how i can be happy where i am? which is not the most outrageous suggestion on a day other than today.

"poetry locates again and again within language, It seems impossible to take that into use... (Use itself as the term of the impossible.)" Larry Price

poetry locates itself at the border where crossing is impossible?  
hmmm.

perhaps so. perhaps utopia is suffering.

or else i wouldn't want utopia because then i wouldn't \*have to\*  
\*need to\* write poetry?

or maybe i would love utopia because i'd be happy and content all the time and everyone would have enough to eat, and the justice system would be fair, and great thinkers wouldn't have to jump out windows... hmmm.

Why is there something rather than nothing? Well why is there something rather than everything? Or are they the same.

We can turn something into more than other.

The social consciousness needs to be raised,  
as do the beams of poetry.

Spring Ulmer

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86. **Tenney Nathanson**  
***granted (Jameson) but***

*Wed 8 Nov 1995*

---

Date: Sun, 5 Nov 1995 13:47:24 -0500

From: Rae Armantrout <[REDACTED]>

*Subject: Re: dunno, but*

*Dear Pat,*

*Hi, the poem Chris was referring to is "Visibility" in MADE TO SEEM. I refer indirectly to the infamous sign in the last section of that. Oh, and thanks for your book. I probably won't be able to read it until Winter break so more anon*

*Dear Wm Northcutt,*

*I've written an essay which is partly about Jameson and his attack on Perelman. It's called "Irony And Postmodern Poetry." It hasn't been published yet, but I think it will be.*

*Yours,*

*Rae Armantrout*

re the Jameson thread:

there are certainly big problems w Jameson's take on Perelman's work (insurmountable, were it a question of buying or not buying the goods). Minor point: I think it's worth noting that the implications of the early version of the piece that takes up Perelman's poem along w a lot of other stuff--in the Foster collection--are a lot more unremittingly hostile than the later take in the Pomo book. My recollection is that the remarks on Perelman are only minimally revised; but the response to a range of postmodern practices is a lot more engaged. More important, I'd say: the notion of schizophrenic speech may also be problematic, but the sense of euphoria or mania that Jameson gets to via this notion is, I think, an important aspect of language writing that's very much under-represented in the in-house theory I've read (esp Bernstein, McCaffery as I recollect). The political claims made in the seventies tended to mute this element: the sense of access of power (cf the sublime) and the way in which it's the writer, not the reader (for all the obverse talk) who's the empowered one (and: isn't "opacity" at least partly an aggressive gesture?).

two cents.

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87. **Tenney Nathanson**  
***update please!***

Wed 8 Nov 1995

---

*Date: Sun, 5 Nov 1995 13:47:24 -0500*

*From: Rae Armantrout <[REDACTED]>*

*Subject: Re: dunno, but*

*Dear Pat,*

*Hi, the poem Chris was referring to is "Visibility" in MADE TO SEEM. I refer indirectly to the infamous sign in the last section of that. Oh, and thanks for your book. I probably won't be able to read it until Winter break so more anon*

*Dear Wm Northcutt,*

*I've written an essay which is partly about Jameson and his attack on Perelman. It's called "Irony And Postmodern Poetry." It hasn't been published yet, but I think it will be.*

*Yours,*

*Rae Armantrout*

Rae--

I'd be very interested in seeing the piece. Could you please post publication info to the list as soon as you have any?

Also: if the publication plans aren't definite, you might consider trying Arizona Quarterly--we tend to be a little hesitant about essays that don't look anything like academic writing (though we've made exceptions), but Charles is on the board, we've published pieces by both him and Perelman, and we're generally very interested in publishing work on Language Writing.

btw, that's also a sort of call for submissions to all those on the list who do work that's academic or borderline-academic.

best,

Tenney

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88. **Tenney Nathanson**  
***re Hartley book***

Wed 8 Nov 1995

---

*Date: Sun, 5 Nov 1995 19:56:27 -0500*  
*From: Patrick Phillips <[REDACTED]>*  
*Subject: Re: Jameson...*

*There are other treatments of this "now notorious essay" as George Hartley put it, but you may want to see his "Jameson's Perelman" in \_Textual*

*Politics and the Language Poets\_ for a post-Lacanian interpretation. In a nut-shell, Hartley contrasts J.'s schizophrenia analogy with the position that Perelman is suggesting, among other things, that "there are alternative ways of structuring (constituting) our experiences. Such alternatives "foreground" our social relations, not reify them.*

I think one limitation of Hartley's very fine book (are you out there George?) is its scanting of the utopian aspects of Language writing. The utopian isn't the schizophrenic, but the latter is something like Jameson's name for what he (wrongly?) takes to be a bad version of the former. Hartley is most interested in the way Language writing performs the Bakhtinian function of alerting us to the socially saturated status of present speech. He's less interested, as I recall, in the sort of language mysticism that emerges so strongly in Charles' /Artifice of Absorption/. In this respect, oddly, his take is a little bit like Perelman's in his Arizona Quarterly essay on Andrews (and Maya ANgelou!). So that Jameson happened to pick on one of Language Writing's /least/ "schizophrenic" writers (one whose work, which I love, is a lot more congruent with Hartley's claims than, say, Charles' is).

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## 89. **Tenney Nathanson**

**yes!**

Wed 8 Nov 1995

---

*Date: Mon, 6 Nov 1995 10:47:44 +100*  
*From: "William M. Northcutt" <[REDACTED]>*  
*Subject: Re: Jameson...*

*Many thanks to Rae, Patrick, Juliana, and to Junte Huang--yes, long live the hooligans!*

*My problem with Jameson is that I agree with him in the big picture, but I think he wraps himself up in a literalism that clashes with his admiration for Benjamin and Adorno. It seems to me that there's some anti-intellectualism underneath it--puritanism or just Lukacs?*

*At any rate, thanks for the responses. William*

terrific post!

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90. **Tenney Nathanson**  
**or else**

Wed 8 Nov 1995

---

Date: Mon, 6 Nov 1995 14:56:16 -0500  
From: Chris Stroffolino <[REDACTED]>  
Subject: Re: do know but?

*Dear Pat Phillips--thanks for elaborating on your poetics--  
but what are these non lang-po "problem poetries that are particularly  
liberatory"? I am curious if you might want to be more specific. Feel  
free to backchannel. Chris S.*

not to horn in, but I'd at least like to cast my vote for frontchannel

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91. **Alan Golding**  
**Chas. B. quotation**

Wed 8 Nov 1995

---

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

Dear Larry Price (or Charles, for that matter):

What's the source for the Charles B. quotation on marginality that you cited  
yesterday? I'd like to follow it up. Thanks.

Alan Golding

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92. **Eryque Gleason**  
**Re: EPC.Live**

Wed 8 Nov 1995

---

I've stopped by EPCLIVE on occasion. once the bot aparently didn't even  
feel like sitting there alone!

---

Eryque "Just call me Eric" Gleason      If I weren't a monkey, there'd be  
71 E. 32nd St. Box 949                      problems...  
Chicago, IL 60616

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

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93. **Chris Stroffolino**

***Re: Indulgence***

*Wed 8 Nov 1995*

---

Larry P. writes "The problem comes when these terms [resentment; evasiveness] are hoisted into an explanatory register, when they begin to account in themselves as narratives for social formation." I may not be understanding everything in his message, but it does seem possible that the problem comes when these terms are denied in "narratives for social formation"---If Presidents, etc, were allowed to cry on TV during a state of the UNION address perhaps is it possible things like OIL WAR ONE would be less likely to happen (I say wistfully at the risk of seeming sappily utopian like Kafka, Shakespeare, etc.). The bringing up of Richard Nixon reminds me of Robert Altman's movie in which he seems to identify with the resigned Nixon as a victim of the structure, etc (and Nixon is allowed to cry and say things like the end of the flick's "FUCK 'EM FUCK 'EM, etc") Anyway, Spring Ulmer's comments were refreshing in this regard-- in which much poststructuralist theory was cited along side of the seemingly more personal moods: "because i change my linger want to stay, but the ferocious tears give me away... to be on the page as love is/yes" and also her troping on the word marginalization-- to see one's self (or THE self) as a margin... and we all know what love does to "theoretical consistency" now don't we?----chris

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94. **D. LaBeau**

***Jameson/Perelman***

*Wed 8 Nov 1995*

---

When Jameson lectured here in May, my friend asked him for some thoughts on American Poetry (up til then he'd only mentioned New Irish Poets) and he told us he liked the Language poets, that what they were working on was very interesting.

I was surprised, having thought his attack on Perelman was a general denunciation of the Language-types. Perhaps it was only Bob he didn't cotton to, or maybe his views have softened.

I guess there's no published evidence of a shift (and I doubt there will be) but it would be interesting if people were still debating a position abandoned by its originator.

-Dan

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95. **Gale Nelson**

***Re: readings desiderata***

*Wed 8 Nov 1995*

---

Now that you've probably put together the better part of your reading series based on the thoughtful advice provided by faster thinkers than myself (as well as the many ideas you'd already been toying with), I'd like to offer some belated thoughts, Jordan:

1. Let the readers know what the format is. Will there be chairs and tables, rows of chairs, etc. Will there be a microphone? Is the room typically hot/cold, etc.? How long is a typical reading? Do you have the capacity to provide special set-ups (such as music, electronic, video, slides, etc.)?
2. If you plan to pair readers, should there be criteria? Such as, respectful but diverging aesthetics, willingness to collaborate/alternate. Perhaps you could occasionally commission the readers to build their reading together (with enough lead time and with sufficient readerly interest, you could have your readers initiate a host of collaborative pieces that could be the centerpiece of the series).
3. Some years ago, I started a series entitled The Canned Goods Poetry Series. We asked those who attended to bring canned foods, that were then distributed via soup kitchens and food clearing houses. The feeling within the audience seemed different, more community-based... If such an element seems of use/interest exists, it can make the series hold an especially lively place.

Good luck, Jordan. We wish you'd come to Providence to start your series; but, let us know how it goes "down south."

Gale

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96. **Charles Bernstein**

***Baraka's 60th Birthday Celebration***

*Wed 8 Nov 1995*

---

Amiri Baraka 60th Birthday Celebration  
Friday Nov. 10 and Sat. Nov. 11  
at Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture  
515 Malcolm X Blvd NY NY 10037

**\*\*preregistration required.\*\*** no fee.

FRIDAY

10am The Social-Intellectual Baraka



11:45 Baraka's Drama  
2pm Musical criticism and recordings  
7pm Literary tribute

SATURDAY

10am Baraka's Fiction  
1pm Baraka's Poetry  
7pm Baraka: A Poetry Retrospective

speakers: Maulana Karenga, William Strickland, Eleanor Traylor, Aldon Nielsen, Sonia Sanchez, Kalamu ya Salaam, Lorenzo Thomas, William Harris, Ethelbert Miller

You may be able to fax your registration to [REDACTED], noting each event you plan to attend and name/institution (if applicable)/ address/ day & evening phone

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97. **Rod Smith**

***Re: granted (Jameson) but***

*Thu 9 Nov 1995*

---

Tenney-- Eric Wirth addresses the question you raise re the "power" of the writer & reader in an essay in *\_Aerial 6/7\_*-- basically in agreement w/ your assertion-- he considers that in the dada text (using Coolidge as example) there is "a preemptive fusing of relations." I go back & forth on this tho I don't see how "opacity" is aggressive-- it can be used as such certainly, but so can any other technique. It seems to me the strength of the opaque text is that it makes no pretense of clarity & leaves the reader free to respond on their own terms as they will. If the rules are broken in the writing then certainly they can be broken in the reading. This is where I find validity in critical claims about reader interaction w/ l.p.-- such writing "honors" the reader's subjectivity by admitting it's own.

I have a recollection of Jameson dismissing Cage in one sentence in his *\_Postmodernism\_*. Pretty boring. Dan Barbiero addresses "the Perelman issue" at length in a piece in *\_Aerial 6/7\_* as well.

I think your remarks abt "euphoria or mania" in the amer tree are important points-- Mayer & Coolidge being exemplars-- Mayer often talking abt exploring states of consciousness. & certainly there's only one Hannah. I think of Ted B. etc. as the hardest partiers. & "Howl" am I remembering it right?-- was written on mushrooms. & the recent visitation of David Ayre certainly made exceptional use of "mania." I'm still tired of grumpy virgins.

--Rod

Tenney Nathanson wrote: "there are certainly big problems w Jameson's take on Perelman's work (insurmountable, were it a question of buying or not buying the goods). Minor point: I think it's worth noting that the implications of the early version of the piece that takes up Perelman's poem along w a lot of other stuff--in the Foster collection--are a lot more unremittingly hostile than the later take in the Pomo book. My recollection is that the remarks on Perelman are only minimally revised; but the response to a range of postmodern practices is a lot more engaged. More important, I'd say: the notion of schizophrenic speech may also be problematic, but the sense of euphoria or mania that Jameson gets to via this notion is, I think, an important aspect of language writing that's very much under-represented in the in-house theory I've read (esp Bernstein, McCaffery as I recollect). The political claims made in the seventies tended to mute this element: the sense of access of power (cf the sublime) and the way in which it's the writer, not the reader (for all the obverse talk) who's the empowered one (and: isn't "opacity" at least partly an aggressive gesture?).

two cents."

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98. **Rod Smith**

***Re: welcome the worlds of lost renga***

*Thu 9 Nov 1995*

---

OK gang, you're good, but don't we get a "statement of method" with this? Is it one line each passed around? What determines the stanza breaks, is that up to each author as it comes to them? Is the whole thing a sanskrit/spanglish/latin palindrome?

--Rod

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99. **Ron Silliman**

***Re: Jameson/Perelman***

*Thu 9 Nov 1995*

---

I first read the Jameson piece in the New Left Review, though I've picked up the later appearances almost as a matter of habit. Never have gone through them to compare versional variations. My distinct impression, based in part on Jameson's presentation sometime after that at New Langton Arts and a dinner thereafter, was that FJ himself never considered his writing on Bob as hostile nor an attack. Rather, I think that tone of his comes from the critical stance of any builder of master narratives (and Jameson produces them at a dizzying rate). He speaks of any work as though he owns it and comes across at once as condescending and inclusive.

Gayatri Spivak once gave a counter reading of the poem at the Lit and Philosophy group in Lawrence, KS. I missed it (I was driving down that day from Iowa City w/ Herman Rappaport and we arrived late). I've never seen that in print. Did it ever get published?

Ron Silliman

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100. **Ron Silliman**

***Re: Baraka's 60th Birthday Celebration***

*Thu 9 Nov 1995*

---

I hope that somebody will give us all the same sort of attentive report back that the big shindig in the Albert Hall received awhile back.

Ron Silliman

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101. **Larry Price**

***Bernstein quote***

*Thu 9 Nov 1995*

---

Alan Golding:

The passage is from "Censors of the Unknown: Margins, Dissent, and the Poetic Horizon," a 1987 follow-up interview with Tom Beckett originally published in TEMBLOR and included in A POETICS. The passage I quoted is on page 190 of A POETICS.

lp

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102. **William M. Northcutt**

***Baraka***

*Thu 9 Nov 1995*

---

Baraka rules!

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103. **Tenney Nathanson**

***hi Dan***

*Thu 9 Nov 1995*

---

Date: Wed, 8 Nov 1995 14:15:46 -0600  
From: "D. LaBeau" <[REDACTED]>  
Subject: Jameson/Perelman

*When Jameson lectured here in May, my friend asked him for some thoughts on American Poetry (up til then he'd only mentioned New Irish Poets) and he told us he liked the Language poets, that what they were working on was very interesting.*

*I was surprised, having thought his attack on Perelman was a general denunciation of the Language-types. Perhaps it was only Bob he didn't cotton to, or maybe his views have softened.*

*I guess there's no published evidence of a shift (and I doubt there will be) but it would be interesting if people were still debating a position abandoned by its originator.*

*-Dan*

Hi, Dan--nice to see you on the list.

I think there are a couple of Jameson pieces--the one on Perelman, the one on third-world lit as allegory, that have turned into big red flags. I don't know that those earlier positions have been abandoned so much as given a less hostile twist (the Lang Po/Perelman one is the one I have in mind--I'm not up on what J has done re 3W allegory of late)

best,

Tenney

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104. **Edward Foster**

***Re: Waldo & O***

*Thu 9 Nov 1995*

the monotony is the thing, yes, so that's why waldo was so welcome: all as change, energy rather than essence, but the deep identity with laissez faire means midnight trauma. yes. all best, ed

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105. **Tenney Nathanson**

***yep yep yep***

*Fri 10 Nov 1995*

*Date: Thu, 9 Nov 1995 14:40:29 -0500*

*From: Edward Foster <[REDACTED]>*

*Subject: Re: Waldo & O*

*the monotony is the thing, yes, so that's why waldo was so welcome: all*

*as change, energy rather than essence, but the deep identity with laissez faire means midnight trauma. yes. all best, ed*

bingo.

so that: where he's MOST exciting (least dated, least dumpy, most like what "we" want to do) he's most implicated.

for a sometimes dated but often brilliant discussion of same: Quentin Anderson (my thesis advisor, now 84!), /Making Americans: An Essay on Individualism and Money/ (HBJ 1992[?]).

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## 106. Steve Evans

## Awesome 6some/Impercipient 8

*Fri 10 Nov 1995*

A reminder to those of you within traveling distance of Providence that this Saturday presents a wonderful opportunity to witness the contemporary avant-garde at work.

Along with the events already announced (see below), you'll also have a chance to pick up the eighth, and final, issue of THE IMPERCIPIENT, featuring work by Camille Guthrie, Robert Hale, Lisa Jarnot, Judith Goldman, Sianne Ngai, Jay Dillemath, Brian Schorn, Bob Harrison, and Brian Kim Stefans.

We hope you'll join us!

S  
o Saturday  
m 11 November 1995  
e Russell Lab, Brown University  
\* 5 Young Orchard Street in Providence \*  
\* 2 Sets: 3-5pm, 7-9pm  
\*  
\*

First Set-3pm

KEVIN DAVIES

JUDITH GOLDMAN

LISA JARNOT

5:30, dinner at The Cav

14 Imperial St. (Downtown Providence)

Second Set-7pm

B I L L L U O M A

D O U G L A S R O T H S C H I L D

J U L I A N A S P A H R

after: party chez Moxley/Evans

Organized by Jennifer Moxley and Steve Evans

Supported by the Creative Writing Dept @ Brown

For more information, call [REDACTED]

r i a t n m u  
a t s u o o o s

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107. **Gabrielle Welford**  
***federal budget game (fwd)***

*Fri 10 Nov 1995*

---

Thought ye'd be interested in this. Gab.

"Reinventing America" Game Launched

Today, Mon., Nov. 6, Crossover Technology launched the "Reinventing America" game at:

<http://www.pathfinder.com/reinventing>

An interactive political simulation game, participants will spend 26 weeks debating various issues of national importance, from drug policy to environmental protection to defense conversion to arts funding and school prayer. Players can come and go (and join) at any time. Throughout the duration of the game, players will debate and vote on levels of federal spending related to these issues, and, at the end of the game, will propose a new federal budget that reflects the results of these discussions. The Markle Foundation, sponsor of the game, will then present this proposed budget to Congress at a press conference in May.

2 Reasons Why You Should Join the Game

1) This game is bound to get a lot of media attention, as it is a very inventive idea (and has some major corporate backing) 2) The right wing is bound to be represented in force. I've joined already and I can definitely see a dearth of progressive opinions.

PLEASE RE-POST, PLEASE RE-POST, PLEASE RE-POST

Thanks Rich,

Leif Utne <[REDACTED]>

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108. **Gabrielle Welford**

***Re: Waldo & O***

*Fri 10 Nov 1995*

---

On Wed, 8 Nov 1995, Jordan Davis wrote:

> On Wed, 8 Nov 1995, Larry Price wrote:

>

> > "in! in! the bow-sprit, bird, the beak"

> >

> > sounds too much like Dylan Thomas for comfort.

> >

> a) I like Dylan Thomas. b) it sounds more like Hopkins.

>

whom I also like abcz

Gab.

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109. **Larry Price**

***Re: yep etc***

*Fri 10 Nov 1995*

---

Ed:

What's confused me is the opposition of laissez-faire and essence. The presumption of atomism in 18th C economics (as well as the impoverished epistemology that conditioned it) seems to point to their eventual equivalence, as of course they are equivalent in the Realeconomik our midnight trauma now is. Which is to say, equivalent in their mutually conditioning statuses as storefronts. I'm beginning to think that the only way I can read what you're doing is through a very different notion of "thing." Which might be a useful contortion of the distortion of "No ideas but" etc.?

lp

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110. **Christopher Reiner**

***New K. Waldrop Book***

*Fri 10 Nov 1995*

---

NEW FROM AVEC BOOKS

The Locality Principle by Keith Waldrop

ISBN:1-880713-03-9; LCCN 95-77360.

Distributed by Baker & Taylor and Small Press Distribution. Also available directly from the publisher (FAX [REDACTED]).

More info at <http://www.crl.com/~creiner/syntax/avec.html>

-----  
Written in alternating sections of poetry and short prose pieces, The Locality Principle is, on one level, a perceptive and often wryly humorous account of a traveler's confusion and dislocation.

In London, a narrator, presumably the author, is living on a street named after a nonexistent park, next to a garden he can see from a window but have no access to--a garden tended by a bizarrely ineffectual group of men and women who could be gardeners or possibly inmates from a local asylum.

But Waldrop's role as a displaced observer also provides the opportunity for a series of reflections on deeper subjects, such as concept of the soul, and the fact of his own mortality.

Overseeing it all is the unforgettable, impassive Pee-Paws, a resident cat that spends night after night staring into the blazing fireplace: "Her response to the fire, I come to realize, is more complete than mine...to her it is obviously a source of the most profound feelings, feelings I can only guess at...mystical feelings."

It is those "mystical feelings" that indicate the terrain which the traveler in The Locality Principle must finally navigate and which bring the book to its subtle but lovely conclusion.

-----  
"The Locality Principle is both winningly and disturbingly beautiful. With Waldrop both extends and expands his extraordinary oeuvre in this deliciously melancholy book where, in flawless prose and verse, the doubles we call life and death, soul and body, soul and spirit are meticulously and lovingly examined. Amid droll evocations of daily life, the reader is seduced into pleasures of speculation about a "(coherent) world" that is "entirely/confabulated," where "every sensation conceals a dream." The book supplies the additional delight of Mrs. Crowe's fervent ghosts."--Harry Mathews, author of Cigarettes and The Journalist

"Having held himself to (what we suppose is) a more or less factual account of life in his recent autobiography, Waldrop now questions the phemera of place and time. He writes of an observed and peopled garden to which there is no door, of encounters whose meaning is suspect; illumination in darkness.



Throughout *\_The Locality Principle\_*, a remarkable and surprising book, we are alert to the metaphysical aspect of life; to an awareness of ghost times." -- Barbara Guest, author of *\_Defensive Rapture\_* and *\_Selected Poems\_*

Keith Waldrop lives in Providence, Rhode Island where he teaches at Brown University and, with Rosmarie Waldrop, edits Burning Deck Press. He has translated the French poets Claude Royet-Journoud, Anne-Marie Albiach and Dominique Fourcade, among others.

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111. **Peter Baker**  
***Studies in Modern Poetry***

*Fri 10 Nov 1995*

---

I've had some backchannel responses to the initial listing of my recent theory book, inquiring into the *Studies in Modern Poetry* series I edit for Peter Lang. What follows is copy from a recent Lang brochure, with a series description, listing of publication data for books in the series, and so forth. Inquiries about manuscripts are welcome.

*Studies in Modern Poetry*  
General Editor: Peter Baker

This series brings together works on particular modern poets and twentieth-century movements as well as comparative and theoretical studies. Works in the series seek to explore the contributions of twentieth-century poets beyond the well-known major figures of Modernism such as Ezra Pound and T. S. Eliot, in the belief that modern poetry is characterized by its variety, richness and scope. A particular focus of the series are those books that compare poetic projects from different national and linguistic traditions or explore the interconnections between poetic expression and the other arts. Authors whose critical approaches utilize contemporary literary theory and multicultural perspectives are especially encouraged to consider this series. Languages of the poetry studied include, but are not limited to, English, French, German, Italian, and Spanish, though the manuscripts should be written in English and addressed to readers beyond strictly national or disciplinary boundaries.

vol. 1

*\_The Poem at the Edge of the Word: The Limits of Language and the Uses of Silence in the Poetry of Mallarme, Rilke, and Vallejo\_*  
by Dianna C. Niebylski  
ISBN 0-8024-2107-3 / 1993  
175 pp. / hc / \$41.95

vol. 2

\_Journeys Toward the Original Mind: The Long Poems of Gary Snyder\_  
by Robert Schuler  
ISBN 0-8024-2459-5 / 1994  
146 pp. / hc / \$39.95

vol. 3

\_ "...a thousand graceful subtleties": Rhetoric in the Poetry  
of Robinson Jeffers\_  
by Terry Beers  
ISBN 0-8024-2592-3 / 1995  
113 pp. / hc / \$37.95

vol. 4

\_Cross-Referential Mis-Conceptions of Rainer Maria Rilke in  
Randall Jarrell, Robert Lowell, and Robert Bly\_  
by Hartmut Heep  
ISBN 0-8024-2874-4 / forthcoming

vol. 5

\_The Mestizo as Crucible: Andean Indian and African Poets  
of Mixed Origin as Possibility of Comparative Poetics\_  
by Christine de Lailhacar  
ISBN 0-8024-2891-4 / forthcoming

For further information about the Studies in Modern Poetry series and for the  
submission of manuscripts, contact:

Peter Baker  
Department of English  
Towson State University  
Towson, MD 21204-7097  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

For further information about purchasing books, contact:

Peter Lang Publishing  
62 West 45th St.  
New York, NY 10036  
toll free [REDACTED]  
fax [REDACTED]

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112. **Edward Foster**

***Re: yep etc***

*Sat 11 Nov 1995*

---

no opposition between essence and laissez faire if you dig deeply enough, and that is the argument: that all systems have their immutable "truths." and yet, tho nouns are verbs in suspension (prisoners for a while), it's quite amazing how many poets think, even now, that fenollosa had the key. but so we have it, and noun/verb is useful, at least for discussion, in distinguishing between poetries.

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113. **Romana Christina Huk**

***Poetry conference/festival1996***

*Sat 11 Nov 1995*

---

AN ANNOUNCEMENT/INVITATION to all POETICS SUBSCRIBERS:

There will be an international poetry conference/festival of readings from the 29th of August to the 2nd of September, 1996, at the New England Center, University of New Hampshire (Durham, NH). These three and one half days of discussions and four nights of readings/performances open to the community (which includes Boston) will focus on relationships between "experimental" poetries in the U.S., U.K., Canada and Ireland; othes from non-English speaking countries may also arrive to help us talk about new directions in these poetries andways/problems of reading across cultures. The issues to addressed in plenary sessions have been broadly arranged to include 1) differences in context and practice, 2) how changing poetries in each of the contexts force us to rethink old debates about the subject, reader, and politics of form, 3) blindspots in the theory and practice (due to gender, race, class, cultural chauvinism, etc.), 4) the institutionalization of radical poetries and the issues raised by it, 5) new and controversial formal directions including new performance strategies, use of narrative, use of electronic media, collaborations as authorship, the collapsing of borders with the mainstream and 6) the role and practice of new translation (revisited).

A call for papers on these topics and others to be proposed will be issued in various newsletters, but I'll issue one right now for all of you on this line. Although a number of papers for plenary sessions/ discussions have been invited, there will also be opportunities for multiple sessions using our three conference rooms at the Center. If you would like to participate in those, please send on detailed abstracts for twenty-minute papers (due in hard copy to me here at the Department of English, University of New Hampshire, Durham, NH 03824 by the end of January). Everyone is of course welcome to come just

to take part in what should be lively discussions and to enjoy the afternoon and evening readings and performances (I'll try to make at least one afternoon reading-spot open-mike) -- I should know wh

Please get back to me for price information soon if you're interested, because space will be limited; and reply with snail-mail addresses if you wish to be on my mailing list for further (more detailed) information.

Romana Huk

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114. **William M. Northcutt**

**Vendler, venerandam**

Sat 11 Nov 1995

Has anyone seen the latest TLS in which they praise Helen Vendler for her eclectic tastes in poetry???????????

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Rosmarie Waldrop at Bridge Street Books

2814 Pennsylvania Ave. NW, Washington, DC

phone [REDACTED]

B.Y.O.E. (Bring your own ears).

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118. **Jorge Guitart**

open mike

Sat 11 Nov 1995

HELEN VENDLER IN HELL

no part gleams with intelligence
no one stumbles up from the depth
no one becomes something of a ghost
no one is perpetually on the fire escape
no one deals with bitter impressions
no one has an impeccable technique
no part adds a continuous depth or lustre
no present is immense or pertinent
nothing serves as a tacit response
nothing owes anything to mood or methodology
nothing gains in resonance cohesion or panache
nothing goes far toward making spirits rest
nothing turns inward or has obvious influence
nothing rebukes a less adventurous era
nothing is about the aftermath of enlightenment
nothing resembles a palimpsest
nothing is asserted to be subverted
nothing remains in the service of anything
nothing is anything by turns
nothing is besieged by the elements of time or history
nothing becomes unreconcilable or untamed
there is no adoption of tactics of encirclement or indirection
there are no themes of attachment or strangement
there is nothing against a cultural background
there are no strangely fruitful effects
there are no irrational antagonists or realms
there is no wreckage for clarity to be amid
there is no imaginative order to be shored up
there is no fervent explorations of being
there are no explorations of subject matter

Jorge Guitart

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119. **Charles Bernstein**

The Hand of the Poet

Sun 12 Nov 1995

*** Worth a Detour:

The Hand of the Poet: Original Manuscripts from 100 Masters

Part 1: John Donne to T.S. Eliot

Nov. 3, 1995 to April 20, 1996

New York Public Library 42nd & 5th, Berg Exhibition Hall

Including many remarkable items, none, for me, topped by the Donne, which I had never seen before, & including Pope, Blake, Burns, Wordsworth, Coleridge, Byron, Shelly, Keats, E. Bronte, Whitman, Dickinson*, E. B. Browning, Carroll, Stevens, Williams, and Eliot (the ms to "The Waste Land" with Pound's comments)

*ms of "Through the great Waters sleep" was on display in the "Masterpieces" exhibit next door at least during November. My impression is that it will go back to the Berg next month. In the present display it is a bit hard to see. Also exhibitted is the 1885 letter to Benjamin Kimball in which the poem was enclosed.

[&&& May 19-Nov. 16, 1996: Part II -- "e.e. cummings to Julia Alvarez"]

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120. **Charles Bernstein**

M/E/A/N/I/N/G

Sun 12 Nov 1995

M/E/A/N/I/N/G

Issue #18, FALL 1995

now available

& featuring --

MONSTROUS DOMESTICITY by Faith Wilding,

BRAVE NEW ART WORLD: A Symposium with Lenore Malen,
Irving Sandler, Michael Brenson, Debra Balken, and Michi Itami,

PAINTING AS MANUAL by Mira Schor

THE STRANGER by Pam Longobardi

PAINTING AFTER PAINTING: The Paintings of Susan Bee
by Misko Suvakovic,

Book REVIEWS by Nick Piombino of Johanna Drucker's new books, Tom
Knechtel of gay artists, Corinne Robins of Eleanor Antin,
Robert C. Morgan of Mondrian

M/E/A/N/I/N/G is edited by Susan bee and Mira Schor.

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New York, NY 10013

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121. **Mark Wallace**

(no subject)

Mon 13 Nov 1995

I would be interested in hearing comments from any point of view on the
following:

In a recent series of private letters to me which he refuses to make public,
perhaps because of their basic hypocrisy, Spencer Selby makes the following
claims about my recent article "Emerging Avant-Garde Poetries and the 'Post-
Language Crisis'":

1) That the Language poets have invented and furthered an environment of
suspicion, lies, and careerism, in which the "selfishness" of their individual
desire to have careers in poetry has caused them to sacrifice and destroy free
debate and opportunities for free expression. He argues, essentially, that the
Language poets created an environment in which promoting one's work counts
more than the quality of that work.

2) That the main problem with my essay is that the writers I mention in that
article (Kevin Killian, Dodie Bellamy, Rod Smith, Jefferson Hansen, Peter Gizzi,
Liz Willis, Juliana Spahr, Joe Ross, Susan Schultz, Ben Friedlander, Charles
Borkhuis, Chris Stroffolino, Lew Daly, John Noto, Steve Evans, Jean Osman,

many others) basically share in common the fact that they are CAREERISTS with no concern for the integrity of poetry. Spencer believes, he says, that the above writers are all second-rate, that the only reason anybody pays any attention to them is that they suck up to the powerful in the world of poetry.

In a recent letter to him, I challenged Spencer on these claims and asked him to debate me publicly on these and other issues. He refused, claiming that my suggestion that I debate him publicly on this issue might be seen as another way in which I am "sucking Up" to those power mongers in the poetry world who are unwilling to listen to what he has to say. He claims that, at best, I am in denial about my own careerist motivations.

I find Spencer's comments, and his insults to my integrity, offensive and pernicious in the worst way. I find his maligning of a great number of committed and concerned poets to be completely lacking in evidence, and to be untrue. I believe that his refusal to debate me publicly is based on his awareness that his claims are pernicious and even potentially legally actionable.

I believe that the private assault he is making on the character and activities of a wide range of experimental poets needs to be made public.

Mark Wallace

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122. **Schuchat**

Re: your mail

Mon 13 Nov 1995

re the mark wallace post, what's wrong with careerism?

"in a corrupt world, I am alone am pure"

everybody is supposed to be a stiff in gray's country churchyard?

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123. **Ann Lauterbach**

Re: POETICS Digest - 11 Nov 1...

Mon 13 Nov 1995

FYI : Barbara Guest (now living in California), and Ann Lauterbach (myself, still here after all these years) will be reading tomorrow evening, the 14th, at The New School, 66 West 12th Street, at 7pm, introduced by Forrest Gander. Be glad to see you there.

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124. **Burt Kimmelman**
turf war?

Mon 13 Nov 1995

Mark Wallace,

I for one certainly cannot ascribe to the view that a number of the people you have mentioned in your article are second rate writers.

Just thought i'd put in my 1 and a half cents.

Here's the other half cent:

"legally actionable"?!! C'mon now, isn't this a bit much?

Burt Kimmelman

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125. **Jordan Davis**
actionable jackson

Mon 13 Nov 1995

Mark,

What's up? If Spencer S (and thanks for the magazine list, Mr Selby) doesn't want to make his grievances public, then doesn't he have the right to that privacy? Granted, it's sad, but the release from irritation it affords you to bring his slanders out may also bring you the fresh irritation of libel. I find myself constantly in such discussions with people who will go unnamed: discussions about the poisoning of the literary community by the language writers, discussions about the mediocrity of writing after (or starting with) language poetry, discussions about the hostility of younger writers to each other (and the disrespect for each other's work). Probably a healthier view (one that disregards the personal noxiousness of certain predecessors who will go unnamed) is that hey it's snowing! is that there was in fact a political/economic/social/spiritual change in the writing climate sometime between 1970 and 1990... and that the few opportunities to proliferate the work of poets who don't want to write like Mary Oliver became much fewer. Meanwhile, the language poets, who unlike their 4th gen NY school classmates, had no qualms about being ambitious, let alone about sending their work to editors they didn't know personally, found other previously unidentified routes to disseminate their work. That is, they sat on MLA panels, they published perfect bound books, they worked their asses off. The legendary personal hostility of certain language writers we'll neglect to name to writers not of the camp of L is another matter. Selby's hostility, though, is another another matter. He publishes widely, until a few months ago he was a frequent

correspondent to the list, and it seemed from here that he was well-involved enough with poetry not to make the kind of attack (privately, we understand) that you say he has made. I used to make that kind of statement, and I'm afraid that the decreasing frequency of my attacks on the poetry establishment says something about me, about my career. I will note, though, that this is the second private fight you've publicized, and while I recognize that your motives are pure, I'm worried that other people will think something else. You're doing an awful lot. The reading series at Ruthless Grip brought in many more people on a rainy Saturday night for my reading with Bill Luoma than either Bill or I could have drawn in NY (and I hope you're not surprised to hear that) at the Ear, Biblios, St Mark's, etc. Situation is one of the least careerist new magazines around (could you help me by explaining what you mean by "poetics of identity" as a must for poetry you print there? I can't quite figure it out). You come to this field of language from one of the most neglected directions--Burroughs--and you bring to it a clear (if paratactic) intelligent set of concerns. So I ask again, what's up?

Sincerely,
Jordan

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126. **Gale Nelson**
(no subject)

Mon 13 Nov 1995

Mark,

It sounds as though Spencer has some concerns about the state of poetry, but that he did not feel as though it would be in anyone's best interests for him to air these concerns publicly. Unless he's writing "nasty things" about you to the rest of the poetry community (and I'm not in that loop), then it sounds as though he is responding in a serious way to an article that you have written. If the dialogue is driven by his response to your article, then I would hope that the two of you would converse by mail or telephone (or some other fashion), airing to one another your ideas. If he's not interested in having those comments put before a larger community, then he may have his reasons: he may not want to hurt feelings, he may not feel that his position has "hardened" (and would prefer to consider his ideas for a longer period of time before making a public statement), he may be doing/thinking any number of things -- but among them was his desire to keep the discussion private. It seems clear that you have felt the need to take offense in a public manner; and now you've done so. The poets you've listed became publicly scorned by Spencer because you put them in a list

second-hand. At least some of those poets might have been just as happy not knowing [second hand] that Spencer is troubled by their motives.

Now, the unwilling Spencer may feel obliged to take a stand, rather than simply continue a private conversation with another poet. I'll certainly try to have a policy to keep everything public with you, Mark.

Cheers,

Gale Nelson

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127. **Alan Sondheim**

Re: your mail

Mon 13 Nov 1995

I wonder in terms of intellectual property laws, as well as slander/libel laws, if it is permissible to quote and/or to paraphrase what is obviously private email. We all have our relatively violent moments which we share either with friends or associates, however defined; there is trust in privacy. I find it unethical to 'expose' private email publicly unless there is an overriding reason, such as threat of physical violence, etc.

Alan

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128. **Gwyn McVay**

Nathaniel Mackey

Mon 13 Nov 1995

Here is a quick and naive question re: Nathaniel Mackey that I'm hoping someone can answer: a) is *Song of the Andoumbolou* "complete," inasmuch as such a thing is possible, or still in progress? --and-- b) Have the existing sections been published all together or gathered in the same place?

Thanks--

Gwyn McVay

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129. **Larry Price**

yep & yep

Mon 13 Nov 1995

Ed:

What a terrific thought - I had forgotten that from Fenollosa, but you're quite right. Which makes me recall my consistent irritation over phonemic analysis, being as I always am, interested in that bleeding of one sound into another locus, not finally as other than, simply moments in the hearing of the same sound. While it is that blink of the ear that gives then, for me at least, the sense of time in the reading, or in the writing, I've always worked hard to dissect certain pieces, literally, glyph by glyph. For example, Sappho's "tina deute peitho mais agein es san philotata, tis o psaph, adikeiei," (forgive any missteps; dove sta, etc.) illustrates both sides of the issue, working as it does the athleticism of the consonants, while nonetheless maintaining the broad vocalic valleys which are then picked up in the following lines (the "kai gar ai feuge" delta that finishes the strophe. But the fact is, you're absolutely correct: when you do go down to the level of the letter, the oppositions completely disappear. Oddly, though, as I think about it, that does throw responsibility back to the reader, not so much to account for significations, but the other dimensions, the limning of, as above, time and the ways in which that gives over to the reader presence. The injunction to count them, those blinks of the ear, as either 1. lapses, 2. bursts of attention, or 3. switches between and what's occurring during the switch. Grenier's "Rose Appellate Project" comes to mind, as so much else there.

Larry Price

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130. **Bill Luoma**

a Subject

Mon 13 Nov 1995

mark,

i'm worried about your blood pressure. obviously spencer is right about point one. now langue poets are getting into the canyon. now they continue to publish their works and clog the narrowing dust lanes robbing younger good poets of a good chance to be heard unless they toady the cause. yes that makes their works tired. they are legitimized. they are like orpheus in cocteau's moovie. they need to etonnez nous if they want the younger crowd to really listen and not just kiss ass or poke around for historical reasons.

yes, languers have done a lot of silencing and selfing, claiming to be the only game in town e.g. i just heard of franz kamin a month ago and it's all your fault ron, charles and michael.

On the other hand they worked hard to promote their work with good marketing. i think it's done more to open up debate than quell it. so thank you ron, charles, michael. :*/ big smooch with tongue.

spencer, like tony door who recently coined the phrase "sucking raisins out of Bruce Andrews' ass" to describe ear inn toadies, tends to be one to point to the emperor and remark on his bad fashion sense. you gotta love em for that.

Bill Luoma

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131. **RUSSELL ELIZABETH J**

Re: your mail

Mon 13 Nov 1995

I wonder in terms of intellectual property laws, as well as slander/libel laws, if it is permissible to quote and/or to paraphrase what is obviously private email. We all have our relatively violent moments which we share either with friends or associates, however defined; there is trust in privacy. I find it unethical to 'expose' private email publicly unless there is an overriding reason, such as threat of physical violence, etc.

Alan

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132. **Charles Smith**

Re: Nathaniel Mackey

Mon 13 Nov 1995

<<Here is a quick and naive question re: Nathaniel Mackey that I'm hoping someone can answer: a) is _Song of the Andoumbolou_ "complete," inasmuch as such a thing is possible, or still in progress? --and-- b) Have the existing sections been published all together or gathered in the same place?

Thanks--

Gwyn McVay>>

Gwyn,

"S of A" is an on-going serial poem, potentially extensible for as long as Nate cares to continue writing it. Same goes for the prose. No, the existing sections haven't been published together. Like Duncan's work, they are deliberately worked into the larger context his other poems create. At this point, all the existing sections haven't even been published yet. He was up to something like #35 as of last spring. Hopefully, City Lights will see the way to doing another volume. Or someone...

You should check out, if you haven't yet, the CD _Strick: Song of the Andoumboulou 16-25_ where he is accompanied by Royal Hartigan on percussion & Hafez Modirzadeh on reeds. Excellent stuff, & well recorded. Hats off to Paul Naylor if he's reading this (& for his good essay in PMC). The CD is available from SPD, or from Spoken Engine Co., PO Box 771739, Memphis, TN 38177-1739.

all best,
charles

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133. **Alan Sondheim**

Re: a Subject

Mon 13 Nov 1995

Oh hell, help! I'm a poet and a really good writer and those damn language poets are stopping me from doing anything! Can't even get a rhyme up anymore and when I do, POW! Even my local Newspaper would rather Bernstein than me! I can't live like this, bang bang I'll shoot myself dead, that will show them!

And xerox, take that! They won't even copy my poems! Those Long-Po's are ruining everything!

Those Long Long Po's!

I mean get a life, start a magazine, self-publish, go and write, start a publishing co, other people I know have. This argument's old as the hills some of them trilobites complaining that the ones with longer lateral spines keeping them out of the really good tidepools...

Alan

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134. **Alan Sondheim**

Re: your mail

Mon 13 Nov 1995

Kewl.

On Mon, 13 Nov 1995, RUSSELL ELIZABETH J wrote:

I wonder in terms of intellectual property laws, as well as slander/libel laws, if it is permissible to quote and/or to paraphrase what is obviously private email. We all have our relatively violent moments which we share either with friends or associates, however defined; there is trust in privacy. I find it unethical to 'expose' private email publicly unless there

is an overriding reason, such as threat of physical violence, etc.

Alan

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135. **Loss Glazier**
Announcing Tinfish...online!

Mon 13 Nov 1995

Announcing ...
 ..+..
 + TINFISH---->
 text & graphical files
 are now ----- Online ----->
 at the Electronic Poetry Center!

This magazine, edited by Susan Schultz in Honolulu, is a journal of experimental poetry with an emphasis on work from the Pacific region. *Tinfish #1* presents work by Joe Balaz, Peter Kenneally, Kathy Dee, John Geraets, Rob Wilson, Spencer Selby, Yi Sha, John Kinsella, Lyn Hejinian, Barry K. K. Masuda, and John Tranter.

Have a look at the EPC (<http://writing.upenn.edu/epc>) under "journals"!

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Subscription information also available
at the Tinfish home page!

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136. **Bill Luoma**
Baa Fashion (fwd)

Mon 13 Nov 1995

[illegible]

Forwarded message:

From: [REDACTED] TEXT.PUB (Wyndam Lewis)

(HUGE Chat-Net)

(HUGE Chat-Net)

To:

(Multiple recipients of list HUGE)

Date: 1956-11-13 16:33:08 EST

Note : An Unmanned of Distinction

There is a distinction between pointing to the emperor & saying, "What horrible clothes! Who's his tailor? That jacket went out of style when my great-gran-mama was 30; & those colors, well you'd have to be blind!" instead of saying, "NAKED!"

Let's do lunch. But which is better? I do not know. It depends on your interpretation. First, do the people who see the emperor think that he actually has clothes on? Have not some of them been brainwashed into thinking the emperor really has clothes? Can these people be convinced that the clothes they think they see are bad? Is this a worthwhile endeavor?

"It is not vanity to have pulled from the air a live tradition"

I will chose to do both. The Emperor is imagining that he is wearing totally tasteless clothes of his own design. Whose thread bare fabrics are hideous & lack style. But not as the result of a devotion to bad style, but as the result of a complete ignorance of the concept itself.

The Emperor wears "nous" clothes & these duds are not of the "now."

More specifically, aside from Mac Low, Zukofsky, & Oppen, why can i not remember whom else they've suggested we read? Besides Franz Kamin, who had heard of Schwitters before Jerry R. did his book? who has heard of the Lettrests? {can i even spell it?} who knows the work of Chuck Stein {a plug for the Little Magazine on CD Rom--listen to Chuck Stein's piece, then listen to Charles Bernstein's--& draw your own conclusions[collusions] (or as they say at Rice, "add you own 'E's")}

Which, by a curious vicous of recircumlocution, brings us back to the Emperor's new clothes. The ones he sometimes has on (when HAVING them is an important step toward saint hood), & sometimes does not (when NOT HAVING them is a convenient way to avoid criticism.)

The Emperor is fickle & his clothes are bad.

He wears the atrocious garb of the self-aggrandizing. Isn't it curious that [to varying degrees] most {i did not say all--oddly enough} of the poets mostly associated by most of us, [&

rarely by only a few of them] with most of themselves; as constituting, if not a school, a group, nor even a poetic society, [why does no one EVER mention the word "community" when speaking of these poets?] at the very least a mutual [& extremely generous & uncritical] admiration society; are so extremely passive-aggressive?

Have i mentioned Miserly? Threadbare? Bankrupt?

Isn't it curious that the "second generation" {some would have it as "third"} has no direction in which to go? Could it be that they lack leadership? Lack role models? are torn in two directions? [The diametrically opposed directions of poet & toady?] Could it be . . . ? No, look at how helpful they have been to so many others--how encouraging they continue to be.

I propose this--Who so ever thought that they ever learned anything "Poetic" from a naked, raving dictator--"check your calculations. It still looks like a chicken coop from here."

Tony Door
Europe

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137. **Jonathan Brannen**

Re: dunno but

Mon 13 Nov 1995

Date: Sat, 28 Oct 1995 10:05:28 -0400

From: Chris Stroffolino <[REDACTED]>

Subject: Re: & Ralph Waldo

*(continued from last note--which ended with FOR WHAT?)
or FOR WHOM? cs*

Chris--

Certainly the good doctor had insurance claims investigator (does anybody out there remember Johnny Dollar on Saturday afternoon radio?!?) is just silly. I didn't say that though perhaps (?) Jonathan did.

Chris & Tenney,

Surely nothing I've said has suggested that I have a favorable opinion of the medical profession.

Best,
Jonathan

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138. **Carla Billitteri**

Friday Lecture and Saturday Reading (in Buffalo, N.Y.)

Mon 13 Nov 1995

l l l e e e c c c t t t u u u r r r e e e
)_L_()_E_()_C_()_T_()_U_()_R_()_E_(
l e c t u r e

Charles Cantalupo

(Associate Professor of English at Penn State Univ.)

"AFRICAN FOREGROUNDS AND THE EXAMPLE OF NGUGI WA THIONG'O"

A lecture on the Kenyan novelist and essayist Ngugi wa Thiong'o

11:00 A.M.

Friday, November 17

Clemens 410

r e a d i n g
)_R_()_E_()_A_()_D_()_I_()_N_()_G_(
r r r e e e a a a d d d i i i n n n g g g

Robert Fitterman

&

Charles Cantalupo

7:30 P.M.

Saturday, November 18

Central Park Grill (2519 Main St.)

\$4

Robert Fitterman is the author of *_Ameresque_* and *_Metropolis_* and is
co-editor of the journal *_Object_*

Charles Cantalupo is the author of
*_Anima/l Wo/man and Other Spirits_*
and the poetry-performance cycle *_After Africa_*

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139. **Jonathan Brannen**

Re: Wallace and fiscal poetry

Mon 13 Nov 1995

jonathan: back to the money/poetry/stevens matrix. wd this be interesting to
pursue further--siena, the medicis, alchemy, plato, poetry, all those
astonishing links such that $a + b$ equals more than c . it won'y make

friends but can make interest. stevens was not taking about money as machinery but as magic. -ed

Yo! Ed,

I'm not opposed to transforming a little lead. Then I've always believed that poetry has been hypertext longer than computers have been computers. Go figure!

Best,

Jonathan

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140. **Steve Carll**

Re: trouble

Mon 13 Nov 1995

Mark:

How are we supposed to comment on this argument when we only have your representation of Spencer's position in it? I know Spencer well enough to be aware of his general ideas about this subject, and it seems to me you're reading them reductively, polarizing them; but without knowing what he actually said to you, I'd only be reacting to hearsay.

While I can sympathize with your offended integrity, I wonder if you haven't struck it a worse blow yourself by choosing this forum and this tactic to make your case.

Steve

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141. **Patrick Phillips**

Re: trouble

Mon 13 Nov 1995

Somebody tell me, what's all this stuff about integrity?

Whose?

And what the hell is "the integrity of poetry???"

I'd be willing to give somebody five bucks if they could honestly tell me.

- standing offer.

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142. **Aldon L. Nielsen**

Baraka Conference

Tue 14 Nov 1995

I can't take the time to give as full a summary of last week's Baraka conference as we've had of other events recently, but here's a taste --

That this happened at all is something of a minor miracle. There was no funding to be had easily, though there seems to be plenty of money for multiple celebrations of a whitened BEAT millenium. As a result, everything, including my own arrival, was late.

So, following Baraka's 61st birthday, the Schomburg Library in New York hosted a 60th birthday conference on the work of Amiri Baraka.

I can't tell you anything of the first panel, as I was just arriving at LaGuardia when it began. But then, Baraka wasn't there yet either. Kalamu Ya Salaam and William Strikland were scheduled to speak about Baraka's political activites, and Charles Bernstein, who was there for part of it, tells me they seemed determined to do so without any reference to his writings. Neat trick.

Things started picking up with the second session, on Baraka's drama. Baraka had, by now, arrived. Eleanor Traylor, Marjorie Perloff's running buddy in grad. school days, made her usual highly dramatic statement, articulated with waves of her feathered sleeves. (The Schomburg staff continued to find these feathers floating about the collection for days afterward, signs of Eleanor's having been through the manuscript room.) Eleanor had also throughly composed her interview questions for Baraka, and they amounted to miniature essays delivered as if they were sermonettes. But, her questions were very much to the point, and Baraka answered them with good humor.

By the time we had had lunch, the sessions were back on schedule and it was time for me to say a few words about Baraka's fiction and to handle the interview on that material. If you've tried to find Baraka's fiction lately, you know what part of the problem is here. I spoke briefly about the development of African-American postmodernisms, using uncollected Baraka prose works from *_Yugen_*, *_Kulchur_* and from his manuscripts to illustrate my points. Also asked him about the "populist modernism" he speaks of in his introduction to his fiction anthology *_The Moderns_*. My favorite moment was our reading of a letter from the then editor in chief of Putnams about the novel Baraka was writing under contract for them in the early seventies. They seemed to think they would get a sort of black *_Godfather_*, a triumphalist (and realist) narrative of a rise from the ghetto (with lots of blood along the way I suppose). Clearly they had never read his previous novel, *_The System of Dante's Hell_*.

That evening was given over to a literary tribute, with scheduled readings by Haki Madhabuti and Sonia Sanchez. No news here (except for the news that Baraka and Madhabuti are now speaking to each other again). No new work appeared, but the readings were well delivered. (You can probably tell I'm not a big fan of these two. If you like their work, you would have liked their reading.) The surprise was an unscheduled appearance of Baraka reading with a jazz ensemble named Blue Ark. This turned out much better than other such productions in the past. Much better than anything Baraka himself has done since his performances with David Murray and Steve McCall more than a decade ago. Less agit prop and more poetry of the type we've seen from Baraka in *_Sulfur_* and other mags recently.

Saturday morning the panel dealt with Baraka's music criticism and his own recordings. Kalamu Ya Salaam talked about Baraka's now hard to find albums. Lorenzo Thomas provided a walking tour of *_Blues People_* and was his usual charming self. This turned into the longest and most wide-ranging interview of the conference.

Saturday afternoon was given over to talk of the poetry itself, though few questions got asked about poetics. (Ain't that always the way.) Sonia Sanchez was on this panel, but mostly she just read her own poems and told anecdotes about meeting Baraka (good anecdotes, I hasten to add). William J. Harris had much more cogent remarks to make about the poetry. If you have never looked at it, read his 1985 book on Baraka's poetry and jazz aesthetics. (Harris was one of the first writers on Baraka to read through Baraka's correspondence with Dorn, Olson and others. It's still a good book he wrote, though now a bit dated.) There were, of course, questions from the audience of the "where do you get your ideas" sort, but there were also some very good questions asked by very young people.

The final event was a retrospective reading by Baraka that was recorded for possible release as a CD later on. (Kalamu is working on that project and should do a good job.) The early poems were magnificent. Some of the more recent poems were magnificent. And then there was some crap in the middle. Baraka mentioned that he had been called antisemitic and anti-gay in response to some of those late-sixties and early-seventies poems, and found an unseemly humor in that fact. He has written scathing criticism of his own cultural nationalism from those years elsewhere, and maybe he didn't want to repeat that at his own retrospect -- but I wished he were less apologetic about his earliest poems and more apologetic about some of the nationalist work -- particularly since he takes such a strongly antinationalist line today -- (and when, if ever, will anyone hold Dorn responsible for his antisemitic remarks over the years?!?)

But it began and ended (the reading) with impressive work impressively delivered. If you look at some of the "Why's" poems in the new selected, or the recent stuff in *_Sulfur_* issues, you'll see that there's still some interesting work coming out of that typewriter in between plays like that wretched "Tarzan and Boy Appear in a Clearing" --

The entire series was videotaped, and that material will soon be available for people to look at in the Schomburg collection. If you've never been there, get on that #2 subway and pay a visit. It's one of the major collections of African-American materials (including 5000 films and videos) available to scholars in the U.S. -- Much of the collection is indexed on the New York Public Library's CATNYP system, which you can access, I think, through the NYPL web site:

<http://www.nypl.org>

There are about 200 pages of uncollected Baraka poems in ms. at the Schomburg, which they are just now beginning to process and make available.

Meanwhile, get *_Transbluesency: Selected Poems of Amiri Baraka_* edited by Paul Vangelisti, and play some good music while you read around in it -- Try *_Impressions_* while reading "I Substitute for the Dead Lecturer" for example. And next time you're at one of those BEAT retrospectives, ask somebody where all the black poets and painters are --

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143. **Aldon L. Nielsen**

Re: integrity

Tue 14 Nov 1995

Mr. Phillips -- send \$5.00 and I will tell you about the integrity of poetry. Trust me!

Anybody else who wants to know about this, just send the five bucks. It's not much to ask.

yours,
soupy sales

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144. **Jeffrey Timmons**

Re: trouble

Tue 14 Nov 1995

On Mon, 13 Nov 1995, Patrick Phillips wrote:

| *Somebody tell me, what's all this stuff about integrity?>*
| *Whose?*

*And what the hell is "the integrity of poetry???"
I'd be willing to give somebody five bucks if they could honestly tell me.
- standing offer.*

Uh, a dandruff shampoo?

Jeffrey Timmons

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145. **James Sherry**

Re: POETICS Digest - 12 Nov 1995 to 13 Nov 1995

Tue 14 Nov 1995

-Should we evaluate language writing and Spencer Selby on their own terms or
-should we evaluate them on each other's terms or -should we evaluate them on
some third set of terms dictated by assumptions but unvoiced.

Can you each say how you evaluated each and the question?

Is there an unbreachable discrepancy between quality and career or is it more
complicated? They are not synonyms, but they are not antonyms either.

If we are not writing for our careers, who or what are we writing for?

Does the aim of our writing make is better or worse as writing?

Does the aim of our writing have anything to do with its value?

Ron has made some significant contributions to questions of poetry and value.
So has Ann Lauterbach. Others have made significant although covert
contributions.

James

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146. **Jordan Davis**

the aim of our poetry

Tue 14 Nov 1995

I think Mark was taking aim at poetry.

Jordan

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147. **Fred Muratori**
Crybaby Poetry?

Tue 14 Nov 1995

I find Spencer's comments, and his insults to my integrity, offensive and pernicious in the worst way. I find his maligning of a great number of committed and concerned poets to be completely lacking in evidence, and to be untrue. I believe that his refusal to debate me publicly is based on his awareness that his claims are pernicious and even potentially legally actionable.

I believe that the private assault he is making on the character and activities of a wide range of experimental poets needs to be made public.

Mark Wallace

Could this be? Is LangPo now entering the era of Late-LangPo, its final, decadent, crybaby phase? Insults may have indeed been perpetrated, but since when is it out-of-bounds to challenge or criticize or just plain insult the work of any poet or school of poetry? And since when could a debate settle such subjective matters as aesthetic preference? ("Yes, your logic is overwhelming. I now appreciate the awesome implications of Edgar Guest's verse.") The mainstream -- however so defined by historical moment -- has absorbed "pernicious" criticism for years. That's the inevitable consequence when an entity acquires -- or is perceived to have acquired -- power. ("If you got it, flaunt it.") It's news to me that literary criticism or accusations of careerism could be "legally actionable." Much as I appreciate and admire LangPo, I doubt that its practitioners and promoters can claim any divine dispensation from criticism and insult, no moreso than New Formalists or any other category we can conveniently assign to a group of poets. As always, the poets most likely to get screwed/silenced by existing power centers are those who are aligned with none.

Please, let's direct our attention to more adult matters, like the current discourse between Congress and Clinton over the federal budget.

Fred Muratori

"Certain themes are incurable."

(██████)

- Lyn Hejinian

Reference Services Division
Olin * Kroch * Uris Libraries
Cornell University
Ithaca, NY 14853

148. **Jeff Hansen**

None

Tue 14 Nov 1995

Mark Wallace's post about Selby's accusations is timely. Many are making similar claims.

1. To argue that the Language poets invented self-promotion and careerism is ridiculous. Has anyone out there heard of Walt Whitman writing reviews of his own books? And what about the promotional efforts of Pound, Stein, Olson, Ginsberg, Baraka, etc.? One may argue that the Language poets, unlike these others, let market affairs infect their poetry, so that the poetry became sullied by careerism to a degree unheard of before. There are a lot of Language poets, so I can't discuss all of them. But I do find it interesting that two so-called Language poets, Bernstein and Perelman, have, for the first time to my knowledge, thematized the relationship between promotion/PR and poetry in poems such as "Lives of the Toll Takers." Could they be suffering at the hands of the Selbys because they have been too honest, too willing to explore the less-than-rigid line between PR and aesthetics? They both suggest, compellingly, that poetry cannot be separated from the efforts to get it public attention. They say this about not only their poetry, but everyone else's as well. I suggest that this honesty, coupled with jealousy at their success, is at the core of these sorts of attacks.

2. What is wrong with self-promotion? A writer would have to be a masochist to publish and not to publicize. I want a wider audience, and, so long as I do not violate my aesthetic principles, I will do what I can to get it. It seems to me that Selby's line of argument supposes that, because the system is corrupt, any success must also be corrupt. Would [REDACTED]"

3. Where is the line at which self-promotion sullies the poetry? Such a question can be answered only on a case-by-case basis. But wholesale rejection and judgment of the way whole groups of poets have negotiated this difficult terrain is not helpful.

4. To attack Bernstein as a careerist ignores all the good that he has done all poets. Note this list. And the contributions he has made to poetry as the Grey Chair at Buffalo. Charles is not resting on his laurels nor using his position simply for crass personal advancement. Quite to the contrary. He has helped all of us. To not recognize this is to be profoundly ungrateful. I'm glad that an individual as generous as he has been so successful.

5. Selby has three full-length collections of poetry out. I have some chapbooks, but no collections. He calls me a careerist. Look at the evidence. Who is the real careerist? How did you manage to get your books published, Spencer?

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149. **Chris Stroffolino**
(no subject)

Tue 14 Nov 1995

"Much Virtue in An "IF"----Shakespeare, AS YOU LIKE IT, act 5--

Well, Mark--

IF Spencer said that I was second-rate and

IF Specnker said that I am a careerist

who just sucks up to the powerful and

IF he also said that I therefore have no integrity,

THEN it no do doubt becomes quite bizarre that he would

have asked me to blurb his last book-----

signed, a fiend (i mean friend---much virtue in an R).

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150. **Edward Foster**
Re: yep & yep

Tue 14 Nov 1995

larry: in this matter, i've been back with whitman this morning, thinking about that particular movement and why it was open to revision and expansion. stein is equally emersonian but never frees herself from chronology, i think, but later work

stanzas in meditation, maybe. others, early ginsberg for instance, work through increment, and that's of course not it either. fenolossa was too much a philosopher, wanted conclusions i suppose. whitman's mystery as a poet is his ability to maintain syntax but not submit to discrete letters. so many have tried, in his wake, but fail. -ed

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151. **Charles Alexander**
Re: None (or any) (or some)

Tue 14 Nov 1995

Re: careerism, poetry, publishing.

During 15 years of making books, publishing them in one form or another, I have been called a careerist because on a couple of occasions I have published my own work. I have also been called one because I have published work I like by poets I like. Frankly, I wouldn't want it any other way. It has been suggested to me, from some in the nonprofit sector, that I should not choose the books I publish, rather should have a non-partisan and diverse editorial board make such choices. If I had to do that, I wouldn't do the work at all. I've also been criticized because I've actually tried to promote the books (and most of you probably know I haven't done all that much in that area). I plead guilty. And I can tell you what a pleasure it has been on occasion (all too few) to publish something by a writer who worked really hard to get her/his books reviewed, to get readings, to get the books into stores, to get their friends and admirers to buy them. Damn that careerism.

I've also tried to find employment or gain fellowships, and have been offered some, on occasion, related to my writing and/or publishing and/or bookmaking efforts. I thought I did this to try to make sure I helped provide, along with my spouse, such things as food, shelter, health care, and more, to my family (believe me, I'd love NOT to need such jobs, but I've never been in that position). It hasn't hurt, on such occasions, to have recommendations from people who could put them on letterhead that mattered to whatever employers or granters saw them. Damn me and damn those letter writers for such careerism.

Although I criticize here certain attitudes, let me say that I have great respect for Spencer Selby and, at the moment, little respect for Mark Wallace and his decision to make a private matter become a public matter. Spencer has done great work through his organization of readings, his publishing, and his writing. That he and Mark differ in many opinions, even to the point of difficult emotional argument, is not surprising. Spencer and I probably differ in such ways, too. But to bring the bitterest part of such argument to public knowledge without one participant's consent is something I find extremely distasteful.

Please get on with your poetries, and your careers.

charles

Charles Alexander
Chax Press
P.O. Box 19178
Minneapolis, MN 55419-0178
[REDACTED] (phone & fax)
[REDACTED]

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152. **Edward Foster**
Re: Wallace and fiscal poetry
Tue 14 Nov 1995

oh, jonathan! hypertext indeed. it's time for a little homebrew. no figures, just fun. or maybe satie-faction. -ed

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153. **Edward Foster**
Re: integrity
Tue 14 Nov 1995

aldon, \$5 is too much. I can do it for \$2. according to this morning's times, "Jersey City Officers Are Accused / Of Turning Stolen Cars to Profit." (that's "Jersey" City, sorry about mistyping, these fingers are so slippery) The possibility of corruption in my home town. Oh, my god, i could barely finish lunch.

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154. **Jordan Davis**
concreet letters
Tue 14 Nov 1995

whitman's mystery as a poet is his ability to maintain syntax but not submit to discrete letters. so many have tried, in his wake, but fail. -ed

Ed,
this sounds amazing. What, though, are discrete letters?
Jordan

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155. **Kevin Killian**
snarl
Tue 14 Nov 1995

Chris Stroffolino wrote:

"Much Virtue in An "IF"----Shakespeare, AS YOU LIKE IT, act 5--

Well, Mark--

IF Spencer said that I was second-rate and

IF Specnecr said that I am a careerist

who just sucks up to the powerful and

IF he also said that I therefore have no integrity,

THEN it no do doubt becomes quite bizarre that he would

*have asked me to blurb his last book-----
signed, a fiend (i mean friend---much virtue in an R).*

Your point is well taken, Chris. You're not the only one on second-rate careerist list to have treated Spencer with friendship and generosity. Here's what I wrote to Mark PRIVATELY:

"Kevin let me read your post to him, and told me to read your message on the listserv (I haven't been following the discussions there lately). People are going to be afraid to write to you, Mark, though I am enjoying your stirring up of things. I think Kevin's holding on his opinion until Spencer, who Kevin's always been very nice and supportive of, makes some kind of response. Biting the hand that feeds you is too common a practice among writers. I've recently been majorly bitten, chewed by Cudjo, so this is on my mind. I did similar attacks when I was younger and impatient that others give me the recognition I couldn't even give myself, but Spencer is old and should know better. Kevin is always telling me that love is its own reward and that you shouldn't expect or demand gratitude--and, over and over, Mark, this is the only option one has out of the soul-destroying type of bitterness you're describing here."

Dodie Bellamy

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156. **Eryque Gleason**
look who's talking

Tue 14 Nov 1995

post it in the EPC. At least then we might all know what we're talking about.

Ken Sherwood

Ken, what's the fun in knowing what we're talking about? i've found it makes it much harder to get into heated arguments when you level the field like that....

eryque the red.

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157. **Janet S. Gray**
Need help identifying a poem

Tue 14 Nov 1995

Just joined this list, looking for help with a poetry puzzle. I'm editing an anthology of 19th-c American women poets, and I've run across two poems that I'm convinced are take-offs on the same poem, but I don't know what the poem is. Hunches are that the original may not be in English; that it may be classical,

and there may have been a popular new translation of this poet in the late 19th century. People have already tried to talk me out of this theory but I'm not convinced. Would love to hear from any who recognize the two- quatrain pastoral (probably) behind this pair or can suggest where I might turn.

MOONRISE IN THE ROCKIES

The trembling train clings to the leaning wall
Of solid stone; a thousand feet below
Sinks a black gulf; the sky hangs like a pall
Upon the peaks of everlasting snow.

Then of a sudden springs a rim of light,
Curved like a silver sickle. High and higher--
Till the full moon burns on the breast of night
And a million firs stand tipped with lucent fire.

--Ella Higginson, 1898

A PASTORAL IN POSTERS

The mid-day moon lights up the rocky sky;
The great hills flutter in the greenish breeze;
While far above the lowing turtles fly
And light upon the pinky-purple trees.

The gleaming trill of jagged, feathered rocks
I hear with glee as swift I fly away,
And over waves of subtle woolly flocks
Crashes the breaking day!

--Carolyn Wells, 1900

Higginson's version especially makes me think of Sappho, but I can't find a Sappho poem that does.

Janet Gray

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158. **Kenneth Sherwood**

Dominance of Lang. Po. / Wallace

Tue 14 Nov 1995

I too have had a private corr with Wallace over Lang Po dominance and the recuperability of trad forms, just to out myself as painlessly as possible. Find it hard, still, to find the dominance in the work since never can pin down the 'center' (even mediated thru anthol.s like Amer Tree or Art Practice) sure enough see how this is even could be dominant.

Compare John Taggart's "if we stop long enough we'll be gathered brought together by the voice" with "erratum for the tummy La La Ta tin erratum neuter past errare all" of Joan Retallack. These two lines drawn almost at random from the latests 'canonizing' lang po anthology seem canyons apart.

Whatever the "quality" of the work on some grade-scale, it does seem to have a range. Like "objectivism" (a term never meant to represent a 'movement' or group), lang po seems most useful as a homogenizing label slung around by those who didn't want to read any in the first place. (Not you Mark, I know.)

Calling the works of lang po hegemonic seems to rely on the same homogenizing myopic that would see "contemporary" art as limited because only involved with flat surface and form.

More, without getting personal, it might be useful to talk about poems or the work of particular poets rather than the Lang. Po. bogey man.

p.s. Mark--if you want this debate, perhaps you want to share yr essay from Poetic Briefs with the list, or send it to me and I'll post it in the EPC. At least then we might all know what we're talking about.

Ken Sherwood

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159. **Jordan Davis**

Re: Dominance of Lang. Po. / Wallace

Tue 14 Nov 1995

I'm interested in the recurrence of the term "hegemony" on this list. Not to raise the spectre of the AHP (and will the authors of the AHP posts ever be outed?) but what are the symptoms of hegemony?

Jordan

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160. **Marc L. Weber**

announcement of new lit. mag. available on-line

Tue 14 Nov 1995

If you (or anyone you forward this message too) want a copy in HTML format just drop me a note at [REDACTED] and ask for a copy of SUGAR MULE #1. I will have a WWW site sometime next year. (For others reading this--the hard copy will require a handling fee--inquire for address.)

The mag in brief could be described thusly:

Approx. 64 book-size pages--Paul Hoover, Jane Augustine, Michael Heller Kate Lila Wheeler, Lance Olson and Pierre Joris and others will be in the first issue.

Though not strictly so, the magazine is eccentrically Buddhist and eco-oriented. All types of prose and poetry are welcome.

You can order hard-copy versions at Web, P.O. Box, 6912, Colo. Spgs., CO 80934 for \$10 for two issues--make checks payable to Marc L. Weber.

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161. **Edward Foster**

Re: concreet letters

Tue 14 Nov 1995

for jordan: letters are discrete before they make sense; syntax may not in itself make sense, but you can't make sense without it. letters are discreet when they make less sense than they could. -ed

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162. **Tenney Nathanson**

unpack

Wed 15 Nov 1995

Date: Tue, 14 Nov 1995 11:18:50 -0500

From: Edward Foster <[REDACTED]>

Subject: Re: yep & yep

larry: in this matter, i've been back with whitman this morning, thinking about that particular movement and why it was open to revision and expansion. stein is equally emersonian but never frees herself from chronology, i think, but later work

stanzas in meditation, maybe. others, early ginsberg for instance, work through increment, and that's of course not it either. fenolossa was too much a philosopher, wanted conclusions i suppose. whitman's mystery as a poet is his ability to maintain syntax but not submit to discrete letters. so many have tried, in his wake, but fail. -ed

Ed--

unpack the Walt remarks please?

Tenney

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163. **Tenney Nathanson**

urgh!

Wed 15 Nov 1995

Date: Tue, 14 Nov 1995 19:55:21 -0500

From: Edward Foster <[REDACTED]>

Subject: Re: concreet letters

for jordan: letters are discrete before they make sense; syntax may not in itself make sense, but you can't make sense without it. letters are discreet when they make less sense than they could. -ed

Dear Sir:

please attach to Uncle Walt....

thanks, T.

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164. **Spencer Selby**

Re: None (I wish)

Wed 15 Nov 1995

Thanks to Gale Nelson and Charles Alexander for their thoughtful speculations about my exchange with Mark Wallace.

I am not saying "nasty things" about anyone in the poetry community, publically or privately. Also: I never called anyone a careerist. I never questioned anyone's integrity. I never said anything about "lies of Language Poets."

In fact, the only motives I've spoken of directly are Mark's, and I did that because his overwrought emotional reaction to my posts has made it seemingly impossible for him to hear what I'm saying, what I'm trying to say. He prefers a blatant, unfair caricature, such as what he has posted to POETICS.

My exchange with Mark was a private one, but I would rather go public with it than be so unfairly represented, misquoted by Mark or Jefferson Hansen. So anyone who wants to know what I really said: Post me and I'll forward the complete text of my exchange with Mark.

With Greetings and Respect to All,

Spencer Selby

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165. **Jordan Davis**
something to take your mind off
Wed 15 Nov 1995

Hey kids!
Here's an url you'll really like
<http://www.phantom.com:80/~fowler/bookstor/gjmcwestmass.html>
It's a new book of poems by Jim McCrary!
Jordan

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166. **Charles Alexander**
Re: None (I wish)
Wed 15 Nov 1995

Dear Spencer
glad you posted something as solid and simple as you did re: Wallace's remarks.
all best,
charles
Charles Alexander
Chax Press
P.O. Box 19178
Minneapolis, MN 55419-0178
[REDACTED] (phone & fax)
[REDACTED]

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167. **Jordan Davis**
Re: concreet letters
Wed 15 Nov 1995

At 7:55 PM 11/14/95, Edward Foster wrote:
>for jordan: letters are discrete before they make sense; syntax may not
>in itself make sense, but you can't make sense without it. letters are
>discreet when they make less sense than they could. -ed
Ed, so re whitman, the letters are discrete means the 19th c. oratorical diction
and odd (Keatsian?) valence (vis a vis one word next to another) aren't
combined again? That's his right place/right nerd good luck?- Jordan

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168. **ULMER SPRING**

Re: yep & yep

Wed 15 Nov 1995

what about stein's using nouns as verbs?

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169. **Mark Wallace**

my recent post

Wed 15 Nov 1995

While I appreciate the concerns regarding privacy, etc., that people have suggested in regards to my recent post, I think they are misplaced in this case. It's one thing to say that comments regarding ideas, issues, etc, that are made privately have some potential right to be kept private, although even in such a situation, I don't quite see why Mr. Selby, whom I barely know, has the right necessarily to send unsolicited ideas to me and expect that I have some obligation not to make them public. But this is not a situation regarding ideas. Mr. Selby has CALLED MY CHARACTER INTO QUESTION, and has further gone on to suggest that a number of writers who I like and admire are equally lacking in character. So I'd say to Gale Nelson that it's one thing to ask me to keep an idea private, it's another to impugn my motives, and the motives of others I respect and in some cases love, in correspondence to me and then to ask me to keep such baseless accusations to my self.

Perhaps I am personally sensitive about accusations about my motivations, although I wonder who would not be. But the issue is larger than that for me. Let me explain why. As an adjunct professor who makes a marginal living teaching literature and writing, I also have an economic concern regarding poetry. I've chosen to make my living teaching literature because, for me, it seemed most honorable to try to survive economically by professing something I believe in--I've found other jobs to compromise my integrity in ways that make me uncomfortable. I do not say that other should do what I do, but simply that it seemed the best choice for me. But as an adjunct, I have no job security. My continued employment is based on my ability to seem competent and fair, and accusations that I am not, from whatever quarter, behaving in an ethical manner are accusations I not only will, but must, take extremely seriously. Lest it seem that I exaggerate, let me point out that while I was a graduate student at the University at Buffalo, I know of one case where a graduate student was reprimanded, and in another case removed from teaching, on the basis of a student accusation of unfairness. I don't know how well grounded those accusations were, I only know they had real effects. It is my attempt here to forestall in advance anyone who might make such accusations about me, in

whatever context, so that my silence is not taken as some tacit acceptance of such accusations.

Secondly, as a resident of Washington, D.C., I am living in a politically charged environment where character slanders of the sort that Mr. Selby is spreading about contemporary poets are a commonplace political tactic. Artists in this environment, especially experimental artists, are regularly described as immoral, both in public and private, as a way of eliminating public support for the arts. It is my belief that Mr. Selby, whether intentionally or not, can only by accusing avant garde writers of unethical behavior in this way do further harm to the image of artists. When such statements are made public, as in Jonathan Yardley's recent Washington Post article claiming that artists were living financially lucrative existences on the basis of receiving huge amounts of public money for which they are showing no responsibility, I make an effort to respond in print. If comments attacking the integrity of artists are made privately, I feel that those comments should be "outed" as a way of taking on their pernicious influence in a public context. I am doing in these matters far LESS than I should, actually--an avant-garde writer who is far more politically effective than myself, and receives far less credit, Joe Ross, has been extremely active in helping maintain public support for the arts in the current climate, and is also one of the people who Mr. Selby's comments to me have maligned. I repeat that such accusations have no right to remain private in such a politically charged environment. They must be dealt with, and they must be dealt with forthrightly and forcefully.

I have no control over the comments that Mr. Selby makes about me or others, nor should I have such control. However, since I have therefore no control over to whom he may make comments about my activities, my best way to defend myself against them, and to defend people I respect against them, is to state publicly that I know he has made such accusations, and that, until he puts forward proof of these accusations, to state publicly that such accusations are baseless and false. I believe that Mr. Selby's "private" speech is doing a great deal of harm, and that blaming me for bringing that to people's attention is a misplaced concern in this instance. A private individual like myself is under no legal compunction to keep such accusations private, and indeed I believe that keeping such accusations private can do a great deal of harm.

I will cite, as proof of this last point, another of my own experiences, which several people on this list can also vouch for. This instance is far more extreme than that of Mr. Selby's, but is, I think, illustrative. While in graduate school, I became roommates with another graduate student in my department. Within several months, he was verbally abusing me, and finally did indeed threaten to kill me. I was forced to abandon my apartment in the middle of a Buffalo November, to call Health Services and the police, and finally to bring a large

number of friends to my apartment so that I could remove my belongings unharmed. I discovered later that other graduate students had experienced similarly violent verbal assaults from this student, but had not made their experiences known. I learned also that the English department was aware that this graduate student had a record of abusive behavior. What is the right to privacy in an instance like this? Clearly, while Mr. Selby's activities are in no way on the same level, I think it's clear that a private individual (I'm not Mr. Selby's doctor, or his priest) is not under any obligation to keep verbal assaults of any sort private.

Oddly enough, I do think that Mr. Selby BELIEVES that his accusations are ethical and proper. It is for this reason that I corresponded with him privately on this subject for some weeks. I asked him to retract his claims, or to couch them in a manner less personally offensive. He refused. I then asked him for public debate on this manner, which he also refused, saying that he had made his position on this subject known too many times, rather than otherwise. But I do not see that Mr. Selby has actually ever published such claims in any forum in which one can respond to him. He makes his accusations privately, and then demands that they be kept private, a tactic which certainly aids in his ability to spread his accusations without public response. So Gale Nelson's concern that perhaps Mr. Selby is keeping his opinions private because they are not yet "fully developed" is not true, I think, in this instance. Mr. Selby says to me that he keeps his ideas private because "no one wants to hear what he is saying." Yet, when I offered to debate him, to respond to what he was saying, he accused me of further pandering to the powers that be, and actually put the sentence "Tell him to suck up some other way" INTO THE MOUTH OF HIS WIFE, who as far as I know is not a poet and has no connection with the world of poetry. It was as a response to this particularly cowardly form of accusation that I felt a need to make the issue public. I have saved the documents in which he makes such accusations, and will, if it proves necessary, post them if I think that is the best way to protect my character and the character of others.

I am sensible to the kind suggestion, made privately to me by a number of people, that I simply should let such personal accusations pass. Perhaps they are beneath response, and perhaps, if I was the only one being harmed by them, that is the course I would have taken. But I believe that Mr. Selby's private accusations have potentially far-reaching consequences, and that other people need to know that correspondence with Mr. Selby, however initially harmless, can lead to personal assaults on one's character. I did not solicit Mr. Selby's comments on my article, although I did open the doors for our discussion, perhaps, by thanking him for sending me his new book, and for pointing out to him that my review (wholly positive, by the way) of his book SOUND OFF had appeared in Poetic Briefs. I am not even totally out of sympathy with some of

his ideas--I do think that problems of promotion, access to resources, etc. are under-addressed in the contemporary avant garde. But when I took issue with some of his points, which I felt were overstated and even paranoid, he began to accuse me either of corruption (making the statements I make not sincerely but out of a desire to further my own career at the expense of others) or out of blindness to what I was doing--which I suppose means that I am corrupt but too stupid to know it. Our conversation was at times heated--I told him that people have no sympathy for his position not because his position was without value, but because he begins his arguments by impugning the motives of others.

I want to thank all those who took the time to respond to me, whether critically or not. I think that slurs on the character of individual poets, even if made privately, need to be made public. I believe that rumors and slurs are at least as damaging, probably more so, than public accusations. In any case, I find it necessary to state publicly that until Mr. Selby provides documents and examples proving that I have behaved unethically, or that others are behaving unethically, that his accusations remain baseless and despicable, however much he himself believes that he is behaving honestly.

With respect, and with belief in the value of "all information at all times in all places,"

mark wallace

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170. **Mark Wallace**

cookies (fwd)

Wed 15 Nov 1995

On another political issue entirely, I forward the following.

mark wallace

----- Forwarded message -----

Date: Mon, 13 Nov 1995 17:19:36 -0500

From: Robin Meader <[REDACTED]>

To: Multiple recipients of list GWENGL <[REDACTED]>

Subject: cookies (fwd)

Forwarded message:

This \$250 cookie recipe may be timely for the holidays.

From: [REDACTED] Mon Nov 13 12:07 EST 1995

Date: Mon, 13 Nov 1995 12:07:08 -0500

To: [REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED] (Shahram Sarkani)

Subject: cookies (fwd)

Content-Length: 3517

Date: Thu, 9 Nov 1995 17:42:07 -0500 (EST)

From: Blakely Holman Willis <[REDACTED]>

To: [REDACTED]

Cc: [REDACTED], [REDACTED],
[REDACTED]

Subject: cookies (fwd)

Content-Length: 2957

Eat up!

This message is sent to you with the hope you will forward it to EVERYONE you have ever even seen the e-mail address of. In the spirit of the originator, please feel free to post it anywhere and everywhere.

Okay, everyone....a true story of justice in the good old U.S. of A.

Thought

y'all might enjoy this; if nothing else, it shows internet justice, if it can be called that.

My daughter & I had just finished a salad at Neiman-Marcus Cafe in Dallas &

decided to have a small dessert. Because our family are such cookie lovers,

we decided to try the "Neiman-Marcus Cookie." It was so excellent that I asked if they would give me the recipe and they said with a small frown, "I'm

afraid not." Well, I said, would you let me buy the recipe? With a cute smile, she said, "Yes." I asked how much, and she responded "Two fifty."

I

said with approval, just add it to my tab.

Thirty days later, I received my VISA statement from Neiman-Marcus and it was

\$285.00. I looked again and I rememberd I had only spent \$9.95 for two salads

and about \$20.00 for a scarf. As I glanced at the bottom of the statement, it

said, "Cookie Recipe - \$250.00." Boy, was I upset!! I called Neiman's Accounting Dept. and told them the waitress said it was "two fifty," and

I

did not realize she meant \$250.00 for a cookie recipe.

I asked them to take back the recipe and reduce my bill and they said

they
were sorry, but because all the recipes were this expensive so not just
everyone could duplicate any of our bakery recipes....the bill would
stand.

I waited, thinking of how I could get even or even try to get any of my
money back.

I just said, "Okay, you folks got my \$250.00 and now I'm going to have
\$250.00 worth of fun." I told her that I was going to see to it that
every
cookie lover would have a \$250.00 cookie recipe from Neiman-Marcus for
nothing. She replied, "I wish you wouldn't do this." I said, "I'm sorry
but
this is the only way I feel I could get even," and I will.

So, here it is, and please pass it to someone else or run a few
copies.... I
paid for it; now you can have it for free.

THE NEIMAN-MARCUS COOKIE
(Recipe may be halved):

2 cups butter
4 cups flour
2 tsp. soda
2 cups sugar
5 cups blended oatmeal*
24 oz. chocolate chips
2 cups brown sugar
1 tsp. salt
1 8-oz. Hershey Bar (grated)
4 eggs
2 tsp. baking powder
3 cups chopped nuts (your choice)
2 tsp. vanilla

** measure oatmeal and blend in a blender to a fine powder.

Cream the butter and both sugars. Add eggs and vanilla; mix together with
flour, oatmeal, salt, baking powder, and soda. Add chocolate chips,
Hershey
Bar and nuts. Roll into balls and place two inches apart on a cookie
sheet.
Bake for 10 minutes at 375 degrees. Makes 112 cookies.

Have fun!!! This is not a joke - this is a true story.

*That's it. Please, pass it along to everyone you know, single people,
mailing
lists, etc.....*

*Ride free
citizen!!*

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171. **Mark Wallace**

cookies

Wed 15 Nov 1995

Actually, I just found out (oops!) that the cookies thang is a funny hoax! Enjoy them anyway.

mark wallace

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172. **Aldon L. Nielsen**

Re: the price of a price

Wed 15 Nov 1995

ed,,, for \$2.00 all I can give up is the poetry -- the intergity costs another three bucks -- got to stick to some sense of value, after all!

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173. **Aldon L. Nielsen**

Re: the return (again) of the repressed

Wed 15 Nov 1995

This current exchange does take me back indeed. (Not all that far back -- the chief perpetrator still works [if what he does could be called work] in an office beneath my own.)

Back in May of 1979, Alan Soldofsky wrote in the *Poetry Flash* as follows:
"The intellectual and linguistic concerns of the 'language poets' [note this appearance you guys at the *OED*] are both an inevitable and peculiar outgrowth of the narcissistic preoccupations of the group of writers that comprised what was called the 'New York School' in the late sixties."

There you have it; the careerism of the present bunch as the result of the narcissistic careerism of the previous bunch! From no less an authority than "professor" Soldofsky.

Steve Abbot, in that same issue, wrote:

"As a whole, the group is quite industrious. They've organized several presses, reading series and a talk series. Individually, however, many seem uncomfortable and at times suspicious or self-effacing about the attention they are now receiving."

Bruce Boone offered a letter in July of 79 that made rare good sense:

"We should be clear about one thing--this dispute is not going to go away by itself. But it does need to be carried on with an awareness of the common stakes involved. The alternative is to suppose that questions about technique and about social responsibility are just unrelated."

enough said?

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174. **Joe Amato**
mark and spencer...

Wed 15 Nov 1995

hey, both you guyz: i'm not utopian enough to believe that *anything* could heal the damage you've both obviously subjected each other to, intentionally or no...

but there is something of a flawed logic in all of this, and it begins with an understanding of what poetics---this list---IS, and could be...

mark: really, whatever your feelings about spencer's remarks, keep in mind that i for one don't know him personally and that i for one don't know you personally... i mean, like, though there are plenty of 'language writers' around these parts, to presume upon these regions in terms such as you've put forth---to "out" spencer based on (presumably) baseless accusations he's made to you (personally) about some poetry "public"---is likewise to "out" me some...

i'm feeling left out, i mean... do you get this?... do you see yourself through my screen, the one here in my spare bdrm., in my chicago apt.?... regardless my feelings about whether you're justified in opening private correspondence (as

you have) in a public forum that is itself quasi-public domain, i have OTHER feelings re this list... and you're presuming upon them some... unless of course i'm to sit back snidely watching the machine you've put in motion raise all sorts of "hell" with a number of folks i DO know (and care) about yet who, with regard to your concerns, seem to become through synecdoche the entire community hereabouts...

and spencer: whether or no you've got a beef about undue careerism, why shit, man---you've been put on the spot, no doubt about it, and it's clear that you musta posted SOMETHING to raise mark's ire, no?... so what the hell, why'nt you give it a go?---whatever the hell it is that's bugging you, why'nt you S-P-E-L-L it out?... what have you got to lose?---save perhaps for having ceded to mark's provocations...

one thing though: when/if you do so, i'd ask only that you keep in mind what i'm busy busting mark's chops about---that there are others on this list, such as mself (and you?) who are (1) NOT inexperienced and (2) NOT a part of the 'language writing community' as such, save through personal acquaintances and friendships and the like... regardless whether you've 'heard' of me (ugh) the point i'm making here is that i wish not to be left OUT of some presumed poetry "world"... by which i certainly am NOT saying that i wish to be "one of []" (i'm certain you understand the paradox here---it's a common enough poetry anxiety)...

there is, in short, a question of whence one speaks, and for whom...

since connections are particularly fuzzy in the virtual scene, and since being "a part of" may consist simply of 'being friendly with,' and since (as charles a. has so nicely glossed it) we are ALL careerists to a certain extent, and since i have NO desire to wish away some very real power relationships re "schools" of poetry and the like: it might do some good to discuss issues of "poetry careerism" from the vantage point not so much of personal egos but of how the various constituencies of poetry/poetics maneuver themselves in the midst of more discursive realities... this may require a bit of historicizing, no?...

if this post sounds a tad cranky or defensive, it's b/c i've seen this sorta presumption operate all too often in list 'communities,' whereby the one or two presume to speak for the many...

and i for one prefer to speak for mself, as but one of a many...

all best//

joe

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175. **Burt Kimmelman**

Re: the return (again) of the repressed

Wed 15 Nov 1995

aldon et al.,

the likening in 1979 of lang poets and ny school finally does more harm than good--in the way that taggart and retallack don't write the same kind of stuff, as demonstrated in a recent post, to my mind satisfactorily.

i recall lewis turco at a big conference in cleveland in the mid 1980s say that black mountain poets were beat poets (he did NOT mean that the bm's were LIKE the beats); here in this lumping together nothin is gained.

anyway, poetry schools always, as in the example used about the objectivists (which ignored lz/s issue of Poetry), are not finally accurate, but they help descriptively in order to get started in understanding a poet or poets. yet as has been noted by several folks on this list of late, the lang poets (whoever in this wide world they may be in theory or otherwise) marketed themselves, strategized about how to gain readers and other things, and thus they themselves, if not somewhat amorphically, by deed proclaimed a school of poetry.

am i wrong about this?

Burt

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176. **Jordan Davis**

Re: yep & yep

Wed 15 Nov 1995

At 9:35 AM 11/15/95, ULMER SPRING wrote:

>what about stein's using nouns as verbs?

Rereading the 4th ed Hopkins (brought back by my blustering at Larry Pr re Olson) I saw Hopkins accused of the same tactic--of course now I can't find the citation--but it looked more like the verb was suppressed.. wait. maybe it was verbs used as nouns "the achieve of"... in which case guilty

Jordan

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177. **Rod Smith**

Re: mark and spencer...

Wed 15 Nov 1995

A few thoughts on all this:

1. Poets (i.e. people) talk trash a lot. 1.1. It's boring. 2. Spencer's new book *No Island* is worth reading. 3. Mark may have "over-reacted" a bit by going public though I'm not convinced of this, in any case it's an interesting over-reaction. He's not just spewing confusion he's trying to deal with it in a constructive manner. I don't know Spencer's take, he may feel "betrayed," but obviously so did Mark. 4. Joe Amato's comments about 'one or two presum[ing] to speak for the many' & I believe it was Jordan who said "what's all this HEGEMONY then?" -- point, I think, at the primary alienation underlying-- just to presume a minute-- that we all feel "betrayed" by the economic structure we have to attempt to negotiate. This may be our failing. Collectively, we may not be able to do any better (poets, i.e. people here again). We may not be able to construct a society in which the human is valued over payola, thus we will continue to behave like idiots, devaluing each other personally, & being controled by honchos in boardrooms six floors away. This relates to the question of "evaluation" James Sherry brought up, & is merely a sketch, Chomsky or Mouffe or Wallerstein etc. Our "psychology" may be able to see what we should be, but not quite get there. 4.1. Am I wrong? Hope so. 4.2. With regard to the "derivative" nature of "2nd gen language poets"-- seems the "1st generation" outlined many of its "source texts" quite well? & other connections such as *Tel Quel* & *Nouveau Roman* not as much discussed but divivable hmm? 4.121. -- Rod

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178. **Ron Silliman**

Re: trouble

Wed 15 Nov 1995

Mr. Patrick Phillips wrote:

>

>Somebody tell me, what's all this stuff about integrity?

>

>Whose?

>

>And what the hell is "the integrity of poetry???"

>

>I'd be willing to give somebody five bucks if they could honestly tell me.

>

>- standing offer.

The integrity of poetry is whatever anybody wants it to be when they don't want their own motivations seen/discussed/questioned.

Since I'm at Comdex this week, I'll take that in quarters.

Ron Silliman
Piero's Restaurant
Las Vegas, NV

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179. **Ron Silliman**

Flame wars and meaning

Wed 15 Nov 1995

While you folks have been squabbling about your and my careers, not one word has appeared on this list about the fact that a writer was executed in Nigeria last week, at least as much for his writing as for anything else he may have done.

Ron

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180. **Steve Carll**

Re: yep & yep

Wed 15 Nov 1995

At 12:36 PM 11/15/95 -0500, you wrote:

>At 9:35 AM 11/15/95, ULMER SPRING wrote:

>>what about stein's using nouns as verbs?

>

>Rereading the 4th ed Hopkins (brought back by my blustering at Larry Pr re

>Olson) I saw Hopkins accused of the same tactic--of course now I can't find

>the citation--but it looked more like the verb was suppressed.. wait. maybe

>it was verbs used as nouns "the achieve of"... in which case guilty

>

>Jordan

What's the penalty for this one? Nouns and verbs swap places all the time--it's one of the ways English (and many other languages as well) generate new syntactic units. I read what can only have begun as an academic study on Cummings' deployment of this and many other "deviant" strategies in his poetry a couple of years ago: *_E.E. Cummings and Ungrammar_* by Irene R. Fairly

(Watermill Publishers, NY). Very interesting, but a bit example- and endnote-heavy. Interestingly, Cummings and Stein never appreciated each other's work as much as one might think they would (I might think they would, anyway.)

Steve

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181. **Kenneth Sherwood**
EPCLIVE schedule of Events

Wed 15 Nov 1995

EPCLIVE Calendar

----- This first series of happenings on EPCLIVE (the real-time performance channel on the undernet IRC network) will take place Mondays from 6:30-8pm EST (11:30pm GMT).

"Events" are semi-formal discussions with invited guest(s) and a prearranged topic; "Open Field" is a collaborative improvisation session; "Exchanges" are informal discussions around a general theme.

For more information on EPCLIVE go to <http://writing.upenn.edu/epc/epclive>

November

20 Grand Opening / Coffee House

27 Exchange--on Writing and Anthologies

December

4 Open Field

11 Event--Poems for the Millennium: a discussion with Pierre Joris and Jerome Rothenberg on their newly released anthology of Modern and Postmodern Poetry.

18 Open Field

January

8 Coffee House

15 Event (Guest and topic TBA)

22 Exchange--on Electronic Writing

EPCLIVE can also be used at other times for formal or informal events. We will be glad to publicize gatherings organized by others in this space and to take suggestions of topics for Events/Exchanges or answer questions regarding EPCLIVE.

Write [redacted] or [redacted]

k.s.

nov. 95

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182. **Tony Green**

Re: Flame wars and meaning

Wed 15 Nov 1995

re Nigeria and that Commonwealth Heads of Government voted Nigeria out of the Brit Commonwealth and that boycotts of Shell Oil are happening as a result of its involvement in Nigeria and that the British are convinced the military regime in Nigeria is "on its last legs. The execution of nine men in Nigeria sparked the comment and action. According to Amnesty International they were not given proper civil trials with the ensuing right of appeal, but were brought before military tribunals on charges of murder. All this has figured heavily in the news media here and I'm summarising here. Yes it was a poet went down, but I don't know his poetry....it appears that he was involved in protest about exploitation of his extremely oil-rich tribal area by the Nigerian military govt. ogvt

Tony Green,

e-mail: [REDACTED]

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183. **Jordan Davis**

they changed the url

Wed 15 Nov 1995

They changed the url

<http://www.thing.net/~grist/golpub/mccrary/jmcwest.htm>

will get you to McCrary (and incidentally some visual poems by Bill Luoma)

Jordan Davis

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184. **Aldon L. Nielsen**

Re: regurgitation of the repressed

Thu 16 Nov 1995

Burt! buddy! that was a quote from a fool -- NOT in any way a suggestion that anything indicated in the quote had any truth value whatsoever -- just the contrary -- Of course the connection made by Soldofsky in his diatribes on "The

POetics of Narcississm" does more harm than good -- that's why I was reminding folks of this previous iteration of the "careerism" debates --

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185. **Spencer Selby**

Re: trouble

Thu 16 Nov 1995

I was going on the assumption that Mark and were friends, not close but with mutual respect and seemingly the basis, in sympathy and understanding, for candid honesty and thoughtful disagreement.

At a couple of points, things were said by both Mark and I that could be interpreted as accusatory or insulting by the other. The record will show (now I'm sounding like a lawyer too) this was mutual, that Mark's claim that this was one-sided is completely false.

I would not use Mark's accusations as justification for launching an all-out assault on Mark, as he has done with me. Using Mark's reasoning, I could very well do that. But I will not, even though I think he has impugned my character more than I have impugned his.

As I said last night, I never questioned anyone's integrity. Mark kept bringing integrity up, and once as a threat, saying mine would be in question if I did not debate him publicly.

I did at one point use the term "careerist." Discovered this in going over the posts today. I did not mean this as a characterization or maligning of anyone's character. I used the term in talking about two kinds of success--writing good poetry vs. publishing lots of books and/or getting more audience support.

I tried to stick to the issues and have tried my best to dissuade Mark from taking things personally. My effort failed and perhaps I could have done better. Or maybe it was hopeless from the start. Maybe Mark just can't see it any other way, because of his experience. If so, I am sorry. And if I had known this going in, I would never have started the exchange.

There is one thing on my mind now, that I must speak to before I shut up. This tendency to take as a deadly or serious threat things that are said that one doesn't agree with or like, this tendency is, in my opinion, the real threat. It is this tendency that the right and forces of repression use to justify their curbs on freedom. If we on the left, who all share a commitment to freedom of expression, do not encourage all honest, open communication and dissent. If we only pay lip service to this in principle, while in practice, when dissent hits home or upsets us, react as if to a threat that must be stopped. If we do this or

support it, then we are all in trouble--no matter what we believe about anything else.

Spencer Selby

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186. **Spencer Selby**
Re: trouble, the movie

Thu 16 Nov 1995

I've had my share of literary battles, skirmishes and run-ins, but I believe that Mark's recent posts represent the high point or low, the most extreme, irrational outburst I've encountered in my 20 years as a poet. Of course, in saying that, I'm further impugning Mark's character, I'm letting myself in for perhaps another barrage. Who knows, maybe this time he'll do more than rail against me. Maybe he'll start to think that I do want to kill him, that he must get me first.

Maybe I'm a fool to say anything in my own defense (some have said as much). Maybe I'm only drawing myself deeper into this nightmare vortex, this poetry film noir, this paranoid dream where danger and threats lurk at every turn.

A month ago Mark and I were friends, or so I thought. Not close friends, but friendly peers that I thought had a lot more in common than differences. Mark called me Spencer back then, no hint of the ominous appellation "Mr. Selby," and claim to "barely know" me, that lay around the next bend. No hint that Mark couldn't handle my direct, sometimes blunt, verbal style. No hint that Mark felt so threatened and surrounded by evil. That Mark lived in a world where everything might suddenly become a life-and-death, dog-eat-dog struggle for survival. That everything might at any moment collapse into a vicious, primitive realm of us vs. them. A realm where yesterday's polite discussion is today's mortal combat, where honesty between two peers could spontaneously explode into the worst kind of rancorous, damaging conflict.

Sounds like a Hollywood movie alright, and not a very good one at that. Maybe a better writer and a top director could do something with it. Maybe if we could get some good stars--say Pacino as Mark and De Niro as me. Get Scorsese to direct. The avant garde poetry setting would be a good twist. Scorsese could do a lot with that, linking his poetic style and themes (power!) to the taut, overblown content.

Then if the movie was a hit, maybe this would spill over into poetry sales, help us get some sort of an audience. It would only be a temporary blip on the big screen, but better than nothing. Better than more of the same.

Spencer

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187. **Jeff Hansen**

None

Thu 16 Nov 1995

About the writer and activist recently killed in Nigeria:

1. Can anyone inform us of the current political climate? I know that a coup took place a year or two ago, and that the miners went on strike to protest the military government. Is there anything else we should know?
2. Should we, as a group, send a protest of some sort to the current Nigerian regime? Would it be possible for interested people on this list to sign a group letter?
3. If interested, please e-mail me with your ideas. I am willing to write an initial draft that can be added to etc. by others. I think we should, however, respond in a timely fashion.
4. I feel that we should do something. Nigeria is the land of Christopher Okigbo, Wole Soyinka and others. I would hate to see this sort of repression go unanswered.

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188. **Daniel Bouchard/College/hmco**

J.H.'s letter idea

Thu 16 Nov 1995

>> Should we, as a group, send a protest of some sort to the current Nigerian regime? Would it be possible for interested people on this list to sign a group letter?

I'm pretty sure that a government which hangs its own writers would not be interested in the dissent of foreign writers. Registering protest with the UN or the State Department may be more worthwhile.

Jeff, I would be interested in such a letter.

██████████

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189. **Charles Alexander**

Re: trouble

Thu 16 Nov 1995

I will now delete the Wallace/Selby "trouble" messages before reading. Do we need this to be a public debate? or public flogging?

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190. **Gale Nelson**

Re: On Certanty

Thu 16 Nov 1995

"114. If you are not certain of any fact, you cannot be certain of the meaning of your words either."

-- Ludwig Wittgenstein, *_On Certainty_*

For no particular purpose...

Gale

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191. **Daniel Bouchard/College/hmco**

New(t) Address for your use

Thu 16 Nov 1995

He's not a member of the poetics list but if you want to register a complaint about careerists and other characters who debase the integrity of the legislative branch of our government, please e-mail Newt Gingrich at the following address:

██████████

Feel free to pass this along.

██████████

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192. **Lucinda Potts**

Re: Flame wars and meaning

Thu 16 Nov 1995

On Wed, 15 Nov 1995, Ron Silliman wrote:

> While you folks have been squabbling about your and my careers, not one word

> has appeared on this list about the fact that a writer was executed in

> Nigeria last week, at least as much for his writing as for anything else
> he may have done.

>

> Ron

>

Yes, I heard about that. Has anybody read any of his stuff? Why did the Nigerian government find it offensive?

Thanks,
Cindy

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193. **Jordan Davis**

Re: renew renga

Thu 16 Nov 1995

As I listened to the argument with ear to the wall
The pit at the tip of my tongue hung gracefully
I know I was punished for objecting to one man-one groan.
After the dance of the devils on the head of a pin
Aunt Matilda came away with the impression and ironed pants
with metro paradise and sheet metals & captain stots hanging
in bold faced afterglow, the way we had imagined forenoon all embedded
in syntax that was not designed for use. Yet "you" are "rubbery".
"I" am "scared" of "the man" in "the subway"

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194. **Lisa Samuels**

Re: renew renga

Thu 16 Nov 1995

Jordan Davis:

As I listened to the argument with ear to the wall
The pit at the tip of my tongue hung gracefully
I know I was punished for objecting to one man-one groan.
After the dance of the devils on the head of a pin
Aunt Matilda came away with the impression and ironed pants
with metro paradise and sheet metals & captain stots hanging
in bold faced afterglow, the way we had imagined forenoon all embedded
in syntax that was not designed for use. Yet "you" are "rubbery".
"I" am "scared" of "the man" in "the subway", so
hungry for eternal gratitude i forged in consciousness
the unremitted pleasure of decay, the harking for the

lyrically long day, one time too many splayed apart
against the wall, such arteries of willingness
to please fell down, the paint spilled up and there we
were, possessing all the ground. 'hurray!' bespoke
the diners, one and all, deliriously sated by the roaring
sound of trains and training ear and eye, raining
excess, reigning access, all the possibles
given over, 'o hurray!'

[↑ Contents](#)

195. **ULMER SPRING**

Re: yep & yep

Thu 16 Nov 1995

i woodchuck the africa with manyhold of all some sort. cannot lever with and
wonder all time concertina. noun verb fungle. wood suggest it is liberatory.
liberary toy. didn't meen to connote deadcourse. was a passing.

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196. **Loss Glazier**

EPC flyer (revised)

Thu 16 Nov 1995

THE ELECTRONIC POETRY CENTER (EPC)

URL=<http://writing.upenn.edu/epc>

THE ELECTRONIC POETRY CENTER (EPC). 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 EPC provides access to numerous electronic resources in the new poetics including RIF/T: an Electronic Space for New Poetry, Prose, & Poetics, the Poetics List archives, a text library of poet/author home pages, LINEbreak (sound files of interviews and performances which showcase and archive contemporary writers at work) and information about EPC.Live, our series of online literary events.

In addition, the EPC houses and distributes electronic poetry journals including Brink, DIU, the Experioggi(cyber)cist, Inter\face, Juxta/Electronic, Passages: A Technopoetics Journal, the Segue Foundation/Root Book News, Tinfish, TREE: TapRoot Electronic Edition, We Magazine, and Witz. We also offer access to and

news of related print sources from small presses. Other electronic resources include numerous electronic poetry journals and connections to related Internet poetry and poetics resources. Or use our Online Directory of Poets and Critics to correspond with one of our listed poets and scholars.

Texts housed at the Electronic Poetry Center, texts are "definitive" texts inasmuch as, prior to posting, they have been approved by their producers.

Access to the Center: For those with World-Wide Web (lynx) or Mosaic access choose your go to URL option then go to (type as one continuous string):
<http://writing.upenn.edu/epc>

Check with your system administrator if you have problems with access. Also ask about setting a "bookmark" for quick and easy access to the Center when you log on.

If you have comments, suggestions about sites to be added to the Center, or wish to submit essays, creative work, or book reviews, or wish to find out more about our resources do not hesitate to contact Loss Pequen~o Glazier () or Kenneth Sherwood ().

The Electronic Poetry Center
is administered at SUNY Buffalo in collaboration with
RIF/T, the Poetics Program, and Charles Bernstein

Rev. 11-16-95

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197. **Paul Naylor ok 157602**

On Certainty 496

Thu 16 Nov 1995

Dear Gale: here's one with a particular purpose:

496. This is a similar case to that of shewing that it has no meaning to say that a game has always been played wrong.

Wittgenstein _On Certainty_

I've always read this as a prescient pre-emptive strike against (reductive readings of) deconstruction. In other words, what does it mean to say "nothing escapes logocentrism"?

Paul "The Meaning Bandit" Naylor

MAIL

SEND

in%"[REDACTED]"

in%"[REDACTED]"

SEND

in%"[REDACTED]"

in%"[REDACTED]"

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198. **Jordan Davis**

Hi! renga fans

Thu 16 Nov 1995

Hi! renga fans

That "renew renga" you saw

not long ago

was started a couple days ago

by Tom Bell, Jorge Guitart, Sheila E Murphy, Gabrielle Welford and me

and we'd love you to join our carbon copy chain

Just drop any of us a line

and we'll cc you

the next time through

because we don't wish to tie up the list

but we also don't want to exclude anybody who might

dig writing through th'email, k?

Love,

Jordan "no e" Davis

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199. **Eryque Gleason**

Re: Hi! renga fans

Thu 16 Nov 1995

Jordan, a little while back another renga was posted as finished product (i think), and someone followed fairly shortly with a request for yous guyses to state your method. I'd like to reiterate the request.

thanks,

eryque

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200. **Jim Andrews**

MOCAMBOPO

Fri 17 Nov 1995

David, I have you booked for Mocambopo on February 23, 1996. Are you interested?

Does the drop of metal shine
like a syllable in my song?

Neruda
Book of Questions

Jim Andrews, Victoria, B.C., Canada: [REDACTED]

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201. **Ron Silliman**

Re: trouble

Fri 17 Nov 1995

"This tendency to take as a deadly or serious threat things that are said that one doesn't agree with or like, this tendency is, in my opinion, the real threat. It is this tendency that the right and forces of repression use to justify their curbs on freedom."

Amen, Spencer!

Ron

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202. **R I Caddel**

Ken Saro-Wiwa

Fri 17 Nov 1995

The Nigerian writer murdered recently (along with eight others) was Ken Saro-Wiwa, an environmental campaigner on behalf of the Ogoni tribe, who'd been protesting against the despoiling of their land by Shell (with the support of the Nigerian government).

The protest against Shell, as I understand it, had been going on for some years, and Shell were threatening that if the Nigerian Govt. didn't do something about it, they'd reduce the scale of their "investment". Hence the security force "crackdown" on the Ogoni - which, along with the land damage and pollution, was what KS-W was protesting about, and endeavouring to draw world attention to.

A couple of days after Ken Saro-Wiwa's death, Shell issued a statement to the effect that it was nothing to do with them, and oh, maybe they'd look at the possibility of the Ogoni getting a coupla percent more to compensate for the upheaval of the "investment". I paraphrase.

The only book of Saro-Wiwa's I've seen is "Sozaboy", a telling of a young man's experience in the Nigerian civil war (1967-70). It's told in what the author calls "rotten English" - a mix of pidgin, broken, and idiomatic.

Folks in the UK could write to the Nigerian High Commission, 56-57 Fleet Street, London EC4Y 1JU - I don't have the address for the US office. Oh, and Shell too - unless you buy their "nothing to do with me" line.

x x Richard Caddel, E-mail: R.I.Caddel @ durham.ac.uk x x Durham University Library, Phone: 0 [REDACTED] x x Stockton Rd. Durham DH1 3LY Fax: 0 [REDACTED]
x x "Words! Pens are too light.
Take a chisel to write." x x - Basil Bunting
x x x

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203. **Edward Foster**

Re: unpack

Fri 17 Nov 1995

tenney: re: whitman remarks and 'unpacking' (a) the term is horrible as it returns us to language as signs, collected, but (b) see note to jordan for 'discrete/discreet.' also this, tho: i think some want merely the movement/music and so attend to the letters, phonemes; and, finding their music in this way, all too easily disrupt syntax. it's much like composing without measure (satisfaction). but the opposite is (correct?) to find pleasure in the syntax (and that is where whitman found it, and why it is such joy to read him), but then one can focus on the smallest changes, this letter to that, as in much of stein (and so preclude transendence, rapture). i don't know how whitman got there; but his followers, as i said, repeatedly fail (i think) when they try it, too. -ed

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204. **Edward Foster**

Re: concreet letters

Fri 17 Nov 1995

no, jordan, letters as notes rather than melody. -ed

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205. **Edward Foster**

Re: yep & yep

Fri 17 Nov 1995

re: using nouns as verbs: the absolute distinction--nouns are this and verbs are that--belongs to grammarians, not poets. it's not so much that stein used nouns as verbs as that she showed that nouns _are_ verbs. the only enemies (those that do not change until you change them) are those _you_ see. "nouns" are supposed to define, to say this or that is at rest (what i'm doing right now, after all), but in emerson/whitman/stein there is only change: nothing is fully at rest.

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206. **Daniel Bouchard/College/hmco**

Ken Saro Wiwa

Fri 17 Nov 1995

Here is some information that I pasted from the Internet. It's not only better than any US news source, it's actually SOMETHING! J.Hansen- if this helps (and if I can help with) drafting a letter, please backchannel to me.



ELA CONDEMNS EXECUTION OF
KEN SARO WIWA AND CALLS FOR
DAY OF MOURNING

Cape Town, 11 November, 1995

Earthlife Africa (Cape Town) utterly condemns the execution of Ken Saro Wiwa and his eight co-trialists by the Abacha regime. It is clear that Ken Saro Wiwa was an innocent man, and his death can be called nothing but political assassination.

Ken Saro Wiwa was an internally respected environmental hero and human rights leader. His courage in leading MOSOP in its campaign of non-violence against Shell and the Nigerian dictatorship puts him in the class of other great leaders such as Martin Luther King and Mahatma Ghandi.

We call on the Commonwealth heads of government to expel Nigeria immediately. We call on President Nelson Mandela to take up the campaign for the isolation of Nigeria. In diplomacy, in sports, in culture and in the economy Nigeria must be isolated to force an end to the

tyranny of Sani Abacha, and to secure justice for MOSOP and other pro-democracy forces in Nigeria. We call on Anglo-Dutch Shell and all other multinational oil companies in Nigeria to disinvest - to stop their funding of this murderous regime. Until such time as this happens, we call for a comprehensive, international boycott of Shell products.

Earthlife Africa (Cape Town) calls for Sunday the 12th of November to be a day of mourning and remembrance for Ken Saro Wiwa. A hero has fallen.

Endorsements:

Earthlife Africa (Pretoria)

Earthlife Africa (East London)

Earthlife Africa (Grahamstown)

If you have any suggestions or problems with this page, please mail them to: [REDACTED]

At 11:30 am on 10 November, 1995, Ken Saro Wiwa was executed. This act of murder on the part of the Nigerian dictatorship must never be forgotten.

Earthlife Africa (Cape Town) release a press release on the issue, and calls for a continuation of the struggle in support of MOSOP, and the Nigerian people.

Whilst we grieve about the death of this great hero, and 8 other Ogoni, we cannot be paralysed by our sorrow. Urgent international pressure is needed on Abacha, to stop the continuing 'slow genocide' perpetrated against the Ogoni people. Anglo-Dutch Shell's role in the 'slow genocide' cannot be ignored - it is Shell money which fills Abacha's purse. A comprehensive international alliance and boycott against Shell is needed to show multinationals that their profits cannot be built on the blood of innocents. BOYCOTT SHELL TODAY

The Ken Saro Wiwa Campaign

Ken Saro Wiwa was a Nigerian author, and the leader of a minority ethnic group

in Nigeria

called the Ogoni. He has recently been executed on trumped up charges for his actions in leading

the protest against the exploitation of Ogoni lands and Ogoni people.

Some History

The Ogoni people of Nigeria have their lands in Rivers state, a part of Nigeria near the delta of the river Niger. This has historically been a fertile area, and consequently is highly populated. It is also the first place in Nigeria that the Anglo/Dutch transnational Shell started extracting oil from, in 1958. At that time, Nigeria was still a British colony.

Ogoniland has been important to Nigeria for two reasons: Firstly, it has been termed the 'breadbasket' of Rivers State, a major food producing area, and secondly, since 1958 it has been the source of more than 900-million barrels of crude oil, vital to the Nigerian economy.

The Issue

Although international attention is now being focussed on democracy in Nigeria, and pressure is being placed on the Nigerian dictatorship of Gen. Sani Abacha to democratize the country, little is said of the role of the Western transnational corporations which prop up the Abacha's dictatorship.

Shell has been exploiting the oil in Nigeria without consulting or compensating the Ogoni people in any way. The Ogoni people are a minority, and thus have little political power, since the Nigerian constitution doesn't protect minority interests. They have no mineral rights to their land, since all mineral rights are owned by the state. They are merely the victims when oil spills, blowouts, and invasive pipe laying cause environmental damage. Shell has not been effective in cleaning up oil spills, and as a consequence, Ogoniland has lost its fertility.

In 1990, the Ogoni started to mobilise against the human and environmental injustice perpetrated upon them. They formed MOSOP, the Movement for Survival of Ogoni People, a peaceful resistance movement which attempted to highlight their plight, under the leadership of Ken Saro-Wiwa.

The response to MOSOP's protests has been brutal. Ogoniland is now sealed off, and under

martial law. Ken Saro-Wiwa has been executed, along with 8 other Ogoni. Hundreds of Ogoni have been murdered. Shell's role in this is significant - the most significant brutalities against the Ogoni have happened after Shell has expressed concern about perceived threats to the Nigerian government. A memo signed by Major Okuntimo of the Rivers State Internal Security TaskForce, dated May 12th 1994, states: "Shell operations still impossible unless ruthless military operations are undertaken for smooth economic activities to commence." The document goes on to recommend the "wasting" of Ogoni leaders. Ken Saro Wiwa was arrested on May the 22nd, 10 days later.

The blatant disregard for human rights that Shell Nigeria has displayed in its dealings with the Ogoni show it to be two sided in its international relations. The abuses that are perpetrated in Nigeria (directly in the form of spills and blowouts, and indirectly by the Nigerian government to protect Shell's interests) would be unacceptable in the countries where Shell sells most of its oil. Whilst Shell International claims that its actions and those of Shell Nigeria are not linked, this is a transparent ploy to deny culpability. Shell profits are built upon Ogoni suffering.

Ken's Trial and Execution

Ken Saro-Wiwa was held, without legal recourse, and without medical attention, for many months. He was also tortured. The charges against him (the supposed murder of 4 Ogoni activists) were so ridiculous that Amnesty International declared him a prisoner of conscience. His trial was been a total farce, run under the auspices of Civil Disturbances Special Tribunal (CDST), which is only answerable to Military Government. Ken Saro-Wiwa and eight other Ogoni leaders were sentenced to death on the 31st of October 1995. Despite

calls international

calls for clemency, Ken and his eight co-trialists were executed on the 10th of November, 1995.

We mourn their passing, and salute their spirit.

We call on all people who love freedom and justice to:

1. Lobby your leaders to intervene on the behalf of MOSOP and the Nigerian people.

Strong international action is necessary, not just talk.

2. Boycott all Shell products and inform Shell of your boycott. Remember, the joint venture

operated by Shell in Nigeria is responsible for 70% of the Nigerian state's revenue - Shell

is funding murder in Nigeria.

3. Educate yourself about Ogoniland, the Ogoni struggle, and Nigeria. Our Factsheet on the

Ogoni struggle is a good place to start. Another good resource is the September/October

1995 issue of Africa Today magazine, or the videos 'The Drilling Fields' and 'The Delta

Force' (details for 'The Drilling Fields' are below).

Shell must know that it can't make profit out of the blood of the Ken Saro Wiwa and the Ogoni.

Abacha must know that tyranny is universally unacceptable. The only way that this will happen is

broad, strong action by all the people of the world.

(Look here to see the Earthlife Africa 1995 Congress resolution on the Ogoni's struggle.)

Earthlife Africa Fact Sheet on the Ogoni Struggle

Look here to see the Earthlife Africa (Cape Town) factsheet on the Ogoni Struggle. (To be updated soon)

Shell: Dirty in Nigeria, Dirty in the North Sea

While Shell continues to evade responsibility for its role in the war against the Ogoni, it has

compounding its environmental abuses by attempting to dump the North Sea oil rig, the Brent

Spar, in the North Sea, despite the fact that the Brent Spar contains a large amount of toxic and

radioactive waste. For the details, have a look at Greenpeace's Brent Spar page.

Greenpeace won the first round of the Brent Spar fight, simply because consumers (most notably German consumers) launched a large and effective boycott of Shell. Other resources on the Ken Saro Wiwa campaign

The Body Shop International's Ken Saro Wiwa home page.

The Drilling Fields: The award winning documentary about the plight of the Ogoni in Nigeria

Ken Saro Wiwa was awarded the Goldman Prize, a prize for international environmental

heroes. The Goldman Environmental Foundation maintains a page on Ken, his

sentence,

and how to respond to it.

Resources related to Nigeria and human rights

The Amnesty International Kenya/Nigeria page highlights human rights abuses in these two

African giants.

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207. **Willa Jarnagin**

Re: trouble

Fri 17 Nov 1995

"This tendency to take as a deadly or serious threat things that are said that one doesn't agree with or like, this tendency is, in my opinion, the real threat. It is this tendency that the right and forces of repression use to justify their curbs on freedom."

Amen, Spencer!

Ron

Yes, I agree too. If I remember correctly, Mark said something about injury to his reputation endangering his job as an adjunct professor, that if his reputation is tarnished by people criticizing him/his poetry then his job will be in jeopardy. If this is true, it is sad and wrong, on the UNIVERSITY'S part, not that of the critic. We should protest this kind of policy, not bend under it by keeping our mouths shut and avoiding any comments that could be perceived as "insulting." Otherwise, whose integrity are we protecting?

Willa

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208. **Jordan Davis**

Re: yep & yep

Fri 17 Nov 1995

At 11:41 AM 11/17/95, Edward Foster wrote:

>re: using nouns as verbs: the absolute distinction--nouns are this and verbs
>are that--belongs to grammarians, not poets. it's not so much that stein
>used nouns as verbs as that she showed that nouns _are_ verbs. the only
>enemies (those that do not change until you change them) are those _you_
>see. "nouns" are supposed to define, to say this or that is at rest (what
>i'm doing right now, after all), but in emerson/whitman/stein there is
>only change: nothing is fully at rest.

I'd love to see examples--that didn't alas show--the mask of other function--is
the elision of the other function--and not cross-syntax--but a poetry of syntax--
not acid etchings either--not Milton--let's see

Jordan

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209. **Rod Smith**

Re: trouble, slightly revised

Fri 17 Nov 1995

"This tendency to take as a deadly or serious threat things that are said that
one doesn't agree with or like, this tendency is, in my opinion, the real threat. It
is this tendency that the right and forces of repression use to justify their curbs
on freedom."

This tendency to take as a dear or sermon 3-D think factory things that are sad
that onerimancy doesn't Agrippa with or ligulate, this tendency is, in my
opposum shrimp, the ready threap. It is this tendency that the rigadoon and
forebrain of reprobate U.S. to jut their curch on free fall.

letters of creedence

snap,

sag,

sacrilege ribs

the cosignatory--

a largesse producer

no foot-candle

no fault faucet

plenish unindorsed
polka unimpaired
"peace trap"
think
unilobed
thingumaboob
enactory
rhetoric
winces
re-called it-region
salient electroforming
viper-elect or reference pg 1381
'toad to Toklas'
includes
toilet water

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210. **Jordan Davis**
Re: concreet letters
Fri 17 Nov 1995

At 11:22 AM 11/17/95, Edward Foster wrote:

>no, jordan, letters as notes rather than melody. -ed

oh, the melody that will occur when you're not out scrounging it, or coaxing it, or anything but compiling it. Yah. So who does that--should we be reading about counterpoint, gradus ad parnassum (hic)? you mean we shouldn't be repressing these melodies tht keep falling on our

Jordan

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211. **Chris Stroffolino**
Re: yep & yep
Fri 17 Nov 1995

For all the times a "mind" alights, an alight "minds" on the color of the meaning that tried to do away with color as long as emotions are projected on an it you may call yourself as a pre-emptory gesture since in reality every fall from a great height is a ruse of rhetoric since in reality nothing happens and the hypothetical that is allowed to thrive in framed solitude seems unconfined

only from the perspective that fails to confirm the badge of HUMANITY on the brain's harmonious tension with, say, the liver which science makes to break as long as practical motives are taken into account and healing is progress and aging is two ships passing like nights that would be days if all swamps who thought they were individuals and all the stick figures who thought they were communities could meet in the mosh-pit, trade bodies and roll out the red-carpet for a past disguised as the future that will treat it better than words of doubt could wield..... cs.

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212. **Chris Stroffolino**

Re: trouble, slightly revised

Fri 17 Nov 1995

Open QUESTIONS: Is it possible that one of the reasons "avant garde" poetics has been more against the "bourgeois" or "singular" or "continuous" or "autonomous" self that "mainstream" poetics because of the temperamental differences of the people involved. One of the interesting, for me, things about the recent "flame war" is that two poets, both of whose work is quite sophisticated and "polyvocal" and abstract in its problematization of the self (neither DODGE the issue as some other writers--not to name names here--seem to) have adopted the very PERSONAL "I"-based discourse and CHARACTER that their own poetry seems to be most vigorously and rigorously opposed to. I mention this not so much to pass judgment on either writer (certainly no more than I do on my "own" self) as to call attention to what may be called a "productive site" or "fruitful contradiction". For, viewed in such a light, the "battle" becomes less exclusively between "avant-garde" and "mainstream" as between the poet's poetry, or the poetry's poet, and the "non-poetic" utterances made by a person who calls himself a poet. If we put the ostensibly "non-poetic" statements of the poets in dialogue with say NO ISLAND or COMPLICATIONS FROM STANDING IN A CIRCLE or, more generally, the ideology implied by the poetries, it might be at least as fun as a cookie to ask IS IT POSSIBLE THE STRICTURES and/or DEMANDS many (if not all?) kinds of poetics makes on its writers can stifle to the point where the only "equilizing" outlet can be a kind of ostensibly non-poetic admission of a frustration and rage whose reality may "call into question" or "severely problematize" the very standards the poetry itself may be said to speaking for???? (even though of course Ed Foster is right and there is ONLY CHANGE and OPENENDEDNESS in Stein, etc---). Chris Stroffolino

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213. **Jeff Hansen**

Ken Saro-Wiwa

Fri 17 Nov 1995

I have received a lot of important information on the assassination of Wiwa since my last post. Thanks, everyone! The page that Daniael Bouchard posted here earlier can be accessed at <http://www.gem.co.za/ela/ken.html>

I will compose letters to Shell oil, the Nigerian leader, and President Clinton asserting my support for free speech and the economic and political self-determinacy of native peoples. Whoever wants their name to appear on the letter after seeing it, will be able to backchannel me. I suggest that we who get involved call ourselves "The Coalition for Free Speech and the Self-Determinacy of Native Peoples."

i think that this is it for now. I should be able to post those letters by Monday.

Have a good weekend,

jeff

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214. **Willa Jarnagin**

Re: Ken Saro Wiwa & Shell Oil

Fri 17 Nov 1995

A friend of mine found an address for Shell Oil:

Shell Oil Products

Dept. 210

P.O. Box 2463

Houston, TX 77252

Even if Shell is not "directly" responsible for Saro Wiwa's murder, the company stands to PROFIT from it. On Oct. 31, after Saro Wiwa and his eight activist colleagues were sentenced to death, Shell responded to international pleas to use its influence with the Nigerian government to seek clemency for the activists, with the statement, "It is not for a commercial organization like Shell to interfere in the legal processes of a sovereign state such as Nigeria." But they will interfere with the rights of the Ogoni people and destroy their land, against their will and without compensating them in any way.

Write.

Willa

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215. **Loss Glazier**
Poetry/Talking/Live (promo)
Fri 17 Nov 1995

epclive*epclive*epclive*epclive*epclive*epclive*epclive*epclive*epclive

Monday night
6:30 pm EST
the public opening of
EPC.Live

epclive*epclive*epclive*epclive*epclive*epclive*epclive*epclive*epclive

As Ken's message a couple of days ago announced: be at the opening of
the first(?)

online real-time poetics conference!

It helps to have a look at instructions to
connect, our schedule, etc. in advance. Please feel free to contact
me (██████) or Ken Sherwood
(██████)
with any questions.

LOADS of EPC.Live info
is available through the EPC at <http://writing.upenn.edu/epc>
select
"EPC.Live" ...

epclive*epclive*epclive*epclive*epclive*epclive*epclive*epclive*epclive

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216. **Wystan Curnow**
Re: Ken Saro-Wiwa
Fri 17 Nov 1995

Dear Jeff, Don't know what news you have been getting, so let me pass on
something of the context as from here. The executions took place during the
meeting of the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM--
pronounced "chogum") here in Auckland. Nigeria was represented by its
Foreign Minister. Besides the question of nuclear testing--Britain was in the
firing line for supporting France--Nigerian democracy was on the agenda. It is
not the only Commonwealth country at whom the finger can be pointed, but at
its last meeting, in Harari, a Declaration committing the Commonwealth to the

principles of democratic government was made and has been regarded as giving the post-(British) colonial organisation some contemporary meaning. The execution of these 8--it has been pointed out that Nigeria have been executing political prisoners in this fashion for some time, this is not new--in the middle of the CHOGM was an act of defiance. A number of heads of state had been calling upon Nigeria to exercise clemency in the weeks preceding. Mandela, who was the key figure at this meeting (the Queen was here for it, but it was Mandela who was in effect symbolic head) had intended to soft-pedal the Nigerian situation and assert some African solidarity was affronted and took the lead in condemning the executions and pushing for wider international pressure. He indicated his intentions to speak with both Clinton and Major (the US and the UK are Shell's biggest Nigerian customers I understand). APEC is meeting in Japan and I believe our beloved PM Jim--as we call him, on CNN he prefers 'James'--Bolger--intends to have a word with the US vice-president on the matter, and someone has starting selling TO HELL WITH SHELL bumperstickers. Hoping some of this is news to you, Wystan

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217. **Thomas Bell**

Re: Ken Saro-Wiwa

Fri 17 Nov 1995

Story sounds more interesting the more I hear.

I would also be very interested in seeing some of this "rotten English".

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218. **Tenney Nathanson**

pack em in?

Sat 18 Nov 1995

Date: Fri, 17 Nov 1995 11:20:12 -0500

From: Edward Foster <[REDACTED]>

Subject: Re: unpack

tenney: re: whitman remarks and `unpacking' (a) the term is horrible as it returns us to language as signs, collected, but (b) see note to jordan for `discrete/discreet.' also this, tho: i think some want merely the movement/music and so attend to the letters, phonemes; and, finding their music in this way, all too easily disrupt syntax. it's much like composing without measure (satiation). but the opposite is (correct?) to find pleasure in the syntax (and that is where whitman found it, and why it is such joy to read him), but then one can focus on the smallest changes, this letter to that, as in much of stein (and so preclude transience, rapture). i don't know how whitman got there;

| but his followers, as i said, repeatedly fail (i think) when they
try it, too. -ed

Ed:

my association w the term is Jamesian (William not Henry) where it has something to do w a pragmatics of names and models--lay it out, pick up various pieces of it to see what they can DO, what the trope, say, is good for. But then I don't really bridle at "cash value" in James either, though I perk up my ears--but that things go round and again go round....like, let's not go round again on THAT one.

as for the rest of it, yes, or yes kind of. In "Song of Myself" esp the strange play of the phonemes in the long lines w longer syntax stretched over them is certainly a real pleasure, and the play of one against the other is definitely part of it, yes (Koch used to say that you couldn't read the stuff, early sections such as #2, w/o feeling like you had rocks in your mouth, which is great). otoh W's sense of syntax can get pretty vestigial (or no, that's not it: his good sense is to MAKE the syntax get vestigial, in the catalogues): if you set those gigantic agglutinations against Wordsworth, or against the atypical and terrific syntax of the opening of that awful poem "Out of the Cradle," you see what a rudimentary machine Whitman sometimes constructed. And THEN there's the long floating thing that makes up most of section 2, no verbs, just hum and flux of being and body.

I dunno that the followers fail: not if you think of the Crane of Voyages, or lots and lots of O'Hara.

so: it's the phonemic movement, in Whitman, that precludes floating off (?) into transcendence, rapture? A la Olson on the syllable via the head (but the line the breath, or heart)? I never understood that one, feeling I feel the phonemes as body, kinesthetics (a la Kristeva, but really just discretely ducking and bobbing at poetry readings)

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219. **Burt Kimmelman**
Re: trouble, slightly revised
Sat 18 Nov 1995

Chris-

Setting aside the idea that there is no such thing as poetry (an idea I embrace at my best and worst moments though never in between), and then turning to your comments about the recent public slug-it-out we have all been made privy to, I would only remind us all that writing emerges as a technology when societies become economically and socially complex enough to need to keep

track of mundane matters like debits and credits and civic disagreements (i.e., accounting and law) or rather to keep track of rules when there are enough of them to begin to be confusing.

seems to me that the artistic impulse, while it is bound up with technology in its execution if not in its formulation, searches out a transcendent world (thankfully).

saturday morning musings amounting to

burt

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220. **Robert Drake**

Re: Ken Saro-Wiwa

Sat 18 Nov 1995

Many Amnesty International chapters have been active on Ken waro-Wiwa's behalf (since before it was too late); if you don't have a chapter near you, there are many on the net. try: <http://www.gatech.edu/amnesty/action.html#month>

A similar organization that focuses on journalists & writers is the Committe to Protect Journalists--330 Seventh Ave., 12th floor; New York NY 10001; [REDACTED]. the coordinator for Africa is, i believe, Jennifer Pogrand; her email: [REDACTED]

luigi

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221. **Ron Silliman**

Shell Oil

Sat 18 Nov 1995

Shell Oil is a division of Royal Dutch.

Its US division has a web page at:
<http://www.shellus.com/welcome.html>

It even has a "mail to" form so you can tell them directly what you think about their policies in Nigeria.

If you don't have a web browser, their customer service number is [REDACTED]

Ron

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222. **Bill Luoma**
Re: Ken Saro-Wiwa
Sat 18 Nov 1995

Jeff & Dan,

According to the NY times, the Nigerian general dude has hired "at least" seven american pr companies to bolster his image, "including a book and a video." Your letter might be emailed to these companies were we able to find out their addresses.

& us imports about half of Nigeria's petroleum. the us petroleum lobby will be fighting against any import sanctions. who to nail there?

Bill Luoma

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223. **Aldon L. Nielsen**
Re: backchannel clogged
Sat 18 Nov 1995

jeff -- add me to the list

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224. **Rod Smith**
Darragh/Ganick reading
Sat 18 Nov 1995

Sunday, Nov. 19th at 3 PM -- Tomorrow!

Tina Darragh & Peter Ganick

reading at DCAC (District of Columbia Arts Center)
2438 18th St NW (near 18th & Columbia)

\$3 donation requested

series curated by Heather Fuller & Joe Ross

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225. **Jordan Davis**
some renga methodism
Sat 18 Nov 1995

At 11:09 PM 11/16/95, Eryque Gleason wrote:

>Jordan, a little while back another renga was posted as finished product (i

>think), and someone followed fairly shortly with a request for yours guyses
>to state your method. I'd like to reiterate the request.

Eryque

the renga process has changed
slightly since going undernet

Tom Bell writes: Look in madness, chapter 3 : "Word salad"

The version Jorge/Cris posted
was a collage Cris stitched
from all the different versions

The names Jorge named
have been ccing (mini-listservice)
new lines added mainly to the top
the the north of the poem

lines have been added to the middle of the poem

some rengans (mainly Jorge,
although I think each of us
has done this at least once)
have made minor alterations
on other people's lines..
as in the "windows 95" edit
to the listserv's renga

the emphasis has been placed on variety

Cris Sheila George and Jorge had been sending the most
then Cris went off to Devon to teach
George took off for parts unknown
Gabrielle went on a tear sending at one point
over thirty new messages at a time
I send many, Jorge sends many, Tom Bell sends many
Maria Damon makes an occasional appearance (on sabbatical)

Lisa Samuels has joined the circle recently

we welcome new players with strong backhands
or good drop shots
and we need a goalie, a bassist, and a designated hitter
someone with proposal writing skills
some clerical
and experience in international affairs is a plus

NO MIDDLE MANAGEMENT PLEASE

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226. **Kenneth Sherwood**

Nigeria

Sat 18 Nov 1995

While it might be interesting to look at Ken Saro-Wiwa's "bad english", it should be noted that his execution followed directly from his political activities as head of MOSOP (Movement for the Survival of the Ogoni People).

For those interested in more information, the NOV 21 Village Voice ran a lengthy story. Their focus is the involvement of Shell Oil. Shell's economic interest in Nigeria has already been noted; the Voice piece concentrates on the "emerging paper trail" which suggests "Shell may have funded military operations against MOSOP, and leaked company minutes detail how Shell and the military held meetings, after Saro-Wiwa was arrested, to discuss public relations strategies for the company. Potentially far more damning, however, are allegations contained in sworn affidavits that two key prosecution witnesses were offered bribes by Shell to testify against Saro-Wiwa"

A protest letter to the Nigerian Embassy or UN might also be usefully inflected towards Shell, keeping in mind its 'public relations' concerns.

K.S.

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227. **Steve Carll**

Re: trouble

Sat 18 Nov 1995

Spencer:

Well, you were right about one thing--no one wanted to hear a public debate.

I might just say that one dangerous temptation in a dialogue is to psychoanalyze the other person. I think that the psyche can no more be reduced to psychology than a poem can be reduced to a poetics. Besides, what response is there to the assertion, "There's an unconscious process going on in you that you, by definition, can't be aware of, but I'm aware of it"? Except to get pissed off and end the dialogue, which is what people seem to do with you (maybe you've noticed :-)), or to make the same accusation about your unconscious, which leads to a stalemate on that ground.

Enjoyed some of the work in *_Score_*. He did me one better by not putting page numbers on the pages, so to find out who did what, you have to count them yourself.

Got a submission from Gustaf Sobin in the mail yesterday. He said he's coming in late January to read in Berkeley and Stanford and wants to meet.

You missed the Gertrude Stein marathon at New College last night. Five hours of GS read by the allstar cast. It was all wonderful except for Barrett Watten's interminable reading from *The Making of Americans*, which brought the whole evening to a screeching halt.

See you soon,
Steve

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228. **Romana Christina Huk**
UNH Cambridge Program

Sat 18 Nov 1995

Another announcement for POETICS subscribers:

If you know of students (undergrad or grad) who would like to spend six weeks this summer writing poetry with four poets overseas -- Tom Raworth, Denise Riley, Rod Mengham and Caroline Bergvall -- ask them to get in touch with me; I'm running this univ's Cambridge, England Program at Gonville & Caius College and have worked in a "writing component" that includes possibilities for working on fiction as well. I'll send a huge packet of info to anyone that mails me an address; the address here is: The UNH Cambridge Program, Hamilton Smith Hall, University of New Hampshire, Durham, NH 03824. Thanks for any interested people you might send this way.

Romana Huk

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229. **Charles Bernstein**
Ear Inn Readings Dec. & Jan.

Sat 18 Nov 1995

--Boundary (ID I+dk0Y2eVUZJsXdOuQ9Pew)

**** PLEASE NOTE NEW TIMES FOR READINGS, SATURDAY 2:30PM!!!****

December & January Readings at The Ear Inn

THE EAR INN

326 Spring Street (all the way West!)

New York, NY 10013



DECEMBER 2: JEROME SALA, DAVID SHAPIRO Jerome Sala's *Raw Deal: New and Selected Poems* has just appeared from Another Chicago Press. Of this collection, Amy Gertsler comments: "Sala's poems . . . give a new and enlarged meaning to the phrase 'wise guy'." David Shapiro has written numerous books of poems including: *Lateness*, *To an Idea*, *House (Blown Apart)*, and many volumes of art and literary criticism.

DECEMBER 9: TAN LIN, DOUGLAS MESSERLI Tan Lin teaches at the U. of Virginia in Charlottesville. *Lotion Bullwhip Giraffe* is forthcoming from Sun & Moon. His work has appeared in such journals as: *o.blek*, *Hambone*, *Talisman*, *Lingo*, and the *Village Voice Literary Supplement*. Douglas Messerli is the editor and founder of Sun & Moon Press, and is the author of several books of poetry, *River to Rivet: A Manifesto*, *Maxims from My Mother's Milk/Hymns to Him: A Dialogue*, and the most recent *An Apple, A Day*.

DECEMBER 16: LAYNIE BROWNE, MARK WALLACE Laynie Browne's most recent book is *One Constellation (Leave)*. She has two books of poems forthcoming, *Pollen Memory (Tender Buttons)*, and *Rebecca Letters (Kelsey St.)*. Some of her poems will appear in the new issue of *Conjunctions*. Mark Wallace is the author of *Complications From Standing In A Circle* and *Every Day Is Most of My Time*. He edits the poetry magazine *Situation* and writes poetry reviews regularly for the *Washington Review*.

DECEMBER 23: HOLIDAY SCHEDULE -- NO READING.

DECEMBER 30: HOLIDAY SCHEDULE -- NO READING.

JANUARY 6: WANG PING, NINA ZIVANCEVIC Wang Ping was born in Shanghai and graduated from Beijing University before coming to the U.S. in 1985. She is the author of a book of stories *American Visa (Coffee House)*, and the forthcoming novel *Foreign Devil (Coffee House)*. Nina Zivancevic is the author of many books published in the former Yugoslavia, where she won the equivalent of the American Book Award in 1983. Her books include *More or Less Urgent (New Rivers)* and a collection of short stories *Inside & Out of Byzantium (Semiotext(e))*. She is currently writing and teaching in Paris.

JANUARY 13: GEORGE-THERESE DICKENSON, CHARLES BERNSTEIN George-Therese Dickenson is the author of *Transducing (Roof)* and will be reading from her new book-length manuscript *The Interpreter of Dreams*. Her work will be anthologized in *American Poets Say Good-bye to the Twentieth Century*, edited by Andrei Codrescu, forthcoming in 1996. Charles Bernstein's recent books include: *Dark City*, *Rough Trades*, *The Sophist (Sun & Moon)*, and *A Poetics (Harvard University)*. He teaches in the Poetics program at SUNY Buffalo.

JANUARY 20: THOMAS BYNUM, BRUCE ANDREWS Thomas Bynum is the publisher of Drogue Press and the producer, co-director, and designer for Drogue Performance and in 1996 will present a full production of Leslie Scalapino's play Goya's L.A. He will be reading from his new work [Missouri]. Bruce Andrews has published numerous books of poetry, including the most recent XYZ (Roof). Forthcoming: the Andrews issue of Ariel, Paradise & Method, essays (Northwestern U.), and Designated Heartbeat (Sun & Moon).

JANUARY 27: NICK PIOMBINO, RAY DI PALMA Nick Piombino is the author of Poems (Sun & Moon), The Boundary of Blur (Roof), and the forthcoming Light Street (Zasterle). Recent work in: Situation, Avec, Ribot, M/E/A/N/I/N/G, and the anthology Gertrude Stein Awards in Innovative American Poetry. Ray DiPalma's recent books include: Motion of the Cypher (Roof), Provocations (Potes & Poets), and Numbers and Tempers (Sun & Moon). Janviero, a video based on his prose book January Zero (Coffee House), was recently made in France.

SATURDAY AFTERNOON READINGS begin at 2:30 pm. EAR INN is at 326 Spring St., NYC. \$3.00 contribution goes to readers. Coordinator for December and January is Charles Borkhuis. Special thanks to Nick Piombino. Continuing support of this series is provided by the Segue Foundation. Funding is made possible by support from the Literature Program of the New York State Council on the Arts. PLEASE SUPPORT THE EAR -- COME EARLY FOR LUNCH, STAY LATE FOR DINNER!

IMPORTANT!! WE ARE IN THE PROCESS OF UPDATING OUR MAILING LIST. If you want to be added to the mailing list, please contact by mail or phone: The Segue Foundation, 303 E. 8th Street, New York, NY 10009, [REDACTED], and receive 10% off your next purchase of any Roof Book, thank you.

--Boundary (ID I+dk0Y2eVUZJsXdOuQ9Pew)--

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230. **Herb Levy**
Re: Stein trouble
Sat 18 Nov 1995

Steve Carll wrote:

You missed the Gertrude Stein marathon at New College last night. Five hours of GS read by the allstar cast. It was all wonderful except for Barrett Watten's interminable reading from _The Making of Americans_, which brought the whole evening to a screeching halt.

Steve, could you be more specific about Watten's reading of The Making of Americans. Was your problem with the delivery, or the text itself?

I mean, the book IS a screeching halt. It would be difficult to make it seem entertaining, and it would probably be a disservice to the work to attempt to do so.

Not that it would be less of a disservice to much of Stein's other work, but it's easier to imagine ways of making a lot of Stein's other writing seem charmingly eccentric or coy in performance.

(Since I read it all in one sitting today & it seems like it's dying down, I'll not comment on the Wallace/Selby "troubles.")

Bests

Herb Levy



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231. **Steve Carll**
delete that last post, please

Sat 18 Nov 1995

Dear list:

Oops. Due to my unthinking use of the "reply" key, I seem to have sent a personal message out to the whole list. Please disregard and forgive.

Thanks,
Steve

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232. **Kevin Killian**
Re: Stein trouble

Sat 18 Nov 1995

Herb Levy wrote:

Steve, could you be more specific about Watten's reading of The Making of Americans. Was your problem with the delivery, or the text itself?

I mean, the book IS a screeching halt. It would be difficult to make it seem entertaining, and it would probably be a disservice to the work to attempt to do so.

I'll come to Steve's defense here. The problem, Herb, was merely a matter of length and placement. The single-spaced list of readers of Stein's work went on to the back of a letter-sized page--dozens of people. It was an astonishing event, particularly the plays. Barrett read in the third hour of the event, when fatigue was starting to set in, and according to one person who claimed to time

him, he read for 20 minutes--and there were plenty more readers to follow. In another context his reading would have been fine, particularly the way he contextualized it by reading a passage from Anti-Oedipus.

Dodie Bellamy

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233. **Ryan Knighton**

Book Launch

Sat 18 Nov 1995

Thought I would let those of you in the Vancouver area (or those who may be in the area) that the book launch for George Stanley's *Gentle Northern Summer* will be on Dec. 8 at the Western Front.

Cheers

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234. **Gabrielle Welford**

Re: J.H.'s letter idea

Sun 19 Nov 1995

I'd certainly put my name to such a letter too. Gab.

On Thu, 16 Nov 1995, Daniel Bouchard/College/hmco wrote:

Should we, as a group, send a protest of some sort to the current Nigerian regime? Would it be possible for interested people on this list to sign a group letter?

I'm pretty sure that a government which hangs its own writers would not be interested in the dissent of foreign writers. Registering protest with the UN or the State Department may be more worthwhile.

Jeff, I would be interested in such a letter.



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235. **Gabrielle Welford**

Re: renew renga

Sun 19 Nov 1995

Slurpies are forbidden beyond a meter

- > As I listened to the argument with ear to the wall
- > The pit at the tip of my tongue hung gracefully
- > I know I was punished for objecting to one man-one groan.
- > After the dance of the devils on the head of a pin
- > Aunt Matilda came away with the impression and ironed pants
- > with metro paradise and sheet metals & captain stots hanging
- > in bold faced afterglow, the way we had imagined forenoon all embedded
- > in syntax that was not designed for use. Yet "you" are "rubbery".
- > "I" am "scared" of "the man" in "the subway"
- > soubriquet of a monkey formal
- >
- >

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236. **Gabrielle Welford**

FAREWELL,KEN SARO-WIWA! (fwd)

Sun 19 Nov 1995

This came from the postcolonial list. Gab.

From: Prof F W J Mnthali, Humanities, English <[REDACTED]>

To: [REDACTED]

Subject: FAREWELL,KEN SARO-WIWA!

Some papers here tell us
you and your colleagues
went to your death singing!

Would that Africa as a whole
boasted more men and women with
your courage and your vision.

But we are all caught up in a web of fear
the fear that rules all killers
that web of silence which is the bane of all our feelings
the fear of our own shadows
the fear of lizards lurking behind freedom's rays
the fear of being thought weak
the fear of parting with loot and plunder

the fear of losing those peripheral powers
whose only guarantee is the barrel of a gun
cynically backed by the greed of those who have more guns!

When fifteen years ago I spent a year in your country
I saw with my own eyes
how the fishes and other forms of life
were all slowly dying
in the sluggish brownish and filthy liquid
that had once been water; black gold it seems
demanded its pound of flesh
from everything and everyone around it!

It has now demanded that you too
like the rest of our continent's creme de la creme
pay with your life for this gold this madness;
that the Ogoni like the rest of us
since the days of slavery and brutish colonisation
have been paying with our lives
for treasures that others consume
while our own people go hungry and naked:
it was for reminding it of this simple story
that the sphinx has devoured you
for no sphinx on earth
wants its victims told
how naked and how foolish it looks!

In my own country the sphinx
devoured Dick Matenje and Aaron Gadama
Twaibu Sangala and David Chiwanga
Attati Mpakati and Mkwapatira Mhango
Orton Chirwa and many many others
whose bodies were dumped
into the waters of the Shire
or into the bellies of crocodiles;
many fled into exile which also became an area of darkness
when the tentacles of the sphinx would know no bounds
for the kingdoms of darkness
decay and death are all alike:
they thrive best in the midst of silence and despair
our silence and our despair!

If today's death be that of Ken Saro-Wiwa and eight others
who have been so brazenly and so blatantly

in the classical fashion of Nazism so openly executed
can the deaths of Moshood Abiola and General Obasanjo
and Ransome Kuti
be far off?

Silence, why must heinous acts
be always followed by a deathly silence
oh, OAU,
oh, Africa?

Felix Mnthali.

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237. **Tony Green**
Re: Ken Saro Wiwa
Sun 19 Nov 1995

Thanks to Daniel Bouchard, info printed out and photo-copied for circulation today.

Tony Green,
e-mail: 

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238. **Steve Carll**
Re: Stein marathon
Mon 20 Nov 1995

Well, since my foot's already in my mouth (thanks, Dodie, for helping me extricate!), maybe I should do a report on the Stein marathon, which was hosted by the always-charming Lyn Hejinian at the prompting of the students in her Stein class at New College on Friday the 17th. It was five hours long. The proceeds from admission and drink, t-shirt and poster sales (Tim Kraft designed the posters and t-shirts, which were lovely). I'm doing this from memory (there was a program of sorts, but it was in flux due to various factors), so the order and the exact titles may be only approximate, or completely nonexistent.

Four of Lyn's Stein students started us off at 7 with, what else? "Ladies' Voices/Curtain Raiser," which was quite funny.

Robert Gluck read "Sherwood's Sweetness," about S. Anderson, which was itself very sweet.

Kathleen Fraser read a section of "Composition as Explanation" that she explained she keeps going back to again and again at different stages of her life.

Bill Berkson read "Reflections on the Atom Bomb," explaining that he'd wanted to do some of her reflections on money, but that Stein's view of money "was somewhere near Bob Dole's." He went on to say that this was Stein in her preaching mode, and that he might perform it by impersonating James Brown, but that he wasn't going to do that. Published the year after her death and when the atomic bomb was still new, this was one of her last written works. She pronounces the Bomb: "not interesting."

My personal favorite of the evening was "Bon Marche Weather" featuring Tim Kraft and Lisa Sogliuzzo wearing giant sunflower costumes a la Peter Gabriel in his Genesis days. They showed what you can do with Stein if you have a comic's feel for inflection. Tim lost a little bit of momentum fumbling with the bullhorn he used to deliver the final lines, but it was a very engaging piece nonetheless.

Gabby Glancy skipped around Tender Buttons (my personal favorite Stein writing, for the record). She said she'd read bits of it onstage before and had wanted to read the same bits, but couldn't find them again, but that's a book you can improvise out of and be OK, and she was.

Kit Robinson was a scream reading from The Geographical History of America.

Robert Grenier took the stage and announced he'd wished Bill Berkson WOULD'VE done a preaching voice for Stein, and read for a bit out of various books, of which I remember only that he read different sections of Tender Buttons than Gabby had. Grenier was very amusing, changing voices and so on.

Brenda Hillman and Robert Hass (temporarily laid off as poet laureate since the gov. was closed) revisited Sherwood Anderson with "A Valentine to Sherwood Anderson," from which they read together, and we took a 20-minute break so the by-now-full-house could stretch its legs.

Someone (Stephen Ratcliff? Aaron Shurin? I can't remember already) starting at "page 800" of The Making of Americans. I remember remaining interested in it.

Beverly Dahlen did a reading from "Lifting Belly" which seemed a little precious to me.

Jalal Toufic and Trinh T. Minh-ha did a reading from one of the plays (memory fails me again) followed by a critical analysis Jalal did which I found hard to follow.

Several more of Lyn's students did a lively, silly take on "A Circular Play."

Larry Eigner read from "Melanctha." He was hard to understand at first, but as he went on I started to catch what he was reading, almost chanting.

It was around in here that Barrett Watten went on. He did start off intriguingly, by reading from *_Anti-Oedipus_* and the beginning of *_Making_*, which concerns the burial of a father. After that he skipped to a section which dealt with a fat sister and a skinny sister, I lost the Deleuze and Guattari thread and he did indeed go on for 20 minutes from this same section with its implicit psychosocial theory of the interpersonal dynamics of such a sisterhood. A lot of people left then. Herb, with regard to your comments, I think it was the combination of his choice of material (which wasn't as interesting in and of itself as most of the other stuff), the fact that he'd tied it to something that it didn't seem to stay tied to, and the length of his reading that did this presentation in for me.

Dodie, what did you read? Was it "If You Had Three Husbands"?

Laura Moriarty, Leslie Scalapino and Nick Robinson did a very coy and funny run-through of "Doctor Faustus Lights the Lights."

Two people performed "Rooms" from *_Tender Buttons_*.

Carla Harryman read a piece of Stein's about herself and Picasso in the early years (didn't catch the title).

Kevin Killian did a great reading of "Miss Furr and Miss Skeene."

Camille Roy read "As A Wife Has A Cow/A Love Story."

Jack and Adelle Foley performed a radio interview with Stein dating from her American tour and then went off on a tangent or two.

We took another break, then Jeff Conant read from "Ada."

Lyn, Kit, Jean Day and Alan Bernheimer performed "I Feel A Very Anxious Moment Coming." Very amusing.

And, by popular demand, Tim and Lisa reprised "Bon Marche Weather" for the people who showed up late. It was even funnier the second time, even without the element of surprise regarding the costumes. It was midnight. I was exhausted and vowed to myself I'd start showing up to this class. Whew.

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239. **Kevin Killian**

Re: Stein marathon

Mon 20 Nov 1995

Steve Carll wrote:

>Dodie, what did you read? Was it "If You Had Three Husbands"?

Boy, Steve, I come to your defense and you can't even remember what I read! I read from "What is English Literature," for which I got a surprisingly enthusiastic response. It was a great crowd.

"If You Had Three Husbands", if I remember correctly, was read by Carla Harryman. It was hilarious the way she'd look individual audience members in the eye and say with conviction, "If YOU had three husbands." But that's only if I'm remembering correctly.

Dodie

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240. **Loss Glazier**

Reminder: Tonight (Mon) 6:30EST epcLIVE

Mon 20 Nov 1995

The inaugural online live gathering for epcLIVE occurs tonight 6:30 EST! Details on the EPC...

<http://writing.upenn.edu/epc>

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241. **David Kellogg**

1995 MLA "Poetry and Cultural Criticism"

Mon 20 Nov 1995

Those who are interested in social theory and contemporary poetry might be interested in a talk I am giving at MLA.

Title: "Pierre Bourdieu, Poetry Critic: Subject and Object in the Contemporary Poetic Field."

Time: 8:30-9:45 am., Friday, 29 December

Place: New Orleans, Hyatt Regency Chicago

Session Number/Name: 372, Poetry and Cultural Criticism

I am concerned because the MLA, in its infinite wisdom, decided to schedule this session at the same time as a cool session on Historicizing Poetry chaired by POETICS's own Marjorie Perloff. So I'm worried that my talk won't be well attended. It will be interesting, though, and if the schedules are any indication, you can see me and still make it to Stephen Fredman and Peter Quartermain at the Perloff session in the same building. Or stay and see Deborah Nelson talk on Paul Monette's **Love Alone**. Either way.

I think the scheduling snafu is due to the fact that my session, inexplicably, is arranged by the Division on Nineteenth-Century American Literature. I promise there will be nothing nineteenth-century about it.

Cheers,
David

~~~~~  
~~~~~

David Kellogg Duke University
[REDACTED] University Writing Program
[REDACTED] Durham, NC 27708
FAX [REDACTED]

"Yexplication is yexploration."

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242. **Daniel Bouchard/College/hmco**
Ken Saro-Wiwa

Mon 20 Nov 1995

I've been looking thru the Internet for places to send the letter Jeff Hansen is drafting and which I hope many people on this list will "sign." How, exactly, we will sign this, I am unsure. Anyway, the Goldman Environmental Prize Web Page (which Saro-Wiwa won) had the following list already assembled.

Has anyone read or heard of Clinton making a statement and, if he has, has he mentioned Shell's involvement?

[REDACTED]

To express your outrage over the execution of Mr. Saro-Wiwa please contact the following:

General Sani Abacha
Chairman, Provisional Ruling Council
State House
Abuja, Federal Capital Territory
Nigeria
Fax: 234-9-[REDACTED]

C.A.J. Herkstrater, Chairman
Royal Dutch Shell
Carel van Buylantlandtlaan 30
2596 HR The Hague
The Netherlands

Fax: 44-[REDACTED]
(public affairs office in London)

In Nigeria, two leading newspapers:

The Guardian, Fax: 234-1-522-027
Tribune, Fax: 234-1-[REDACTED]

In the United States:
Ambassador Zubair Mahmud Kazaure
Embassy of the Federal Republic of Nigeria
2201 M Street, NW
Washington, DC 20037
Fax: [REDACTED]

- or -

urge President Clinton to speak
out on this issue by calling the
White House Comments Line at
ph: [REDACTED] or fax: [REDACTED]

In other countries:
Contact the nearest Nigerian Embassy.

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243. **Robert Drake**
community...

Mon 20 Nov 1995

friends--

just a bit of musing--i just finished a short survey article on poetry resources available by e-mail (discussion groups & e-zines); i felt a bit foolish, but left out any mention of this list, as per the instructions from the list owner. having wallowed around in rec.arts.poetry, & being painfully aware of the huge volumes of drek that wide-open forums invite, i understand the rationale... but i can't help but question, particularly a forum that mostly reflects a progressive politic, how appropriate such a restriction is... sounds like something the old boys would cook up... & i'm thinkin about the earlier discussion about LangPo's supposed closed-ness? && also, about the debut tonight of the EPC chat line, which is similarly configured--you must know the name of the group to join the discussion, "tell 'em charlie [tuna, or olson...] sent ya"... all of this relates, for me, to questions of community, how one constitutes oneself as a member of a group, how the group (separate from the individual members) regulates itself, etc... questions of canon formation follow close behind...

&& lest there be any doubt, i am not attacking anybody by raising the question, much grateful to chas b., and loss g., for their considerable work in enabling these forums... likewise

asever
luigi

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244. **Daniel Bouchard/College/hmco**

Ken Saro-Wiwa: follow-up

Mon 20 Nov 1995

If someone has ideas for tracking down the names of the PR firms Bill Luoma saw mentioned in the NYT I would be willing to call for addresses and names of people to target the letter to. Since the executions have already taken place, confronting involvement cover-up and disinformation will be an important task, in addition to preventing more arrests and executions. To save time, leave a message on my voice-mail at [REDACTED].

[REDACTED]

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245. **Steve Carll**

Re: Stein marathon

Mon 20 Nov 1995

At 02:23 AM 11/20/95 -0800, you wrote:

Boy, Steve, I come to your defense and you can't even remember what I read! I read from "What is English Literature," for which I got a surprisingly enthusiastic response. It was a great crowd.

"If You Had Three Husbands", if I remember correctly, was read by Carla Harryman. It was hilarious the way she'd look individual audience members in the eye and say with conviction, "If YOU had three husbands." But that's only if I'm remembering correctly.

Dodie

Boy, I'm just getting myself into more and more trouble here. You're absolutely right--It was Carla who read "3 Husbands." And I was also one of the enthusiasts when you read about the island where they invented explaining.

But, at the risk of further embarrassment, what did Stephen Ratcliffe read? Aaron Shurin? And what was the name of the woman who read the piece from

the uncollected Stein, the title of which was something like "Didn't Lily and Elsa Love You?"

Thanks Dodie,
Steve

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246. **Steven Howard Shoemaker**
NIGERIA CASEFILE #1 (A KEN SARO WIWA-OGONI HANDBOOK)
(fwd)

Mon 20 Nov 1995

Forwarded message:

From daemon Mon Nov 20 13:49:17 1995

Resent-Message-Id: <[REDACTED]>

Resent-From: Tejumola Olaniyan <[REDACTED]>

Resent-Date: Mon, 20 Nov 95 13:28:13 EST

Resent-To: [REDACTED]

From: Tejumola Olaniyan <[REDACTED]>

Date: Mon, 20 Nov 95 13:16:20 EST

To: [REDACTED]

Subject: NIGERIA CASEFILE #1 (A KEN SARO WIWA-OGONI HANDBOOK)

NIGERIAN CASEFILE: THE KEN SARO WIWA-OGONI HANDBOOK

compiled by the Coalition Against Dictatorship (CAD)

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Saro Wiwa's Closing Statement at the Trial

The Difference You Can Make

Nigerian Oil and the West: The Moral Challenge

The Challenge of Nigeria: A Call to World Conscience

Ken Saro Wiwa, preface to *Genocide in Nigeria: the Ogoni
Tragedy*

(SECTION 2, in a separate mail file)

Ken Saro Wiwa, "The World Bank and Us"

Chuks Iloegbunam, "The Death of a Writer"

(an obituary by a Nigerian journalist)

F. W. J. Mnthali, "Farewell, Ken Saro-Wiwa!"

(a poetic memorial by the renowned Malawian poet)

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Appendix 2: Wole Soyinka, "Why the General Killed"

THE KEN SARO WIWA CAMPAIGN

Ken Saro Wiwa was a prominent Nigerian author, television producer, environmental activist and leader of the Movement for the Survival of Ogoni People (MOSOP). The Ogoni are a minority ethnic group of about 500,000 people in Nigeria's oil-rich Southeastern Rivers State. Once an agricultural region with fertile soils, the Ogoni land and water have been devastated by pollution by multi-national oil companies with assistance from Nigeria's military dictatorship. MOSOP was set up to defend the environmental and human rights of the Ogoni community. Because the Nigerian government considers mineral resources within its territory to be automatically federally owned, the idea of special rights and reparations for local communities are alien to it. Oil provides about 80 percent of Nigeria's export revenue. Oil companies with significant presence in Nigeria are the Anglo/Dutch Shell Group, Chevron Corp., Mobil Corp., France's Elf Aquitaine SA and Italy's Agip SpA. Ken Saro Wiwa and eight others were recently executed after a sham trial on trumped up charges of murder.

SOME HISTORY

The Ogoni people of Nigeria have their lands in Rivers State, a part of Nigeria near the delta of the river Niger. This has historically been a fertile area, and consequently is highly populated. It is also the first place in Nigeria from where the Anglo/Dutch transnational Shell began extracting oil in 1958. At that time, Nigeria was still a British colony. It is estimated that \$30 billion worth of oil has been extracted from Ogoni lands since then. Ogoniland has been important to Nigeria for two reasons: Firstly, it has been termed the "breadbasket" of Rivers State, a major food producing area, and secondly, since 1958 it has been the source of more than 900 million barrels of crude oil, vital to the Nigerian economy.

THE ISSUE

Although international attention is now being focussed on democracy in Nigeria, and pressure is being placed on the Nigerian dictatorship of General Sani Abacha to democratize the country, little is said of the role of the Western transnational corporations which prop up the Abacha's dictatorship. Shell has been exploiting oil in Nigeria without consulting or compensating the Ogoni people in any way. The Ogoni people are a minority, and thus have little

political power, since the Nigerian constitution does not protect minority interests. They have no mineral rights to their land, since all mineral rights are owned by the state. They are expected to be passive victims when oil spills, blowouts, and invasive pipe laying cause environmental damage. Hiding behind the dictatorial military, Shell has always turned a blind eye to the damages caused by its operations. For Shell's operations, says a news report, "the Ogoni people have received virtually nothing except a ravaged environment. Once fertile farmland has been laid waste by constant oil spills and acid rain. Puddles of ooze the size of football fields dot the landscape, and fish and wildlife have vanished." Shell would be slapped with hefty fines if it were to pollute any European or American country one-tenth as much as it did in Nigeria. The Exxon Oil spill in Alaska in 1989 and the reparations afterward is still fresh in our memory. In 1990, the Ogoni started to mobilize against the human and environmental injustice perpetrated upon them. They formed MOSOP, the Movement for Survival of Ogoni People, a peaceful resistance movement which attempted to highlight their plight, under the leadership of Ken Saro-Wiwa. Shell suspended its activities in Ogoniland in 1993, partly as a result of the Ogoni campaign. But it still pumps more than 250,000 barrels of oil a day in Nigeria, nearly 12 percent of Shell's international oil output. The government's response to MOSOP's protests has been brutal. Ogoniland is now sealed off, and under martial law. Ken Saro Wiwa has been executed, along with 8 other Ogoni. Hundreds of Ogoni have been murdered. Shell's role in this is significant - the most extreme brutalities against the Ogoni happened after Shell expressed concern about perceived local threats to its smooth functioning, to the Nigerian government. A memo signed by Major Okuntimo of the Rivers State Internal Security Task Force, dated May 12th 1994, states: "Shell operations still impossible unless ruthless military operations are undertaken for smooth economic activities to commence." The document goes on to recommend the "wasting" of Ogoni leaders. Ken Saro Wiwa was arrested on May the 22nd, 10 days later. The blatant disregard for human rights that Shell Nigeria has displayed in its dealings with the Ogoni show it to be two-sided in its international relations. The abuses that it perpetrates in Nigeria (directly in the form of spills and blowouts, and indirectly by the Nigerian government which it leans on to protect its interests) would be unacceptable in the countries where Shell sells most of its oil. Whilst Shell International claims that its actions and those of Shell Nigeria are not linked, this is a transparent ploy to deny culpability. Shell profits are built upon Ogoni suffering. The Shell which fully supports democracy at "home" is the same Shell that actively promotes tyranny and barbarism "abroad."

SARO WIWA'S TRIAL AND EXECUTION

Ken Saro Wiwa and 15 other Ogonis were arrested in May 1994 after the deaths of four local pro-government Ogoni chiefs during a melee at a political rally. He was held in leg irons, and denied access to his family, doctors and legal counsel for eight months before being charged with murder. The charge was so baseless and devoid of concrete evidence that Amnesty International declared Saro Wiwa a Prisoner of Conscience. Even the government itself did not trust its own case enough to produce the predetermined result it wants--the elimination of vocal Ogoni leaders like Saro Wiwa--in the normal law courts that it created instead a military-dominated Special Tribunal to hear the case, though this was a civil offense. Such tribunals are answerable ONLY to the military government and there is NO right of appeal. It should be noted that the Nigerian military generally considers what goes on in civil courts to be "too much English" and a "waste of time." The defense team was frustrated at every step of the way by the Special Tribunal. The tribunal rejected defense evidence of the bribing of two key prosecution witnesses testifying against Saro Wiwa. The charade was so obvious that the defense resigned from the proceedings, feeling, as everyone felt, that the tribunal was predetermined to find the defendants guilty. Saro Wiwa and eight others--Dr. Barinem Kiobel, Saturday Dobe, Paul Levura, Nordu Eawo, Felix Nuate, Daniel Gbokoo, John Kpuinen and Baribor Bera--were found guilty and sentenced to death on October 31, 1995. Despite international appeals for clemency, they were hanged on November 10, 1995. Saro Wiwa won the 1995 Goldman Environmental Prize for Africa, awarded by a San Francisco-based foundation.

SARO-WIWA'S CLOSING STATEMENT TO THE NIGERIAN MILITARY
APPOINTED SPECIAL TRIBUNAL

Port Harcourt, Rivers State, Nigeria

My lord,

We all stand before history. I am a man of peace, of ideas. Appalled by the denigrating poverty of my people who live on a richly endowed land, distressed by their political marginalization and economic strangulation, angered by the devastation of their land, their ultimate heritage, anxious to preserve their right to life and to a decent living, and determined to usher to this country as a whole a fair and just democratic system which protects everyone and every ethnic group and gives us all a valid claim to human civilization, I have devoted my intellectual and material resources, my very life, to a cause in which I have total belief and from which I cannot be blackmailed or intimidated. I have no doubt at all about the ultimate success of my cause, no matter the trials and tribulations which I and those who believe with me may encounter on our journey. Nor imprisonment nor death can stop our ultimate victory. I repeat that we all stand before history. I and my colleagues are not the only ones on trial. Shell is here on trial and it is as well that it is represented by counsel

said to be holding a watching brief. The Company has, indeed, ducked this particular trial, but its day will surely come and the lessons learnt here may prove useful to it for there is no doubt in my mind that the ecological war that the Company has waged in the Delta will be called to question sooner than later and the crimes of that war be duly punished. The crime of the Company's dirty wars against the Ogoni people will also be punished. On trial also is the Nigerian nation, its present rulers and those who assist them. Any nation which can do to the weak and disadvantaged what the Nigerian nation has done to the Ogoni, loses a claim to independence and to freedom from outside influence. I am not one of those who shy away from protesting injustice and oppression, arguing that they are expected in a military regime. The military do not act alone. They are supported by a gaggle of politicians, lawyers, judges, academics and businessmen, all of them hiding under the claim that they are only doing their duty, men and women too afraid to wash their pants of urine. We all stand on trial, my lord, for by our actions we have denigrated our Country and jeopardized the future of our children. As we subscribe to the sub-normal and accept double standards, as we lie and cheat openly, as we protect injustice and oppression, we empty our classrooms, denigrate our hospitals, fill our stomachs with hunger and elect to make ourselves the slaves of those who ascribe to higher standards, pursue the truth, and honor justice, freedom, and hard work. I predict that the scene here will be played and replayed by generations yet unborn. Some have already cast themselves in the role of villains, some are tragic victims, some still have a chance to redeem themselves. The choice is for each individual. I predict that the denouement of the riddle of the Niger delta will soon come. The agenda is being set at this trial. Whether the peaceful ways I have favored will prevail depends on what the oppressor decides, what signals it sends out to the waiting public. In my innocence of the false charges I face Here, in my utter conviction, I call upon the Ogoni people, the peoples of the Niger delta, and the oppressed ethnic minorities of Nigeria to stand up now and fight fearlessly and peacefully for their rights. History is on their side. God is on their side. For the Holy Quran says in Sura 42, verse 41: "All those that fight when oppressed incur no guilt, but Allah shall punish the oppressor." Come the day.

THE DIFFERENCE YOU CAN MAKE

Shell must know that it can't make profit out of the blood of the Ken Saro Wiwa and the Ogoni. Abacha must know that tyranny is universally unacceptable. The only way that this will happen is broad, strong action by all the people of the world. We call on all people who love freedom and justice to:

* Lobby your leaders to intervene on the behalf of MOSOP and the Nigerian people. Strong international action is necessary, not just talk. Demand for full

sanctions. Demand for a freeze on the personal assets abroad of Nigerian military and government officials. Here are useful addresses:

---President Bill Clinton, The White House, 1600 Pennsylvania Ave., NW, Washington, DC 20500.
Tel.: [REDACTED], Fax: [REDACTED]
Email: [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

---Your Senators, US Senate, Washington, DC 20510

* Boycott all Shell products and inform Shell of your boycott. Remember, the joint venture operated by Shell in Nigeria is responsible for 70% of the Nigerian state's revenue - Shell is funding murder in Nigeria. Shell is the Nigerian military's enter of gravity. Call Shell Directly and ask them to scale back operations in Nigeria; also ask them to explain their decision to continue the \$3 billion LNG project. Don't be deceived by Shell propaganda that sanctions would hurt ordinary Nigerians; tell Shell you heard that line before during sanctions against South Africa and that you are no fool. Nigerians say they want sanctions and are ready to bear it until the dawn of freedom. Tell Shell to keep its kindness, and ask it since when has it lost any sleep over the welfare of ordinary Nigerians. Shell recently said in a paid advertisement in British newspapers (11/19/95): "It's easy enough to sit in our comfortable homes in the West, calling for sanctions and boycotts against a developing country. But you have to be sure that knee-jerk reactions won't do more harm than good." Tell Shell it should be ashamed of itself for this absolute vulgarity and thinly disguised intimidation; tell Shell you weren't born yesterday to be so cheaply muscled into the corner of guilt for demanding sanctions. Tell Shell the title of its ad, "Clear Thinking in Troubled Times," is really "Clear Thinking to Profit Enormously from Tragic Times." And finally, tell Shell to answer this question posed by Wole Soyinka, the Nigerian Nobel Laureate: "Has the revenue of Nigeria ever reached the people?" Soyinka continues, "There's no reason why a total, comprehensive trade embargo shouldn't be enforced now. Even (former South African President F.W.) De Klerk says sanctions were the greatest force that brought apartheid down." Here are useful Shell addresses:

---Shell USA: [REDACTED].
---P. J. Carroll, President, Shell Oil Company, Houston, Texas
Fax: [REDACTED]
---Steven Ward, Vice President for Government Relations, Washington DC. Fax: [REDACTED]
---http://www.shellus.com/cgi-bin/page_feedback.cgi/OilProducts/abt-

shl/wwwadmin:Shell_Web_Feedback

---Christopher Fay, Shell UK Ltd, Shell Mex House, The Strand,
London W2CR ODX U.K.

Phone: 44-0 [REDACTED]; Fax: 44-0 [REDACTED]

---C.A.J. Herkstroter, Chairman, Royal Dutch Shell, Carel van
Builantlandtlaan 30, 2596 HR The Hague, The Netherlands.

Fax (public affairs office in London): 44-0 [REDACTED]

Model Fax to Shell Oil Company (from AIUSA)

Please either sign the model letter yourself or print it out to use as a petition
signed by as many people as you can fit on the page and fax it.

P. J. Carroll
President, Shell Oil Company
Houston Texas
[REDACTED]

Steven Ward
Vice President for Government Relations
Washington DC
[REDACTED]

I'm writing to express my shock, dismay and outrage at the execution in Nigeria of Ken Saro Wiwa, Dr. Barinem Kiobel and eight others on Nov. 10, 1995. This tragic killing of these peaceful environmental activists should never have happened. I expected Shell Oil to do all it could to stop the violations and save lives. I understand that the only public action Shell took to prevent this travesty was at the 11th hour in a letter requesting clemency. Shell Oil must now strongly and publicly condemn the Nigerian government for this brutal action. Despite Shell's contention that it had nothing to do with human rights violations in Ogoniland, the fact remains that Ken Saro Wiwa and his MOSOP organization were protesting environmental degradation due to Shell operations. In addition, the commander of the military unit that committed gross human rights violations in Ogoniland during May and August of 1994 boasted at a press conference that these actions were taken to protect Shell installations. Shell Oil has publicly expressed concern about the reaction in Nigeria to these executions. Shell can contribute to peaceful dialogue in Nigeria through visible, concrete actions to prevent future arrests, unfair trials, or executions of peaceful activists. In the effort to crush the Ogoni movement, homes were destroyed by the military in 30 villages. One concrete step Shell could take is to contribute to relief for those who were displaced and to reconstruction of destroyed homes. Shell should join world leaders, business leaders and concerned citizens around the world in an effort to gain the release

of all prisoners of conscience in Nigeria and demand a return to rule of law and respect for international human rights in Nigeria. Sincerely, ...

NIGERIAN OIL AND THE WEST: THE MORAL CHALLENGE

Nigeria's crude oil is probably the purest in the world. Generally called "sweet crude" as opposed to "sour crude" from Saudi Arabia and other regions, Nigeria Light has only 0.2% sulfur. >From fractional distillation, you could get about 33% gasoline, 20% kerosene, 16% light gas oil, 30% heavy gas oils, leaving ONLY 1% bitumen residue. Compare these figures with, say, Boscan Venezuelan crude which has 6.4% sulfur, only 3% gasoline, 6% kerosene, 7% light gas oil, 26% heavy gas oils, and a whopping 58% bitumen residue. This then is why Nigeria's crude is the dream oil of the advanced industrial countries of Europe and America: its lightness makes for cheaper distillation. These countries already have extensive road networks, so they would rather not buy, if they could, crude oil with high bitumen residue.

The quickest solution to the Nigerian crises, both the minority rights question and the larger issue of democratization, is an oil embargo. Nelson Mandela himself (an acknowledged moral voice on the continent), formerly lukewarm on the matter of oil sanctions, has finally embraced it as the solution to averting a Rwandan-scale tragedy in Nigeria. Europe and America are the main buyers of Nigeria's oil. Nigeria exports about 1.6 million barrels per day; about 44 percent of it goes to the United States and another five percent to Canada. Europe buys the rest. Although the international outrage against the Nigeria military dictatorship is currently so high that many Western leaders are already hinting at the possibility of oil sanctions, we must not be smug on the matter and expect that the leaders will actually impose sanctions without our relentless push. An oil embargo on Nigeria will certainly affect prices in the West, and politicians are not known to actively embrace actions that would put them on the spot with their vocal electorates. Not especially at a time when elections are near as they are in the U.S.A. at this moment. Here then is the moral challenge for us citizens and residents of Europe and America. We ought to let our leaders know that we support full oil sanctions against Nigeria as a way to quickly restore that country to democracy and the path of glory that its great potentials eminently qualify it for; that we are ready to pay a few cents more at the gas pumps than continue to fund the military junta's subversion of the rule of law, repression of the press,

proscription of oppositional movements, massive embezzlement of public funds and the judicial murder, assassinations, indiscriminate arrests and interminable detention without trial, of democracy- and peace-loving Nigerians. We should let our leaders know that we will not fill our tanks with Ogoni blood.

THE CHALLENGE OF NIGERIA: A CALL TO WORLD CONSCIENCE

by the International Coalition Against Oppression in Nigeria and the Forum for Creativity Towards the 21st Century. Tokyo Japan. November 15, 1995.

The latest outrage by the Nigerian military regime, in executing the writer and environmentalist, Ken Saro-Wiwa after a sham trial by hand-picked special tribunal, an execution that was hastily carried out in defiance of pleas by the international community, constitutes a fatal negation of civilized conduct and a denial of the fundamental human rights of accused persons. The Nigerian regime has flouted natural justice, the articles of the fundamental human rights of the United Nations, the Human Rights charter of the Organization of African Unity, and the Harare Commonwealth Declaration, to all of which the Nigerian government is a signatory. This act of judicial murder is of course only the most notorious and horrifying of a long catalogue of other violations- arbitrary imprisonments, torture, extra-judicial killings, denial of freedom of expression, not to mention the callous programme of "ethnic cleansing" of the Ogoni people, all documented in great detail by various Human Rights organizations in and outside of Nigeria. We wish to call attention especially to the latest of these, titled: NIGERIA- STOLEN BY GENERALS, the report by the Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative, compiled after a fact-finding mission to Nigeria this year. It is clear that the present regime of Sani Abacha is resolved to stop at no act of terror and repression in order to perpetuate itself in power and thwart the rightful democratic aspirations of the Nigerian peoples, a choice that was clearly expressed in the elections of June 12, 1993. Those elections were acknowledged free and fair both by internal assessment and from international monitoring bodies, including the Commonwealth of Nations. The unjustifiable annulment of those elections constitute the root of Nigeria's current crisis. Not surprisingly, General Sani Abacha stubbornly keeps the winner of that election in prison, and under inhuman conditions, despite various decisions of the Nigerian courts that Bashorun Moshood M.K.O. Abiola, the President-Elect in question, should be set free. We therefore call upon the international community to assist the Nigerian people in the attainment of their democratic aspirations and in restoring their society to the rule of law by isolating the Nigerian dictatorship totally from the international community, and subjecting that regime to the same set of universal sanctions that were applied to bring down the racial minority regime of apartheid South Africa. We call for the immediate release of all detained persons, including the

former Head of State, General Olusegun Obasanjo and others who were tried in secret on trumped-up charges and sentenced to brutal terms of imprisonment. Stability in that African sub-region can only be guaranteed by the quick restoration of democracy to this problematic, but crucially placed regional member, Nigeria. We call for the break of diplomatic, economic, sporting and cultural links with the illegal military regime of Nigeria. We call for a suspension of all ongoing economic projects in Nigeria, termination of all assistance programmes, and a ban on the sale of arms, military spare parts, and police equipment to Nigeria. WE CALL ESPECIALLY FOR AN EMBARGO ON NIGERIAN OIL WITH THE AIM OF STARVING THE REGIME OF FUNDS AND COMPELLING IT TO CEDE POWER TO THE DULY ELECTED DEMOCRATIC PRESIDENT. We call for an urgent debate in the Security Council on the deteriorating state of human existence in Nigeria and a concrete plan of action that will be binding on its member states.

Approved by full Plenary assembly of over 1,700 world dignitaries.

Signatories include the following Nobel laureates:

Michael Gorbachev, Kenzaburo Oe, Leo Esaki, Kenichi Fukui, Wole Soyinka, Desmond Tutu.

KEN SARO WIWA, PREFACE TO *GENOCIDE IN NIGERIA: THE OGONI TRAGEDY* (Port Harcourt: Saros, 1992; 103 pp.)

Author's Note

Writing this book has been one of the most painful experiences of my life. Ordinarily, writing a book is torture, a chore. But when, on every page, following upon every word, every letter, a tragedy leaps up before the eyes of a writer, he or she cannot derive that pleasure, that fulfillment in which the creative process often terminates. What has probably worsened the matter is that I have lived through most of the period covered by this sordid story. I knew, as a child, that period from 1947 when the Ogoni saw, for a few brief years, the possibility of extricating themselves from the cruel fate which seems to have been ordained for them. I watched as they went into decline. I was privileged to play a role in the civil war which decimated them further and to assist in their rehabilitation at the end of that war. Since then I have watched helplessly as they have been gradually ground to dust by the combined effort of the multinational oil company, Shell Petroleum Development Company, the murderous ethnic majority in Nigeria and the country's military dictatorships. Not the pleas, not the writing over the years have convinced the Nigerian elite that something special ought to be done to relieve the distress of the Ogoni. I have known and argued earnestly since I was a lad of seventeen that the only way the Ogoni can survive is for them to exercise their political and economic rights. But because the Nigerian elite appear, on this particular matter, to have

hearts of stone and the brains of millipedes; because Shell is a multi-national company with the ability to crush whomever it wishes; because the petroleum resources of the Ogoni serve everyone's greed, all the doors seemed closed. Three recent events have encouraged me to now place the issue before the world: the end of the cold War, the increasing attention being paid to the global environment, and the insistence of the European Community that minority rights be respected, albeit in the successor states to the Soviet Union and in Yugoslavia. What remains to be seen is whether Europe and America will apply in Nigeria the same standards which they have applied in Eastern Europe. For what has happened and is happening to the Ogoni is strictly not the fault of the Nigerian elite and Shell Company alone; the international community has played a very significant role in it. If the Americans did not purchase Nigerian oil, the Nigerian nation would not be, nor would the oppressive ethnic majority in the country have the wherewithal to pursue its genocidal intentions. Indeed, there is a sense in which the "Nigerian" oil which the Americans, Europeans and Japanese buy is stolen property: it has been seized from its owners by force of arms and has not been paid for. Therefore, these buyers are receiving stolen property. Also, it is Western investment and technology which keep the Nigerian oil industry and therefore the Nigerian nation alive, oil being 94 percent of Nigeria's Gross Domestic Product. Also, European and American shareholders in multi-national oil companies and manufacturers of oil mining equipment have benefitted from the purloining of Ogoni resources, the devastation of the Ogoni environment and the genocide of the Ogoni people. Thus, shareholders in the multi-national oil companies -- both Shell and Chevron -- which prospect for oil in Ogoni, the American, Japanese and European governments, and the multi-national oil companies have a moral if not legal responsibility for ending the genocide of the Ogoni people and the complete devastations of their environment, if, indeed, that is still possible. The requirement is enormous and urgent. The Ogoni people themselves including their children are determined to save whatever is left of their rich heritage. The international community can support this determination by championing the drive of the Ogoni for autonomy within Nigeria. The restoration of their rights, political, economic and environmental does not, cannot, hurt anyone. It will only place the responsibility for ending this dreadful situation where it should lie: on the Ogoni people themselves. The area being rich in resources and the people resourceful, the Ogoni will be able to sort out their problem in time. Secondly, the international community must prevail on Shell and Chevron which prospect for oil in Ogoni, and the Nigerian Government which abets them, to stop flaring gas in the area immediately. Thirdly, the international community can help by sending experts -- medical, environmental and agricultural -- to assist the Ogoni people restore a semblance of normality to Ogoni territory. In the early years of this century, a French writer, Andre

Gide, toured the Congo and observed the gross abuse of human rights being perpetrated in that country by King Leopold II of Belgium and his agents. He wrote about it and Europeans were sufficiently shocked to end the abuses. I write now in the hope that the international community will, in similar fashion, do something to mitigate the Ogoni tragedy. It is bad enough that it is happening a few years into [before?] the twenty-first century. It will be a disgrace to humanity should it persist one day longer. I expect the ethnic majority of Nigeria to turn the heat of their well-known vindictiveness on me for writing this book. I defy them to do so. Some may wonder at my use of the word "genocide" to describe what has happened to the Ogoni people. The United Nations defines genocide as "the commission of acts with intent to destroy a national, ethnic, racial or religious group." If anyone, after reading this book, has any further doubt of, or has a better description for, the crime against the Ogoni people, I will be happy to know it. I wish to thank Barika Idamkue and Dr. Sonpie Kpone-Tonwe for kindly reading the manuscript and making valuable suggestions for improving the work; and my assistant, Hyacinth Wayi, for speedy word-processing. All errors in the book are mine and I accept full responsibility for them.

Ken Saro-Wiwa
Port Harcourt, 1992

(END OF SECTION 1. PLEASE SEE SECTION TWO UNDER SEPARATE MAIL FILE)

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247. **Steven Howard Shoemaker**
NIGERIA CASEFILE #2 (A KEN SARO WIWA-OGONI HANDBOOK)
(fwd)

Mon 20 Nov 1995

Forwarded message:

From daemon Mon Nov 20 13:48:34 1995

Resent-Message-Id: <[REDACTED]>

Resent-From: Tejumola Olaniyan <[REDACTED]>

Resent-Date: Mon, 20 Nov 95 13:28:32 EST

Resent-To: [REDACTED]

From: Tejumola Olaniyan <[REDACTED]>

Date: Mon, 20 Nov 95 13:19:07 EST

To: [REDACTED]

Subject: NIGERIA CASEFILE #2 (A KEN SARO WIWA-OGONI HANDBOOK)

NIGERIAN CASEFILE: THE KEN SARO WIWA-OGONI HANDBOOK

compiled by the Coalition Against Dictatorship (CAD)

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Harvard students take the lead

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KEN SARO WIWA, "THE WORLD BANK AND US"

a column from the *Sunday Times* of Lagos; reprinted in *Similia:

Essays on Anomic Nigeria* (Port Harcourt: Saros: 1991), a

collection of columns published in 1989 and 1990. (Note: In this

essay Ken uses "World Bank" and "IMF" interchange-

ably.)

Almost twenty years ago, touring the United States of America, I came to know several variations of my surname. In New York, I was called Sora-Wawo, in Los Angeles Sira-Wawa. But the limit was in Atlanta, in the presence of Mrs. Coretta King, where I was introduced as Saro-Wee-Wee. Uncomfortably close to the toilet, you might say. I was minded, that day, to change my name to something more heavenly like Wiwa or Saros. I refrained from doing so. In the interest of history. Today, I'm used to these and other variations of my name. Thus I was only half-surprised when an invitation arrived at my Surulere office the other day, addressed to, you guessed it, Ken Sarohiwa. And it came from the Indian High Commission. It was an invitation to a party celebrating

Indian National Day. I am not a party-going man. Invariably, I find myself, in the day, glued to my telephone or sitting in the front offices of the high and mighty in Nigeria pursuing you know what. At night, I'm in my study consulting dictionaries or the thesaurus and struggling endlessly with words in English or my native Khana. No one invites me to parties. Which is a blessing. So the half of my surprise was that the Indian High Commission had called me up. How on earth did they find out my address? I am supposed to be anonymous, in the name of all you love! Since I have never been to a diplomat's party, and I do not mind a new experience, I took my courage in my hands and wended my way to Eleke Crescent on Victoria Island. I suspected I would be lost at the part. I knew that my perpetual *adire* shirt would mark me out as a non-diplomat and that I did not have the polish to match a diplomat's shoes. I *was* lost. I held my soft drink (no alcohol was served) and the only diplomat I met almost sent me to my grave. No, he did not deal me a blow. He was a high official of the World Bank. These sapped times are hungry times, and a hungry man is an angry man. I never have met any representative of the International Monetary Fund anywhere and this was an opportunity for me to send a message to the Fund through one of its representatives in Nigeria. As it turned out, I had nothing new to tell the representative. He had been to all but two of the states of Nigeria, and most of it by road. He was aware of the distress caused by the Structural Adjustment Programme. The latest World Bank Report on the Africa Sub-region accepts as much. Forty years of the World Bank experiment in turning the economies of debtor-nations round has not resulted in success in a single country. Yet the Bank persists in its folly. Which makes you believe that their mission in debtor nations is not to heal but to rub salt into wounds. To collect debts and to send the nations into even greater debt so that the World Bank can remain in the nations forever. The gentleman in question kept reminding me that the IMF would not have been in Nigeria if Nigeria had not gone on a borrowing spree. I know and have always known it. But the question which confronts us all is what to do in the circumstances. Must we see all our children die of kwashiorkor? Must we see all those who survive the ravages of disease and famine grow up as zombies because they have no books to read, cannot afford good education, decent housing, transportation and water? Perhaps the only thing they can look forward to is a "befitting burial" which we perversely still give the dead? All of which sends me right back to the present administration which continues to sing of the "gains of SAP." It is all right for a government, any government, to put a policy in place and pursue its implementation with single-mindedness. Just to see if it works. However, any respectable government must also have a fall-back position. I believe that all Nigerians, indeed, all black people, must work hard, think hard, practise thrift and show dedication to progress. But the question which Government and all of us must now tackle is the failure of World Bank "remedies" world-wide. A

survey in Ghana recently showed that in spite of adherence to World Bank conditionalities, in spite of the fact that the Bank has enough statistics to show that the Ghanaian economy is improving, the fact stands that the average Ghanaian's earnings cannot feed him and his family, much less send his children to school or doctor them. The representative of the World Bank in Ghana is reported to have said recently that the mismanagement of the past in Ghana was so immense that recovery under the IMF's guidelines will be almost impossible. For Ghana, you may read Nigeria, Zambia, or wherever. Which, of course, means that the "gains of SAP" are likely to remain a chimera for all time. The World Bank itself has now accepted that some of its programmes are faulty. It also accepts that it pays its employees incredible salaries and allowances. but it then places the blame on the various governments: the governments are autocratic, corrupt and have not allowed the full development of the creative energies of their peoples. Maybe. This may mean that the World Bank and its Euro-American mentors will stop forcing incompetent rulers and brutes upon third and "enth" world societies in the belief that such men will brutalize their peoples and compel them to accept the bitter pill which the World Bank means to force down the nations' throats. But methinks the World Bank has to accept that its real instrument of torture is its insistence on growth, its economic theorizing at the expense of human welfare. In Nigeria, as elsewhere, its potent instrument is the exchange rate. The fixing of that rate is, as far as I can see it, a con; it is dubious and no one can convince me otherwise. And the sooner debtor-nations realized the political nature of the World Bank, the sooner they will be able to face the bogus economic theories of the Bank with an equivalent weapon--people's power. At no matter what cost.

CHUKS ILOEGBUNAM, "THE DEATH OF A WRITER"
(an obituary by a Nigerian journalist)

It is a supreme irony that the death of Ken Saro-Wiwa, the Nigerian environmental activist, businessman and writer at the age of 54, should have come in such a grotesque manner: tried and condemned by a tribunal instead of an ordinary court of law, denied the right of appeal, and hanged. Nothing about his origins, nor indeed, the course of most of his life, indicated even remotely that things would come to this terrible pass.

Saro-Wiwa was born in Bori, near Port Harcourt, capital of Rivers State in Nigeria. He was a brilliant student and government scholarships saw him through Government College, Umuahia, and the University of Ibadan - two famous institutions which some other notable Nigerian writers, including Chinua Achebe, had also attended.

He taught briefly at the Universities of Ibadan and Nigeria (at Nsukka) before the outbreak of the Nigerian civil war in 1967. Stridently anti-Biafran (until his

death he wrote the name with a lower case "b"), Saro-Wiwa pitched his camp with the Federal authorities. He was appointed the administrator of the oil port of Bonny, and in 1968 became one of the first cabinet members of the newly created Rivers State, where he alternately held the powerful portfolios of education and information. However, when he left the cabinet of Commander Alfred Dietee-Spiff, the military governor of Rivers State, in 1973, it was in acrimonious circumstances.

Out of government, Saro-Wiwa turned to business, which he ran alongside his real love of writing. He made good on both scores. He could afford to send his son to Eton; and had to his credit more than 20 titles in all genres of literature. There are four novels, a poetry volume, two books of short stories, three titles on general topics, two drama volumes, one on folklore and nine children's books. And this output does not include the extensive pamphleteering on behalf of the Ogoni cause. His *Tambari* and *Tambari In Dukana*, both written for children, were published by Longman. All the others are published by his Saros International Publishers. Last year, Longman re-issued his *Sazaboy: A Novel in Rotten English*, which received an honourable mention at the Noma Award for Publishing in Africa. Only last month the same publishers re-issued *A Forest Of Flowers*, his first collection of short stories which was shortlisted for the Commonwealth Writers Prize in 1987.

Saro-Wiwa was also at different times an engaging newspaper columnist for *Punch*, *Vanguard* and the *Daily Times*, all Lagos-based dailies. Whether in journalism or in creative writing, he exposed a nation "cracking up under the pressures of maladministration, corporate greed, sloth, ignorance and mercenary self-interest, while its people struggle against government neglect and abuse, racketeering, poverty, disease, superstition and ethnic mistrust to quote the apposite comment on the blurb accompanying *A Forest Of Flowers*.

Sometime in 1991, Saro-Wiwa decided to abandon "everything" and devote himself to the Ogoni struggle, which until then he had combined with his other activities. He put his creative writing in abeyance, dutifully returning to their owners all the manuscripts his Saros International was to have published, and relinquished his position as president of the Association of Nigerian Authors which he held for three years.

Towards the end of 1992 he was struck by tragedy when his son at Eton dropped dead during a game of rugby. Something inside Saro-Wiwa seemed to have died as a result. From then on he lived only for the Ogoni struggle.

Before long he complained that the military authorities had turned a deaf ear to the demands of his people. In the circumstances, he said that the only option left was to attract the attention of the international community. In July 1992 he addressed the United Nations Working Group on Indigenous Population in

Geneva and followed this up with a visit to the UN in New York. He bought cine equipment and cameras, and systematically began recording scenes of oil pollution and gas flaring in Ogoniland. Using the platform of Movement for the Survival of the Ogoni People (MOSOP), which he helped found, he sensitised his people to both the politics and economics of oil.

Greenpeace and other environmental groups soon took up the Ogoni case and the picketing of Shell's office in London became commonplace. (In fact, Shell was chased out of Ogoniland in 1993.) Saro-Wiwa had become an acute embarrassment to oil companies operating in Nigeria and to his country's military rulers.

During his last visit to London in May last year he complained that Shell had put a world-wide surveillance on his movements. He said it was obvious that the military regime in Nigeria was feeling the heat of the Ogoni struggle. "I am using even the Koran which says it is right to fight one's oppressors against them", he told me. "And they don't like it one bit," A mutual friend, a novelist, asked Saro-Wiwa if it was not possible for him to "go slow" on "the struggle". The man merely smiled and changed the topic.

The last time I saw him was when the UK chapter of the Ogoni movement was launched at the Royal Park Hotel in London. Saro-Wiwa told me he would return to Nigeria the following week, but would be back in good time for the launch of *Sozaboy* by Longman. He never came back.

Shortly after his return to Nigeria he was arrested and charged with multiple murder although it was established that he was not at the scene of the killings. But Justice Ibrahimauta, the tribunal chairman, warned: "If an accused was not directly involved in a crime, he could still be convicted if he encouraged the act". And the tribunal is empowered to pronounce only capital punishment.

So, the Nigerian state has killed Ken Saro-Wiwa. The man I knew, the one who was my friend for over a decade, believed in combat - the combat of the written and spoken word. If he opposed anything, he went to great lengths to leave nobody in doubt as to where he stood. Perhaps his eternal mistake was that he chose to rail at those who saw themselves in superhuman terms, people who would brook no opposition and who, in the peculiar setting of the Nigerian entity, had invariably coveted the power to decide who got dispatched and who did not.

But he always insisted that the Ogoni would demand their rights peacefully. He showed impatience each time it was alleged that he was planning for the Ogoni to secede. "I am not a fool", he would declare. "The Ogoni are only 500,000. Nigeria is about 100 million. Secession is not a viable option and we are not into that." Somebody wanted to know the meaning of Saro-Wiwa's death. Simple. It means that nothing has changed.

He is survived by his wife, Hauwa, his children, one of whom, Ken, has been the foremost campaigner for his father's freedom, and his father and mother, who are aged 91 and 75 years respectively.

F W J MNTHALI, "FAREWELL, KEN SARO-WIWA!"

a poetic memorial by the renowned Malawian poet

Some papers here tell us
you and your colleagues
went to your death singing!

Would that Africa as a whole
boasted more men and women with
your courage and your vision.

But we are all caught up in a web of fear
the fear that rules all killers
that web of silence which is the bane of all our
feelings
the fear of our own shadows
the fear of lizards lurking behind freedom's rays
the fear of being thought weak
the fear of parting with loot and plunder
the fear of losing those peripheral powers
whose only guarantee is the barrel of a gun
cynically backed by the greed of those who have more
guns!

When fifteen years ago I spent a year in your country
I saw with my own eyes
how the fishes and other forms of life
were all slowly dying
in the sluggish brownish and filthy liquid
that had once been water; black gold it seems
demanded its pound of flesh
from everything and everyone around it!

It has now demanded that you too
like the rest of our continent's creme de la creme
pay with your life for this gold this madness;
that the Ogoni like the rest of us
since the days of slavery and brutish colonisation
have been paying with our lives
for treasures that others consume
while our own people go hungry and naked:

it was for reminding it of this simple story
that the sphinx has devoured you
for no sphinx on earth
wants its victims told
how naked and how foolish it looks!

In my own country the sphinx
devoured Dick Matenje and Aaron Gadama
Twaibu Sangala and David Chiwanga
Attati Mpakati and Mkwapatira Mhango
Orton Chirwa and many many others
whose bodies were dumped
into the waters of the Shire
or into the bellies of crocodiles;
many fled into exile which also became an area of
darkness
when the tentacles of the sphinx would know no bounds
for the kingdoms of darkness
decay and death are all alike:
they thrive best in the midst of silence and despair
our silence and our despair!

If today's death be that of Ken Saro-Wiwa and eight
others
who have been so brazenly and so blatantly
in the classical fashion of Nazism so openly executed
can the deaths of Moshood Abiola and General Obasanjo
and Ransome Kuti
be far off?

Silence, why must heinous acts
be always followed by a deathly silence
oh, OAU,
oh, Africa?

F e l i x M n t h a l i .

THE WRITINGS OF KEN SARO-WIWA: A BIBLIOGRAPHY

THE TRANSISTOR RADIO (radio play) BBC-Radio, 1972
BRIDE BY RETURN (radio play) BBC-Radio, 1973
TAMBARI (1973)
TAMBARI IN DUKANA (1973)
SONGS IN A TIME OF WAR (POEMS) (1985)
SOZABOY: A NOVEL IN ROTTEN ENGLISH (1985)
A FOREST OF FLOWERS (SHORT STORIES) (1986)

BASI AND COMPANY:A MODERN AFRICAN FOLKTALE (1987)
PRISONERS OF JEBS (1988)
ADAKU AND OTHER STORIES (1989)
FOUR FARCIAL PLAYS (1989)
ON A DARKLING PLAIN:AN ACCOUNT OF THE NIGERIAN CIVIL WAR
(1989)
NIGERIA:THE BRINK OF DISASTER (1991)
PITA'S BUMBROK'S PRISON (1991)
SIMILIA:ESSAYS ON ANOMIC NIGERIA (1991)
THE SINGING ANTHILL:OGONI FOLK TALES (1991)
GENOCIDE IN NIGERIA:THE OGONI TRAGEDY (1992)

In addition, he was producer and writer of the television
series, BASI AND COMPANY, 1985-1990, Editor, MELLANBITE,
1963-64, HORIZON, 1964-65,and UMUAHIA TIMES, Member of
editorial board, UMUAHIAN

His television series included:

MR. B (1987)
BASI AND COMPANY (1989)
THE TRANSISTOR RADIO (1989)
MR.B GOES TO LAGOS (1989)
MR. B IS DEAD (1991)
SEGI FINDS THE RADIO (1991)
A SHIPLOAD OF RICE (1991)
MR. B'S MATTRESS (1992)
MR. B. GOES TO THE MOON (1992)
A BRIDE FOR MR. B. (1992)

Born October 10, 1941 in Bori, Rivers State, Nigeria
Died November 10, 1995 in Port Harcourt, Nigeria
Education: University of Ibadan B.A. (Honors), 1965
Avocational interests: Sports, travel, classical music

APPENDIX 1

ACTION AGAINST THE NIGERIAN JUNTA AND ITS BACKERS: HARVARD STUDENTS TAKE THE LEAD

Resolution passed on November 19, 1995

RESOLUTION 14F-28: Response to Human Rights Violations in Nigeria
(Simons, Kasper, Freeman)

Whereas, on Friday, 10 November 1995, the military government of Nigeria
executed nine anti-government activists, including playwright, environmental

and human rights activist Ken Saro- Wiwa, in trials which Amnesty International believes to have been politically motivated and unfair;

Whereas, the international community has reacted with outrage and condemnation to the executions, the United States and other nations have withdrawn their ambassadors to Nigeria, the 52-member Commonwealth of Britain has suspended Nigeria as a member, and the brutal government of Nigeria has been described by Nelson Mandela as "counter to the most basic human rights;"

Whereas, the Nigerian government is supported in large part by foreign investment, especially from oil corporations, most of the oil from which is exported to the United States;

Whereas, Harvard University is a shareholder in corporations which invest in Nigeria;

Be it resolved that the Undergraduate Council requests that President Neil Rudenstine sign letters to the Nigerian government and to Shell Oil, a leading investor in Nigeria in which Harvard owns shares, expressing outrage and dismay at the executions;

Be it resolved that the Undergraduate Council requests the University Advisory Committee on Shareholder Responsibility to recommend a policy of supporting all shareholders' resolutions calling for corporate withdrawal from Nigeria by drafting a letter to the student representative, Adrienne Bradley, which she shall read on behalf of the Undergraduate Council.

Be it resolved that the Undergraduate Council requests the Harvard Corporation and the Board of Overseers of Harvard College to adopt a policy of selective purchasing which would prohibit any part of the University or its subsidiaries from buying products from or entering into contracts with oil companies which invest in Nigeria.

Be it further resolved that the Undergraduate Council requests that Harvard University divest fully from oil companies which invest in Nigeria.

APPENDIX 2:

WOLE SOYINKA, "WHY THE GENERAL KILLED"

There is one question only we need to address to ourselves: why the rush to execution ? That question holds the key to the darkest moment in the history of our existence in the benighted nation called Nigeria.

There are hundreds of convicts on the death row of our prisons, some of them over ten years, maybe twenty, awaiting their date with destiny. Some are violent armed robbers, cold-blooded murderers. Several are functional sadists, mindless butchers who took advantage of religious or ethnic riots to practice

their stock-in-trade. Years after they slaughtered their victims and turned the streets, markets and places of worship most especially into slaughter slabs. They were duly sentenced yet they are still kept alive in our prison cells, awaiting rescue by executive clemency. What then was the overwhelming cause that drove Sani Abacha, who had taken over the functions of criminal justice, set up his own trial court, then presided over the last court of appeal, to rush Ken Saro-Wiwa and his companions to the gallows ? Since when has the cause of justice been served by haste, especially selective justice in its irreversible mode ?

In seeking to answer to our central question, we would be wise to take our minds back to the internecine strifes, the escalation of mutual destruction that became a puzzling feature of life among the Delta people over the two years of Abacha's seizure of power in Nigeria. We must remind ourselves of the impersonation of the Okrika, the Andoni and the Ogoni by Abacha armed soldiers, the destruction of villages and farmlands, kidnapping and murders timed to appear as consequences of boundary disputes, mostly minor, but now turned into vicious rounds of bloodletting and serial vengeance among traditionally peaceful neighbours. We must refresh our memories with the detailed reports of commissions of enquiries about this strange and costly eruption of animosity - Professor Claude Ake's meticulous report most especially. We must single out, as a most graphic instance, the 1994 machine-gunning of a boat in mid-stream, in a carefully executed military action that resulted in the deaths of tens of innocent men, women and children, including prominent citizens of Ogoniland. The Okrika were first blamed for this atrocity, but we do recall how the true criminals, the military personnel, were exposed in the end by the few survivors.

The purpose of Abacha's bloody provocation was straightforward: to make it impossible for the victims of oil exploration to present a united front in their demands for reparations for their polluted land, for a fair share in the resources of their land, and a voice in the control of their own development. The Ogoni were of course at the head of these demands.

Still, the Ogoni preserved their united resolve - until lately. The crack in their unity was formed by the same forces that destroyed the peaceful co-existence of the various communities of the Delta, setting one against the other. The next stage was to set the final seal of doom on the Ogoni, who had had the temerity to spearhead the Delta revolt against the oil companies. Four prominent sons of Ogoni were brutally hacked to death, creating a permanent breach within the Ogoni movement, MOSOP.

Now, there had begun serious moves to heal that breach, with limited but real success. I know this at first hand, because I was contacted by the relations of

the murder victims and the peacebrokers. Such a process could only have been initiated as a result of the mounting suspicion that the blood-guilt lay outside the Ogoni community, that, at the very least, the murder of the four Ogoni leaders had been organised by a common enemy, the permanent "agent provocateurs" in the pay of the Abacha's regime. There was only one way to thwart the process of healing within MOSOP, and this was to terminate all efforts to root out the real criminals, and widen the blood breach in an irreversible manner.

Ken Saro-Wiwa's fate had long been sealed. The decision to execute him was reached before the special tribunal was ordered to reconvene and pronounce a verdict that had been decided outside the charade of judicial proceeding. The meeting of the Provisional Ruling Council to consider that verdict was a macabre pretence, a prolongation of the cynicism that marked the trial proceedings from the outset.

As the world knows, the executions were to have taken place immediately after the "ratification" session of the Military Council. Hence the sense of urgency, even panic with which we addressed our task in Auckland from the moment that we learnt that Abacha had summoned his uniformed puppets to perform at his dance of death. A blatant unrepentant defiance of civilised norms, an atavistic psyche is what has characterised this regime from the beginning, so there should have been no cause for surprise. We have warned, and pleaded. Now we are paying yet another heavy prize for the comatose nature of global conscience.

Is that conscience finally nudged awake ? Despite the belated flurry of motions, it would appear that the real problem, and the solution are still being dodged. Why do the Commonwealth Heads of States still proceed to offer Sani Abacha two whole years to "restore" Nigeria to democracy ? Nigeria has a civilian President-elect, Bashorun M.K.O. Abiola, clamped in gaol by Sani Abacha. We have called for a solution which requires his immediate release in order to head a government of national unity and restore the nation to a democratic path. Every atrocity that has befallen Nigerians, the total collapse of civic society, stem from the pattern of evasion that seeks a path round the immutable reality: that Nigerians went to the polls, elected their President, then a military cabal, of which Sani Abacha was Number Two, nullified the process.

It is time to stop beating about the bush when a path that, as it happens, combines both principle and pragmatism opens up itself unambiguously. Yes, of course, there are thorns along that path, a few boulders here and there, but what is the alternative ? Two more years of Abacha ? Does any serious thinking individual believe that Nigeria will survive a two-year endorsement of this national haemorrhage ? Let the Commonwealth leaders think again, and

save the nation from the spiral of murder, torture and leadership dementia that is surely leading to the disintegration of a once proud nation.

[published in "Der Spiegel"]

Other sources of info:

Earthlife Africa (Cape Town)

Greenpeace International

Amnesty International

(END OF SECTION TWO. PLEASE SEE SECTION 1 IN A SEPARATE MAIL FILE)

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248. **Maria Damon**

Re: Metroplexities

Mon 20 Nov 1995

just a word about metroplexities in massachusetts: just spent the wkend in northampton and visited used bookstores, and was disappointed/relieved to find not one single interesting "experimental" book of poems on the shelves. disappointed because, well, because i like my e-friends to be doing well and getting lots of attention. relieved because, well, because i have this narrative about "my" institution (UMN) and "my" state MN, tho it used to be MA, then CA) being the most inhospitable to the new poetries and the energies they spring from and replenish. now i get a taste of reality: the city that hosts five major colleges is steeped in ...well, robert frost, may sarton and other ilkish ones. in my m onth away from the e, i've been in northern vermont, brooklyn (took in the whitney's beat show, tho had to miss the opening, much to my already-invited friends' rage) and nhamp. happy to be back on the cape and on the e. and just got, in the mail, walter lew's new asian american anthology, Premonitions. dig it! lots of fun stuff. kaya press.--maria d

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249. **Maria Damon**

Re: Maria (D.)

Mon 20 Nov 1995

hi alan, i haven't gotten yr msg yet, but probly will tmw. i was away for over a month, and recklessly decided against doing the "set poetics no mail" --it took my computer 2.5 hrs to retrieve most of the msgs and then apparently gave out, so there's about a week's worth of uncollected msgs still to be gotten --but i'mm back and the same msg can be backchanneled again.---best, md

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250. **Maria Damon**
Re: Baraka Conference
Mon 20 Nov 1995

thanks again, aldon, for your updates and commentaries. in response to your comment "And next time you're at one of those BEAT retrospectives, ask somebody where all the black poets and painters are --"

see mona lisa saloy's essay, black beats and black issues, in the whitney's beat exhibit catalogue. she and i divvied up the terrain (yeah yeah i know that's suspect, but that's how it worked out) --i did i kind of overview on "other beats" and she did Black writers and artists.

happy birthday to baraka, culture hero! he's said some of the smartest stuff i've ever heard on poetry/populism/politics. --md

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251. **Maria Damon**
Re: Orono Conference
Mon 20 Nov 1995

have the contents of the orono conference already been established? or is the call for papers still open?--maria d

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252. **Maria Damon**
Re: latter day lateness
Mon 20 Nov 1995

aldon, late in my reply but always glad to read your msgs --piquant and saucy... anyway you say --

Admittedly a bad example --

but it was Genet who once asked "what color is a black man?" and he hadn't been reading Said, Fish, or Foucault on that day either --

is this a different translation, or a different occasion, from his line "what exactly is a Negro?" by the way, genet WROTE Said, Fish and Foucault before they knew who they were.--md

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253. **Jordan Davis**
you have been warned
Mon 20 Nov 1995

Greetings POETICS (and hello to boopsy)

APRIL 1996 Established as
First Annual National Poetry Month

Booksellers and Librarians: To request an order form for the free information kit, booksellers and librarians should send a self-addressed, stamped envelope to the Academy of American Poets, Dept. NPM, 584 B'way Ste 1208, NY NY 10012-3250 [REDACTED]. Kits (not you Mr Robinson) will be mailed on or before March 1, 1996.

Educators: To receive free Nat'l Po Month resource materials, educators should call or write the Nat'l Council of Teach Engl, Attn. Poetry Project, 1111 Kenyon Rd, Urbana IL 6180 [REDACTED] ext 290.

Media Contacts Only: If you would like more info about NPM contact Susannah Greenberg at [REDACTED] or Tom Bevan at [REDACTED]. Please do not print these two phone numbers in any articles on Nat'l Po Month.

Start yr engines
Jordan

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254. **Aldon L. Nielsen**
Re: Steinway
Tue 21 Nov 1995

Steve & Dodie: Maybe it's because I wasn't there, but now I can't remember -- what did Stein write?

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255. **Aldon L. Nielsen**
Re: genetway
Tue 21 Nov 1995

Maria -- diff. trans. of following line, "and first of all, what color is he?" --
time for me to decide whether or not to propose Kaufman panel for ALA in San Diego, May 30 - June 2 -- interested?? will probably see you at Orono, if not, and if I can get money source to get there --

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256. **Marjorie Perloff**

Re: David Kellog's MLA posting

Tue 21 Nov 1995

David, you'll find the MLA makes this glitch every single year; it has nothing to do with 19th vs 20th C or anything else; they always put all the good things at the same time! Never mind, people can go back and forth. But I wish I could hear that Bourdieu paper. Maybe you'll send it or post it.

On another note: I want to know how people learn about (are invited to) things like the Stein reading marathon at Berkeley. I was right nearby at Mills for the Cage conference and, had I known, would have loved to go. Next time, please invite some of the rest of us Steinians.

Marjorie

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257. **Kevin Killian**

Re: Stein marathon

Tue 21 Nov 1995

Steve Carll wrote:

>But, at the risk of further embarrassment, what did Stephen Ratcliffe read?
>Aaron Shurin? And what was the name of the woman who read the piece from
>the uncollected Stein, the title of which was something like "Didn't Lily
>and Elsa Love You?"

Steve according to KK, Ratcliffe read from The Making of Americans, wasn't it page 806? Aaron Shurin read "Preciosilla." We think it must have been Camille Roy who read about Lily and Elsa. But that wasn't the name of it--Camille, if you're on this list, please fill us in.

Dodie

p.s. to Marjorie: the Stein marathon was in San Francisco, at New College. How we wish you could have joined us! We would have loved to have heard you, Joan Retallack, and many of the other speakers at the Mills College Cage conference. How about giving us your precis of the Cagefest?

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258. **Pierre Joris**

IFEX Communiqué #4-45 (fwd)

Tue 21 Nov 1995

Here's some info about reactions to the hangings in Nigeria. It's a long message as I left in the rest of the IFEX communiqué's stuff dealing with questions of

repression of writers/journalists around the world. & it's a big world out there, just beyond yankeeland.

Pierre

Forwarded message:

> From [REDACTED] Mon Nov 20 20:18:43 1995
> Date: Mon, 20 Nov 1995 20:14:47 -0500 (EST)
> From: Lucy Komisar <[REDACTED]>
> To: PEN Listserv <[REDACTED]>
> Subject: IFEX Communique #4-45 (fwd)
> Content-Length: 17948

>

>

>

> ----- Forwarded message -----

> Date: Mon, 20 Nov 95 15:58:45 -0500 (EST)
> From: Clearing House <[REDACTED]>
> To: [REDACTED]
> Subject: IFEX Communique #4-45

>

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> ** ***** ** COMMUNIQUE # 4 - 45

> ** ** ** 20 November 1995

> ***** ** **

> International Freedom of Expression eXchange Clearing House

>

>

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> WORLD MOURNS WRITER KEN SARO-WIWA AND OTHER NIGERIAN ACTIVISTS

>

> INTERNATIONAL PEN MARKS DAY OF THE IMPRISONED WRITER

>

> A wreath in memory of those killed by the Nigerian military
> government on 10 November was laid outside the Nigerian High
> Commission in Namibia on 17 November, reported the Media
> Institute of Southern Africa (MISA). The wreath-laying ceremony
> was in memory of Ken Saro-Wiwa, Dr. Barinem Kiobel, Saturday
> Dobe, Paul Levura, Nordu Eawo, Felix Nuate, Daniel Gbokoo, John
> Kpuinen and Baribor Bera. "All those who share feelings of
> outrage at the inhumanity of the Nigerian regime's actions" were
> invited to attend wreath-laying ceremonies which took place
> outside the Nigerian High Commission in Windhoek and at all the
> Nigerian consulates in southern Africa. The Namibian ceremony was
> organized by the Journalists Association of Namibia and the
> Namibian chapter of MISA.

>

> Human Rights Watch condemned Royal Dutch/Shell and other multi-
> national oil companies operating in Nigeria for failing to
> respond to the executions by closing down their remaining
> operations in Nigeria. Human Rights Watch/Africa also appealed to
> the United Nations Security Council to isolate Nigeria. As well,
> Human Rights Watch/Africa called on the governments of the United
> States, the United Kingdom, the Commonwealth Countries, the
> Organization of African Unity and the European Union to "freeze
> all foreign assets of members of the Nigerian government who are
> responsible for serious human rights abuses; embargo all military
> sale and shipment of arms to the Nigerian government through
> governmental or private channels; immediately reject the request
> for \$100 million in loans from the International Finance
> Corporation for a natural gas project in the Niger River Delta;
> publicly name those members of the Nigerian government to whom
> visas are denied as a result of their complicity in human rights
> abuses; suspend all non-essential high-level visits to and from
> Nigeria; instruct their embassies in Lagos to publicly support

- > the efforts of Nigeria's dynamic human rights community by
- > meeting regularly with Nigerian human rights activists, issuing
- > frequent statements regarding pressing human rights issues, and
- > providing project assistance."
- >
- > This year, International PEN's Day of the Imprisoned Writer on 15
- > November was overshadowed by news of the execution of Saro-Wiwa,
- > reported the Writers in Prison Committee (WiPC) of International
- > PEN. WiPC said, "PEN centres in many countries campaigned
- > tirelessly for his release, in the belief that the charges
- > against him were trumped up and that the real reason for his
- > arrest lay in his minority rights activism." Many well-known
- > writers signed a petition on his behalf, including Chinua Achebe,
- > Ben Okri, Octavio Paz, Arthur Miller, Harold Pinter, Edward Said,
- > Nadine Gordimer, Seamus Heaney and Isabel Allende. Several PEN
- > centres dedicated their events for the Day of the Imprisoned
- > Writer to Saro-Wiwa. At the PEN Canada event, which became a
- > memorial to Saro-Wiwa, Ugandan author George Seremba gave a
- > passionate reading from his play "Come Good Rain".
- >
- > WiPC noted that Saro-Wiwa is just one of the many cases on its
- > caselist. The WiPC has documented around 900 instances of writers
- > and journalists who have been persecuted in pursuit of their
- > profession since the beginning of 1995. Among these are 30 cases
- > of killings, over 33 unsolved disappearances, and the detention
- > of almost 400 others. Also recorded are numerous death threats,
- > beatings and other forms of harassment aimed at intimidating
- > writers and journalists into silence. International PEN said it
- > "works to highlight these cases so they are not forgotten."
- >
- > ** ** **
- >
- > REGIONAL NEWS
- >
- > AFRICA
- >
- > CAMEROON: BILL COULD THREATEN PRESS FREEDOM; CAMEROON
- > CRITICIZED
- >
- > A bill which could restrict freedom of the press in Cameroon is
- > being debated by Parliament, reported Reporters sans frontieres
- > (RSF). According to RSF, Article 17, on the seizure and banning

> of newspapers, refers to attacks on "the public order" and
> "accepted standards of good behaviour/values." However, RSF said,
> "since those terms are not defined anywhere else in the law, they
> are left open to interpretation." Although RSF said Article 17
> gives a newspaper the right to immediately submit legal
> complaints against it to a judge for an emergency interim ruling,
> the article gives that judge two hours (for daily newspapers) or
> 24 hours (for weeklies) to pass a verdict. As well, Article 7 of
> the bill gives the prefect the right to refuse the establishment
> of a newspaper. According to RSF, submitting the founding of a
> newspaper to that kind of authorization is a restriction on press
> freedom; investing the prefect (who would rule along with a
> representative of the press) with that authority further puts
> obstacles in the way of the media. Under the bill, one would also
> have to go through several additional administrative steps to
> establish a newspaper.
>
> Cameroon's history of press freedom violations should have been
> more cause for concern before it was admitted to the Commonwealth
> earlier this month, ARTICLE 19 said in a statement to the
> Commonwealth Heads of Government meeting (CHOGM), which took
> place in New Zealand from 10 to 13 November. ARTICLE 19 said,
> "Cameroon has a long record of human rights violations. Most
> recently, in 1995, the government of Cameroon has closed
> newspapers and engaged in the systematic harassment of opposition
> political activists [which] cast[s] doubt on Cameroon's
> commitment to promote human rights and democratization, as laid
> out in the Harare Declaration." Details of this abuse are
> contained in ARTICLE 19's report "Northern Cameroon: Attacks on
> Freedom of Expression by Governmental and Traditional
> Authorities". For information, contact ARTICLE 19 at 33 Islington
> High St., London N1 9LH, U.K., tel: [REDACTED], fax: +44 1
> 71 [REDACTED], e-mail: [REDACTED].
>
> RWANDA: RSF PUBLISHES REPORT ON JOURNALISTS' WORKING
CONDITIONS
>
> Press freedom after the genocide in Rwanda is at a crossroads,
> says Reporters sans frontieres (RSF) in a new report entitled
> "Rwanda: L'Impasse? La liberte de la presse apres le genocide".
> The report covers the conditions in which Rwandan journalists who
> survived the massacre -- 49 journalists were killed between April

> and July 1994 -- are returning to work in Rwanda and abroad. It
> lists attacks which have been made against the press in Rwanda,
> but it also denounces the role which hate media continues to
> play. RSF says the reconstruction of the press in Rwanda poses a
> particularly complex set of problems. It asks how a regime which
> aspires to replace a racist totalitarian dictatorship with a
> multi-ethnic pluralistic democracy reconciles the freedom of the
> press with the necessity of preventing the return of genocidal
> propaganda. RSF concludes with a set of recommendations to the
> new government of Rwanda. The report was put together with the
> support of the European Commission and includes reproductions of
> Rwandan articles. Its price is 60 FF (CAN \$15). For further
> information, contact RSF at 5, rue Geoffroy Marie, Paris 75009,
> France, tel: [REDACTED], fax: [REDACTED], e-mail:
> [REDACTED].

>

> MAGHREB

>

> ALGERIA: PRESS RESTRICTED PRIOR TO ELECTIONS

>

> The government of Algeria subjected the press to several
> restrictions prior to the election in Algeria on 16 November,
> which returned incumbent President Liamine Zeroual to power,
> reported Human Rights Watch (HRW). HRW said that in order to
> comply with the government's wish for a high turnout, the
> Ministry of Communications issued a circular "warning the media
> against advocating or publishing calls for a boycott of the
> election." Another violation of freedom of expression was "a
> black-out by the state-controlled television of any viewpoints
> hostile to the election." Three issues of the outspoken weekly
> "La Nation", which were critical of the upcoming election, were
> confiscated at the printing press "without explanation."

>

> Under the pretext of protecting foreign journalists, the Algerian
> government strictly controls their movements, writes Djallal
> Malti in the November issue of Reporters sans frontieres' (RSF)
> bulletin "La Lettre". Ostensibly to "insure" their safety, RSF
> says foreign journalists are under the guard of the civil police
> from the time they arrive at the airport and escorts accompany
> them on all their interviews. At the Ministry of Communications,
> Malti explains, journalists' itineraries are also strictly
> controlled. They are told government opponents are "unavailable"

> or living in an area "too dangerous" to visit. Journalists who
> refuse to work under these conditions must sign a form which
> absolves the security service of responsibility in the event of a
> mishap -- although RSF says they are nonetheless followed. Non-
> compliant or "expert" journalists often find it difficult to
> obtain a visa for Algeria in the first place. RSF has had
> repeated problems obtaining visas.

>

> ASIA

>

> THAILAND: JOURNALISTS MORE INTERESTED IN BUSINESS THAN
POLITICS

>

> Journalists in Thailand are more interested in reporting on
> business than politics, said a Thai journalist at a meeting
> organised by the Canadian Committee to Protect Journalists (CCPJ)
> in Toronto, Canada on 17 November. Pravit Rojaphruk, who works
> at the newspaper "The Nation" in Bangkok, said environmental
> reporting is also becoming a trendy beat. Consequently, socio-
> political matters like prostitution, economic development, and
> the rate of AIDS are not discussed in the press much. Journalists
> also worry about keeping up with new technologies as the
> information society takes hold in Thailand. Rojaphruk is one of
> four international journalists visiting Canada this month on a
> grant programme for journalists from developing countries
> sponsored by the International Centre for Human Rights and
> Democratic Development (ICHRDD) and the Canadian Association of
> Journalists (CAJ). The other journalists are Antoine Kaburahe of
> the newspaper "Panafrika" in Bujumbura, Burundi; Rina Saeed Khan
> of the newspaper "The Friday Times" in Lahore, Pakistan; and Ana
> Maria Mejia Rusconi of the newspaper "Expreso" in Lima, Peru.

>

> FORMER YUGOSLAVIA

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> FORMER YUGOSLAVIA: CONFERENCE SAYS NO PEACE WITHOUT MEDIA
FREEDOM

>

> Press freedom should be a prerequisite for aid to countries which
> sign a peace agreement to end the war in former Yugoslavia said
> participants at a conference organized by the International
> Federation of Journalists (IFJ) and the International Federation
> of Newspaper Publishers (FIEJ). Around 140 journalists, editors

> and publishers from Bosnia, Croatia and Serbia attended the
> two-day conference, titled "A Strategy for Independent Media in
> the Peace Process", in Ljubljana, Slovenia on 12-13 November. It
> was the fourth round table meeting organized by journalists and
> publishers to confront state control of the region's media and to
> campaign in support of independent voices in the press and
> broadcasting systems. In a declaration issued at the end of the
> conference, delegates welcomed an end to the war, said the IFJ,
> but they warned international negotiators at the peace talks last
> week in Ohio in the United States that "the international
> community must ensure that political and economic support for the
> region is conditional upon respect for all human rights including
> freedom of expression." The meeting also declared that "actions
> in support of independent and free media should be a core element
> of programmes for democracy, reconstruction and economic
> development."
>
> "The world was shocked at the way media have been used as weapons
> of war and hate," said Aidan White, General Secretary of the IFJ
> at the end of the meeting. "Now it is essential that free media
> are used to underpin democracy and help build new societies which
> will be able to confront the intolerance and extremism which have
> infected the region's political culture." For further
> information, contact the IFJ/FIEJ Co-ordinating Centre for
> Independent Media of the Balkan Region, Vosnjakova 8 61000
> Ljubljana, Slovenia,
> tel: [REDACTED],
> e-mail: [REDACTED];
> or contact Cailin MacKenzie at the IFJ, Rue Royale, 266, B-1210
> Brussels, Belgium, tel: [REDACTED], fax: [REDACTED], e-mail:
> [REDACTED].
>
> EASTERN EUROPE
>
> HUNGARY: MEDIA FREEDOM LAGGING DESPITE DEMOCRACY
>
> Media freedom has been lagging as democracy grows in Hungary,
> according to the September/October issue of the International
> Press Institute's magazine "IPI Report". In the four years since
> Parliament was freely elected, Rick Bruner of IPI writes,
> "relations between the government and the media grew deeply
> acrimonious." IPI says the situation briefly improved after a new

- > political coalition was elected in 1994, "but dark clouds have
- > returned." The government issued a decree in March 1995 ordering
- > the mass dismissal of 1,000 employees from state television,
- > although it is unclear whether it was a political or economic
- > decision. As of publication, IPI reports the dismissals were
- > suspended by the courts.
- >
- > IPI says Janos Betlen, the editor of the main evening television
- > news program, "Hirado", was fired without an official
- > explanation. There is widespread speculation that the editor
- > "lost his job in an act of political vengeance," likely due to
- > his dedication to independence. Meanwhile, the government has
- > been working on a draft of a new media law over the past year.
- > IPI says the draft that was submitted to parliament includes
- > "various safeguards against government intervention in
- > broadcasting." Betlen doubts the law will boost media freedom.
- > "We don't have too many journalists who consider freedom vital,"
- > he said. "These problems are deeply rooted in our social
- > structure. It's only going to get worse."
- >
- > ** ** **
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- > ACTION ALERTS ISSUED BY THE CLEARING HOUSE DURING THE PAST
- WEEK
- >
- > 13/11/95
- > NIGERIA: MISA calls for isolation of Nigerian regime following
- > execution of writer Ken Saro-Wiwa (MISA) - press release
- > NIGER: Draft bill could threaten independence of state media
- > (RSF) - alert
- > AWARD: FIEJ seeks nominees for 1996 Golden Pen of Freedom
- > (FIEJ) - press release
- > AZERBAIJAN: Convicted "Chesme" journalists pardoned by President
- > (CPJ) - update
- > NIGERIA: Further details on hanging of Ken Saro-Wiwa (WiPC) -
- > update
- >
- > 14/11/95
- > PERU: Hearing in case of detained journalist Jesus Alfonso
- > Castiglione Mendoza resumes (IPYS) - update
- > CAMEROON: ARTICLE 19 highlights Cameroon in statement to
- > Commonwealth Heads of Government meeting (A19) - press release

- > CAMBODIA: Offices of "Serei Phreap Thmei" ransacked; printer
- > refuses to print 6 Khmer-language papers (RSF) - alert
- > NIGERIA: Leading MOSOP figure not rearrested as reported by some
- > sources (WiPC) - update
- > GENERAL: PEN centres worldwide commemorate International PEN's
- > Day of the Imprisoned Writer on 15 November (WiPC) - press
- > release
- > NIGERIA: Human Rights Watch calls for international condemnation
- > of Nigeria after executions of Ken Saro-Wiwa & 8 other Ogoni
- > activists (HRW) - press release
- > NIGERIA: Appeal to multi-national oil companies on executions of
- > Ken Saro-Wiwa & 8 other Ogoni activists (HRW) - update
- >
- > 15/11/95
- > COLOMBIA: Customs regulation touches foreign newspapers (IAPA) -
- > alert
- > NIGERIA: Appeal to U.N. Security Council urging isolation of
- > Nigerian military over executions of Ken Saro-Wiwa & 8 other
- > Ogoni activists (HRW) - update
- >
- > 16/11/95
- > CAMEROON: Bill could threaten press freedom (RSF) - alert
- > NAMIBIA: Wreath laying in Namibia for Ken Saro-Wiwa & executed
- > Ogoni activists (MISA) - press release
- > FORMER YUGOSLAVIA: No durable peace without media freedom, say
- > journalists at Fourth IFJ/FIEJ Round Table Discussion on the
- > Situation of the Media in the Balkan Region (IFJ) - press release
- > HAITI: Attacks & threats against Radio Cap-Haitien journalists;
- > Radio Voix de l'Ave Maria offices ransacked (RSF) - alert
- >
- > 17/11/95
- > PERU: Hearing in case of detained journalist Jesus Alfonso
- > Castiglione Mendoza postponed (IPYS) - update
- > LITHUANIA: Newspaper "Lietuvos Rytas" bombed (RSF) - alert
- > NIGERIA: Human Rights Watch condemns Royal Dutch Shell's failure
- > to speak out against human rights abuses in Nigeria (HRW) - press
- > release
- >
- > ** ** **
- >
- > The IFEX "Communique" is published weekly in English, French and
- > Spanish by the IFEX Clearing House, Toronto. The facility is

> operated by the Canadian Committee to Protect Journalists in
> partnership with the member organizations of the International
> Freedom of Expression eXchange (IFEX). Material for the
> "Communique" may be submitted to the CCPJ, 490 Adelaide Street
> West, Suite 205, Toronto, Ontario, M5V 1T2, CANADA; E-mail:
> [REDACTED]; Tel: (1-416) [REDACTED]; or Fax: (1-416)
> [REDACTED]. Editor: Kristina Stockwood, with Andrew Stockwood this
> week. Subscriptions are available by e-mail and surface mail. The
> views expressed in the "Communique" are the responsibility of the
> sources to which they are attributed.
>
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Pierre Joris | "Poems are sketches for existence."
Dept. of English | --Paul Celan
SUNY Albany |
Albany NY 12222 | "Revisionist plots
tel&fax: [REDACTED] | are everywhere and our pronouns haven't yet
email: | drawn up plans for the first coup."
[REDACTED] | --J.H. Prynne

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259. **Pierre Joris**

epclive

Tue 21 Nov 1995

anything happen last night on epclive? I connected but either was unable to figure out how to open the channel, or turned out to be the only one there. (whenever I would give the "/who #epclive" command, only my own userid would get listed). I was using the UNIX irc, & I must say the on-line help is rather unhelpful.so, Ken, Los what's up?

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=====

Pierre Joris | "Poems are sketches for existence."
Dept. of English | --Paul Celan
SUNY Albany |
Albany NY 12222 | "Revisionist plots
tel&fax: [REDACTED] | are everywhere and our pronouns haven't yet

email: | drawn up plans for the first coup."

██████ --J.H. Prynne

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260. **Ron Silliman**

Re: 1995 MLA

Tue 21 Nov 1995

David Kellog,

I won't be attending the MLA this year and would love to get a copy of your piece.

This also applies to yours Marjorie. Perhaps (in fact, one thought leading to the next), we can get EPC to post all MLA talks given by members of the list. It would be a most useful archive.

Ron Silliman

██████

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261. **Jeff Hansen**

Saro-wiwa

Tue 21 Nov 1995

Here are the three letters that I will send. If you don't like what I say, then I urge you to write your own. Everyone who has told me to add their name to the letters will appear on them. If you have not yet told me that you want to be added, e-mail me. I will send them tomorrow, Wednesday.

What other issues should we get involved in? Next time, let's get started before they kill someone.

Writers Coalition for Free Speech and the Self-Determinacy of Native Peoples
c/o Jefferson Hansen
2510 Highway 100 South #333
St. Louis Park, MN 55416

General Sani Abacha
c/o Embassy of the Federal Republic of Nigeria
Chancery 1333
16th Street NW
Washington, D.C. 20036

Dear General Abacha:

This is to inform you of our outrage concerning the recent hanging of writer and activist Ken Saro-Wiwa. We believe in the free expression of ideas and that native peoples should have economic and political control over their traditional territories, ideals that Mr. Saro-Wiwa died defending.

We ask you to take the following steps in the name of justice and true democracy:

- > Step down as leader of Nigeria so that the legitimate, democratically elected officials may resume office.

- > Respect the sovereignty of native peoples within your borders by giving them significant and legally sanctioned say in the decisions that affect them.

- > Support the fine literary tradition of Nigeria by supporting the free expression of ideas.

We trust that your excellency will soon respond to our requests.

Sincerely,

Writers Coalition for Free Speech and the Self-Determinacy of Native Peoples

Writers Coalition for Free Speech and the Self-Determinacy of Native Peoples

c/o Jefferson Hansen

2510 Highway 100 South #333

St. Louis Park, MN 55416

President William Clinton

The White House

Pennsylvania Avenue

Washington, D.C.

Dear President Clinton:

This is to inform you of our outrage concerning the recent hanging of writer and activist Ken Saro-Wiwa in Nigeria. We believe in the free expression of ideas and that native peoples should have economic and political control over their traditional territories, ideals that Mr. Saro-Wiwa died defending.

We ask you to take the following steps in the name of justice and true democracy:

- > Support an international economic boycott of Nigeria.

- > Insist on democratic elections in Nigeria that respect the needs of native peoples.

- > Craft and introduce legislation that will regulate U.S. companies' use of native peoples' lands.

We realize that Shell Oil, which is implicated on some level in Saro-Wiwa's execution, is not a U.S.-owned company. However, we feel that the U.S. should

take the lead among developing nations in respecting the rights of the "least developed" human societies.

Respectfully yours,

Writers Coalition for Free Speech and the Self-Determinacy of Native Peoples

Writers Coalition for Free Speech and the Self-Determinacy of Native Peoples

c/o Jefferson Hansen

2510 Highway 100 South #333

St. Louis Park, MN 55416

P.J. Carroll, President

Shell Oil Company

Houston, Texas

This is to inform you of our outrage concerning the recent hanging of writer and activist Ken Saro-Wiwa. We believe in the free expression of ideas and that native peoples should have economic and political control over their traditional territories, ideals that Mr. Saro-Wiwa died defending.

While we realize that Shell Oil is not a U.S.-owned company, we do feel that the U.S. arm of Shell can do much towards bringing the executioners of Saro-Wiwa to justice. We ask that you support the following:

- >Support an international economic boycott of Nigeria.
- >Work to restore the democratically elected government.
- >Respect the sovereignty of native peoples when the land you are using has been traditionally theirs.
- >Work to bring the killers of Saro-Wiwa to justice.

Until we see marked improvement in your company's treatment of native peoples and the developing countries you often do business within, we will boycott your products.

Sincerely,

Writers Coalition for Free Speech and the Self-Determinacy of Native Peoples

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262. **Jeff Hansen**

Saro-Wiwa

Tue 21 Nov 1995

Daniel Bouchard posted addresses that are more relevant than the ones I affixed to the letters I just sent to the list. I will use his addresses. (Thanks, Daniel.) We should definitely let these NYC PR firms know that we know of their B.S. Do they have any shame?

Jeff

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263. **Charles Alexander**
Re: David Kellog's MLA posting

Tue 21 Nov 1995

On another note: I want to know how people learn about (are invited to) things like the Stein reading marathon at Berkeley. I was right nearby at Mills for the Cage conference and, had I known, would have loved to go. Next time, please invite some of the rest of us Steinians.

Marjorie

Let me second Marjorie's note. And if notice comes soon enough (which may be a year in advance in some cases) we might even apply for travel grants to come to such doings.

Was Lisa Bowden there, whose Kore Press in Tucson is working on a hand printed artist's book edition of Tender Buttons? Lisa was my assistant at Chax Press in Tucson during the best years there, and she's still up to great things.

charles

Charles Alexander
Chax Press
P.O. Box 19178
Minneapolis, MN 55419-0178
[REDACTED] (phone & fax)
[REDACTED]

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264. **Maria Damon**
Re: 1995 MLA "Poetry and Cultural Criticism"

Tue 21 Nov 1995

speaking of mla scheduling snafus, they seem to ahve put all the poetry stuff at the same time, in the ungodly a.m., so we cant' come to each other's sessions! talk about divide and conquer. we don't get no respect...or so the grumblings went last year when we were all stuffed into a tiny and freezing room... anyway, hope to meet some of you --maybe we should decide on a place to meet and hang out, like, noon on the 28th or something, in the something bar in the hotel, so we can all meet each other? can someone who knows what's going on make a more concrete suggestion, maybe several, so we can see each other in the flesh (O fear and trembling)--maria d

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265. **Judy Roitman**

Re: Metroplexities

Tue 21 Nov 1995

just a word about metroplexities in massachusetts: just spent the wkend in northampton and visited used bookstores, and was disappointed/relieved to find not one single interesting "experimental" book of poems on the shelves

And in the Kansas City Barnes and Noble (shudder), in the very stylish Country Club Plaza across the street (yes, street -- this is no shopping mall) from Saks, I bought books by Zukofsky, Stein, and Susan Howe.

Go figure.

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266. **Charles Bernstein**

Re: Orono Conference

Tue 21 Nov 1995

I was hoping to get Burt Hatlen to send an announcement direct but anyway, here is part of the Call for Papers from the new Sagetrieb:

NPF Conference on American Poetry in the 1950s

University of Maine, Orono June 19 to 23, 1996

paper proposals are invited on any poets active during the 1950s, including first- and second-generation modernists and especially on the emerging poets of the 1950s generation. [Long list of names follows.]

DEADLINE: January 15, 1996 for app. 250 word proposals:

Burton Hatlen

Room 304

5752 Neville Hall

University of Maine

Orono, ME 04469-5752

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267. **Herb Levy**

Subtext Reading Series Website

Tue 21 Nov 1995

Hi -

The website for Subtext, the Seattle reading series, is finally up.

Here's the URL:

<http://speakeasy.org/subtext/>

It's very much under construsion, as they say in Vancouver, but it contains the current reading schedule, texts by many of the writers who've read in the series (with more to come), links to literary sites &, I'm sure, a few typos that weren't caught in proof reading.

Hope you find it useful.

We'd appreciate it if those of you with web sites added a link to it. & if anyone has suggestions for other sites to link to it, let me know.

Bests

Herb Levy



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268. **Herb Levy**
Steiniana

Tue 21 Nov 1995

Hi Steve -

Sorry I responded to your first message before I saw your second. I'm only looking at poetics a couple of times a week til I finish a humungous free lance job that keeps me online far too long on its own.

But I'm glad that you (& Dodie) felt the need to report on the reading. It sounds like it was pretty good. In the context of all of those, uh, value-added performances, though, it's still hard to imagine a straight reading of a big chunk of The Making of Americans getting over, no matter where it was in the program.

But then, I'm just a stick in the mud, anyway. I mean, I didn't even watch the Beatles reunion on TV.

Herb Levy



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269. **ULMER SPRING**
Re: Metroplexities

Tue 21 Nov 1995

Barnes and Noble in Vermont has Susan Howe too.

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270. **Jordan Davis**

Re: Metroplexities

Tue 21 Nov 1995

The poetry buyer at Barnes & Noble does a pretty good job (tho small press folks may differ). Hidden Meaning: He's just taken on about fifteen Teachers & Writers titles to be available shortly in the "writing & publishing" (shiver) section. He's reading Vollman and Bobrowski (sp?--the ND poet) these days..

Jordan

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271. **David W. Clippinger**

Re: POETICS Digest - 19 Nov 1995 to 20 Nov 1995

Tue 21 Nov 1995

I am trying to get the address of Leave Books as well as the addresses of the following journals: impercipient, cathay, windmill, torque, first intensity, and volt. I would appreciate whatever help you may provide.

Thanks,
David

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272. **Steve Carll**

Re: David Kellog's MLA posting

Tue 21 Nov 1995

To those who inquired about the Stein reading marathon, it was at New College of California in S.F. and was listed in the S.F. Bay Guardian and S.F. Weekly events calendars. To get on the Poetics Program mailing list, just send a note to:

Poetics Program
New College of California
766 Valencia St.
S.F., CA 94110
attn: Michael Price

and ask him to put you on. And Charles, if she was there, I didn't meet her; maybe someone else did.

Steve

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273. **Steve Carll**

Re: Steinway

Tue 21 Nov 1995

At 09:37 PM 11/20/95 -0800, you wrote:

>Steve & Dodie: Maybe it's because I wasn't there, but now I can't

>remember -- what did Stein write?

Everybody's autobiography.

Steve

[↑ Contents](#)

274. **Charles Bernstein**

Re: Steiniana

Tue 21 Nov 1995

Spake Herb Levy earlier today:

For many years, there has been a marathon reading of *The Making of Americans* every New Year's, days long; in recent years it has alternated with a reading of *Finnegans Wake*. It takes place at the Paula Cooper Gallery in SoHo (New York). The first few years, in the middle or late 70s, I read at 3 or 4am to a quite small, even tiny, audience. These were hardly "straight" readings but I think fairly engaging. The work, it seemed to me then and there, held up well to something like chant or anyway highly intoned reading (a kind of davening perhaps). I have had other occasions to read the from the book, even when fully awake, and found many rhythmic and performative possibilities there. I have always felt that Stein's work would be better served by a more all over reading from her works, but the fact that *The Making of Americans* has held up to repeated and complete readings for so many years (though of course "stands up" to whom?) is interesting.

--Charles Bernstein

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275. **Wystan Curnow**

Re: Metroplexities

Tue 21 Nov 1995

Your mention of Barnes & Noble pricked a memory. Earlier this year I visited the Astor Place branch for the first time. There used to be a good bookstore across the road which I suppose the B & N put out of business. What I wanted to mention was the way they categorized their stock. There is a section called POETRY and then one called FICTION AND LITERATURE. How significant is

this division? Do all B & N stories do it, do other stores do it? I believe the division is at work in English departments, among the interests, knowledge and attitudes of teachers, and in curricula. I know I tend to think the other way: POETRY AND LITERATURE and FICTION. What does it betoken? Any thots?

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276. **Charles Bernstein**
Jnl of Artists's Books (JAB)

Tue 21 Nov 1995

Highly recommended:

JAB, Journal of Artists' Books, is published by Brad Freeman in an attempt to encourage focused critical discussion of artists' books. Recent articles have included work by Janet Zweig, Clifton Meador, Anne Moeglin-Delcroix, Johanna Drucker, Phil Zimmermann, and others. Unsolicited articles are welcome, but writers are strongly encouraged to read an issue of the journal before sending material. Subscriptions are \$18 for 1996 (two issues, includes postage and handling); a few issues of JAB #4 are still available at \$7 for the issue and postage. Write to Brad Freeman at 324 Yale Avenue, New Haven, CT, 06515.

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277. **Pierre Joris**
NIGERIA CASEFILE #1 (A KEN SARO WIWA-OGONI HANDBOOK)
(fwd)

Tue 21 Nov 1995

Jeff, others -- here's more Saro Wiwa stuff,

Pierre

Forwarded message:

> From daemon Mon Nov 20 13:49:17 1995
> Resent-Message-Id: <[REDACTED]>
> Resent-From: Tejumola Olaniyan <[REDACTED]>
> Resent-Date: Mon, 20 Nov 95 13:28:13 EST
> Resent-To: [REDACTED]
> From: Tejumola Olaniyan <[REDACTED]>
> Date: Mon, 20 Nov 95 13:16:20 EST
> To: [REDACTED]
> Subject: NIGERIA CASEFILE #1 (A KEN SARO WIWA-OGONI HANDBOOK)
>
>
> NIGERIAN CASEFILE: THE KEN SARO WIWA-OGONI HANDBOOK

- >
- > compiled by the Coalition Against Dictatorship (CAD)
- >
- >
- > CONTENTS:
- >
- > (SECTION 1)
- >
- > The Ken Saro Wiwa Campaign
- > Some History
- > The Issue
- > Saro Wiwa's Trial and Execution
- > Saro Wiwa's Closing Statement at the Trial
- > The Difference You Can Make
- > Nigerian Oil and the West: The Moral Challenge
- > The Challenge of Nigeria: A Call to World Conscience
- > Ken Saro Wiwa, preface to *Genocide in Nigeria: the Ogoni Tragedy*
- >
- >
- > (SECTION 2, in a separate mail file)
- >
- > Ken Saro Wiwa, "The World Bank and Us"
- > Chuks Iloegbunam, "The Death of a Writer"
- > (an obituary by a Nigerian journalist)
- > F. W. J. Mnthali, "Farewell, Ken Saro-Wiwa!"
- > (a poetic memorial by the renowned Malawian poet)
- > The Writings of Ken Saro Wiwa: A Bibliography
- > Appendix 1: Action against the Nigerian junta and its backers:
- > Harvard students take the lead
- > Appendix 2: Wole Soyinka, "Why the General Killed"
- >
- >
- > THE KEN SARO WIWA CAMPAIGN
- >
- > Ken Saro Wiwa was a prominent Nigerian author, television
- > producer, environmental activist and leader of the Movement for the
- > Survival of Ogoni People (MOSOP). The Ogoni are a minority ethnic
- > group of about 500,000 people in Nigeria's oil-rich Southeastern
- > Rivers State. Once an agricultural region with fertile soils, the
- > Ogoni land and water have been devastated by pollution by multi-
- > national oil companies with assistance from Nigeria's military

> dictatorship. MOSOP was set up to defend the environmental and
> human rights of the Ogoni community. Because the Nigerian
> government considers mineral resources within its territory to be
> automatically federally owned, the idea of special rights and
> reparations for local communities are alien to it. Oil provides
> about 80 percent of Nigeria's export revenue. Oil companies with
> significant presence in Nigeria are the Anglo/Dutch Shell Group,
> Chevron Corp., Mobil Corp., France's Elf Aquitaine SA and Italy's
> Agip SpA. Ken Saro Wiwa and eight others were recently executed
> after a sham trial on trumped up charges of murder.

>

> SOME HISTORY

>

> The Ogoni people of Nigeria have their lands in Rivers State,
> a part of Nigeria near the delta of the river Niger. This has
> historically been a fertile area, and consequently is highly
> populated. It is also the first place in Nigeria from where the
> Anglo/Dutch transnational Shell began extracting oil in 1958. At
> that time, Nigeria was still a British colony. It is estimated
> that \$30 billion worth of oil has been extracted from Ogoni lands
> since then.

> Ogoniland has been important to Nigeria for two reasons:
> Firstly, it has been termed the "breadbasket" of Rivers State, a
> major food producing area, and secondly, since 1958 it has been the
> source of more than 900 million barrels of crude oil, vital to the
> Nigerian economy.

>

> THE ISSUE

>

> Although international attention is now being focussed on
> democracy in Nigeria, and pressure is being placed on the Nigerian
> dictatorship of General Sani Abacha to democratize the country,
> little is said of the role of the Western transnational
> corporations which prop up the Abacha's dictatorship.

> Shell has been exploiting oil in Nigeria without consulting or
> compensating the Ogoni people in any way. The Ogoni people are a
> minority, and thus have little political power, since the Nigerian
> constitution does not protect minority interests. They have no
> mineral rights to their land, since all mineral rights are owned by
> the state. They are expected to be passive victims when oil spills,
> blowouts, and invasive pipe laying cause environmental damage.
> Hiding behind the dictatorial military, Shell has always turned a

> blind eye to the damages caused by its operations. For Shell's
> operations, says a news report, "the Ogoni people have received
> virtually nothing except a ravaged environment. Once fertile
> farmland has been laid waste by constant oil spills and acid rain.
> Puddles of ooze the size of football fields dot the landscape, and
> fish and wildlife have vanished." Shell would be slapped with
> hefty fines if it were to pollute any European or American country
> one-tenth as much as it did in Nigeria. The Exxon Oil spill in
> Alaska in 1989 and the reparations afterward is still fresh in our
> memory.

> In 1990, the Ogoni started to mobilize against the human and
> environmental injustice perpetrated upon them. They formed MOSOP,
> the Movement for Survival of Ogoni People, a peaceful resistance
> movement which attempted to highlight their plight, under the
> leadership of Ken Saro-Wiwa. Shell suspended its activities in
> Ogoniland in 1993, partly as a result of the Ogoni campaign. But it
> still pumps more than 250,000 barrels of oil a day in Nigeria,
> nearly 12 percent of Shell's international oil output.

> The government's response to MOSOP's protests has been brutal.
> Ogoniland is now sealed off, and under martial law. Ken Saro Wiwa
> has been executed, along with 8 other Ogoni. Hundreds of Ogoni
> have been murdered. Shell's role in this is significant - the most
> extreme brutalities against the Ogoni happened after Shell
> expressed concern about perceived local threats to its smooth
> functioning, to the Nigerian government. A memo signed by Major
> Okuntimo of the Rivers State Internal Security Task Force, dated
> May 12th 1994, states: "Shell operations still impossible unless
> ruthless military operations are undertaken for smooth economic
> activities to commence." The document goes on to recommend the
> "wasting" of Ogoni leaders. Ken Saro Wiwa was arrested on May the
> 22nd, 10 days later.

> The blatant disregard for human rights that Shell Nigeria has
> displayed in its dealings with the Ogoni show it to be two-sided in
> its international relations. The abuses that it perpetrates in
> Nigeria (directly in the form of spills and blowouts, and
> indirectly by the Nigerian government which it leans on to protect
> its interests) would be unacceptable in the countries where Shell
> sells most of its oil. Whilst Shell International claims that its
> actions and those of Shell Nigeria are not linked, this is
> a transparent ploy to deny culpability. Shell profits are built
> upon Ogoni suffering. The Shell which fully supports democracy at
> "home" is the same Shell that actively promotes tyranny and

> barbarism "abroad."

>

> SARO WIWA'S TRIAL AND EXECUTION

>

> Ken Saro Wiwa and 15 other Ogonis were arrested in May 1994
> after the deaths of four local pro-government Ogoni chiefs during
> a melee at a political rally. He was held in leg irons, and denied
> access to his family, doctors and legal counsel for eight months
> before being charged with murder. The charge was so baseless and
> devoid of concrete evidence that Amnesty International declared
> Saro Wiwa a Prisoner of Conscience. Even the government itself did
> not trust its own case enough to produce the predetermined result
> it wants--the elimination of vocal Ogoni leaders like Saro Wiwa--in
> the normal law courts that it created instead a military-dominated
> Special Tribunal to hear the case, though this was a civil offense.
> Such tribunals are answerable ONLY to the military government and
> there is NO right of appeal. It should be noted that the Nigerian
> military generally considers what goes on in civil courts to be
> "too much English" and a "waste of time." The defense team was
> frustrated at every step of the way by the Special Tribunal. The
> tribunal rejected defense evidence of the bribing of two key
> prosecution witnesses testifying against Saro Wiwa. The charade
> was so obvious that the defense resigned from the proceedings,
> feeling, as everyone felt, that the tribunal was predetermined to
> find the defendants guilty. Saro Wiwa and eight others--Dr.
> Barinem Kiobel, Saturday Dobee, Paul Levura, Nordu Eawo, Felix
> Nuate, Daniel Gbokoo, John Kpuinen and Baribor Bera--were found
> guilty and sentenced to death on October 31, 1995. Despite
> international appeals for clemency, they were hanged on November
> 10, 1995. Saro Wiwa won the 1995 Goldman Environmental Prize for
> Africa, awarded by a San Francisco-based foundation.

>

> SARO-WIWA'S CLOSING STATEMENT TO THE NIGERIAN MILITARY
> APPOINTED SPECIAL TRIBUNAL
> Port Harcourt, Rivers State, Nigeria

>

> My lord,

>

> We all stand before history. I am a man of peace, of ideas.
> Appalled by the denigrating poverty of my people who live on a
> richly endowed land, distressed by their political marginalization
> and economic strangulation, angered by the devastation of their

> land, their ultimate heritage, anxious to preserve their right to
> life and to a decent living, and determined to usher to this
> country as a whole a fair and just democratic system which
> protects everyone and every ethnic group and gives us all a valid
> claim to human civilization, I have devoted my intellectual and
> material resources, my very life, to a cause in which I have total
> belief and from which I cannot be blackmailed or intimidated. I
> have no doubt at all about the ultimate success of my cause, no
> matter the trials and tribulations which I and those who believe
> with me may encounter on our journey. Nor imprisonment nor death
> can stop our ultimate victory.
> I repeat that we all stand before history. I and my colleagues
> are not the only ones on trial.
> Shell is here on trial and it is as well that it is
> represented by counsel said to be holding a watching brief. The
> Company has, indeed, ducked this particular trial, but its day will
> surely come and the lessons learnt here may prove useful to it for
> there is no doubt in my mind that the ecological war that the
> Company has waged in the Delta will be called to question sooner
> than later and the crimes of that war be duly punished. The crime
> of the Company's dirty wars against the Ogoni people will also be
> punished.
> On trial also is the Nigerian nation, its present rulers and
> those who assist them. Any nation which can do to the weak and
> disadvantaged what the Nigerian nation has done to the Ogoni, loses
> a claim to independence and to freedom from outside influence. I am
> not one of those who shy away from protesting injustice and
> oppression, arguing that they are expected in a military regime.
> The military do not act alone. They are supported by a gaggle of
> politicians, lawyers, judges, academics and businessmen, all of
> them hiding under the claim that they are only doing their duty,
> men and women too afraid to wash their pants of urine. We all stand
> on trial, my lord, for by our actions we have denigrated our
> Country and jeopardized the future of our children. As we subscribe
> to the sub-normal and accept double standards, as we lie and cheat
> openly, as we protect injustice and oppression, we empty our
> classrooms, denigrate our hospitals, fill our stomachs with hunger
> and elect to make ourselves the slaves of those who ascribe to
> higher standards, pursue the truth, and honor justice, freedom, and
> hard work. I predict that the scene here will be played and
> replayed by generations yet unborn. Some have already cast
> themselves in the role of villains, some are tragic victims, some

> still have a chance to redeem themselves. The choice is for each
> individual.

> I predict that the denouement of the riddle of the Niger delta
> will soon come. The agenda is being set at this trial. Whether the
> peaceful ways I have favored will prevail depends on what the
> oppressor decides, what signals it sends out to the waiting public.
> In my innocence of the false charges I face Here, in my utter
> conviction, I call upon the Ogoni people, the peoples of the Niger
> delta, and the oppressed ethnic minorities of Nigeria to stand up
> now and fight fearlessly and peacefully for their rights. History
> is on their side. God is on their side. For the Holy Quran
> says in Sura 42, verse 41: "All those that fight when oppressed
> incur no guilt, but Allah shall punish the oppressor." Come the
> day.

>

> THE DIFFERENCE YOU CAN MAKE

>

> Shell must know that it can't make profit out of the blood of
> the Ken Saro Wiwa and the Ogoni. Abacha must know that tyranny is
> universally unacceptable. The only way that this will happen is
> broad, strong action by all the people of the world. We call on
> all people who love freedom and justice to:

>

> * Lobby your leaders to intervene on the behalf of MOSOP and
> the Nigerian people. Strong international action is necessary, not
> just talk. Demand for full sanctions. Demand for a freeze on the
> personal assets abroad of Nigerian military and government
> officials. Here are useful addresses:

>

> ---President Bill Clinton, The White House, 1600 Pennsylvania
> Ave., NW, Washington, DC 20500.

> Tel.: [REDACTED], Fax: [REDACTED]

> Email: [REDACTED]

>

>

>

> ---Your Senators, US Senate, Washington, DC 20510

>

> * Boycott all Shell products and inform Shell of your boycott.
> Remember, the joint venture operated by Shell in Nigeria is
> responsible for 70% of the Nigerian state's revenue - Shell is
> funding murder in Nigeria. Shell is the Nigerian military's enter

> of gravity. Call Shell Directly and ask them to scale back
> operations in Nigeria; also ask them to explain their decision to
> continue the \$3 billion LNG project.
> Don't be deceived by Shell propaganda that sanctions would
> hurt ordinary Nigerians; tell Shell you heard that line before
> during sanctions against South Africa and that you are no fool.
> Nigerians say they want sanctions and are ready to bear it until
> the dawn of freedom. Tell Shell to keep its kindness, and ask it
> since when has it lost any sleep over the welfare of ordinary
> Nigerians. Shell recently said in a paid advertisement in British
> newspapers (11/19/95): "It's easy enough to sit in our comfortable
> homes in the West, calling for sanctions and boycotts against a
> developing country. But you have to be sure that knee-jerk
> reactions won't do more harm than good." Tell Shell it should be
> ashamed of itself for this absolute vulgarity and thinly disguised
> intimidation; tell Shell you weren't born yesterday to be so
> cheaply muscled into the corner of guilt for demanding sanctions.
> Tell Shell the title of its ad, "Clear Thinking in Troubled Times,"
> is really "Clear Thinking to Profit Enormously from Tragic Times."
> And finally, tell Shell to answer this question posed by Wole
> Soyinka, the Nigerian Nobel Laureate: "Has the revenue of Nigeria
> ever reached the people?" Soyinka continues, "There's no reason
> why a total, comprehensive trade embargo shouldn't be enforced now.
> Even (former South African President F.W.) De Klerk says sanctions
> were the greatest force that brought apartheid down."
> Here are useful Shell addresses:
>
> ---Shell USA: [REDACTED].
> ---P. J. Carroll, President, Shell Oil Company, Houston, Texas
> Fax: [REDACTED]
> ---Steven Ward, Vice President for Government Relations, Washington
> DC. Fax: [REDACTED]
> ---[http://www.shellus.com/cgi-](http://www.shellus.com/cgi-bin/page_feedback.cgi/OilProducts/abt-shl/wwwadmin:Shell_Web_Feedback)
> [bin/page_feedback.cgi/OilProducts/abt-](http://www.shellus.com/cgi-bin/page_feedback.cgi/OilProducts/abt-shl/wwwadmin:Shell_Web_Feedback)
> [shl/wwwadmin:Shell_Web_Feedback](http://www.shellus.com/cgi-bin/page_feedback.cgi/OilProducts/abt-shl/wwwadmin:Shell_Web_Feedback)
> ---Christopher Fay, Shell UK Ltd, Shell Mex House, The Strand,
> London W2CR ODX U.K.
> Phone: 44-0 [REDACTED]; Fax: 44-0 [REDACTED]
> ---C.A.J. Herkstroter, Chairman, Royal Dutch Shell, Carel van
> Builantlandtlaan 30, 2596 HR The Hague, The Netherlands.
> Fax (public affairs office in London): 44-0 [REDACTED]
>

> Model Fax to Shell Oil Company (from AIUSA)

>

> Please either sign the model letter yourself or print it out to use
> as a petition signed by as many people as you can fit on the page
> and fax it.

>

>

> P. J. Carroll
> President, Shell Oil Company
> Houston Texas

> [REDACTED]

>

> Steven Ward
> Vice President for Government Relations
> Washington DC

> [REDACTED]

>

> I'm writing to express my shock, dismay and outrage at the
> execution in Nigeria of Ken Saro Wiwa, Dr. Barinem Kiobel and
> eight others on Nov. 10, 1995. This tragic killing of these
> peaceful environmental activists should never have happened. I
> expected Shell Oil to do all it could to stop the violations and
> save lives. I understand that the only public action Shell took
> to prevent this travesty was at the 11th hour in a letter
> requesting clemency. Shell Oil must now strongly and publicly
> condemn the Nigerian government for this brutal action.

> Despite Shell's contention that it had nothing to do with
> human rights violations in Ogoniland, the fact remains that Ken
> Saro Wiwa and his MOSOP organization were protesting environmental
> degradation due to Shell operations. In addition, the commander
> of the military unit that committed gross human rights violations
> in Ogoniland during May and August of 1994 boasted at a press
> conference that these actions were taken to protect Shell
> installations.

> Shell Oil has publicly expressed concern about the reaction in
> Nigeria to these executions. Shell can contribute to peaceful
> dialogue in Nigeria through visible, concrete actions to prevent
> future arrests, unfair trials, or executions of peaceful
> activists. In the effort to crush the Ogoni movement, homes were
> destroyed by the military in 30 villages. One concrete step Shell
> could take is to contribute to relief for those who were
> displaced and to reconstruction of destroyed homes.

> Shell should join world leaders, business leaders and
> concerned citizens around the world in an effort to gain the
> release of all prisoners of conscience in Nigeria and demand a
> return to rule of law and respect for international human rights in
> Nigeria.

> Sincerely,

>

>

>

> NIGERIAN OIL AND THE WEST: THE MORAL CHALLENGE

>

> Nigeria's crude oil is probably the purest in the world.
> Generally called "sweet crude" as opposed to "sour crude" from
> Saudi Arabia and other regions, Nigeria Light has only 0.2% sulfur.
> >From fractional distillation, you could get about 33% gasoline, 20%
> kerosene, 16% light gas oil, 30% heavy gas oils, leaving ONLY 1%
> bitumen residue. Compare these figures with, say, Boscan
> Venezuelan crude which has 6.4% sulfur, only 3% gasoline, 6%
> kerosene, 7% light gas oil, 26% heavy gas oils, and a whopping 58%
> bitumen residue. This then is why Nigeria's crude is the dream oil
> of the advanced industrial countries of Europe and America: its
> lightness makes for cheaper distillation. These countries already
> have extensive road networks, so they would rather not buy, if they
> could, crude oil with high bitumen residue.

> The quickest solution to the Nigerian crises, both the
> minority rights question and the larger issue of democratization,
> is an oil embargo. Nelson Mandela himself (an acknowledged moral
> voice on the continent), formerly lukewarm on the matter of oil
> sanctions, has finally embraced it as the solution to averting a
> Rwandan-scale tragedy in Nigeria. Europe and America are the main
> buyers of Nigeria's oil. Nigeria exports about 1.6 million barrels
> per day; about 44 percent of it goes to the United States and
> another five percent to Canada. Europe buys the rest. Although the
> international outrage against the Nigeria military dictatorship is
> currently so high that many Western leaders are already hinting at
> the possibility of oil sanctions, we must not be smug on the matter
> and expect that the leaders will actually impose sanctions without
> our relentless push. An oil embargo on Nigeria will certainly
> affect prices in the West, and politicians are not known to
> actively embrace actions that would put them on the spot with their
> vocal electorates. Not especially at a time when elections are
> near as they are in the U.S.A. at this moment. Here then is the

> moral challenge for us citizens and residents of Europe and
> America. We ought to let our leaders know that we support full oil
> sanctions against Nigeria as a way to quickly restore that country
> to democracy and the path of glory that its great potentials
> eminently qualify it for; that we are ready to pay a few cents more
> at the gas pumps than continue to fund the military junta's
> subversion of the rule of law, repression of the press,
> proscription of oppositional movements, massive embezzlement of
> public funds and the judicial murder, assassinations,
> indiscriminate arrests and interminable detention without trial, of
> democracy- and peace-loving Nigerians. We should let our leaders
> know that we will not fill our tanks with Ogoni blood.

>

>

> THE CHALLENGE OF NIGERIA: A CALL TO WORLD CONSCIENCE

>

> by the International Coalition Against Oppression in Nigeria and
> the Forum for Creativity Towards the 21st Century. Tokyo Japan.
> November 15, 1995.

>

> The latest outrage by the Nigerian military regime, in
> executing the writer and environmentalist, Ken Saro-Wiwa after a
> sham trial by hand-picked special tribunal, an execution that was
> hastily carried out in defiance of pleas by the international
> community, constitutes a fatal negation of civilized conduct and a
> denial of the fundamental human rights of accused persons. The
> Nigerian regime has flouted natural justice, the articles of the
> fundamental human rights of the United Nations, the Human Rights
> charter of the Organization of African Unity, and the Harare
> Commonwealth Declaration, to all of which the Nigerian government
> is a signatory.

> This act of judicial murder is of course only the most
> notorious and horrifying of a long catalogue of other violations-
> arbitrary imprisonments, torture, extra-judicial killings, denial
> of freedom of expression, not to mention the callous programme of
> "ethnic cleansing" of the Ogoni people, all documented in great
> detail by various Human Rights organizations in and outside of
> Nigeria. We wish to call attention especially to the latest of
> these, titled: NIGERIA- STOLEN BY GENERALS, the report by the
> Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative, compiled after a
> fact-finding mission to Nigeria this year.

> It is clear that the present regime of Sani Abacha is resolved

- > to stop at no act of terror and repression in order to perpetuate
- > itself in power and thwart the rightful democratic aspirations of
- > the Nigerian peoples, a choice that was clearly expressed in the
- > elections of June 12, 1993. Those elections were acknowledged free
- > and fair both by internal assessment and from international
- > monitoring bodies, including the Commonwealth of Nations. The
- > unjustifiable annulment of those elections constitute the root of
- > Nigeria's current crisis. Not surprisingly, General Sani Abacha
- > stubbornly keeps the winner of that election in prison, and under
- > inhuman conditions, despite various decisions of the Nigerian
- > courts that Bashorun Moshood M.K.O. Abiola, the President-Elect in
- > question, should be set free.
- > We therefore call upon the international community to assist
- > the Nigerian people in the attainment of their democratic
- > aspirations and in restoring their society to the rule of law by
- > isolating the Nigerian dictatorship totally from the international
- > community, and subjecting that regime to the same set of universal
- > sanctions that were applied to bring down the racial minority
- > regime of apartheid South Africa. We call for the immediate
- > release of all detained persons, including the former Head of
- > State, General Olusegun Obasanjo and others who were tried in
- > secret on trumped-up charges and sentenced to brutal terms of
- > imprisonment.
- > Stability in that African sub-region can only be guaranteed by
- > the quick restoration of democracy to this problematic, but
- > crucially placed regional member, Nigeria. We call for the break
- > of diplomatic, economic, sporting and cultural links with the
- > illegal military regime of Nigeria. We call for a suspension of
- > all ongoing economic projects in Nigeria, termination of all
- > assistance programmes, and a ban on the sale of arms, military
- > spare parts, and police equipment to Nigeria. WE CALL ESPECIALLY
- > FOR AN EMBARGO ON NIGERIAN OIL WITH THE AIM OF STARVING THE
- > REGIME OF FUNDS AND COMPELLING IT TO CEDE POWER TO THE DULY
- > ELECTED DEMOCRATIC PRESIDENT. We call for an urgent debate in the
- Security
- > Council on the deteriorating state of human existence in Nigeria
- > and a concrete plan of action that will be binding on its member
- > states.
- >
- > Approved by full Plenary assembly of over 1,700 world dignitaries.
- >
- > Signatories include the following Nobel laureates:

- > Michael Gorbachev, Kenzaburo Oe, Leo Esaki, Kenichi Fukui, Wole
- > Soyinka, Desmond Tutu.
- >
- > KEN SARO WIWA, PREFACE TO *GENOCIDE IN NIGERIA: THE OGONI
- > TRAGEDY* (Port Harcourt: Saros, 1992; 103 pp.)
- >
- > *Author's Note*
- >
- > Writing this book has been one of the most painful experi-
- > ences of my life. Ordinarily, writing a book is torture, a chore.
- > But when, on ever page, following upon every word, every letter,
- > a tragedy leaps up before the eyes of a write, he or she cannot
- > derive that pleasure, that fulfillment in which the creative
- > process often terminates.
- > What has probably worsened the matter is that I have lived
- > through most of the period covered by this sordid story. I knew,
- > as a child, that period from 1947 when the Ogoni saw, for a few
- > brief years, the possibility of extricating themselves from the
- > cruel fate which seems to have been ordained for them. I watched
- > as they went into decline. I was privileged to play a role in the
- > civil war which decimated them further and to assist in their
- > rehabilitation at the end of that war.
- > Since then I have watched helplessly as they have been
- > gradually ground to dust by the combined effort of the multi-
- > national oil company, Shell Petroleum Development Company, the
- > murderous ethnic majority in Nigeria and the country's military
- > dictatorships. Not the pleas, not the writing over the years have
- > convinced the Nigerian elite that something special ought to be
- > done to relieve the distress of the Ogoni.
- > I have known and argued earnestly since I was a lad of
- > seventeen that the only way the Ogoni can survive is for them to
- > exercise their political and economic rights. But because the
- > Nigerian elite appear, on this particular matter, to have hearts
- > of stone and the brains of millipedes; because Shell is a multi-
- > national company with the ability to crush whomever it wishes;
- > because the petroleum resources of the Ogoni serve everyone's
- > greed, all the doors seemed closed.
- > Three recent events have encouraged me to now place the
- > issue before the world: the end of the cold War, the increasing
- > attention being paid to the global environment, and the insis-
- > tence of the European Community that minority rights be respect-
- > ed, albeit in the successor states to the Soviet Union and in

> Yugoslavia. What remains to be seen is whether Europe and America
> will apply in Nigeria the same standards which they have applied
> in Eastern Europe.

> For what has happened and is happening to the Ogoni is
> strictly not the fault of the Nigerian elite and Shell Company
> alone; the international community has played a very significant
> role in it. If the Americans did not purchase Nigerian oil, the
> Nigerian nation would not be, nor would the oppressive ethnic
> majority in the country have the wherewithal to pursue its
> genocidal intentions. Indeed, there is a sense in which the
> "Nigerian" oil which the Americans, Europeans and Japanese buy is
> stolen property: it has been seized from its owners by force of
> arms and has not been paid for. Therefore, these buyers are
> receiving stolen property. Also, it is Western investment and
> technology which keep the Nigerian oil industry and therefore the
> Nigerian nation alive, oil being 94 percent of Nigeria's Gross
> Domestic Product.

> Also, European and American shareholders in multi-national
> oil companies and manufacturers of oil mining equipment have
> benefitted from the purloining of Ogoni resources, the devasta-
> tion of the Ogoni environment and the genocide of the Ogoni
> people.

> Thus, shareholders in the multi-national oil companies --
> both Shell and Chevron -- which prospect for oil in Ogoni, the
> American, Japanese and European governments, and the multi-
> national oil companies have a moral if not legal responsibility
> for ending the genocide of the Ogoni people and the complete
> devastations of their environment, if, indeed, that is still
> possible.

> The requirement is enormous and urgent. The Ogoni people
> themselves including their children are determined to save
> whatever is left of their rich heritage. The international
> community can support this determination by championing the drive
> of the Ogoni for autonomy within Nigeria. The restoration of
> their rights, political, economic and environmental does not,
> cannot, hurt anyone. It will only place the responsibility for
> ending this dreadful situation where it should lie: on the Ogoni
> people themselves. The area being reich in resources and the
> people resourceful, the Ogoni will be able to sort out their
> problem in time.

> Secondly, the international community must prevail on Shell
> and Chevron which prospect for oil in Ogoni, and the Nigerian

> Government which abets them, to stop flaring gas in the area
> immediately.
> Thirdly, the international community can help by sending
> experts -- medical, environmental and agricultural -- to assist
> the Ogoni people restore a semblance of normality to Ogoni
> territory.
> In the early years of this century, a French writer, Andre
> Gide, toured the Congo and observed the gross abuse of human
> rights being perpetrated in that country by King Leopold II of
> Belgium and his agents. He wrote about it and Europeans were
> sufficiently shocked to end the abuses.
> I write now in the hope that the international community
> will, in similar fashion, do something to mitigate the Ogoni
> tragedy. It is bad enough that it is happening a few years into
> [before?] the twenty-first century. It will be a disgrace to
> humanity should it persist one day longer.
> I expect the ethnic majority of Nigeria to turn the heat of
> their well-known vindictiveness on me for writing this book. I
> defy them to do so.
> Some may wonder at my use of the word "genocide" to describe
> what has happened to the Ogoni people. The United Nations defines
> genocide as "the commission of acts with intent to destroy a
> national, ethnic, racial or religious group." If anyone, after
> reading this book, has any further doubt of, or has a better
> description for, the crime against the Ogoni people, I will be
> happy to know it.
> I wish to thank Barika Idamkue and Dr. Sonpie Kpone-Tonwe
> for kindly reading the manuscript and making valuable suggestions
> for improving the work; and my assistant, Hyacinth Wayi, for
> speedy word-processing.
> All errors in the book are mine and I accept full responsi-
> bility for them.
>
> Ken Saro-Wiwa
> Port Harcourt, 1992
>
> (END OF SECTION 1. PLEASE SEE SECTION TWO UNDER SEPARATE MAIL
FILE)
>
=====
=====

Pierre Joris | "Poems are sketches for existence."
Dept. of English | --Paul Celan
SUNY Albany |
Albany NY 12222 | "Revisionist plots
tel&fax: [REDACTED] | are everywhere and our pronouns haven't yet
email: [REDACTED] | drawn up plans for the first coup."
[REDACTED] | --J.H. Prynne

=====
=====

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278. **Pierre Joris**

NIGERIA CASEFILE #2 (A KEN SARO WIWA-OGONI HANDBOOK) **(fwd)**

Tue 21 Nov 1995

& here's the final part of that file -- pierre

Forwarded message:

> From daemon Mon Nov 20 13:48:34 1995
> Resent-Message-Id: <[REDACTED]>
> Resent-From: Tejumola Olaniyan <[REDACTED]>
> Resent-Date: Mon, 20 Nov 95 13:28:32 EST
> Resent-To: [REDACTED]
> From: Tejumola Olaniyan <[REDACTED]>
> Date: Mon, 20 Nov 95 13:19:07 EST
> To: [REDACTED]
> Subject: NIGERIA CASEFILE #2 (A KEN SARO WIWA-OGONI HANDBOOK)
>
>
> NIGERIAN CASEFILE: THE KEN SARO WIWA-OGONI HANDBOOK
>
> compiled by the Coalition Against Dictatorship (CAD)
>
> SECTION TWO.
>
> CONTENTS:
>
> Ken Saro Wiwa, "The World Bank and Us"
> Chuks Iloegbunam, "The Death of a Writer"
> (an obituary by a Nigerian journalist)
> F. W. J. Mnthali, "Farewell, Ken Saro-Wiwa!"
> (a poetic memorial by the renowned Malawian poet)

- > The Writings of Ken Saro Wiwa: A Bibliography
- > Appendix 1: Action against the Nigerian junta and its backers:
 - > Harvard students take the lead
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- > (PLEASE SEE SECTION 1 IN A SEPARATE MAIL FILE)
- >
- > SECTION 1. CONTENTS:
- >
- > The Ken Saro Wiwa Campaign
- > Some History
- > The Issue
- > Saro Wiwa's Trial and Execution
- > Saro Wiwa's Closing Statement at the Trial
- > The Difference You Can Make
- > Nigerian Oil and the West: The Moral Challenge
- > The Challenge of Nigeria: A Call to World Conscience
- > Ken Saro Wiwa, preface to *Genocide in Nigeria: the Ogoni Tragedy*
- >
- >
- >
- >
- > KEN SARO WIWA, "THE WORLD BANK AND US"
- >
- > a column from the *Sunday Times* of Lagos; reprinted in *Similia: Essays on Anomic Nigeria* (Port Harcourt: Saros: 1991), a collection of columns published in 1989 and 1990. (Note: In this essay Ken uses "World Bank" and "IMF" interchangeably.)
- >
- > Almost twenty years ago, touring the United States of America, I came to know several variations of my surname. In New York, I was called Sora-Wawo, in Los Angeles Sira-Wawa. But the limit was in Atlanta, in the presence of Mrs. Coretta King, where I was introduced as Saro-Wee-Wee. Uncomfortably close to the toilet, you might say.
- > I was minded, that day, to change my name to something more heavenly like Wiwa or Saros. I refrained from doing so. In the interest of history. Today, I'm used to these and other variations of my name.
- > Thus I was only half-surprised when an invitation arrived at

> my Surulere office the other day, addressed to, you guessed it,
> Ken Sarohiwa. And it came from the Indian High Commission.
> It was an invitation to a party celebrating Indian National
> Day. I am not a party-going man. Invariably, I find myself, in
> the day, glued to my telephone or sitting in the front offices of
> the high and mighty in Nigeria pursuing you know what. At night,
> I'm in my study consulting dictionaries or the thesaurus and
> struggling endlessly with words in English or my native Khana. No
> one invites me to parties. Which is a blessing. So the half of my
> surprise was that the Indian High Commission had called me up.
> How on earth did they find out my address? I am supposed to be
> anonymous, in the name of all you love!
> Since I have never been to a diplomat's party, and I do not
> mind a new experience, I took my courage in my hands and wended
> my way to Eleke Crescent on Victoria Island.
> I suspected I would be lost at the part. I knew that my
> perpetual *adire* shirt would mark me out as a non-diplomat and
> that I did not have the polish to match a diplomat's shoes. I
> *was* lost. I held my soft drink (no alcohol was served) and the
> only diplomat I met almost sent me to my grave.
> No, he did not deal me a blow. He was a high official of the
> World Bank. These sapped times are hungry times, and a hungry man
> is an angry man. I never have met any representative of the
> International Monetary Fund anywhere and this was an opportunity
> for me to send a message to the Fund through one of its represen-
> tatives in Nigeria.
> As it turned out, I had nothing new to tell the representa-
> tive. He had been to all but two of the states of Nigeria, and
> most of it by road. He was aware of the distress caused by the
> Structural Adjustment Programme. The latest World Bank Report on
> the Africa Sub-region accepts as much. Forty years of the World
> Bank experiment in turning the economies of debtor-nations round
> has not resulted in success in a single country. Yet the Bank
> persists in its folly. Which makes you believe that their mission
> in debtor nations is not to heal but to rub salt into wounds. To
> collect debts and to send the nations into even greater debt so
> that the World Bank can remain in the nations forever.
> The gentleman in question kept reminding me that the IMF
> would not have been in Nigeria if Nigeria had not gone on a
> borrowing spree. I know and have always known it. But the ques-
> tion which confronts us all is what to do in the circumstances.
> Must we see all our children die of kwashiorkor? Must we see all

> those who survive the ravages of disease and famine grow up as
> zombies because they have no books to read, cannot afford good
> education, decent housing, transportation and water? Perhaps the
> only thing they can look forward to is a "befitting burial" which
> we perversely still give the dead? All of which sends me right
> back to the present administration which continues to sing of the
> "gains of SAP." It is all right for a government, any government,
> to put a policy in place and pursue its implementation with
> single-mindedness. Just to see if it works. However, any respect-
> able government must also have a fall-back position.

> I believe that all Nigerians, indeed, all black people, must
> work hard, think hard, practise thrift and show dedication to
> progress. But the question which Government and all of us must
> now tackle is the failure of World Bank "remedies" world-wide. A
> survey in Ghana recently showed that in spite of adherence to
> World Bank conditionalities, in spite of the fact that the Bank
> has enough statistics to show that the Ghanaian economy is
> improving, the fact stands that the average Ghanaian's earnings
> cannot feed him and his family, much less send his children to
> school or doctor them.

> The representative of the World Bank in Ghana is reported to
> have said recently that the mismanagement of the past in Ghana
> was so immense that recovery under the IMF's guidelines will be
> almost impossible.

> For Ghana, you may read Nigeria, Zambia, or wherever. Which,
> of course, means that the "gains of SAP" are likely to remain a
> chimera for all time.

> The World Bank itself has now accepted that some of its
> programmes are faulty. It also accepts that it pays its employees
> incredible salaries and allowances. but it then places the blame
> on the various governments: the governments are autocratic,
> corrupt and have not allowed the full development of the creative
> energies of their peoples. Maybe. This may mean that the World
> Bank and its Euro-American mentors will stop forcing incompetent
> rulers and brutes upon third and "enth" world societies in the
> belief that such men will brutalize their peoples and compel them
> to accept the bitter pill which the World Bank means to force
> down the nations' throats.

> But methinks the World Bank has to accept that its real
> instrument of torture is its insistence on growth, its economic
> theorizing at the expense of human welfare. In Nigeria, as
> elsewhere, its potent instrument is the exchange rate. The fixing

> of that rate is, as far as I can see it, a con; it is dubious and
> no one can convince me otherwise. And the sooner debtor-nations
> realized the political nature of the World Bank, the sooner they
> will be able to face the bogus economic theories of the Bank with
> an equivalent weapon--people's power. At no matter what cost.
>
>
> CHUKS ILOEGBUNAM, "THE DEATH OF A WRITER"
> (an obituary by a Nigerian journalist)
>
> It is a supreme irony that the death of Ken Saro-Wiwa, the Nigerian
> environmental activist, businessman and writer at the age of 54,
> should have come in such a grotesque manner: tried and condemned by
> a tribunal instead of an ordinary court of law, denied the right of
> appeal, and hanged. Nothing about his origins, nor indeed, the
> course of most of his life, indicated even remotely that things
> would come to this terrible pass.
>
> Saro-Wiwa was born in Bori, near Port Harcourt, capital of Rivers
> State in Nigeria. He was a brilliant student and government
> scholarships saw him through Government College, Umuahia, and the
> University of Ibadan - two famous institutions which some other
> notable Nigerian writers, including Chinua Achebe, had also
> attended.
>
> He taught briefly at the Universities of Ibadan and Nigeria (at
> Nsukka) before the outbreak of the Nigerian civil war in 1967.
> Stridently anti-Biafran (until his death he wrote the name with a
> lower case "b"), Saro-Wiwa pitched his camp with the Federal
> authorities. He was appointed the administrator of the oil port of
> Bonny, and in 1968 became one of the first cabinet members of the
> newly created Rivers State, where he alternately held the powerful
> portfolios of education and information. However, when he left the
> cabinet of Commander Alfred Dietee-Spiff, the military governor of
> Rivers State, in 1973, it was in acrimonious circumstances.
>
> Out of government, Saro-Wiwa turned to business, which he ran
> alongside his real love of writing. He made good on both scores. He
> could afford to send his son to Eton; and had to his credit more
> than 20 titles in all genres of literature. There are four novels,
> a poetry volume, two books of short stories, three titles on
> general topics, two drama volumes, one on folklore and nine

> children's books. And this output does not include the extensive
> pamphleteering on behalf of the Ogoni cause. His *Tambari* and
> *Tambari In Dukana*, both written for children, were published by
> Longman. All the others are published by his Saros International
> Publishers. Last year, Longman re-issued his *Sazaboy: A Novel in*
> *Rotten English*, which received an honourable mention at the Noma
> Award for Publishing in Africa. Only last month the same publishers
> re-issued *A Forest Of Flowers*, his first collection of short
> stories which was shortlisted for the Commonwealth Writers Prize in
> 1987.

>
> Saro-Wiwa was also at different times an engaging newspaper
> columnist for *Punch*, *Vanguard* and the *Daily Times*, all Lagos-based
> dailies. Whether in journalism or in creative writing, he exposed
> a nation "cracking up under the pressures of maladministration,
> corporate greed, sloth, ignorance and mercenary self-interest,
> while its people struggle against government neglect and abuse,
> racketeering, poverty, disease, superstition and ethnic mistrust to
> quote the apposite comment on the blurb accompanying *A Forest Of*
> *Flowers*.

>
> Sometime in 1991, Saro-Wiwa decided to abandon "everything" and
> devote himself to the Ogoni struggle, which until then he had
> combined with his other activities. He put his creative writing in
> abeyance, dutifully returning to their owners all the manuscripts
> his Saros International was to have published, and relinquished his
> position as president of the Association of Nigerian Authors which
> he held for three years.

>
> Towards the end of 1992 he was struck by tragedy when his son at
> Eton dropped dead during a game of rugby. Something inside
> Saro-Wiwa seemed to have died as a result. From then on he lived
> only for the Ogoni struggle.

>
> Before long he complained that the military authorities had turned
> a deaf ear to the demands of his people. In the circumstances, he
> said that the only option left was to attract the attention of the
> international community. In July 1992 he addressed the United
> Nations Working Group on Indigenous Population in Geneva and
> followed this up with a visit to the UN in New York. He bought cine
> equipment and cameras, and systematically began recording scenes of
> oil pollution and gas flaring in Ogoniland. Using the platform of

- > Movement for the Survival of the Ogoni People (MOSOP), which he
- > helped found, he sensitised his people to both the politics and
- > economics of oil.
- >
- > Greenpeace and other environmental groups soon took up the Ogoni
- > case and the picketing of Shell's office in London became
- > commonplace. (In fact, Shell was chased out of Ogoniland in 1993.)
- > Saro-Wiwa had become an acute embarrassment to oil companies
- > operating in Nigeria and to his country's military rulers.
- >
- > During his last visit to London in May last year he complained that
- > Shell had put a world-wide surveillance on his movements. He said
- > it was obvious that the military regime in Nigeria was feeling the
- > heat of the Ogoni struggle. "I am using even the Koran which says
- > it is right to fight one's oppressors against them", he told me.
- > "And they don't like it one bit," A mutual friend, a novelist,
- > asked Saro-Wiwa if it was not possible for him to "go slow" on "the
- > struggle". The man merely smiled and changed the topic.
- >
- > The last time I saw him was when the UK chapter of the Ogoni
- > movement was launched at the Royal Park Hotel in London. Saro-Wiwa
- > told me he would return to Nigeria the following week, but would be
- > back in good time for the launch of Sozaboy by Longman. He never
- > came back.
- >
- > Shortly after his return to Nigeria he was arrested and charged
- > with multiple murder although it was established that he was not at
- > the scene of the killings. But Justice Ibrahim Auta, the tribunal
- > chairman, warned: "If an accused was not directly involved in a
- > crime, he could still be convicted if he encouraged the act". And
- > the tribunal is empowered to pronounce only capital punishment.
- >
- > So, the Nigerian state has killed Ken Saro-Wiwa. The man I knew,
- > the one who was my friend for over a decade, believed in combat -
- > the combat of the written and spoken word. If he opposed anything,
- > he went to great lengths to leave nobody in doubt as to where he
- > stood. Perhaps his eternal mistake was that he chose to rail at
- > those who saw themselves in superhuman terms, people who would
- > brook no opposition and who, in the peculiar setting of the
- > Nigerian entity, had invariably coveted the power to decide who got
- > dispatched and who did not.
- >

> But he always insisted that the Ogoni would demand their rights
> peacefully. He showed impatience each time it was alleged that he
> was planning for the Ogoni to secede. "I am not a fool", he would
> declare. "The Ogoni are only 500,000. Nigeria is about 100 million.
> Secession is not a viable option and we are not into that."
> Somebody wanted to know the meaning of Saro-Wiwa's death. Simple.
> It means that nothing has changed.

>

> He is survived by his wife, Hauwa, his children, one of whom, Ken,
> has been the foremost campaigner for his father's freedom, and his
> father and mother, who are aged 91 and 75 years respectively.

>

>

> F W J MNTHALI, "FAREWELL, KEN SARO-WIWA!"

>

> a poetic memorial by the renowned Malawian poet

>

> Some papers here tell us
> you and your colleagues
> went to your death singing!

>

> Would that Africa as a whole
> boasted more men and women with
> your courage and your vision.

>

> But we are all caught up in a web of fear
> the fear that rules all killers
> that web of silence which is the bane of all our
> feelings
> the fear of our own shadows
> the fear of lizards lurking behind freedom's rays
> the fear of being thought weak
> the fear of parting with loot and plunder
> the fear of losing those peripheral powers
> whose only guarantee is the barrel of a gun
> cynically backed by the greed of those who have more
> guns!

>

> When fifteen years ago I spent a year in your country
> I saw with my own eyes
> how the fishes and other forms of life
> were all slowly dying

> in the sluggish brownish and filthy liquid
> that had once been water;black gold it seems
> demanded its pound of flesh
> from everything and everyone around it!
>
> It has now demanded that you too
> like the rest of our continent's creme de la creme
> pay with your life for this gold this madness;
> that the Ogoni like the rest of us
> since the days of slavery and brutish colonisation
> have been paying with our lives
> for treasures that others consume
> while our own people go hungry and naked:
> it was for reminding it of this simple story
> that the sphinx has devoured you
> for no sphinx on earth
> wants its victims told
> how naked and how foolish it looks!
>
> In my own country the sphinx
> devoured Dick Matenje and Aaron Gadama
> Twaibu Sangala and David Chiwanga
> Attati Mpakati and Mkwapatira Mhango
> Orton Chirwa and many many others
> whose bodies were dumped
> into the waters of the Shire
> or into the bellies of crocodiles;
> many fled into exile which also became an area of
> darkness
> when the tentacles of the sphinx would know no bounds
> for the kingdoms of darkness
> decay and death are all alike:
> they thrive best in the midst of silence and despair
> our silence and our despair!
>
> If today's death be that of Ken Saro-Wiwa and eight
> others
> who have been so brazenly and so blatantly
> in the classical fashion of Nazism so openly executed
> can the deaths of Moshood Abiola and General Obasanjo
> and Ransome Kuti
> be far off?

>
> Silence, why must heinous acts
> be always followed by a deathly silence
> oh, OAU,
> oh, Africa?
>

> Felix Mnthali.
>
>

> THE WRITINGS OF KEN SARO-WIWA: A BIBLIOGRAPHY
>

> THE TRANSISTOR RADIO (radio play) BBC-Radio, 1972
> BRIDE BY RETURN (radio play) BBC-Radio, 1973
> TAMBARI (1973)
> TAMBARI IN DUKANA (1973)
> SONGS IN A TIME OF WAR (POEMS) (1985)
> SOZABOY:A NOVEL IN ROTTEN ENGLISH (1985)
> A FOREST OF FLOWERS (SHORT STORIES) (1986)
> BASI AND COMPANY:A MODERN AFRICAN FOLKTALE (1987)
> PRISONERS OF JEBS (1988)
> ADAKU AND OTHER STORIES (1989)
> FOUR FARCIAL PLAYS (1989)
> ON A DARKLING PLAIN:AN ACCOUNT OF THE NIGERIAN CIVIL WAR
> (1989)
> NIGERIA:THE BRINK OF DISASTER (1991)
> PITA'S BUMBROK'S PRISON (1991)
> SIMILIA:ESSAYS ON ANOMIC NIGERIA (1991)
> THE SINGING ANTHILL:OGONI FOLK TALES (1991)
> GENOCIDE IN NIGERIA:THE OGONI TRAGEDY (1992)
>

> In addition, he was producer and writer of the television
> series, BASI AND COMPANY, 1985-1990, Editor, MELLANBITE,
> 1963-64, HORIZON, 1964-65,and UMUAHIA TIMES, Member of
> editorial board, UMUAHIAN
>

> His television series included:
>

> MR. B (1987)
> BASI AND COMPANY (1989)
> THE TRANSISTOR RADIO (1989)
> MR.B GOES TO LAGOS (1989)
> MR. B IS DEAD (1991)

- > SEGI FINDS THE RADIO (1991)
- > A SHIPLOAD OF RICE (1991)
- > MR. B'S MATTRESS (1992)
- > MR. B. GOES TO THE MOON (1992)
- > A BRIDE FOR MR. B. (1992)
- >
- > Born October 10, 1941 in Bori, Rivers State, Nigeria
- > Died November 10, 1995 in Port Harcourt, Nigeria
- > Education: University of Ibadan B.A. (Honors), 1965
- > Avocational interests: Sports, travel, classical music
- >
- >
- > APPENDIX 1
- >
- > ACTION AGAINST THE NIGERIAN JUNTA AND ITS BACKERS: HARVARD
- > STUDENTS TAKE THE LEAD
- >
- > Resolution passed on November 19, 1995
- >
- > RESOLUTION 14F-28: Response to Human Rights Violations in Nigeria
- > (Simons, Kasper, Freeman)
- >
- > Whereas, on Friday, 10 November 1995, the military government of
- > Nigeria executed nine anti-government activists, including
- > playwright, environmental and human rights activist Ken Saro- Wiwa,
- > in trials which Amnesty International believes to have been pol
- > itically motivated and unfair;
- >
- > Whereas, the international community has reacted with outrage and
- > condemnation to the executions, the United States and other nations
- > have withdrawn their ambassadors to Nigeria, the 52-member
- > Commonwealth of Britain has suspended Nigeria as a member, and the
- > brutal government of Nigeria has been described by Nelson Mandela
- > as "counter to the most basic human rights;"
- >
- > Whereas, the Nigerian government is supported in large part by
- > foreign investment, especially from oil corporatcorporations, most
- > of the oil from which is exported to the United States;
- >
- > Whereas, Harvard University is a shareholder in corporations which
- > invest in Nigeria;
- >

- > Be it resolved that the Undergraduate Council requests that
- > President Neil Rudenstine sign letters to the Nigerian government
- > and to Shell Oil, a leading investor in Nigeria in which Harvard
- > owns shares, expressing outrage and dismay at the executions;
- >
- > Be it resolved that the Undergraduate Council requests the
- > University Advisory Committee on Shareholder Responsibility to
- > recommend a policy of supporting all shareholders' resolutions
- > calling for corporate withdrawal from Nigeria by drafting a letter
- > to the student representative, Adrienne Bradley, which she shall
- > read on behalf of the Undergraduate Council.
- >
- > Be it resolved that the Undergraduate Council requests the Harvard
- > Corporation and the Board of Overseers of Harvard College to adopt
- > a policy of selective purchasing which would prohibit any part of
- > the University or its subsidiaries from buying products from or
- > entering into contracts with oil companies which invest in Nigeria.
- >
- >
- > Be it further resolved that the Undergraduate Council requests that
- >
- > Harvard University divest fully from oil companies which invest in
- > Nigeria.
- >
- >
- > APPENDIX 2:
- > WOLE SOYINKA, "WHY THE GENERAL KILLED"
- >
- > There is one question only we need to address to ourselves: why
- > the rush to execution ? That question holds the key to the
- > darkest moment in the history of our existence in the benighted
- > nation called Nigeria.
- >
- > There are hundreds of convicts on the death row of our prisons, some
- > of them over ten years, maybe twenty, awaiting their date with
- > destiny. Some are violent armed robbers, cold-blooded murderers.
- > Several are functional sadists, mindless butchers who took
- > advantage of religious or ethnic riots to practice their stock-in-trade.
- > Years after they slaughtered their victims and turned the streets,
- > markets and places of worship most especially into slaughter slabs.
- > They were duly sentenced yet they are still kept alive in our
- > prison cells, awaiting rescue by executive clemency. What then

- > was the overwhelming cause that drove Sani Abacha, who had taken
- > over the functions of criminal justice, set up his own trial court,
- > then presided over the last court of appeal, to rush Ken Saro-Wiwa
- > and his companions to the gallows ? Since when has the cause of
- > justice been served by haste, especially selective justice in its
- > irreversible mode ?
- >
- > In seeking to answer to our central question, we would be wise to
- > take our minds back to the internecine strifes, the escalation of
- > mutual destruction that became a puzzling feature of life among
- > the Delta people over the two years of Abacha's seizure of power
- > in Nigeria. We must remind ourselves of the impersonation of the
- > Okrika, the Andoni and the Ogoni by Abacha armed soldiers, the
- > destruction of villages and farmlands, kidnapping and murders
- > timed to appear as consequences of boundary disputes, mostly minor,
- > but now turned into vicious rounds of bloodletting and serial
- > vengeance among traditionally peaceful neighbours. We must
- > refresh our memories with the detailed reports of commissions of
- > enquiries about this strange and costly eruption of animosity -
- > Professor Claude Ake's meticulous report most especially. We must
- > single out, as a most graphic instance, the 1994 machine-gunning
- > of a boat in mid-stream, in a carefully executed military action
- > that resulted in the deaths of tens of innocent men, women and
- > children, including prominent citizens of Ogoniland. The Okrika
- > were first blamed for this atrocity, but we do recall how the
- > true criminals, the military personnel, were exposed in the
- > end by the few survivors.
- >
- > The purpose of Abacha's bloody provocation was straightforward: to
- > make it impossible for the victims of oil exploration to present
- > a united front in their demands for reparations for their
- > polluted land, for a fair share in the resources of their
- > land, and a voice in the control of their own development. The
- > Ogoni were of course at the head of these demands.
- >
- > Still, the Ogoni preserved their united resolve - until lately.
- > The crack in their unity was formented by the same forces that
- > destroyed the peaceful co-existence of the various communities
- > of the Delta, setting one against the other. The next stage was
- > to set the final seal of doom on the Ogoni, who had had the
- > temerity to spearhead the Delta revolt against the oil companies.
- > Four prominent sons of Ogoni were brutally hacked to death, creating

> a permanent breach within the Ogoni movement, MOSOP.
>
> Now, there had begun serious moves to heal that breach, with limited
> but real success. I know this at first hand, because I was contacted
> by the relations of the murder victims and the peacebrokers. Such a
> process could only have been initiated as a result of the
> mounting suspicion that the blood-guilt lay outside the Ogoni
> community, that, at the very least, the murder of the four Ogoni
> leaders had been organised by a common enemy, the permanent
> "agent provocateurs" in the pay of the Abacha's regime. There was
> only one way to thwart the process of healing within MOSOP, and this
> was to terminate all efforts to root out the real criminals, and
> widen the blood breach in an irreversible manner.
>
> Ken Saro-Wiwa's fate had long been sealed. The decision to execute him
> was reached before the special tribunal was ordered to reconvene
> and pronounce a verdict that had been decided outside the charade
> of judicial proceeding. The meeting of the Provisional Ruling
> Council to consider that verdict was a macabre pretence, a prolongation
> of the cynicism that marked the trial proceedings from the outset.
>
> As the world knows, the executions were to have taken place immediately
> after the "ratification" session of the Military Council. Hence the
> sense of urgency, even panic with which we addressed our task in
> Auckland from the moment that we learnt that Abacha had summoned
> his uniformed puppets to perform at his dance of death. A blatant
> unrepentant defiance of civilised norms, an atavistic psyche is what
> has characterised this regime from the beginning, so there should
> have been no cause for surprise. We have warned, and pleaded. Now
> we are paying yet another heavy prize for the comatose nature of
> global conscience.
>
> Is that conscience finally nudged awake ? Despite the belated flurry
> of motions, it would appear that the real problem, and the solution
> are still being dodged. Why do the Commonwealth Heads of States still
> proceed to offer Sani Abacha two whole years to "restore" Nigeria
> to democracy ? Nigeria has a civilian President-elect, Bashorun
> M.K.O. Abiola, clamped in gaol by Sani Abacha. We have called for
> a solution which requires his immediate release in order to head
> a government of national unity and restore the nation to a democratic
> path. Every atrocity that has befallen Nigerians, the total collapse
> of civic society, stem from the pattern of evasion that seeks a path

> round the immutable reality: that Nigerians went to the polls, elected
> their President, then a military cabal, of which Sani Abacha was
> Number Two, nullified the process.
>
> It is time to stop beating about the bush when a path that, as it
> happens, combines both principle and pragmatism opens up itself
> unambiguously. Yes, of course, there are thorns along that path,
> a few boulders here and there, but what is the alternative ? Two
> more years of Abacha ? Does any serious thinking individual believe
> that Nigeria will survive a two-year endorsement of this national
> haermorrage ? Let the Commonwealth leaders think again, and save
> the nation from the spiral of murder, torture and leadership
> dementia that is surely leading to the disintegration of a once
> proud nation.
>
> [published in "Der Speigel"]
>
> Other sources of info:
> Earthlife Africa (Cape Town)
> Greenpeace International
> Amnesty International
>
>
> (END OF SECTION TWO. PLEASE SEE SECTION 1 IN A SEPARATE MAIL
FILE)
>

=====
=====
Pierre Joris | "Poems are sketches for existence."
Dept. of English | --Paul Celan
SUNY Albany |
Albany NY 12222 | "Revisionist plots
tel&fax: [REDACTED] | are everywhere and our pronouns haven't yet
email: | drawn up plans for the first coup."
[REDACTED] | --J.H. Prynne
=====
=====

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279. **Charles Alexander**

Re: Metroplexities

Tue 21 Nov 1995

just a word about metroplexities in massachusetts: just spent the wkend in northampton and visited used bookstores, and was disappointed/relieved to find not one single interesting "experimental" book of poems on the shelves

And in the Kansas City Barnes and Noble (shudder), in the very stylish Country Club Plaza across the street (yes, street -- this is no shopping mall) from Saks, I bought books by Zukofsky, Stein, and Susan Howe.

Go figure.

I always did like Kansas City. Makes perfect sense to me, except for the Barnes & Noble part -- but then this is the mid-nineties.

charles alexander

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280. **Charles Alexander**

Re: POETICS Digest - 19 Nov 1995 to 20 Nov 1995

Tue 21 Nov 1995

I am trying to get the address of Leave Books as well as the addresses of the following journals: impercipient, cathay, windmill, torque, first intensity, and volt. I would appreciate whatever help you may provide.

I just received a mailing from The Impercipient, of the eighth and final issue, and the address remains 61 East Manning Street, Providence, Rhode Island 02906. I'm not certain anymore about Leave Books, as various people involved have moved, and I'd love to have the correct address for that and the others you request, too. So I hope people post them on the list.

charles alexander

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281. **Jordan Davis**

Re: Metroplexities

Tue 21 Nov 1995

At 12:24 PM 11/22/95, Wystan Curnow wrote:

I know I tend to think the other way: POETRY AND
>LITERATURE and FICTION. What does it betoken? Any thots?

That's the general division in american bookstores. Books & Co led (maintained?) the rear guard keeping their poetry books interspersed with the

fiction (and some literature) until what a year ago? I remember seeing Hannah Weiner's books there where anybody could find them. I remember it was an effort to keep from crying. Anyway, that's over, B&C has moved them upstairs (with the film, music and philosophy/classics/theory books). Which bookstore in Astor Place did you like, Wylan? There was a not-so-bad place called "Cooper Square Books" until about what a year ago? Before that, there was a legendary place that kept the books wrapped in plastic... Cooper Square was a direct casualty of B&N, the decision to cease operation following right after the announcement of the Astor Place B&N. I'd like to note that the Barnes & Noble "superstore" at 82nd & Bway has been voted the "best" place to pick-up (and I guess be picked up) in New York, ahead of Max Fish and Crunch Fitness. Hmm.

Jordan

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282. **Robert Drake**
addresses (leave etc.)

Tue 21 Nov 1995

Leave Books, PO Box 786, Buffalo NY 14213
Impercipient, 61 E. Manning St., Providence RI 02906
Cathay, 11 Slater Ave., Providence RI 02906
First Intensity, PO Box 140713, Staten Island NY 10314
Volt, 4104 24th St. #355, SanFran CA 94114
Torque, Box 118 Canal City Sta., New York NY 10013

Impercipient is shutting down w/ the current issue #8, alas. i understand that leave will also move on to other endeavors, tho the backlist will continue to be available?--they are one of the featured presses in the forthcoming (at the printers now!) TapRoot Reviews, as is Chas Alexander's Chax Press...

& my repeated call to those of you who teach--consider using micropress publications instead of (or in addition to) anthologies--the publication you save could be your own...

lbd, TRR

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283. **Rod Smith**
Re: Metroplexities

Tue 21 Nov 1995

Yes, but will Barnes & Noble stock YOUR book.
We will-- we're your friendly nayborewhoed
Bridge Street Books

2814 Pennsylvania Ave NW

Washington, DC 20007

ph- [REDACTED]

e-mail [REDACTED]

Which is right down the street from new Georgetown Barnes & Noble. They suck.

--Rod

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284. **Loss Glazier**

epclive

Tue 21 Nov 1995

Pierre, Yes, we were there. A pretty energetic handful of folks and a lively conversation from 6:30-8 EST. Yes, last night (Mon.). I'm not sure why you didn't find us. We were certainly boisterous enough to be heard in the hallway! It was a good conversation...often multichannel but v. good ... Loss

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285. **Daniel Bouchard/College/hmco**

Re: Metroplexities

Wed 22 Nov 1995

> I'd like to note that the Barnes & Noble "superstore" at 82nd & Bway has been

voted the

>"best" place to pick-up (and I guess be picked up) in New York,

Will your chances of being picked up improve in the Literature/Fiction section as opposed to standing in the Poetry section where the narrow selection may cause a melancholy expression?

dan bouchard

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286. **Maria Damon**

Re: Metroplexities

Wed 22 Nov 1995

re Poetry, Literature and Fiction: to most of the students i teach, literature is synonymous w/ fiction. poetry, to them, is not "literature." nor is it, apparently, to bookstore organizers, who usually use the designator "literature" to mean middle-to-highbrow fiction, and distinct from "paperbacks," which are low-brow fiction. weird, isnt it. other than places like ucsc, albany and buffalo, i bet even

most grad students in lit. departments have poetry-phobia. that's certainly true of both the place i was a grad student and the place where i currently teach. is that your (collective) experience?--md

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287. **Maria Damon**

Re: Steiniana

Wed 22 Nov 1995

I received this today, and was confused about who spake what. is the anecdote in the first person herb's or charles's? why do i care? i don't know but i do. just to keep things --like identity --straight, so to speak, in my so-to-speak head. --md

Spake Herb Levy earlier today:

For many years, there has been a marathon reading of *The Making of Americans* every New Year's, days long; in recent years it has alternated with a reading of *Finnegans Wake*. It takes place at the Paula Cooper Gallery in SoHo (New York). The first few years, in the middle or late 70s, I read at 3 or 4am to a quite small, even tiny, audience. These were hardly "straight" readings but I think fairly engaging. The work, it seemed to me then and there, held up well to something like chant or anyway highly entoned reading (a kind of davening perhaps). I have had other occasions to read the from the book, even when fully awake, and found many rhythmic and performative possibilities there. I have always felt that Stein's work would be better served by a more all over reading from her works, but the fact that *The Making of Americans* has held up to repeated and complete readings for so many years (though of course "stands up" to whom?) is interesting.

--Charles Bernstein

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288. **Willa Jarnagin**

Poetry/Fiction/Literature divisions

Wed 22 Nov 1995

On Wed, 22 Nov 1995, Wystan Curnow wrote:

There is a section called POETRY and then one called FICTION AND LITERATURE. How significant is this division? Do all B & N stores do it, do other stores do it? I believe the division is at work in English departments, among the interests, knowledge and attitudes of teachers,

and in curricula. I know I tend to think the other way: POETRY AND LITERATURE and FICTION. What does it betoken? Any thots?

What interests me is not only why bookstores would make such a division, but, essentially, what IS the difference between poetry and fiction? I write both and they overlap. What seems to be the difference for me is the degree to which I write in character. But that doesn't always hold. Plot, momentum? Form? No, all these are exploited by either genre (ick, what a word, genre). If it's in stanzas or scattered across the page it's poetry? That would seem to be the criteria among booksellers. What would happen if poetry books were sold mixed in with novels and short fiction on the shelves? Would we lose out by not having a "poetry" section to make a beeline toward in any bookstore? Or would people who normally only buy novels discover poetry? Would poets lose their identity? Would Danielle Steel try her hand at verse? Cough.

Hm.

Willa

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289. **Gwyn McVay**

Re: Poetry/Fiction/Literature divisions

Wed 22 Nov 1995

Willa,

Danielle Steel (e?) *has* tried her hand at verse. A bright pink book of hers with embossed gold lettering, swooshy caps, the whole bit, sits in the poetry section at my local Borders.

Gwyn

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290. **Keith Tuma**

Re: Metroplexities

Wed 22 Nov 1995

For Maria D:

"Poetry-phobia" would mean at least some experience of poetry, no? Whereas most junior faculty I know here couldn't give a rat's ass for poetry. I'm constantly saying, like, why don't you put a little Brathwaite or Césaire in that Caribbean lit/post-colonial seminar you're teaching? Blank smiles: yeah sure Keith. Other than a little Wordsworth creeping into seminars on one or another topic in romanticism, other than the chair's fascination for Stevens and a 70 year-old's genuflections before Pound, poetry is left to me, who has it "covered." I'd be surprised if your situation at UM was news to anybody.

--Keith Tuma

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291. **Judy Roitman**

Re: Steiniana

Wed 22 Nov 1995

Whoever, said it, thanks for

"a kind of davening perhaps."

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292. **Jordan Davis**

Re: Poetry/Fiction/Literature divisions

Wed 22 Nov 1995

M Jourdain: So then I've always been speaking in poetry,
And also in prose?

The Professor: That is correct.

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293. **Charles Bernstein**

Re: Steiniana {corrected}; shelflife

Wed 22 Nov 1995

Somehow the extract from Herb's post that I was replying to got dropped in the transmission, can't figure out how.

This is what Herb Levy posted yesterday, or a bit of it:

... sounds like it was pretty good. In the context of all of those, uh, value-added performances, though, it's still hard to imagine a straight reading of a big chunk of The Making of Americans getting over, no matter where it was in the program.

& this what I added:

For many years, there has been a marathon reading of The Making of Americans every New Year's, days long; in recent years it has alternated with a reading of Finnegans Wake. It takes place at the Paula Cooper Gallery in SoHo (New York). The first few years, in the middle or late 70s, I read at 3 or 4am to a quite small, even tiny, audience. These were hardly "straight" readings but I think fairly engaging. The work, it seemed to me then and there, held up well to something like chant or anyway highly entoned reading (a kind of davening perhaps). I have had other occasions to read the from the book, even when fully awake, and found many rhythmic and performative possibilities there. I

have always felt that Stein's work would be better served by a more all over reading from her works, but the fact that *The Making of Americans* has held up to repeated and complete readings for so many years (though of course "stands up" to whom?) is interesting.

***** PS -- on the shelving of books in bookstores, Stein is always a problem but after a while EPC may be able to provide for call-up consultations for bookstore workers to help them diagnose ... er, classify the stock. For myself, I always liked the fact the the Dewey Decimel system classifies poetry as a type of nonfiction, unlike novels and short stories. I would encourage bookstores to shelve poetry along with the other nonfiction books, where it belongs.

--Charles Bernstein

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294. **Herb Levy**

Re: Steiniana

Wed 22 Nov 1995

Maria -

The writing below yours is pure Bernsteiniana. &, yeah, Judy, davening sounds about right to me too.

- Herb

I received this today, and was confused about who spake what. is the anecdote in the first person herb's or charles's? why do i care? i don't know but i do. just to keep things --like identity --straight, so to speak, in my so-to-speak head. --md

Spake Herb Levy earlier today:

*For many years, there has been a marathon reading of *The Making of Americans* every New Year's, days long; in recent years it has alternated with a reading of *Finnegans Wake*. It takes place at the Paula Cooper Gallery in SoHo (New York). The first few years, in the middle or late 70s, I read at 3 or 4am to a quite small, even tiny, audience. These were hardly "straight" readings but I think fairly engaging. The work, it seemed to me then and there, held up well to something like chant or anyway highly entoned reading (a kind of davening perhaps). I have had other occasions to read the from the book, even when fully awake, and found many rhythmic and performative possibilities there. I have always felt that Stein's work would be better served by a more all over reading from her works, but the fact that *The Making of Americans* has held up to repeated and complete readings for so many years (though of course "stands up" to whom?) is interesting.*

--Charles Bernstein

Herb Levy



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295. **Daniel Bouchard/College/hmco**
bookstores, syllabi, and yer own good intentions

Wed 22 Nov 1995

Keith Tuma:

"Poetry-phobia" would mean at least some experience of poetry, no? Whereas most junior faculty I know here couldn't give a rat's ass for poetry. I'm constantly saying, like, why don't you put a little Brathwaite or Cesaire in that Caribbean lit/post-colonial seminar you're teaching? Blank smiles: yeah sure Keith. Other than a little Wordsworth creeping into seminars on one or another topic in romanticism, other than the chair's fascination for Stevens and a 70 year-old's genuflections before Pound, poetry is left to me, who has it "covered."

I have considerable respect for the opinions of poetry of everyone on this list (yuk, what a lousy sentence). So seeing a recurring theme in many postings that much of today's significant and/or experimental poetry is ignored by both English departments and the mainstream book market(s), I wonder if people would give their thoughts as to what the the priorities are in regard to new poetry for a) English departments, b) publisher's & bookstore's marketing managers and c) poets who intend to publish. Clearly, many publishers and bookstores are looking to make money, but if money is the only reason they were in their respective business, why wouldn't they have chosen something more profitable? I'm thinking about big bookstores like Borders and B & N and Waterstones who want to make a profit but also give at least the appearance of selling new and interesting books if only for the sake of their reputation as an all-around good bookstore. Borders (where I've worked on and off for the past four years) carries Zukofsky, Stein, Howe, Hejinian not, as someone pointed out because of the poets' names but because of the publishers- Johns Hopkins, Sun&Moon, Wesleyan. That is not a progressive policy but still, there they are waiting to be bought which does happen once in a while, usually on a staff recommendation. Borders is not Bridge Street books nor is Bridge Street Borders. I see no reason to cut down one in favor of the other. If I'm looking for poetry I'll take Bridge Street (or its New England equivalent, which isn't saying much) everytime. English Departments aren't looking to make money (or else, I am extremely naive) but they do have something to sell: the image of the

school and the careers of the instructors. Many people on this list teach literature at the college level and many have stated their choices for syllabi. Is it too silly a question to ask why so many instructors can't see that they are repeating exactly the mistakes of their predecessors who rejected Williams, Pound, et al. Or is it that they KNOW better about today's "poetry" and time will pardon them and their views? Finally, who are all you publishing poets hoping will read your work? College undergraduates? Graduate students? Fellow poets? People in the business world? the art world? Heads of state? Probably all, or as many as possible. But how to achieve that end? Is it enough to get the material printed and bound and release it like a pair of rare animals hoping they'll mate and spread all over the earth? Or spread like a fire from a tiny ember as Shelley kind of said?

Just typing out loud, hoping for good readings when I logon Monday morning.
Happy Holiday to those celebrating Thanksgiving.

██████████

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296. **Alan Golding**
MLA Poetry Programs

Wed 22 Nov 1995

Associate Professor of English, U. of Louisville

Phone: ██████████; e-mail: ██████████

The problem's always seemed to me that whoever puts the program together has zero sense of the various audiences or constituencies out there and the relationship among them. And as Marjorie says, this seems to happen every year. I wonder if people in other fields have the same complaint. But consistently in poetry and poetics, panels likely to be of interest to the same audience are scheduled against each other, often three or four at a time. You have at least some sense of the inside workings of the MLA, Marjorie--do you have any sense of how these decisions get made, and what chance there is of changing that?

Related example: all the poetry readings are always scheduled at the same time on the same evening. Is it the organization's assumption that no-one could want to hear two or three or four different poets, and so we're obliged to choose? Last year was a spectacular example: Jerry Rothenberg, Armand Schwerner, and Norman Finkelstein in one place; Galway Kinnell, Gerald Stern, and Sharon Olds in a second; and Denise Levertov in yet a third location, all at the same time.

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297. **Charles Alexander**

Re: Metroplexities

Wed 22 Nov 1995

re Poetry, Literature and Fiction: to most of the students i teach, literature is synonymous w/ fiction. poetry, to them, is not "literature." nor is it, apparently, to bookstore organizers, who usually use the designator "literature" to mean middle-to-highbrow fiction, and distinct from "paperbacks," which are low-brow fiction. weird, isnt it. other than places like ucsd, albany and buffalo, i bet even most grad students in lit. departments have poetry-phobia. that's certainly true of both the place i was a grad student and the place where i currently teach. is that your (collective) experience?--md

That was certainly my experience in grad school, where I tutored Ph.D. students in Ezra Pound & post-Pound American poetry, about which they were particularly afraid, before their Ph.D. prelims. As for bookstores, I'm content anymore if they have poetry, and don't particularly demand that they characterize it as "literature." But these terms are constantly changing to many, aren't they? I remember coming back from college and running into my favorite high school English teacher who remarked how pleased she had been to hear I was majoring in "Letters." I still like that term.

charles

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298. **Jim Andrews**

MOCAMBOPO reading series

Wed 22 Nov 1995

Here is the schedule for the MOCAMBOPO reading series in Victoria, B.C. from June 23, 1995 till March 15, 1995. Poets interested in participating in the series should contact me (Jim Andrews) at [REDACTED] or [REDACTED].

I will be posting a call for submissions to the electronic and print magazine And Yet in the next week or so.

Mocambopo will happen every week. May it be a launching pad for the cultuwordular energies of writers and poets and letters, sounds, action. Young and old, established and not, destablished, upcoming—the hope is to provide a venue in which all manner of poets and writers are welcome and active, a place for excellence, innovation, collaboration, diverse projects, confluence, experiment, and consequence in the life of the city. The event will start every Friday at 7:30. The format will include two open mikes and a featured artist between the open mikes.

There will also be an electronic/print magazine called And Yet associated with Mocambopo in early 1996 and a link also to the Mocambopo schedule which will include sample writings, interviews, essays, etc of the writers featured at Mocambopo.

JUNE 23, 1995: JOSEPH KEPPLER Seattle's Joseph Keppler is widely regarded in Canada and America for his work as a poet, critic, editor, sculptor, and photographer. His poetry over the last few years has shifted from concentration on the aural and the visual to the creation/discovery of the language we hear (and speak) in the midst of conversation (at work, even). The result bears relation to the 'language' poetry he has been aware of for many years. He holds a mirror to everyday language and the attendant political/personal confusions.

JUNE 30: LINDA ROGERS Linda Rogers is the author of many books of poetry including *Woman at Mile Zero*, *The half life of radium*, *Hard candy*, *Letters from the doll hospital*, and *Singing rib*. She has won many awards for her work including the Stephen Leacock humour award. Linda has been a dynamic force in organising poetry events and projects in Victoria for many years.

JULY 7: PETE MARLOWE Pete Marlowe is a novelist, song-writer/singer, dramatist, and poet. His upcoming play *The Second Coming*, a comic, contemporary reworking of Euripides's *The Bacchae*, will play in Victoria October and November 1995 at The Drawing Room. He recently finished the manuscript of his second novel, *Just a Kid Like You*. Pete will be reading from it and performing some of his songs.

JULY 14: AN EVENING FOR CRAIG PIPELL Craig Piprell was a house of a heart and a startlingly talented writer. His untimely death at the age of forty shocked and saddened those who knew him—and he knew many people. He was a 300 pound biker with an M.A. in English. He was well known in Victoria (and amongst forestry companies) for his work with *Monday* magazine and his conscientious, brave environmental reportage. Lesser known was his work as a writer of poetry and fiction. Some of his friends have done a superb job in assembling some of his work into *The Lemmings Had Nowhere to Go*. Friends of Craig will read from Craig's literary legacy. "Nothing I knew or had learned prepared me for the slipperish heat; the divine cologne of freshly conjured juices at my fingertips. I moonwalked home, a thousand miles in the dark. But when I got there I felt I had arrived, not at some inevitably disappointing final destination, but at the border of unbounded opportunity. I had tickled the lock at the door to the womb. The darkness between streetlamps receded, oasis by aromatic oasis in caravansaries of light, where the anointed eagerly wait to welcome me to all the glittering secrets and jewelled joy of earth" (from "The Machinery of Night").

JULY 21: GAIL HARRIS Gail Harris, a.k.a Cow Patty and Queen of the baddies, has performed her poems and songs around Canada and England with the aplomb that accompanies The blue silk underwear of the incredible Miss Rainwater (Coach House Books). She is the author of several books of poetry also including Lady Ambivalence and her small, secret mansion and ZaZa of the Cirque Fernando.

JULY 28: JOEL SHEA Eighteen-year-old Joel Shea has impressed those who have heard him perform his poetry at Java Coffee House where he won the 'poetry contest' there recently. Joel will perform his dynamic material. He is also Dionysus in Pete Marlowe's upcoming play The Second Coming.

AUGUST 4: JIM ANDREWS Jim Andrews recently finished his first book Several Numbers Through the Lyric, a collection of poems, stories, essays, letters, and visual poems. He'll read from it and perform some of his sound poetry and audio poems. He produced the radio show FINE LINES and, later, ?FRAME?, published the magazine And Yet, and is the host of MOCAMBOPO.

AUGUST 11: DERK WYNAND Derk will read "Airborne," a 3000 word sentence. "Airborne" is a "...flight from and toward a kind of nirvana, holding on a version of letting go, everything up in the air, as he is, flying..." Derk is the author of many books of poetry including Heat Wave, Snowscapes, and One Cook Once Dreaming. Derk teaches Creative Writing at U.Vic and is the editor of The Malahat Review.

AUGUST 18: STEPHEN SCOBIE Governor General award winning poet Stephen Scobie is the author of many books of poetry including McAlmon's Chinese Opera, The Land They Gave Away, and Expecting Rain. He has written many books of literary criticism including bp Nichol: What History Teaches, Leonard Cohen, and Sheila Watson And Her Works. He is internationally regarded for his poetry, scholarship, and superb readings. He teaches English at U.Vic.

AUGUST 25: bill bissett bill is the author of over 40 books of poetry. He has read and performed his sound poetry around the world. He has created a written language all his own—though it is also an astounding embodiment of Canadian and North American idioms. Some of his recent books are the last photo of the human soul, incorrect photos, animal uproar, and Canada geese mate for life.

SEPTEMBER 1: DAVID DAY David Day has written over thirty books (Whale War, The Tolkien Encyclopedia, The Dooms-Day Book of Animals, and Work and the Working Life). He writes poetry, fiction, and books on the lore and ways of the creatures of the Earth and mind. The Doomsday Book of Animals is the basis of a television series currently airing on the BBC and Japanese television. He has a new book coming out in September called The Quest For King Arthur. David will read from an autobiographical collection of poems and stories.

SEPTEMBER 8: YVONNE OWENS Yvonne is a co-author of *The Witch's Book of Days* with Jessica North and Jean Kosikari. Yvonne also writes on the arts in *The Victoria News* and *Artichoke*. She has a series of chapbooks on magic from Reference West publishers and is one of the editors of *Hecate's Loom*.

SEPTEMBER 15: MARK JARMAN Mark is the author of *Dancing Nightly In The Tavern*, *Killing The Swan*, and *Nothing North Of Disneyland* (with Craig Piprell and Carl Grindley). He teaches English and Creative Writing at Uvic. Mark will be reading excerpts from a novel in progress.

SEPTEMBER 22: MATT FAIR Some of Matt's radio art (*The World Owes You a Living*) has been heard on National Public Radio in America on *All Things Considered*. He has published writing in *Left Bank*, *Convolvulus*, and *And Yet* (of which he was a co-editor). He will read from a two-volume work in progress.

SEPTEMBER 29: ARIEL O'SULLIVAN Ariel is widely known in Victoria for her readings and performance art. She is the author of *Braid Your Hair and Go To Brazil*. She will be reading from her new book *Blast the Morality of Kings* and new work in progress.

OCTOBER 6: DENNIS REID Dennis is the author of *The Women Who Surround Me* (poetry), *The Knife Behind the Gills* (a novel), and *How to Catch Salmon* (science fiction?). He's the province's rep. of the League of Canadian Poets and the Vice of the B.C. Federation of Writers. He's also involved in the Internet Swiftsure project. He will read the Christmas dinner fiasco from his new novel *The Knife Behind the Gills* (Ekstasis Editions), a near King Learish look at a family in 1990's rural/urban Victoria.

OCTOBER 13: DON BERGLAND Don is dean of multimedia. He propositions, therefore, several orifices (sometimes free of charge) and the brain, if it exists. Don recently returned from heading Electronic Arts's art department which involved coordinating forty artists at work on the graphics for all of Electronic Arts's software products. Don presents a kind of Disney with the Death Penalty, a vision in which he meditates Buddhistically upon such phenomenon as Donald (the mighty) Duck and the sale to Disneyland of the Mountie's image. A heavily insured event. The menu will include lugers and salmon pate. Disney spells treated on-site.

OCTOBER 20: ANNE SWANNELL Anne Swannell is the author of two books of poetry: *Drawing Circles On the Water* (Rampant Swan Publishers) and *Mall* (Rowan); her work has been published widely in Canadian, U.K., and American magazines. She is currently at work on a story for children and a third book of poems. She is also a painter, art critic and educator in the arts.

OCTOBER 27: CLIFF SYRINGE Cliff injects proust punk observations on Victoria and the cyber scar into his novel *Glasshouse*, a Johnny-Rotten-like,

Burroughsian excursion through a Gibsonian Victoria populated with Fernwood's appalling denizens. Cliff threatens also to bring his guitar and possibly others like him. Run for the hills (or James Bay).

NOVEMBER 3: CLIFF PIPELL Cliff Piprell reads from a collection of poems that detail some of his experiences prior to and through retirement. Many Victorians will be familiar with the work of Cliff's son Craig; Cliff's thoughtful, insightful presence has nurtured a family of writers.

NOVEMBER 10: P.K. PAGE P.K. Page has been a force in Canadian poetry of the mind for over 50 years. Her painterly poems (she is also a highly regarded visual artist) trace the Ur and i mage. P.K. is a kind of poetical cubist. As the title of her latest book of poems (Hologram) suggests, her work is often concerned with multiple perspectives. The grace and eloquence of her work has earned her many honours including the Governor General's award for poetry.

NOVEMBER 17: ROBERT KROETSCH Robert Kroetsch is one of Canada's most highly regarded poets, novelists, and critics. His most recent book is *A Likely Story: THE WRITING LIFE* (Red Deer College Press), an autobiographical collection of essays and poems that explore the experiences that lead to writing.

NOVEMBER 24: M.A.C. FARRANT M.A.C. Farrant is the author of five collections of fiction: *Sick Pigeon* (Thistledown), *Raw Material* (Arsenal Pulp Press), *Altered Statements* (Arsenal), *Word of Mouth* (Thistledown), and *The Congress of Human Wonders* (Arsenal). Her pointed and humorous work "...delves into our waking 'sleep'—into the dialectical world of our dreams and our nightmares as individually and communally played out through our habits and traditions." This reading is sponsored by the Canada Council; no admission charge.

DECEMBER 1: margareta waterman Originally from New York, Seattle's margareta waterman has been a force in the poetry of Seattle for many years. She is the publisher of *Nine Muses Books* and has been very active in *Red Sky* (an ongoing poetry series), and *Bumbershoot* (Seattle's huge annual Arts Festival). She is an accomplished poet whose books include *Lady Orpheus*, *Occam's Razor*, and *Astarte Calling Clytemnestra*. H.D. was an early and enduring influence on waterman's work: waterman also explores the ancient myths and their relevance to the contemporary psyche and body politic. Her work embodies an unusual fusion of classical sensibility and training with the primal/funk West Coast elements of the travelling poet. She has taught at the Naropa Institute in Boulder, Colorado and recently returned from a trip in South America described in her most recent chapbook, *some south american colors*.

DECEMBER 8: FORUM: THE INTERNET, COMPUTERS, AND POETRY What sort of effects will the Internet and digital communications have on poetry? The

effects on the language will be as they may; you could view them as relatively minor or yet more reinforcing of the metaphors between people and machines or...? The most easily explicable changes and influences will be upon the infrastructures of publishing and dissemination. It's currently difficult to find the work of many poets in foreign countries, etc. (even in Ontario or Seattle). Will work be more widely accessible world wide? What role will poetry assume in the future? Will the culture of youth be more receptive to the medium of print, given the rise of computer based communications? Will poets acclimatise to cyberspace and tease out the imaginative possibilities of the communications revolution? What are they? COME ON YOU POETS IF THE WORD IS A VIRUS LET'S GET REAL SICK AND DO UP AN EVENING ON THESE QUESTIONS. CALL ME WITH IDEAS ON WHAT WE SHOULD DO TONIGHT! Jim Andrews: [REDACTED].

DECEMBER 15: JAY RUZESKY Jay is the author of *What Was Left of James Dean* (Outlaw Editions), *Am I Glad to See You* (Thistledown), and *Painting the Yellow House Blue* (Anansi). He writes about what's spectacularly mundane and is the curator of *Lost and Found Language* ("What is a man with a pen but no words?").

DECEMBER 22: NADINE SHELLEY: POEMS FOR THE INNER EAR A sensual soundscape of deep dream mythology. A syllable waxing her wings on the moon. Erotic naturalism and evocative symbol magick. Nadine will be reading from her current manuscript of poetry *A Darktime Crossing* to celebrate the winter solstice. "When we walk by the river/ we talk of the crossing/ darktime we are crossing."

DECEMBER 29: VICTORIA: WHERE/ WHAT IS IT: ESCAPE FROM DISNEYLAND Is Victoria any place for a poet? Is there any chance of Victoria coming to be a place of innovation and excellence in poetry? What are the elements of excellent literary and intellectual culture (great bookstores, magazine shops, libraries, local literary magazines, reading series, publishers, newspapers, etc.)? Do they exist here? What can we do to create or change/energise them? CONTACT ME CONCERNING PARTICIPATION IN THIS FORUM. CAPACIOUS VISION, PLEASE. Jim Andrews, [REDACTED].

JANUARY 5: RHONDA BATCHELOR Rhonda's newest book of poems is *Interpreting Silence* (Beach Holme). "The Muse pulls up in a taxi, late. Enters on the arm of the driver who asks you for her fare from the airport. She has no bags. The reading is over and the audience has gone home without any tangible evidence. You autograph the wall dedicating everything to everyone personally. Ms. Muse is miffed, the wine's all gone. She refuses to help stack the chairs, breezes back out for a smoke and window-shops the block...." In a different poem: "She has to face it. Gracefully or not, she's ageing and going through the

change, any change, won't be easy.... In the glamour of the rising moon the voice of experience whispers to the pearl of her ear Nothing lasts forever, whispers Have no fear."

JANUARY 12: NICK NOLET Nick is well known in Victoria for her thoughtful writing poised somewhere along the edge of urban relationships and proust punk observations. "This is about love... not to be confused with a love poem." She takes great care with the phrasing of her poems but insists nonetheless on the raw and primal.

JANUARY 19: PAULINE HOLDSTOCK "Though Holdstock's subject matter is often stark and brutal, her elegant, ethereal prose turns raw reality into art." Vancouver Sun. Pauline will read from her new novel House, set in a decaying, post-Mishap London and will launch her chapbook, Mouths of The Amazon, "the first erotic poem composed entirely of words from the index to the Times Concise Atlas of the World..."

JANUARY 26: SHERI D WILSON Sheri is one of Canada's most prominent performance poets; she was recently featured in the Word Up series of videos on Much Music. She is well known for her combination of lyric strength and sophisticated, comic grace. This reading is sponsored by the Canada Council; no admission charge.

FEBRUARY 2: GERRY GILBERT Gerry's contribution to the literature of Vancouver is immense both in his own writings and his other projects. He is one of the best informed poets to be found anywhere and has been devoted to the art for about forty years. His extraordinarily agile poetry continues to influence a younger generation of poets (notably amongst those involved in the Kootenay School in Vancouver) and his radio show (Radio-freerainforest on CFRO-FM) informs B.C. of what's happening in poetry not only in Vancouver but around the world. Gerry's most recent book is Azure Blues (Talon-books). "Poetry/ the trick to read what can't be read/ quick to write what can't be said." Gilbert's readings are dynamite. An intellectual poet with a hot tongue and great ear for word jazz. This reading sponsored by the Canada Council. No admission charge.

FEBRUARY 9: JIM ANDREWS I write poetry, fiction, and criticism. I also do visual poems and sound poetry. I'm going to put myself in a spot and say that I'm going to do a lot of sound poetry. So I better get at it. I agree that good taste is the first resort of the witless. I agree that language is a technology (tool(s) made by people) and that the precision and scope of our tools determines how deeply and accurately we can think and feel. And we should also have access to the primal. I will consider the first thought in detail and read excerpts from an essay called "The Impossibility of the Mere Existence of the Great Works of the Late Twentieth Century."

FEBRUARY 16: PAUL MCKINNON Paul's comic brilliance is well known around Victoria and Vancouver. It almost looks like he's improvising. But isn't it too good to be totally improvised? And all those loose ends end up getting tied up. I think he ties up too many loose ends to be improvising too much. Yes he's funny but is he deep? Oh yes he's very deep. Smells like Curt Cobain: "there you are now, entertain us..." or carcinogenic haiku: "the dishwasher tells us/ he has cancer/ then lights a cigarette." Paul is a brilliant writer and performance guy. There you are now. Come and be entertained.

FEBRUARY 23: DAVID AYRE David has been active with The Kootenay School of Writing in Vancouver and has published various poems in such magazines as Riddle Moon. He will read from his own work and discuss the nature of the Kootenay School.

MARCH 1: DAVID P. SMITH David is highly regarded for superb performances of his poetry. His last performance at Java, a poem about Calgary, was about 15 minutes long and done without a written copy. David composes his works in his head while he paints houses. An aural/oral poet of great talent and humour.

MARCH 8: RICHARD OLAFSON Richard is a poet and the publisher of Victoria's Ekstasis Editions which is one of the primary publishers of poetry in the province. He reads widely in poetry (both internationally and within Canada), has been devoted to the art for many years, and has written several books of poetry including Blood Of The Moon Poems (1982), In Arbutus Light Saturna Poems (1987), Inner Shore (1987), Name Of Being (1986), and Roses Pearls Ocean Stars Triads (1994).

MARCH 15: TIM LANDER Tim is well known around the Pacific Northwest for his bardic West Coast lyrical long beard poems. A resident of Nanaimo, Tim is constantly travelling to where people talk about and perform poetry. He reads his poetry superbly. June 23, 1995—March 15, 1996 Schedule

MOCAMBOPO

OPEN MIKE, FEATURE WRITER

at Mocambo Coffee, 1028 Blanshard, Victoria, B.C., Canada, V8W 2H5, (604)



FRIDAYS, 7:30, \$2 at the door

Does the drop of metal shine
like a syllable in my song?

Neruda
Book of Questions

Jim Andrews, Victoria, B.C., Canada: 

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299. **Charles Alexander**

FYI

Wed 22 Nov 1995

Maybe there is someone out there interested in this possibility. As the most recent former director I certainly maintain the hope that MCBA will remain involved with poetry & poetics.

charles

>Date: Wed, 22 Nov 1995 09:44:03 -0600
> collecting" <[REDACTED]>
>From: richard g schunn <[REDACTED]>
>Subject: FYI
>To: Multiple recipients of list BOOK_ARTS-L
> <[REDACTED]>
>
>If interested please contact below address directly
>
>MCBA Search Committee
>24 North Third Street
>Minneapolis MN 55401
>tele: [REDACTED]
>
>MINNESOTA CENTER FOR BOOK ARTS SEEKS EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
>
>MCBA is one of the leading book arts institutions in the country, a center for
>professionals in the book arts, students, and the general public. Facilities
>include letterpress and offset printing, papermaking, book binding, a library
>and exhibition space. It has over 500 members and has additional financial
>support from over 100 individuals and twenty corporations and foundations.
>Over
>11,000 people visited the facility last year for classes, lectures and
>exhibitions.
>
>The Executive Director, working with a Board of Directors, is responsible for
>carrying out the mission of the Center: to nourish and interpret quality,
>integrity and creativity in the arts involved in the creation of the physical
>book; to serve artists practicing book arts and design; to involve and educate
>diverse communities, regional and national, in the book in all its contexts -
>aesthetic, cultural, social and commercial.
>

- >The Executive Director develops and implements artistic programs, is responsible
- >for financial management and staff, coordinates fundraising activities, works
- >with artists in Minnesota and elsewhere to create professional opportunities
- >that advance the field.
- >
- >Background should include experience as an artist and as an administrator of
- >artistic programs for at least five years, and an ability to develop local and
- >national networks.
- >
- >
- >Letters of interest or applications and a resume should be sent to:
- >
- >MCBA Search Committee
- >24 North Third Street
- >Minneapolis MN 55401
- >
- >
- >
- >
- >CRITICAL TASKS/CHALLENGES
- >
- >1. Provide the artistic and creative leadership that will attract artists and
- >related organizations, in both the Twin Cities and nationally, in building
- >outstanding programs.
- >
- >2. Relationship building with the board and all related parts of the (local)
- >community.
- >
- >3. Financial and business management of MCBA, including generating earned
- >income and development dollars.
- >
- >4. Creating a strong (effective and flexible) administrative team, managing
- >and growing the staff.
- >
- >5. Focusing priorities and resources to enhance strategy, long term goals,
- >and short term needs.
- >
- >COMPETENCIES OR SPECIAL QUALIFICATIONS
- >

- >1. Management experience with 5 - 20 people, budgets of \$300 - 750,000 and
>program complexity.
>
- >2. Experience (bottom line responsibility) for earned income.
>
- >3. Implementation skills - planning, organizing, setting priorities.
>
- >4. Strategic thinking - ability to articulate a long range plan and
>implement programs accordingly.
>
- >5. Ability to grow and organization and to collaborate with others.
>
- >6. Communication skills, both written and oral, for dealing with a
variety of
>constituents.
>
- >7. Pragmatic judgment, decisive - ability to see key issues.
>
- >8. Board relationship skills.
>
- >9. Presence, social skills, engaging style.
>
- >10. Community savvy, especially Twin Cities.
>
- >11. Ability to relate to artists.
>
- >12. Stature within his/her given field (preferably graphic arts and design).
>
>
>
>
>
>
>

- > [REDACTED] (w) [REDACTED] ext 302
- >richard g schunn (h) [REDACTED]
>
> Design Center for American Urban Landscape
>
> <http://www.umn.edu/nlhome/m471/schun001/schun001.html>
>

- >
>

300. **Timothy Liu**
BARNES & NOBLE, THE CHAINS

Wed 22 Nov 1995

Many chains across the country (B&N, Brentano's, Borders) consider LITERATURE to be synonymous with LITERARY PROSE, hence providing a nice umbrella for various fictions, memoirs, essays, belles lettres, etc. Perhaps in the near future, there will simply be either PROSE or VERSE sections . . .

While it may be a pleasant surprise to find a Susan Howe title at a B&N Vermont, the future may actually be looking grim.

The chains are forcing many independent booksellers to fold. In Chicago, Stuart Brent Books on Michigan Ave, will close its doors in January after decades of service. Although Borders and Waterstone's just down the street stock ample Sun&Moon titles (whereas Stuart Brent did not), none of these stores carry titles from ROOF, CHAX, O BOOKS, BURNING DECK, etc. Ironically, if Stuart Brent were to remain open, they'd have the easiest time ordering from smaller presses. Why?

The chains rely on a centralized ordering office. While I am not a self-proclaimed avant-garde poet, I have been facing new challenges to get my books (from Copper Canyon Press and Alice James Books) into stores run by the chains. In the past, directly contacting an owner or buyer at an Independent might have been enough to persuade the store to stock a copy or two of a particular title. But with the chains, if your ISBN# is not in the system, you're fucked.

The chains will "gladly" special order any book in print, yet aren't many of our books purchased after an initial browse (NECROMANCE by Rae Armantrout comes to my mind). Other books require return visits to a store, repeat browsings, to finally win me over. An independent bookstore can provide both the shelf space and the time (often years) for books of poetry to sell. Meanwhile, B&N sends back all its unsold Sun&Moon titles within six months (often damaged beyond resale).

As a practice, I try to only patronize the independents. Whenever in Cambridge, I lay my cash down at the Grolier before sauntering off to other stores run by local/national chains. The Grolier even helped me complete my Leslie Scalapino collection this summer by mail (1-800- 234-POEM). I must admit its great to see BIG poetry sections at the chains (sure beats B. Dalton or Walden Books), but the money we save off list price is a bad investment for the long run if the chains are luring us away from the independents.

Other thoughts on this?

--Timothy Liu

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301. **Joseph Zitt**
Re: Metroplexities

Wed 22 Nov 1995

On 21 Nov 95 at 13:41, Jordan Davis wrote:

The poetry buyer at Barnes & Noble does a pretty good job (tho small press folks may differ). Hidden Meaning: He's just taken on about fifteen Teachers & Writers titles to be available shortly in the "writing & publishing" (shiver) section. He's reading Vollman and Bobrowski (sp?--the ND poet) these days..

Our Barnes and Noble in Dallas does pretty well, with a wider selection of poetry than any of the smaller stores that I know of. I got "Poems of the Millenium" and the Kurt Schwitters collection (both edited by Rothenberg & Joris, of course).

Which reminds me, tangentially: I did a Sound Poetry event tonight, and all three of us who were reading (there was a fourth ...uhh... performer who did something with blood and feedback positioned in that well-abandoned nomansland between Ozzy Osbourne and Nam Jun Paik) came planning to read Hugo Ball's "Gadji Beri Bimbira". Fortunately, we got to talking beforehand, and ended up doing it as a trio, trading off lines. (I also took a crack at the 3rd Movement of the Ursonata, which went over well, though I'm not sure how accurate it was.) -----1-----1-----1-----1-----1-----1-----1----- |||/ Joseph Zitt ===== [REDACTED] ===== Human Systems \\\| \\\| Organizer, SILENCE: The John Cage Mailing List \\\| \\\|Joe Zitt's Home Page\|

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302. **Jeff Hansen**
Saro-Wiwa

Wed 22 Nov 1995

Dear poetics list,

I will send out the letters to Clinton, Shell Oil, and Nigeria this weekend. They are printed up. If any of you missed out, please write your own letters. Daniel Bouchard's posting of a couple days ago contained important addresses. (The only changes to the letter were that I mentoned eight people killed other than

Saro-Wiwa per Chax's suggestion and added a short piece to the Nigerian and Clinton letter about how we will publicize the situation.)

A few people questioned the value of proceeding in the way we have. One reason to write these letters, for me, is personal satisfaction. I feel that I at least told the tyrants what I think, even if they don't listen. Another is that politicians and business people do care about PR and do pay attention to how many letters they receive that present a position on an issue. We might, with other individuals and groups, have an impact.

But finally, it is important to me that writers band together to express ethical/political opinions as writers. The act of putting fingers on a keyboard provides us with insights not given to other professions. I feel that we should sometimes express these insights in a public forum. What do you think? It's an old question, but what is the political role of the artist? (I am not asking what the political impact of poetry is--as I've already noted on this list, that seems to me almost nil--but what we should do as a small voting bloc.)

Any ideas,

Jeff

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303. **Eryque Gleason**

Re: BARNES & NOBLE, THE CHAINS

Wed 22 Nov 1995

The chains are forcing many independent booksellers to fold. In Chicago, Stuart Brent Books on Michigan Ave, will close its doors in January after decades of service. Although Borders and Waterstone's just down the street stock ample Sun&Moon titles (whereas Stuart Brent did not), none of these stores carry titles from ROOF, CHAX, O BOOKS, BURNING DECK, etc. Ironically, if Stuart Brent were to remain open, they'd have the easiest time ordering from smaller presses. Why?

The chains rely on a centralized ordering office.

I ran into this problem at those specific stores while trying to get _bloo3_ in local bookstores. Although Stuart Brent didn't take it on consignment either, they looked at it for a few days before saying no thanks. B.Dalton, Borders, B&N, Waterstones all said that that i'd have to send a copy to the New York office. The Barbara's chain all took it no problem, (does anyone know if they're a national or local chain?) as did 57th St. Books (which along with it's sister store, is better than Disneyland in my opinion).

Eryque

304. **Charles Alexander**
Re: BARNES & NOBLE, THE CHAINS

Thu 23 Nov 1995

Thanks to Timothy Liu for a great post on chain bookstores/independents, etc. And he asked for further thoughts. As a publisher, this topic certainly gets a lot of thought, and a lot of discussion time with others publishing books.

The chains, I believe, are not only forcing a lot of independent bookstores to close, but they are also forcing other bookstores to do business in ways similar to the chains. Among other things, this pushes to greater conformity in books. I'm talking about the physical object here, meaning books are generally certain sizes, have glossy laminated or matte finish covers, certainly have their ISBN numbers prominent, and have bar codes. While I've gone along with this at Chax to a certain extent, I often wonder what's gained. By that I mean, are enough copies sold in bookstores which demand this kind of product, to justify the conformity of design & vision it demands. Increasingly I think no, but it's hard to convince authors, among others of that.

In addition, getting books into stores like Borders and Barnes & Noble is relatively recent for small press literary publishers. And yes, some (Sun & Moon is one) get them into such stores in large numbers. But Timothy is absolutely right to point out how high the returns are on such books. This is something that several small publishers did not adequately predict, and I know it has hurt some rather tremendously, as one has to honor returns to such bookstores (they have tremendous clout) either through cash or credit (usually these books have been bought and paid for already).

Finally, there is some danger that if the largest chains can kill off enough independent booksellers, the chains will be the only sales outlet other than direct sales to libraries and individuals. This means, in effect, that they will have even greater control over what is published & how it is published. So, for example, if they decide not to carry Sun & Moon or any other press, that press is forced to deal with the possibility of selling several hundred copies of books rather than a couple of thousand copies of books.

Increasingly I think the onus is on us to shop the independents whenever possible, including by mail order, and to buy directly from publishers, even though that may not be terribly convenient (and the largest of the small press publishers often discourage it, as they don't have staff & time to deal with the orders -- the smallest of such publishers need those direct sales even though they still don't have the staff & time to deal with the orders), even though it moves away from browsing possibilities -- hopefully there will still be

opportunities for that, but there may not. It also puts a responsibility on independent publishers to remain independent in their ways, their design sense, their marketing strategies, and in basically every way they can, and not to capitulate to market pressure to do what the chains want. This is where a lot of people disagree with me, but it has not yet been proven to me that there is any big advantage in having one's books, if those books are built around alternative and/or individual visions and aesthetics, in bookstores where such alternity and individuality are profoundly discouraged.

One of the literary editors & publishers I respect most simply refuses to deal with the demands of these chains, and refuses to deal with at least one major distributor, Baker & Taylor, out of principle (like Baker & Taylor recently simply announcing that they will be charging all presses a certain amount per book for any books which come to them without bar codes) and out of experiences with returns which make him doubt the efficacy of doing business with them. I have not come to that point yet, but I'm close.

charles

ps -- for those of you who ordered Mary Margaret Sloan's *The Said Lands, Islands, and Premises* (and some ordered other books along with it), in response to a notice on this list -- that book was delayed a couple of weeks, but it is now finished & received from printers. I will begin filling those orders just after Thanksgiving. And thank you very much. *The Bounty*, by Myung Mi Kim, is still expected in mid-January.

Charles Alexander
Chax Press
P.O. Box 19178
Minneapolis, MN 55419-0178
[REDACTED] (phone & fax)
[REDACTED]

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305. **Marjorie Perloff**
Re: Condition of Poetry in the Academy

Thu 23 Nov 1995

This is in answer to Maria, Keith, Charles Alexander, et al:

Maria, I disagree only insofar as the people you're talking about HATE FICTION TOO, at least any interesting or experimental fiction. At your alma mater here, the undergrads actually love poetry--all they need is a little exposure. As for the grads, the ones who entered about 5 years ago and are now coming to the job market, HATE LITERATURE, period. They're Puritanical, and the idea of

actually enjoying reading anything seems wrong. It's got to do "cultural work." So we have endless dissertations (I just got a list) of cost accounting in the 18th C and narrative The brewery and ale house in the 16th C The Temperance movement and gender

Anything, but to have to figure out what the poetic or literary might actually be.

But (the good news): the incoming class (which I now teach) is very different. We've just read (in the theory context of the Intro to Grad Studies in which we read Adorno, Benjamin, Barthes, Serres, etc), Bernstein's A POETICS and Howe's THE BIRTHMARK. The class (mostly in Renaissance and 18th C) loved both and discussed them with incredible enthusiasm and argument. So there's hope....

Allan Golding asks why MLA schedules all the poetry programs at same time. I don't think it's a plot; it's simple ignorance on the part of the schedulers. They don't have a clue. If something comes out of the Poetry Division and something else out of, say, American Lit division, you don't think it occurs to them that both are on contemp poetry, do you? Perhaps next year we should send in PROVISOS: Warning, do NOT schedule at same time as session run by X or Y. I'm serious. They might just do it.

Marjorie Perloff

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306. **Rod Smith**

Book Party for new Cage/Retallack

Thu 23 Nov 1995

Publication Celebration for the new Wesleyan University
Press Publication:

_MUSICAGE/CAGE MUSES ON WORDS. ART. MUSIC: John Cage in
Conversation with Joan Retallack_

at Bridge Street Books
2814 Pennsylvania Ave NW
Washington, DC 20007
ph [REDACTED]

in Georgetown across from the Biograph theatre.

MUSICAGE features 350 pages of discussions with Cage which range across his career in the arts (plural!). The last of these discussions took place just twelve days before his death. Retallack will also read from _A F T E R R I M A G E S_, her recent book of poems from Wesleyan.

Mail order of signed copies of these books is available (free shipping!) for a limited time. *_MUSICAGE_* is \$29.95 (cloth), *_A F T E R R I M A G E S_* is \$12.95 (paperback). Order by phone or e-mail [REDACTED].

>>support independent booksellers<<

& as always,

B. Y. O. E. (Bring Your Own Ears)

Happy Thanks.

--Rod

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307. **R I Caddel**

Poetry, Literature

Thu 23 Nov 1995

Ah - just one local tale to add here: amongst the wreckage of a small branch library which was closing (financial cutbacks) I discovered the following plastic shelf sign:

AMERICAN SPORT - LITERATURE AND POETRY

Unhappily, the bookstock which it would have signed had long since been dispersed - so I can't tell you if it really did represent a whole bay of novels and poems about baseball etc. Another entry in the Catalogue of Lost Books.

x	x x Richard Caddel,	E-
mail: R.I.Caddel @ durham.ac.uk	x x Durham University Library,	Phone:
0 [REDACTED]	x x Stockton Rd. Durham DH1 3LY	Fax: 0 [REDACTED]
x x	x x	"Words! Pens are too light.
Take a chisel to write."	x x	- Basil Bunting
x x	x	

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308. **Ron Silliman**

Fwd: Response to your comments on the Shell Web Site

Thu 23 Nov 1995

Jeff,

Thanks for writing the letters. Sign me on. Thought you would like to see the response I got from the Shell Website. I reckon they are getting a number of these and answering them in batches. Anybody got the London address??

Ron Silliman

To: distribution:@shellus.com; (see end of body)
Subject: Response to your comments on the Shell Web Site
Date: Tue, 21 Nov 1995 08:25:27 -0600
From: Andy Frush <[REDACTED]>

Shell Oil Company, the U.S. operating company in the Royal Dutch/Shell Group of companies has no operations, employees or investments in Nigeria. Therefore, we are not in a position to comment on events or issues in that country.

Your message will passed along to Shell International Petroleum Company in London who deals directly with the Group operating company doing business in Nigeria.

%%% overflow headers %%%

To: [REDACTED], [REDACTED], [REDACTED],
[REDACTED], [REDACTED], [REDACTED],
[REDACTED], [REDACTED], [REDACTED],
[REDACTED],
[REDACTED], [REDACTED], [REDACTED],
[REDACTED], [REDACTED],
[REDACTED],
[REDACTED], [REDACTED], [REDACTED],
[REDACTED], [REDACTED], [REDACTED],
[REDACTED], [REDACTED],
[REDACTED], [REDACTED],
[REDACTED],
[REDACTED], [REDACTED]

%%% end overflow headers %%%

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309. **Joseph Zitt**
Re: Poetry/Fiction/Literature divisions
Thu 23 Nov 1995

On 23 Nov 95 at 8:02, Maria Damon wrote:

*so, who among us will take up the challenge to do for swooshy-capped poetry
what jan radway and tania modleski did for harlequins and other romance
genres? --md*

Hm?! What did they do? -----1-----1-----1-----1-----1-----1-----1 |||/
Joseph Zitt ==== [REDACTED] ===== Human Systems \||| ||/ Organizer,

SILENCE: The John Cage Mailing List \|| |/Joe Zitt's Home Page\|

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310. **Maria Damon**

Re: Poetry/Fiction/Literature divisions

Thu 23 Nov 1995

gwyn writes:

Danielle Steel (e?) *has* tried her hand at verse. A bright pink book of hers with embossed gold lettering, swooshy caps, the whole bit, sits in the poetry section at my local Borders.

Gwyn

so, who among us will take up the challenge to do for swooshy-capped poetry what jan radway and tania modleski did for harlequins and other romance genres? --md

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311. **Maria Damon**

Re: Steiniana

Thu 23 Nov 1995

re roitman's

Whoever, said it, thanks for

"a kind of davening perhaps."--

yeah i thot that wz cool 2. did anyone in nyc catch me and charles b on the radio about a month ago talking about stein's jewishness? it was fun, esp. defending her against charges that she was friends w/ a collaborationist (bernard fai -sp?-). we both bristled and came to her defense just as the program ended. afterwards we talked abt the possibility of having a stein discussion circle at some future mla. "discussion circle" what a concept for that top-down forum. let's infiltrate!--md

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312. **Maria Damon**

Re: Metroplexities

Thu 23 Nov 1995

Keith writes to moi:

For Maria D:

"Poetry-phobia" would mean at least some experience of poetry, no? Whereas most junior faculty I know here couldn't give a rat's ass for poetry. I'm constantly saying, like, why don't you put a little Brathwaite or Cesaire in that Caribbean lit/post-colonial seminar you're teaching? Blank smiles: yeah sure Keith. Other than a little Wordsworth creeping into seminars on one or another topic in romanticism, other than the chair's fascination for Stevens and a 70 year-old's genuflections before Pound, poetry is left to me, who has it "covered." I'd be surprised if your situation at UM was news to anybody.

Okay --but how did all of you get hired? are we just tokens, some of us multiply so by virtue of gender race etc as well as "eccentric"-- i.e. contemporary american poetics rather than past english prose-- field of scholarship? i was puzzled to be so heavily recruited and then not supported once i took the position. --md

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313. **Charles Alexander**
Re: Poetry/Fiction/Literature divisions

Thu 23 Nov 1995

gwyn writes:

*Danielle Steel (e?) *has* tried her hand at verse. A bright pink book of hers with embossed gold lettering, swooshy caps, the whole bit, sits in the poetry section at my local Borders.*

Gwyn

so, who among us will take up the challenge to do for swooshy-capped poetry what jan radway and tania modleski did for harlequins and other romance genres? --md

Susan Bee & Charles Bernstein already have, in *The Nude Formalism*, although there's much else in that book as well.

charles

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314. **Keith Tuma**
Re: Metroplexities

Thu 23 Nov 1995

Maria asks are we tokens, etc.

Yup, probably, in a system still organized by ideas of periodicity and field. So we're no more tokens than the local Chaucer scholar, except that he/she isn't thought to be vaguely attached to or at odds with the mostly ignored institutionalized creative writing professors. "Poetics" as a discourse still is not recognized within those period-leaping, field bashing discourses-- theory, "cultural studies," etc.--which might help us, despite local efforts such as the one marjorie details or Charles B's seminar on the "ordinary" at Buffalo. At most institutions the introduction to theory course is already "owned" by one or two or three people just as is the contemporary poetry course. It seems to me that we need to be more aggressive in attacking these disciplinary models/structures by 1) insisting that poetics is not applied theory (and therefore subordinate to one field-crossing discourse) and 2) working harder to make contemporary poetics and poetry speak to the Skelton or Chaucer or Wyatt or Wordsworth scholar--understandably, we've been preoccupied with promoting "our own"--and 3) working to problematize certain cultural studies assumptions that make or understand contemporary poetry and poetics as a self-marginalized or elite practice of small concern to everyday life.

Notice that in this year's MLA joblist the one job that seems in comparative abundance and NOT attached to some traditionally-defined historical field is not "theory"--certainly not "poetics"--but ethnic studies. Not many jobs in contemporary poetry, sad to say for my unemployed friends, and from what I can make out some ads that seem to be asking for people writing on cont. poetry aren't really looking for anybody likely to be a part of this list.

Signed,
The Happy Turkey

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315. **Aldon L. Nielsen**
Re: more work for Loss?

Thu 23 Nov 1995

somebody suggested a possible e-mail exchange among those of us speaking at MLA and unable to get to each other's panels -- I'd like to see that -- would it be possible to arrange an address where such longer items might be posted for general downloading? could also be used to post some of the very long schedules & other info, with precis posted to POETICS list alerting readers to its presence at this other address??

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316. **Aldon L. Nielsen**

Re: The Great Poetry Coverup

Thu 23 Nov 1995

Keith's posting raises another problem familiar to most of us in academia -- many departments feel that having hired one "poetry person" the ground is covered -- Thus students are often confined within the interests and fileds of that one person -- Departments are also curiously unable to see distinctions among people who study poetry -- Thus, while a large English department may have a Victorianist -- A Rhetorician -- A postcolonial studies person -- an early American Lit. person -- etc. -- these folk are liable to work mostly on prose, and the department is unlikely to understand that one might do well to have people in these fields who work on verse, as well -- Not that I expect any ark actually to hold two of every species -- but this is a large part of the reason so few grad. students these days have anything like the knowledge of poetry that they have of other literary forms --

and often English departments, having hired a "practicing poet" (love that term, will assign all classes in verse to []) -- there's the other paren. for you -- that poet,,, and see no need to hire an additional person knowledgeable in other areas of poetry --

Keith's example is on the mark -- not only do few departments give serious considertaion to postcolonial studies scholars working primarily in poetry,,, ethnic studies in the academy is marked by the same problem -- One reason, for example, that very few grad. students have any familiarity with contemporary African-American poetry is that they only read fiction in their lit. seminar --

speaking of which -- If you haven't already got it, be sure to read Harryette Mullen's *_Muse & Drudge_* just out from Gil Ott's press!!!

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317. **Tony Green**

Re: Condition of Poetry & Art in the Academy

Thu 23 Nov 1995

---I bet someone here cd speak for Music in the Academy too as a BLASTED ACADEMIC OAK. Do you think art historians actually enjoy pictures and statues any more than Eng dept persons like and enjoy reading? In an attempt at a collaborative teaching session with a puritanical colleague, I remarked to the students that x and y and z were what gave me pleasure in the paintings of Claude Lorraine. Gee, the look of shock/horror and distaste on my colleague's face was a real picture. He pronounced my pleasures as subjective and

irrelevant. Do not imagine for a moment that this is localized POETRY bashing, it is one of the horrors of academic life in general that the arts are regarded one and all as intel lectually inferior amusements.

The REASONS, the intellectual RATIONALE in the Academy? Is there one?

Tony Green,

e-mail: [REDACTED]

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318. **Wystan Curnow**

Re: Metroplexities

Thu 23 Nov 1995

Keith, Thank you for that summary of the situation in the academy--it seems accurate from here--and for the list of what to do. I teach in both theory and poetics; just as I won't teach poetics as applied theory, nor will I teach theory as applied theory. Poetics and theory need to find more common institutional ground...

So there is a battle over what is Literature, is it fiction as the Barnes & the Nobles say, or is it poetry? The Academy is still making up its mind whether its fiction or cultural studies but its pretty clear its not poetry. Here, on this list, we say poetry IS Literature, and historically that's so; 'poetics' is the theory of literary (to say the least) practice, not just poetic. Poetry is not a genre, which is what keeps it interesting and of value. Fiction is, but I prefer movies. Tell me I'm wrong.

Wystan

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319. **Rachel Loden**

for Maria D.

Fri 24 Nov 1995

Maria Damon wrote:

did anyone in nyc catch me and charles b on the radio about a month ago talking about stein's jewishness?

Maria: tell us more, please, about this--if it suits you--

Rachel Loden

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320. **Charles Alexander**
Re: for Maria D.

Fri 24 Nov 1995

Maria Damon wrote:

*did anyone in nyc catch me and charles b on the
radio about a month ago talking about stein's jewishness?*

Maria: tell us more, please, about this--if it suits you--

Rachel Loden

and/or

what radio program, address, phone, contact, do they offer transcripts or tapes?

charles

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321. **H. T. KIRBY-SMITH**
Question

Fri 24 Nov 1995

This may be irrelevant to the current purposes of this list, but I was wondering how a person knows for sure that she or he is a poet?

Is there any place where Emily Dickinson speaks of herself as a poet?

I suppose that now that Seamus Heaney has been Professor of Poetry at Oxford, and Boylston Professor at Harvard, and has won the Nobel Prize, he may feel reasonably assured that someone thinks he is a poet. It appears that God told Milton that he was.

Is there any place where William Carlos Williams speaks of himself as a poet?

Stephen Spender once paid a visit to T. S. Eliot at Faber and Faber, and after he left, Eliot remarked to someone, "He talked a lot about being a poet but he didn't say anything about writing poetry."

Tom Kirby-Smith
English Department
UNC-Greensboro
Greensboro NC 27412

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322. **Rod Smith**

Re: Book Party for new Cage/Retallack

Fri 24 Nov 1995

It has been brought to my attn that there is a rather important piece of information missing from this announcement, the date & time, which is

SUNDAY, NOV. 26th @ 8 PM ;)

_MUSICAGE/CAGE MUSES ON WORDS. ART. MUSIC: John Cage in
Conversation with Joan Retallack_

at Bridge Street Books
2814 Pennsylvania Ave NW
Washington, DC 20007
ph [REDACTED]

in Georgetown across from the Biograph theatre.

MUSICAGE features 350 pages of discussions with Cage which range across his career in the arts (plural!). The last of these discussions took place just twelve days before his death. Retallack will also read from _A F T E R R I M A G E S_, her recent book of poems from Wesleyan.

Mail order of signed copies of these books is available (free shipping!) for a limited time. _MUSICAGE_ is \$29.95 (cloth), _A F T E R R I M A G E S_ is \$12.95 (paperback). Order by phone or e-mail [REDACTED].

>>support independent booksellers<<

& as always,

B. Y. O. E. (Bring Your Own Ears)

Happy Thanks.

--Rod

& thanks to those that have ordered books.

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323. **Tenney Nathanson**

literal characters and vatic lines

Fri 24 Nov 1995

Date: Wed, 22 Nov 1995 22:46:29 -0800

From: Marjorie Perloff <[REDACTED]>

Subject: Re: Condition of Poetry in the Academy

This is in answer to Maria, Keith, Charles Alexander, et al: [. . .]

At your
alma mater here, the undergrads actually love poetry--all they need is a
little exposure. As for the grads, the ones who entered about 5 years
ago and are now coming to the job market, HATE LITERATURE, period.
They're Puritanical, and the idea of actually enjoying reading anything
seems wrong. It's got to do "cultural work." So we have endless
dissertations (I just got a list) of
cost accounting in the 18th C and narrative
The brewery and ale house in the 16th C
The Temperance movement and gender

Anything, but to have to figure out what the poetic or literary might
actually be.

But (the good news): the incoming class (which I now teach) is very
different. We've just read (in the theory context of the Intro to Grad
Studies in which we read Adorno, Benjamin, Barthes, Serres, etc),
Bernstein's A POETICS and Howe's THE BIRTHMARK. The class (mostly in
Renaissance and 18th C) loved both and discussed them with incredible
enthusiasm and argument. So there's hope....

Marjorie--

obscene though it be in such a workaday context, Benjamin quoting Kafka
popped into my head here: "but not for us." Seriously, I'm wondering whether
you think your first-year class at Stanford is a fluke, or whether you think
you've turned a corner there, and whether you think we might have turned one
nationally. I'm reminded of the close-reading/anti-close-reading debate on the
list a few months ago, which for several of us who teach had the corollary you
traverse in your post: hegemonic methods aside, ahem, it just seems as if a lot
of grad students today have no notion at all of how to close read, or of how it
might actually open poems up in a way that makes them a lot more interesting.
Here at Arizona, where I've been Grad Director for about three years now, the
program keeps getting more and more selective: it's nothing like Stanford I'm
sure, but we now admit only about 10% of those who apply. And as we get
more selective (and I think we do a good job with admissions, with plenty of
attention to writing samples, so that we don't let all the real gems slip away)
the classes get less interesting, for the reasons you note in your post. There are
certainly dramatic exceptions--a couple on this list, both from Stanford and
here--but the trend has been pretty grim.

any Rx's out there?

wearing my trousers rolled I guess,

Tenney

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324. **Tenney Nathanson**
web?

Fri 24 Nov 1995

Date: Thu, 23 Nov 1995 10:36:38 -0800
From: "Aldon L. Nielsen" <[REDACTED]>
Subject: Re: more work for Loss?

somebody suggested a possible e-mail exchange among those of us speaking at MLA and unable to get to each other's panels -- I'd like to see that -- would it be possible to arrange an address where such longer items might be posted for general downloading? could also be used to post some of the very long schedules & other info, with precis posted to POETICS list alerting readers to its presence at this other address??

Ron Silliman's ambitious suggestion seemed like a terrific answer: would it be possible to set up an archive of MLA papers by list members? Retrievable via either FTP or the EPC web site? Would it be a lot of work to create such an archive?

Alternatively:

could list members be encouraged to load their essays onto their own accounts, and then to email them to list members who request them backchannel? They'd of course have to post to the list telling everyone they have such and such a paper available.

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325. **Loss Glazier**
Mon. Night: epclive!

Fri 24 Nov 1995

THIS WEEK ON EPCLIVE ...

11/27 ...

Exchange--

"on

Writing

e s "

and

i

A n t h o l o g

----->

"Events" are semi-formal discussions with invited guest(s) and a prearranged topic; "Open Field" is a collaborative improvisation session; "Exchanges" are informal discussions around a general theme.

<----

This first series of happenings on EPCLIVE (the real-time performance channel on the undernet IRC network) will take place Mondays from 6:30-8pm EST (11:30pm GMT).

--> For more info <http://writing.upenn.edu/epc/epclive>

<--

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326. **Loss Glazier**

Re: more work for loss

Fri 24 Nov 1995

This would be no problem whatsoever!

In fact would be a great use of this space.

All I would need is the texts either

in the body of an e-mail message (preferred)

or

on a diskette

.....

and such a page (downloading site) could be put up very quickly! (We could even call it "Alternatives in MLA 95" or something y'all might think up

Aldon and others, I look forward to hearing from you on this...

somebody suggested a possible e-mail exchange among those of us speaking at MLA and unable to get to each other's panels -- I'd like to see that -- would it be possible to arrange an address where such longer items might be posted for general downloading? could also be used to post some of the very long schedules & other info, with precis posted to POETICS list alerting readers to its presence at this other address??

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327. **Loss Glazier**

Re: more work for loss (addendum)

Fri 24 Nov 1995

In fact, a list of "recommended" / relevant (to this list) events might also be a useful item to have put up ...

Forwarded message:

>

This would be no problem whatsoever!

>...[edited for brevity]

>

> Aldon and others, I look forward to hearing from you on this...

>

>

>

> > somebody suggested a possible e-mail exchange among those of us
> > speaking at MLA and unable to get to each other's panels -- I'd like
> > to see that -- would it be possible to arrange an address where such
> > longer items might be posted for general downloading? could also be
> > used to post some of the very long schedules & other info, with
> > precis posted to POETICS list alerting readers to its presence at
> > this other address??

>

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328. **Michael Boughn**

Re: Question

Fri 24 Nov 1995

*Is there any place where William Carlos Williams speaks of himself as
a poet?*

Tom Kirby-Smith

Yes, in an agonized and terrific shriek, at the end of "Desert Music":

I *am* a poet! I

am. I am. I am a poet, I reaffirmed, ashamed.

Best,

Mike



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329. **Donald J. Byrd**

Re: literal characters and vatic lines

Fri 24 Nov 1995

Marjorie Perloff:

> > At your

> >alma mater here, the undergrads actually love poetry--all they need is a

> >little exposure. As for the grads, the ones who entered about 5 years

> >ago and are now coming to the job market, HATE LITERATURE, period.

Tenney Nathanson:

*There are certainly
dramatic exceptions--a couple on this list, both from Stanford and here--but
the trend has been pretty grim.*

any Rx's out there?

It seems to me that graduate students are, by and large, learning precisely what they are being taught. It is only necessary to look at the program for the MLA Conference to see that the _literary_ does not get much attention in the profession at large. After all, students write the dissertations that Marjorie mentions because there are faculty ready to direct them.

One might speculate about the reason students and their mentors are more interested in cultural minutiae than literary texts.

Some of the reasons are fairly justifiable. For one thing, there is original research to be done. Of course, there has been a lot written about Shakespeare, Milton, et. al., but I saw a chart some time back of how many dissertations had been written on lesser figures. I do not remember the precise numbers, but there were huge numbers on even the minor figures who appear in anthologies.

Moreover, theory is very powerful and sexy. It is obviously inefficient to read a hundred novels and poems, when you can get it all, conceptually, in three or four books by Foucault and a couple of others.

You _can't_, of course, but literary people, who tend to be rightfully suspicious of concepts and awkward in their application, have done a lousy job of explaining _why_ you can't. Most proponents of literature appear to graduate students as fuddy-duddies, and I fear that often they are.

In the closing paragraph of _Discipline and Punish_, Foucault notes: "...the notions of institutions of repression, rejection, exclusion, marginalization, are not adequate to describe, at the very centre of the carceral city, the formation of the insidious leniencies, unavowable petty cruelties, small acts of cunning, calculated methods, techniques, 'sciences' that permit the fabrication of the disciplinary individual." And he goes on to say that in all of this, "we must hear the distant roar of battle."

Foucault has articulated a subtle strategy for that battle as he understands, and a lot of people have understandably responded positively.

It seems to me that Foucault is mistaken about the nature of that battle and the logic involved in it, but he makes an attractive argument.

I have been called a "prophet of doom" more than once recently, but the argument for literature (for art in general) and its strategic use in the battle

(which now seems more than a distant roar) has not been widely advanced, and it takes a great deal of redundancy to make any complex argument hearable. And, for the most part, literary people continue to make the argument in terms of the same romantic logic as the culturalists. It is as if there had been no significant _formal_ developments since Marx, Nietzsche, and Freud. Our close readings may be brilliant but we do not point out that the theoretical implications of _Stanzas in Meditation_, _Finnegans Wake_, _Hermetic Definitions_, _"A"_, or "Passages." We have not made clear the strategic value of this activity in the battle.

At any rate, if the students are buying, it seems to me that it must be our fault, not theirs. What are we telling them? What do we have to offer? With all due respect, not a great deal of what passes on this list strikes me as gripping. And I do not mean to be pessimistic. We are not through with the art of this century. I recently saw the Brancusi show in Philadelphia and the Mondrian show in NY, and I am still much inclined to think that they and their literary colleagues make places available that are yet to be inhabited.

Don Byrd

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330. **Ken Edwards**

Shell

Fri 24 Nov 1995

Ron,

You wrote

"Thanks for writing the letters. Sign me on. Thought you would like to see the response I got from the Shell Website. I reckon they are getting a number of these and answering them in batches. Anybody got the London address??"

Shell International are based in the UK at

Shell Centre

London SE1

Tel 0 [REDACTED]

- Ken

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331. **Charles Alexander**

Re: web?

Fri 24 Nov 1995

somebody suggested a possible e-mail exchange among those of us speaking at MLA and unable to get to each other's panels -- I'd like to see that -- would it be possible to arrange an address where such longer items might be posted for general downloading? could also be used to post some of the very long schedules & other info, with precis posted to POETICS list alerting readers to its presence at this other address??

Ron Silliman's ambitious suggestion seemed like a terrific answer: would it be possible to set up an archive of MLA papers by list members? Retrievable via either FTP or the EPC web site? Would it be a lot of work to create such an archive?

I never thought of this list as necessarily confined to the academy, even if it does originate at a university. So why just MLA papers? If we do it, why not any papers, essays, reviews, by list members. But doesn't the list, or at least the EPC site, already have that possibility built into it? Loss? Ken?

thanks,

charles

Charles Alexander

Chax Press

P.O. Box 19178

Minneapolis, MN 55419-0178

██████████ (phone & fax)

██████████

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332. **Ron Silliman**

Re: Steiniana {corrected}; shelflife

Fri 24 Nov 1995

For myself, I always liked the fact the the Dewey Decimel system classifies poetry as a type of nonfiction, unlike novels and short stories. I would encourage bookstores to shelve poetry along with the other nonfiction books, where it belongs.

--Charles Bernstein

My favorite classification system was the one that Small Press Traffic used when it was still in that small front room in Noe Valley: Men, Women, Fiction.

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333. **Tenney Nathanson**

Don Byrd's post

Sat 25 Nov 1995

Don--

yes, "we" must be teaching "it" or the students (grad) wouldn't be reproducing it. I do think that a lot of "lit" oriented types are also theoretically fairly current, so it's not fuddy-duddyism type #1 that's at issue. Conversely, Foucault whom you mention (and Derrida certainly!) are incredible close readers (as were, say, Benjamin and Adorno). So it's not theory per se that generates the non-close-reading mindset. otoh one of your other points seems especially telling, and it echoes one recently, I can't recall by whom, about the discipline of "poetics": there may not be enough powerful readings out there that lay out how modern and contemporary literature really bends what it means to read--such that contemporary literature would seem to grad students and other professors to be a powerful alternative to "theory" in terms of understanding what it is we do as readers. Part of the problem, as I have some vague recollection of your posting about, about a year ago, may be that readers of contemporary texts (me too) tend to read them "through" non-literary theory. Not that that's wrong, but it would be useful to have more of a two way street: reading theory through poetry and poetics as well as t'other way round.

anyway at its worst the present period is kind of an anti-Charles-Barkley criticism, or a not-yet-Barkley one: remember those "I am not a role model" ads? When it gets down to carving up the characters into liberatory and repressive role models, it's all over but the counting....

don't mean to sound despairing just polemical,

Tenney

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334. **Tenney Nathanson**

I hope so

Sat 25 Nov 1995

Date: Fri, 24 Nov 1995 17:52:40 -0600
From: Charles Alexander <[REDACTED]>
Subject: Re: web?

[. . . .]

I never thought of this list as necessarily confined to the academy, even if it does originate at a university. So why just MLA papers? If we do it, why

not any papers, essays, reviews, by list members. But doesn't the list, or at least the EPC site, already have that possibility built into it? Loss? Ken?

thanks,

charles

that would be great.

hi there in MN, oh maker of the book!

(but no vigorish)

T.

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335. **Rod Smith**

Re: literal characters and vatic lines

Sat 25 Nov 1995

With reference to Don B's post. Seems to me the problem is the logic of justification in operation within institutions. Poetry has to justify itself? (relative to theory or any fk'n thing else)? Poets have to justify themselves? Seems to me authority is what needs to be justified, & in most cases it cannot. This is precisely what isn't happening, & why D.B. is right to be a "prophet of doom."

More directly on the question of theory-- poetry seems to me to articulate at the limits of what can be articulated. To speak in a manner, to offer an experience, to start in the Anti-Oedipal middle, in a manner in which only it can. The most useful philosophy is *_always_* very poetic. I wanna know why Andrew Ross isn't more poetic, I mean come on! Deleuze's work on minor literature & "the superiority of anglo-american literature" offer good fodder here for anybody looking to play the justification game.

The word "class" comes to mind. . . but we're in America, so turn on the TV. . . that's what's doin' the "teaching."

--Rod

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336. **Rod Smith**

Re: literal characters and vatic lines

Sat 25 Nov 1995

Don Byrd wrote:

"It seems to me that Foucault is mistaken about the nature of that battle and the logic involved in it, but he makes an attractive argument."

Don, could you say a bit more about this. "The nature of the battle" as you see it.

--Rod

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337. **Ron Silliman**

Re: Poetry/Fiction/Literature divisions

Sat 25 Nov 1995

You wrote:

>

>gwyn writes:

>

>

>Danielle Steel (e?) *has* tried her hand at verse. A bright pink book of

>hers with embossed gold lettering, swooshy caps, the whole bit, sits in

>the poetry section at my local Borders.

>

>Gwyn

>

>so, who among us will take up the challenge to do for swooshy-capped poetry

>what jan radway and tania modleski did for harlequins and other romance

>genres? --md

>

There is a new collection out of the poetry of L. Ron Hubbard (Dianetics, the whole scientology cult, plus a number of sci-fi novels before that). It's called: Ron: The Poet/Lyricist and does indeed have "swooshy caps" at the head of every poem, plus terrific graphics on every page. As a book-object, it reminds me of things I have seen from what I might call the literature of the beloved (take a look at the Marishi's college catalogue even), an immense expense per page.

The poetry itself is pretty much a reflection of its times. In the 1930s (before he created his cult and when he was in fact an ardent unionist and the fulltime activist for the NY Authors Guild), there's a lot of neo-imagist (proto-objectivist?) poetry with a social realist bent, e.g.,

BORED

To sit
And listen
And
Pretend.

The subway is
A droning surf.

To read
And feel
That this
Is just a
Temporary easy
Soon lost.

To sit
And taste
This stale
Cigarette.

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338. **Ron Silliman**

Re: Poetry/Fiction/Literature divisions

Sat 25 Nov 1995

Whoa, typo in that L. Ron Hubbard poem.

Temporary easy

should be

Temporary ease

Ron

(now am I going to get snakes in my mailbox?)

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339. **Marjorie Perloff**

Re: POETICS Digest - 23 Nov 1995 to 24 Nov 1995

Sat 25 Nov 1995

This is in response to Tenny Nathanson's posting yesterday: Tenny, you're much too modest. You've trained one of the best grad students we have here--Carlos Gallego--who told me you're the one that opened the world of poetry to him. This guy, who was pegged as a "Chicano Studies person" and more or less expected to take primarily those courses, has been studying German

hermeneutics with Eckhart Forster, Foucault with Medimbe, Charles Bernstein etc. with me, and in general, is doing amazing work. He's always quoting Tenney as the person who got him going...

so Don Byrd is right: much depends on the professor but unfortunately fashion has never been bigger and the fashion is always behind what is happening. Right now the Cultural Studies dissertations are peaking and the new students aren't too interested (5 years after the fact) because these Cultural Studies theses are mostly like pre-New Critical 1930s and 40s historical studies of little minor blips.

John Guillory (Cultural Capital) is writing a new book where he argues that perhaps the main thing we can teach is Reading--that this is something that can be taught and can be USED whatever profession etc. one goes into.

More on that some other time...

Marjorie

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340. **David Kellogg**
Re: more work for loss

Sat 25 Nov 1995

On Fri, 24 Nov 1995, Loss Glazier wrote:

This would be no problem whatsoever!

In fact would be a great use of this space.

*All I would need is the texts either
in the body of an e-mail message (preferred)
or
on a diskette*

Ah, for that I'd actually have to finish the paper! Well, OK then, since you asked (and for others -- Marjorie, Ron -- I'll send directly when done or give you (Marjorie) in Chicago), I think this is a great idea.

What about Maria's other gem, that is, Poetics list people who are in Chicago for the circus somehow getting together? That sounds great! When/where, and who will trouble to arrange?

Cheers,
David

~~~~~  
~~~~~

David Kellogg

Duke University

University Writing Program
Durham, NC 27708
FAX

"Yexplication is yexploration."

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341. **William \"Uncle Torchy\" Northcutt** < >
question

Sat 25 Nov 1995

Is there any place where William Carlos Williams speaks of himself as a poet?

Check out Williams's correspondence with Harriet Monroe, and his argument over the poem which mentions something about, I think, Peace in Heaven, or some such something. He tells her, and I paraphrase: You may not think so, but I AM a poet.

William Northcutt
Englische Literaturwissenschaft
Universitaet Bayreuth
95440 Bayreuth
Germany

fax:(921)553641

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342. **Donald J. Byrd**
Re: Graduate School & the Poetry Cult

Sat 25 Nov 1995

Tenney / Rod:

I am reading Jed Rasula's _The American Poetry Wax Museum_, which is certainly the most important book about American poetry since Kenner's _The Pound Era_. It would hardly be a complement to say it is the best book about American poetry of the post-WW II era. Which is not say that Rasula merely recapitulates the modernist formula, "the age of 'the age of'," as he calls it.

Consider the competition. Rasula provides a very complete bibliography. My point is that the academics have failed even to provide an informed account of the history, to say nothing of sorting out the texts worth reading, or providing a context for serious discussion of the field.

Although Rasula does not make this point explicitly, one constant of the past fifty years of American poetry is that the Professors have been the enemy. And this is true for both 'academic' poets and the 'non-academic' poets. The fact seems to be that the arts and their critics thrive only when they do not require institutional support. One telling point that Rasula makes is that the New Critics almost universally published with _commercial_ publishers. We might well despise them for that too, but it indicates that they were making viable cultural products (i.e. not needing government or corporate foundation subsidy). With the N.E.A. poetry went on welfare, and much of the present malaise in the poetry community is a result of its withdrawal.

This is not to say people who make their livings in universities can not do good work. Every one has to make a living, whether one drives a taxi or teaches poetry, and thus everyone is implicated in the institutions by which, despite ourselves, we end up helping to create the carceral network. In institutions as perfectly conceived as the university, which is far more savvy in imposing itself than the medieval church, even opposition is useful to the _maintenance_ of the structure. Foucault probably underestimates the structural vitality of postmodern institutions, which in fact are _not_ hierarchical in any sense that "proliferation" constitutes a meaningful threat.

Much of my doom-saying has been occasioned by the increasing university domination of poetry, and, as Director of Graduate Studies at SUNY--Albany, I have been fully implicated myself (Tenney, we'll have to have some backchannel professional chit-chat).

I would suggest that the viable model for poetry at this time is the cult. "...what has been lost is the secret of secrecy," Olson says. To be sure, it may have its exoteric forms that can be revealed in the university. Rod was at a gathering of a few poets around my kitchen table a couple of weeks ago, and it seemed like an occasion on which the business of poetry was well served, even though no one was particularly trying to serve it.

Cultures are profoundly conservative. Their very structure, best exemplified by the university, is to preserve what is known and to pass it on to the next generation, while creating the most rigorous obstacles to faddish change. The very survival of cultural unit depends upon weeding out mistaken innovations, and it is culturally preferable, in terms of survival, to lose a hundred useful innovations than to incorporate a serious mistake.

Obviously, in times of profound change--such as crises of overpopulation or uncontrolled technological development-- the cultural institutions, which are always troublesome, begin to fail completely (witness the U.S. Congress, the universities, indeed the family).

Poetry thus might reasonably be an esoteric cult. To be sure, all of the texts are available to any one who wants to find them. It will be an effort, but if one wants to know, it is surely worth the effort to find the texts. And if one does not want to know, no availability of the texts will help; they will not understand.

We can speak openly of the secrets. Only those who
know will understand or even hear.

The question is, for us, convened here in secret, What do we have to say? Do we even know what questions we are trying to answer?

Let me suggest some possible questions.

The Malthusian mathematics that a species utilizes as a tool of evolutionary viability sooner or later runs into the finitude of its environment. Or course, for humans, there are a couple of alternatives: escape from the earth into the more or less infinite expanse of stars or the transfer of the human genetic information from a hydrocarbon to a silicon base (this is a serious proposal of Hans Moravec of the Carnegie-Mellon Robotics Lab and numerous others). Prophetic poetry might try to prepare us for these eventualities? Do we have any good work in this direction?

Otherwise, it is possible for poetry to underwrite values that provide an alternative to material growth as a motive for human life? Of course, classically, this is what poetry has done, often scandalously offering access to gods and otherworlds that now seem to have been false promises. Are there values of secular consciousness that we can offer as alternatives to more cars, more houses, more shopping mall junk as values to make life worth living?

The dire fact seems to be that, even by the most optimistic estimates, that we will, if we continue our present path, do irreparable damage to the biosphere within the next century, and perhaps much more quickly than that. What might we offer as value?

Don Byrd

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343. **Judy Roitman**

Re: BARNES & NOBLE, THE CHAINS

Sat 25 Nov 1995

I must admit its great to see BIG poetry sections at the chains (sure beats B. Dalton or Walden Books), but the money we save off list price is a bad invenstment for the long run if the chains are luring us away from the independents.

Other thoughts on this?

This is a difficult issue that manifests itself in many ways (do you encourage the supermarket to stock organic produce, or do you support your local health food store?). "Money we save off list price" isn't really a reason to occasionally buy from chains, but having the books we love available for browsing to people who otherwise might never meet them is.

I too try to give most of my book money to independent booksellers, but the chains' attempts to stock interesting stuff need occasional encouragement, and I don't mind occasionally giving it to them.

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344. **Maria Damon**

Re: literal characters and vatic lines

Sat 25 Nov 1995

Marjorie Perloff:

- > > At your
- > >alma mater here, the undergrads actually love poetry--all they need is a
- > >little exposure. As for the grads, the ones who entered about 5 years
- > >ago and are now coming to the job market, HATE LITERATURE, period.

Tenney Nathanson:

- > There are certainly
- > dramatic exceptions--a couple on this list, both from Stanford and
- here--but
- > the trend has been pretty grim.
- >
- > any Rx's out there?
- >

It seems to me that graduate students are, by and large, learning precisely what they are being taught. It is only necessary to look at the program for the MLA Conference to see that the _literary_ does not get much attention in the

profession at large. After all, students write the dissertations that Marjorie mentions because there are faculty ready to direct them.

One might speculate about the reason students and their mentors are more interested in cultural minutiae than literary texts.

Some of the reasons are fairly justifiable. For one thing, there is original research to be done. Of course, there has been a lot written about Shakespeare, Milton, et. al., but I saw a chart some time back of how many dissertations had been written on lesser figures. I do not remember the precise numbers, but there were huge numbers on even the minor figures who appear in anthologies.

Moreover, theory is very powerful and sexy. It is obviously inefficient to read a hundred novels and poems, when you can get it all, conceptually, in three or four books by Foucault and a couple of others. Don Byrd

now hold on! i did mean specifically "poetry" v. "fiction," not "lit" v. "theory" or cult studs. I LIKE that historical/"cultural" type work --not the boring, silly, ridiculous kind of course (shakespeare with a twist), but, for inst., Stuart Hall, the new ethnography, etc. --and in my experience and observation, it's a lot easier (tho not more rewarding) to read a few hefty victorians (and "relate" with smarmy piety to the characters in an unreflective way) than to read either a work by g. stein or a slim volume by Foucault. --md

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345. **Maria Damon**

Re: for Maria D.

Sat 25 Nov 1995

hi rachel! hi charles! y'all wrote:

Maria Damon wrote:

did anyone in nyc catch me and charles b on the radio about a month ago talking about stein's jewishness?

Maria: tell us more, please, about this--if it suits you--

Rachel Loden

and/or

what radio program, address, phone, contact, do they offer transcripts or tapes?

charles

well now let's see: was it wnyc? or wabc? one of the two; it was a sunday afternoon show called "beyond the pale," organized by Jews for Racial and

Economic Justice, and it was in early october. Eileen Myles and an elderly artist named Buffy SomethingorOther, who'd known G and A in Paris, were the non-Jewish lesbians participating. This session of "beyond" was done in response to a Jewish Gay and Lesbian activist group, who when asked what they'd most like to hear broadcast on Beyond, said, a show for Gertrude Stein. Amazing, since it'd be a stretch to call her an activist in any sense other than as a fairly apolitical cultural radical. I had a good time. I asked the organizer/mc for a tape and she sd she'd get to it when she could. i don't know, otherwise, what their transcript policy is. do you know more, charles b?--maria

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346. **Maria Damon**

Re: The Great Poetry Coverup

Sat 25 Nov 1995

aldon wrote:

Harryette Mullen's _Muse & Drudge_ just out from Gil Ott's press!!!

what's the name of Gil Ott's press, for those of us unhip enough to need to ask?--md

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347. **Maria Damon**

Re: Poetry/Fiction/Literature divisions

Sat 25 Nov 1995

i wrote:

so, who among us will take up the challenge to do for swooshy-capped poetry
>what jan radway and tania modleski did for harlequins and other romance
>genres? --md

charles a responded:

Susan Bee & Charles Bernstein already have, in *The Nude Formalism*, although there's much else in that book as well.

charles

to which i respond in turn, sorry, i meant, er, a prose analysis/defense of said poetry, not a poetic satire of it. I like *The Nude Formalism* (tho I can't find my copy, rats!), but I was hinting at the possibility of --vey is mir --an inquiry into the "cultural work" s-c'd poetry by romance writers accomplishes. i know the c-word (culture, not capped) has a dubious reputation among some folks on the list, but i think it's cool.--md

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348. **Maria Damon**

Re: Mon. Night: epclive!

Sat 25 Nov 1995

loss, help! i think i have web but don't know. i'm spozed to write soemthing on anthologies for mla and wd like to participate or at least get a transcript of the proceedings of ep-clive, but don't know how to get on or to get transcripts!--
maria d

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349. **Charles Alexander**

Re: The Great Poetry Coverup

Sat 25 Nov 1995

aldon wrote:

Harryette Mullen's _Muse & Drudge_ just out from Gil Ott's press!!!

what's the name of Gil Ott's press, for those of us unhip enough to need to ask?--md

Singing Horse Press

& it & Gil & Julia Blumenreich (6ix magazine, but this is probably not the official address fr 6ix) can all be reached at

427 Carpenter Lane

Philadelphia, PA 19119



I also have an address I've had a lot longer for Singing Horse/Paper Air (Paper Air, to me, one of the essential magazines of the last two decades -- no longer with us now), which is perhaps preferred for biz correspondence

P.O. Box 40034

Philadelphia, PA 19106

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350. **Charles Alexander**

Re: for Maria D.

Sat 25 Nov 1995

well now let's see: was it wnyc? or wabc? one of the two; it was a sunday afternoon show called "beyond the pale," organized by Jews for Racial and Economic Justice, and it was in early october. Eileen Myles and an elderly artist named Buffy SomethingorOther, who'd known G and A in Paris, were the non-Jewish lesbians participating. This ssession of "beyond" was done in

response to a Jewish Gay and Lesbian activist group, who when asked what they'd most like to hear broadcast on Beyond, said, a show for Gertrude Stein. Amazing, since it'd be a stretch to call her an activist in any sense other than as a fairly apolitical cultural radical. I had a good time. I asked the organizer/mc for a tape and she sd she'd get to it when she could. i don't know, otherwise, what their transcript policy is. do you know more, charles b?--maria

Sounds like a blast, Maria. When you get the tape could you send an address so I could inquire about a copy or if they might let you copy yours?

We miss you in Minneapolis, where things have been rather quiet. Myung Mi Kim & Mei-Mei Berssenbrugge will be here together in early March for readings/classes/fireside chats -- one of the last things I helped set up in my attempts to be ever so slightly subversive of biz as usual at minn. center for book arts. Hopefully we'll get all local poetics people here together at that time.

bring something of the ocean back here, will you?

all best,

charles

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351. **Maria Damon**

Re: Poetry/Fiction/Literature divisions

Sat 25 Nov 1995

rrrRon wrrrites:

Whoa, typo in that L. Ron Hubbard poem.

Temporary easy

should be

Temporary ease

Ron

ahh. i thought, skimming, it said "temporary essay." thanks for sharing,
ron.--md

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352. **Maria Damon**

Re: more work for loss

Sat 25 Nov 1995

dkellogg (of the panel i'd have loved to be on, judging from the title) writes:

What about Maria's other gem, that is, Poetics list people who are in Chicago for the circus somehow getting together? That sounds great! When/where, and who will trouble to arrange?

*** dk: i've taken it on myself, notoriously poorly organized as i am, to find out what kinds of hotel bars are extant, and figure out one or two times we can designate as a congregational moment --or shd we "take a table" and have shifts of us? if we designate a place and a few times, i figure we can overlap, --any specific suggestions?--maria d

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353. **Stephen Galen Cope**

Re: question

Sat 25 Nov 1995

I am a poet! I
am. I am. I am a poet...

WCW- The Desert Music

-Stephen Cope

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354. **Ron Silliman**

Re: Question

Sat 25 Nov 1995

This may be irrelevant to the current purposes of this list, but I was wondering how a person knows for sure that she or he is a poet?

Is there any place where Emily Dickinson speaks of herself as a poet?

I suppose that now that Seamus Heaney has been Professor of Poetry at Oxford, and Boylston Professor at Harvard, and has won the Nobel Prize, he may feel reasonably assured that someone thinks he is a poet. It appears that God told Milton that he was.

Is there any place where William Carlos Williams speaks of himself as a poet?

Stephen Spender once paid a visit to T. S. Eliot at Faber abd Faber, and after he left, Eliot remarked to someone, "He talked a lot about being a poet but he didn't say anything about writing poetry."

Tom Kirby-Smith

English Department
UNC-Greensboro

Tom,

In the late 60's/early 70's, when the conceptual art movement would obviously have had a significant influence well beyond its own borders, some poet said that "poetry is what a poet does." What I don't remember (and it fascinates me that I don't) is whether the poet who said that was David Antin or Ted Berrigan, or if both said essentially the same thing in different contexts.

However, to paraphrase David Antin, "if Seamus Heaney is a poet, then I don't want to be a poet."

Ron Silliman

Greensboro NC 27412

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355. **Ron Silliman**

Re: web?

Sat 25 Nov 1995

Chax writes,

"I never thought of this list as necessarily confined to the academy, even if it does originate at a university. So why just MLA papers? If we do it, why not any papers, essays, reviews, by list members. But doesn't the list, or at least the EPC site, already have that possibility built into it? Loss? Ken?"

Charles Bernstein and I both have "papers" on our EPC home pages and I think that others do likewise. It's an excellent use of the space, even if the table of contents under each author fails to distinguish between poems and other pieces (willful negation of genre?).

If you are using the footnote feature of your word processing program, you may have to do a little reformatting (very minor) when you convert it into ascii and it is good to indicate *_italics_* and **boldface**, since HTML basically still don't do that.

I think everybody should put their works up under authors. In 25, if things continue as they are (thinking of both the Bookchain thread of messages and the long litany of "University as disabler" of the ability to read and enjoy poetry that we've had lately), something like EPC's home pages will be precisely how poetry exists and gets published in this country. And others. It's a daunting prospect, to say the least. The sooner we think in these terms, the better.

Ron Silliman



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356. **Aldon L. Nielsen**

Re: site for sore eyes

Sun 26 Nov 1995

NOBODY said the damned thing should be reserved for "academic" stuff -- In response to a problem (many people at MLA wanting to hear talks they can't get to) somebody asked about posting them --

My suggestion is that we set up an address where these MLA papers AND ANY OTHER LONG STUFF OF INTEREST may be posted for retrieval by any who want to read same -- This would save time-consuming (and for some expensive) paging through on the pOETICS list -- Could start with MLA papers, but would be available for, let's say anything in excess of 3 pages somebody might want to make available -- "saym"??

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357. **Aldon L. Nielsen**

Re: Muse & Drudge

Sun 26 Nov 1995

Harryette Mullen's book *_Muse & Drudge_* is available from
Singing Horse Press
P.O. Box 40034
Philadelphia, PA 19106

according to my copy the price is \$12.50

tell 'em aldon sent ya

P.S. -- ignore the blurbs on back of book -- silly stuff meant to move books off of shelves at Barnes & Noblesse, I would imagine --

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358. **Marjorie Perloff**

MLA Get together

Sun 26 Nov 1995

Some people have asked when those in this group could get together at MLA.

You are hereby invited to the joint party sponsored by the ACLA (american com lit assoc) and the U-Cal Press in honor of Jerry Rothenberg/Pierre Joris's fabulous POEMS FOR THE MILLENIUM

It's listed in program as "ACLA cash bar," 5.15 PM, 28th, Marriot Hotel. But I believe you'll get at least one free drink and good food and meet your friends. I think J and P will also be saying a few words.

See you there, I hope!

Marjorie

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359. **Ron Silliman**

Muse & Drudge

Sun 26 Nov 1995

You wrote:

>

>aldon wrote:

>

>Harryette Mullen's *Muse & Drudge* just out from Gil Ott's press!!!

>

>what's the name of Gil Ott's press, for those of us unhip enough to need to

>ask?--md

>

Singing Horse Press

P.O. Box 40034

Philadelphia, PA 19106

██████████

\$12.50 + (I believe) S&H.

This is indeed a great book. Harryette read from it in front of me at Naropa summer before last and it totally blew me off the stage (in multiple senses of that word). Also notable for the blurbers: Sandra Cisneros and Skip Gates.

Ron Silliman

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360. **H. T. KIRBY-SMITH**

Questions

Sun 26 Nov 1995

I guess my view is somewhat existentialist--that is, one becomes a poet by writing poetry.

Is it possible to be a poet without ever writing poetry?

Or is writing poetry--like the good behavior of a Calvinist that proves that she is one of the elect--proof that one is among those predestined to be poets?

Can there be only a limited number of poets--such as the 144,000 that the Jehovah's Witnesses allow as the number of souls who will go to heaven?

Is being a poet a state of grace? Or is it a result of works?

Who has the final word as to whether someone is a poet? The MLA? Barnes and Noble? God? Time Magazine? The New Criterion?

Since many people use the word "poet" as what Frost called a "praise word," and apply it to those whose work they enjoy reading, maybe it might be best to invent some other word in order not to have one's own character compromised by being called a poet. For simplicity's sake we might use the word "Peot." It's easy to remember and it makes it easy to change if you accidentally use the word "poet." Maybe the list name could be changed to "Peotics."

Problem is, what if certain New Formalists started calling themselves peots, too? But I think it would be a safe bet that Seamus Heaney would not lay claim to the title.

Tom Kirby-Smith

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361. **kat**

Re: genetway

Sun 26 Nov 1995

Hey, if you think of Kaufman, think of me. No this ain't La Stein its just Lindberg, again. San Diego is a nice place for such conferences,the place where I first held forth on Kaufman, as I recall.

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362. **Maria Damon**

Re: for Maria D.

Sun 26 Nov 1995

charles a writes We miss you in Minneapolis, where things have been rather quiet. Myung Mi Kim & Mei-Mei Berssenbrugge will be here together in early March for readings/classes/fireside chats -- one of the last things I helped set up in my attempts to be ever so slightly subversive of biz as usual at minn. center for book arts. Hopefully we'll get all local poetics people here together at that time. *** i'll try to pass the word around from here, i've been teaching berssenbrugge for years and everyone --students that is --goes crazy about her, but needless to say, if you tell the cw office to publicize it, they'll say "who?"--

well, maybe not, since i lent one of her books to maria fitzgerald who knows a good thing or two. when i proposed brathwaite for a visiting writer i drew blank stares (again, w/ the exception of m fitzG). well, i could go on and on, and already have, too much for my own good (this list is not safe from infiltration, it turns out). anyway, i miss my nice sunny apt in mpls, and always carry a plastic bag of shells and sea pebbles in my car when in the midwest...best to you, charles and all m-politans!--md

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363. **kat**

Re: literal characters and vatic lines

Sun 26 Nov 1995

Just a thought, one might add Herbert Marcuse, especially One Dimensional Man, nicely/frighteningly keyed to the 50's and 60's assaults on imagination by disciplinary mechanism(s) that would create ADMINISTERED MAN, to Foucault.

It is, however painful such discussions can be, a good sign that "the literary" is under attack. Pace Foucault's notice of (Saxon?) marching music--and not!--it is always time to question poetry--poetically, one hopes. Poetics can take the sting off of the many ways that Dichten can turn to marching music.

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364. **k. lindberg**

Re: poetry's "boss" poetry as mega meta-discourse

Sun 26 Nov 1995

this cautionary note is not directed to any one sender--do I mean "sender" as in Naked Lunch?

When we think of poetry as a unified field, even more of poetry and poetics as being or producing "The Boss," we should remember that Ezra Pound was not alone in calling Mussolini BOSS. Some might find this comforting; certainly the post-syndicalist, proto-fascist folks in Italy, France, and US thought lots about making poetry MATTER and making it BOSS other discourses. In other words, being discursive turf winner does not imply a progressive politics--or not. Besides, one can proclaim oneself master and still have nothing but a converted coterie. I have daily and humbly to remind myself that neo-modernism--on the model of "neo-colonialism," a more accurate title than post-modernism?--poses certain joys and dangers. Thinking of poetry and poetics as separate and masterful or "autonomous," a neo-modernist gesture, is at least complex. Does one, at this late hour/millennial moment, want poetry to be totalizing or totalitarian?

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365. **Tony Green**
Re: Metroplexities

Sun 26 Nov 1995

More concern over poetics. Seriously, poetics is the necessary position in which thinking (philosophy) is written. So all sciences in the full sense of "knowledges better watch out. We're the boss, if we choose to be. This runs counter to the usual administrative certainty that science in the narrow sense of the sciences (as per university practices) are the model for all academic activity. Social sciences seem to conform; humanities can be minced until they seem to conform, but to do so have to abandon poetics as their main concern. This is how it looks to me from here. It is amusing that Erwin Panofsky, the great iconologist, moving from Germany to the U.S.A. (and Britain and New Zealand are similar) found a big difference. In Germany, the humanities were the admired model that scientists and engineers wanted to emulate, -- in the U.S.A, other way round. It's a matter of what is deemed, ultimately, useful and what is therefore deemed useless. Best

Tony Green,

e-mail: [REDACTED]

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366. **Chris Stroffolino**
Re: Questions

Sun 26 Nov 1995

I'm interested in Tom Kirby Smith's heuristic notions of poetic "identity" and find it a fitting rebuke (originally I wrote renuke) of WCW's "I am a poet, I am. I am" which is somewhere between POPEYE and Mondale's "I am a real democrat, I am I am". Preferable for me is Riding's "warm accusation of being poets"---But since so many knew the WCW quote and posted it to the list, I have another question that any answer would be helpful (now that I'm in academia and need to CITE my references-- rather than simply let them circulate "freely" as it were)--- Somewhere William Blake talks about the difference between "States" and "Individuals" in a way that Kirby-Smith might like, a way that if I remember correctly gets to the heart of the question of ANY identity (poetic or otherwise)---Where may I find that quote? Does anybody know what piece it's taken from? I'm pretty sure it's not in MILTON or THE FOUR ZOAS or THE MARRIAGE OF H AND H or the songs of e and i---but where oh where? Thanks in advance, Chris Stroffolino

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367. **jeffrey timmons**

Re: Condition of Poetry in the Academy

Sun 26 Nov 1995

On Wed, 22 Nov 1995, Marjorie Perloff wrote:

Maria, I disagree only insofar as the people you're talking about HATE FICTION TOO, at least any interesting or experimental fiction. At your alma mater here, the undergrads actually love poetry--all they need is a little exposure. As for the grads, the ones who entered about 5 years ago and are now coming to the job market, HATE LITERATURE, period. They're Puritanical, and the idea of actually enjoying reading anything seems wrong. It's got to do "cultural work." So we have endless dissertations (I just got a list) of cost accounting in the 18th C and narrative The brewery and ale house in the 16th C The Temperance movement and gender

Anything, but to have to figure out what the poetic or literary might actually be.

Um.... You know, I have to object to this characterization. As a person interested in doing cultural work this hits pretty close to home. I object because while much cultural work does try and figure out what the poetic or literary might actually be in the context of its surroundings, the comments here suggest that if it's not directly engaged with the "literary" it ain't worth a darn. Does this imply a need to return to the text? That seems surprising.

The comments here also raise an issue that has puzzled me. My work has been committed to theory and its engagement with various cultural practices, yet, increasingly, I am hearing from many older and established faculty members who, either openly or implicitly, deride theory in its various forms. This puzzles me because I want my work to be up to date and relevant. I am not a trend-monger, nor is my commitment to my work and theory a studied attempt at saying all the right things in hopes of obtaining a job. I guess, what it comes down to is that I find it deeply surprising--if not a little disappointing--when so much scholarly work is written off as hating literature....

Jeffrey Timmons

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368. **jeffrey timmons**

Re: Condition of Poetry in the Academy

Sun 26 Nov 1995

Oh, and I am not puritanical. Really. Honestly.

Jeffrey Timmons

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369. **Stephen Galen Cope**
Re: Condition of Poetry in the Academy

Sun 26 Nov 1995

It seems that a part of the ambivalence directed toward theory has to do with the tendency (not so much on the part of theorists themselves as the literary critics who make use of their models) towards treating theory as a kind of empirical ground in itself which all 'art' then represents and to which all cultural/creative artifacts must in some way refer means that those artifacts which don't fit -- and this is probably most of the interesting ones -- are simply ignored for the sake of critical efficacy. Poets and poems are treated either as secondary agents illustrating and exemplifying some theoretical premise or as hopelessly retro/romantic troublemakers who won't get with the program. Thus, the hatred for literature of which Marjorie speaks. Thus also, unfortunately, the accuracy of Maria's statement on the relative efficiency of theoretical work...

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370. **Loss Glazier**
Re: Mon. Night: epclive!

Sun 26 Nov 1995

> From: Maria Damon <[REDACTED]>

>

> loss, help! i think i have web but don't know. i'm spozed to write
> soemthing on anthologies for mla and wd like to participate or at least get a
> transcript of the proceedings of ep-clive, but don't know how to get on or to
> get transcripts!--maria d

>

Maria, a tough one! I'm not familiar with AOL. Maybe someone else on the list might be. I can't imagine they would still be in business

without offering web access. You probably need to contact them and tell them you need to go to the url:

http://writing.upenn.edu/epc

If you can get to that URL then choose "epclive"

Perhaps someone else on the list has aol?

All best,

Loss

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371. **Chris Scheil**

Ayer Redux

Sun 26 Nov 1995

Cleaning out my hard-drive, I came across this message, which, for some mysterious reason, was never sent. Thought I'd throw it up for amusement & as a small token of those halcyon days...

RZ

**

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372. **Chris Scheil**

Re: Ayer Redux

Sun 26 Nov 1995

sorry, forgot to append the correct file. Here it is...

Bravo David Ayer!

A game attempt at the paranoid style, though you're a little weak in the metaphor department, so let me give a few free invective examples to prime your delicious schizo-performative metier:

1. Bernstein (that faux-charismatic pavilion of lard melting under the sun of his own self regard) is nothing more than a charlatan, snake-charming the masses his self-mutilatory street-theater ethos, his turgid blague about "mediated cosmogonies of language, erected in the social." As if the mere act of putting down words weren't enough for this rapscallion (strutting around Buffalo like some minor character in a bad Gissing novel), he has to drag theory into the arena; on this subject, let me paraphrase: "Sir, I knew T.S. Eliot. T.S. Eliot was a friend of mine. Sir, you are no T.S. Eliot."

2. Only a ignorant, scrofuluos chap such as he would have the temerity to dismiss entire social movements, embedding himself like a somnolent tick in the clean-shaven groin of his own clique-ish generational cohort of quasi-elitist

druid-like versifiers (or should I say disimulators?), marching about in parodic lock-step & polishing his waste-paper chapbooks like they were God's own bequest to some vast & cultish mandarin salon of chosen poetic yogiis.

3. Hearing his nasal twang ring out over the restless crowd, one can't help but evoke images of ectomorphic pashas holding court in goat-pelt yurts on the vast Mongolian tundra, of wizened old barbers huddled in the WC with only a Gideon's Bible for company, of a drear sunday afternoon in a wastewater treatment plant, punching the mute & omnipresent timeclocks for some drab, celestial Pinkertons agency. Of a DDT wind blown through some Jurassic swamp, tea-leaves encrusting a mason-jar glass, the laquered sheen of a billion centipedes crawling up Mt. Rushmore in a blizzard, the sound of a volkswagon engine turned over on some Januaury morning, after one's volvo's been repossessed because of some unfortunate words spoken at the methadone clinic...

You get my point.

(BTW Charles, just re-read *_Naked City_*. Can't express how much I enjoyed it.)

Chris Scheil

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373. **Loss Glazier**

Re: web?

Sun 26 Nov 1995

Charles Alexander wrote:

I never thought of this list as necessarily confined to the academy, even if it does originate at a university. So why just MLA papers? If we do it, why not any papers, essays, reviews, by list members. But doesn't the list, or at least the EPC site, already have that possibility built into it? Loss? Ken?

Yes, indeed! And as Ron so kindly replied, many such essays and papers are already there. These are no problem whatsoever to include and serve many uses. You can direct people to obtain copies there, people can get to them by browsing, and it's a way of getting feedback. As Ron also says, this may well be an important way to 'circulate' such papers as we move forward with all this.

Forget 'cyberspace'! The EPC is simply a kind of 'hub' where certain kinds of materials may circulate. Part small press, part literary distributor, part library, AND part news stand--and it is this latter area where paper has limited the circulation of essay, etc. (Plus, with epclive, the EPC can also now accommodate small 'conferences' and post transcripts of such events.) So the EPC does serve the function of getting some material out there for those who want to see it. And the great thing is, it's already working!

So yes, Charles -- and others, do let me know of papers you might like to put up. The EPC is ready!

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374. **Tenney Nathanson**
big round of applause
Mon 27 Nov 1995

to Loss and other EPC folks. This is terrific, and many thanks are owed. Here's one.

Tenney

Date: Sun, 26 Nov 1995 22:44:59 -0500
From: Loss Glazier <[REDACTED]>
Subject: Re: web?

Charles Alexander wrote:
I never thought of this list as necessarily confined to the academy, even if it does originate at a university. So why just MLA papers? If we do it, why not any papers, essays, reviews, by list members. But doesn't the list, or at least the EPC site, already have that possibility built into it? Loss? Ken?

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So yes, Charles -- and others, do let me know of papers you might like to put up. The EPC is ready!

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375. **Tenney Nathanson**
history, theory, lit (huey, dewey, and louie?)
Mon 27 Nov 1995

Date: Sun, 26 Nov 1995 17:51:19 -0700
From: jeffrey timmons <[REDACTED]>
Subject: Re: Condition of Poetry in the Academy

On Wed, 22 Nov 1995, Marjorie Perloff wrote:

Maria, I disagree only insofar as the people you're talking about HATE FICTION TOO, at least any interesting or experimental fiction. At your alma mater here, the undergrads actually love poetry--all they need is a little exposure. As for the grads, the ones who entered about 5 years ago and are now coming to the job market, HATE LITERATURE, period. They're Puritanical, and the idea of actually enjoying reading anything seems wrong. It's got to do "cultural work." So we have endless dissertations (I just got a list) of cost accounting in the 18th C and narrative The brewery and ale house in the 16th C The Temperance movement and gender

Anything, but to have to figure out what the poetic or literary might actually be.

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Jeffrey Timmons

didn't mean to offend (as one of the poops who got into this thread early). The collapse of "theory" into cult studs, in Jeffrey's post, is interesting: while Cultural Studies IS assuredly theory, its relation to reading, at least as this filters into pedagogy, has been rather different from, say, deconstruction (that *petit pedagogie bien determine*(') or whatever it is Foucault called it dismissively). In our comp program, at any rate, the Rhet Comp contingent opposes "Cultural Studies" to "close reading," the latter being what retrograde Lit students supposedly do (but these latter often scurry to say no we don't). Deconstructors, of course, are maniacal close readers (hence, partly, Foucault's acerbic remark, but he was himself a remarkable close reader). So are lots of cultural studies critics. But I think Marjorie's criticism still stands: there are a lot of grad students (and professors, as several posts have pointed out) who deploy big cultural categories as an alternative to (or avoidance of) mucking about in details. Kenneth Koch used to say in class that it wasn't the broad points but the narrow ones, the remarks about odd details or idiosyncracies, that were most revealing about a writer's work (not THEMES but verbal ticks). Partly that's an old-fashioned old new criticism oddly surfacing, but it's also a poet's take. It's kind of like (oh no I'm gonna cite Eliot as an authority, and approvingly!!!) Eliot on personality and impersonality (great to escape from if you got one): there's not much that can't be interesting if reading acumen is at work, not much that can be if not.

anyway I think some grad classes where folks just sit around pretending there is no such thing as theory and mucking around with single poems for an hour or so are a good idea.

re the increasingly-retrograde older faculty remark by Jeffrey: I think some of it is based not on a weariness with theory, but on a suspicion of lit crit wielding theory not inflected by close reading. oh well. so, sure: a "return to the text," why not--and a "Return to Freud" for that matter!

urgh.

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376. **Steve Carll**

Re: Questions

Mon 27 Nov 1995

Chris:

Blake talks about States and Individuals in several places, but what I think you're thinking of is indeed in *_Milton_*, plate 32, lines 10-35 (in the revised Erdman edition):

We are not Individuals but States: Combinations of Individuals (...) Distinguish therefore States from Individuals in those States. States Change: but Individual Identities never change nor cease: You cannot go to Eternal Death in that which can never Die. (...) The Imagination is not a State: it is the Human Existence itself Affection or Love becomes a State, when divided from Imagination The Memory is a State always, & the Reason is a State Created to be Annihilated & a new Ratio Created

This pair gets mentioned also in *_The Four Zoas_*, *_A Vision of the Last Judgment_*, and *_Jerusalem_*. S. Foster Damon defines "States" in Blake as "stages of error, which the Divine Mercy creates (or defines) so that the State and not the Individual in it whall be blamed." (Gotta love that Blake Dictionary!) In other words, one passes through the state on the way back to Eternity.

At 06:42 PM 11/26/95 -0500, you wrote:

- > I'm interested in Tom Kirby Smith's heuristic notions of poetic "identity"
- > and find it a fitting rebuke (originally I wrote renuke) of WCW's
- > "I am a poet, I am. I am" which is somewhere between POPEYE and Mondale's
- > "I am a real democrat, I am I am". Preferable for me is Riding's "warm
- > accusation of being poets"---But since so many knew the WCW quote and
- > posted it to the list, I have another question that any answer would
- > be helpful (now that I'm in academia and need to CITE my references--
- > rather than simply let them circulate "freely" as it were)---
- > Somewhere William Blake talks about the difference between "States"
- > and "Individuals" in a way that Kirby-Smith might like, a way that
- > if I remember correctly gets to the heart of the question of ANY identity
- > (poetic or otherwise)---Where may I find that quote?
- > Does anybody know what piece it's taken from? I'm pretty sure it's not
- > in MILTON or THE FOUR ZOAS or THE MARRIAGE OF H AND H or the
- > songs of e and
- > i---but where oh where? Thanks in advance, Chris Stroffolino
- >
- >

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377. **Marjorie Perloff**

Re: POETICS Digest - 25 Nov 1995 to 26 Nov 1995

Mon 27 Nov 1995

Re: Jeffrey Timmons's comments on cultural studies.

cultural studies, as conceived in the wake of the New Historicism was wonderful and liberating--I am not at all opposed to it. But in the last few

years, it's taken a weird turn back to a kind of pre-New Critical subject-matter scholarship: i.e., the treatment of motherhood in the 19th c. novel etc etc. Much of it assumes that a novel, say, is just a straightforward social document and hence that what is "said" about motherhood is an accurate reflection of what Victorian attitudes were. This is hardly what Foucault had in mind and it has become oppressive--or so think.

Marjorie Perloff

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378. **Stephen Galen Cope**
Re: Condition of Poetry in the Academy
Mon 27 Nov 1995

Sorry for the repeat, but my last post got cut...

It seems that a part of the ambivalence directed toward theory has to do with the tendency (not so much on the part of theorists themselves as the literary critics who make use of their models) towards treating theory as a kind of empirical ground in itself which all 'art' then represents and to which all cultural/creative artifacts must in some way refer. This means that those artifacts which don't fit -- and this is probably most of the interesting ones -- are simply ignored for the sake of critical efficacy. Poets and poems are treated either as secondary agents illustrating and exemplifying some theoretical premise or as hopelessly retro/romantic troublemakers who won't get with the program. Thus, the hatred for literature of which Marjorie speaks. Thus also, unfortunately, the accuracy of Maria's statement on the relative efficiency of theoretical work...

It would seem important to realize, with Tony Green, that poetics is a condition for all writing -- that theory and criticism and interpretation are productive acts that, at best, are aimed at creating models or maps for thought and action. The real question is whether or not a

given map is useful or, for that matter, relevant
at all...

-Stephen Cope

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379. **David Kellogg**
Re: Condition of Poetry in the Academy
Mon 27 Nov 1995

On Sun, 26 Nov 1995, jeffrey timmons wrote:

[big snip]

*I guess, what it comes down
to is that I find it deeply surprising--if not a little
disappointing--when so much scholarly work is written off as hating
literature....*

I would like to second this position. My own theoretical writing is not about hating or liking literature but is a different sort of work altogether (about, mainly, how the terms of value in the literary field get circulated and reproduced). Now, obviously I can't remove my own contributions from the field I'm analyzing, but that, to put it bluntly, is a theoretical problem. Just because work doesn't promote certain writers the way some work does does not mean that it hates poetry, or fiction, or anything else. Give me a break.

Cheers,
David

~~~~~  
~~~~~

David Kellogg Duke University
[redacted] University Writing Program
[redacted] Durham, NC 27708
FAX [redacted]

"Yexplication is yexploration."

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380. **David Kellogg**
Re: more work for loss
Mon 27 Nov 1995

On Sat, 25 Nov 1995, Maria Damon wrote:

*dk: i've taken it on myself, notoriously poorly organized as i am, to find
out what kinds of hotel bars are extant, and figure out one or two times we*

can designate as a congregational moment --or shd we "take a table" and have shifts of us? if we designate a place and a few times, i figure we can overlap, --any specific suggestions?--maria d

Not knowing Chicago well, (and hoping for interviews at yet-to-be-determined times), no, but I think Marjorie's suggestion of meeting at the Rothenberg/Joris party is a start. Problem is, that's at the end of the convention.

Cheers,
David

~~~~~  
~~~~~

David Kellogg Duke University
[REDACTED] University Writing Program
[REDACTED] Durham, NC 27708
FAX [REDACTED]

"Yexplication is yexploration."

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381. **Mark Roberts**

AWOL: BlackWattle Press new release

Mon 27 Nov 1995

The following message has been posted by Australian Writing Online for BlackWattle Press. Enquiries about the title or service listed below should be directed to BlackWattle Press at the contacts listed.

ABOUT AWOL: AWOL is a information and distribution resource for Australian creative writers and publishers. We offer a variety of services from a monthly national writing what's on list (Happenings), through small press distribution, internet and conventional publicity service for writers and publishers as well a small press 'virtual bookshop'. All AWOL services are available through the internet, by fax or by mail. We can be contacted at PO Box 333 Concord NSW 2137 Australia EMail [REDACTED] or [REDACTED] Phone 61 2 7475667 Fax 61 2 7472802

ONE DEAD DIVA LAUNCHES

BlackWattle Press, Australia's leading gay and lesbian literary publisher, announces the release of a new novel from Phillip Scott. One Dead Diva is a light-hearted romp that traces the antics of two would-be detectives as they attempt to unravel the mystery death of an up-and-coming opera singer.

Jennifer Burke was a rising star in the Sydney City Opera until she fell off a cliff or was she pushed? Marc, an accident-prone opera queen, and his friend Paul, a chorus boy addicted to dance parties, decide to investigate. Being very amateur detectives, they incompetently lose the evidence and accuse all the wrong people in their quest to solve the puzzle. Part murder mystery, part farce, part contemporary satire, and even part romance, *One Dead Diva* is one lively read.

Phillip Scott is a well-known musician, actor, composer, and television comedy writer. His credits include *The Big Gig*, *The Gillies Report* and *Three Men and a Baby Grand* for ABC Television, and performances in many plays and musicals. He co-wrote the shows *Safety in Numbers* and *Zena and Now*, and is keyboard player/arranger with Ignatius Jones' swing band *Pardon-Me-Boys*. He likes opera, and coffee, and lives right under the flight path in Sydney's inner west.

One Dead Diva will be launched by Dennis Watkins, Sydney Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras Festival Director, at 4.30pm on 3rd December at the Lizard Lounge, upstairs at the Exchange Hotel, 34 Oxford Street, Darlinghurst Sydney. Miss Caroline Clark will attend.

One Dead Diva is the fifth book released from BlackWattle Press this year; three of them from first time authors. 'While it's been quite hard work, the release of each one of these titles is a celebration of the strength and diversity of the Australian gay and lesbian community,' said Laurin McKinnon, manager at BlackWattle. 'We're looking forward to next year with some excitement.'

ONE DEAD DIVA, by Phillip Scott

ISBN 1 875243 21 6, 240 pages \$16.95, On release December 3 1995

BlackWattle Press Pty Ltd. PO Box 4 Leichhardt NSW 2040 Phone & fax *
Sydney 02 [REDACTED] * Australia + [REDACTED] We're on E-mail at - [REDACTED]

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382. **Mark Roberts**

AWOL: Polonius Press New Releases

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The following message has been posted by Australian Writing Online for Polonius Press. Enquiries about the title or service listed below should be directed to Polonius Press at the contacts listed.

ABOUT AWOL: AWOL is a information and distribution resource for Australian creative writers and publishers. We offer a variety of services from a monthly national writing what's on list (Happenings), through small press distribution, internet and conventional publicity service for writers and publishers as well a small press 'virtual bookshop'. All AWOL services are available through the internet, by fax or by mail. We can be contacted at PO Box 333 Concord NSW

2137 Australia EMail [REDACTED] or [REDACTED] Phone 61 2 7475667 Fax 61 2 7472802

Polonius Press is launching two new poetry books:

TRANS-SUMATRAN HIGHWAY & OTHER POEMS (96pp, \$17.95) by S. K. Kelen
and

MRS SCHNELL'S ENTRY INTO HEAVEN (55pp, \$17.95)
& other light verse by Geoff Page

The books will be launched by Senator Bob McMullan at the Members Bar, Old Parliament House commencing 6pm on Wednesday 29 November 1995.

Anyone wishing to purchase either of these books can order them direct from the publisher: Phil MacKenzie

Polonius Publications
35 Wybalena Grove
COOK, ACT, 2614

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383. **Chris Stroffolino**

Re: Questions

Mon 27 Nov 1995

Thanks, Steve---I had forgotten I actually have the Blake dictionary-- but maybe it was just an excuse to get you to quote this to the list! But Damon may be--as usual--reductive--for though "States" may be errors for Blake, it seems his idea of the "individual" is also more complex than Damon allows. For if the "individual" is that which can not change, it is of course more like "imagination" and certainly not the autonomous individual or the "egotistical sublime" (as Keats says of Wordsworth). It wouldn't be too much of a stretch to say that Blake's "imagination" (in the above quote at least) is far more like Marx's "labour" in the way it operates in his system---as an activity rather than a state. So so much for the Edison division between perspiration and inspiration....Chris

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384. **Joseph Conte**

Williams, W. C.

Mon 27 Nov 1995

In reply to Mr. Kirby Smith's inquiry as to whether W. C. Williams ever declared himself a "poet," there is a rather poignant passage towards the end of "The Desert Music" in which Williams replies to the inquiries of a dinner guest:

So you're a poet?
a good thing to be got rid of--half drunk
a free dinner under your belt, even though you
get typhoid--and to have met people you
can at least talk to .

*

I _am_ a poet! I
am. I am. I am a poet, I reaffirmed, ashamed

It's fairly apparent that within the "professional" or business community Williams felt such an admission of vocation--with the no distinction between what one "does" and who one "is"--difficult to make in mid-century America. As an addendum, I'd say that declaring one's profession as Professor of Poetry in polite conversation around the Thanksgiving Turkey in 1995 doesn't get you very many more nods of approval and tacit understanding than Williams's admission got him in 1954.

Joseph Conte

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385. **Maria Damon**

Re: genetway

Mon 27 Nov 1995

la lindberg writes:

Hey, if you think of Kaufman, think of me. No this ain't La Stein its just Lindberg, again. San Diego is a nice place for such conferences, the place where I first held forth on Kaufman, as I recall. *** so, le aldon, here's my scoop: at the very time of the ALA i may be needing to demenage from my sabbatical home, since it's a may-june wkend and i may need to be outta here june 1 (june 15 if i'm lucky, but can't count on it). so maybe i oughta pass --i hate to forego a chance to talk kaufman in sd, but la lindberg shd do you proud.--la daemon

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386. **Maria Damon**
Re: MLA Get together
Mon 27 Nov 1995

la MP ecrit:

Some people have asked when those in this group could get together at MLA.

You are hereby invited to the joint party sponsored by the ACLA (american com lit assoc) and the U-Cal Press in honor of Jerry Rothenberg/Pierre Joris's fabulous POEMS FOR THE MILLENIUM

It's listed in program as "ACLA cash bar," 5.15 PM, 28th, Marriot Hotel. But I believe you'll get at least one free drink and good food and meet your friends. I think J and P will also be saying a few words.

See you there, I hope!

Marjorie *** thanks marjorie --cool. that absolves me of the onerous organizational task of rounding up likely suspects at some unspecificable bar. i'd heard a rumor about the millennial party, but didn't want to presume. now i can crash the gate w/ my disreputable cultural studies friends in tow (just kidding, they'd never come to a "poetry" event) --looking forward to it and to seeing y'all's name tags. yrs--md

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387. **Bill Luoma**
Re: Question
Mon 27 Nov 1995

kirb th rit:

*I was wondering how a person knows
for sure that she or he is a poet?*

According to Spicer, anyone who has caught a rabbit is poet.

"The language is there and it has to be learned and you have to really know the shadows of words and all that eventually. But the first thing, if you are going to build a house and furnish it and set a table and all that-the first thing you have to do is make sure you have a guest. I mean it's like the receipe for rabbit stew. First catch the rabbit."

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388. **Eryque Gleason**

Press Release--WWW Magazine (fwd) -Forwarded

Mon 27 Nov 1995

This seemed like something of particular interest to some of us here. Load it up and notice that it's sponsored by Borders.

Enjoy!

Eryque

San Francisco Journalists Bring Wit and Smarts to the World Wide Web with 'Salon' Apple Computer, Adobe Ventures L.P., Borders, Inc. Help Launch Journalists' Dream Publication

SAN FRANCISCO, California--November 20, 1995--People who spend their time surfing the World Wide Web no longer have to turn off their computers and walk down to the corner newsstand to get their daily dose of intelligent and fun discussion about modern culture. Today, some of San Francisco's top journalists have launched SALON--a new World Wide Web site that aims to bring lively, smart and engaging discourse about the arts, books and ideas to the Internet.

The venture, which is funded by Apple Computer, Inc., Adobe Ventures L.P., and retail bookstore experts Borders, Inc., is the creation of David Talbot and David Zweig. Talbot, the SALON Web site editor and CEO, is the former arts and features editor of the San Francisco Examiner. Zweig, the SALON Web site publisher and president, has a long history in publishing and entrepreneurial ventures.

SALON (<http://www.salon1999.com>) marries the immediacy and free-spiritedness of the Internet with the intelligence, spirit and variety of daily journalism. Talbot and Zweig have assembled an impressive staff, including Internet expert Howard Rheingold, award-winning art director Mignon Khargie and TV critic Joyce Millman, a two-time Pulitzer Prize finalist in criticism.

"We aim to bring to electronic media the sort of intelligent and provocative discussion of cultural issues that seems to have disappeared from the mass media today," Talbot said. "We see the promise of a cultural rebirth in the ascendance of the World Wide Web, and we hope SALON contributes to that renaissance."

Unlike other magazines which came to the Internet by way of print progenitors, SALON was created solely for the World Wide Web. Inside the SALON Web site, people will encounter not only authors, artists and thinkers, but a kinetic community of readers and kindred spirits eager to thrash out cultural, political and literary issues. During the startup period, SALON will publish biweekly, and after that on a weekly basis,

with daily updates.

In addition to each issue's interviews and features, SALON departments will bring the reader daily editorials, cultural news in-brief, an interactive mystery, reviews of movies, fiction, multimedia, and music, and conversation in the form of live chats with celebrity guests and topical discussion threads. The premier issue features interviews with authors Amy Tan and John le Carre, commentary by Camille Paglia, a roundtable on America's strained race relations with authors Shelby Steele, Richard Rodriguez, Stanley Crouch and Jim Sleeper and an essay by Armistead Maupin.

Realizing the creative significance of SALON and its potential draw for Macintosh users, the Apple Internet Services division of Apple Computer, Inc. has backed the venture. Apple provided start-up financing for the project and, going forward, aims to develop further co-marketing and content production relationships with SALON. "SALON fits perfectly with our aim to provide a portfolio of Web sites that appeal to Apple customers in the home and creative professions" says Peter Friedman, vice president of the division. "But more importantly, we see in SALON an unstoppable cultural force aimed at making the Web the 21st Century equivalent of a 15th century Florentine piazza--and we want to make sure we're there!"

"We believe that SALON is a good example of the marriage of visually rich content with an exciting new medium--the World Wide Web," said Fred Mitchell, vice president of business development for Adobe Systems. "We are very excited about participating in this new venture and look forward to our continued involvement." Adobe Ventures L.P., was established in June 1994, and is currently a \$40 million venture capital limited partnership between Adobe Systems Incorporated and Hambrecht & Quist Group. It is chartered to invest in innovative companies strategic to Adobe's businesses. Hambrecht & Quist Group is a venture capital, investment banking and securities brokerage firm specializing in emerging growth companies in chosen areas of industry focus, including technology and life sciences.

Borders Inc., the nationwide chain of book and music superstores based in Ann Arbor, Michigan, is co-sponsoring the new magazine through the underwriting of "Sneak Peeks," a preview section of forthcoming books that will appear in SALON. And Borders will help Web surfers find SALON by distributing bookmarks featuring the site's Internet address in its nearly 100 stores nationwide. Sneak Peeks titles and reviews will also be displayed in all of its stores. In addition, SALON readers will be able to order titles featured in the magazine by e-mail from Borders.

"This is an ideal alliance--both Borders and SALON celebrate the excitement of discovery and new ideas," said Robin Wagner, senior vice

president of merchandising at Borders. By virtue of residing on the Internet's World Wide Web, SALON is available to people using any type of computer--Macintosh, PC-compatibles, etc.--so the common ground of users becomes the passion for reading and thinking rather than technology preference.

The SALON Web site (<http://www.salon1999.com>) was developed using software technology from WebGenesis (<http://www.webgenesis.com>), an Ithaca, New York-based firm owned and operated by twelve Cornell University students with an eye for the future. Saturn Corporation (<http://www.saturncars.com>) is SALON's charter advertiser.

NOTE TO EDITORS: If you are interested in receiving Apple press releases by fax, call 1-800-AAPL-FAX (██████████) and enter your PIN. If you do not have a PIN, please call the Public Relations Hotline at ██████████

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Adobe Systems Incorporated, (NASDAQ:ADBE) founded in 1982, is headquartered in Mountain View, California. Adobe develops, markets and supports computer software products and technologies that enable users to create, display, print and communicate electronic documents. The company licenses its technology to major computer, printing and publishing suppliers, and markets a line of applications software and type products for authoring visually rich documents. Additionally, the company markets a line of powerful, but easy to use products for home and small business users. Adobe has subsidiaries in Europe, Asia and the Pacific Rim serving a worldwide network of dealers and distributors. Adobe's 1994 revenue was approximately \$598 million.

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Apple's home page on the World Wide Web: <http://www.apple.com>

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389. **Bill Luoma**

Re: Poetry/Fiction/Literature divisions

Mon 27 Nov 1995

md wrote:

| c-word (culture, not capped) has a dubious reputation. . .

That's what we used to call Steven Greenblat's mag (Reputations).

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390. **Jordan Davis**

Re: Press Release--WWW Magazine (fwd) -Forwarded

Mon 27 Nov 1995

<http://www.suck.com>

<http://www.papermag.com>

two dailies up and running now
suck/ lowbrow slack web-satire
paper// downtown ny "c-word"

anybody know of any other thoughtful daily pages?

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391. **Maria Damon**

Re: poetry's "boss" poetry as mega meta-discourse

Mon 27 Nov 1995

kat: thank you for your sharp responses to what i read as a kind of nostalgia that permeates poetics-folks's sense of being victimized by everything from cultural studies to an overdose of tweedy colleagues. i wish i were as eloquent as you in recalling the dangers of public wound-licking in the name of poetic purism. (no offense to anyone here --i 'd like to bring cultural studies and poetics to bear on each other --and i know there are sympathizers out there!)--md

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392. **Maria Damon**

Re: Condition of Poetry in the Academy

Mon 27 Nov 1995

jt writes:

The comments here also raise an issue that has puzzled me. My work has been committed to theory and its engagement with various cultural practices, yet, increasingly, I am hearing from many older and established faculty members who, either openly or implicitly, deride theory in its various forms. This puzzles me because I want my work to be up to date and relevant. I am not a trend-monger, nor is my commitment to my work and theory a studied attempt at saying all the right things in hopes of obtaining a job. I guess, what it comes down to is that I find it deeply surprising--if not a little disappointing--when so much scholarly work is written off as hating literature....

Jeffrey Timmons

***to which i can add--already have, if u've seen it, jeffrey --my agreement and encouragement to keep up the good work.--md

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393. **Maria Damon**

Re: POETICS Digest - 25 Nov 1995 to 26 Nov 1995

Mon 27 Nov 1995

marjorie p writes:

cultural studies, as conceived in the wake of the New Historicism was wonderful and liberating--I am not at all opposed to it. But in the last few years, it's taken a weird turn back to a kind of pre-New Critical subject-matter scholarship: i.e., the treatment of motherhood in the 19th c. novel etc etc. Much of it assumes

that a novel, say, is just a straightforward social document and hence that what is "said" about motherhood is an accurate reflection of what Victorian attitudes were. This is hardly what Foucault had in mind and it has become oppressive--or so think.

*** "cultural studies" predated New Historicism, as i understand it --coming from primarily sociologists (the "Birmingham school"), literature scholars like Raymond Williams, and historians in Britain, who stressed the need to revise the traditional marxist emphasis on economic base over cultural superstructure --at the same time they insisted on preserving the sense of engagement and vision of social justice that characterized traditional marxism. americans have contributed "the new ethnography," primarily anthropologists, who have found literary theories useful tools for analyzing their self-reflective insight that they are basically producing fictions, and who nonetheless want to explore the possibility of studying other ("Other") cultures in non-colonialising ways. As I understand it, New Historicism is literary scholars' attempt to try to salvage the capital L in literary in the face of these democratising developments while incorporating the socio/historical: so now we have new ways of studying shakespeare --but it's still shakespeare that gets the focus, new ways of studying Eliot --but it's still Eliot -- they're still in thrall to a sense of literary greatness. A true revision of literary studies would go beyond simply applying new interests (conduct books in Britain) to old chestnuts (Pride and Prejudice).--md

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394. **Kevin Killian**

Re: Condition of Poetry in the Academy

Mon 27 Nov 1995

I haven't been following this discussion closely, so maybe someone already mentioned this, but for a great examination of academia's devouring of a writer, check out the Nov. 27 issue of *The New Yorker*, Joan Acocella's article on the reinventing of Willa Cather through the decades, "Cather and the Academy." It would be hilarious if it weren't so scary.

Dodie Bellamy

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395. **Jordan Davis**
are you the boss of poetry
Mon 27 Nov 1995

hi

as one poet looking to get out from under the vinculum of poetic bossing or
as one rabbit trapper researching havahart traps what are the ways to
um produce closure or a closure substitute

people here have seen and liked? (that is I guess authority is there mainly to
cause poems to end) (or the end of poetry?) and I don't mean Hemingway
evasion via nature or

Jordan

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396. **Michael Greer**
Discipline and Categorize
Mon 27 Nov 1995

It's been more than interesting to read several days' worth of posts where the Barnes & Noble discussion has intertwined with the English department question: Where, after all, IS "poetry" in all this? How different are the commodified shelf-definitions in bookstore aisles from course offerings in a univ. catalog? I'm reminded of the opening of *The Order of Things*, where Foucault cites that list of different types of animals and wonders on what discursive "plain" they may be compared to one another. As Jed Rasula shows in *The American Poetry Wax Museum*, middlebrow culture has many uses for poetry, which it has been more than successful in reproducing in its own image.

The question really revolves around what kind of cultural value (cultural capital) poetry is going to be assigned to (is that the right way to put that?). Bill Moyers has appeared to more successfully show people how to care about poetry than just about anyone else lately. People started buying Rumi books last summer after that show aired.

The Barnes & Noble question is about one kind of cultural capital (which is much more complex and interesting than a simple question of "sales"--if that were the sole criteria, I don't think they'd stock any poetry at all, save those swoopy-capped volumes by Susan Polis Schutz, Rod McKuen, et al--and we do need very much the kind of analysis in poetry corresponding to Jan Radway's take on the romance novel, btw.) I actually worked in a B&N for a few months and had a great deal of influence on the local buying habits of the store itself. Because we had two small presses in the town I was then working in (Bloomington-Normal, Illinois, home of Fiction Collective 2 and Dalkey Archive

Press), I was able to order basically the complete list of each publisher to stock our "local authors" section. B&N folks don't really know "literary" books, but they were, in my case, willing to listen to someone who did. As for my conscience, there were no independent bookstores to be put out of business. Not to defend B&N, but they do often increase book traffic overall, and can have a kind of symbiotic relationship to small, niche, used stores in their area. But I still shop at indies as much as possible. (Ingram is actually B&N's major distributor, and I think it's the largest in the country, much bigger even than Baker & Taylor. They certainly delivered semis full of books to one smallish city in central Illinois. They do seem to be driving the car in their relationships with publishers, however, which certainly seems backward to me.)

The English dept question is about another kind of cultural capital, which both does and does not overlap with that of bookstores. Interesting that while the theory crowd don't read much po, they certainly like to talk about the "poetics" of this and that. What valence are they getting out of that term? What's it allowing them to say that the word "theory" or "method" doesn't quite get at? Can we talk to theory people (I consider myself one of them too) about the relationship between "poetry" and "poetics" and get them to talk about the erasure of the former in the midst of the latter's hyper-inflation? Probably. But then getting colleagues to read language poetry might be a bigger challenge. Ours or theirs?

Great discussion. I have more questions than answers, to be sure.

--Michael Greer

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397. **Tony Green**

Re: history, theory, lit (huey, dewey, and louie?)

Mon 27 Nov 1995

to say a little more abt the theory problem, not to be at all anti-theoretical, only to notice that "reading" is not a well-defined act so that everyone knows at once what is meant. There are "reading" practices that aim at the question of how a text or a painting, say, was put together 1) as an action taking time energy and thought 2) working in a situation -- taking a context and changing 3) taking account of writer-text-reader relations. All that tends easily to get left to one side (too difficult?) in favour of picking up on the "content" (story-line, character implications, social habits recorded) as the base for either simple-minded social analysis as Marjorie Perloff's complains or else into one or another social-scientific analyses -- socio-psycho-politico-economico. The elision is regularly performed in much academic discourse. It misses out precisely questions of the art, as if the "poetics" were not of any consequence. To put it in

a too simple and old-fashioned terminology it is as if the "meaning" were identified with the "content" and the question of "form" was relegated to one of several possible rubbish baskets -- the idealist aesthetic basket, formalism, subjective introspection, stylistics....whatever. It is as if you told a film-critic/historian, you must only address the story-line and the characters and dialogue, plus the detailed objects in the mise-en-scene at each moment -- as symbolic -- but not the directorial devices of cutting, montage, time, continuity, camerawork, colour and sound. Best mentd

Tony Green,

e-mail: [REDACTED]

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398. **jeffrey timmons**

Re: history, theory, lit (huey, dewey, and louie?)

Mon 27 Nov 1995

On Sun, 26 Nov 1995, Tenney Nathanson wrote:

> The collapse of "theory" into cult studs, in Jeffrey's post, is interesting....

Yes, I wasn't just referring to cult studs, but theory in general--whether it's decon, queer, new hist, what have you....

But I

> think Marjorie's criticism still stands: there are a lot of grad students
> (and professors, as several posts have pointed out) who deploy big cultural
> categories as an alternative to (or avoidance of) mucking about in details.
> Kenneth Koch used to say in class that it wasn't the broad points but the
> narrow ones, the remarks about odd details or idiosyncracies, that were most
> revealing about a writer's work (not THEMES but verbal ticks).

Yes, of course, you are right. I agree.

And I will be provocative: close reading is unimportant.

Ticks are all fine and good mind you, but they are annoying . . . and dangerous! Always trying to suck your blood and latch on to you. Yuck!

Seriously, though: I do agree with what you say, but as I read your poem [which I liked very much, by the way] in the latest RIF/T I was intrigued by the broad sweep of the piece. I think the poem is interesting in its breadth-- and even in its odd details. But you must admit (please, please) that your poem is INTERESTING because of its broad points, because of its scope, and the strength derived from those big cultural ideas. I have another question about the poem, but I'll save that....

Your allusions to Whitman, I think, suggest the necessity of broadness.

But, really, we're both right. We need details (and those nasty ticks, yuck!) and broad points. I seem to recall a discussion with Spencer on the necessity for detail and scope or breadth. Anyway....

anyway I think some grad classes where folks just sit around pretending there is no such thing as theory and mucking around with single poems for an hour or so are a good idea.

You mean we don't do this? Yes, it is a good idea, but a little dated perhaps? Isn't close reading, essentially, a version of biblical exegesis? which is probably even related to the Talmudic tradition of reading--though I'm out of my element here (where's Tom Mandel?)--which probably makes it even older. Old is not bad, it's just that I would like to look at other ways of reading and using texts. What this is precisely I am not sure . . . though I am willing to consider the options.

Thanks for your remarks Marjorie and Tenney.

close reading hurts my eyes and it smears the ink,

Jeffrey Timmons

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399. **jeffrey timmons**

Re: POETICS Digest - 25 Nov 1995 to 26 Nov 1995

Mon 27 Nov 1995

On Mon, 27 Nov 1995, Maria Damon wrote:

A true revision of literary studies would go beyond simply applying new
> interests (conduct books in Britain) to old chestnuts (Pride and
> Prejudice).

Could you elaborate?

Jeffrey Timmons

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400. **Robert Drake**

Publication announce: TapRoot Reviews 7/8

Mon 27 Nov 1995

This is to announce the publication of _TapRoot Reviews #7/8_, featuring reviews of independent literatures of several stripes. The Electronic version, which includes only the individual magazine & chapbook reviews (_not_ the material in the featured articles) will be available at the EPC in a few weeks.

The paper version is available now from Burning Press, PO Box 585, Lakewood OH 44107. 40 pages tabloid, \$5.00 for the double issue. Thanks to all contributors & subscribers for patience & support-- their contributions of time & money help insure TRR's continuation...

TRR 7/8 Contents:

ZINE REVIEWS... 126 periodicals!

Jake Berry: ARTICULATING FREEDOM (essay)

MOODYSTREET IRREGULARS--elegy by Mike Basinski

LEAVE BOOKS--19 titles reviewed by Mark Wallace & Susan Smith Nash;
interview by lbd

BOOK REVIEWS... 185 titles!

Gary Allen: THE MISSIONARY WHO FORGOT HIS NAME--review by
Randolph Roark

Michael Basinski: SLE VEP--review by Ken Sherwood

Clark Coolidge: THE ROVA IMPROVISATIONS review by Mark DuCharme

Fabio Doctorovich: BRIBAGE CARTOONIANA--review by Harry Polkinhorn

dbqp PRESS--11 titles reviewed by Jake Berry

Geof Huth: PRAECISIO (essay)

AUDIO REVIEWS... 11 recent tapes & CDs

Leslie Scalapino: DEFOE--excerpt; and reviews by Steven Benson,
Tom Beckett, and Susan Smith Nash

John Taggart: SONG OF DEGREES--review by William Martin

CHAX PRESS--7 titles reviewed by Tom Beckett

E-SOURCES FOR POETRY--(part 1), reviewed by lbd

Individual reviews by: Dan Barbiero, Micheal Basinski, Tom Beckett, John M. Bennett, Jake Berry, David Bromige, Luigi-Bob Drake, Mark DuCharme, Chris Funkhouser, Peter Ganick, Loss Pequeno Glazier, Bob Grumman, Andrew Joran, Karl Kempton, Roger Kyle-Keith, Hank Lazer, Susan Smith Nash, Mark Nowak, Oberc, Andrew Russ, Thaddeus Rutkowski, Mark Scroggins, Ken Sherwood, Chris Stroffolino, Gary Sullivan, Gregory Vincent St. Thomasino, Jeffery Timmons, Mark Weber, Larry Wendt, Thomas Willoch, & Karl Young.

lbd, editor
TRR/Burning Press
PO Box 585, Lakewood OH 44107
[REDACTED]

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401. **Rod Smith**

Re: Graduate School & the Poetry Cult

Mon 27 Nov 1995

On 11/25 Don Byrd wrote: "Foucault probably underestimates the structural vitality of postmodern institutions, which in fact are not hierarchical in any sense that "proliferation" constitutes a meaningful threat."

Don't really understand what is meant by "not hierarchical etc."

Also Don:

" I would suggest that the viable model for poetry at this time is the cult.
"...what has been lost is the secret of secrecy," Olson says. To be sure, it may have it exoteric forms that can be revealed in the university. Rod was at a gathering of a few poets around my kitchen table a couple of weeks ago, and it seemed like an occasion on which the business of poetry was well served, even though no one was particularly trying to serve it."

I agree with this though prefer the term "community" to "cult"-- cult seems too closed, & that's not my experience of how these groups operate. People pop in & out-- as Cage said "there's always somebody wondering in from the street."

I also wonder about the assertion that with the N.E.A. "poetry went on welfare"?

On 11/27 Michael Greer wrote "The Barnes & Noble question is about one kind of cultural capital (which is much more complex and interesting than a simple question of "sales"--if that were the sole criteria, I don't think they'd stock any poetry at all"

This isn't my experience. Having worked in 3 stores, two independents and one local chain-- I can assert that, in fact, Poetry Sells! The idea that it doesn't I don't really understand. When it is made available folks buy it. & not just poets! The "numbers" really are better than you would expect-- at one store where I did quite a bit of poetry buying the section managed 5 turns, better than fiction or biography. & this was a 4 bookcase section including trade, small press, & university stuff.

Finally, re: theory/poetry question & Wystan's remarks about "FASHION"-- this seems to me the point. CODIFICATION is what happens too quickly, & I think this has to do with the hierarchical nature of institutions. As Ron mentioned at one point-- theory in '71 was "liberating," now it's obligatory-- one has to know it & justify oneself in those terms. I'd like to question that. Of course, the best of the theoreticians are very grounded & acknowledge these problems-- Charles Bernstein & Cornel West come to mind. Also Clint Burnham's *The Jamesonian Unconscious* is a good example of a complex "debasement" of theory-- an attempt to deal w/ the issue of "the institution speaking." Guess I'm the only one who hasn't read the Rasula book, I'll catch up.

--Rod

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402. **Wystan Curnow**

Re: POETICS Digest - 25 Nov 1995 to 26 Nov 1995

Mon 27 Nov 1995

Hi marjorie, thanks for the invite to the book party for the BIG POETRY BOOK in Chicago. I don't think i'll make it other than in spirit. Its chronic isn't it, the way ideas will take 'weird turn's? You can count on it, if a liberatingism comes along sooner or later its going to take a weird turn. So this discussion about Literature v Theory v Cultural studies v Poetry.... is largely driven and/or coloured by feelings about and attitudes to (I hesitate to say but it is handy) FASHION. I know the term belongs to duddie-fuddies, and I am not one of them and if they use it against me I say and what's wrong with FASHION??!! But there IS something wrong with it, which has to do with ideas taking weird turns, turns for the worse. And so what is it about the Academy that encourages the process? Well, I suppose it is to do with careers, teaching, yes, but what are the larger composting processes of which this of form ideological decay of is a part? I'd like to know more about this if you or others have thoughts.

The other thing which occurred to me was this: what most members of an English Dept have in common is that they teach and study historical texts; a primary interest in contemporary poetry sets one apart, in a place where one's claims on literature are, or may seem to be, very different in their nature and value. Is it because Theory, at least to begin with, and Cultural Studies, at least to begin with, made claims on Literature out of an articulated contemporaneity, and so robbed Literature of its present--that's big el 'literature'--, that we have mixed feelings about them.

Best wishes,
Wystan

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403. **Aldon L. Nielsen**

Re: Cather Tube

Tue 28 Nov 1995

Dodie and I may not be scared by the same things -- I just read that NYer piece and found it a terrifying piece of dreck -- 1/2 way through I lost count of all the uninspected preuspositions it requires if one is to be upset about what one is clearly meant to be upset about -- as with Dickinson scholarship, there is much that is laughable published about Cather, and our NYer wants to make us laugh even at that which is in fact carefully accomplished and insightful - - Is it really the case that contemporary critics, for example, were startled to find that Cather shared many beliefs about society with U.S. Grant, particularly since these beliefs had been on public display all along -- ??

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404. **Aldon L. Nielsen**

Re: Poe biz

Tue 28 Nov 1995

odd indeed in this context to see the first page of Foucault's "Preface" to *The Order of Things* as if that list of animules hadn't sprung out from the pages of Borges for the close reading of Foucault

"Take a Message to Michael"

and where is this theory group that reads no poetry? I suspect our complaint has more to do with which poetry gets read -- Our American crop seems stuck in Romanticism or Modernism, judging from the talk one hears when folk gather to complain of theory -- but closer reading yet finds the reading of contemporary verse alive and well among a small body of the younger "theory-ridden" who frighten our elders into forming anti-MLAs and National Associations of Scabs -- Maybe it would help if we all read each other and went to each others conferences more???? Let's all bring a Cult Studs ephebe to Orono with us this Summer and start a phenomenon

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405. **Aldon L. Nielsen**

Re: Damonology

Tue 28 Nov 1995

Thanks to Maria for a good reminder of Cultural Studies as it first reared its head -- its translation to these shores and near replacement of the old "Popular Culture" studies makes an interesting study --

since I'm deep in a book on C.L.R. James, let me mention his importance in this regard -- if you note the heavy Caribbean influence in British Cultural Studies (Stuart Hall, Kobena Mercer, Paul Gilroy, etc) you'll find they've all read *Beyond a Boundary* and other, fugitive, texts by James -- That book, by the way (BB), has recently been republished by Duke --

and Maria -- San Daggoo won't be the same without you!!! If we make a go of it, I'll tape the proceedings and send it on to you --

((does Mona Lisa Saloy have an e-mail address??))

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406. **Tenney Nathanson**

for now

Tue 28 Nov 1995

The Lit/Theory/Poetry/History/Cult Studs/Geisers/Turks thread is sure getting nicely gnarly. Rather than worry it some more, right now, just a Plug for a Listmate's work:

via this:

Date: Tue, 28 Nov 1995 16:55:12 GMT+1200

From: Wystan Curnow <[REDACTED]>

Subject: Re: POETICS Digest - 25 Nov 1995 to 26 Nov 1995

The other thing which occurred to me was this: what most members of an English Dept have in common is that they teach and study historical texts; a primary interest in contemporary poetry sets one apart, in a place where one's claims on literature are, or may seem to be, very different in their nature and value. Is it because Theory, at least to begin with, and Cultural Studies, at least to begin with, made claims on Literature out of an articulated contemporaneity, and so robbed Literature of its present--that's big el 'literature'--, that we have mixed feelings about them.

*Best wishes,
Wystan*

Alan Golding's terrific new book on canons, /From Outlaw to Classic/ partly confirms this but partly complicates it in interesting ways, by looking (in one chapter) at the interlocking commitments of the New Criticism to, precisely, professionalization, amateurism, canon-formation, evaluation, and (some!) contemporary work--all at the very same time, like they say (on Barney actually).

anyway, as several others on the list noted a few weeks ago, it's a terrific book.

Tenney

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407. **Chris Scheil**
(no subject)

Tue 28 Nov 1995

It is one problem of sleep to maintain disorder-becoming-myriad-fountains, like his hobby of apology that struck structure at the creature auction or his plural cerebral mail squarely removed from the basilisk prick sort of riffed on the difficult blanks (those whips defy lighting exceeding enclosure) against unconcern at the announcement of doom sweeps & pledges of difficulty to make radiant gasses. Oh, and his "necessity tails" seem quick-like, sapphire, a concordance of breadth in paralysis, or his urns of firing hail for shaving, that focused dictation in the entreatable gesture of snugging. His viewings of seven, his dismay at height as an unconscious accuracy, everywhere animal on impulse & searching for resolve, it is those desperate hours of minutes that obey horror, prevent or order anybody induced to dive off the omnipotent he is the liquid inventor (inside) pity, whose midnight dance of the afternoon overcasts the impossible posture. Clarion. Heavy. Fearfully gnawing.

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408. **Ron Silliman**

The break you're seeking

Tue 28 Nov 1995

David Kellog writes:

On Sun, 26 Nov 1995, jeffrey timmons wrote:

[big snip on David's part]

I guess, what it comes down
to is that I find it deeply surprising--if not a little
disappointing--when so much scholarly work is written off as
hating literature....

I would like to second this position. My own theoretical writing is not
about hating or liking literature but is a different sort of work altogether
(about, mainly, how the terms of value in the literary field get circulated and
reproduced). Now, obviously I can't remove my own contributions from the
field I'm analyzing, but that, to put it bluntly, is a theoretical problem. Just
because work doesn't promote certain writers the way some work does does
not meant that it hates poetry, or fiction, or anything else. Give me a break.

~~~~~  
~~~~~

I don't think that anyone here is suggesting that you or any other the other
"criticism-centered" practitioners on this list hate or even dislike poetry. The
self-selective nature of the list weeds that attitude out, thankfully. But even at
Berkeley in the late 1960s, one ran into grad students whose position was, to
paraphrase, "I'm being trained as a specialized reader and to become
emotionally involved in the texts I study would be unprofessional," a stance that
is silly enough on the face of it, but which devolves very rapidly into a kind of
contempt for the object of study (as in "the only true creative writing today is
criticism," a sentence I also heard uttered by a Berkeley student back in the
late 1980s). Furthermore, I've seen that same attitude taken in a dozen
different fields (e.g., "the first sign of a lawyer is contempt for the law," a
comment I heard more than once while working as a lobbyist for the prison
movement, invariably uttered by a lawyer--and which I heard last just one week
ago, again from a lawyer).

But in the academy, and in the professions generally, there is an enormous
amount of barely concealed emotion that leaks out as "professionalism" and this
mode of despair (which is how I read it) is one such possible emotion. Which is
why I passed on law school.

Carried forward by enough people, it can become a subtext to a larger discourse (one finds it in spades in Critical Inquiry, in SAQ, in Representations) and just spreads to become a norm.

And I've certainly heard critics who participate on this list -- such as Marjorie Perloff or Hank Lazer -- dismissed by others on the grounds that they LIKE their subject too much. That's why their work and the work of Alan Golding, Cary Nelson, Andrew Ross, George Hartley, Linda Reinfeld, Herman Rappaport and others like them always strikes me as fundamentally courageous.

I think that the story of the U.S. academy over the past quarter century has not been one of the arrival of theory nearly so much as it has one of the PROFESSIONALIZATION of theory. From the radical works of Barthes, Benjamin, Foucault, the Frankfurt School, Gramsci to the dimly argued intellectual minimalism of (pick your favorite example and insert it here) fundamentally changes the meaning of theory itself. Those poets (not critics) who were initially so violently anti-theory when langpo began using that vocabulary (Codrescu, Clark et al), confusing langpo and the New Criticism in some instances, were not entirely wrong in that their intuition led them to suspect what theory itself would become once submitted to the institutional regime of the professions. What gets carried out today (as folks have noted from dissertation topics or a perusal of this year's MLA topics reflects) in the name, say, of cultural studies often seems a betrayal of the very promise inherent in theory. Walter Benjamin wasn't seeking a step increase.

All best,
Ron



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409. **Michael Boughn**
Theory etc.

Tue 28 Nov 1995

It seems to me it's not so much a problem with theory as with the relation to theory. And in that case, WYSTAN's FASHION might be better theorized as consumerism. The English Department of the Soul doesn't produce theory, it consumes it in a scenario that increasingly resembles the major American TV networks' November Sweeps Week.

Did anybody read Sander Gilman's injunction to young grad student writers in a recent MLA newsletter? Basically, it said, if you want a job, write like me. Above all else, don't be original either in concept or execution. It'll only confuse the hiring committee.

Sigh.

Mike



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410. **H. T. KIRBY-SMITH**

Question

Tue 28 Nov 1995

No one really did ever answer the question about how one knows if one is a poet.

Tom Kirby-Smith
Concerned Citizen

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411. **Schuchat**

Re: Question

Tue 28 Nov 1995

On Tue, 28 Nov 1995, H. T. KIRBY-SMITH wrote:

> No one really did ever answer the question about how one knows if one
> is a poet.

>

> Tom Kirby-Smith
> Concerned Citizen

>

the question reposed suggests that it might be possible for someone to be an inadvertent or unconscious poet, practicing poetry without awareness that that is what is being practiced. what form could that take? ted berrigan's analogy was birdsong, but he had a concept of poet as a vocation and/or election (the first in a catholic sense and the second in the calvinist sense). in that view, being a poet was like being gay (or queer, if you prefer), something one would in most cases eventually admit to oneself. if poetry is an activity, and being a poet is what you are while engaging in that activity, does it need to define all your other selves?

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412. **David Kellogg**

Re: The break you're seeking

Tue 28 Nov 1995

Well this **is** a pleasant debate, probably the best on POETICS in a while. I'm gonna respond issue by issue as I see it, rather than by individual. I'm thinking on the screen, so bear with me.

1. Professionalization. I think Ron (and others, including Marjorie P. in a different way) are right to point to professionalization as the key factor in what's happening to poetry talk. But it's a mighty complex issue. Is poetry professionalized? Well, yes and no. Much talk about poetry takes place in critical venues which are part of the larger critical professionalization-machine, and they have the typical features of professions (published standards for work, peer review (sometimes double-blinded)), "official" organs for professional organizations, etc. Now, is **Poetry** magazine part of a profession? Is **Sulfur**? Is **Arial**? What profession? Whose? Unlike wholly professionalized critical journals, many poetry journals do not provide peer review in the sense that, say, **Diacritics** is supposed to (with written responses to the work, suggestions for revision, reasons for rejection etc.-- though I have a story about that). With poetry, of course, it's largely a case of the volume of submission. With criticism published in poetry journals it's a different. Sometimes you have the case of a semi-creative journal going wholly professional, signified in part by the exclusion of actual poetry from its pages: **Boundary 2** would be an example. While the "professional" used to be opposed to the "amateur" or the person "of letters," professional these days seems to be opposed to "independent" or "alternative," thus echoing the rock music scene (viz. the proposed title of the archive of MLA papers by members of this list). What I'm saying is that professional and its opposite are **both** sources of critical and creative value, depending on context, and that people like us who work in contemporary poetry are caught between these value-zones. Which brings me to my second point.

2. Value. It's true, as someone mentioned, that one difference between academics on this list (not that we're all academics) and most academics elsewhere is that we work on contemporary writers, on the contemporary literary field, so that many of us feel obligated to promote writers we like (and trash others). When people, even those with careers in English or literature, find out I work on contemporary poetry, they ask me who are the best poets around. Does anybody else find this strange? I don't mind expressing my tastes, but my work isn't primarily about my tastes (or at least my poetic tastes -- it's certainly about, implicated in, my cognitive tastes). This response seems particularly suited to contemporary literature: nobody asks my Victorianist friends whether Eliot is better than Dickens (tho of course she is 8-)). In contemporary poetry, half the articles are reviews, and another third are

promotions disguised as analyses. This is why I often think that Helen Vendler is really Marjorie Perloff's evil twin.

3. Emotional response. It's a pity that critics should have to conceal their emotional response to work, and that such response should itself be more or less excluded from critical discussion. Such strictures breed precisely the disingenuousness in critical writing that I mentioned above. But they do more: they split critical work down the middle, and hinder the production of knowledge by setting critics against each other.

Cheers,
David

~~~~~  
~~~~~

David Kellogg Duke University
[REDACTED] University Writing Program
[REDACTED] Durham, NC 27708
FAX [REDACTED]

"Yexplication is yexploration."

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413. **Paul Naylor ok 157602**

Re: the caribbean

Tue 28 Nov 1995

Aldon --when you say you are in the middle of a book about CLR James, does that mean you are reading or writing such a book? Your connection between the rise of culture studies in Britain and their reading of Caribbean writers like James is very suggestive. I'd be interested to know why you think that connection occurred. We had the great pleasure of having Kamau Brathwaite and Nourbese Philip here (The University of Memphis) last week for a symposium on the Caribbean, and they both stressed how difficult it was for them to throw off the colonial model of literature and culture in order to do the kind of work they do. As a result, their work -- particularly Brathwaite's, since he is older than Philip -- doesn't draw a strict division between writing culture studies and writing poetry. Brathwaite's new book *Barabajan Poems*, is a remarkable text that joins poetry, literary history, autobiography, and visual experimentation in a way that, for me at least, answers the question about whether contemporary poetry does any "culture work." Although Aldon's formulation of the connection between culture studies and the Caribbean looks at that connection from outside in (from Britain to the Caribbean), looking at the connection from the inside out (from the Caribbean to Britain) may be even more provocative. Along this same line, Nourbese Philip contends that the

Caribbean has always been postmodern -- given the collage of languages and multiple subject positions those who live in the Caribbean have always confronted. This gives a useful twist to the debate about where postmodernism began -- in the US (Huyssen) or Europe (Lyotard, Habermas).

Paul Naylor

MAIL

SEND

in%"[REDACTED]"

in%"[REDACTED]"

SEND

in%"[REDACTED]"

in%"[REDACTED]"

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414. **Judy Roitman**

Re: Theory etc.

Tue 28 Nov 1995

It seems to me it's not so much a problem with theory as with the relation to theory. And in that case, Wystan's FASHION might be better theorized as consumerism. The English Department of the Soul doesn't produce theory, it consumes it in a scenario that increasingly resembles the major American TV networks' November Sweeps Week.

Just a note to say (everyone knows this anyway) that fashion and consumerism are rampant everywhere, not just in English departments.

I've spent 25 years in the academy, and the shifts of FASHION begin to look like toddlers racing through rooms disorienting any grown-ups trying to focus (and ultimately destroying the very perps themselves)...

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415. **Judy Roitman**

Re: Question

Tue 28 Nov 1995

No one really did ever answer the question about how one knows if one is a poet.

*Tom Kirby-Smith
Concerned Citizen*

Yeah, well I was going to ask how one knows if one is human...

I asked my kid last night "are you a juggler?" He said "sure." Couldn't understand the big deal -- he throws things around and catches them, so he's a juggler, no problem.

Where does all this fraughtness come from? The trembling before the altar, the notion that it is hubris to say "I am a poet" when folks who know shit about language cheerfully read self-promotional cliché-confirming crap and call it poetry (so why don't I? -- such contradiction here).

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416. **Joe Amato**

Re: The break you're seeking

Tue 28 Nov 1995

latecoming as i am to this fascinating discussion of theory/poetry, just a few observations:

(1) easiest terms to appropriate in the world are "poetry" and "poetic"... to allude to a previous thread, there's always "poetry in baseball," or a "poetics of baseball," even as there is relatively little baseball in poetry (i.e., notwithstanding an anthology or two)... i could name any number of "new" theories that have used poetry/poetics with no reference whatever to poetry per se, or the discourse surrounding same...

(2) yes michael b., i too found gilman's "advice" stuffy and unfortunate...

(3) theory can be practiced differently, right?... i mean, it's not a monolith either... and SURELY there are more options "out there" than academic presses have generally allowed...

(4) cultural studies has become chi-chi, yes... but there is yet very good work to be had under this latter rubric...

(5) re this question of the professional which david k. raises, for me THE central issue, which i put forth here in shorthand, and with some ambivalence:

for any of you who are academics, methinks you would do well to regard yourselves as academic "professionals" EVEN AS you strive to rethink said distinction vis-a-vis the "non-professional" (whether "amateur" zinist or "independent" alternative etc)... in fact, i would argue that most folks proud of their work see themselves as "pro's," and that this latter distinction still has value in such terms... it seems to me that academic professionals, for example, OUGHT to consider [gasp] unionizing... that they OUGHT to consider their expertise no "better" than lay expertise of various sorts... i'm thinking here of the work of cheryl geisler, and am well aware of how the term "professional" has been used (particularly during the 19th. century) to disenfranchise "other"

worker-groups... but it seems to me we're FAR too far into this century to propose a new term, steeped as we are in our various institutions... hence i'd argue for wholesale reform of the category... and i find it somewhat dubious to argue that academics are NOT professionals, and i find it in fact convenient (however necessarily blurred) for poets to argue for such "disconnection" when in fact most poets i know are actively seeking a form of validation that strikes me as particularly professionalized... so to me the danger is the "professional" as currently construed, and it seems to me that (some) "we" needs to take this term out of the hands of the professions as such...

joe

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417. **Chris Stroffolino**

Re: Question

Tue 28 Nov 1995

Well, what if you're only a poet when you stop thinking of yourself as one....

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418. **Jonathan A Levin**

Re: Condition of Poetry in the Academy

Tue 28 Nov 1995

Poetics folk:

I've taken to offering graduate courses aggressively focused on "writers," i.e., Whitman & Dickinson, or Wharton & James--this as a way of insisting that the object of study is always literature, literary language, problems of narrative, image, syntax, theme (yes, even that), and so on. For me, as I suspect for many of you out there, all the theory and cultural studies that get put in front of the literature so often are still relevant, and I do what I can to make them see how the literature, the language, makes them relevant--but I want them to learn that what we study is literature, and that we study it because, as James said, it's interesting. I think, frankly, more of us have to find ways of letting our graduate students know that it's o.k. to study--gasp--literature. I go through this all the time: reassuring my graduate students that it's really o.k. to be a student of literature first, so long as you're willing to be sophisticated about what that means (and hell: I don't much mind if you give in to the urge to suspend that sophistication every so often). But I really think WE have a responsibility here. There are grad students who would probably never take my class in "Whitman & Dickinson": but if that's their attitude, so be it--they're obviously finding what they need somewhere else. As for trends, I'm not

terribly optimistic, based on what I see, but I do know that we continue to draw a healthy handful of students who are responsive to the kind of reading I do with them.

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419. **Susan Schultz**

Re: Condition of Poetry in the Academy

Tue 28 Nov 1995

Some symptoms:

--When my department decided (finally!) to hire a local writer (one familiar with the culture and creole of Hawai'i), the poets unanimously agreed to advertise for a *_fiction_* writer. The rationale was that more graduate students write fiction than poetry, but one wonders why that is so...

--The current visiting writer, Eric Chock, noticed that there was an anti-poetry bias in the department. He also noticed that his graduate creative writing students hadn't read much poetry. And that even poets on the staff claimed not to like reading the stuff. Some members of the faculty apparently told him they wanted to write on poetry, but only after they got tenure.

--Someone applying for a job last year did a brilliant reading of Lois-Ann Yamanaka's book of poems, *_Saturday Night at the Pahala Theatre_* (Bamboo Ridge Press), while referring to it as a series of "novellas." Never once did she allude to the fact that they are poems--and that the issue of genre in them is crucial.

--A senior faculty member told me he thought that all the interesting theoretical work was being done on narrative. Then he said he didn't know anything about work on poetry.

--Political readings of poetry and fiction suffer, I think, due to a lack of attention to language and form. Thus, a book of radical Hawaiian poetry is considered that despite the fact that it's written in mainstream free verse with Hawaiian words thrown in. Or Garrett Hongo's book on finding his roots in Hawai'i is praised despite his reliance on the lexicon of Keats and Shelley.

So, like someone else who wrote in recently, I think it's part of our job to do PR for our subject. Part of the problem is ignorance, a lack of recognition that contemporary poetry is rife with intelligence and controversy.

Can anyone suggest good books of cultural studies on poetry? I see no reason why there can't be such, though in my department there's an automatic assumption that cultural studies = a study of narrative (the stories of people who haven't been represented adequately in print). My colleague, Rob Wilson,

has done some exciting work on local writing in the context of the Pacific, but I'd really like to hear about other work. Susan

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420. **Susan Schultz**

Re: the caribbean

Tue 28 Nov 1995

Paul--who is the publisher of Brathwaite's new book?

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421. **Joe Amato**

Re: The break you're seeking

Tue 28 Nov 1995

and at the risk of boring those w/o academic affiliation per se, one final opine:

(6) i would call attention to sander gilman's more recent proposal in the brand spanking new mla newsletter to institute (by way of doing more in the face of a dismal job market) "postdoctoral fellowships"... now i like gilman's scholarship, and i think he's an entirely well-intentioned mla president... but there's a certain irony comes of listening to him urge such action---from *my* pov... ysee, he teaches right around the corner from me, at the u of chicago... and i teach up the street (so to speak) at illinois institute of technology, where we just six months back lost two of our three PREdoctoral fellowships (english and philosophy), and are doing what we can to preserve a four-course humanities (abet) requirement on a tech. campus gone, well, a bit haywire... gilman's various assertions---that "Students want to study what we want to teach," that "The system of higher education in the humanities in North America should be recognized as what it is---the best in the world," that "There is even a nascent language-across-the-curriculum movement..."---it strikes me that these sorts of assertions simply MUST be uttered from an institutional vantage-point that only a minority of academics share... such disparity (detailed nicely in james sosnoski's *_token professionals and master critics: a critique of orthodoxy in literary studies_* (sunny, 1994)) reveals what's at stake in ANY revaluation of economic-material-academic realities, and in reworking the "professional"... as gilman rightly asserts (and to paraphrase), "we" are the mla---BUT this is not quite to emphasize how vested some of us are in more orthodox institutional habits... further, such assertions fall somewhat flat in the face of more vitriolic appraisals of academe, such as the recent barron's piece, variously "Slow Learners" and "Campus Unrest" (by jonathan r. laing, nov. 27)----"Why parents are up in arms about tuition bills, and colleges will finally be forced to change their free-spending ways"...

uh-huh...

there's some serious critique 'out there'---seriously misguided, imho... but the only realistic response will come first from a recognition that "we" are not all experiencing the same academic realities... how to find some solidarity in the midst of such differences isn't gonna be easy, never is...

joe

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422. **Steve Carll**

Re: Question

Tue 28 Nov 1995

At 08:53 AM 11/28/95 EST, you wrote:

>No one really did ever answer the question about how one knows if one
>is a poet.

>

>Tom Kirby-Smith

>Concerned Citizen

One doesn't, Tom. That's the beauty of it, what gives the whole project its edge.

Steve

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423. **Maria Damon**

Re: Williams, W. C.

Tue 28 Nov 1995

hey joe, where' re u going w/ that gun etc?

u wrote:

I'd say that declaring one's

profession as Professor of Poetry in polite conversation around the

Thanksgiving Turkey in 1995 doesn't get you very many more nods of approval and tacit understanding than Williams's admission got him in 1954.

Joseph Conte

when i confess to same, people either tell me they're nuts about rita dove watch my reaction (i don't know what they're waiting for) or ask if i write my "own" stuff, not "just" criticism. then, have i been published. ooh, aah. i like to die of shame. hope all's well w/ you--md

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424. **Chris Stroffolino**

Re: Condition of Poetry in the Academy

Tue 28 Nov 1995

Well, I can't speak for others, but am happy to include myself in the "we" Jonathon Levin outlined---JL makes a good point, too, that I've been thinking about since Don Byrd suggested that "theory is very sexy today". For though it no doubt has its attractions, Levin is right that there are quite a few graduate students who ARE GOOD AT and who CAN PLAY the theory game, but feel pressured by their junior faculty (the last 4 or 5 hires at my institution are all primarily theory, for instance)--as well as by what they are told are THE DEMANDS OF THE MARKETPLACE that somehow they can't "get away" with literature, that they can't unless they want to be pegged a RIGHTEST.... So, I'm glad this is NOT a closed issue, and where there's hope there's doubt. And where there's detachment there's (fill in blank).... cs

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425. **David Kellogg**

Re: Condition of Poetry in the Academy

Tue 28 Nov 1995

On Tue, 28 Nov 1995, Susan Schultz wrote:

| *Can anyone suggest good books of cultural studies on poetry?*

Our own Maria Damon's THE DARK END OF THE STREET: MARGINS IN VANGUARD POETRY (have I got the title right) U Minnesota P;

Ross Talarico, SPREADING THE WORD: POETRY AND THE SURVIVAL OF COMMUNITY IN AMERICA, Duke UP.

Cheers,
David

~~~~~  
~~~~~

David Kellogg Duke University
[REDACTED] University Writing Program
[REDACTED] Durham, NC 27708
FAX [REDACTED]

"Yexplication is yexploration."

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426. **Chris Stroffolino**

Re: Condition of Poetry in the Academy

Tue 28 Nov 1995

Dear Susan Schultz---You say Garrett Hongo is praised as "radical" despite his reliance on the lexicon of Keats and Shelley"----Oh, IF ONLY his lexicon and his syntax (to say little of his "intelligence" or "vision") WERE even as radical as Keats and Shelley still can be... Why blame THEM for the HONGOS of the world! cs.

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427. **Jordan Davis**

Re: Question

Tue 28 Nov 1995

At 8:53 AM 11/28/95, H. T. KIRBY-SMITH wrote:

>No one really did ever answer the question about how one knows if one
>is a poet.

Are they rounding up the poets?

Jordan

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428. **Susan Schultz**

Re: Condition of Poetry in the Academy

Tue 28 Nov 1995

Dear Chris--my comment was not meant as a put down of Keats and Shelley or their radicalism! It was just to say that their language seems counter-productive to Hongo's project, which is finding himself in Hawai'i; what is revolutionary in one context isn't necessarily in another(?). Susan

On Tue, 28 Nov 1995, Chris Stroffolino wrote:

Dear Susan Schultz---You say Garrett Hongo is praised as "radical despite his reliance on the lexicon of Keats and Shelley"----Oh, IF ONLY his lexicon and his syntax (to say little of his "intelligence" or "vision") WERE even as radical as Keats and Shelley still can be... Why blame THEM for the HONGOS of the world! cs.

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429. **Donald J. Byrd**

Re: Condition of Poetry in the Academy

Tue 28 Nov 1995

On Tue, 28 Nov 1995, Chris Stroffolino wrote:

there are quite a few graduate students who ARE GOOD AT and who CAN PLAY the theory game, but feel pressured by their junior faculty (the last 4 or 5 hires at my institution are all primarily theory, for instance)--as well as by what they are told are THE DEMANDS OF THE MARKETPLACE that somehow they can't "get away" with literature...

I think graduate programs should make "Recent Trends in the Modern Language Job Market," by Bettina J. Huber, in the MLA publication, _Profession 94_. Its statistics are sobering, to be sure. From 88-89 to 93-94, the number of jobs decreased by half. It is also enlightening, however. In 1993, there were roughly as many jobs in Restoration and eighteenth-century lit as in literary and critical theory and cultural studies combined. Twice as many jobs in nineteenth-century British, and three times as many in Renaissance. Almost twice as many jobs for poets.

Don Byrd

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430. **Maria Damon**

Re: Discipline and Categorize

Tue 28 Nov 1995

michael greer: welcome. how long have you been lurking? i like what u have to say.--md

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431. **Maria Damon**

Re: Condition of Poetry in the Academy

Tue 28 Nov 1995

david kellog wrote:

On Sun, 26 Nov 1995, jeffrey timmons wrote:

[big snip]

I guess, what it comes down to is that I find it deeply surprising--if not a little disappointing--when so much scholarly work is written off as hating literature....

I would like to second this position.

***me third.--md

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432. **Maria Damon**

Re: Poetry/Fiction/Literature divisions

Tue 28 Nov 1995

luoma (great name) wrote:

md wrote:

| *c-word (culture, not capped) has a dubious reputation. . .*

That's what we used to call Steven Greenblat's mag (Reputations).

***yeah, they only publish each other for the most part, with a few notable exceptions.--md

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433. **Maria Damon**

Re: for now

Tue 28 Nov 1995

i'd rather be a "Geiser," not to mention a geyser, than a geezer, guyzies!--md

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434. **Maria Damon**

Re: Question

Tue 28 Nov 1995

tk's writes:

>No one really did ever answer the question about how one knows if one

>is a poet.

***how about, as in current methods of treating alcoholism, one is a poet if one declares oneself so? one can be encouraged by others to see oneself as a poet, but one has to take that big step of self-realization all alone. (ooohhh).

otherwise, it seems, we can run into some sticky things like ethnopoetics, in which texts or utterances not intended to be "poetry" in the way we conceive of it (for aesthetic pleasure) can be pressed into such service, possibly altering its original function --again --did i post this bfre? i was asked, lo these many years at my oral exams, what if a hunting song used for dog magic was anthologized as a "poem" --would that dilute its ability to function as dog magic?--md

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435. **Maria Damon**

Re: The break you're seeking

Tue 28 Nov 1995

joe amato writes:

academic

professionals, for example, OUGHT to consider [gasp] unionizing...

***YES YES YES--md

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436. **Maria Damon**

Re: The break you're seeking

Tue 28 Nov 1995

ron writes, among other things:

But in the academy, and in the professions generally, there is an enormous amount of barely concealed emotion that leaks out as "professionalism" and this mode of despair (which is how I read it) is one such possible emotion. Which is why I passed on law school. *** i really agree with you. and the weird thing is, that since a straightforward appreciation of subject matter can't be admitted, it comes out in the creepiest blend of sanctimoniousness and humility, the whole handmaid to genius thing, which is simultaneously a form of contempt. and in fact, i think one reason most of the g-students i studied with and now teach prefer fiction to poetry is precisely that it enables a cheesy sort of identification process on the most unexamined kind (confusing fictions characters with real people, for example) that they then vehemently check themselves on and disavow. like parents afraid to "give in" to their love for their kids or something. i'm puzzled abt why you admire cary nelson so much. his work is okay, but to single him out as having written the best thing on poetry ...and andrew ross. i wish he were more invested in his subject matter. in fact, at that big cult stud conference at illinois in 1990, donna haraway said that the best work comes out of writing on something one is emotionally or otherwise "personally" invested in. she was on a panel w/ ross, and afterwards someone put him on the spot by asking what his personal connection to his work was, and he was actually somewhat weak in his answer, evasive almost. he's an elegant writer and he's never exactly wrong, but his sweep is so enormous that he doesn't seem to really grok any one phenomenon. i also really appreciate what you say about benjamin etc --they did what they did not for their "careers" but out of a sense of love and urgency --je dis hurrah!--md

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437. **Maria Damon**
susAN SCHULTZ'S dept
Tue 28 Nov 1995

susan, i so identify with the departmental situation yr describing ! and the unthinking assumption that, tho the novel i a strictly western industrial form, that it's the foremost vehicle for exploring whatever non-Western cultures or minority cultures w/in the western world have to say--irritating --md

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438. **Maria Damon**
Re: Condition of Poetry in the Academy
Tue 28 Nov 1995

dkellog writes:

On Tue, 28 Nov 1995, Susan Schultz wrote:

| *Can anyone suggest good books of cultural studies on poetry?*

Our own Maria Damon's THE DARK END OF THE STREET: MARGINS IN
american

VANGUARD

POETRY (have I got the title right) U Minnesota P;

Ross Talarico, SPREADING THE WORD: POETRY AND THE SURVIVAL OF
COMMUNITY IN AMERICA, Duke UP.

***thanks for the plug dk, i'm very fond of my book, tho the introduction is
kinda clumsy --i'd like to add essays and books, if possible, to yr list:

Walter Benjamin's "On Some Motifs in Baudelaire" --magnificent and
unsurpassed! (in Illuminations, Schocken bks)

Henry Louis Gates, Jr, the first few chapters of The Signifying Monkey.
(oxford)

Steven Caton, Peaks of Yemen I Summon: Poetry as Social Practice in a
Northern Yemeni Tribe (Calif.)

Lila Abu-Lughod (sp?), Veiled Sentiments: Honor and Poetry in Bedouin Society
(Calif).

"The Pure Products Go Crazy," intro to James Clifford's The Predicament of
Culture (Harvard)

various writings by Gordon Rolehr and (Edward) Kamau Brathwaite on
caribbean
culture/poetry.

Cary Nelson (who late i spoke of in tempered tones) Repression and Recovery
(Wisconsin?)

Walter Kalaidjian, American Culture Between the Wars: Revisionary Modernism

and Postmodern Critique. (Columbia)

Theodor Adorno, "Lyric Poetry and Society"

a couple chapters of Benjamin Harshav's The Meaning of Yiddish (Cal)

Americo Paredes, don't know the title of this piece, saw it presented at Stanford in mid-late 1980s, on a particular Mexican ballad and its role in organizing certain Chicano families' relations to each other.

parts of Houston Baker's The Harlem Renaissance

Marc Zimmerman and Neil Larsen, or is it John Beverly, on Latin American revolutionary poetry --

Jose Limon, Mexican Ballads and Chicano Poetry (much too Bloomian, not "cultural" enough for my taste, but it exists)

i'd love to see a working bibliography grow here --then we can put out a multi-authored anthology of poetry/cultural studies texts --that'll really wow our colleagues on both sides of the illusory divide. any other contributions? --md

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439. **jeffrey timmons**

Re: Question

Tue 28 Nov 1995

On Tue, 28 Nov 1995, H. T. KIRBY-SMITH wrote:

No one really did ever answer the question about how one knows if one is a poet.

How about the de beauvoir answer?: a poet is made not born (paraphrase).

the foucault answer?: a poet is an effect of linguistic signs, and s/he will certainly pass away as the particular codifications of knowledge-power that we knew as "poet"

the beckett answer?: how can i be a poet? i'll be a poet....

Jeffrey Timmons

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440. **jeffrey timmons**

Re: Theory etc.

Tue 28 Nov 1995

On Tue, 28 Nov 1995, Judy Roitman wrote:

I've spent 25 years in the academy, and the shifts of FASHION begin to look like toddlers racing through rooms disorienting any grown-ups trying to focus (and ultimately destroying the very perps themselves)...

Fashion, toddlers, grown-ups trying to focus? This vocabulary needs interrogation, I believe.

Jeffrey Timmons

[↑ Contents](#)

441. **Chris Stroffolino**

Re: Theory etc.

Tue 28 Nov 1995

Jeffrey T---Does Judy R's vocabulary need interrogation--or perhaps to be fleshed out? What is a PERP? Anyway? Fashion IS a toddler toddling through a world of grown-ups like the wind through an aeolian harp bought at Walmart. And there are so many of them it's really hard to get one's beauty sleep which one needs especially as a grown-up and since Abigail Child is the father of De Man certainly everything will appear out of focus as in Marx's camera oscura which we were minding our business, interrogating, BUT IT'S TOLD US NOTHING and we relented until the fashionable toddlers decided to take the form of the turkey at the center of the yuppie mainstream bourgeois table that so tortured Joe Conte and so we decided to boycott the holidays whose false totalizing teleological standards of functional reality leave us in the lurch so in a defensive move we all start claiming WE ARE POETS! WE WILL INHERIT THE HEARTH! as a an attempt to have something to cling on now that we've gone cold turkey. This too all needs to be severely interrogated.....cs

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442. **jeffrey timmons**

Re: Condition of Poetry in the Academy

Tue 28 Nov 1995

On Tue, 28 Nov 1995, Maria Damon wrote:

i'd love to see a working bibliography grow here --then we can put out a multi-authored anthology of poetry/cultural studies texts --that'll really wow our colleagues on both sides of the illusory divide. any other contributions? --md

Excellent idea.

Jeffrey Timmons

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443. **jeffrey timmons**

Re: Theory etc.

Tue 28 Nov 1995

chris

ha-ha-ha.... ha-ha...

jeffrey

[↑ Contents](#)

444. **jeffrey timmons**

Re: Theory etc.

Tue 28 Nov 1995

chris, hope you dont mind:

vocabulary [interrogation]

Fashion IS a toddler toddling through a world of grown-ups
the wind through an aeolian harp bought at Walmart
there are so many of them

it's really hard to get one's beauty sleep
which one needs especially as a grown-up

Abigail Child is the father of De Man

everything will appear out of focus

Marx's camera obscura

we were minding our business
interrogating

BUT IT'S TOLD US NOTHING

we relented

fashionable toddlers
turkey at the center

the yuppie mainstream bourgeois table

tortured Joe Conte

we decided to boycott the holidays
false totalizing teleological standards
functional reality

leave us in the lurch
a defensive move

WE ARE POETS!
WE WILL INHERIT THE HEARTH!

an attempt to cling on
now we've gone cold turkey

This needs to be severely interrogated

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445. **Tony Green**

Re: POETICS Digest - 25 Nov 1995 to 26 Nov 1995

Tue 28 Nov 1995

Re- contemporary writing as distinct from "historical texts", in Wystan Curnow's posting, same applies in Art History: where historians are engaged with contemporary activity as curators, essayists, critics or as is occasionally the case ambitious and competitive practitioners, then the chances are historical art will not simply be more grist to social history/new art history or illustration or chopping block for theory. But also the chances are they will be regarded as some kinds of weirdos by art historians not engaged with contemporary art activities. It seems to me that there is a real problem for academics when engaged as writers/artists, or should that be a real problem for "artists" when diverted into academic work?

Tony Green,

e-mail: [REDACTED]

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446. **Charles Alexander**

Re: for now

Tue 28 Nov 1995

*i'd rather be a "Geiser," not to mention a geyser, than a geezer,
guyzies!--md*

golly, mickey

goofy

[↑ Contents](#)

447. **Charles Alexander**
Re: The break you're seeking
Tue 28 Nov 1995

ron writes, among other things:

But in the academy, and in the professions generally, there is an enormous amount of barely concealed emotion that leaks out as "professionalism" and this mode of despair (which is how I read it) is one such possible emotion. Which is why I passed on law school.

This, and Ron's other comments, and some by others reminds me of being in grad school in English, where one professor, who was head of graduate studies in English, told me that one should not write about literature one likes, because one could not be objective enough about it. The same man also discouraged grad students from pursuing Spanish as their foreign language because, he said, "Spanish is not a literary language." One can only speculate what he could have meant by that.

Another professor, one closest in that department to my own concerns, discouraged me from reading Denise Levertov because she was, as he said, too easy. And he discouraged me from pursuing a reading of Zukofsky and Duncan because he said they were too difficult.

And one fellow grad student confessed to me that he really wanted to be a novelist, and that he had all the technique in the world to do so, but just didn't have the "ideas."

So I managed to study some in a Comp. Lit. department which was friendly to theory (this was about 1977-78), where I could read Olson & Duncan in the same class as Adorno & Habermas and was encouraged to think about that mix. But alas, in a place where teaching assistants were unionized, the comp. lit. professor who encouraged such invigorating reading was also one of the two or three profs at the university who spoke out on behalf of striking teaching assistants, and he was one of the two or three profs who subsequently was denied tenure and sent packing despite the support of his own department as well as his own rather stunning credentials.

Yes, there are reasons why Ron didn't go to law school, and why I left grad school in a rush (my letter of resignation from a teaching assistantship was a four-line poem -- still don't know what anyone thought of that) -- but I do still find this ongoing discussion of theory/literature/professionalism/etc. rather fascinating.

charles

Charles Alexander
Chax Press
P.O. Box 19178
Minneapolis, MN 55419-0178
[REDACTED] (phone & fax)
[REDACTED]

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448. **Susan Schultz**

Re: Condition of Poetry in the Academy

Tue 28 Nov 1995

Dear Maria--thanks for the bibliography. I hope others will add to it. Your idea about an anthology of cultural studies/poetry work is marvelous.

Susan

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449. **Charles Alexander**

Re: Condition of Poetry in the Academy

Tue 28 Nov 1995

On Tue, 28 Nov 1995, Maria Damon wrote:

i'd love to see a working bibliography grow here --then we can put out a multi-authored anthology of poetry/cultural studies texts --that'll really wow our colleagues on both sides of the illusory divide. any other contributions? --md

Excellent idea.

I'd add much of the very specific and careful work written and/or edited by Larry Evers in the Sun Tracks series from the University of Arizona Press, but perhaps most compelling, Yaqui Dear Songs/Maso Bwikam: A Native American Poetry, by Larry Evers and Felipe S. Molina. 1987. Tucson. University of Arizona Press.

and Evers & Molina's "How the Coyotes Came Back to Old Pascua," which is the introduction to Wo'i Bwikam/Coyote Songs: from the Yaqui Bow Leaders' Society, recorded, edited, and annotated by Evers & Molina. 1990. Tucson. Chax Press.

charles alexander

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450. **Chris Stroffolino**

Re: The break you're seeking

Wed 29 Nov 1995

Hey Charles (A. not lurker B.)---send that four line resignation poem to the list, pretty please---WE MAY HAVE NEED OF IT SOMEDAY. I promise not to start a renga with it. cs.

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451. **Chris Stroffolino**

Re: Theory etc.

Wed 29 Nov 1995

Oh Jeffrey--with your brains, my brawn and Judy R's vocabulary, just think of cultural stud(ie)s we could toddle!
your in aesthetic eugenics, cs

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452. **Marjorie Perloff**

Re: Poetry and Cultural Studies5

Wed 29 Nov 1995

I'd add to the list:

Christopher Beach (ABC of Influence) is finishing up a book on the culture of contemporary poetry which promises to be very good

Jed Rasula (of course!), GREAT AMERICAN POETRY WAX MUSEUM

Charles Bernstein, A POETICS (for me still the best "cultural studies" book on poetry although not billed as such).

Ron Silliman, THE NEW SENTENCE

Bob Perelman, THE TROUBLE WITH GENIUS

Steve McCaffery--pretty much anything

Symposia on Women & Culture in various mags: Meaning, Raddle Moon, Tessera.

Johanna Drucker's writings are totally pertinent.

I don't know about being Helen Vendler's evil twin, David. What does that mean exactly?

Re: the larger issue of poetry and cultural studies. Maria is right that the British school (Stuart Hall) did really important work. But their situation was quite different from our current one. Hall, Hebdidge and co. were breaking

away from the stultifying British canon which did not go beyond Eliot (still doesn't) and wanted to bring popular culture into the discussion. It was very liberating but in so doing they had no truck with any "literature" at all, least of all poetry. Dick Hebdidge, now at Cal Arts as Dean, still follows this idea and is leary of inviting poets. So I'm wary of the "if you can't beat it, join it" school. What's urgently needed in our situation is just more attention to reading. I find that even the smart grad students here have a lot of trouble with it. We've been reading *THE BIRTHMARK* by Susan Howe. They'll talk about her representation of Mary Hutchinson of what she "thinks" about Cotton Mather but they don't look at the way that book is actually put together or how it works, rather than what it "says." And I think this is because in our own so-called "cultural studies," too often it's just old-fashioned subject-matter criticism: e.g., breast-feeding between 1800-1840. Which means that the novel in question (say, Charlotte Bronte's *VILLETTE*) is mined for what it "says" about nursing and motherhood and then those statements are compared to statements about nursing in non-fictional books of the period. The result, after a while, is that we don't need literature at all.

A bunch of us are doing a session on Hejiniian's *MY LIFE* at this year's ACLA comparing philosophical to cultural studies approaches since the topic for the conference is "Literature between Philosophy and Cultural Studies"--Roland Greene, for instance, is going to do a paper on class and gender positioning in that book--should be quite interesting.

As for the story David Kellogg tells about people asking him what poets he likes, that's just conversation meant to cover up ignorance; since they never read anything written in last 50 years or so it's a way of generating names, that's all. It's not very different from what went on at Harvard early in the century. James Laughlin always tells the story about being in Robert Hillyer's poetry class in the late twenties where the names Eliot and Pound were taboo and one studied "respectable" poets of a previous era. Is it really all that different now?

Marjorie

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453. **Aldon L. Nielsen**

Re: To Paul

Wed 29 Nov 1995

both in fact,,,, writing a book on James that is now overdue, and as a result rereading available books on James --

wasn't looking at Britain to Caribbean at all, but Caribbean influence on emergence of cultural studies in England, which is direct result, not

surprisingly, of influx of Caribbean intellectuals -- James is there in the thirties working with the Independent Labor Party and forming committees for the defense of Abyssinia -- produces play with Paul Robeson in London -- etc. -- post WWII generations pick up on his earlier work, then *Beyond a Boundary* lands in the middle of developing Cultural Studies a la Birmingham --

the thesis on the Caribbean and postmodernity sounds like an update of James's (*Black Jacobins*) and DuBois's (*Black Reconstruction*) thesis that, as a result of the rupture of middle passage and the new modes of labor organization in the Americas, African-Americans are among the first "modern" peoples --

realize that this is akin to old arguments to the effect that modernism was really just more romanticism, or that all the moderns were really postmoderns -- but there is some use to this way of looking at labor in the Americas, I think --

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454. **R I Caddel**

Pearl

Wed 29 Nov 1995

"All my words are homeless."

Can't remember if I plugged this one before: New from Equipage [c/o Rod Mengham, Jesus College, Cambridge CB5 8BL] is Barry MacSweeney's "Pearl" at three quid plus postage. It's the best thing Barry's done in years. If I did mention it before, and you ordered it then, why not order another copy now?

x	x x Richard Caddel,	E-
mail: R.I.Caddel @	durham.ac.uk	x x Durham University Library,
0 [REDACTED]	x x Stockton Rd. Durham DH1 3LY	Fax: 0 [REDACTED]
x x	x x	"Words! Pens are too light.
Take a chisel to write."	x x	- Basil Bunting
x x	x	

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455. **Michael Boughn**

Re: Question

Wed 29 Nov 1995

No one really did ever answer the question about how one knows if one is a poet.

*Tom Kirby-Smith
Concerned Citizen*

One writes poems.

Mike
[REDACTED]

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456. **David Kellogg**

Re: Poetry and Cultural Studies5

Wed 29 Nov 1995

On Tue, 28 Nov 1995, Marjorie Perloff wrote:

I don't know about being Helen Vendler's evil twin, David. What does that mean exactly?

No no no. You're the good twin, Vendler's the evil twin. I should have phrased it better.

As a biological (identical) twin myself, I am fond of the metaphor. What I mean by the twin fantasy changes, but basically I see you and Vendler occupying similar structural positions in the academy as ambassadors for contemporary poetry; that structural similarity means that your work and Vendler's can sometimes seem to me to advocate different "sides" in the same "game." I'm not saying that the differences between you are **actually** surface differences; rather, that some deep differences in one view **become** surface disagreements in another.

Wow, it's weird to talk to you directly about this (even in a semipublic space), since it touches on issues I've been thinking about for some time in "private."

Cheers,
David

~~~~~  
~~~~~

David Kellogg Duke University
[REDACTED] University Writing Program
[REDACTED] Durham, NC 27708
FAX [REDACTED]

"Yexplication is yexploration."

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457. **Keith Tuma**

Re: Poetry and Cultural Studies5

Wed 29 Nov 1995

I'm with Marjorie P in her skepticism about certain versions of historical and/or cultural studies and her expanded list of what might count as cultural studies.

But I have a few questions prompted in part by Joe Amato's post on his institution, which spoke of his institution and my former colleague Jim Sosnoski's book on the profession. To be clear: I'm not against cult studies.

1) What departments of English out there are actually organized as cultural studies programs? This is not the same thing as departments in which some people are doing something called "cultural studies."

2) To what extent is the interest in "cultural work"--to use the refrain--a response to extra-academic pressures insisting that "we" (academics) offer more in the way of "service" (as also in undergraduate teaching). That is, if the "discipline" of literary studies has lost some of its credibility and/or purpose (in the public eye) one response might be to crash the old disciplinary boundaries. (The current job situation would be relevant here too.) Or, if cultural studies is not a response to a demand for service that doesn't accept the production of knowledge about literature as adequate/useful/ important "service," what might it contribute by way of an answer to the great unwashed asking us hey dudes what is it that you do and why should I care and send my tax dollars to support it? Somebody--Marjorie maybe-- mentioned that John Guillory thinks what we do--the service we offer, one might say, to use the obnoxious lingo--is teach people how to read. (Frank Kermode made the same argument years ago.) At my institution, some of the biggest promoters of cultural studies are the composition/rhetoric faculty, and, as literature jobs have declined, our literature faculty have been anxious to create for graduate students the possibility of a double major in comp/rhet and lit, crossing sub-disciplinary boundaries because they are now "irrelevant," which too often means simply that the lit folks have a much harder time getting jobs. And comp/rhet is something the great unwashed have little trouble understanding as "service"--English departments teach "writing."

Just a couple of questions: wish they were better ones.

--Keith Tuma

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458. **FUNKHOUSER CHRISTOPH**

Barabajan Poems

Wed 29 Nov 1995

Susan,

The Brathwaite title, BARABAJAN POEMS, isn't all that "new" (it came out in *early* '94)--it just hasn't been distributed Anywhere. It's also quite pricey, but worth it. Send \$25 to Savacou North c/o Dept. of Comparative Literature, New York University, NY, NY 10003

I used the text in a course last fall, & the students totally loved this "Sycorax video-style" epic.

Dig it,

-chris f

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459. **Paul Naylor ok 157602**

Brathwaite's book

Wed 29 Nov 1995

Susan -- Kamau Brathwaite's *_Barabajan Poems_* is available from Savacou North, c/o Department of Comparative Literature, New York University, New York, New York 10003.

It's a beautiful book, but perhaps it's a visible sign of the split between poetry and culture studies that the book doesn't have a distributor, let alone a major publisher. Am I wrong in suspecting that a major academic press would publish a book about Brathwaite in a heartbeat but would not even consider publishing a book by Brathwaite?

Paul Naylor

MAIL

SEND

in@"[REDACTED]"

in@"[REDACTED]"

SEND

in@"[REDACTED]"

in@"[REDACTED]"

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460. **Daniel Bouchard/College/hmco**

Re: Poetry and Cultural Studies5

Wed 29 Nov 1995

| *You're the good twin, Vendler's the evil twin.*

The further I get away from graduate school, the brighter the beacon of academia shines.

I've never been to an MLA conference but I can now clearly picture the paper presenters walking to and fro, asking of each other, "Are you a good witch, or a bad witch?" while munching on a tuna-melt sandwich.

And when I imagine all that intellectual energy venturing outside, self-conscious of its ability with language, blushing if it "knows" it is a poet, (or not)

and seeking out the professor-ish version of CO-DEPENDENT NO MORE from an otherwise shamefully stocked Borders or Barnes/Noble, then I truly regret my contemplation of law school.



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461. **Jordan Davis**
Re: Brathwaite's book

Wed 29 Nov 1995

At 8:23 AM 11/29/95, Paul Naylor ok 157602 wrote:

Am I wrong in suspecting that a major academic press would

>publish a book about Brathwaite in a heartbeat but would not even consider

>publishing a book by Brathwaite?

Sorry to be a pedant again, but didn't

Oxfrd do the arrivants?

Jordan

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462. **Bill Luoma**
working bibliography

Wed 29 Nov 1995

| *Can anyone suggest good books of cultural studies on poetry?*

Kristen Ross wrote some excellent material on Rimbaud. Steve knows the title.

re: recent primacy of poetry discussion:

What are people really saying here? That it's preferable to studdy/analyze/work on a poetic text? Certainly schilars tend to focus more on fiction, but why is everyone saying that the written text must be the prime mover? I mean the thing that makes Benjamin so amazing is that he wrote about shopping malls.

I think about how to write "poetry" too much and what to write about too much. I would not take kindly to people suggesting that there is a proper and fit prime mover to start with. It's anything. Schilarship should be similar, know? Isn't it all writing? What is poetry anyway? It sounds like everyone is really sure they know.

Bill Luoma

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463. **Daniel Bouchard/College/hmco**

Re: working bibliography

Wed 29 Nov 1995

Bill,

Are you suggesting that people are trying to formulate a kind of Schilarship's List where only X amount of crit books can escape from the cultural void but only if those texts labor in Schilar's personal fog factory?

██████████

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464. **Jordan Davis**

needs work

Wed 29 Nov 1995

At 10:17 AM 11/29/95, Bill Luoma wrote:

>I think about how to write "poetry" too much and what to write about too
>much. I would not take kindly to people suggesting that there is a proper
>and fit prime mover to start with. It's anything. Schilarship should be
>similar, know? Isn't it all writing? What is poetry anyway? It sounds like
>everyone is really sure they know.

I don't know if it's "anything". I think the convention of poetry including "anything" usually reduces to a kaleidoscopic one-of-everything (shopping-mall) method/motif. At least it did for me when I realized poetry was anything. There seem to be other overriding conventions that determine what's taken by other readers (intelligent, questioning, reasonable readers) as "good poetry" or "the work". Your humility is pretty great, Bill, and only you know for sure whether there's truth value there, but I don't think you think too much about poetry. That is, you may be thinking too hard about it, but it's what characterizes you as a poet (for me) that you do think so much about how to write poetry. Paul Valery said that it's not true that people don't like poetry--People, generally, do like poetry--but not everybody needs poetry. So.. what the seemingly anti-cult studs folk want it seems to me is for more people to "need" poetry in that valerian way, which may be like saying "fall in love dammit." Or "admire purple".

'd like to reiterate my request for examples of good endings.

what does an acceptable academic essay look like? (seriously)

Jordan

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465. **Kenneth Sherwood**
EPCLIVE transcripts and happenings

Wed 29 Nov 1995

The second session of EPCLIVE took place last night. It was a pleasure to be joined by several @poetics sorts. Next monday will be an "Open Field" event, which means giving over the space to collective improvisation. (Moreso than usual, that is.)

In case anyone here is interested in seeing the 'results' of one of these events, the transcripts are now posted in the EPC. Browse your way over to <http://writing.upenn.edu/epc/epclive>

A session with Pierre Joris and Jerome Rothenberg is upcoming this month. Be assured, great fun will be had by all!

December

4 Open Field

11 Event--Poems for the Millennium: a discussion with Pierre Joris and Jerome Rothenberg on their newly released anthology of Modern and Postmodern Poetry.

18 Open Field

Check out the epclive pages for further information on events, how to IRC etc.

k.s.



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466. **Judy Roitman**
Re: The break you're seeking

Wed 29 Nov 1995

joe amato writes:
academic
professionals, for example, OUGHT to consider [gasp] unionizing...

***YES YES YES--md

And across disciplines. It's the same across the board -- exploitation of the young, genuine and helpless concern mixed with residual smugness in the professional organizations, cluelessness from the prestigious institutions, financial pressure, lack of public support for public institutions...

Are people aware that U. of Rochester is terminating its comp lit PhD along with three other PhD programs?

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467. **Daniel Bouchard/College/hmco**

Re: The break you're seeking

Wed 29 Nov 1995

joe amato writes:

>academic

>professionals, for example, OUGHT to consider [gasp] unionizing...

>

>***YES YES YES--md

And across disciplines. It's the same across the board -- exploitation of the young, genuine and helpless concern mixed with residual smugness in the professional organizations, cluelessness from the prestigious institutions, financial pressure, lack of public support for public institutions...

Are people aware that U. of Rochester is terminating its comp lit PhD along with three other PhD programs?

WHAT would happen should "literature" ever find itself excluded from higher education? Seriously.

██████████

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468. **Rod Smith**

Re: Brathwaite's book

Wed 29 Nov 1995

>Am I wrong in suspecting that a major academic press would publish a book about Brathwaite in a heartbeat but would not >even consider >publishing a book by Brathwaite?

Actually he's had books from Oxford, U. Michigan, & most recently New Directions. Speculating now, but I think Savacou North, which is his press I believe, or him and others, did *_Barbajan Poems_* because of the size & complexity of it. I.e., think he wanted to make sure it was done right. & I believe, the reason it's not distributed is an attempt to recoup the cost of production. Can't remember what I paid for it, but it's in the 25-30 dollar range. Brathwaite's *_Trenchtown Rock_* is fairly recent from Lost Roads, also worth getting.

Rod

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469. **David Kellogg**
Re: working bibliography
Wed 29 Nov 1995

On Wed, 29 Nov 1995, Bill Luoma wrote:

| *Kristen Ross wrote some excellent material on Rimbaud. Steve knows the title.*

RIMBAUD AND SOCIAL SPACE.

Cheers,

David

~~~~~  
~~~~~

David Kellogg Duke University
[REDACTED] University Writing Program
[REDACTED] Durham, NC 27708
FAX [REDACTED]

"Yexplication is yexploration."

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470. **David Kellogg**
Re: Poetry and Cultural Studies5
Wed 29 Nov 1995

On Tue, 28 Nov 1995, Marjorie Perloff wrote:

| *As for the story David Kellogg tells about people asking him what poets he likes, that's just conversation meant to cover up ignorance; since they never read anything written in last 50 years or so it's a way of generating names, that's all. It's not very different from what went on at Harvard early in the century. James Laughlin always tells the story about being in Robert Hillyer's poetry class in the late twenties where the names Eliot and Pound were taboo and one studied "respectable" poets of a previous era. Is it really all that different now?*

I think you're largely right -- there isn't much difference on that score -- though I honestly do think the question of value gets circulated differently in contemporary and pre-contemporary work, at least in the academy, in part because of the convergence of practitioner/ critic identity in the contemporary. No-one in Victorian studies is actually writing Victorian novels (though plenty of people in MFA programs are).

My comments wrt yr and Vendler's twinship are meant in jest, as you obviously know, tho I hold to the description of yr similar position in the poetic field.

Being a thoroughgoing relativist meself, "good" and "evil" don't hold a lot of weight for me.

I'm not sure I understand Daniel Bouchard's post; his description of MLA is pretty accurate, but I think he misreads my tone in his haste to score a point. Perhaps I should stick with smiley faces.

Cheers,
David

~~~~~  
~~~~~

David Kellogg Duke University
[REDACTED] University Writing Program
[REDACTED] Durham, NC 27708
FAX [REDACTED]

"Yexplication is yexploration."

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471. **Daniel Bouchard/College/hmco**

Re: Poetry and Cultural Studies5

Wed 29 Nov 1995

I'm not sure I understand Daniel Bouchard's post; his description of MLA is pretty accurate, but I think he misreads my tone in his haste to score a point. Perhaps I should stick with smiley faces.

David,

I'm only kidding. I've no points to score. I'm not even in the game.

[REDACTED]

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472. **Susan Schultz**

Re: Poetry and Cultural Studies5

Wed 29 Nov 1995

Keith--my department has decided to reform the MA curriculum into separate "tracks," which include "literary studies," "cultural studies," "creative writing," and "comp/rhet." Students will (I think it's finally been approved) concentrate in one of these tracks. The cultural studies track will emphasize Asian and Pacific material, which is a good thing here. Though I wonder about "mixed track" material.

Susan

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473. **Robert Drake**

Re: needs work

Wed 29 Nov 1995

| what does an acceptable academic essay look like?

To Start: It Has a Colon In Its Title

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474. **Jorge Guitart**

Re: Poetics of renga

Wed 29 Nov 1995

I agree with my renga bro Tom.

One kind of unique thing about the renga is that it lets you see immediately the influence you have on others and lets you report immediately the influence that others have on you.

Jorge

On Tue, 28 Nov 1995, Thomas Bell wrote:

After being involved with this renga business for awhile, I have realized that it is probably the first truly new form to arise from electronic transmission. This type of collaboration would not be possible in print. Even FEDEXED the time would be prohibitive. Print would also allow too much time for reflection and the responses would be thought over rather than spontaneous and improvisational. When I download a sequence and give it some thought before uploading and posting I find myself trying too hard to be clever and impress, bizarre as that seems.

Am I correct in asserting that it is the first new form?

Other participants - do you share my feelings about offline and online responding?

Tom

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475. **Charles Alexander**
Re: The break you're seeking
Wed 29 Nov 1995

*Hey Charles (A. not lurker B.)---send that four line resignation poem to the list, pretty please---WE MAY HAVE NEED OF IT SOMEDAY.
I promise not to start a renga with it. cs.*

I remember the poem, which was simply

long time gone

no sorrow

won't be back

tomorrow

But what I can't remember and don't have a record of (we're talking 1980 here) is the footnotes. The four lines had 7 footnotes explaining various points. I don't imagine the english department was amused. The long time gone was about a semester leave of absence I had taken to begin study of book arts in the art department.

charles

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476. **Judy Roitman**
Re: Poetics of renga
Wed 29 Nov 1995

I agree with my renga bro Tom.

One kind of unique thing about the renga is that it lets you see immediately the influence you have on others and lets you report immediately the influence that others have on you.

Jorge

On Tue, 28 Nov 1995, Thomas Bell wrote:

After being involved with this renga business for awhile, I have realized that it is probably the first truly new form to arise from electronic transmission. This type of collaboration would not be possible in print. Even FEDEXED the time would be prohibitive. Print would also allow too much time for reflection and the responses would be thought over rather than spontaneous and improvisational. When I download a sequence and give it some thought

*before uploading and posting I find myself trying too hard to
be clever and impress, bizarre as that seems.*

Am I correct in asserting that it is the first new form?

*Other participants - do you share my feelings about offline and
online responding?*

Tom

What about proliferation, branching, versions, no way of knowing what's out there any more... I'm curious about people's take on this, and what really happens.

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477. **Daniel Bouchard/College/hmco**

The (line) break you're seeking

Wed 29 Nov 1995

long time gone

no sorrow

won't be back

tomorrow

- Charles Alexander

| *hey, man, is that Freedom Rock? Or at least the Allman Brothers?*



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478. **Charles Alexander**

Re: Brathwaite's book

Wed 29 Nov 1995

At 8:23 AM 11/29/95, Paul Naylor ok 157602 wrote:

*Am I wrong in suspecting that a major academic press would
publish a book about Brathwaite in a heartbeat but would not even consider
publishing a book by Brathwaite?*

*Sorry to be a pedant again, but didn't
Oxfrd do the arrivants?*

Jordan

My understanding is that Brathwaite's relationship to Oxford University Press is entirely problematic. Despite the fact that Brathwaite hails from the so-called "Americas," he has been published (& *The Arrivants* is not the only book) by Oxford University Press in Britain and not by the American division, and distribution in America has been either spotty or none at all. Despite that, Brathwaite has at times tried to get permission for a different, American press to publish those Oxford books in America, and Oxford has not allowed such publications. My information on all this is a few years old, and I can only speculate on the reasons for all this.

I don't know that any major academic press would jump to publish a book about Brathwaite, either -- that would depend more on the author, the approach, and more. I think Brathwaite's formal radicalism, his various techniques which include collage, inventive typography, and more, make him a figure many academics (and, one would imagine, academic presses as well) shy away from, in contrast to, for example, Derek Walcott. This is terribly unfortunate.

charles

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479. **Aldon L. Nielsen**

Poets, Critics, The Academy, AWP,,, aaarrrggghhh

Wed 29 Nov 1995

Maybe this was a backlogged article, but the new AWP Chronicle appears to be wearing the same old clothes --

Here's a cover piece by Dana Gioia which, not content simply to argue that more people should read and study Weldon Kees, has to enlist the possibly dead white male in Gioia's battle with THE CRITICS -- straw men (and women) falling all over the page here --

Thesis is as follows: "The current literary reputation of Weldon Kees is both paradoxical and exemplary. It presents a paradox in that his work is held in high esteem by poets, especially younger ones, while it remains virtually unknown to academic critics."

Now, we could simply reverse this if we were trying to be cute. We could point to a number of "academic critics" who have championed Kees, then take a survey among our MFA students "proving" that few younger poets have ever heard of Kees --

But more to the point, in order to make his point, Gioia has to engage in any number of tactics that should have been questioned by an editor. To make the divide between poets and critics that he wishes to make, he has to define all poets who write criticism as "poets" in opposition to, I suppose, critics who do

not publish verse. Most of the poets he credits for having written on Kees have published even more criticism than I have (though much of it, in the case of Nemerov or Simpson is pretty damned bad "academic" criticism).

Then, Gioia suppresses critical work that's easily identified with a quick trip to the MLA CD Rom -- Gioia has no problem locating the 1979 special issue of Stanford's *_Sequoia_* devoted to Kees and edited by Ted Gioia, perhaps because it's on his own shelf -- Dana has an essay in that issue. He goes on to state that William T. Ross's 1985 Twayne book on Kees is "still the only critical study devoted to the author."

Well, there is a whole freaking dissertation on Kees by Robert James Niemi (1991), and much of Niemi's work on Kees has appeared in print, including his bibliographic checklist and his article on Kees & "Little Gidding" -- I suppose that if Niemi has written a poem Gioia will explain that he's really a poet, not a critic -- Gioia notes that "the one academic scholar who had consistently championed Kees," Robert Knoll, has published Kees's letters, and that "poet" James Reidel later edited Kees's novel and his reviews and essays. But Gioia leaves out Jim Elledge's Scarecrow Press volume *_Weldon Kees: A Critical Introduction_*, which includes work by Niemi and Reidel. There was also an article by Raymond Nelson (mostly biographical) that appeared in *_American Literary History_* --

In fact, this is the typical pattern of studies that appear not too long after a poet's death or disappearance: first we get a flood of "appreciations," then things like Twayne books and biographical studies, and later we begin to get dissertations and critical studies -- This lies behind Gioia's remark that "A skeptical reader needs to appreciate the sheer mass of Kees's supporters before turning to the paucity of attention paid by academic critics." The same could be said of Lorine Niedecker, or Charles Reznikof, or Robert Hayden, or Bob Kaufman, or , back some years, lord help us, Randall Jarrell. It has nothing to do with, as Gioia insists on putting it, "The disparity between the legion of imaginative writers who admire Kees's work and the paucity of academic interest," which paucity is supposed to demonstrate "that there is something now oddly out of joint between the worlds of poets and literary critics."

Whenever someone tells me, as Gioia does, that "The facts speak for themselves," I start looking for facts that have been left out or altered. Whenever somebody tells me, as Gioia does, that "It would be pointless to list the many critical studies in which Kees does not appear," I make a point of looking for the critical studies the author doesn't want to point me toward.

Instead of writing a useful critical appraisal of Kees that might lead more readers to his work, Gioia is bent upon bending the facts to support his insupportable rhetorical question: "if today's theory-obsessed scholars actually

read Kees, would they even recognize the exceptional quality to which legions of poets have testified."

There we have what seems to be the AWP party line, to borrow a phrase from Alfred Corn, even under the new dispensation. "Imaginative writers" versus the "theory obsessed."

This is not just tiresome, it fosters continued animosity and divisions that have been built around falsehoods -- There is plenty for us to argue about in the work of Weldon Kees -- Gioia does not want to have that argument -- Would he really be any happier if we had a sudden spurt of deconstructive readings of Kees, or new historicist recontextualizings, or queer theory explications, or cultural studies (what kind of car did Kees leave at Golden Gate Bridge?!? hmmm) -- I don't think so --

It is clear to me that nobody on the staff of the AWP chronicle cares about checking their author's assertions -- unless those assertions contest this continued campaign that I can only call modern day know-nothingism --

Look, there have always been people who wrote both criticism and poetry,,, There have always been poets who thought deeply about the philosophical questions raised in the writing of poetry -- there have always been poets who engaged in theory -- None of this has much to do with the institutional divisions of labor and reward that the AWP membership has good reason to be concerned about --

I've gone on too long for those on the list paying to page through all this, but y'all get my drift, no?

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480. **Joe Amato**

Re: The break you're seeking

Wed 29 Nov 1995

re Cary Nelson, and to set aside his scholarship for a sec: he's got an *excellent* piece in the newest issue of *_academe_* (published by *aaup*), "lessons from the job wars"... he really hits the nail on the head regarding the present postsecondary state of affairs, and he offers a provocative "twelve-step program" of reform... also a few other nice pieces by Michael Berube, Stephen Watt and others... check it out///

joe

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481. **Jordan Davis**
Re: Poetics of renga
Wed 29 Nov 1995

What about proliferation, branching, versions, no way of knowing what's out there any more... I'm curious about people's take on this, and what really happens.

Judy,
hi,
the whole thing broke open one day
when G Welford sent over 100 posts at once
since then we've all been sending huge doses of renga
catching up as many threads as possible
some threads have turned into couplets
some quatrains
Cris and Tom have compiled versions
I've rewritten a couple
Maria D and Cris C took time off and came back
I know this isn't what you're asking
but I think Gaby's making a movie of it
Jordan

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482. **Gwyn McVay**
Re: Poets, Critics, The Academy, AWP,,, aaarrrggghhh
Wed 29 Nov 1995

Dear Aldon,

There ain't no AWP party line. We all have our own phone extensions here.

In all seriousness, I, too, was provoked by some of the assertions Gioia makes about the "theory-obsessed" vs. "imaginative" writers. But consider the source. We're talking here about a writer who has gone so far into what some might call self-parody that he is better known for his meta-poetics--simply *being* a New Formalist--than any book or work he might actually have written.

Realize, too, that Gioia's article and his by-blows and cheap-shots *don't necessarily reflect* the opinions of the AWP office, board of directors, or member programs. That little bitty disclaimer on the masthead on page 2 really means what it says. We published Gioia's article not because it reflects any way

any group of people necessarily feels about "creative" writing vs. theory, or anything else for that matter, but because it does focus some attention on a writer who--despite the excellent dissertations & other material you refer to--is still not as well known or as widely read as he might be.

Personally, I'd love it if you laid out the points made in your e-mail and sent it to us as a Letter to the Editor.

Yrs etc,
Gwyn McVay

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483. **Eryque Gleason**

Re: Question

Wed 29 Nov 1995

No one really did ever answer the question about how one knows if one is a poet.

*Tom Kirby-Smith
Concerned Citizen*

One writes poems.

Mike
[REDACTED]

who gets to judge what's a poem?

-the bailiff

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484. **Mark Roberts**

AWOL. December Happenings 1/2

Wed 29 Nov 1995

DECEMBER Happenings

AWOL Happenings. A monthly guide to readings, book launches, conferences and other events relating to Australian literature both within Australia and overseas. If you have any item which you would like included in future listings please contact AWOL.

AWOL is also setting up a virtual bookshop for Australian small magazines and presses. This will take the form of regular newsletters (which will be available both on the net and by mail and fax) that will pre/review new publications. These titles will then be able to be ordered by mail or fax. Associated with our

Virtual Bookshop is our Sydney distribution service for small presses. Please contact us for further details if you want to distribute your publication to bookshops in Sydney.

AWOL posts are archived on the WWW at the following address
<http://www.anatomy.su.oz.au:80/danny/books/AWOL/> then click on Australian Writing OnLine.

How to receive AWOL postings

Internet

All AWOL postings, including the monthly Happenings list, one off posts about special events, the latest literary magazines and small press books, together with information about AWOL's Virtual Bookshop, are available free to subscribers with an internet address. Simply send a post, asking to be added to our mailing list, to [REDACTED].

Mail

Each month AWOL will post a hard copy of that month's Happenings list, together with a copy of all special posts, to AWOL subscribers. While we are setting up our Virtual Bookshop there will be a introductory charge of \$12.50 (for six months) to cover postage and printing costs (rates will be reviewed early in 1996). Please send cheques, made payable to Rochford Press, to AWOL, PO Box 333, Concord NSW 2137 (overseas rates on application).

Fax

Subscribers in the 02 telephone area can elect to have the monthly Happenings list and special posts faxed to them for \$5.00 for six months. Please send cheques, made payable to Rochford Press to AWOL, PO Box 333, Concord NSW 2137. Subscribers outside the 02 area should contact us for individual fax rates.

Advertise in HAPPENINGS

Funded magazines, publishers and organisations - \$35.00 1/4 page, \$55.00 1/2 page and \$80.00 full page. Non funded magazines, publishers and organisations \$25.00 1/4 page, \$45.00 1/2 page and \$70 full page. If you publish a regular magazine or newsletter we can exchange adds for no charge. In the near future we will also be able to conduct internet publicity for your event or publication. Contact AWOL for further details.

ACT

Writers Workshops. The ACT Writers Centre conducts regular writing workshops. For further information contact the ACTWC at Griffith Library, Blaxland Crescent ACT 2603 or phone (06) [REDACTED] or (06) [REDACTED].

3rd Monday ACT FAW meets 8pm Studio Room, Griffin Centre, Civic. Details Phone (06) [REDACTED].

The National Library of Australia is running a children's holiday program. Details phone (06) [REDACTED].

NSW

SYDNEY

Sunday 3 December 4.30pm at the Lizard Lounge, Exchange Hotel, 34 Oxford Street Darlinghurst. BlackWattle Press book launch. Denis Watkins will launch Phillip Scott's new novel One Dead Diva . Miss Caroline Clark will also appear. Details phone BlackWattle Press on (02) [REDACTED].

4 December Women in Publishing Christams Party 6pm for 7pm start. Australian Museum 4th floor. Details Carol Dettmann (02) [REDACTED].

Friday 15 December 7pm Inklings journal celebrates its 3rd Christmas & its 5th issue with a 'Reading at the Beach'. Ravesi's Hotel, Cnr Campbell Pde & Hall Street Bondi Beach. \$6/\$3.50 Munchies included.

Every Thursday Writers Anonymous at Tap Gallery level 1 278 Palmer Street Darlinghurst. Details phone/fax [REDACTED]

Every Monday 7pm Monday Night Live, comedy, drama, dance, poetry, music, monologue and mime. At the Blue Fox Bar 274 Victoria Street Darlinghurst (opposite the fire station). Details phone Christo (02) [REDACTED] or Leslie (02) [REDACTED].

Every second Tuesday...POETRY SUPREME 9pm, Eli's Restaurant, 132 Oxford Street, Darlinghurst. Details phone/fax (02) [REDACTED]

Every Sunday...THE WORD ON SUNDAY 11.30am Museum of Contemporary Art, Circular Quay. 2 Admission \$8/ \$5.. Details phone (02) [REDACTED].

Every Thursday...POETRY ALIVE 11am-1pm, Old Courthouse, Bigge Street, Liverpool. Details phone (02) [REDACTED].

Every Tuesday night THE WALLS HAVE EARS 8.30 till late. Upstairs at the Little West Cafe 346 Liverpool Street Darlinghurst. Details Clare McGregor (02) [REDACTED].

1st and 3rd Wednesday ...POETS UNION 7pm, The Gallery Cafe, 43 Booth Street, Annandale. Details phone (02) [REDACTED].

1st Friday...EASTERN SUBURBS POETRY GROUP 7.30pm, Everleigh Street, Waverly. Details phone (02) [REDACTED].

1st Tuesday...ICEBREAKERS GAY POETRY 8pm, 197 Albion Street Surry Hills. \$2 includes free coffee. Details phone Noel Tointon (02) 3172257.

2nd & 4th Thursday...FRESH WORDS 7.30pm The Poets Union on Oxford Street, Berkelouw Books, 19 Oxford Street Paddington. Guests and open section. Phone Anna (02) [REDACTED] or 015 704 364 or Nick Sykes (02) [REDACTED].

3rd Sunday 2 - 4pm INTERLUDES at the Lethington Community Centre 133 Smith Street Summer Hills. Poets, musicians and storytellers. December reading will be held on 17 December Details ph Joye Dempsey (02) [REDACTED]

3rd Sunday...POETRY WITH GLEE: THE POETS UNION AT GLEEBOOKS. 2-4pm, 49 Glebe Point Road, Glebe. Admission \$5/\$2 Details Nick Sykes (02) [REDACTED].

4th Monday of each month...FUTURE POETS SOCIETY 8pm, Lapidary Club Room, Gympie Bay Road, Gympie. Details phone Anni Featherstone (02) [REDACTED].

4th Wednesday...LIVE POETS AT DON BANKS MUSEUM 7.30pm, 6 Napier Street North Sydney. Guest reader plus open section. Admission \$6 includes wine. Details phone Sue Hicks or Danny Gardiner (02) [REDACTED].

28 December 8pm Writers at the River, Roscoes Riverside Restaurant, Penrith, NSW. Theme 'After the ball' pre New Years Party rehearsal. Open Section included. Details contact Carl Leddy (047) 21 2087.

DECEMBER AT ARIEL BOOKSELLERS

3 December 2-3pm Penelope Sachs, herbalist and naturopath

7 December 6.30pm Anne Fairbairn An Australian Conference of the Birds (Black Pepper Press) will be launched by Keith Owen of the Dept. of Immigration & Ethnic Affairs. Speakers, readings and music including Mohammad Nabi Tavellaie and Mohammad Nematzadeh.

17 December 3pm Appearance by Medievalist and musician Stevie Wishart to promote her CDs.

19 December 6pm Barry Humphries will discuss his new novel Women in the Background (Reed Books). The novel will be briefly discussed by (another) special guest and Barry will sign copies. RSVP to Ariel. Refreshments will be served.

Ariel Booksellers is at 42 Oxford Street Paddington. Phone (02) [REDACTED], fax (02) [REDACTED].

DECEMBER AT GLEEBOOKS

There are no literary events planned for December at Gleebooks. Stay tuned for their January program.

Gleebooks is at 49 Glebe Point Road Glebe. For details and bookings for all events ph (02) 6602333.

1996 events

Sunday 14 January 1996 BaBel Ariel Booksellers and the Sydney Fringe Festival present: BaBel - the Fringe Writers Festival. Located at the refurbished Paddington Town Hall, the festival will bring you a whole day packed with readings and discussions, poetics and publishers, book launches, CD ROM, poetry software, visual text, small press and 'zines, the Ern malley Memorial Bar and much more. The festival will focus on writing which exists in the margins and on the fringe and which is mostly quitehappy to be there - providing a rich and fertile ground for our literature. Guest will include John A Scott, Tom Flood, berni janssen, Paul Kelly, UWS students and many more performance poets, authors, publishers and bibliophiles. Launches include that of Sabrina Achilles first novel Waste. For further details contact Lisa herbert on (02) 3324581.

Wednesday 24 January 1996, at 6 pm in the Dixon Room, State Library of New South Wales. Launch of Yasmine Gooneratne's new novel The Pleasures of Conquest will be launched by Michael Wilding with readings from the novel by David Ritchie, Pauline Gunawardene and David Baldwin.

23 - 28 January 1996 - 1996 Sydney Writers' Festival

Hailed as the major literary event in NSW, the Sydney Writers' Festival is held in association with the Sydney Festival and the State Library of NSW. Programmed events include author profiles, readings, film screenings, discussion sessions, book launches, literary feasts, research tours, master classes, special events and activities for young people.

Internatiional writers include: Walter Mosley, David Guterson, Barbara Kingsolver, Terry Pratchett, Romesh Gunsekera, Alison Fell, Evelyn Lau, Peter Matthiessen, Ko Un and the Nuyorican Poets Cafe Live. Australian writers include: Dorothy Porter, Amy Witting, Peter Singer, Geraldine Brooks, Jenny Pausacker, Hanifa Deen, Morris West, Frank Moorhouse, Yasmine Gooneratne, Anne summers, Jill Kitson, David Marr, Hazel Hawke, Herb Wharton, Justine Ettler, Arlene Chai, Fiona Capp, Rosie Cross, Linda Jaivin, Gary Dunne and many more.

The Sydney Writers' Festival hotline will be in operation from mid-December. People requiring information about the Writers' Festival can call (02) [REDACTED] or fax (02) [REDACTED] for details.

NSW WRITERS' CENTRE EVENTS

WOMEN WRITERS' NETWORK 2nd Wednesday. 7.30pm, NSW Writers' Centre. Details Ann Davis (02) [REDACTED].

FEMINIST & EXPERIMENTAL WRITERS' GROUP meets every second Friday 6.30-9.30pm. Details Margaret Metz (02) [REDACTED] or Valerie Williamson for details of venues.

TECHNIQUES OF JOURNAL WRITING WITH ANGELIKA FREMD. Sat 2 and Sat 9 December 9.30 am to 5pm. This workshop will aim to acquaint participants with techniques of journal writing which will allow recorded material to be mined for use in autobiographical fiction writing. Cost \$120 (members) \$150 (non members). Details and bookings (02) [REDACTED].

The NSW Writers' Centre Christmas Party Thursday 14 December 6pm. Entry free, refreshments provided, surprise entertainment. Bookings absolutely necessary. Phone Anna on (02) [REDACTED] by 12 December.

Unless otherwise stated all NSWWC events are held at the centre in Rozelle Hospital grounds (enter from Balmain Road opposite Cecily Street and follow the signs).

REGIONAL NSW

ARMIDALE 1st Wednesday 7.30pm, Rumours Cafe in the Mall. Details phone James Vicars (067) 73 2103

WOLLONGONG 2nd & 4th Tuesday 7.30pm, Here's Cheers Restaurant, 5 Victoria Street, Wollongong. Details phone Ian Ryan (042) 84 0645.

LISMORE 3rd Tuesday 8pm. Stand Up Poets, Lismore Club, Club Lane. Details phone David Hallett (066) 891318.

MULLUMBIMBY second Saturday morning of the month 10am - noon. POWEM women's workshop. Mayor's room upstairs, opposite RSL Club, Dalley Street Mullumbimby. Contact Philmoena Scheehan (066) 80 1006.

NEWCASTLE / HUNTER VALLEY

3rd Monday... Poetry at the Pub. Northern Star Hotel, 7.30pm Beaumont Street Newcastle Street \$2/\$1. Details phone Bill Iden (049) 675 972

MAITLAND Poetry group 4th Friday 7.30, Literary Institute in Banks Street East Maitland. \$2. Details phone Bruce Copping (049) 301497.

KANGAROO VALLEY Last Friday...Writers in the Valley "music .poetry and social interaction in Kangaroo Valley". For details on venue and times ring Diana Jaffray on (044) 651 334

BLUE MOUNTAINS Friday Nights at Varuna Writers' Centre 7.30pm: Includes tea, coffee & biscuits. \$2 buys entry and a lucky door ticket. Varuna Writers' Centre, 141 Cascade Street Katoomba NSW 2780. Details ph Peter Bishop (047) 825 674.

WAUCHOPE Second Sunday 3pm Poets in the pub, readings performances & music at the Star Hotel, organised with 2WAY FM and taped for Broadcast. Details P Denton (065) 85 93929 or Trevor Corliss (065) 84 8023.

WAGGA WAGGA

The next reading in Wagga will take place on the 5th March 1996

Enquiries: David Gilbey (069 332465)

SOUTH AUSTRALIA

ADELAIDE

7 December Friendly Street Readings at the the Box factory, Little Regent Street South Adelaide 7.30pm. Readers include David Cookson, Emma Sleth And Rory Harris. There wil also be a Christmas book sale. Details phone Stephen Lawrence (08) [REDACTED] or Gail Murdoch (08) 2728189.

2nd & 4th Tuesday Poets in the Pub The Governor Hindmarsh Hotel 59 Port Road 8pm. Open readings. Details phone Barry McKee (08) [REDACTED].

Every Friday Interactive Port O'Call opposite Johnny Rockets at the rear of 281 Rundle Street. 8.30pm. Open reading. Free. Details phone (08) 2236113.

3rd Thursday Salisbury Writers Meetings at the Salisbury Central Library 6.30-8.30pm. Visitors and new members welcome. Details phone (08) [REDACTED].

March 3-8, 1996 The Telstra Adelaide Festival 96 Writers Week will present Writer's Week In The Writers' Week Tents, Pioneer Women's Memorial Gardens.

Featuring. Overseas Writers: Fred d'Aguiar, Vikram Chandra, Adrian Edmondson, Jostein Gaarder, Sue Grafton, Amin Maalouf, E. Annie Proulx, Giorgios Heimonas, Philip Jeyaretnam, Barbara Trapido, Malcolm Bradbury, J. M. Coetzee, James Elroy, Jane Garden, Josephine Hart, Michael Ignatieff, Barry Lopez, Paul Muldoon, Rupert Thomson, Vassilis Vassilikos. Australian Writers: Ken Bolton, Kaz Cooke, Liam Davison, Sara Dowse, Fotini Epanomitis, Steve Evans, John Forbes, Kate Grenville, Marian Halligan, Colin Hope, Gail Jones, Mike Ladd, Peter McFarlane, John Marsden, Stephen Mueke, Dorothy Porter, Matt Rubinstein, Trevor Sykes, Glenys Ward, Ben Winch, Tim Winton, Lily Brett, Evelyn Crawford, Bruce Dawe, Philip Drew, Susan Errington, Tim Flannery, Pene Greet, Rodney Hall, Christine Harris, John Jenkins, Antigone Kefala, Cath Kenneally, Maureen McCarthy, Humphrey McQueen, Meahgan Morris, Neil Paech, Gillian Rubinstein, Kim Scott, Ania Walwicz, Herb Wharton, Keith Windshuttle, Amy Witting. A detailed program of events with information on all sessions and participating writers and speakers will be available a month before the Festival. Copies of the Writer's Week Program Guide can be reserved by sending your name and address with a cheque or money order for \$8:00

(payable to The Adelaide Festival) to: Writer's Week Program Guide, GPO Box 1269, Adelaide, SA. 5001, Australia.

Writers' Centre SA Events

Every 2nd Wednesday 10am. City Scribes writers group meet at the Writers' Centre. Details phone Jenny (08) 2948602 or Jeanne (08) [REDACTED].

Every 2nd Wednesday 7.30pm Children's Writers Group meets at the Writers' Centre. This is a discussion group for active children's writers. Details phone Jeri Kroll (08) 269627.

Unless otherwise stated all Writers' Centre of South Australia events are held at the Centre 187 Rundle Street Adelaide. Details phone Mary Combe (08 [REDACTED], fax (07) [REDACTED],

REGIONAL SOUTH AUSTRALIA

Last Sunday of the month 2pm Gawler Poetry at the Railway Family Hotel, corner 18th and 15th Streets Gawler. Open Readings. Free Details phone Martin Johnson (085) 224268.

Every second Monday Yankalilla District Writers' Group meets from 9.30pm at the RSL Hall Main Road Normanville. Details phone Claire Brooks (085) 582294.

QUEENSLAND

Wordsmith Cafe Readings. There will be no reading at Wordsmiths in December. The next event will be a book signing by Terry Pratchett on Monday 22 January 1996 between 1 & 2 pm. Wordsmiths - The Writers Cafe is located adjacent to the University Bookshop, Staff House Road, St Lucia. Details Helen Wood Grant ph (07) 3652168, Fax (07) 3651977.

Every Tuesday Bombshelter Bar Story Bridge Hotel Brisbane Writers SLAM Guest speakers, word games, literary quizzes - win cash and prizes. \$3. Details Phone Bernie (07) 3378 0341.

Every second Monday 1.30pm at West End Community House, 4 Norfolk Road South Brisbane. A new literary and creative writing group has been set up to talk about literature, to read your own work and receive feedback. Writers from non English speaking backgrounds are particularly welcome. Details Barbara Damska (07) 3844 0091.

Writers in Townsville meets every Wednesday at 7.30pm at the Migrant Resource Centre Walker Street. Readings of manuscripts, guest speakers etc. Details Yvonne (077) 71 2585. PO Box 5101 MSO Townsville Qld 4810

Queensland Writers Centre Events

EXCITING WRITING: READINGS OF NEW WORKS AT THE QUEENSLAND WRITERS' CENTRE

Crime Writers group is looking for new members to meet at the QWC. Details phone Pat Noad (07) 3397 0431.

Queensland Writers Centre Christmas Party 15 December 7pm. Featuring Mary-Rose MacColl, Gregory Rogers & David McCartney. \$12 QWC members, \$15 non-members. Bookings essential. Contact QWC for details.

NOW AVAILABLE FROM THE QUEENSLAND WRITERS' CENTRE..... HANDBOOK FOR QUEENSLAND WRITERS.

Contents include Preparation, Representation, Professional Issues and Development and Funding. Cost \$10 plus \$1.50 postage for QWC members Or \$15 plus \$1.50 for non members. For more information contact the QWC.

VICTORIA

8 December New Spinfex Poets booklaunch The new double collection The Body in Time by Diane Fahey and Nervous Arcs by Jordie Albiston will be launched at the Victorian Writers' Centre 1st floor, 144-156 George Street, Fitzroy Vic 3065. Details contact VWC on. Ph 03 9415 1077

Last Friday 6.30pm MELBOURNE POETS Meeting and reading/workshop The Hawthorn Lower Town Hall, 360 Burwood Road, Hawthorn (entry and car parking at rear). 6.30pm meeting begins, 7.30pm reading/ workshop begins. Cost \$3 (Members), \$5 (non members). Details write to Martin French 1/16 Kent Road Surrey Hills Vic 3127.

3rd Sunday each month; 2pm Readings at the Eaglemont Bookshop 525 Brunswick St North Fitzroy. These readings apparently have been a little irregular over recent months so contact Shelton Lea ph (03) 4863219 to confirm.

La Mama Poetica La Mama 205 Faraday St Carlton. For details on December reading contact Catherine Bateson Phone (054) 221680

December 1-3, Montsalvat National Poets, Spoken Word and Vision Festival:

The Festival will feature print poets, oral poets, performance poets, visual poets, multicultural poets, Queensland poets, bush poets, concrete poets, sound poets and computer poets and will take place at Montsalvat in Eltham. The Festival will begin with a Grand Opening on Friday 1st Dec at 7.30 pm. 'Polonius Press poets' Kathy Kituai, Dorothy Shaw, Russell Erwin, Robert Verdon, Lizz Murphy, and Danielle Stewart together with other Canberra poets Francesca Rendle-Short, Geoff Page, Alan Gould and Lynn Hard will be reading on Saturday. Tickets are available at Montsalvat Ph (03) 9439 7712 and

Collected Works Bookshop Ph (03) 9654 8873 Weekend ticket costs \$35, Day ticket \$15 (\$10 conc), Family ticket \$25.

WESTERN AUSTRALIA

DISK READINGS are held on the Third Tuesday of each month at Pockets Cocktail Lounge 44 Lark Street Northbridge. Admission is free. Details Mike Shuttleworth ph. (09) 4304991.

** ** **

The Katherine Susannah Prichard Writer's Centre, at 11 Old York Rd Greenmount, is perched on the side of the Darling Range, looking towards the towers of Perth and the setting sun. It is surrounded by National Park and the developing suburbs of the Hills district. The place is small and friendly and the kettle is nearly always on the boil.

The Centre holds readings on the first Sunday of the month at 7.30pm. Three invited readers are featured. Cost is \$5/\$4 and includes light refreshments. Faye Davis is currently writer-in-community working on a project called 'Writing in the Hills' Changes'. She is running moderately priced (\$3.50 a session) workshops in the district, and is available for consultation at the house by appointment. (this project is supported by the Australia Council).

The house itself, former home of Katherine Susannah Prichard, is heritage listed and tours cost \$5. Wednesday and Sunday are tour days. Ring first to book. A small writer's studio, once used by Katherine, is now used by writers-in-residence. The KSP Foundation, the Centre's management body, is currently investigating the possibility of letting the Studio on a short term basis to writers from the city, country and/or interstate.

Ring Rob Finlayson, the co-ordinator, on Thursdays, between 10.30am and 5.30pm (09) [REDACTED], to chat about writing and writers, and to find out what's happening in the Hills of Perth and the sunburnt city at their feet. At other times ring the Chairperson, Rose van Scon (09) [REDACTED].

Fremantle Arts Centre Press's has a WWW web site:
<http://www.iinet.net.au/~bryce/facp.html>. The page includes details of upcoming titles, a full backlist catalogue, and listings of recent books, updated regularly.

TASMANIA

14 December 5.30pm The Famous Reporter 12 will be launched by Pete Hay at Hobart Bookshop 29 Criterion Street Hobart. There will also be a short reading compered by Elizabeth Dean. Light refreshments provided. Details ph (002) 349654.

14-17 March 1996 Salamanca Writer Festival. Presented by TWU, the University of Tasmania and the Salamanca Arts Centre. Program includes Young Writers and Readers Festival, and Fringe events. Details phone Subi (002) 384 414, Marjorie (002) 344 384 or Fiona (002) 240 029.

NORTHERN TERRITORY

Darwin

Saturday 9 December 10am-4pm The 3,000 words, 3 billion possibilities Short Story Writing Workshop at the Frog Hollow Centre for the Arts. 56 McMinn Street Darwin.

Award winning Darwin writer Wolfgang Wirf will be conducting this short story writing workshop. It will give participants a chance to set part of the agenda. So bring your questions and ideas, your insights and your problems. Topics to be workshopped include mastering short story techniques, using the right words, the soul o the story, sentences - limp or strong, symbolism, characterisation, voice and getting started.

Cost \$10 & bring your own lunch. Tea/coffee provided. Details phone/fax Northern Territory Community Writing Program (089) 412651

For further information about any of these events contact Andrew McMillan, Literature Officer, Northern Territory Community Writing Program GPO Box 1774 Darwin NT 0801, phone/fax (089) 412651.

Darwin Fellowship of Australian Writers conducts monthly meetings/workshops. Details Matthew Lonsdale ph (089) 278133, PO Box 37512

Winnellie NT 0821.

Katherine

Katherine Writers" Guild conducts regular workshops, meetings, recitals and produces a regular newsletter. \$5 joining fee, \$20 a year (conc half price). Details Lori Martin PO Box 2155 Katherine NT 0851.

Alice Springs

2nd & 4 Tuesday Alice Springs Fellowship of Australian Writers meetings at the YWCA on Stuart Terrace. Details contact Meg Williams PO Box 1783 Alice Springs NT 0871.

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485. **Mark Roberts**

AWOL: December Happenings 2/2

Wed 29 Nov 1995

COMPETITIONS

8 DECEMBER INAUGURAL CALAMBEEN LITERARY COMPETITION Prizes of \$100 and \$50 will be awarded for the categories of poetry and short stories. There is also a \$50 prize for poetry with a celebratory theme and \$50 for a Haiku. \$3 entry fee. Send SAAE to the Co-ordinator, PO Box 35, Creswick VIC 3363.

15 December Queensland Arts Council/Everalld Compton New Writer Scholarship This will be awarded to a regional new writer who through portofolio, previous publication and project plan can satisfy the assessors that they would benefit professionally from athree week writing retreat at VarunaWriters Centre at Katoomba in the Blue Mountains. An administrative fee of \$5 applies . Details contact the Queensland Arts Council phone (07) 3846 7500.

31 DECEMBER TOM COLLINS POETRY PRIZE

This prize is for unpublished poems up to 60 lines. 1st prize \$500. For details send SSAE to 15 Birch Street Attadale WA 6156

31 DECEMBER REPUBLIC PRIZE A prize of \$1,000 will be awarded to the writer of a work of fiction, poetry, biography, memoir or history published in 1995 which expresses the aims of the Republic. Details: GPO Box 5150 Sydney 2001.

31 DECEMBER CLIFF STREET PUBLISHING seeks fiction submissions over 25,000 words by one writer. The writing submitted can be either a complete work of fiction or a collection of short stories. Send MS and SSAE to The Editor, FICTION, Cliff Street Publishing, 22/11 Cliff St, Fremantle WA 6160.

NOVEMBER 95 TO JANUARY 96 AUSWRITE SHORT STORY COMPETITION Entries will be accepted from November to January with results published in March 1995. (No details provided on prizes). \$5 entry fee per story. Limit 2,000 words. For details and entry forms contact Auswrite, PO Box 327 Mascot NSW 2020.

10 FEBRUARY: TOP DOG JOURNAL ANNUAL SHORT STORY & POETRY COMPETITION. Short story to 1200 words, poems to A4 length. Must be about dogs. Attach signed statement: 'I am happy for this entry to be published should it receive an award in the Top Dog Journal'. State age if under 21. Top Dog Journal, PO Box 29, Berwick Vic 3806.

TASMANIAN TRADES AND LABOUR COUNCIL 1996 MAY DAY SHORT STORY COMPETITION "Working lives" For details and entry forms contact Chris Trousselot (002) 287 866).

CONFERENCES

BECOMING AUSTRALIANS: THE MOVEMENT TOWARDS FEDERATION IN BALLARAT AND THE NATION

December 1 and 2, 1995 Ballarat. Presented by the Australian Studies Team University of Ballarat

Combining national with regional perspectives, this conference promises to provide new insights into the social and political forces which influenced the development of a sense of 'being Australians' in the years leading up to and immediately following federation.

Organized by the Australian Studies Team at the University of Ballarat, the conference aims to elucidate the many aspects of what it meant to be Australian during this period, and how this in turn influenced the progress of the federation movement.

The value and relevance of these historical concerns will be related to current debates regarding citizenship, republicanism and Australian political and cultural awareness.

Speakers include: Hon John Bannon, former Premier of South Australia and author of *The Crucial Colony: South Australia's Role in Reviving Federation*.. Professor Weston Bate, historian and author of a two volume history of Ballarat. Professor Geoffrey Blainey, Chancellor of the University of Ballarat and historian. Dr John Hirst, Reader in History at LaTrobe University and author of *A Republican Manifesto*. Dr Helen Irving, Reader in Politics at the University of Technology, Sydney and author of the forthcoming *To Constitute a Nation*.. Hon Joan Kirner AM, former Premier of Victoria and Chairperson of the Centenary of Federation Advisory Committee. Professor Stuart Macintyre, of Melbourne University, who has recently edited Alfred Deakin's account of federation.

Among those representing literary aspects of the conference will be: Dr. Richard Jordan, Dr. Meg Tasker, and Rod Sadler, all of the University of Ballarat.

Full registration (2 days)	\$85
Students/unwaged (2 days)	\$50
Conference dinner	\$45

Make cheques payable to University of Ballarat and post to: Philippa Watt, Conference Convenor, School of Behavioural and Social Sciences and Humanities, University of Ballarat, PO Box 663, Ballarat VIC 3353

Enquiries contact School secretary on (053)279610 FAX: (053) 279840 or Richard Jordan, School of Behavioural & Social Sciences & Humanities University of Ballarat. email [REDACTED]

AUSTRALIAN STUDIES AND THE SHRINKING PERIPHERY: SURFING THE NET FOR AUSTRALIA.

The Centre for Australian Studies in Wales, University of Wales, Lampeter, are hosting this conference next year. Organisers are calling for papers.

"In recent years the consolidation of Europe into the 15 states of the EU, the integration of east and west within Europe, and the progressive turning of Australia to its own Pacific backyard have furthered the impression of periphery: one world's edge looking distantly at the other."

The contacts are:

Dr Graham Sumner and Dr Andrew Hassam
Centre for Australian Studies in Wales
University of Wales
Lampeter
Dyfed, SA48 7ED,
Wales, UK.

Telephone: Graham Sumner [REDACTED] or 424790 (secretary) Fax: [REDACTED]
Andrew Hassam [REDACTED] (secretary) Fax [REDACTED] E-mail: [REDACTED] or [REDACTED] Offers of papers should reach the organisers by 31 December 1995, and comprise a full title and an abstract of no more than 100 words.

Further information will be sent when available, and will appear on the Centre's WWW home-page (<http://www.lamp.ac.uk/oz>).

3rd International/Australian Conference: Religion Literature and the Arts.

18 - 21 January 1996 Sancta Sophia College, University of Sydney. Invited speakers include: Karen Armstrong - a well known broadcaster from the UK and author of a number of books including *The Gospel According to Woman*, *Tongues of Fire* (an anthology of religious poetry) and *A History of God*, Professor Peter Steele SJ - professor of English, University of Melbourne and a poet and critic, Professor Elizabeth Isichei - Professor of Religious Studies, University of Otago New Zealand. She has written widely on African history and religion and, more recently, on religion and art in New Zealand, Nigel Butterley - a well known composer, Professor David Parker - Professor of English at the Australian Catholic University and Al Zolynas - a San Diego based poet. There will also be a Women's Artists' Forum with artists Kate Briscoe, Liz Coates and others and a Wirtiers Forum including Rae Desmond Jones, Sara Dowse and

others. Wing-It! Performance Ensemble from San Francisco (Phil Porter & Cynthia Winton- Henry).

Cost - Registration, including meals \$160 (conc \$130), Conference dinner \$30. Accommodation is available in Sancta Sophia College at \$40 per night including breakfast.

For further information contact Dr Michael Griffith, Department of Literature and Languages, Australian Catholic University, 179 Albert Road Strathfield NSW 2135. Phone (02) 7392192, Fax (02) 7392105.

1996 CONFERENCE OF THE AMERICAN ASSOCIATION FOR AUSTRALIAN LITERARY STUDIES

The 1996 conference of the American Association for Australian Literary Studies will be held at Humboldt State University, California, from April 18-21, 1996. Papers of 20 minutes' duration on any Australian literary or cultural subject are welcome.

For more information, please write: Professor Jack Turner, Department of English, Humboldt State University, Arcata, CA 95521, USA; e-mail [REDACTED]

1996 NATIONAL CHILDREN'S BOOK COUNCIL OF AUSTRALIA 'CLAIMING A PLACE'.

3-6 May at the Sheraton Hotel Brisbane. Guest speakers will include Monica Hughes, Gillan Cross, Anthony Browne and many distinguished Australian authors and illustrators. Registration forms will be available from November 1995. For further information contact the Children's Book Council of Australia (Tasmania) PO Box 113 Moonah Tasmania 7009

ASAL 1996 - BRISBANE

CALL FOR PAPERS Queensland University of Technology is hosting the 1996 Association for the Study of Australian Literature annual conference, from Saturday July 6 to Thursday July 11. The conference will be held on the Gardens Point Campus, situated between the City Botanic Gardens and the river.

Papers are invited on any aspect of Australian literature. Abstracts of approximately 200 words should be sent to Sharyn Pearce, School of Humanities, QUT, Carseldine Campus, Beams Rd., Carseldine Q.4034 or Email [REDACTED], by 16 December 1995. All papers will be of twenty (20) mins duration.

Enquiries to the co-ordinators: Sharyn Pearce: School of Humanities, QUT, Carseldine Campus, Beams Rd., Carseldine Q.4034 or Email [REDACTED]. Fax 07 3864 4719. Email [REDACTED], or Philip Neilsen: School of Media and Journalism, Faculty of Arts, QUT, GPO Box 2434, Brisbane Q 4001. Fax 07 3864 1810. Email [REDACTED]

THE IRISH CENTRE FOR AUSTRALIAN STUDIES: AUSTRALIAN STUDIES CONFERENCE

The Irish Centre for Australian Studies will be holding an Australian Studies Conference in Dublin from 3-6 July 1996. The three major streams will be history, culture and the environment. For further details contact David Day Professor of Australian History Department of Modern History University College Dublin Ireland.

COMPARING AUSTRALIA: A CONFERENCE.

Call For Papers and Introductory Information. Dates: 30th August-1 September 1996 in Stirling, Scotland. Abstracts not exceeding 200 words by 30th November 1995. Papers 20 minutes delivery time. Registration forms will be mailed out in January 1996. For further information Contact Angela Smith, British Association for Studies on Australia, Centre of Commonwealth Studies, University of Stirling, Stirling FK9 4LA, UK Fax 01786 451 335 E-Mail: [REDACTED]

While AWOL makes every effort to ensure the accuracy of Happenings listing we suggest you confirm dates, times and venue.

AWOL would like to thank the following organisation who provided information for this list: NSW Writers Centre, Queensland Writers Centre, The Writers' Centre of South Australia, Tasmanian Writers' Union, AusLit discussion group (internet), Muse (ACT) FAW WWW LINK (<http://www.ozemail.com.au:80/~faw/>) and the other individuals and organisations who supplied information about their events directly to AWOL.

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486. **Maria Damon**

Re: Condition of Poetry in the Academy

Wed 29 Nov 1995

an addition: how could I have forgotten Robt von Hallberg's American Poetry and Culture 1945-1980? or maybe the years are a little different, and it's am. culture and poetry. he deals with centrist poetry, what we'd call "academic," and shows how it was part of the nation-building process of .u.s. as superpower. the other side of the coin to advocating the marginal.--md

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487. **Maria Damon**

Re: Condition of Poetry in the Academy

Wed 29 Nov 1995

btw --any publishers out there, or connections to publishers, who might want to do an anthology of poetry/cult studs texts?--that way i won't have to break copyright laws everytime i teach.--md

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488. **Maria Damon**

Re: Pearl

Wed 29 Nov 1995

to richard caddell:

what genius said or wrote "all my words are homeless"? i need that! kinda like milos's "language is the only homeland" or a line i read in d meltzer's jazz bk this a.m., the benjaminian aura as "a ghetto of ghosts made up of words." he's writing specifically about white appropriation of jazz/creation of JAZZ thru writing. but i think it has wider applications as well. positive ones.--md

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489. **Maria Damon**

Re: Brathwaite's book

Wed 29 Nov 1995

jdavis rites:

At 8:23 AM 11/29/95, Paul Naylor ok 157602 wrote:

Am I wrong in suspecting that a major academic press would

>publish a book about Brathwaite in a heartbeat but would not even consider

>publishing a book by Brathwaite?

Sorry to be a pedant again, but didn't

Oxfrd do the arrivants?

Jordan

**yeah, it's American publishers who have been incredibly dense about brathwaite and i wd argue that this is not due to the split in poetry/cult studs but simply to american racism and xenophobia.--md

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490. **Maria Damon**

Re: working bibliography

Wed 29 Nov 1995

luoma wrote:

> Can anyone suggest good books of cultural studies on poetry?

Kristen Ross wrote some excellent material on Rimbaud. Steve knows the title.

**yes, she's another of my culture heroes. It's *The Emergence of Social Space: Rimbaud and the Paris Commune* (UMinnesotaPress.) a yummy book w/ great intro and chapters actionpacked with close readings! also, Jacques Ranciere has a good essay called "Ronds de Fume(e?)," about the worker-poet vogue in 18th c. France. in a book edited by i think Jean Luc Nancy...it's in the bibliography of my own bk --also Karlheinz Stierle, "Identite du Discours et Transgression Lyrique," in *Poetique* 32.

btw, marjorie, stuart hall and dick hebdige were not particularly concerned with the literary canon, as i understand it. hall is an historian/sociologist and hebdige an art historian. i remember renato rosaldo, one of my mentors and your colleague at LSJU, telling me that the question of whether something was in the canon or not and why was about the least interesting thing to be asked of a text. i tend to agree with him, and think it a particularly soc-sci position that i find refreshing.--md

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491. **GRAHAM W. FOUST**

Phoebe: call for submissions

Wed 29 Nov 1995

Phoebe Magazine is calling for submissions for its 25th anniversary double issue (Spring 1996). The most recent issue (featuring Michael Palmer, Connie Deanovich, Peter Gizzi, and Heather Fuller) will be published in January.

Please send work to: _Phoebe_
Graham Foust, editor
George Mason University
4400 University Drive
Fairfax, VA 22030

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492. **Marisa Januzzi**

Re: needs work

Wed 29 Nov 1995

| *what does an acceptable academic essay look like?*

| *To Start: It Has a Colon In Its Title*

To Continue: It often begins with an anecdote, like Brenda Silver telling about noticing the poster of Virginia Woolf in SAMMY AND ROSIE GET LAID

The ones that get attention often proceed by being relatively lucid and proportionately inflammatory, like Lawrence Rainey's judicious piece on the value of HD and feminist canon-revision... finally:

BAM! And then he kissed her on the mouth.
(They usually do not end that way!)

---Marisa

PS: Thanks, QUITE belatedly, to everyone who wrote me anecdotes about driving across the country (which I did in August)(August!!)-- I am still catching up w/you

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493. **Alan Sondheim**

Re: Question

Wed 29 Nov 1995

On Wed, 29 Nov 1995, Eryque Gleason wrote:

> who gets to judge what's a poem?

>

> -the bailiff

>

I do. It's a nasty job but someone has to do it.

-Alan

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494. **Dick Higgins**

Re: Condition of Poetry in the Academy

Wed 29 Nov 1995

| *btw --any publishers out there, or connections to publishers, who might want to do an anthology of poetry/cult studs texts?--that way i won't have to break copyright laws everytime i teach.--md*

Suggested solution: use the internet better.

Dick Higgins
P O Box 27
Barrytown, NY 12507
Tel- [REDACTED]
Fax- [REDACTED]
e-mail- [REDACTED]

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495. **Jordan Davis**
Re: Condition of Poetry in the Academy
Wed 29 Nov 1995

Gnomic request: please elucidate.

| *Suggested solution: use the internet better.*

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496. **Tony Green**
Re: Question
Wed 29 Nov 1995

Saying "witch" with a mouthful of sandwich sounds like it must be a poem.

Tony Green,
e-mail: [REDACTED]

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497. **cris cheek**
Re: Poetics of renga
Wed 29 Nov 1995

| *What about proliferation, branching, versions, no way of knowing what's out there any more... I'm curious about people's take on this, and what really happens.*

I'm guessing but reckon that there have been more than 50 'named' rengas in 5 months. Some of those have run for several weeks and had many more branches than that. The 'welcome to the lost world of rengas' posted recently merely edited a bunch of outakes (pretty much a creative disc clearance on my part).

The form is beginning to break open, partly helped by a prolonged 'getting to know you' period of community formation by the dogged core (currently at 10ish). Posts are being generated at upwards of 100 per day. One day Gabrille

Welford broke our first one person century - so sometimes it's quite a lot more than that. There is more than merely vicarious pleasure in seeing what does - or doesn't - happen to your contribution. The comprovisatory (i know there's a compromised rib lurking here) moment is driven by so many differing agencies of time intersection (my posts are sometimes delayed for a couple of days - for some unfathomable quirk of my server - sometimes they come up almost instantaneously), 'hot' personel (everyone has to go and do other things, sometimes for days or weeks, so there's a tonal shift and energy pulses from person to time to zone). There is a curious 'investment' in adding - in teasing - in re-framing - in rebutting a concensual reality from emerging. There are recognisable traits and vocabularies and syntactical strategies at work, even characters and locations. But overall there's a sifting the grounds of curiosity 'collective' compositional energy which remains fascinating to be engaged with. Adding material and receiving versioning from that material are both specifically pleasurable.

Others will have differing takes.

love and love
cris

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498. **Maria Damon**

Re: Phoebe: call for submissions

Wed 29 Nov 1995

faust writes:

Please send work to: _Phoebe_
Graham Foust, editor
George Mason University
4400 University Drive
Fairfax, VA 22030

renga anyone? wanna send some off to this tempter?--md

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499. **Rod Smith**

Re: Condition of Poetry in the Academy

Wed 29 Nov 1995

btw --any publishers out there, or connections to publishers, who might want to do an anthology of poetry/cult studs texts?--that way i won't have to break copyright laws everytime i teach.--md

Write a proposal & send it to Routledge. I've talked w/ a sales rep about possibly doing this sort of book with them. My thought was more of an anthology of poetics starting with Stein/Pound etc up to present.

Rod

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500. **Aldon L. Nielsen**

Re: ISSN0194-6498

Thu 30 Nov 1995

I have often read, and wondered at, the disclaimer on the masthead of the AWP Chronicle. It greatly resembles such disclaimers in my daily newspapers. This does not obviate the observable fact of certain trends in solicited unsolicited and otherwise published essays. I recognize and am grateful for the fact that the same issue will contain, say, a Gioia and a Waldman. But I think it's no stretch to argue that there has been a generally anti-theory tone to the essays in the Chronicle. It may indeed reflect the opinions of the membership more than the opinions of the editors, but that again may have something to do with institutional set-up -- (It's still the case, for example, that one must be a member of the MLA to vote in MLA elections -- one doesn't receive a ballot by virtue of one's department having some sort of institutional membership)

The point I was making more simply is this -- while there are faults indeed in the system of peer review at critical journals ("don't start me to talking," as Sonny Boy Williamson used to say) there is some sense that somebody is checking to see if, when I claim for example that something is "the only critical study devoted to an author" there is some truth to the assertion.

I thought David Lehman and others told me in the pages of the Chronicle that it was the theory obsessed critics who had no allegiance to a correspondence theory of truth --

And frankly, I'm not much interested in writing letters to the editor these days -- If you want a good article some day, we can talk --

don't mistake the direction of my animus here -- I would give almost anything to be at the conference to hear Gerald Barrax or Sara McAulay --

but, as I see _Phoebe_ heading in directions that would not have been contemplated a decade ago, I was hoping to see a more eclectic spirit in the Chronicle -- Hell, even APR will print some of the people on this list if enough famous people tell them they're "significant" --

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501. **Thomas Bell**
Re: Poetics of renga
Thu 30 Nov 1995

It's like putting a note in a bottle and casting it into the sea and then either having a fish toss it back or days later seeing a report of it on foreign tv.

On Wed, 29 Nov 1995, Judy Roitman wrote:

I agree with my renga bro Tom.

One kind of unique thing about the renga is that it lets you see immediately the influence you have on others and lets you report immediately the influence that others have on you.

Jorge

On Tue, 28 Nov 1995, Thomas Bell wrote:

After being involved with this renga business for awhile, I have realized that it is probably the first truly new form to arise from electronic transmission. This type of collaboration would not be possible in print. Even FEDEXED the time would be prohibitive. Print would also allow too much time for reflection and the responses would be thought over rather than spontaneous and improvisational. When I download a sequence and give it some thought before uploading and posting I find myself trying too hard to be clever and impress, bizarre as that seems.

Am I correct in asserting that it is the first new form?

Other participants - do you share my feelings about offline and online responding?

Tom

What about proliferation, branching, versions, no way of knowing what's out there any more... I'm curious about people's take on this, and what really happens.

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502. **Gabrielle Welford**
FWD: GovAccess.202... (fwd)

Thu 30 Nov 1995

Anyone know what is happening with this, the truths and the untruths? Gab

Internet Censors Close to Success: Act Now

By Howard Rheingold

syndicated by King Features

electronic rights: Howard Rheingold

Permission granted to redistribute this column (Internet Censors Close to Success) freely.

The religious right is only weeks away from final victory in its battle to shut American citizens out of the Internet as a medium for uncensored communication.

The story so far: The censorship drive began in February, 1995, with the introduction of S.314, "The Computer Decency Act of 1995" (CDA), by Senator Jim Exon (D-NE), as part of the much larger telecommunications deregulation bill, S 652. Senator Leahy (D-VT) countered CDA with "The Family Empowerment Act," which mandates investigation of technical means for parents to determine what comes into their homes and schools for their children to see, according to their own family's values. CDA passed the Senate on June 14; Leahy's amendment lost. On June 21, opposition to the Exon amendment was voiced even among prominent Republicans, including Representative Gingrich (R-GA).

Rep. Chris Cox (R-CA), and Rep. Ron Wyden (D-OR) introduced the "Internet Freedom and Family Empowerment Act" (HR 1978), offering an approach that would empower parents, rather than the State, to make decisions about what is considered decent in every household.

The time has come for Congress to choose between competing amendments. Whether our representatives ultimately go down the road to censorship advocated by the Exon amendment, or choose the parental empowerment approach advocated by the Cox-Wyden amendment, depends on the outcome of the battle for public opinion. In the final weeks of 1995, the campaigns for and against the CDA are approaching the decisive moment. Unless many people who favor freedom of expression make telephone calls, write letters, send faxes, right now, as the pro-censorship forces certainly are doing, the censors are going to win.

An extremist minority is pressing for final legislation that is even more restrictive than the Exon bill. This faction, now openly led by the religious right, seeks to use criminal and civil penalties to hold all Americans' online conversations, web pages, public archives to a rigidly

defined standard for decency of content. The bill's zealous backers make it clear that their interpretation of decency in the new medium is far more strict than those standards upheld by the Supreme Court in regard to other forms of speech.

Discourse on the Net will be restricted to that which is judged suitable for young children in strict households. The liability issues, if upheld, will mean the death of the online services industry, which has been growing explosively. America will hand off yet another native industry to global competitors. Until and unless the Supreme Court decides that the legislation is unconstitutional, the decency cops, with the full power of the law, will have their day.

In October, 1995, Commerce committee chairman Larry Pressler received a letter signed by The Christian Coalition's Ralph Reed, Eagle Forum's Phyllis Schlafly, the Reverends Donald Wildmon and Louis Sheldon of the American Family Association and Traditional Values Coalition, and former Attorney General Edwin Meese, that threw the weight of the top organizations of the religious right behind legislation that would establish a Federal decency police and shut down the emerging online communications industry by making online service providers criminally liable for the activities of their customers. The battle of the CDA is part of the sweeping telecommunications deregulation bill (S 652), now approaching the final stages of Congressional decision-making.

Call or fax Newt Gingrich's office now ([REDACTED] voice; [REDACTED] fax), and cc Senator Robert Dole (R-KS) ([REDACTED] voice; [REDACTED] fax). Tell them you favor the parental control tools proposed in the Cox-White-Wyden amendment to the chilling and unnecessary Exon amendment. Tell them that you, not the the Federal government, are the proper authority to decide what is decent in your household.

For more information, check web sites <http://www.vtw.org/exon/> and URL:<http://www.cdt.org/cda.html> . Gopher archives: <gopher://gopher.eff.org/11/Alerts>. Via e-mail, send a message to [REDACTED] (put "send alert" in the subject line for the latest alert, or "send cdafaq" for the CDA FAQ).

Stay informed, spread the word, make those calls.

END

*Howard Rheingold [REDACTED]
<http://www.wll.com/user/hlr/>
Fax: [REDACTED]
what it is ----->is----->up to us*

[illegible]

Quaint phrasing from obsolete document: "Congress shall make no law ... abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press ..."

-- unless, of course, such forms of expression utilize modern technology.

Mo' as it Is.

--jim

Jim Warren, GovAccess list-owner/editor ([REDACTED])
 Advocate & columnist, MicroTimes, Government Technology, BoardWatch, etc.
 345 Swett Rd., Woodside CA 94062; voice/[REDACTED]; fax/<# upon request>

To add or drop GovAccess, email to [REDACTED] ('Subject' ignored)
with message: [un]subscribe GovAccess YourEmailAddress (insert your eaddr)
For brief description of GovAccess, send the message: info GovAccess

*Past postings are at <ftp.cpsr.org:/cpsr/states/california/govaccess>
and by WWW at <http://www.cpsr.org/cpsr/states/california/govaccess> .
Also forwarded to USENET's <comp.org.cpsr.talk> by CPSR's Al Whaley.*

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503. **R I Caddel**

Re: Pearl

Thu 30 Nov 1995

Maria - and anyone else - "all my words are homeless" is from the Barry MacSweeney chapbook, conclusion to "Pearl Says":

... I in
worry eat my fist, soak my sandwich
in saliva, chew my lip a thousand times
without any bought impediment. Please
believe me when my mind says and
my eyes send telegraphs: I am Pearl.
So low a nobody I am beneath the cowslip's
shadow, next to the heifers' hooves.
I have a roof over my head, but none
in my mouth. All my words are homeless.

- I'm never any good at soundbites - hope that helps, x
x x Richard Caddel, E-mail: R.I.Caddel @ durham.ac.uk x x Durham
University Library, Phone: 0 [REDACTED] x x Stockton Rd. Durham
DH1 3LY Fax: 0 [REDACTED] x x
x x "Words! Pens are too light. Take a chisel to write." x x
- Basil Bunting x x x

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504. **Hothead Paisan**

Re: ISSN0194-6498

Thu 30 Nov 1995

Aldon,

Yes, yes, yes, yes, please send articles. In fact, all of you-all send articles. Not interviews--we are up to our collective editorial butt-cheeks in interviews--but articles about 2500-5000 words that I can argue for at editorial meetings by correctly pointing out that they are terrific.

You're quite right, I think, to point to a general similarity of tone in articles published over the last few years. And I think it does have to do with our member faculty readers/contributors; save for a few notable and wonderful exceptions, present company included, relatively few of the 290 member programs include either theory or querzblatz poetics (I made up a word just now because I'm tired of "innovative," "avant-garde," "experimental," and all of those other words that don't quite catch it), in any significant way, in their teaching or research. Moreover, the books these faculty members publish, in the main, don't come from way-cool querzblatz presses like Chax, O Books, Sun & Moon.

I personally, as one still, small voice up here in the editorial office, would love to start including and representing more theory and querzblatz poetics, and thereby dispelling the myth that they are somehow "elitist" or "inaccessible."

Best,
Gwyn

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505. **cris cheek**

Re: desire / and the 39 steps

Thu 30 Nov 1995

cut price right down to quick. get close up. see that honey. phone flag. burn these leaves inprinting with dark bruised keytones from shivering trees. their

cars go nowhere, effectively stood in curative safety tracks - rooted, before knowing that.

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506. **Maria Damon**

Re: Condition of Poetry in the Academy

Thu 30 Nov 1995

dickhiggins wrote

Suggested solution: use the internet better

hunh? explain pls?

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507. **Edward Foster**

Re: desire / and the 39 steps

Thu 30 Nov 1995

no honey in the groin: ah, jack, billy's but a dream, dark bruised image in your verse. sweet safety lies in driving down the root, regard release without intent. in fact it's always there, but only for a price.

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508. **Michael Greer**

More on poetry and cultural studies

Thu 30 Nov 1995

I love the idea of a collection of essays situating poetry/poetics in the context of cultural studies. There is a real problem, however, in identifying c.s. as a reading strategy or hermeneutic, and I would want to address why cultural studies generally *hasn't* had much to say about poetry as a way of opening up the issue. But it's a great idea, and I would like to contribute something to such a volume; I'll help in any way I can.

I am a bit distressed at the version of "cultural studies" being tossed about amidst our discussion, though. I agree with Marjorie and others that there is work going on under the sign of c.s. that addresses such topics as representations of steam-engines in late Victorian fiction, etc., but this is a market strategy, and not cultural studies, any more than those "deconstructive" close readings were really Derridean a decade ago. At least let's do our homework and talk about actual cultural studies...(uh oh, here I go; next thing you know I'll swoop into my myths of origin which locate Stuart Hall's left foot as it steps onto the runway in Champaign Illinois in June of 1983 to begin the

series of lectures in which "cultural studies" in a particular narrative of Birmingham was first handed down to us poor marxist graduate students during that summer teaching institute: were any of you here? It was really fun, and hot, and it really was the first time Hall had been to the States in twenty years...ok already, I'll stop: but I do think we need to be reading cultural studies carefully and not caricaturing its position so readily...and now I'll step down off my hi-horse.). Raymond Williams wrote a book some while ago on Marxism and Literature that is a good start; John Guillory's Cultural Capital and John Frow's Cultural Studies and Cultural Value are excellent recent contributions to the field. (The bibliography growing here is helpful too; thanks, y'all)

For me, a cultural studies orientation might look at the notion of "the poetic" as it has functioned and circulated in a particular cultural framework crossing from literary to popular culture. It would think about the kinds of cultural value assigned to/occupied by "poetry" in its moment; etc. Difficult to speak of in the abstract, though.

How about this: what is the relationship between poetry and high technology? I've been reading Andrew Ross's newest, The Chicago Gangster Theory of Life (about sociobiology and other things), remembering that his first book was about Olson, Eliot, and Ashbery (The Failure of Modernism), and digging up an old footnote of Donna Haraway's in Cyborg Manifesto where she says:

"If we are imprisoned by language, then escape from that prison-house requires language poets, a kind of cultural restriction enzyme to cut the code; cyborg heteroglossia is one form of radical cultural politics." She then cites Marjorie's essay on "Dirty language" in Sulfur 1984, a piece by Kathleen Fraser, and HOW(ever) mag.

I think Bob Perelman's work is very useful and interesting in thinking about poetry in a technoculture. Which brings us back to that quip by Jameson about BP's "china" in that POMO article. (sorry).

Anyway, I would like to see more work addressing cultural studies and poetry, but CS is--rightly so--very suspicious of "literary" reappropriations, and when one sees what the MLA machine has done in the name of "cultural studies," one can more than sympathize with the critique. When I was in grad school, all of my "cultural studies" friends (who were not in English but in the Institute for Communications Research at U of Illinois) continually pressed me about the exclusionary, colonialist politics of English studies, about the high-cultural bias of literary studies, and repeatedly wanted to know why on earth one might want to study poetry, and avant-garde at that, in a culture such as ours. I wrote a dissertation to answer them, and I'm not satisfied with my response yet: it's a good question. I for one urge that it be taken seriously...

One last title to add to the list: Bruce Robbins's book on professionalism: *Secular Vocations*, Verso 1992 or -3, I think.
Thanks for listening.
--Michael Greer

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509. **Peter Baker**
Theory/Poetics
Thu 30 Nov 1995

I find the thread on poetics and the presumed dangers of theory very interesting, though it is always disheartening to hear personal narratives of those turned off to one form of poetry study or another through bad teachers and/or advice.

Here's a personal narrative of someone whose interest in poetry was "saved" by theory.

As a young writer and college undergraduate in the mid-seventies at Harvard, I felt that just about everyone speaking on poetry and literature in general had as their express aim to dull my very active interest in reading and producing poetry. Bloom was big then, with his anxiety of influence, but he was just building on Jack Bate's *Burden of the Past on the English Poet*. The teaching methods generally consisted of fantastically dull lectures from podiums with tedious intonings of the greats, accompanied by the most banal biographical and explicative commentary. The energy and activity of poetry I sustained by starting a poetry magazine, publishing everyone I knew in newprint format with large swatches from contributors and kick-ass graphics.

Somewhere during the course of a similarly dispiriting stint at the Writing Seminars at Hopkins I came across some industrious graduate students who were doing what would later come to be recognized as theory, and I realized that there was still plenty more to learn (partly in order to become a poet--to respond obliquely to another thread).

So a Ph.D. program in Comp Lit quite literally "saved" my interest in poetry and the thought of doing anything at all in the academic domain. And there's no doubt in my mind that theory / criticism / poetry / poetics are productively combined recombined and intermingled in many of the most exciting poetic projects, critical projects, theory projects going on now all the time.

Of course anything can become oppressive simply by becoming the normative discourse, as theory has to some extent in the literary branch of the university world. Another, less personal narrative could (and to some extent has) been

constructed arguing that the most interesting poetry in the last quarter century is involved in exactly the areas casually grouped under the theory rubric.

Cheers to all,
Peter

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510. **jeffrey timmons**

Re: Theory etc.

Thu 30 Nov 1995

On Wed, 29 Nov 1995, Chris Stroffolino wrote:

*Oh Jeffrey--with your brains, my brawn and Judy R's vocabulary, just
think of cultural stud(ie)s we could toddle!
your in aesthetic eugenics, cs*

what child hath we wrought?

Jeffrey Timmons

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511. **Stephen Galen Cope**

Re: More on poetry and cultural studies

Thu 30 Nov 1995

A few more titles to consider:

Edouard Glissant, "Cross-Cultural Poetics," in Carribean Discourse.

Nathaniel Mackey, "Discrepant Engagement: Dissonance, Cross-Culturality, and Experimental Writing."

Antonio Benitez-Rojo, "The Repeating Island," some decent essays on Guillen, Ortiz, Harris, Carpentier.

and of course:

"The Politics of Poetic Form," ed. C. Bernstein...

-Stephen Cope

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512. **David Columbia**

Re: More on poetry and cultural studies

Thu 30 Nov 1995

-- boring to attempt to characterize c.s. as distinct from mat feminism/ new historicism/ marxist lit crit / post-struct. anthro etc. easy enough to create

abstracted views, but in practice they more often than not mush together, usually productively.

-- in that respect there's been a lot of "cs" work addressing poetry, especially on the romantics, on Milton, on Renaissance poetry, etc. etc. Not as much on contemporary stuff (though more than on some kinds of lit), but then there's no more recent writing on recent novelists of an experimental stripe. (more on non-Western, non-white, etc., authors, which strikes me as all to the good). (also true of non-white/male poets, as a comment of Ron S's somewhere hints).

-- I find myself impatient with attempts right now to define cultural studies especially when the definition goes along with the phrase "what's wrong with...". Nobody is setting him/herself up as the arbitrator (vendor) of c.s. Contents of recent journals show all kinds of work falling under the umbrella. Work on poetry (Albert Corn just as much as Hejinian), well done, will have no trouble finding a place. (What about John Barrell's *Critical Inquiry* piece on Raworth, 3/4 years ago at this point? & other examples to boot).

-- Agree with Marjorie that too much current work focuses on writing as transparently "about" stuff, not enough on the politics & dynamics & structures of the aboutness relation & its specific mechanisms and instances. Again, though, I see more a call for new work (that will be wanted when it's done, make no mistake) rather than a criticism of current items. & counterexamples abound.

-- Grad students are arrogant brats, for the most part. Not helped by having undergrad profs treat them like the next hot thing when they are sophomores -- helps them not do the deep & self-questioning work they need to do which might include learning to really read closely and productively. Easier to get at *Villette* on breastfeeding than to Zukofsky (but note here the growing amount, some of it good, of c.s. work on Stein). But this is a professional problem, one the "profession" itself and profs need to correct in terms of their professional/personal relations with students, and less a problem of the "method" of c.s. I've yet to see an instance of a probing, productive, provocative paper on just about any subject that won't make it into one of the 20 or 30 top-flight journals, many of which rarely refuse papers due to "subject matter" (counterexamples?). If that's hegemony I'll live with it.

--



David Columbia

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513. **Steve Carll**

Antenym 1-5 Online Announcement

Thu 30 Nov 1995

Dear Poetics:

This is to announce the debut of ANTENYM magazine online. The first e-issue will highlight the long- out-of-print ANTENYMs #1-5 (originally appeared Fall 1988 through Winter 1990 in Irvine and Oakley, CA) and features work by Brian Boury, Steve Carll, Paul Eastup, Sheldon Forrest, Tira Palmquist, J. Mark Sugars, Tiffany Turley and Hugo Victorious.

To get it, please e-mail me ([REDACTED]) and let me know. It'll come in two parts, the first about 9K and the second about 13K. Loss, I'd like to send one to the EPC, but I'm unsure how.

My plan is to put each issue electronically as it goes out of print (so that the "out" becomes an "in" somewhere else). If you'd like to help speed this process along, you can subscribe to ANTENYM by sending a check (made out to Steve Carll) for \$3.50 per 50-page issue (@3 issues a year = \$10.50). Issue #8 is now available and features art by George Albon and writing by Jake Berry, Steve Carll, Paul Celan translated by Pierre Joris, Marcel Cohen translated by Jordon Zorker, Darin De Stefano, David Golumbia, Lyn Hejinian, Bob Heman, Pierre Joris (translating himself ;-)), W.B. Keckler, Travis Ortiz, Douglas Powell, Mary Carol Randall, Dale Smith, Thomas Stolmar, Chris Stroffolino, Thomas Lowe Taylor, and Alicia Wing. A few copies of #7 still exist as well.

Everyone is also invited to send me work for future issues. ANTENYM's focus remains to explore the question(s) of being(s) through language(s).

My snailmail address is 106 Fair Oaks St. #3, San Francisco, CA 94110-2951.

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514. **Charles Smith**

Re: Williams, W. C.

Thu 30 Nov 1995

<<It's fairly apparent that within the "professional" or business community Williams felt such an admission of vocation--with the no distinction between what one "does" and who one "is"--difficult to make in mid-century America. As an addendum, I'd say that declaring one's profession as Professor of Poetry in polite conversation around the Thanksgiving Turkey in 1995 doesn't get you very many more nods of approval and tacit understanding than Williams's admission got him in 1954.

Joseph Conte>>

Try going with WCW's affirmation without the prestige attached to "Professor!"
all best, charles

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515. **Bill Luoma**

Re: needs junk

Thu 30 Nov 1995

jordanian wrote about poetry:

I don't know if it's "anything". I think the convention of poetry including "anything" usually reduces to a kaleidoscopic one-of-everything (shopping-mall) method/motif. At least it did for me when I realized poetry was anything. There seem to be other overriding conventions that determine what's taken by other readers (intelligent, questioning, reasonable readers) as "good poetry" or "the work".

I was unclear. I agree with you that the found kaleidoscope shopping mall pome is not that interesting.

I didn't mean to suggest that anything was poetry, or at least good poetry. But that any subject or method or orientation or perception or blank is a suitable thing to start/use as a basis for making a ... saxifrage? ...pome.

For example I got really bubbly when i went to the auto gobbler today in canarsie to look for a used starter. the subway ride (2) to the end of the line, the 20-block wlk, the parts guy who said i was safe, i.e. they had the part, the picture of the huge hippo with mouth wide gobbling cars, then all the dead cars. I didn't expect to get all bubbly about replacing my starter. i like how the not expecting // bubbly feeling tickles the mid-brain. when i recognize it (probably 10% of the time) i know i need to write.

i can't be the only one ever inspired by a junk yard. Who's written good junkyard lyrics?

Bill Luoma

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516. **Dick Higgins**

Re: Condition of Poetry in the Academy

Thu 30 Nov 1995

dickhiggins wrote
Suggested solution: use the internet better

hunh? explain pls?

Well, it struck me that saying one thing to each of twenty listeners, while it might be construed as a poetic act, was less likely to lead to one's own position on poetry and its nature or potential functions than going ever deeper with one or two p-people into the subject, creating a virtual dialog.

Secondly I am annoyed, not necessarily by you but by most Americans that they assert this-or-that on the basis of a very small amount of available evidence, and they love to chatter about unavailable materials-especially in the academy. It makes me very skeptical about our countrymens' and countrywomens' opinions. "Faaacts, Ralph, Faaaacts," I say here with Carlyle (not exactly my favorite thinker either). Meanwhile the web is mature enough so that what is available on it is a pretty representative sampling of all the kinds of texts which are being done by such poets as have access to the web at all, and not just in English. If one wishes to develop a poetic which is not based on excellence but on other forms of relevance, this is one of the principal corpera of available work which should be discussed.

While such a poetic is not my own quest, the inquiry does interest me, even though I am not in academia.

Sincerely

Dick Higgins

P O Box 27

Barrytown, NY 12507

Tel- [REDACTED]

Fax- [REDACTED]

e-mail- [REDACTED]

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517. **Ron Silliman**

Re: Brathwaite's book

Thu 30 Nov 1995

"Speculating now, but I think Savacou North, which is his press I believe, or him and others, did _Barbajan Poems_ because of the size & complexity of it. I.e., think he wanted to make sure it was done right. & I believe, the reason it's not distributed is an attempt to recoup the cost of production. Can't remember what I paid for it, but it's in the 25-30 dollar range. Brathwaite's _Trenchtown Rock_ is fairly recent from Lost Roads, also worth getting."

Rod

I think this may be more complicated. As I read the intro material, this book (399 pages!) was originally given as a lecture(!!) at, of all places, the Central Bank of Barbados. This is apparently a traditional venue of cultural legitimation there, an annual event, and the bank each year publishes a volume that transcribes the lecture (like, I suppose, some of the Nobel lectures or the early DIA events in NYC).

Kamau gave the talk (or some version of it) in 1987 and then did much revision before presenting this manuscript to the bank, which sat on it and never published it.

Unless, of course, all this is a just an allegorical frame tale.

Ron

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