

@poetics

The UB Poetics Discussion Group

Archive of Electronic Correspondence
July 1996

695 messages · Mon 1 Jul 1996 – Wed 31 Jul 1996

*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

It is not true that the list ignored the news that July. It kept a different ledger. A jetliner came apart over Long Island on the seventeenth with two hundred and thirty aboard, and a pipe bomb went off in the Olympic park at Atlanta on the twenty-seventh, and neither appears in six hundred and ninety-five letters; but on the sixteenth Michael Boughn posted under the heading Bad news, and the room went into mourning for a week. Coach House Press was closing after thirty-one years — Blaser, Bowering, Ondaatje, Thesen — and Boughn knew whom to blame: *"Chalk up another victory for the New York bankers"*. That was July's catastrophe, and the room grieved it properly, while doing the least defensible thing it did all year.

For the month's largest business, some forty letters under List wars and List-personship, was the list discussing its own conduct. The occasion was a panel at Orono: Aldon Nielsen had said something, Robert von Hallberg had disputed it, Keith Tuma had forwarded Nielsen's remarks to von Hallberg, who was not a member, and von Hallberg had replied to a list he had not joined. From this the room extracted a fortnight of procedure — whether the forwarding was permissible, whether the reply was, whether he ought now to subscribe — with a subsidiary quarrel over lurkers, whom Herb Levy had characterised in terms Daniel Bouchard quoted back at him before asking, reasonably, *"Who can blame lurkers for keeping silent?"*

It took Marjorie Perloff to say what the month was. She found the controversy slightly absurd, and gave her reason: Lorenzo Thomas, *"a Live Black Poet and the only one present"* at Orono, had given a moving talk on Melville Tolson, had not been asked to read, and was being discussed by nobody — while the question of who forwarded what to whom was on its fourth day. And here is the part I cannot get past: maria damon, who wrote fifty-two times that July and had made this point already, replied only that *"this is exactly what i was trying to point out"*. She had said it. It became audible when Perloff said it.

The month's other thread asked what a poem in extremity is worth, and got an answer nobody wanted. Victim art had been discussed for a week in the abstract when Dan Horne wrote from New Zealand to say it had happened to him: a nurse had asked him to read the poems of a teenage patient recently dead of cancer,

and say whether an editor might take them. He read them. He told her *“the poems didn’t align themselves with the ideologies”* of the journals he knew, and felt worse for saying it, and said so. Elsewhere the list, doing the thing it is actually good at, assembled a shelf — Blackburn’s journals, Curnow’s daybook, Helene Davis, Pekar and Brabner — for anyone who wanted to read the illness rather than adjudicate it.

And in Toronto the premier of Ontario, asked about the press his government had cut by seventy-four per cent, told reporters that the company’s blaming the province *“probably speaks to their management capabilities”*. Boughn printed it from that morning’s Globe without comment, which was the correct handling. Charles Alexander wrote the epitaph and did not know it: *“One good thing come to an end. Bless it.”* I have set the etiquette and the elegy where July put them, four days apart, because this is the month the room spent forty letters establishing who was entitled to speak to it, while a press that had printed thirty-one years of poems went under, a living poet’s talk went undiscussed, and a dead girl’s poems were weighed against the ideologies of the journals and found not to fit.

— K. M. F.

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- 633. George Bowering — Re: Bad news
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- 643. Gabrielle Welford — Schlafly letter (fwd)
- 644. Gabrielle Welford — English-only Update -- VI (fwd)

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- 646. Pierre Joris — EMF GENERAL ALERT (fwd)
- 647. Gwyn McVay — Re: English-only Update -- VI (fwd)
- 648. maria damon — Re: comparative suffering
- 649. Pritchett,Pat — Re: indigestible?
- 650. Eliza McGrand- CVA Guest — Re: feelingth/holocaust
- 651. Gabrielle Welford — Re: English-only Update -- VI (fwd)
- 652. Maria Damon — Re: feelingth/holocaust
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- 655. Aldon L. Nielsen — Re: this crime to the writing fraternity (fwd)
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- 658. Bob Holman — Gloria Tropp
- 659. Tony Green — Re: cancer poetry
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- 670. maria damon — Re: spoken word recordings
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- 674. maria damon — bargain books, mpls
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- 676. Aldon L. Nielsen — Re: spoken word
- 677. Bob Gale — (no subject)
- 678. Sylvester Pollet — cancer poems
- 679. JOEL LEWIS — melvin tolson
- 680. Douglin Beck — Re: POETICS Digest - 28 Jul 1996 to 29 Jul 1996
- 681. maria damon — Re: POETICS Digest - 28 Jul 1996 to 29 Jul 1996
- 682. maria damon — Re: conference fwd
- 683. Robert Drake — Re: bargain books, mpls

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- 689. Julie Marie Schmid — Re: bargain books, mpls
- 690. Tristan D. Saldana — Language Poetry; Deconstruction; New Criticism
- 691. maria damon — Re: bargain books, mpls
- 692. George Bowering — Re: address for Christopher Dewdney
- 693. T-Bone Prone — Re: Language Poetry; Deconstruction; New Criticism
- 694. Ian Wilson — Re: Language Poetry; Deconstruction; New Criticism
- 695. george hartley — Re: Language Poetry; Deconstruction; New Criticism

1. Peter Quartermain

Re: british women poets

Mon 1 Jul 1996

There's an astonishing number of really good women poets around. To the list of British and Commonwealth women poets already listed by Maria Charles Daniel Rod John Keith and others, let me add: Catherine Walsh is Irish, and as Keith hinted, would be deeply insulted by being called British; among Brits not mentioned yet (but let me too add a plug for Maggie O'Sullivan,. Geraldine Monk, Wendy Mulford, Denise Riley) Bridget Penney, Caroline Bergvall, Frances Presley, Harriet Tarlo, Grace Lake, Vittoria Vaughan, Maggie Helwig (Canadian, living in London), Helen Macdonald and Jennifer Chalmers; if you want to step back a little in time don't forget writers like Veronica Forrest-Thomson or even Frances Horowitz... . In Canada there's -- in more or less random order -- besides the much neglected Phyllis Webb already mentioned, M. Nourbese Philip, Catriona Strang, Melissa Wolsak, Sharon Thesen, Daphne Marlatt, Karen Mac Cormack, Lola Lemire Tostevin, Lisa Robertson, Christine Stewart, Julia Steele, Hilary Peach, and Karlyn Koh. The list goes on and on -- there's gazillions of others, all so-called "experimental." Alternative might be a better word. I don't know the Scottish and Welsh scene at all, someone should chip in here -- maybe Romana Huk? Eck Finlay if he's around? (As soon as I send this I'll no doubt think of lots of others). Good reading!

At 01:57 PM 6/28/96 -0400, Steve wrote:

>A friend of mine is looking for suggestions of British or Commonwealth
>women poets of the 20thC to teach in an upcoming course, and i was rather
>embarassed at how few names i cld summon off the top o' the noggin. Any
>suggestions, for my own edification, and my friend's?

 $\geq$

>thanks, steve

 $\geq$ $\succ$

+

Peter Quartermain

128 East 23rd Avenue

Vancouver

B.C.

Canada V5V 1X2

Voice and fax:

+

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2. Aldon L. Nielsen

Re: Jacquee la Mousse

Mon 1 Jul 1996

I was ASSIGNED by Loss to report back from Orono on the subject of race & ethnicity -- I didn't get a chance to ask if he meant that I was to review the gathered complexions or the complexities of the papers, or if perhaps I was to examine the demographics of Orono itself -- as if that were not enough confusion, our email system has been returning everything I've attempted to post on this or any other subject ever since I sent in that execrable poem --

but I'll see what I can get in before the whole shebang (and are there any hebangs?) collapses again -- if interrupted, there will be a part two --

"Of the approximately 231 papers delivered at this conference, about 14 were devoted to the writings of minority poets." This observation was part of my introduction to a panel on Langston Hughes and Bob Kaufman. This sentence was also singled out by Robert von Hallberg at the beginning of a five minute long denunciation of the panel which exhausted the discussion time remaining for the session. In the course of his comments, Robert accused the panelists, including me, of "doing the sociology thing," which is reductive, of lending ourselves to identity politics. He said that what should be done instead is close readings of interesting poets, but that the poets discussed here weren't worth that sort of close reading because they were "bad" poets.

Now . . . this is a pretty old hat to those of us who have been studying issues of race and ethnicity in literature longer than two weeks -- But what I want first to mention is that, repeating strategies of the oldest of new critics, these comments required a complete decontextualization (and an evasion of close reading, I might add) of what had in fact been presented. In the interests of saving time, I will only use the example of my opening remarks. The numbers that I noted were offered in response to repeated accusations from many quarters (I used the example of Carol Iannone) to the effect that academic critics had in recent years entirely abandoned "true" critical criteria and were instead simply promoting authors on the basis of an "ethnic agenda." I introduced my numbers with the remark: "Let's see how the ethnic agenda is doing." My point was to offer a simple refutation. The large number of critics gathered at Orono had in fact produced a remarkably small number of papers concerning minority authors. It looks to me as if the profession is some distance still from being dominated by an ethnic agenda. This point is truly sociological, but hardly pointless. (Might add that at least two of us there on the panel have devoted considerable efforts to criticisms of identity politics.)

At any rate, I could say much more on this topic, but that's not what I was asked to do -- so --

The first day included a panel on Stephen Jonas, Melvin Tolson and Russell Atkins, where could be heard (gasp) close readings of truly interesting black poets. Mark Scroggins advanced an interesting view of the ever-problematic Jonas, Keith Leonard (one among a stream of Stanford presenters -- Stanford and Buffallo seem to be the hotbeds of poetry criticism now) set up parameters for thinking about Tolson that were later fleshed out in Lorenzo Thomas's talk, and I spoke about the critical theories of poet Russell Atkins (check your library for his old selected from Cleveland State, about the only easily available volume)

On Friday morning I discovered the amazing discussions of O'Hara and race that were already in progress at the conference. Ben Friedlander followed some intriguing wrinkles (already mentioned on this list by others) and Steve Evans followed with exactly the type of scholarly and philosophically informed exploration that some of us have been hoping for for years -- Steve has done what any good Pound scholar would do -- finding himself in a poem to the "French Negro Poets," Steve went and read them (now there's a novel approach folks --) also reading the requisite Sartre etc. -- Steve's paper asks questions about the ideologies of race and their relationships to poetics that have long needed looking into --

The one question I left with (there wasn't time to ask it) is why so many white critics think that desegregating the sex act is a politically radical move -- Tell that one to Walter White --

ooops, have to relinquish the keyboard -- will be back in about 24 hours with rest of my homework assignment --

bottom line is that there were great papers all around on these topics, though there were few of them -- and there really might have been at least one African-American or Asian-American or Latino or American Indian poet reading poems, huh???

but back with the GOOD stuff in 24 hrs --

love to all,
aldon

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3. **Kevin Killian**

Re: Jacquee la Mousse, ono etc

Mon 1 Jul 1996

This is Dodie Bellamy speaking.

Maria,

One thing you didn't point out in your last post was that the Orono conference had much more to offer to women than acceptance by a male elite that we could kind of "bask in." Rachel Blau du Plessis' and Joan Retallack's talks were *the* best moments of the conference for me. Rachel's talk reminded me that if it weren't for women like Rachel who promoted a specifically female approach to post-modernism, I wouldn't exist. I also found it great to just watch Margorie Perloff, her energy, her awesome confidence.

I think you should do a bit of deconstruction on your post--in your complaints about the conference the men are treated as troublesome boys who do things out of line, but--usually with your guidance--apologize and get their shit together. The only unredeemable characters in your post are the covertly racist female plenary speakers in the front row. Funny, I was in the third row (sitting next to Rachel, who was quiet as a mouse) and I didn't hear any loud whisperings. What female plenary speakers are left? Margorie Perloff? Alicia Ostriker? Couldn't these female plenary speakers be considered a *female* elite whose acceptance a young scholar would want to bask in?

One thing that stuck me about Lisa Amber Phillips' presence at the conference was how clearly she liked women and how much time she spent talking with other women--rather than chasing "testosterone," as you put it in an earlier post. There should more to feminism than demanding materialistic equality.

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4. **Michael Faherty** ***Re: British Women Poets***

Mon 1 Jul 1996

It's always fascinated me that poets, like comedians, don't seem to travel very well and that, by all appearances, very few contemporary British poets are known in the States and, likewise, only a handful of young American poets are read here.

As far as contemporary women writers go, I would second the recommendations of Carol Ann Duffy, Pauline Stainer and Sujata Bhatt. Bhatt, by the way, actually grew up in the States and attended the Iowa Writers Workshop, where she met her German husband and moved back home to Bremen with him, but she's still often listed as a "British" poet.

I would also suggest that Helen Dunmore, Lavinia Greenlaw, Kathleen Jamie, Liz Lochhead, Sarah Maguire, Paula Meehan, Grace Nichols and, especially, Jo Shapcott are worth a look. And for Irish writers, of course, you can't miss Eilean Ni Chuilleanain, Nuala Ni Dhomhnaill and Medbh McGuckian.

If I were putting a course together, I would use the France anthology since it includes many of the above and more.

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5. **R I Caddel**

brit.wom.po's

Mon 1 Jul 1996

Blimey, you go away for a wet weekend and a whole discussion about the british poetry scene zips past you. This is to endorse John Matthias' plug for OUT OF EVERYWHERE (Reality Street Editions, 1996) and the individual plugs for Maggie O'Sullivan, Elaine Randell, Catherine Walsh (Irish), Michelle Leggott (NZ), and add special mention for Wendy Mulford and Geraldine Monk (both in OOE) and add Caroline Bergvall, Carlyle Reedy (also both in OOE) and Harriet Tarlo (forthcoming in Talisman, amongst others).

RC

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6. **maria damon**

Re: Jacquee la Mousse, ono etc

Mon 1 Jul 1996

as long as we're complaining now about our recent love fest, let me say that at this conference i saw something i didn't like --a coupla times, senior, well-established, famous folks excoriating or picking on grad students who were giving their first papers in public. after one such instance i put my arm around louis simpson, took him aside and sd look, louie (for some reason this conference, or maybe it was the sabbatical, being out of the hierarchic loop for a year, has made me less fearful) this kid is never gonna get a job, he's just a student in some third rate graduate program, give him a break. he was reasonably contrite, and hoped he hadn't been too harsh (unlike r von h, he hadn't been). also, two other plenary speakers whispered loudly and passed notes throughout most of lorenzo thomas's talk, right there in the front row. he kept looking over at them but they didn't stop until they decided he was actually saying something (about 3/4 of the way thru). i was embarrassed, cuz these were ladies i expected more from. also, at banquet, ml rosenthal started baiting us younger scholars on "what is 'discourse analysis' anyway and what does it do other than state the obbvius in unnecessarily convoluted terms?" but then he apologized. i never use that phrase discourse analysis anyway and neither to my knowledge did any of the other folks (all women) there either.

as for lisa amber philips' comments on feminist turf-establishing, there was something very retro about the conference, as i sd in my earlier post. i myself

had fun with it because i felt accepted by the male elite, and kinda basked in it, but let's not get carried away with nostalgia for an earlier era when white males could attack accomplished, intelligent women as symbols of the establishment, with no consciousness of their own gender privilege. lisa, you know nothing about what that woman who made the comment about another comment's being "contemptible" has been through professionally, personally, etc, what her struggles with sexism in the academy have been, how these social dynamics have affected her health, her standard of living, her life chances, etc. I don't know where you're at in your career, but i myself never took sexism seriously as something that affected my material well-being (of course i was aware of paternalism and the occasional patronizing comment from a male professor, but i just ascribed that to his stupidity, and it didn't affect my life) until i entered the workforce. as a student i was very protected. now, i routinely see my white male colleagues get outrageous raises for --not mediocre, but --NO scholarly accomplishment, i see white guys with no publications deciding who does and doesn't get raises, fellowships, jobs, etc ...it's the lowpaid and overworked women in my dept who get offers from elsewhere for endowed chairs, huge salary increases, reduced teaching loads, invitations to give seminars at harvard etc, while at home it's the white guys who've never written a word past their dissertations 30 years ago who make sure these women don't get a break, and who promote those in their own image. i never would have believed it was that blatant. i know i sound maternalistic myself now, pulling the rank of "older and wiser," and i apologize for that. i could be totally off in my assumptions about where you're coming from. and i know it's not academically "rigorous" (to invoke a word i'm not too fond of) to suggest that knowing the larger context of a particular utterance may nuance our reception of it --that is, a biographical understanding of why this woman said what she did may take it out of the realm of facile post/feminist theorizing and give it some substance. so, i'm sorry if i'm intervening from left field. nonetheless, i think one of the things that made the conference so good, in spite of our complaints, was the relative openness and acceptance. paradoxically, in light of the strictly retro demographics. perhaps, and i hope not, this was due to the relatively homogenous population --that is, social differences were underrepresented, so there was less overt tension and conflict...? if so, and it's possible, i can easily relate to how diana trilling must have felt seduced by being a token in the white male literary establishment --i had a great time BECAUSE i wasn't really a threat...?xo, md

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7. **Burt Kimmelman**

Bruce Andrews

Mon 1 Jul 1996

Anyone have an e-mail address for Bruce Andrews?

thanks,

Burt Kimmelman

██████████

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8. **henry gould**

John High email

Mon 1 Jul 1996

Does anyone have an email address for poet/translator John High? I have his street address. Please backchannel - thanks - Henry Gould ██████████

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9. **Jordan Davis**

O the glassy towns are

Mon 1 Jul 1996

Which four poems by O'Hara are you (is someone) saving? I am a speculator and would like all the rest, thank you. Please send to:

Jordan Davis

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10. **Kevin Killian**

Re: Jacquee la Mousse, ono etc

Mon 1 Jul 1996

Okay, Maria, thanks for listening and not chewing me out. To add a note of compassion, I for one certainly would never be able to survive the hell of academic politics--and I think any woman with the strength to make it in that world deserves--I don't know what: admiration? Awe? But I'm sympathetic to Lisa Amber Philips' complaints. These blanket statements about what White Middle Class Women do and do not know are highly problematic. Also statements about young women. There are lots of young women poets (many of them black, asian, and lesbian) on the scene here in San Francisco, and, from what I've seen, they have a wide range of response to the question of whether or not they're oppressed as women in our "post"-feminist era. I'm particularly close to my intern who's 27, and her frustration over the position of women in the young

hip world she operates in is a frequent topic of discussion-- particularly in terms of her acting out her sexual desires.

Dodie

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11. **Ward Tietz**

Re: Paul Zelevansky

Mon 1 Jul 1996

Thanks Charles for the overview of Paul Zelevansky's work. Yours is far more detailed and cohesive than anything I could have done.

To pick up on this idea of the glyph, I think it's the narrative use of glyphs that perhaps sets Zelevansky's work apart, for me anyway. It's true Schwerner uses a very different system of support for his glyphs and the effects are in many ways more conventionally literary, but I would say in contrast that Zelevansky's use of them is probably more synthetic and sustained in terms of their function with text.

What interests me especially about Zelevansky's work is the development of an iconic/symbolic narrative that begins, in time, to function very much in a literary way. How this occurs is difficult to articulate, but in my experience it seemed to be a result of a slow but steady accumulation, a re-cognition of the material that was very analogous to learning how to read. This can be done by means of images, but I think the entire process is enhanced by the use of glyphs.

The useful thing, I think, about a glyph is that it functions very differently from an image or a mark. It's iconic, in C. S. Peirce's use of the term, in the sense that it is a sign that refers by way of similarity back to its referent, but it is also symbolic, and in that sense its use as a sign is similar to text.

I've begun to think about forms of this sort as investigating a certain "presentational" potential of literary form, in contrast to more conventional discursive form, but I still haven't worked it all out. In any case I think Zelevansky's books are some of the most ambitious and successful examples of hybrid literary form in book format of the last 20 years or so.

There's a new piece of Zelevansky's, by the way, in Chain 3, vol. 1.

Ward Tietz

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12. **Steve Carll**

Re: of the whole art/spam two generations

Mon 1 Jul 1996

At 04:12 PM 6/30/96 -0500, Jordan wrote:

| *Hi. What's the unconscious?*

Federal regulations require this label when the product contains less than 4% caffeine.

|||||
.....

Steve Carll

I listen.

I hear nothing. Only
the cow, the cow
of nothingness, mooing
down the bones.

~~Galway Kinnell

.....

|||||

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13. **Aldon L. Nielsen**

Re: Race 'round Orono II

Mon 1 Jul 1996

well, where were we --

Wednesday evening Robert von Hallberg delivered an interesting talk on Robert Hayden -- The talk began and ended with, of all things, a sociological argument, to the effect that "we should" learn to reread poets who have made certain types of arguments for universality, and I would have to agree -- Not much point in making universal rejections of such readings, is there? While von Hallberg seemed to gloss over the specificity of address in Hayden's poem about certain eveangelical types (Daddy Grace, Father Divine, etc.), he presented a good overview of Hayden's long poem "Middle Passage." (By the way, why do people believe that "Those Winter Sunday's has no ref. to race? This is not von Hallberg's argument, but was raised here recently) -- I believe the reading of "Middle Passage" must be part of a longer and more detailed analysis, but this was a good introduction to the important issues in the poem for an audience that might not have been all that familiar with the text.

I'm afraid I missed the papers on Audre Lorde and Gwendolyn Brooks, but perhaps somebody else on the list heard them & can fill us in? Lorde needs to be seen in the fuller context of the avant garde set she was part of in her early years; and Brooks was perfect for a conference at which Louis Simpson appeared. Simpson, for those of you who have not read ALL his reviews, authored a notorious review of Brooks back in the day in which he opined that until she could write poetry without making "us" aware that she is a "Negro" she will never be an important poet --

Saturday included the panel I have already mentioned -- Joe Lockard gave a quick summary of his attempts to lay out a parallel between the racialized social space of 50s America and the racialized space of literary anthologizing, criticism, etc., using the reception of Hughes as an example -- John Millet gave a reading of Hughes's blues lyrics as a form of "projective" community, and Maria Damon, working around a fine reading of Bob Kaufman's "Bagel Shop Jazz," broadened our understandings of the Beat orbits -- if you haven't already read her "Beat Occlusions" essay in the Whitney Beat catalogue, that's a good place to start to pick up Maria's direction --

and that was pretty much it -- no papers, for example, on Chicano poets, though Tino Villanueva's landmark antho. appears in the 50s --

but want to mention too Marjorie Perloff's talk -- As Michael Davidson had started us off by examining the trope of containment as it extended from foreign policy throughout American culture, Marjorie's paper touched in one respect on issues of race and containment -- I can't go into it all here,,, but in the expectation of this paper's one day appearing in print, let me mention that she offered a brilliant reading of the differing ideologies and aesthetics in two widely circulated collections of photographs -- the infamous "Family of Man" exhibit (the book of which was given even to me as a birthday present still in print in the next decade -- and Robert Frank's (name right?) collection of American photos published by Grove press -- Professor Perloff, now semiretired but hardly slowing down, "read" individual photos as well as the reception of the volumes as context against which to read Ginsberg, O'Hara and that ole gem "Love Calls Us to the Things of this World" -- This kind of paper is really exciting to me -- not an attempt to read the cultural past as a transparently available and stable entity, but looking at, how else to say it, what everyone was then looking at, as a means of deepening our discussions of the, hate to say it, poems themselves -- One of the best fast tours of "A Step Away from Them" that I've heard --

(off the track, but another question -- has any O'Hara critic EVER bothered to read the contemporaneous accounts of the night the police beat up Miles Davis, which episode figures in a lunch poem? This was a major topic in all the black

newspapers of the day -- One of the speakers on O'Hara panel No. IV commented that there's nothing wrong with thinking of O'Hara as a poet of surfaces so long as we recognize those surfaces as quicksand -- this poem, I think, offers a good example of that --)

so, in the end there wasn't all that much discussion of race among the papers, but what did appear was worth attending to -- next time, perhaps, we could expect conference notices to go, early, to MELUS, African American Review, Callaloo, CLA Journal, ethnic studies programs, etc.???

and despite what Chris said here a few days ago, and despite my dread of the coming rush of anthologies on the construction of whiteness, I still think that "critics who are regarded as white people" still need to lead a struggle, among "white" people," against racilaist ideology, but there I go being sociological again --

forgive me, love to all,
aldon

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14. **Keith Tuma**

Re: Zelevansky

Mon 1 Jul 1996

I'm wondering if you have time, Ron, to say a little more about what it is that you like about Ken Irby's work within the line. Examples would help. I don't know the work except by reputation; KI seems to me far more disappeared than Tarn or Enslin et. al.

Keith Tuma

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15. **Tristan D. Saldana**

Re: of the whole art/spam two generations

Mon 1 Jul 1996

On Sun, 30 Jun 1996, Carl Lynden Peters wrote:

Hi. What's the unconscious?

Jordan

jordan, -- what eliot was so afraid of

c.

And what he so effectively demonstrated in his poetry . . .

Tristan

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16. **Aldon L. Nielsen**

Re: last days and time

Mon 1 Jul 1996

got shoved off system before I could insert my final paragraph on the final keynote at Orono -- so here, quickly, before I'm shoved again

The final hangers-around at Orono were privileged to hear a quite good presentation by Lorenzo Thomas on Melvin B. Tolson's major 50s work, *_Libretto for the Republic of Liberia_*. Thomas did an excellent job of building on the works of earlier Tolson scholars (Farnsworth, Robinson, Woodson, Pinson, Berube, etc) and adding new details to our understanding of Tolson's relationships to his sources -- Particularly useful, though brief due to time constraints, was Thomas's look at the changes Tolson made in his poem between the time a part of it appeared in *_Poetry_* (where Williams saw it, to great effect!) and the time of the book appearance of the poem -- thanks to the great audience response to Thomas's talk, it appears that the National Poetry Foundation will probably see to it that at least some of Tolson's out-of-print work is again made available --

Now that's the kind of reader response I like to encourage --

see y'all

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17. **Henry Gould**

unconscious

Mon 1 Jul 1996

Jordan Davis asks, what's the unconscious?

While perusing a moldy volume of pharaonic lore I discovered the following glyph, partially effaced, found tattooed in t-bird ink on an indentation in Tutankhamen's ritually bashed-in skull:

!! @ ~~~~~ ## \$ % \$ ~~~~~ !!!

Roughly translated from the Akkadian (or is it Rebokkian?):

"The Divine Simulacrum rules the Right Hand;
The Unconscious Trace rules the Left Hand;
You, O Pharaoh, must be a Switch Hitter;
Live Forever in the Hereafter... O [effaced]"

- Henry Gould

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18. **Kevin Killian**

haunted

Mon 1 Jul 1996

This is Dodie.

At 4:19 PM 7/1/96, Mary Hilton wrote:

>Now available from primitive publications -- "The Haunted Baronet," by
>Mark Wallace, inspired by Sheridan Le Fanu's ghost story of the same
>title. According to Wallace, "The seventeen poems here are a way of
>taking the vocabulary of #The Haunted Baronet# and seeing what it says
>now." The result is stunning, mysterious, and haunting in its own right.

This just came in the mail today. It looks luscious. Just yesterday Kevin was pondering the world's enduring interest in ghost stories--due to our channel-surfing late the night before and landing on a schlocky ghost movie starring the ever-talent-free Allie Sheedey (or however you spell her name).

Le Fanu has never been a favorite of mine, but he will always hold a warm place in my heart due to the Hammer Studios "adaptations" and re-adaptations and re-adaptations of his Carmilla story--cleverly in each remake they simply re-arrange the letters in Carmilla--and voila Mircalla emerges from the grave! Oh those bare-breasted lascivious vampire women--I can never get enough of them.

Recently I read a collection of ghost stories by Edith Wharton and was delighted to see how many of Wharton's ghosts write letters. (The handwriting of ghosts is very faint). A writer writing about ghosts who write--does anybody smell a psycho-drama here?

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19. **David Baratier**

unconscious

Mon 1 Jul 1996

Jordan

How bout Eryque's version of "what is the unconscious"

of course, what i've got in mind isn't really in mind yet as the weather
conditions in albany and economic conditions in my pocket are ripe for avi-
ating

riper than an faux (foh) ode to joy in Philly,

David Baratier

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20. **Daniel Bouchard**

books, books, books

Mon 1 Jul 1996

Bill Luoma,

You said, in reference to new books by yourself and Lisa Jarnot, that ordering info. was forthcoming. I may have missed it. Could you post it again?

██████████

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21. **cris cheek**

Re: British Women Poets

Mon 1 Jul 1996

Hi, seconding the multiple branch listings of - and then beginning to ask questions as to the increasingly inclusive lists of 'British Women Poets' cropping up here. The borders of 'nationality' and of 'poetry' are inscribed by processes of dis/emi/nation (to use a Bhabha-ish breakdown), and as has already been mentioned in this context Catherine Walsh would be unhappy being described as British. So, the subject immediately becomes more complex. I'd list Fiona Templeton, who's been mostly in Stateside for best part of 15 years, who's 'English' and whose 'You - The City' is in my view a major piece of work. Then there are Paige Mitchell and Carlyle Reedy, both U.S. born but living here for the past 25 and more - both very engaging writers. Keith Tuma's placing of Mina Loy in his list is equally problematic under such origins and migrations and exiles and

Is this proposed course on women poets . or is there a more focussed agenda? (yes, there are a couple of terrible puns there).

There are very many women poets among these islands, thankfully, and I can see the advocacy for a course presenting a range of such practices. There's a considered distance between Carol Ann Duffy (for example) and Maggie O'Sullivan though. I'd echo cheers for Reality Street's 'Out of Everywhere' anthology, edited by O'Sullivan and the Linda France collection from Bloodaxe.

Then I'd teach specific books, and this isn't meant to be an inclusive list (I've also tried, as much as possible, to limit the number of presses you might need to contact to get a fair collection together) :

Jean 'Binta' Breeze - ('Riddym Ravings', in 'The New British Poetry' anthology and from Race Today)
Caroline Bergvall - ('Strange Passage', Equipage - 'Eclats', forthcoming Sound & language)
Catherine Walsh - ('Pitch', Pig Press)
Grace Lake - ('Viola Tricolor', Equipage)
Elaine Randell - ('Beyond All Other', Pig Press)
Merle Collins - ('Rotten Pomerack', Virago)
Frances Horowitz - ('Snow Light, Water Light', Bloodaxe)
Geraldine Monk - ('Interregnum', Creation Press - 'Quaquaversals', Writers Forum)
Fiona Templeton - ('You - The City' - Roof Books)
Elaine Feinstein - ('Selected Poems' - Carcanet)
Jackie Kay - ('The Adoption Papers', Bloodaxe)
Maggie O'Sullivan - ('Unofficial Word', Galloping Dog - 'In The House of the Shaman', Reality Street)
Denise Riley - ('Mop Mop Georgette', Reality Street)
Jo Shapcott - ('Electroplating the Baby', Bloodaxe)
Maighread Medbh - ('The Making of A Pagan', Blackstaff Press)

finally a note on Madge Heron. Gab, I haven't seen her for about 18 years, since I heard her read in various motley company's with bill bissett and Bob Cobbing. She was a riotous presence, and I too hope she's well somewhere.

love and love
cris

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22. **Jordan Davis**

I'll iterate

Mon 1 Jul 1996

Put down the gun.

Yesterday afternoon two new books of poetry came out. Joe Elliott, sultan of Situations Press, brought *_Sea Lyrics_* by Lisa Jarnot and *_Western Love_* by Bill Luoma in bulk to Biblos where he semi-secretly presides as master of puppets. These are very good books which will only increase in value. Readers of the poetics list may remember a few mentions of *_Sea Lyrics_* around last February when Jarnot read at the Ichor Gallery. It was referred to then as 'something about California.' Also there was a brief mention of Luoma's *_Western Love_* in connection with his reading at Ruthless Grip in Washington. Yesterday Luoma read the book in its entirety to a cheerful and noshing crowd. I enjoyed it significantly more than I did the first time I heard parts of it, there in Washington,

sitting directly in front of my grandmother. It is a loping study of double intention and rewired vocabulary, with the good natured sexual hijinks familiar to readers of Luoma's love poems in The Impercipient and the Poetry Project Newsletter. When will there be a big perfect bound book of Bill's poems? There was a big perfect bound book of Lisa's poems on the table, too. *_Some Other Kind of Mission_*, a Burning Deck book, contains much of the collaged and looped work Jarnot published in Lingo and other places, and the exciting static of it suggests the purity of first feedback, you know, rock and roll, not that rock and roll ordinarily has anything to do with poetics, but it ought to, not that depressing rockist fetishization of the stage, the band line up, but getting the noise to do the work too. I suppose a good cellist would argue a different necessity of noise: overtone. Well there's that in *_Sea Lyrics_* which is curiously more like a studio album than the perfect book, handsome typography by Joe, and god I hope I'm not embarrassing the authors who are after all reading the list. Probably I will be able to get some copies to offer to the readers of the list for not too much sometime soon. So yes in a way this should be read as a movie minute produced by Buena Vista.

Who was there. A clean shaven Drew Gardner (who looked for a second just like Tim Griffin! imagine), Lewis Warsh, Juliana Spahr and Charles, Rob Fitterman and Kim Rosenfield, Marcella Durand and Rich, Kevin Davies, Deirdre Kovac, Garrett Kalleberg and Heather Ramsdell, Douglass Rothschild, the Mitch Highfill, Mark Cheney, Joe and Leo of course, Sophie Warsh, and Max Warsh, geez, I'm leaving out a lot of people. Drew is playing at the Knitting Factory on the 9th of July. Poetry's sort of quieting down for the summer, bang.

Jordan

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23. **Henry Gould**

Re: unconscious geography

Mon 1 Jul 1996

On Mon, 1 Jul 1996 15:20:57 -0500 Jordan Davis said:

>

>>"The Divine Simulacrum rules the Right Hand;

>>The Unconscious Trace rules the Left Hand;

>>You, O Pharaoh, must be a Switch Hitter;

>>Live Forever in the Hereafter... O [effaced]"

>

>Which I think gets to it. Why is half the brain marked X? (Half my brain

>anyway. And keep your smart remarks to yourself, as they say at the state

>line of Rhode Island on a t-shirt a camp mate wore once ten summers ago.)

>'new world' or 'terra incognita.' is this so much imperialism of the
>unknown

If I might add a brief scholarly addendum to this presentation: I adhere to the school of Hermann Nautical of Liebfraumilch Univ., who interprets this "glyph" in a strictly political sense. If "Pharaoh", in the regal sense of Person, looks to the "Right", politically, she finds a "simulacrum" of the divine - those traditional orders of the Good she is enjoined to obey. If Pharaoh looks to the "Left", politically, she finds the upwelling trace of the repressed, to which she is enjoined to submit. They are, in a sense, mirror images. Both demand obedience of the Person to a higher (or lower) authority. Where, then, in Chaadevian terms, is moral freedom? Where is - the po commodified Person? She or he flourishes in a realm of freely chosen commitment to... the glyph.... the [effaced]... if indeed shuhee exuhists...

- Heinricvh Gcvld

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24. **Mary Hilton**

"The Haunted Baronet" by Mark Wallace (ad)

Mon 1 Jul 1996

Now available from primitive publications -- "The Haunted Baronet," by Mark Wallace, inspired by Sheridan Le Fanu's ghost story of the same title. According to Wallace, "The seventeen poems here are a way of taking the vocabulary of #The Haunted Baronet# and seeing what it says now." The result is stunning, mysterious, and haunting in its own right.

primitive publications produces approximately six chapbooks a year, focusing on present-day writing based on historical text, language or subject. Cost of one chapbook is \$4.00, or \$20.00 for six. All checks may be made payable to Mary Hilton and mailed to:

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1706 U Street, NW, #102
Washington, DC 20009

Inquiries, or requests to be included on the mailing list, may be e-mailed to



Thank you.

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25. **Jordan Davis**

Re: unconscious geography

Mon 1 Jul 1996

Henry, funny, wrote:

*"The Divine Simulacrum rules the Right Hand;
The Unconscious Trace rules the Left Hand;
You, O Pharaoh, must be a Switch Hitter;
Live Forever in the Hereafter... O [effaced]"*

Which I think gets to it. Why is half the brain marked X? (Half my brain anyway. And keep your smart remarks to yourself, as they say at the state line of Rhode Island on a t-shirt a camp mate wore once ten summers ago.) 'new world' or 'terra incognita.' is this so much imperialism of the unknown

J

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26. **Kevin Killian**

my stack

Mon 1 Jul 1996

William Northcutt, you had a good idea. Here's what I've been reading.

1. Bitter Blue by Jeremy Reed. Incidentally, thanks to all who backchannel me with info on Reed, especially Pierre Joris, Ira Lightman, Joel Lewis, Romana Huk, and Ken Edwards.
2. Portrait of a Lady by Henry James.
3. Autotoxaemia by Latif Harris. About six weeks ago Eddy Berrigan was looking for a job here in San Francisco and told me he went into this one store & the owner gave him a test, and it turned out it was the "questionnaire" Jack Spicer asked his students to fill out to apply to his 1957 "Magic" Workshop (it's printed in the back of the "Collected Books" of Spicer). Following up I went into the store and demanded to see the owner. That's how I met Latif Harris, and he gave me one of his books. Turns out he is the missing witness I've been seeking for all these years, the man who drove Jack Spicer to his last poetry reading at the Berkeley Conference (1965) and had the nerve to bundle him up in the car with the man JS hated, Lew Welch. P.S., good book! PSS>, Eddy did not get the job!
4. The Green Mile, by Stephen King. One of Steve's best.
5. Abigail Child, "Scatter Matrix." Thanks to the people at Segue for sending this to me (or was it to Small Press Traffic????)

6. "Heart of the Breath," by Jim Brodey. I'm supposed to write a review of this one, and it is so long. (Quite a bargain.)
7. "The Prince, the Showgirl and Me," by Colin Clark. At age 19 Colin Clark was the 3rd assistant director on the set of the Olivier/Marilyn Monroe film "The Prince and the Showgirl." This is his diary of the period.
8. "Sunshine Muse," by Peter Plagens (1974). Out of date by lots, but an interesting art history of California during the Cold War. Who was it recommended this book to me as a good place to get more information about Jay De Feo, the San Francisco painter whose life I am dramatizing as we speak?
9. From Outlaw to Classic, by Alan Golding. I have read this book before, but I wanted to read it again to see if I have anything to add to Golding's Laws of Canon Formation.
10. Angry Women in Rock, ed. Andrea Juno, this is the first book of a new press formed by one of the editors of the defunct ReSEARCH.
11. Learned and Leaved: a Tribute to Rosalie Moore-Moore was one of the Bay Area activist poets, like Lawrence Hart, whose death a few months ago inspired a bit of discussion here on this list. These Activist people really had a program, didn't they? A program, and a destiny. Alan Golding, how do they fit in to your ideas about Canon Formation?

--Kevin Killian

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27. **Maria Damon**

Re: Jacquee la Mousse, ono etc

Mon 1 Jul 1996

ok dodie. there were wonderful women-generated moments; i too loved rachel's talk, esp the alphabet device, and retallack as well. i guess i was trying to be self-critical cuz i had such a good time --thanks for calling me on my puritanical side. who other than louis simpson did i chastise? are you referring to barry? i didn't chastise him but told him what i thought. i didn't convert him or bring him into the fold. we had a conversation. sorry if i sound self-serving. i didn't, nor did anyone else i saw, chase testosterone. i enjoyed male attention. perhaps i shd be less self-disclosing. the comment was intended not to cast aspersions on the men present, most of whom i like and admire a great deal and have been inspired by, but to question my own sexual politics. as for materialistic equality, i agree that there should be more to feminism, but it would certainly be an obvious place to begin. as for the thomas/tolson whisperers, why should i not feel uncomfortable and critical. i was so not because they were women but because i liked them and they were doing something i didn't like. the truth is, i

know the woman who made the comment on diana trilling and i felt the need to come to her defense. md

In message <v01520d00adfd4912da0a@[205.134.228.68]> UB Poetics discussion group

writes:

> This is Dodie Bellamy speaking.

>

> Maria,

>

> One thing you didn't point out in your last post was that the Orono

> conference had much more to offer to women than acceptance by a male elite

> that we could kind of "bask in." Rachel Blau du Plessis' and Joan

> Retallack's talks were *the* best moments of the conference for me.

> Rachel's talk reminded me that if it weren't for women like Rachel who

> promoted a specifically female approach to post-modernism, I wouldn't

> exist. I also found it great to just watch Margorie Perloff, her energy,

> her awesome confidence.

>

> I think you should do a bit of deconstruction on your post--in your

> complaints about the conference the men are treated as troublesome boys who

> do things out of line, but--usually with your guidance--apologize and get

> their shit together. The only unredeemable characters in your post are the

> covertly racist female plenary speakers in the front row. Funny, I was in

> the third row (sitting next to Rachel, who was quiet as a mouse) and I

> didn't hear any loud whisperings. What female plenary speakers are left?

> Margorie Perloff? Alicia Ostriker? Couldn't these female plenary speakers

> be considered a *female* elite whose acceptance a young scholar would want

> to bask in?

>

> One thing that stuck me about Lisa Amber Phillips' presence at the

> conference was how clearly she liked women and how much time she spent

> talking with other women--rather than chasing "testosterone," as you put it

> in an earlier post. There should more to feminism than demanding

> materialistic equality.

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28. **filch**

Peeing

Mon 1 Jul 1996

Studies have shown the incidence of peeing in pools to be larger, by far, among members of the adult male population.

Subsequent studies will show whether this figure can be broken down by race, socioeconomic status, and/or sexual orientation.

If you would be interested in participating in such a study please contact me at your earliest convenience.

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29. **Ken Edwards**

British Women Poets

Mon 1 Jul 1996

I'm a little late responding to this, as I've only just downloaded several days' worth of digests, but...

Out of Everywhere, the anthology John Matthias mentioned, is published by Reality Street Editions, the press I run in conjunction with Wendy Mulford. I've mentioned it several times before on this list. Among the thirty contributors there are eight who are UK-based: Maggie O'Sullivan (who edited the book), Wendy herself, who also contributes an afterword, Caroline Bergvall, Paula Claire, Grace Lake, Geraldine Monk, Carlyle Reedy and Denise Riley. Another contributor, Fiona Templeton, is Scottish but has lived in New York for the past few years. The 21 others are American and Canadian.

The book has been out since March in the UK, is a 256pp paperback and costs 9 pounds. Until recently I was under the impression that copies would be available by now at SPD, and at Marginal Distribution in Canada. However, I have been badly let down by people who promised to ship them over; it transpires that Marginal will only now be receiving copies and the copies which SPD should have had weeks ago have apparently still not arrived; I shall be following this up urgently. (I'm sorry: I'm in an "if you want anything done you've got to do it yourself" mood.)

I know many people are eagerly awaiting copies. Please be patient, I'll sort this out soon.

Those who are going to the University of New Hampshire shindig in August/September will get a chance to hear some of the above in person: Maggie, Wendy, Denise. Also Catherine Walsh, who's Irish, not in the anthology but very

good. I shall be coming over too, as well as a number of other like-minded poets of the male persuasion.

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30. **John Cayley**

Engaged Issue Four - the tinned issue

Mon 1 Jul 1996

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Andrea Draper - Pickled Madonnas

Alberto Duman - Seduced Item

Maria Fusco - Questionnaire

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Alyson Morgan - Untitled

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and others

This issue has been funded by London Arts Board

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ENGAGED Issue Three is still available from the ENGAGED address It is published on cross platform CD ROM and features:

"well-wrought and funny" Esquire

ART - ARTISTS COLLAGES - a collaborative piece by Oona Campbell and Paul Ramsay who combine random sound and image to create an unfixed, living collage. GEOFF STOCKER's animations - pure, abstract, computer generated art.

KATH MOONAN - seven stills taken from 'Prime site', a campaign that set out to question the politics driving the development of mass media communication.

S.O.S - by Tony Patrickson, uses sound, film and animation to create an impression of a world in which technological developments lead to an emotionally barren existence

SKIN - by Carl Stevenson, a responsive and sensual piece dealing with corporeality in a medium that is, by its nature, virtual. SELBSTPORTRAIT -

by Claudia Herbst - four animations centred around the female body, giving

abstract impressions of form and identity. BOOK UNBOUND - by John Cayley - an interactive textual/poetic work - 'when you open "Book Unbound" you will change it irreversibly.' (This is available only on Mac Platform) A PORTRAIT OF PERSONALITY - by Katie Waters - a lively animation comically portraying various aspects of the personality of the artist. This piece has an introduction written by Martha Ladley of Real World Studios. ICY-ICY - by Ronald Fraser Munro - a series that sets off imagery against poetry creating a striking and disturbing piece of work. THIS WORLD - by Martha Aitchison - a still in which text is built up, layer upon layer, to create a pictorial account of the language.

IN ADDITION

A FEATURE ON STRIKE, a fine arts project based in London.

AN INTERVIEW with featured artists Paul Ramsay and Oona Campbell.

THE LONELY ARTS COLUMN, artists advertise for others to collaborate with.

A GRAFFITI CUBICLE where readers are encouraged to get involved and pick up a spray can.

LETTERS AND OTHER MESSAGES

EXHIBITION DATES

All this can be found within the virtual walls of a three-d rendered public lavatory.

PRICE: UK-Ten Pounds, Europe-Thirteen Pounds, World-Fifteen Pounds (all include p&p)

Please make cheques payable to ENGAGED MAGAZINE, and if paying from abroad them please make out a cheque for the equivalent amount in your currency. (if you have already subscribed, for fifteen pounds, the difference will be sent out with this issue)

This issue was funded by The Arts Council of England, Cimex and PDO

ENGAGED, 334a Kennington Road, London, SE11 4LD

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31. **Loss Glazier**

Postmortems on Orono (Perloff)

Mon 1 Jul 1996

To All,

Marjorie Perloff was kind enough to send an Orono report for the online book. I wanted to share this in advance with the list!

My thanks to Marjorie,

Loss

>

>Postmortems on Orono:

>

>In some ways, this conference was not as exciting for me as the 30s one a few years back because we're in many ways still "in" the fifties and so they're harder to assess and it was painful to have appraisals like Louis Martz's that assumed nothing had changed in forty years and we could still talk about the giant breakthrough of FOR THE UNION DEAD for chrissake.

>

>The highlight (for me) was the attention now paid to Frank O'Hara, our new hero, as it were. It's been 20 years since I wrote my O'Hara book; in the midseventies, I was reprimanded by Don Allen and others for referring to Joe LeSueur as O'Hara's "lover"; the correct word then was "friend." As for race issues--so fascinating at this conference, especially Steve Evans's and Ben Friedlander's analyses--in the seventies, it was all one could do to get people to accept that these texts were passable as poems, much less discuss O'Hara on race. So I was delighted to hear these talks and delighted that the 50s are no longer considered "The Age of Olson" as they once were....

>

>I wish there had been more time for discussion--so many issues were simply left HANGING. After each and every talk I had dozens of questions as I'm sure we all did and so for future reference, I think it would be great to forget having keynoters at all and have fewer sessions, each with an hour of built in discussion. That's how you learn, I think.

>

>Again, poetry readings shouldn't be sandwiched in at 10.30 PM as a sort of afterthought. Either have them or not but if so, give them some prominence.

>

>A larger question I've discussed with Burt is the diversity issue. Are all poets of the 50s of equal interest? Do we make choices and have a point of view? Does anyone get to give readings just because he/she wrote poetry during the fifties? It can be argued either way but I did feel that to have Jerry Rothenberg's account of the making of POEMS FOR THE MILLENIUM followed by Louis Martz's talk which implied that the issues Jerry was discussing didn't so much as exist created a strange empty space. Burt's argument is that this diversity of points of view is valuable. I'd be curious to know how others felt about this.

>

>All in all, despite the horrible weather, awful food, lousy facilities and

>problems getting back and forth for those of us at the Bangor Inn, I
>thought it was a fabulous time, including the fabled argument I had with
>Barrett Watten at the latenight cash bar. We've got to keep arguing and
>not be too polite. That means not being so hyperpolite to dead poets
>either. Or in making even Allen Ginsberg a prophet.
>
>Finally: Kevin's fashion report was WONDERFUL. I was one of the few
>people present who knows Star Black well--she's a really old friend via
>Paul Monette and Roger Horwitz. Kevin's right: she absolutely won the
>fashion award and was also like a breath of fresh air in this sometimes
>hyperacademicized world. Star makes a living as a professional
>photographer; has covered lots of stories and made artist's books; she's
>now writing more poetry and is passionate about it. It was also great to
>have Geoff O'Brien, another non-academic, really fine writer around. And
>I loved Star's responses to
>things--you should get her to write them up.
>
>Ciao!
>
>Marjorie
>
>
>

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32. **Steve Evans**

Re: chapbook 2 (North, Robinson, Ngai)

Mon 1 Jul 1996

Editor Beth Anderson has brought out another beautifully designed chapbook in her fledgling reference: press series.

The idea behind this terrific series is to bring together work by three poets who are at different stages in their careers, from just emerging to firmly established.

re: chapbook 2 publishes new poems by Charles North, Elizabeth Robinson, and Sianne Ngai. There is also a striking cover drawing by artist Renee Anderson.

Some of you no doubt saw re: chapbook 1 (1995), featuring Keith Waldrop, Jennifer Moxley, and Angela Littwin, also with a graphic by Renee Anderson.

This is an editorial project worth keeping up with!

Make out a check for \$5.00 to
BETH ANDERSON

and mail it to
reference: press
154 Doyle Avenue
Providence RI 02906

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33. **Steve Evans**

Robert Kocik/Andrew Levy Reading

Mon 1 Jul 1996

For those of you in or near or willing to drive
like wild to get to Providence, this Bastille
Day's eve...

Don't miss

Robert Kocik and Andrew Levy
on Saturday, 13 July at 8 p.m.
at the wonderful new loft space
of Patrick Phillips, 320 Lafayette Street
on the Providence / Pawtucket line

Both these writers are newly returned to the New York area after extended so-
journs, Kocik in Paris and Levy in Chicago.

Both are poets engaged in prodigious poetic and epistemological projects, re-
cent glimpses of which can be caught in Kocik's AUKSO (GAIN)--published as
OBJECT 4 (Spring/Summer 1995)--and Levy's CURVE (O Books 1994).

Come for the poetry, stay for the poetics (party).

More information, including directions, backchannel
or call XXXXXXXXXX

r i a t n m u
a t s u o o o s

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34. **James Brook**

my stack, 2

Tue 2 Jul 1996

New to the list, old to books, I confess to reading the following in fits, starts, and restarts (thanks to Kevin Killian for inspiring me to click Reply):

Apollinaire, *Lettres a Lou* (one side of the correspondence--only a few of her letters survive--rich in poetry, emotion, and naughty bits)

Jens August Schade, *People Meet and Sweet Music Fills the Heart* (a great lyrical novel by a Danish poet woefully undertranslated into English-- there's only a small book of poems from *Curbstone*; this novel was translated for Dell in 1969 because it served as the basis for what appears to be a cheesey Dano-Porno flick of the era: it's compared to *I Am Curious*)

The indexing chapter in the *Chicago Manual of Style* (with snooze alarm)

Tom Raworth, *Clean & Well Lit* (which includes a lovely song dedicated to Franco Beltrametti)

Henri Lefebvre, *La Somme et le reste* (autobiographical/philosophical/poetical reflections published in 1959)

A pile of books on San Francisco and California (research for a book on what we around here call *The City*, a place susceptible to smug alerts)

Please direct all questions about indexing elsewhere. . . .

Regards from afar,

James Brook

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35. **Daniel Salmon**

Not a stack

Tue 2 Jul 1996

Jumping on the reading list band wagon - these are what I'm bogged down in at present.

Alastair Campbell 'Sidewinder' Never read his fiction before & i am quite enjoying it as a late night book. He is a Cook Island/New Zealand Poet/novelist.
Judith Binney 'Redemption Songs' Biography of Te Kooti (bloody hard work but it pays off)

J C Beaglehole 'The Life of Captain James Cook'

Hugh Kenner 'The Pound Era'

Conrad 'Nigger of the Narcissus'

From the Other Side of the Century (Bought through poetics - at last a way

to supplement limited choice auckland bookshops.

Beekeeping books & Japanese history.

& 2 books by Lowell Thomas 'The Sea Devil' & 'Raiders of the Deep' for a poetry project.

In the Penguin 60's Classics - for the next time i am stuck in a cafe

without a paer or company Henry James' 'The Lesson of the Master'

For light relief in all the non-fiction i just finished Mao II -Don de Lilo

& American Tabloid - James Ellroy, don't think I'll be visiting either of

them again - still better than sitting through Tarantino or Oliver Stone movies.

& Listening to the Iliad on talking book on long drives in the car.

Daniel.

Daniel Salmon

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36. **Ron Silliman**

Irby's ear

Tue 2 Jul 1996

Keith,

The best way I know to demonstrate Irby's ear is by example. These are the opening lines (first section) of "Heredom," the first poem in Orexis (Station Hill, 1981):

lobe of opalescent glass

broken in the irreplaceable lampshade

out of the shoulder, the corridor

down the street the kids from junior high

come by in t-shirts for the warmth of February

pigeons overhead

stamp and cry in their sleep

gathered, the branch of acacia

fused through the green swirled

Egyptian thorn milk waters

raised, itself, of the lost and gathered body of mastery

or all the highschool years again, unslept, review the annual faces

[over and over till they run green in the movies after the eyes are closed

and still as distant as they were in person

the society of the ordinary

highschool days, never left, will it?

against the society of the widow's son, those
who on the elephant's back
be freed?

the generation of mourning doves' cries
is from twilight in the mind
releasing and attracting us

I hope your screen reader doesn't muck with the line breaks (I had to insert one
"[" myself).

Just following the progression of the 'l's 'o's 's's etc from the first two lines makes me dizzy with pleasure, noticing how "lampshade" sets up "stamp" later, all the way to the contrast in the final line between the liquid consonants of "releasing" versus the hard "tt" and "ct" in "attracting" (not even wanting to make a case, though I think there's one to be made, for the way that line mimics the cooing and feather settling sound of doves). I don't think anybody's done a better job than Kenneth at understanding how Olson used to the caesura in his breath defined line (and these lines seem to me not an instance of the projective in that simplistic organic metaphor, but rather each is a construct). I find "gathered, the branch of acacia" to be breathtaking in how that comma works. I've been reading the poem maybe twice a year now for 15 years and it never gets old.

You are right about Kenneth having been disappeared likewise. A little like Enslin, it has had to do with the fact that sometime around 1980 or so little magazines that sought to carry forward some sense of the Olsonian project just stopped cold, combined with Kenneth's return to Lawrence, KS, to take care of his mother (the widow of the above poem) during her last years and his own very reticent nature about putting his work forward. I spoke with him last about two years ago, when the veterans of the Free Speech Movement were searching out folks who had been active in the FSM at Berkeley in 1964 and Lowell Levant, a Berkeley poet of those years and friend of Irby's (and now a truck driver out of Union City), was on the list. Kenneth said he'd seen and talked to Ronald Johnson just once since his own return to Kansas, so it would appear that Kansas is a state one can indeed get lost in (Mr. Dole, please follow suit).

Station Hill/Tansy did a big collection of the late '70s poems, *Call Steps: Plains, Camps, Stations, Consistories*, in 1992. *Orexis* is reprinted there. It's probably still available from SPD and I recommend it heartily.

Further note to the Oronians: it is very intriguing seeing the comments about, in particular, the talks given by Steve Evans and Ben Friedlander, but for the life of me, I cannot divine from any of the comments what was actually *said.*

(And Von Hallberg pulled that same stunt at an Oppen conference at UC San Diego about 10 years ago, declaring Oppen to be a "tedious" poet with onerous politics on a panel.)

Ron Silliman



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37. **Henry**

Re: chapbook 2 (North, Robinson, Ngai)

Tue 2 Jul 1996

On Mon, 1 Jul 1996 22:14:43 -0400 Steve Evans said:

>Editor Beth Anderson has brought out another beautifully

>designed chapbook in her fledgling reference: press series.

Speaking of Beth Anderson: she'll be reading with Keith Waldrop at Native Gallery in Providence on August 15th, time to be announced (probably around 8 pm). Native Gallery is a new big space at 367 Charles St. Sponsored by the Poetry Mission. - Henry Gould

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38. **Loss Glazier**

Re: my stack

Tue 2 Jul 1996

At 10:43 PM 7/1/96 +0100, you wrote:

Kevin, your annotations are just wooooooooooooooooonderful! -- Loss

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39. **Pritchett,Pat**

Re: my stack

Tue 2 Jul 1996

Patrick Pritchett here:

Capital idea. My own list includes the following; which are being read in no particular order, or rather with Dr. Johnson's notion in mind of "read what you like:"

1. Descent of Alette - Alice Notley (Penguin)

2. The Human Abstract - Elizabeth Willis (Penguin)

3. The Green Lake Is Awake - Joseph Ceravolo (Coffee House). Many thanks to Joel Lewis and others who initiated discussion of Mr. C. and led me to him. He's marvelous!
4. Call Steps - Ken Irby (Station Hill). Met Ken recently here in Boulder. Very nice man. The work is pure delight.
5. Moon Palace - Paul Auster (Penguin)
6. A House White With Sorrow - Jennifer Heath (Rodent Press). Great new novel on Afghanistan.
7. The Cold of Poetry - Lyn Hejinian (Sun & Moon)
8. On The Name - Derrida (Stanford UP)
9. A History of the Arab Peoples - Albert Hourani (Belknap Harvard)
10. Skywatch - A book on clouds, storms, weather...
11. Ice Time - Re: climatology
12. The Kabbalah Unveiled - S.L. MacGregor Matthews (sic)

From: Kevin Killian

To: Multiple recipients of list POETICS

Subject: my stack

Date: Tuesday, July 02, 1996 12:47AM

<<File Attachment: HEADERS.TXT>>

William Northcutt, you had a good idea. Here's what I've been reading.

1. Bitter Blue by Jeremy Reed. Incidentally, thanks to all who backchannel me with info on Reed, especially Pierre Joris, Ira Lightman, Joel Lewis, Romana Huk, and Ken Edwards.
2. Portrait of a Lady by Henry James.
3. Autotoxaemia by Latif Harris. About six weeks ago Eddy Berrigan was looking for a job here in San Francisco and told me he went into this one store & the owner gave him a test, and it turned out it was the "questionnaire" Jack Spicer asked his students to fill out to apply to his 1957 "Magic" Workshop (it's printed in the back of the "Collected Books" of Spicer). Following up I went into the store and demanded to see the owner. That's how I met Latif Harris, and he gave me one of his books. Turns out he is the missing witness I've been seeking for all these years, the man who drove Jack Spicer to his last poetry reading at the Berkeley Conference (1965) and had the nerve to bundle him up in the car with the man JS hated, Lew Welch. P.S., good book! PSS>, Eddy did not get the job!

4. The Green Mile, by Stephen King. One of Steve's best.
5. Abigail Child, "Scatter Matrix." Thanks to the people at Segue for sending this to me (or was it to Small Press Traffic????)
6. "Heart of the Breath," by Jim Brodey. I'm supposed to write a review of this one, and it is so long. (Quite a bargain.)
7. "The Prince, the Showgirl and Me," by Colin Clark. At age 19 Colin Clark was the 3rd assistant director on the set of the Olivier/Marilyn Monroe film "The Prince and the Showgirl." This is his diary of the period.
8. "Sunshine Muse," by Peter Plagens (1974). Out of date by lots, but an interesting art history of California during the Cold War. Who was it recommended this book to me as a good place to get more information about Jay De Feo, the San Francisco painter whose life I am dramatizing as we speak?
9. From Outlaw to Classic, by Alan Golding. I have read this book before, but I wanted to read it again to see if I have anything to add to Golding's Laws of Canon Formation.
10. Angry Women in Rock, ed. Andrea Juno, this is the first book of a new press formed by one of the editors of the defunct ReSEARCH.
11. Learned and Leaved: a Tribute to Rosalie Moore-Moore was one of the Bay Area activist poets, like Lawrence Hart, whose death a few months ago inspired a bit of discussion here on this list. These Activist people really had a program, didn't they? A program, and a destiny. Alan Golding, how do they fit in to your ideas about Canon Formation?

--Kevin Killian

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40. **Edward Foster**
NEW DOUG OLIVER BOOK

Tue 2 Jul 1996

New from Talisman:

Douglas Oliver's *Selected Poems*

ISBN: 1-883689-38-4, \$10.50

Visa/Mastercard orders: XXXXXXXXXX

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41. **Edward Foster**

NEW LESLIE SCALAPINO BOOK

Tue 2 Jul 1996

New from Talisman:

Leslie Scalapino's *Green and Black: Selected Writings*

ISBN: 1-883689-36-8, \$10.50

Visa/Mastercard: 

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42. **Edward Foster**

NEW GEOFFREY O'BRIEN BOOK

Tue 2 Jul 1996

New from Talisman:

Geoffrey O'Brien's *Floating City: Selected Poems*

ISBN: 1-883689-38-4, \$10.50

Visa/Mastercard orders: 

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43. **David Baratier**

orno for pyros (aside)

Tue 2 Jul 1996

Aldon mentioned that Marjorie "offered a brilliant reading of the differing ideologies and aesthetics in two widely circulated collections of photographs -- the infamous "Family of Man" exhibit and Robert Frank's collection of American photos published by Grove press -- Professor Perloff, "read" individual photos as well as the reception of the volumes as context against which to read Ginsberg, O'Hara and that ole gem "Love Calls Us to the Things of this World" -- This kind of paper is really exciting to me -- not an attempt to read the cultural past as a transparently available and stable entity, but looking at, how else to say it, what everyone was then looking at, as a means of deepening our discussions of the, hate to say it, poems themselves --" There are various books of poetry by Simon Perchik that brilliantly "read" these same exact photo's into poems which might be of interest. The Snowcat Poems (1981) work on Robert Frank's photos. The Gandolf Poems (1986) (and the book after, I forget the name) do a superb translation of the "Family of Man" set. The wild thing is the translation itself, how the punctuation is used as a codification process without direct (as Frye would say "radical" or copular) metaphor but rather a connatative associational value that

Perchik builds throughout each poem to guide a readers understanding of the culmative affective utilization of the punctuation. For some reason, few folks seems aware of his work with constructing an intricate set (through series) of "unit values" for various typographical signs, "Family of Man" works, or even of his connection with Blackburn in the late 40's. I can get more publisher info if anyone is interested. Be well.

David Baratier

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44. **Keith Tuma**

Re: Irby's ear

Tue 2 Jul 1996

A public thanks to Ron Silliman for the example of and commentary on Ken Irby's work. I'm sometimes surprised that we don't get more of this on the list, what with all the poets subscribed. More micro-analysis of technique, that is. It's one way to make the disappeared reappear. One test of value in a poetic mode is its possibilities for refinement and extension, no? I'm thinking of Basil Bunting's remarks about Pound having provided a box of tools, making it possible to go on, and not by simple mimicry or imitation. Similarly, I'm thinking right now about the ways it might be possible to speak of "the new sentence" in Harryette Mullen's *_Muse & Drudge_*, what it means that she's crossed the new sentence with idioms and stanzas derived from the blues, r&b, etc, forced thoughtfulness about the stanza as unit back onto formal practices identified and explored by RS and others (if I'm right about this). (The stanza/strophe of Toner or Xing is not at all Mullen's, it seems to me.)

Anyway, I for one would be grateful for more discussion of technique--and thanks again to Ron.

Keith Tuma

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45. **Mark Wallace**

Quartermain, Cage, Beckett

Tue 2 Jul 1996

Dear Peter Quartermain:

Thanks very much for your interesting query about Cage and Beckett from several days ago. I'm only on e-mail about twice a week, so I'm sorry I couldn't get back to you sooner. In that particular post of mine that you quote, I think I was using the word "limitations" exactly as Charles Smith suggests I was (thanks, Charles), that is simply the unavoidable fact of having a consciousness

that can imagine a limited number of concerns, etc. Olson's quote has always seemed important to me--in my own new *Haunted Baronet* chapbook I echo it, somewhat more darkly as befits the contents of the chapbook, as "The form of limitations is history." But I agree with you, also, that "limitations" is a problematic word if understood in other ways--often, the "limitations" of a writer turn out, in critical work, simply to be the extent to which the poet is not doing what the evaluator wishes the poet was doing, i.e. the "limitations" are just as likely to be that of the critical evaluator as they are that of the work itself. In that sense I greatly enjoyed Louis Cabri's remark about bringing poetry to theory, rather than the other way around--that poetic practice can often enact a scathing criticism of the "limits" of literary theory is something that is often missed. But I still believe in the value of critical response, however limited most such responses turn out to be, and I take also your point that such critical response might find the word "limitations" to be itself limiting. Perhaps I would say that it would be better to talk about the "problems" (or "issues," perhaps) that a given writer creates in the mind of a reader, with the recognition that both the critic and the poet (and they can be one and the same!) speak from the perspective of their own "limits" in the Olsonian sense.

If I were to talk about the "problems" that Cage's work present for me, I think I would focus right now on the issue of what might be called "the dark side" in Cage's work. It's possible to argue that Cage is one of the most "optimistic" artists of the 20th century, yet what exactly would one mean by such an argument? Simply that from the perspective of his Buddhism, "worry" is a transitory, ego-ridden phenomena. But is that really where Cage would land on such a problem? I don't think so, really. Rod Smith, who knew Cage and is certainly more of an expert on his work than I am, has often told me about Cage's reticence to talk about the "darkest" periods of his life, such as the 1940s, and I wonder about the significance of that possible "resistance" to darkness. According also to Rod, Cage did not like Beckett's work, because it was too relentlessly "dark." Yet I think the surface "optimism" of Cage's work is deceiving--one has only to think of Cage's almost total rejection of western music to recognize how much of the world he disliked--hated even--and how vehemently he hated it. It turns out that Cage's surface "acceptance" of any phenomena (any noise as music, etc) turns out to include a rejection of western cultural hierarchies in every conceivable guise, which means quite literally that he must have loathed almost everything around him, however "quietly" or "gently" (two cliched phrases about Cage that I can't stand--the man's work seems amazingly fierce and insistent, frankly). Indeed some things that he rejected perhaps seem insufficiently considered--is it in SILENCE that he speaks against jazz as simply repeating the same foreground/background (melody/harmony) as western classical structures (I don't have books here with me, and I certainly haven't read everything he

might have said about jazz)? In any case, even if his rejections seem in most cases valid to me, it's hard to imagine that a man who has spent so much time throwing off the burden of his whole culture does not understand what having a "dark side" would be. I'm tempted to echo Robert Duncan here and say "I prefer to take my John Cage dark."

When it comes to Beckett, the problem his work most presents for me is the same problem that the work of William Burroughs presented for me when I was writing my dissertation on it--how is one to read the relation between the fictional world created in the books and the world outside it that we all know to exist? Too many critics of Burroughs simply wanted to reduce his work to a representational description of human life, and then to dismiss it on the grounds that it was exaggerated (i.e. how does one take the Burroughs phrase "communication must become total before we can stop it"? literally? some other way?). A social realist critic like Lukacs would have read Beckett simply as the decadent expression of a "subjectivity," whereas Adorno, perhaps, would have seen in Beckett a series of social symptoms created by class consciousness, i.e. would have seen Beckett as successful on the grounds of his social criticism. But what's the truth of this really? That is, do we really read Beckett as social critic, or as limited subjectivity? Do we read the circular frustration his texts enact as existentialist comment on human absurdity irrespective of any social context? I think it's possible to say that all these things are legitimate possibilities arising from Beckett's work, and that all of them are potentially valuable, and that, finally, the genius of Beckett's work is the multiplicity of context to which it is responsive.

Another "problem" I find interesting in the work of both writers is the extent to which a dominant paradigm does or does not control the work which they produced. There is some level of theoretical sameness to all of what Cage does, and all of what Beckett does--their work, like say Wallace Stevens, seems to operate on modulations within dominant paradigms, whereas someone like Gertrude Stein seems much more comfortable operating in multiple paradigms. I think Cage has a greater level of multiple approaches than Beckett--he's both a musician and poet, so there's at least two approaches there at the very least (though Beckett wrote fiction and plays, etc). But I wonder the extent to which their artistic goals remain similar accross pieces, and the extent to which they differ, and the extent to which achieving such similarity or difference across a lifetime of production reveals to us the "limits" (Olsonian sense again) of various creative minds. Not a question I could possibly answer here.

But all this is more or less off the top of my head, as e-mail encourages, and perhaps has gone on too long already.

Mark Wallace /-----\ |
|| [REDACTED] "I have not yet begun ||
to go to extremes" || GWU: |
| http://gwis2.circ.gwu.edu/~mdw || EPC:
|| http://writing.upenn.edu/epc/authors/wallace ||

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46. **Mark Roberts**

AWOL: Poetry Stand at the Australian Book Fair (forwarded)

Tue 2 Jul 1996

Mime-Version: 1.0

Date: Tue, 2 Jul 1996 07:02:17 +1000

To: [REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED] (awol)

Subject: AWOL: Poetry Stand at the Australian Book Fair

Poetry Stand at the Australian Book Fair

This year The Poetry Stand will, for the first time, appear at the Australian Book Fair (4-7 July, Darling Harbour Sydney). The Poetry Stand represents a world first initiative. This co-operative adventure will place emphasis on poetry and independent poetry publishers from NSW. The venture has been sponsored by the NSW Ministry for the Arts.

The Poetry Stand will provide a showcase for poetry and highlight the quality and diversity of poetry published in NSW. It highlights the significance of poetry in a growing market and will bring poetry more attention from distributors, librarians, educators, curriculum advisers and the general public.

As a special event one of Australia's brightest poets, Adam Aitken, will be launching his new book IN ONE HOUSE (A&R in association with Paper Bark Press).

Publishers and organisations taking part include A&R in association with Paper Bark Press, AWOL, Hale & Iremonger, Five Islands Press, Heat, Hobo, Scarp, Southerly and many others

For further details contact Heather Cam at Hale & Iremonger ph (02) 565 1955 or email the Poets Union Inc at [REDACTED].

AWOL

Australian Writing On Line
[REDACTED]

http://www.ozemail.com.au/~awol
PO Box 333 Concord NSW 2137 Australia
Phone 61 2 7475667
Fax 61 2 7472802

Mark Roberts
Student Systems Project Officer
Information Systems
University of Sydney NSW 2006 Australia

██████████
PH:(02) ██████████
FAX:(02) ██████████

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47. **maria damon**

Re: Jacquee la Mousse, ono etc

Tue 2 Jul 1996

okay, dodie, all points well taken. it's true, all generalizations are kind of odious (except for blanket statements about minnesota; actually, now that i'm back, one day at a time it's not terrible). i for my part admire anyone who has the presence of mind to live outside of institutional life...i cd never, for example, run a small business although i'd love to, say, do a cafe/bookstore or something. if i weren't an academic i'd probably be on disability or otherwise scraping by on govt beneficence (sp?). can't deal w/ too many unknowns, too much responsibility, etc.

In message <v01520d00adfd9339a523@[205.134.228.103]> UB Poetics discussion

group writes:

> Okay, Maria, thanks for listening and not chewing me out. To add a note of
> compassion, I for one certainly would never be able to survive the hell of
> academic politics--and I think any woman with the strength to make it in
> that world deserves--I don't know what: admiration? Awe? But I'm
> sympathetic to Lisa Amber Philips' complaints. These blanket statements
> about what White Middle Class Women do and do not know are highly
> problematic. Also statements about young women. There are lots of young
> women poets (many of them black, asian, and lesbian) on the scene here in
> San Francisco, and, from what I've seen, they have a wide range of response
> to the question of whether or not they're oppressed as women in our
> "post"-feminist era. I'm particularly close to my intern who's 27, and her
> frustration over the position of women in the young hip world she operates

- > in is a frequent topic of discussion-- particularly in terms of her acting
- > out her sexual desires.
- >
- > Dodie

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48. **Steven Howard Shoemaker**

Re: British Women Poets

Tue 2 Jul 1996

Just back in town after a long weekend and it will take me a while to catch up, but many thanks for all those fab suggestions. I've forwarded them all to my friend and she's wishing she had a whole course to devote to the subject rather than the lit intro. she'll be teaching. I wldn't be surprised if those intriguing names and titles eventually drive one of use to teach such a course. Oh, and at the risk of "boosterism" (Yo Keith), i can't resist relaying how impressed my friend has been w/ the knowledge and enthusiasm present in this forum. A similar call went out to the ModBrit list (more academic, and also, by default, fiction-oriented) and garnered pretty much no result at all. I've been thinking about the dangers of easy "consensus" Keith wrote about, but still, for myself, finding a lot of breadth and variety under the "alternative" umbrella when it comes to questions of who and what people are reading.

steve

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49. **Steven Howard Shoemaker**

Enslin

Tue 2 Jul 1996

Ron Silliman wrote:

I'll be on the lookout, as it were, for New Sharon's Prospect, which I don't know. And I agree that Enslin's neglect has much to do with his decision not to "hustle" his work. In fact, he seems almost a limit case in that regard, and interesting as such. From what I've seen his life in small town on the Maine coast is an impressively Thoreauvian one. Gathers mussels, clams and other fruits de mer, feasts on veggies from his meticulously tended garden, and pays very little attention to the mechanisms of literary fame.

But I have to say my experience of reading Enlin's longer work differs from Ron's. I'm about 350 pages into the 2 vol. *Ranger* without yet marking its "fading" into an excessively "restricted range of possibility."

That book wld be difficult to excerpt here for exemplary purposes, and I don't have time to type out a section from the "Autumnal Rime" sequence I mentioned earlier (but wld refer everyone to the Enslin number of Talisman). So I'll have to content myself w/ one of the small domestic poems from Music in the Key of C. (Behind the title is Schoenberg's remark that there is much good music still to be composed in that key.)

Where?

Buy I'll not take you home
unless we have been somewhere
or met and asked each other
where? There is the chance
that something like this happens
every day on streets impossible
in clutter where? the faceless
angels intersect suppose they do
and where the home is
bound to labyrinth so many threads
an asking noise of traffic desperate
to cease and darkens lightens
as a voice that sharpens
through it where?

To my ear at least this is very fine, and quite precise "musically," for lack of a better word (Enslin was trained as a composer). And since Ron mentions Irby's caesurae, I might point here to Enslin's use of an Oppen-derived "gap syntax" that I've tried to reproduce here (the exact spacing, that is) as far as my editing program will permit.

steve

Re the disappearance, to whatever degree, of Enslin (please spell that name right), Tarn, Schwerner et al, I would think this is a sign that, say, Sulfur and its predecessor Caterpillar have not had the lasting impact on the scene that its editor imagines. All of these are interesting poets, but their relation to Olson et al is at some distance (Armand really is part of the scene around NYC that originally led to Caterpillar--he, Antin, Rothenberg, Kelly et al either "too young" or too non-projective to get into the Allen anthology). In the case of Tarn and Enslin, they've lived at some distance from those key urban centers and really don't hustle their work as much as they might.

Nathaniel was in Hoboken the other week for the big Russ/American thang and looked and sounded fine. His work with Grossman/Cape Goliard, which originally brought out the Mayan Letters, Mayakovsky's How are Verse

Made, the first English translations of Victor Segalen and Nazim Hikmet, LZ's "A" 22/23, Henri Lefebvre's Dialectical Materialism, was one of the most intensely great editing projects of the past 40 years. It's impact is still vibrating through the culture.

My favorite Enslin book is an early one: New Sharon's Prospect and Journals. The long poems seemed too much to me to be exercises on the line, fine for a hundred pages, but ultimately fading into a restricted range of possibility. For pure studies of the ear, my own preference has been, say, for Ken Irby, whose work does so much WITHIN the individual line.

All best,

Ron

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50. **Steven Howard Shoemaker**

Re: Enslin

Tue 2 Jul 1996

Dammit! I just did the same thing to Ron Silliman that I did to Burt K. another time. *I* wrote the stuff below, not Ron. His post is quoted after the "Steve" signoff. Sorry for the tangle.

steve

Ron Silliman wrote:

I'll be on the lookout, as it were, for New Sharon's Prospect, which I don't know. And I agree that Enslin's neglect has much to do with his decision not to "hustle" his work. In fact, he seems almost a limit case in that regard, and interesting as such. From what I've seen his life in small town on the Maine coast is an impressively Thoreauvian one. Gathers mussels, clams and other fruits de mer, feasts on veggies from his meticulously tended garden, and pays very little attention to the mechanisms of literary fame.

*But I have to say my experience of reading Enlin's longer work differs from Ron's. I'm about 350 pages into the 2 vol. *Ranger* without yet marking its "fading" into an excessively "restricted range of possibility."*

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Where?

*Buy I'll not take you home
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or met and asked each other
where? There is the chance
that something like this happens
every day on streets impossible
in clutter where? the faceless
angels intersect suppose they do
and where the home is
bound to labyrinth so many threads
an asking noise of traffic desperate
to cease and darkens lightens
as a voice that sharpens
through it where?*

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steve

Re the disappearance, to whatever degree, of Enslin (please spell that name right), Tarn, Schwerner et al, I would think this is a sign that, say, Sulfur and its predecessor Caterpillar have not had the lasting impact on the scene that its editor imagines. All of these are interesting poets, but their relation to Olson et al is at some distance (Armand really is part of the scene around NYC that originally led to Caterpillar--he, Antin, Rothenberg, Kelly et al either "too young" or too non-projective to get into the Allen anthology). In the case of Tarn and Enslin, they've lived at some distance from those key urban centers and really don't hustle their work as much as they might.

Nathaniel was in Hoboken the other week for the big Russ/American thang and looked and sounded fine. His work with Grossman/Cape Goliard, which originally brought out the Mayan Letters, Mayakovsky's How are Verse Made, the first English translations of Victor Segalen and Nazim

Hikmet, LZ's "A" 22/23, Henri Lefebvre's Dialectical Materialism, was one of the most intensely great editing projects of the past 40 years. It's impact is still vibrating through the culture.

My favorite Enslin book is an early one: New Sharon's Prospect and Journals. The long poems seemed too much to me to be exercises on the line, fine for a hundred pages, but ultimately fading into a restricted range of possibility. For pure studies of the ear, my own preference has been, say, for Ken Irby, whose work does so much WITHIN the individual line.

All best,

Ron

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51. **Don Cheney**
and i thought my translations were out at third base
Tue 2 Jul 1996

I found a tiny book titled, "Modismos - Familiar English-Spanish Expressions" by Mrs. Anness & Mr. Boughton published in Mexico w/no publishing date (my guess is 1950's -- so probably 1961!).

Anyway, I love the English expressions that are used, such as:

"This cigar smells like a ten-center."

or

"I'd like to lick the stuffing out of him."

but the translation for

"He stormed around mad at everything and everybody."

as

"Parecio que habia fumado marihuana.

"Estaba engrifado."

makes me believe that it was published in the 50's and makes me wonder if the authors were Monty Python fans.

Don "Dinsdale" Cheney



(i didn't use diacritical marks as i didn't know how everybody's email browsers would handle them)

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52. **maria damon**

Re: perloff-watten

Tue 2 Jul 1996

i for one heard nothing about an impolite, engaged argument between perloff and watten. please recap, somebody, as it evidently concerns poetry and poetix. bests, maria d

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53. **Robert Drake**

Re: and i thought my translations were out at third base

Tue 2 Jul 1996

such are landmines fr raw poetic ore... i recently found a copy ov "200 Colourful Expressions in English Language" by Sr. Miriam Azode (Onaivi Publishing, Nigeria), with such jems as:

"I never saw him as a _shrinking velvet_"

"The big row he had with Udo's family _unearthed the skeleton in the cupboard_"

"I invented that statement _to save_ his force"

"If they do not _take time by the forelock_, they will miss their luck"

lbd

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54. **Ron Silliman**

Ben Friedlander email address?

Wed 3 Jul 1996

Does anyone have a current email address for Ben Friedlander (Ben, are you reading this?)? The one I had bounced back as "user unknown."

Thanks,

Ron

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55. **Nada Gordon**

Re: Ben Friedlander email address?

Wed 3 Jul 1996

| Does anyone have a current email address for Ben Friedlander (Ben, are you reading this?)? The one I had bounced back as "user unknown."

Thanks,

Ron

You can try this one: [REDACTED]. It worked sometime around last Hannukah.

:-) Nada (Gordon)

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56. **Schuchat**

Re: my stack

Wed 3 Jul 1996

-
1. CONINGSBY, Benjamin Disraeli
 2. ST.PETERSBURG, CRUCIBLE OF CULTURAL REVOLUTION, Katerina Clark
 3. TRANSBLUENCY, Jones/Baraka
 4. IN MEMORY OF MY THEORIES, Rod Smith
 5. WALT WHITMAN'S AMERICA, David S. Reynolds
 6. NEGOTIATING COOPERATION: THE UNITED STATES AND CHINA 1969-1989, Robert Ross
 7. CLOSE TO ME & CLOSER...(THE LANGUAGE OF HEAVEN) and DESAMERE, Alice Notley
 8. MAO & MATISSE, Ed Friedman
 9. PRONTO, Elmore Leonard
 10. DISCOURSES OF THE VANISHING, Marilyn Ivy (modern Japanese culture, pub by U of Chicago)

also, for those of you with access to libraries that would have it, I very strongly recommend Michelle Yeh's article THE "CULT OF POETRY" IN CONTEMPORARY CHINA which you can find in THE JOURNAL OF ASIAN STUDIES 55, no 1. (February 1996), an excellent account of what is going on "post-Misty school."

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57. **Loss Glazier**

Re: Friedlander email + Note

Wed 3 Jul 1996

Actually, that address should be:

[REDACTED]

Note also: the UB machines have been spittin vinegar lately (I believe that's the technical term for malfunctioning nodes). Sometimes they will say things don't exist just because they're messed up. (This also occurs in other discourses.) Often it's good to try a couple of times over a few days if you're having trouble getting to the EPC or otherwise accessing our gleaming towers of silicon.

At 09:13 PM 7/3/96 +0900, you wrote:

>>Does anyone have a current email address for Ben Friedlander (Ben, are
>>you reading this?)? The one I had bounced back as "user unknown."

>>

>>Thanks,

>>

>>Ron

>

>You can try this one: [REDACTED]. It worked sometime
>around last Hannukah.

>

>:-) Nada (Gordon)

>

>

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58. **Rod Smith**

Re: Quartermain, Cage, Beckett, Severity

Wed 3 Jul 1996

Mark Wallace wrote: "It turns out that Cage's surface "acceptance" of any phenomena (any noise as music, etc) turns out to include a rejection of western cultural hierarchies in every conceivable guise, which means quite literally that he must have loathed almost everything around him, however "quietly" or "gently"..."

Well, loathe, is much too strong I think. Cage loved Satie, & thought highly of Mozart, particularly Don Giovanni. He listened to Bach & Beehtoven a great deal in his teens & twenties, & studied with Schoenberg. Seems more appropriate to me to say that at a certain point he just didn't need that tradition anymore, or only *_very_* selectively. It just wasn't useful to him, & that in part accounts for the usefulness of his work to so many, I think. He was forced on occasion, or very often, to address it of course. There's that great story he told of the African prince that saw a program of music from Bach to Wagner, & when asked what he thought of the concert he replied "very nice, but why did they keep playing the same tune over and over."

But on another note, in the spirit of Peter Q's "limiations" question-- somebody, maybe it was George Bowering, used the term "severe avant-garde" in a post, I believe comparing Beckett to Cage-- the implication being Beckett wasn't, Cage was. Not to get stuck on that particular comparison, but just to put the question to the list-- whatsa "severe avant-garde" anywho? Cld be the basis for a new movement-- *_Expurgationism_*? Also, if anyone would volunteer a close reading of Charles B's "An Afternoon on the Jetee" from *_Arras 3_* (does anyone have a tape?). . . I would be quite curious . . .

Rod

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59. **Aldon L. Nielsen**

Re: pee pee

Wed 3 Jul 1996

well now we seem to have hit a "low" --

look "filch" -- your survey wd either have to rely upon self-reporting, in which case it's useless, or on direct observation, in which case that must have been you that was kicked out of the pool for peeking at people peeing -- surely we can come up with a better satire than this --

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60. **Aldon L. Nielsen**

Re: Irby Matters

Wed 3 Jul 1996

Keith -- you might look for the Station Hill volume *_Call Steps_*, copies of which may still float about -- I suspect the Tansy Irbys are long gone -- Did you know that his brother is an important translator of Spanish works? particularly of Jose Lezama Lima's fantastic Cuban novel *_Paraiso_*

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61. **Aldon L. Nielsen**

Re: Perchik

Wed 3 Jul 1996

David -- I had been aware of that via the old Perchik *_Selected_*; but the book as a whole had left a bad feeling in me that kept mt from returning to it -- Now, I'd like to take a look at the fuller sequences (the Frank series in the selected appears to be less than half the sequence?) Will give Simon a second try on your advice --

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62. **Louis Cabri**

Re: my stack

Thu 4 Jul 1996

some hits of bed/floor/deskside reading over the last indefinite while - at 1pm & 4am; caffeinated, ginsenged or cigared; from usedbookstore purchases to gifts & library loans; all 100-watt bulbed; in no special order

1. Primitivism and Decadence by Yvor Winters, where I found "The Experimental School in American Poetry," a descriptive catalogue of literary devices & to me a very uncanny read - templating a poetics which seems to haunt the logos of discursive prose itself. That, next to Artifice of Absorption, is boondoggling - & recommended for formal change fetishists & their detractors. What other catalogues are out there?

2. Laura Riding's The World and Ourselves (1938). She leaves Spain in the nick of Franco's razor & writes, i guess from England, a "personal letter" circulated by meanderment to 400 people, asking how should those she singularly terms "inside people" respond to the changes in the world of "the outside"? "International affairs are too much with us, they are eating into our personal lives and labours...." The book collects 100 responses into an extraorganized format - divided into a section of responses by women and a section by men, then two further sections, "the realistic approach" and the approach "beginning from the inside." Riding provides allover narrative that further strings each letter to her own. Much of her narrative responds to the letters, and explains - wen required - her use of terms like "inside." Is this a protoypical version of the poetics survey?

3. George Bowering's early seventies poetry sequence, At War With the US, loaned from friend & returned else I'd quote some contusional lines. Chequer le livre out, taberwit!

4. Torque #4 (Spring 1996), ed. Elizabeth Fodaski. 21 E Second St #12, NYC 10003. We're talkin' propellant - at torque 4, the blade's curve is d-base .25 & the windcut jigs the meters but good, so you reach "Fifi La Labial Nana Fofana" in about four minutes. Leather bag not supplied.

5. Dick Gregory's first book, of one-liners & short para sequences, From the Back of the Bus, published & intro by... Hugh Hefner, that would be in 62. I had to pack this in a box a few days ago, but it's got some great lines & black&white photos on race matters (Little Rock figures prominently) - who says the "groundlessness" of permanent irony can only display glibness, despair & cynicism?

6. The Cool Crazy Committed World of the Sixties: 21 Television Interviews from The Pierre Berton Show, 1966. Journalist Berton is an icon of Cdn cultural

nationalism, & WASP - so he interviews all that is Not He, for an audience comforted by a then wellfunded public broadcaster. Apparently the last interview w/ Malcolm X. Interview with "Mrs Ian Fleming." Interview with "a single parent," "a gate crasher" (over 26 Beatles concerts), etc, & w/ Lenny Bruce, Phil Spector... only in Canada, eh?

7. A book by James Campbell on Montreal abstract painter Claude Toussignant. Professional art critic "doing the professional," and swings his hardy boy sloop into Michael Fried's dramascop, then to litcrit harbour for a poke in the weeds of what T Eagleton tried to satirize in 1986 as RLM - the Reader's Liberation Movement. Campbell until now has mostly written monographs for gallery shows of artists like Barnett Newman and Ron Martin.

8. Collected writings of another (same gen) Montreal abstract painter, Guido Molinari, who has mostly gone it alone as they say ("I am a UFO & loving it"), though at one time, in wake of a preponderant influence of Automatism on the Montreal scene, associated himself by signature with a selfdeclared NeoPlasticist manifesto. He has various phases. He painted a series blindfolded in the early 50s.

9. Derrida's The SelfPortrait and Other Ruins. Exhibition catalogue of 17-19 c. French paintings/drawings of/on blind subjects, which he curated for the Louvre, plus booklength essay. One more argument I suppose, this time perceptual, for the impossibility of pure "identity." The perceptual geometry holding together artist, canvas, mirror or subject, and viewer, is such that the artist cannot literally see, D argues, the action of painting, even, and especially, a self-portrait. There's a blindness at the "origin" of the act of drawing.

10. Essays in Felix Guattari's Molecular Revolution, an early book. Seems that in one sentence from 1966 he sums up Fredric Jameson's entire generalist's project in The Political Unconscious, and moreover in the specific context of a description of French labour history in this century: "It is the revolutionary vanguard's failure to understand the unconscious processes that emerge as socio-economic determinisms that has left the working class defenceless in the face of capitalism's modern mechanisms of alienation" (p. 199).

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63. **Ron Silliman**

More addresses

Thu 4 Jul 1996

Thanks to Gordon & Loss for their help in getting in touch w/ Ben.

I need two additional addresses for folks whose missives bounced back this past week:

John Byrum
Joel Kuszai

Email and snail mail needed.

Simon,

Since the Valley Forge area is not awash with Asian Studies (unreconstructed xenophobia is the local mode), can you sketch out what Michelle Yeh says in that article on the cult of poetry? I'd love to know and I'll bet I'm not alone,

All best,

Ron

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64. **David Golumbia**

Skool Chaw

Thu 4 Jul 1996

In case anybody's (remotely) (still) interested, there's a far beter response to the Sokal thing than Ross's (& to media response to Sokal), by ST co-editor Bruce Robbins, in July 8/21 edition of IN THESE TIMES (&, mild self-promo, two letters in defense of cultural studies, one by yrs truly, the other, a really nice missive by Phil Goldstein, with Tom Frank response). "In Defense of Cul-tural Studies" runs the banner across the top of front cover. I'm surprised, but glad, to find out the Jim Weinstein is willing to listen to those of us who find it worth defending.

--



David Golumbia

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65. **Charles Smith**

Re: Ronald Johnson Broadside (ad)

Thu 4 Jul 1996

Joel,

I wd like one of the unsigned RJ braodsides for \$10.00.

Charles Smith
2135 Irvin Way
Sacramento, CA 95822


thanks

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66. **Christina Fairbank Chirot**

Re: comments on women today and oppression

Thu 4 Jul 1996

On Sun, 30 Jun 1996, Eliza McGrand- CVA Guest wrote:

> re ms. phillip's dismay about a conference attendee's comments that
> women today do not realize that they are oppressed and that white
> middle class women are the last to realize they are oppressed, i can
> very easily see much that might have motivated those comments and
> agree. i have seen entirely too many anti-feminist slings recently,
> as if one is being somehow radical and brave to trash all those dingy
> feminists. and i can easily, only too easily imagine losing my temper
> if i thought i heard yet another pseudo-daring slam on feminists.
>
> people have been slamming feminists for hundreds of years -- white
> master-owners; male husbands enjoying such privileges as beating a
> wife with anything smaller than the circumfrance of their thumb, being
> the only one in the partnership who can own or inherit land, being the
> only partner who have a bank account or vote; men who can vote, own
> land, have a bank account, work at any number of professions while
> women cannot; men being asked to desist from disenfranchising women;
> academics (male and female) who profess, as dale spender has pointedly
> put it, that "you don't have to read women's literature to know it
> isn't any good" in her book on sexism in literature; academics who
> refuse to hire women in tenure track positions; academics who
> consistently give lower marks and bad reviews to work by women, while
> giving accolades to work of comparable quality by men; etcetera,
> etcetera. it isn't, after all, so very new to slam feminists and
> those who do so certainly aren't the sort of company i would like to
> keep. perhaps mr. howe meant nothing disrespectful toward women. but
> with the comments as reported, i have only too many painful
> experiences which lead me to agree.
>
> in other words, i can't say how many times i have heard some younger
> woman tell me, often with a placating smile (as if being, publically,
> a "good girl"), that SHE is certainly not oppressed and doesn't feel
> women are oppressed anymore. she tells me this while she is typing,
> filing, and scurrying away at a shit job for lower pay than men her
> age and ability. she has also, often, just told me about the job(s)

> she left because she was sexually harrassed, the boyfriend she lives
> with who expects her to wash all the dishes, do the laundry, cook, and
> clean, the same boyfriend who has perhaps just left her for a younger
> prettier woman. she leaves work to paint one more painting that will
> not get exhibited in a museum because although over half of the people
> in art classes are women, less than a tenth of exhibited or reviewed
> artists are women (and this situation exists for women writers, in
> large measure as well -- have you ever noticed how in anonymous entry
> contests, the winners are half or over half women, but in contests
> where names are used, 1/5 to 1/3 of the winners are women?). and we
> watch while a black or latino woman cleans the building around us and
> tells us, if we ask, how she was an accountant at home, or how her
> husband doesn't let her go home alone so she will have to stay here
> and wait for him, or one of us in the room struggles to hide the
> bruises from being beaten by an abusive partner while the residents of
> rooms on all sides of us shut their ears since "he's her boyfriend" so
> that makes it all right.
>
> i am sick of hearing that women are not oppressed. i am sick of
> hearing the very feminists whose damned hard work has gotten women the
> right to vote, to hold about 3/4 more sorts of jobs than they used to,
> the right to start a bank account without their husband's signature to
> give them permission, and so on and so on jeered at, disowned, and
> dismissed as they take on yet another painful, difficult battle for
> the very women who will not stand with them, yet benefit by their
> labor.
>
> from this ground, such seeds as the comments you report seem only too
> understandable.
>
> and while i'm on my soapbox, i have found myself distanced and pained
> by the numerous readings listed with no women writers, by the numerous
> lists of admired writers with at best only one woman for every eight
> men, and by the books and book lists with almost no women. the thread
> on british women poets has been, to say the least, a delight and i'd
> love to see more of the same.
>
> women write too.
> e
>

YES, YES, YES! And you've only mentioned a bit of the daily
pressure/oppression. Backlash is pervasive. "Chicks" is not chic.

Reviews of the Orono conference manifest underrepresentation of women there, as elsewhere. Here's an other woman's voice supporting y/our position.
T in a c.

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67. **Tony Green**
Teaching women poets
Thu 4 Jul 1996

I'd like to pick up an old thread. Teachability is closely linked with publication-ability. New Zealand with a population of 3,600,000 does not support publication of quertzblatt writing except in minute quantities. There is a "mainstream" of writing which fares better, though the rate of publication does not match that for U.S. writing. There are few magazines. Sustaining anything in that way for the kind of quertzblatt interests of many people on this list is damn near impossible. Attempts to get public money for it have not proved successful lately. The only magazine at present serving this interest is in some trouble financially and that is a xerox magazine stapled through, no cover, edited by Alan Loney and called A Brief Description of the Whole World. He also edited Parallax for 3 issues in the early 80's. This was the successor to a short-lived magazine edited by Graham Lindsay "Morepork". In the early 80's there were two xerox magazines, AND and SPLASH, neither lasted long. Meanwhile the mainstream carries on happily enough. Singling out Michele Leggott as teachable woman NZ poet is just fine. Good luck to her. But I must point out that there are perhaps more challenging poets who are not going to be teachable because they do not get books in print and because they do not necessarily appear in anthologies. A reader of the magazines I've named will know what I mean. Can we rely on the "teaching" of Michele Leggott knowing anything of this context? I guess the answer is a very big NO. In which case that teaching, probably unintentionally,,or even, with the very best of intentions, tends to be an "outside" interference in the canon, which can make the situation for those poets who NEVER fit the mainstream magazines at all, more difficult. This is not meant to indicate any kind of dislike of Michele or of her writing, far from it. But before a liberal-minded extension includes that which is available, to suit its liberality, it should be very careful about the effect it can have within the immediate environment within which availability has occurred. In short, I would trust this kind of foraging around for names to put into a plausible list of "representative" NZ women poets for a U.S.college course, only where the library resources could establish that context I've referred to, e.g Buffalo, where most of the magazine material is available. Best

Tony Green,
e-mail: [REDACTED]

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68. **Joel Kuszai**

e-mail address

Fri 5 Jul 1996

sorry to blast this over the public channel
but my address is now

[REDACTED]

I've been off the list for a couple weeks and have been spying it in a digest form.

At some point I'll post my maine response and also some more junk mail about Meow Press summer publications.

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69. **Poetics List**

Welcome Message

Fri 5 Jul 1996

Rev. 5-16-95

Welcome to the Poetics List

&

The Electronic Poetry Center

sponsored by The Poetics Program, Department of English, Faculty of Art & Letters, of the State University of New York, Buffalo

<http://writing.upenn.edu/epc>

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8. Publishers & Editors Read This!

[This document was prepared by Charles Bernstein ([REDACTED]. edu) and Loss Pequen~o Glazier ([REDACTED]).]

1. About the Poetics List

Please note that this is a private list and information about the list should not be posted to other lists or directories of lists. The idea is to keep the list to those with specific rather than general interests, and also to keep the scale of the list small and the volume manageable. Word-of-mouth (and its electronic equivalents) seems to be working fine.

The "list owner" of Poetics is Charles Bernstein: contact me for further information. As of May, Joel Kuszai is working with me to administer the list. For subscription information contact us at [REDACTED]

2. Subscriptions

line, to:

[REDACTED]

the one-line message should say:

{or}

(replacing Jill Jillway with your own name; but note: do not use your name to unsub)

We will be sent a notice of all subscription activity.

*

If you are having difficulty unsubscribing, please note:

Sometimes your e-mail address may be changed slightly by your system administrator. If this happens you will not be able to send messages to mail. To avoid this, unsub from the old address and resub from the new address. If you can no longer do this there is a solution if you use Eudora (an e-mail program that is available free at sharewar sites): from the Tools menu select "Options" and then select set-up for "Sending Mail": you can substitute your old address here and send the unsub message.

The most frequent problem with subscriptions is bounced messages. If your system is often down or if you have a low disk quota, Poetics messages may get bounced. Please try avoid having messages from the list returned to us. If the problem is low disk quota, you may wish to request an increase from your

system administrator. (You may wish to argue that this subscription is part of your scholarly communication!) You may also wish to consider obtaining a commercial account.

3. Who's Subscribed

To see who is subscribed to Poetics, send an e-mail message to blank. In the body of your e-mail message type:

review poetics

You will be sent within a reasonable amount of time (by return e-mail) a rather long list containing the names and e-mail addresses of Poetics subscribers. This list is alphabetized by server not name.

4. Digest Option

The Poetics List can send a large number of individual messages to your account to each day! If you would prefer to receive ONE message each day, which would include all messages posted to the list for that day, you can use the digest option. Send this one-line message (no subject line) to

██████████

set poetics digest

NOTE:!! Send this message to "listserv" not to Poetics or as a reply to this message!!

You can switch back to individual messages by sending this message:

set poetics mail

5. When you'll be away

Do not leave your Poetics subscription "active" if you are going to be away for any extended period of time! Your account may become flooded and you may lose not only Poetics messages but other important mail. You can temporarily turn off your Poetics subscription by sending a message:

You can temporarily turn off your mail by sending a message:

set poetics nomail

& turn it on again with: set poetics mail

When you return you can check or download missed postings from the Poetics archive. (See 7 below.)

6. What is the Electronic Poetry Center?

our URL is

<http://writing.upenn.edu/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 Center provides access to the burgeoning number of electronic resources in the new poetics including RIF/T and other electronic poetry journals, the POETICS List archives, an AUTHOR library of electronic poetic texts, and direct connections to numerous related electronic RESOURCES. The Center also provides information about contemporary print little magazines and SMALL PRESSES engaged in poetry and poetics. And we have an extensive collection of soundfiles of poets' reading their work, as well as the archive of LINEbreak, the radio interview series.

The EPC is directed by Loss Pequen~o Glazier.

7. Poetics Archives via EPC

Go to the EPC and select Poetics from the opening screen. Follow the links to Poetics Archives. You may browse the archives by month and year or search them for specific information. Your interface will allow you to print or download any of these files.

Or set your browser to go directly to:

<http://writing.upenn.edu/epc/poetics/archive>

8. Publishers & Editors Read This!

PUBLISHERS & EDITORS: Our listings of poetry and poetics information is open and available to you. We are trying to make access to printed publications as easy as possible to our users and ENCOURAGE you to participate! Send a list of your press/publications to [REDACTED] with the words EPC Press Listing in the subject line. You may also send materials on disk. (Write file name, word processing program, and Mac or PC on disk.) Send an e-mail message to the address above to obtain a mailing address to which to send your disk. Though files marked up with html are our goal, ascii files are perfectly acceptable. If your word processor will save files in Rich Text Format (.rtf) this is also highly desirable

Send us extended information on new publications (including any back cover copy and sample poems) as well as complete catalogs/backlists (including excerpts from reviews, sample poems, etc.). Be sure to include full information

for ordering--including prices and addresses and phone numbers both of the press and any distributors.

Initially, you might want to send short announcements of new publications directly to the Poetics list as subscribers do not always (or ever) check the EPC; in your message please include full information for ordering. If you have a fuller listing at EPC, you might also mention that in any Poetics posts.

Some announcements circulated through Poetics and the EPC have received a noticeable responses; it may be an effective way to promote your publication and we are glad to facilitate information about interesting publications.

END OF POETICS LIST WELCOME

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70. **Mark Wallace**
rod smith and john cage

Fri 5 Jul 1996

Hey Rod:

Thanks for the clarification on my earlier remarks relative to John Cage and his feelings towards the musical traditions he leaves behind. But your post leaves me with a question I'd like to hear more from you about. When you say that "at a certain point, Cage simply didn't need that tradition anymore" (I'm paraphrasing), are you implying that he left it behind without antagonism, just decided it could be ignored? Or, if he continued to have reactions towards it, what were the nature of those reactions? Loathe is, I can see, probably too strong. But what, from your understanding, would be the proper way to characterize his feelings towards the tradition he leaves behind? There's something about your post that seems almost to be characterizing his reaction as strangely unemotional--i.e., oh there it is, I don't need that, it really doesn't bother me and let's talk about something else. That seems to me a little bit hard to believe--you're trained in a whole tradition, work in it for many years, and then one day decide it's not significant, and leave it without much feeling either way? I'm just curious as to whether you could try to characterize more fully his reaction to what he left behind.

mark

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/-----\ |
||      "I have not yet begun      ||
to go to extremes"      ||  GWU:      |
|  http://gwis2.circ.gwu.edu/~mdw      ||  EPC:      |
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71. **Mark Wallace**

ghost stories

Fri 5 Jul 1996

Dear Dodie (and whoever else):

Ever read anything by the 19th century British ghost story writer Mrs. Riddell? After seeing bits and pieces of her work, I finally tracked down two weeks ago a complete collection of her ghost stories that had been published by Dover about twenty years ago, and has long been out of print. She wrote several supernatural novels also--the one I'm most familiar with is *THE UNINHABITED HOUSE*, which I also read in a Dover edition now out of print. Her stories are not always fully developed--she wrote too fast, for money, according to E.F. Bleier--but they have some genuinely frightening moments, and she does quite a good job with character. A real strangeness runs through the best of what she does.

Sheridan Le Fanu's novels are almost all long out of print, with the exception of *UNCLE SILAS* and two collections of his stories, all still in print I think from Dover. There's a 1977 hardback series from Arno that republished all of his novels, many their first re-publication since they originally appeared in the 1860s and 70s. The Arno can be hard to find, but interlibrary loan will usually pick them up somewhere.

I myself spent several days one summer at the Library of Congress tracking down the original serial publications of Le Fanu's novels in various British periodicals, including the *Dublin Magazine* which Le Fanu himself ran for many years. I even discovered several stories from the 1840s that had never been republished since their original serialization, including several early versions of stories he would later turn into novels. My own sense has always been that of all the British ghost story writers, Le Fanu's novels are most in tune to the economic realities of 19th century British life. His characterizations of women are certainly often problematic, tending towards views of them as sweet and moral but fairly helpless, although there are significant exceptions, like the struggle between strong mother and daughter characters in *THE ROSE AND THE KEY*, which also features one of the scariest 19th century descriptions of an insane asylum that I'm aware of.

mark

```
/-----\ |
| |      "I have not yet begun      | |
to go to extremes"      | |  GWU:      |
|   http://gwis2.circ.gwu.edu/~mdw      | |  EPC:
| |   http://writing.upenn.edu/epc/authors/wallace      | |
|-----|
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72. **maria damon**
felicitous misprisions

Fri 5 Jul 1996

along the lines of shrinking velvets, the liner notes to Alemayehu Eshete("the james brown of ethiopia")'s Addis Ababa album refers to his heart-rendering ballads. render my heart like butter, baby, and i'll lard you with poems.

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73. **Judy Roitman**
Another ethnic group

Fri 5 Jul 1996

If one were so foolish as to try to describe contemporary Native American poet-ries briefly, what would that description be, and what names would be at-tached?

No, I'm not giving a course, and do have other sources (Haskell Indian Nations University is down the road a short piece), but I'm curious what members of this list would say.

Thanks.

```
----- Judy Roitman
| "Glad to have Math, University of Kansas      | these copies of things
Lawrence, KS 66045      | after a while." [REDACTED]
| Larry Eigner, 1927-1996
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74. **Gwyn McVay**
Re: felicitous misprisions

Fri 5 Jul 1996

If they haven't changed the dessert menu at the Westin William Penn in Pitts-burgh, see it; it was obviously compiled by a non-native speaker, and is chock

full of inexplicabilities. The banana something I ordered was described as being "attacked by a banana liqueur." In the heading to "cappuccino mousse," someone had struck an accidental carriage return, so it now read:

Cappucci
no mousse

which may be a found pome?

Gwyn

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75. **Keith Tuma**

Orono

Fri 5 Jul 1996

Several days ago I forwarded to Robert von Hallberg the comments made about his comments in Orono. I did so because I think it's important that people be allowed to respond to the charges made against them in what is after all a public forum, however circumscribed. I now forward von Hallberg's response to Aldon, having been asked to do so.

I expect that conversation will ensue. Unfortunately, I'm leaving for the East Coast for a week on Sunday, and thus will be unable either to participate or to forward messages. Perhaps someone might take care of the latter for me.

best to all,
Keith Tuma

-----Original message-----

>To: [REDACTED]
>From: [REDACTED] (robert von hallberg)
>Subject: Orono
>Cc:
>Bcc:
>X-Attachments:
>
>5 July 1996 Friday.
>
>Dear Aldon,
>

> Keith Tuma was good enough to forward to me your remarks about my contribution to your Langston Hughes, Bob Kaufman session at Orono; I might otherwise not have known of your representation of what I said to that gathering. I want to reply first to you directly, then I will post this so that others can consider the matter further, if they wish.

>

> Why is it that after all the rhetorical and intellectual training that people like you and I receive, we tend so often to want to reduce intellectual differences until our opponents seem wholly negligible? I have felt this pull in my own writing, and friends have stopped me and reminded me that the issues that divide people are not ridiculous, that it is important to get right what our adversaries are advocating or claiming. And of course I recognize this pull in your representation of my remarks at your Hughes/Kaufman panel.

> 1. I did not claim that Hughes and Kaufman are "bad" poets, as you allege. This is simply a factual error on your part. I claimed instead that our job as literary scholars is to sort out the best writings of the poets we claim are being wrongly neglected and present them along with principled evaluative arguments to such audiences as the one gathered at Orono.

> 2. This relates to your quotation of my saying in an accusatory manner that you and the other panelists were "doing the sociology thing." My objection is not at all to the use of sociology or sociological analysis in literary history or criticism; my own work is heavily indebted--as is clear to my readers--to the work of sociologists of American intellectuals, and my most recent book is a sociology-of-art study of East German intellectuals. My objection was then explicitly to simplistic sociology. The example I gave in Orono, you will recall, was not your remark about the number of papers on minority poets, but instead the listing by the first presenter, whose name is not before me now, of the various postwar anthologies and the tabulation of the number of African American poets included: "One" or "none" were the scores repeated a number of times. This sort of sociological analysis is limited because it does not get beyond the obvious point that is not in contention: that African American writers have consistently been poorly represented in mainstream anthologies. I think the word I used to characterize this analysis was "simple." I said that as an intellectual endeavor, this sort of analysis is superficial and not worth doing.

> Once one observes, before an audience of teachers and scholars of contemporary poetry, that African American poets are not being discussed enough in conferences, not being published often enough in anthologies, etc., one should go on to the next step: the making of an argument for the teaching, study, or appreciation of particular poems by particular poets. If one does not take that step, one implies that the teaching, study, or appreciation of one African American poet is as desirable as the teaching, study, or appreciation of another. That is, one is refusing to take the poets with full seriousness by not examining their best work in detail. And, yes, at this point I do feel that identity politics misleads literary

critics into thinking that any form of commentary on underrepresented poets is itself a good thing and often even a sufficient thing. These poets existed; they were rarely published in mainstream anthologies; document their existence in the future--this is an elementary sort of literary critical project. The training that we have as literary scholars and critics enables us to go much further in the intellectual analysis of poetry. Why should we be timid about subjecting poems by Hughes, for example, to the most rigorous critical scrutiny of which we are capable?

> 3. One answer that is commonly given to this question is that the methods of critical analysis that are commonly used to scrutinize poems by Eliot, say, or Pound, or Moore, will not get at the full achievement of African American poets. That may be the case. If so, we need to know exactly where it is so, at what point in analysis the critical categories fail to serve the poets well. That is very interesting and worth knowing in detail, through patient analysis. Once we see just where the critical categories come up empty we can begin to define alternative categories that will serve the poetry better and we can theorize the significance of these categories.

> I did claim, apropos of your misrepresentation of my statements (cited above as item #1) that the poems quoted by Hughes in the first paper were not on the face of things impressive, and that the analysis presented there did not take them beyond the face of things.

> I will relate an anecdote here. Later in the day, after your session, another conferee told me that I just did not understand Hughes. She told me that her husband and she had known him and came to learn of his craftiness. Her husband once remarked to Hughes that he would love to hear Hughes talk about the blues, because he was sure that Hughes would have a different understanding of them than he did (being white). Hughes said, yes, they would have to have that talk, and that maybe they could talk about Schubert at the same time, because Hughes would like to know the white man's understanding of Schubert too. The woman telling me the story said that she wasn't sure her husband took the point of the rebuke right away. Then she told me that what I failed to understand about Hughes was that he was writing for an uneducated, large [black] urban audience, and that of course poems addressed to such an audience would not sound impressive to me. Her point was that Hughes was crafty, knew what he was doing, etc. I asked her if she didn't see any similarity between her claim about Hughes writing simply for simple folk and her husband's presumption that black people have a distinct, circumscribed view of music. She saw no resemblance there. But I think that she and her husband were condescending to Hughes in both instances. Not to subject Hughes's poetry to close analysis and developed evaluative argumentation is to refuse to give him as an artist just what we

are trained to give to the work of Eliot, Pound, Wilbur, Lowell, Bishop, Moore, et al.

> 4. After you misrepresent me by alleging that I said Hughes and Kaufman were "bad poets," you say: "Now ... this is pretty old hat to those of us who have been studying issues of race and ethnicity in literature longer than two weeks."

> Let me say forthrightly here what I said to you in Orono: I benefited from your book on intertextuality and race, esp. (as I told you) from your discussion of Robert Hayden's "Middle Passage." You have been working for years on race and ethnicity, and my paper on Hayden at the conference is the very beginning of my effort now to write about African American poetry, as I mentioned. I am a novice, maybe even an interloper, in your field, and I respect the feelings that are expressed by your remark about the two weeks. You are a professional in this area and you are entitled to feel a somewhat proprietary sense toward this academic specialty, African American poetry.

> My own view is that outsiders sometimes manage to bring something distinctive and unsettling to academic specialties. For this reason, I repeatedly argue that the writing of poet-critics is of special value to us now that literary scholarship has become thoroughly dominated by academic criticism and interpretation, and I hope that my engagement as an American with East German literary and intellectual culture will be off the beaten track of the straight disciplines that have custodial and proprietary claims to the study of East German literature and culture.

> But it is not the case that my advocacy of evaluative argument and close analysis of particular poems is properly characterized as the "strategies of the oldest of new critics," as you claim. The authority of New Criticism has been discredited, but not all close analysis and not all sustained evaluative argument have been discredited at the same time. I am not advocating that the arguments for the poets you admire be conducted by New Critical criteria--analysis of irony, tone, imagery, etc. My claim is rather that advocates of poets excluded from anthologies need to put on the table the evidence of poetic achievement and argue, in whatever terms work best for those poems, for the understanding and evaluation of those poems. Not to do this when an audience is gathered that can make a difference to the dissemination of such poets seems to me intellectually timid.

>

>

Yours,

>

>

Robert von

Hallberg

>

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76. **maria damon**

Re: Orono

Fri 5 Jul 1996

hi keith! did you also let aldon know you were going to forward his remarks? it is not at all clear to me that this list is a "public" one, and i have had the experience of having a formal grievance brought against me by members of another list i made reference to on poetix, believing that, tho this is to be sure a conversation, it is a "private" conversation. this is not a rebuke but a reminder --to all, in fact --that there is some uncertainty about exactly what the boundaries of the list in fact are. i guess it's good to assume, as you do, that anything CAN be made public, and that anyone can reach our files thru EPC after all, anyway. i'll respond to von h at some length later. as i've said, i have had very good interactions with him and consider him a warm, supportive colleague, but i see sometimes the adoption of a persona --the LIBERAL conscience of "what we do" --and the invocation of categories many of us have come to dismiss (he would argue that we're throwing the baby out w/ the proverbial bathwater) --can be startling. he has, tho, written one of the best (and first) of what i would consider cultural studies/poetry texts around, choosing to argue --again, not an argument i make, but a worthy one --that poetry has played a very centrist role in consolidating the American empire. that he does not go on to criticise this role is where i part with him, but i think it important that someone is making an argument different from the common assumption that poetry is necessarily a vanguard discourse. his and my work could be seen in point-counterpoint dialogue, in fact, and i think it matters a lot who it is we choose to study to buttress our respective positions. i do not, for example, think that qualitative evaluation is why we study poetry, or that we should only teach what is the "best." the kaufman poem i discussed ("bagel shop jazz") has, to be sure, some real clinkers in in ("doomed to see their coffee dreams/ Crushed on the floors of time" --for example --i like coffee dreams but anything "of time" sounds soupy to me) but it illustrates a "scene" that is rich, complex, and sociologically compelling to me, which is why i wrote about it. i agree that listing anthologies and saying how many Black poets were or weren't included is not sufficient as analysis, but i also don't think it can be said often enough as a starting point. i have seen some essays on hughes, for example, that don't attend to his social location and his circumstances, that completely fall flat and end up sounding very bad-faith and just plain inaccurate; for example, rather than looking on his importation of popular Black culture into print-"Poetry" as an intellectual/aesthetic achievement, it was seen as an example how skillfully he "marketed" himself. the critic was clearly trying to get beyond what s/he considered a simplistic boosterish analysis, but the result was, to my mind, disastrous. i think it is possible to be both analytically sophisticated AND advocacy-oriented, as Aldon's, CLR James's,

Stuart Hall's, and George Lipsitz's work show. I think also the o'hara/race sessions instanciated this blend of skillful critique/analysis and sympathy. i do think that marjorie has a point about getting rid of plenary sessions, because it sets up a class system, so that Bob can give what he himself describes as a "neophyte" effort at a plenary, while Aldon, to whose work he graciously describes himself as indebted, is in the position of appearing to take on a "heavy" from the sidelines, as it were. well i guess I have responded to Bob's post here/ now after all.

In message <[REDACTED]> UB Poetics discussion group writes:

> Several days ago I forwarded to Robert von Hallberg the comments made about
> his comments in Orono. I did so because I think it's important that people
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> allowed to respond to the charges made against them in what is after all a
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> best to all,
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> >Cc:
> >Bcc:
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> > 1. I did not claim that Hughes and Kaufman are "bad" poets, as you
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> > 3. One answer that is commonly given to this question is that the
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> Eliot, say, or Pound, or Moore, will not get at the full achievement of
> African American poets. That may be the case. If so, we need to know
> exactly where it is so, at what point in analysis the critical categories
> fail to serve the poets well. That is very interesting and worth knowing in
> detail, through patient analysis. Once we see just where the critical
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> that her husband and she had known him and came to learn of his craftiness.
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> evaluative argumentation is to refuse to give him as an artist just what we
> are trained to give to the work of Eliot, Pound, Wilbur, Lowell, Bishop,
> Moore, et al.

> > 4. After you misrepresent me by alleging that I said Hughes and Kaufman
> were "bad poets," you say: "Now ... this is pretty old hat to those of us
> who have been studying issues of race and ethnicity in literature longer
> than two weeks."

> > Let me say forthrightly here what I said to you in Orono: I benefited
> from your book on intertextuality and race, esp. (as I told you) from your
> discussion of Robert Hayden's "Middle Passage." You have been working for
> years on race and ethnicity, and my paper on Hayden at the conference is the
> very beginning of my effort now to write about African American poetry, as I
> mentioned. I am a novice, maybe even an interloper, in your field, and I
> respect the feelings that are expressed by your remark about the two weeks.
> You are a professional in this area and you are entitled to feel a somewhat
> proprietary sense toward this academic specialty, African American poetry.

> > My own view is that outsiders sometimes manage to bring something
> distinctive and unsettling to academic specialties. For this reason, I
> repeatedly argue that the writing of poet-critics is of special value to us
> now that literary scholarship has become thoroughly dominated by academic
> criticism and interpretation, and I hope that my engagement as an American
> with East German literary and intellectual culture will be off the beaten
> track of the straight disciplines that have custodial and proprietary claims
> to the study of East German literature and culture.

> > But it is not the case that my advocacy of evaluative argument and close
> analysis of particular poems is properly characterized as the "strategies of
> the oldest of new critics," as you claim. The authority of New Criticism
> has been discredited, but not all close analysis and not all sustained
> evaluative argument have been discredited at the same time. I am not
> advocating that the arguments for the poets you admire be conducted by
New

> Critical criteria--analysis of irony, tone, imagery, etc. My claim is
> rather that advocates of poets excluded from anthologies need to put on the
> table the evidence of poetic achievement and argue, in whatever terms work
> best for those poems, for the understanding and evaluation of those poems.
> Not to do this when an audience is gathered that can make a difference to
> the dissemination of such poets seems to me intellectually timid.

> >

> >

Yours,

> >

> >

Robert von

> Hallberg

> >

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77. **Keith Tuma**

Re: Orono

Fri 5 Jul 1996

No, Maria, I hadn't asked Aldon if I might forward his comments. This is perhaps a lapse in list ethics on my part--if so, I apologize. Like many on this list, I've learned from Aldon, had useful exchanges private and otherwise with him, find him one of the best, friendliest folks in po-biz. So, sorry, Aldon, if you mind. But I expected that the exchange would be productive, and surely wouldn't send just any remark or a remark by just anybody (somebody I didn't or wouldn't necessarily expect to be willing to take on a particular conversation) to a person not a part of the list. And I would never send on a remark of the sort you allude to re your own situation. I know von Hallberg well-enough to know that he would respond to Aldon's commentary in a manner which would raise questions. What happened to you is regretful.

Nevertheless, I do think that some clarification of the parameters of our conversation here is needed--or perhaps I've missed them. The EPC archives are of course available to all interested computer users, and increasingly comments made on poetics are cited in various print venues. (A poetics note of mine, for instance, is cited in Jed Rasula's book; and I have no problem with that, though I was not asked for permission and I'm betting neither was the listowner.) I guess I take it that "private" applies first and foremost to the matter of informing people of the existence of this list. And that there, as elsewhere, some common sense and taste must factor into the decision to "spread the word." Beyond that I'm not sure how this list can be altogether private, but if i'm missing something I'll be happy to be clued in.

all best,
keith

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78. **William Marsh - 3809183**

Re: stochastic

Fri 5 Jul 1996

I'm hunting down references to the term "stochastic" and wonder if anyone out there has come across it recently, especially in specific reference to writing/poetics. I came across it myself in an essay by Alan Davies, who evidently got it from Gregory Bateson's *_Mind and Nature_* -- a stochastic sequence is one which "combines a random component with a selective process so that only certain outcomes of the random are allowed to endure."

Has anyone seen the term defined/applied more extensively?

Appreciate the help.

Bill Marsh



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79. **Herb Levy**

Re: stochastic

Fri 5 Jul 1996

In the mid & late sixties, the composers Iannis Xenakis & James Tenney used the term stochastic to describe works in which they set up a range of parameters about pitch, rhythm, relative density, etc. and then allowed a computer program to select the details. In this way they could control the overall texture of a piece, while allowing various random processes to fill in the details.

The term stochastic comes from a Greek root that has (I think) something to do with arrows or archery. The model here is that an archer tries to get a bull's eye each time, and over time, depending on the archer's skill, most arrows will be near the center of a target, but the actual trajectory & landing point of any specific arrow is not as clearly defined.

I don't know if either Tenney or Xenakis coined the expression, or if it had previous use in the fields of mathematics, cybernetics, etc.

Bests

H

*I'm hunting down references to the term "stochastic" and wonder if anyone out there has come across it recently, especially in specific reference to writing/poetics. I came across it myself in an essay by Alan Davies, who evidently got it from Gregory Bateson's *_Mind and Nature_* -- a stochastic sequence is one which "combines a random component with a selective process so that only certain outcomes of the random are allowed to*

endure."

Has anyone seen the term defined/applied more extensively?

Appreciate the help.

Bill Marsh

Herb Levy

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80. **Christina Fairbank Chirot**

Re: stochastic

Fri 5 Jul 1996

According to the OED, stochastic comes from the Greek, means "to aim at a mark, guess". "Pertaining to conjecture" The following from Ilya Prigine and Isabelle Stenger's Order Out of Chaos makes a conjunction of poetics with the stochastic--and if one thinks in terms of the relation of cave paintings, rock art and heiroglyphs to poetics in terms of "objects" and "sounds"and "images" in/out of time is most useful: It is hard to avoid the impression that the distinction between what exists in time, what is irreversible, and, on the other hand, what is outside of time, what is eternal, is at the origin of human symbolic activity. Indeed, one aspect of the transformation of a natural object, a stone, to an object of art is closely related to our impact on matter. Artistic activity breaks the temporal symmetry of the object. It leaves a mark that translates our temporal dissymmetry into the temporal dissymmetry of the object. Out of the reversible, nearly cyclic noise level in which we live arises music that is both stochastic and time-oriented (312). Highly recommend this book & appreciate connection made to music in previous note-- dave baptiste chirot (susan howe: "articulation of sound forms in time"--from schoenberg--but improvisation in Free jazz--check out New York Contemporary Five lps-- Archie Shepp and Don Cherry--way to approach understanding chance in relation to form can be quite different when thought of in terms of collective improvisation--and so of "harmony of the spheres"--in relation to "chaos")(Don Cherry wrote "Relativity Suite")

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81. **Robert Drake**

Re: Stochastics

Fri 5 Jul 1996

Stochastic Languages

A stochastic language is a collection of strings with a probability distribution defined on the set of strings...

For a stochastic language it is required that the sum of weights for all strings equals 1, making p a probability function. Stochastic languages with strings which has no upper limit on their length constitute a special situation since the strings will have a very small weight...

For infinite languages it is not feasible to check whether the sum of probabilities equals one, simply by adding the weights, since there will always be strings of greater length representing a small part of the total probability mass. In such a situation it is required to obtain a model for the generation process and perform a test equivalent to evaluate its behaviour in the limit as the processing time goes to infinity...

Stochastic languages are typically specified by a stochastic automaton or a stochastic grammar. For a given stochastic language there is a one-to-one correspondence between the strings accepted by the automaton and the strings generated by the grammar meaning that both models can accept/generate the same strings with identical probabilities. Any string in a language can be modelled correctly concerning its syntactic structure by the corresponding automata/grammar but probabilities might be assigned to a string in such a way that none of the models can reproduce strings with the correct probability...

Theorem: There are stochastic languages for which no stochastic grammar or stochastic automata can reproduce the correct probability for all the individual strings in the language.

There are several explanations for this. As stated [through the pumping lemmas loops...] the derivation process can result in strings differing from each other only on the number of repetitions of a substring. The probabilities of such strings will be dependent on each other, and they therefore cannot take any arbitrarily probability. Furthermore a string is the result of a sequence of derivation steps, each with a predefined fixed probability. Therefore the probabilities assigned to generated strings, come from a discrete set of probabilities, and this fact can conflict with the fact that a string ... can be assigned any value...

Due to the inference mechanism creating the grammar the problem... is of no real concern when using stochastic languages for syntactic pattern recognition, and most other applications. The grammar is typically inferred from a finite set of learning samples, in such a way that it is capable of generating a set of strings of greater cardinality (possible countable infinite) having identical syntactic structure. In such a situation it is not relevant to maintain the exact probability of individual strings in the learning samples.

after Jesper Gravgaard Jensen

for automaton read "poet"
for grammar read "poetics"
for string read "poem"
for stochastic language read "canon"

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82. **maria damon**

Re: Orono

Sat 6 Jul 1996

In message <[REDACTED]> UB Poetics discussion group writes:

> No, Maria, I hadn't asked Aldon if I might forward his comments. This is
> perhaps a lapse in list ethics on my part--if so, I apologize. Like many on
> this list, I've learned from Aldon, had useful exchanges private and
>...etc

okay keith, cool. good points all. i didn't realize we cd be cited in books w/out our permission. i'll have to start watching my tongue, my back, my mind and my fingers. bests, maria d

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83. **maria damon**

Re: stochastic

Sat 6 Jul 1996

i heard the term "stochastic"" used by Julie Patton in her intro to her and Janice Loeb (sp?)'s performance at the Bob Kaufman celebration at the st mark's poetry projecct in april. she gave me the impression that there was an element of sound involved --what you mention below applied specifically to combining sounds. she and janice l read a kaufman poem --sang it, improvised it, playing off each other, simultaneously AND alternating. it was quite wonderfl and i wrote down the word "stochastic" as a result.--md

In message <[REDACTED]> UB Poetics discussion group writes:

> I'm hunting down references to the term "stochastic" and wonder if anyone
> out there has come across it recently, especially in specific reference to
> writing/poetics. I came across it myself in an essay by Alan Davies, who
> evidently got it from Gregory Bateson's _Mind and Nature_ -- a stochastic
> sequence is one which "combines a random component with a selective
> process so that only certain outcomes of the random are allowed to
> endure."

>

> Has anyone seen the term defined/applied more extensively?

>

> Appreciate the help.

>

> Bill Marsh

> [REDACTED]

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84. **filch**

agitprop

Sat 6 Jul 1996

defined / applied

combines a random component with a selective
process so that only certain outcomes of the random are allowed to
endure

stochastic

a mark that translates our temporal dissymmetry into the temporal dissymmetry of the object

(possible countable infinite)

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85. **Paul Naylor**

The Disappeared

Sat 6 Jul 1996

SEND

in%"██████"

in%"██████"

This is a somewhat late response to the comments about the "disappearance" of Irby, Enslin, and Tarn. For those interested in their recent work, you should check out Lee Chapman's journal, *_First Intensity_*. All three of those writers serve as editorial correspondents (along with Michael Boughn, Patrick Doud, Forrest Gander, John Moritz, Joe Napora, Susan Smith Nash, and Spencer Selby). Subscriptions are \$17 for two issues, and you can contact Lee at P.O. Box 140713, Staten Island, New York, 10314-0713.

While I'm in the plugging mode, the new issue of *_River City_* is out and about. The special topic this time is "The Caribbean: South of the South." Contents include a beautiful address by Kamau Brathwaite, "Note(s) on Caribbean Cosmology," new poems and an interview with M. Nourbese Philip, Wilson Harris' "Apprenticeship to the Furies," Aldon Nielsen on C.L.R. James, a section on women poets in the Caribbean. Also, Nathaniel Mackey on Miles Davis, and poems and fiction by Hank Lazer, Aldon Nielsen, Omar Castaneda, Claire Harris (a stunning long poem entitled "WOEMAN WOMB PRISONED"), etc. *_River City_* sells for \$7 per issue or \$12 for two. Make checks out to The University of Memphis and send to:

*_River City_*
Department of English
463 Patterson Bldg.
The University of Memphis
Memphis, TN 38152

I'd also like to announce that our next issue, Winter 1997, will focus on the topic of Engendering Culture; submissions on that topic -- whether poetry, fiction, critical writing -- can be sent to the same address.

Paul Naylor

SEND

in%"██████"

in%"██████"

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86. **Charles Alexander**

Re: Another ethnic group

Sat 6 Jul 1996

If one were so foolish as to try to describe contemporary Native American poetries briefly, what would that description be, and what names would be attached?

No, I'm not giving a course, and do have other sources (Haskell Indian Nations University is down the road a short piece), but I'm curious what members of this list would say.

Mostly I wouldn't be so foolish. But one thing I would be careful about is that adjective "contemporary." For me, it would have to include works from the oral tradition, which are still living, therefore "contemporary." And many of these works are subject to contemporary variations. Too often (although I think this has changed somewhat in the last couple of decades) the oral traditions have been treated as past, as relics. In many cultures they are decidedly not so. Some of the primary work in this regard has been done by Larry Evers through the Sun Tracks series at the University of Arizona Press, and to my mind some of the very best of that is the work with Yaqui oral traditions Evers has done in collaboration with Felipe S. Molina, himself a Yaqui singer.

But this is just one part of a huge story.

good luck,

charles

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87. **Joe Amato**

Re: Orono

Sat 6 Jul 1996

ok, i guess i have to add something here, grinch-like, that is *not* intended primarily as a rebuke to anybody per se, but is essentially a comment about how this list stuff works:

i don't like it that keith had to forward comments to the list from robert von hallberg... that is, i'm sure keith was willing to do so, and it's a settled issue as i

see it at the level of propriety... but i'm talking instead about relative visibilities, and about how lists work... and my carp here has to do, for one, with why robert von hallberg (and others who occupy a visible, even 'senior' position in our profession) are generally not to be found in these regions...

sure, we on poetics enjoy the presence of some folks who are well-known---kudos to these latter for their willingness to mix it up (i won't name names for fear of not naming all the names)... but for some years now, i've noticed the online absence of some of the better-known academics, all of whom have done quite well in print, many of whom are continually referenced in online discussion... that is, part of the explanation has always seemed to me to have to do with why bother? logic... or i don't have the time logic b/c i'm already getting published in print logic... or the real debate is over there logic so (again) why bother? logic... things are changing, to be sure... yet i'd still argue this absence is felt...

in short: though there is, as has been discussed, nothing at all wrong with forwarding comments hither & thither (with due allowance made for variations between public and private and permissions pertaining thereto), i would nonetheless like to go on record here (and anybody who wishes to, btw, can quote anything i say anywhere, but please do let me know if you do so) as saying that we need not only more access for folks without access, but we need our senior folks, or at least our more visible folks, to take the plunge...

to wit: i'd like to think that robert von hallberg is now subbed to poetics... and if he doesn't know how to, i'd like to think he's asking somebody... b/c i don't think his outsider-insider status (at this moment, anyway, wrt this list) is a good place from which to enter into discussion with this network community, or one of its members...

he can of course, like all of us, unsub at any time... but it's fair to ask him, and others, to sub to the list if they'd like to be part of the discussion (assuming they have the technical capabilities to do so)... otherwise, i'm left feeling as though i'm 'witnessing' an exchange w/o really being invited to contribute to same (which is decidedly *not* what lurking is about, either), with one participant offering tidbits from over yonder someplace while he goes about his 'real' business... which is, i understand, not at all intended, but which is nonetheless one effect this sort of forwarding/distancing can produce... and since most on this list know just how talky i can be, most will understand me when i say that i'm feeling a bit uncomfortable at the moment...

best,

joe

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88. **Burt Kimmelman**

New Magazine

Sat 6 Jul 1996

I have been sent a really lovely and rich magazine called "Object Lesson." How to describe it? It is multi-media pre-electronic: art and all kinds of verse (multi-textual I guess) including many insets of smaller "books" and envelopes full of all kinds of juicy things.

The editor, Joshua Beckman, was put on to me by Alex Cigale, and some of you may know his terrific magazine Synaesthetic (based on the found art/poem concept). Beckman writes about his planned next issue: "the next issue will include essays on poetry machines. Everyting from Bob Brown's *Readies* to personal essays on typewriters and tape recorders [yes, believe or not, folks, Beckman does not have e-mail and one might guess from this above remark that he might not own a computer--but i urge you not to be put off by this!]. The idea being to awaken the notions of mechanics that are embedded in the creation of poetry and to broaden the definition of what a machine can be, especially to a writer. I want to have the essays on everything from 'the corporate machine' to 'the influencing machine', so that the idea of the typewriter and the author end up too confused to untangle. At the same time, I hope to have work that simply praises the different tools of the trade and inspires a curiosity towards the reader's poetry and poetry machines."

Now, I would think that if you of, say, the Chris Funkhauserian persuasion, then you might want to think about sending Beckman something anyway.

Send to:

Joshua Saul Beckman, Editor
OBJECT LESSON
630 Wickenden St.
Providence, RI 02903
(401) 453 - 5146

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89. **Ward Tietz**

A Humument

Sat 6 Jul 1996

Does anybody know of any criticism written on Tom Phillips' "A Humument"?

Thanks,

Ward Tietz

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90. **Herb Levy**
Re: A Humument
Sat 6 Jul 1996

Ward Tietz writes:

| *Does anybody know of any criticism written on Tom Phillips' "A Humument"?*

There was a very good special issue of the Canadian magazine Open Letters entitled "Between Poetry & Painting" that focused on Joe Tilson, Ian Tyson, & Tom Phillips. It was fourth series, #1&2, Summer 1978. This includes lots of good stuff: an interview by Kevin Powers (who interviewed each of the featured artists) & articles by Phillips, composer Gavin Bryars, David Bindman, Nicholas Zurbrugg, David Bindman, & others.

There's also a piece in Heather McHugh's book of essays Broken English about the work.

I'd love to know of any other things people know about too.

Herb Levy



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91. **Steven Howard Shoemaker**
age of speleological reproduction
Sat 6 Jul 1996

I've just read an account in the latest Discover about some tablets that have just been found in caves near Beijing. Apparently, around 605 A.D. a Buddhist monk named Jingwan decided that the only way to save the the Buddhist scriptures from hostile Chinese emperors was to chisel them in stone. Over generations, the monks of the Yunju monastery carried out the project, bringing it to completion a millenium later, around 1644, having used 14,278 tablets. They hid the tablets in nine caves, and only the locals knew about them until recently, when a farmer showed them to Josef Guter, a German China specialist. Guter says: "The most important aspect of this discovery is that we have on stone the whole canon of Buddhism in 35 million Chinese characters written over 1,039, and that it has survived WW II and the Cultural Revolution. Its study will be in the hands of generations of men and women in many disciplines of cultural history."

What a textual project! Fascinating to me along many lines, one of them being that it is probably the ultimate example of the potential for atom-based textual preservation--making words as **solid** as possible. At at the other extreme, one might undertake the bit-based strategem of digitizing a text and then

distributing it as widely or carefully as possible, making it nearly immaterial but pervasive? And actually, that question is directly relevant: what will happen to the texts now? Paradoxically, as soon as they are discovered, as soon as they have readers, they are endangered... steve

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92. **Steven Howard Shoemaker**

Re: stochastic

Sat 6 Jul 1996

Strangely, when i made my post about speleological reproduction, I hadn't yet read Christina's post below. Interesting synchronicity.

I wonder if Clayton Eshleman has his tickets booked for Beijing yet?

steve

According to the OED, stochastic comes from the Greek, means "to aim at a mark, guess". "Pertaining to conjecture"

The following from Ilya Prigine and Isabelle Stenger's Order Out of Chaos makes a conjunction of poetics with the stochastic--and if one thinks in terms of the relation of cave paintings, rock art and heiroglyphs to poetics in terms of "objects" and "sounds"and "images" in/out of time is most useful:

It is hard to avoid the impression that the distinction between what exists in time, what is irreversible, and, on the other hand, what is outside of time, what is eternal, is at the origin of human symbolic activity. Indeed, one aspect of the transformation of a natural object, a stone, to an object of art is closely related to our impact on matter. Artistic activity breaks the temporal symmetry of the object. It leaves a mark that translates our temporal dissymmetry into the temporal dissymmetry of the object. Out of the reversible, nearly cyclic noise level in which we live arises music that is both stochastic and time-oriented (312).

Highly recommend this book & appreciate connection made to music in previous note--

dave baptiste chirot

(susan howe: "articulation of sound forms in time"--from schoenberg--but improvisation in Free jazz--check out New York Contemporary Five lps--Archie Shepp and Don Cherry--way to approach understanding chance in relation to form can be quite different when thought of in terms of collective improvisation--and so of "harmony of the spheres"--in relation to "chaos")(Don Cherry wrote "Relativity Suite")

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93. **Charles Alexander**

Re: A Humument

Sat 6 Jul 1996

I would also be interested in the answer to this. I once curated an exhibition at Minnesota Center for Book Arts in which some of the original page/paintings of A Humument were included, borrowed from the Ruth & Marvin Sackner Archive for Concrete & Experimental Poetry. Perhaps Ruth or Marvin Sackner would know the answer, but I don't think either is on this list. I will forward the question to a book arts list and see if it stirs up any answers there.

charles

Ward Tietz writes:

Does anybody know of any criticism written on Tom Phillips' "A Humument"?

There was a very good special issue of the Canadian magazine Open Letters entitled "Between Poetry & Painting" that focused on Joe Tilson, Ian Tyson, & Tom Phillips. It was fourth series, #1&2, Summer 1978. This includes lots of good stuff: an interview by Kevin Powers (who interviewed each of the featured artists) & articles by Phillips, composer Gavin Bryars, David Bindman, Nicholas Zurbrugg, David Bindman, & others.

There's also a piece in Heather McHugh's book of essays Broken English about the work.

I'd love to know of any other things people know about too.

Herb Levy



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94. **Charles Alexander**

journal praise

Sat 6 Jul 1996

Seeing the interest in criticism of Tom Phillips's, and thinking of works in which literature becomes physical (visual & otherwise) made me want to put in a word of praise for the new issue of Chain (vol. 3, part 1, I believe). There are many genre- & some gender-bending works, and enough of works which extend the literary into an other space (conceptual, visual, etc.) as to not make of such works "the exception." It's the first journal in a long time (despite several other

fine ones) I have read cover to cover and continually been amazed by. Already I find myself planning activities or works or publication projects partly influenced by works therein.

Thanks very much to Juliana Spahr & Jena Osman for the fine editorial work.

charles

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95. **James Brook**
[jakob van hoddis?](#)

Sat 6 Jul 1996

Anyone know of translations of the poems and other writings by Jakob Van Hoddis, an early German Expressionist? Or articles about him, especially with biographical information? The only thing I've found in English is a brief entry in Twentieth-Century German Verse edited by Patrick Bridgewater (Penguin 1968) and two poems.

Thanks,

James Brook

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96. **Michelle Roberts**
[Re: post language poetry, post modernist poetry, fakes](#)

Sat 6 Jul 1996

This is me being a bumb bunny, but could any one offer me a quick definition of "the new sentence"? I read it a post on this thread and would like to get a grip on the concept.

Any hints appreciated,

Meaghan

Meaghan Roberts

Ph.D. Candidate - Ethics and Literature

The University of Texas at Dallas



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97. **Gabrielle Welford**
[Ougarit \(fwd\)](#)

Sat 6 Jul 1996

Thought someone must be interested in seeing this. Gab.

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

Ce courrier que j'ai recopié intégralement était joint au premier exemplaire de la revue Ougarit éditée en Palestine et que je vous laisse découvrir :

Madame, monsieur,

Nous avons le plaisir de vous présenter la revue littéraire et artistique 'Ougarit', réalisée par un groupe de jeunes artistes de différentes disciplines (littérature, arts graphiques, cinéma, théâtre, musique) et publiée à Ramallah (Palestine).

Pourquoi cette revue? Tout d'abord parceque nous sommes convaincus qu'il est essentiel aujourd'hui de créer un espace pour un dialogue artistique interdisciplinaire, un lieu d'échange où puissent se rencontrer et confronter les nouveaux courants et les nouvelles visions artistiques et intellectuelles à l'oeuvre dans la société palestinienne.

En effet, les nouvelles réalités que nous vivons actuellement ont ammené un bouleversement des anciennes cartes intellectuelles et mentales qui, en se redistribuant et se redéfinissant, cèdent la place à de nouvelles cartes, à de nouveaux horizons. Cette période "troublée" est en même temps le foyer d'un bouillonnement culturel et artistique dont témoigne l'émergence, dans différents domaines, d'oeuvres de grande qualité, même si certaines en sont encore à un stade "expérimental".

Aussi sentons-nous l'urgence de créer un/ des forum/s pour que ces nouvelles visions en mouvement puissent se rencontrer, se rassembler, mais aussi être fertilisées par un plus grand contact avec des courants qui se développent à l'étranger et desquels nous avons si longtemps été coupés.

C'est pourquoi le comité de rédaction, composé de jeunes artistes impliqués activement dans la création d'une nouvelle culture palestinienne, espère par cet envoi initier un échange fructueux avec ceux qui, d'une rive à l'autre de la méditerranée, ainsi que dans d'autres régions du Monde, souhaitent entamer un dialogue culturel autour de leur vision de l'art, de sa place et de son rôle. Nous serons heureux d'accueillir les articles, travaux littéraires, recherches etc... d'intellectuels désireux d'apporter leur contribution en partageant une vision novatrice.

Nous espérons une édition semestrielle, la présentation en sera améliorée, la forme actuelle (en particulier l'absence de table des matières et le désordre de certains textes) n'étant certes pas due à notre volonté mais aux conséquences du bouclage imposé aux territoires palestiniens pendant la période de son impresse.

En vous souhaitant une bonne lecture, nous vous prions d'agréer Madame, Monsieur, l'expression de nos sentiments chaleureux.

Le comité de rédaction.

Ougarit

c/o Hussein BARGHOUTH

Cultural Studies Department

Bir Zeit University

P.O.BOX 14 - Bir Zeit

Palestine

fax : (972 2) 995 78 10 ou (972 2) 995 76 56

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98. **Tenney Nathanson**

Chain unchained?

Sun 7 Jul 1996

Date: Sat, 6 Jul 1996 16:39:19 -0500

From: Charles Alexander <[REDACTED]>

Subject: journal praise

Seeing the interest in criticism of Tom Phillips's, and thinking of works in which literature becomes physical (visual & otherwise) made me want to put in a word of praise for the new issue of Chain (vol. 3, part 1, I believe). There are many genre- & some gender-bending works, and enough of works which extend the literary into an other space (conceptual, visual, etc.) as to not make of such works "the exception." It's the first journal in a long time (despite several other fine ones) I have read cover to cover and continually been amazed by. Already I find myself planning activities or works or publication projects partly influenced by works therein.

Thanks very much to Juliana Spahr & Jena Osman for the fine editorial work.

charles

could Juliana or someone post an order-from address for this issue? Plus how-to (email? snailmail? etc)

hi Charles!

get ready, it's HOT here!

Tenney

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99. **Aldon L. Nielsen**

Re: here's another fine mess . . .

Sun 7 Jul 1996

Keith did not ask my permission to forward my report to Robert, nor do I feel in any way that permission was required. But now some slippage has happened that does bother me. As you will note at the beginning of Robert's message, addressed to me, he says that he is sending it directly to me prior to posting elsewhere. I believed that this meant we were to have some discussion between ourselves. I posted a quick response to Robert and requested that, should he decide to place his message in a public place, my response go along with it and that I be informed where it went. I also offered to continue the discussion in private.

It may be that Keith misunderstood the timing and forwarded the post too soon, or it could be that what I took to be a direct post to me was already posted in public. I will copy this to Robert in hopes of getting an answer.

When I get a chance I will also forward my initial response to this list. In the meantime I want to point out a few things that I think bear rather directly on Robert's reasonable sounding message.

There is a tape recording of the panel to which Robert responded. The tape is available to Robert on his request. I do not believe that I in fact have misrepresented his comments at the panel (though perhaps "tirade" was a little strong on my part) and there are any number of people on the list who were also at the session and may recall the conversation.

Here is one example. In Robert's message, after complaining that I have misrepresented his comments, he writes: "My objection is not at all to the use of sociology or sociological analysis un literary history or criticism . . ." In his recorded comments he said, "When we do the sociology thing it comes out real simple." I will leave it to you to decide which of us has represented the facts of the discussion more accurately.

This is important to me because, you may recall, one of my complaints about Robert's commentary was that he had decontextualized the papers to which he was responding. In this way he wound up, in response to a paper that argued that poets had been excluded BECAUSE of their racial identity from anthologies etc., stating that the paper argued for including poets based upon their representation of identity formations.

I will confess to having been angered, and I will cop to having gone a bit overboard in my subsequent comments about sociology. However, the fact that a good portion of Robert's message responds to arguments that were not made by

me, and that were not part of my original post, should prompt a certain caution here.

And that is not a Freudian typo up there -- Robert said "in" not "un" literary . . .

As I said, I will forward this to Robert, and I will post here the reponse I sent to him that has not accompanied his message. After that it's pretty much up to Robert if there is any more on this subject --

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100. **Aldon L. Nielsen**

Re: Orono (fwd)

Sun 7 Jul 1996

Here is my response to Robert's message, made before I knew that his message was already on the poetics list. Only note I would add here is that it was Don Wellman who first raises the issue of performative criteria, not Hank Lazer -- Hank raised the issue as a question as we were standing around the podium afterwards --

Have now also read Joe Amato's note on this -- I know that Joe is out of town now, but I want everybody else to feel perfectly free to jump in on the issues involved -- Since Robert felt that I had misrepresented his remarks, I thought it important first of all to state that I had reviewed his remarks carefully -- I am now more than ready to move on to possibly useful discussions of some of the other issues raised in this episode --

And by the way, if anybody on the list whose paper or comments I described in my report feels I have been inaccurate about anything, let me hear about it --

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

Date: Sat, 6 Jul 1996 11:02:24 -0700 (PDT)

From: Aldon L. Nielsen <[REDACTED]>

To: robert von hallberg <[REDACTED]>

Subject: Re: Orono

I will respond at greater length later (am on my way to family meetings at the moment) but here are a few VERY quick comments --

First of all, I would be careful about stating that I have misrepresented your remarks. (excuse the oddness of that sentence please; I, of course, would not have made the remarks) You did in fact include a reference to my opening comments about the number of papers at the beginning of your commentary. Perhaps you did not notice the tape recorder that was on the table in front of you. I responded directly to that comment as I felt I could appropriately speak of that which had been directed to my own remarks. If it becomes necessary in

the course of public discussions, I will ask your permission to post a transcription of the commentary and will supply you with a copy of the tape. The remark about "badness" is off the tape. As we discussed these issues after the panel broke up, you did in fact say to me that the poems discussed were "bad poems." You will perhaps remember that I told you I would not argue with you then and there over the particular qualities of the poems cited for the simple reason that, in the case of "Montage," I didn't happen to like the poem all that much anyway. My arguments with you were not so much about the value of individual poems as about your mode of address (and the amount of the time it took.)

Now for a few quick matters that are more important to me, but have less to do with what one or the other of us actually did or did not say. (Again, I will gladly supply you with the tape if you wish to be certain about quotations.)

It is true that some people argue that a different mode of critique is required for poems such as "Montage," and I would agree with you that IF that is the case, then we should get down to the business of laying out what we think such an aesthetic might entail. However, please recall that I made no such argument to you on the day in question. Hank Lazer and, I believe, Jerome Rothenberg made a few comments on the need for a "performative" mode of critique as we were standing around debating afterwards. But as we go on with our own discussions, please bear in mind that this is not an argument that I make. I believe that "performative" modes of critique are appropriate for forms of performance. I think it condescending to argue that Hughes has to be read by some other criteria of performance (when we're talking about poems on the page at least) than, say, Hayden.

When I refer in my posts to strategies of the old New critics, I am not speaking of their techniques of close reading, which I continue to use. I was speaking of the strategies used to dismiss black poets in the 40s, 50s and 60s. In my other telegraphic reports of Orono (Did Keith in fact send you all of it, or just the part about that panel?) I mentioned an infamous review of Brooks by Simpson. Better examples might be Tate's various responses to African-American poets. What I was getting at in my all too short hand (and perhaps even short sighted) way was that a thorough and close reading of the history of American criticism of African-American poets turns up numerous instances of this same set of remarks being directed to similar panels and critical efforts. I in fact not only welcome close readings of black poets, I produce them from time to time. My complaint about your complaint was that you seemed to be ruling out other efforts that I feel are worthwhile and needed --

For example, if I agreed with what you said about the first paper (and I have much to dislike about that paper on entirely other grounds) I would be hard pressed to see much use in Alan Goldings work on anthologies, work that I find

useful. If we did not make such arguments, the Heath and Norton would probably not have changed much at all. I believe they have not changed enough, and so I continue to make such arguments.

The word "interloper" does not in any way represent my view. I do indeed believe that any field of criticism is likely to benefit from interventions from well-informed critics who have worked primarily in other fields. I'm not sure what the term "outside" would even mean in this context. BUT, I have to admit amazement at part of our post-session (and therefore post-tape) exchange. When we were discussing the fact that numerous conferences, articles, books etc. were devoted to precisely the sorts of readings you called for, you indicated to me that you did not read journals such as CLA, Callaloo, AAR etc., because, as you put it, you "can't be an expert in every field." Now, I hardly expect such expertise from anybody, including myself, but I found that a remarkable statement to come from somebody who had just delivered a keynote address on Robert Hayden. I wouldn't put too much weight on this part of our exchange, as it's not part of the issues you have raised in your post to me, but I am trying to communicate something to you about how certain of your remarks must sound to people, perhaps without your meaning to sound objectionable.

(by the way, I am away from my office for an extended period, and the machine I am using does not allow me to back up and correct typographical errors. I am no typist, so please be forgiving of oddities of spelling, punctuation, spacing etc.)

Again, there is much else we could argue about. (For instance, the phrase "sociology thing" is yours, not mine. -- And I remain puzzled by your remarks about the importance (or lack thereof) of looking at Pound's contacts with black culture (doesn't all that Frobenious weigh on your mind for something?)

It's probably never a good thing to put too much weight upon post-panel discussions. The reason that I tape panels I am a part of is that I hope to get suggestions for further research, new angles to explore, etc. What angered me that day (and I suppose I am still a bit angry about it) is that you did not ask a question, nor did you offer your comments in a way directed specifically to elements of the papers that might help their authors (or even me) to improve the work in hand. You did tell the panel that they were being reductive, that they were lending themselves to identity politics, etc. If I might take a cue from your own comments, I think you would be far more likely to achieve the result you seem to have aimed at by engaging directly with an element of the readings about which one might argue productively. I suspect that any of us who present a paper of 20 minutes on such topics (or even an address of 40 minutes?) might accurately be accused of being reductive. On the other hand, I do not believe it truly is reductive to examine the history of race and anthologizing or race &

criticism -- You appeared to me to go past arguing that the papers had failed in a specific way in the tasks they had undertaken to argue that the tasks they had undertaken shouldn't be undertaken. If I am misreading you on that point, I'm ready to be set straight.

I hope you will remember too that as we left the room I said to you that I felt comfortable having such an argument with you because I thought we could listen to one another (perhaps even mishear one another) and still get somewhere -- whereas I feel there is simply no point in my having such an argument with Louis Simpson. I do not mean by this that I believe you will eventually see things my way, but that I have much to learn from arguing these points with you.

But, as I keep telling my graduate students, we have to look at the same text before we can argue about our interpretations of it.

I am responding directly to you, in private, to the extent that any email is private. If you decide to post your message to me in any public place, please post this with it and let me know where it went. I have much more to say if we are going to debate in public. I have more to say, but perhaps in a happier tone, if we discuss this between ourselves.

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101. **Christopher K. Whipple**
poetry performance

Sun 7 Jul 1996

I am hoping for some help from this group.

I am putting together a season of performed poetry.

The premise is that there is a superabundance of miraculous poetry out there; but for some reason it's not read publicly. My idea is to have trained actors read this great poetry. Who better to bring out the pacing, movement, and prosodic effects of these taught language dramas?

The performances will fall somewhere between reading and theater. The season will be a four part sequence of themes, running 1) Soviet Poetry; 2) Poets of WWI; 3) Victorian Dramatic Monologues, and 4) Contemporary Poetry.

I am going to use public (coffee house) readings as a rehearsal/development process for the fully staged performances.

I'm most interested in getting help on the WWI poets right now. The poets I have so far are Wilfred Owen (of course), Siegfried Sassoon, Ivor Gurney, Isaac Rosenberg, e.e. cummings, Ernest Hemingway, Rupert Brooke, Edward Thomas and David Jones. Am I missing anyone? Can anyone lead me to some lesser

known poets I might otherwise overlook (or lesser known poems from established poets not usually associated with this theme)?

Does anyone have any ideas on why coffee house readings are so often lame and depressing; why do these horrible people have a monopoly on the espresso circuit, while so much that is delicious is abandoned to a half-life in academia?

Does anyone have any ideas on how poetry can be successfully performed? Has anyone seen examples, even failed ones?

I look forward to your responses.

Chris Whipple

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102. **Robert J Wilson**

Covering Cherub

Sun 7 Jul 1996

There's a critical concept/category from Blake that I think is still useful in trying to negotiate the blocked vision and pseudo-pluralism of the US poetry scene, even as worked out in the tender terrain of those panels in Maine-- it's called the Covering Cherub, which I take to be a figure for occluded vision pretending to be open to the past and future, pretending to be benignly liberal and political, pretending to do cultural critique while, at the same time (as in the New Yorker poem, or, for that matter, the poems in Nation or New Republic) bracketing out nine-tenths of social reality and twenty two thousand five hundred and sixty six alternative visions and voices and "outside" (Spicer on Mag Verse genres) languages. The Covering Cherub sits in some middle class heaven, in an English Department of the soul, and he can talk about Language Poetry and AfroAmerican poetics and shaman poets and pidgin poets, he (or she can edit an anthology for Harvard UP too) just makes it possible that what Gramsci called (doing cultural studies in prison for his vision) "good sense" will never break through the "common sense" of ideological sonambulism and formalist reifications and "the big lie of the personal voice." But Covering Cherubs should be heard on language poet panels too, and they should get on poetry lists too and talk and talk and talk the talk, this is called 'cheery American poetry' and that is why, still, 'creativity takes place along a line of flight.' and I want out from that 'dialogue.' Regards to Joe Amato for blasting through so much of the American bullshit, it is an American as apple pie and critical inquiry, Rob Wilson

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103. **Robert Drake**
Re: Chain unchained?
Sun 7 Jul 1996

i'll second earlier enthusiasms for Chain--i'm lookin forward to pt 2...

Chain
107 14th St.
Buffalo NY 14213

\$10 for 1 issue, \$18 for 2
checks to UB Foundation...

lbd

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104. **Burt Kimmelman**
Re: Orono
Sun 7 Jul 1996

Joe,
I understand your frustration, but I don't want to see our possibilotoe
possibilities of discourse circumscribed. We're in a wierd techno-leap moment
and maybe that accounts in part at least for why people like van hallberg aren't
on our list; maybe we should draft a letter to newt gingrich to send some of
those lap tops he promised to all the inner city kids of america to senior profs,
that is, along with a subscription to the net.

burt

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105. **Peter Nicholls**
Re: oppen
Sun 7 Jul 1996

Dear Peter: just wondering whether there is any news from California about Ob-
jectivist Nexus....Will you be coming to the UK this summer? Let me know if you
are. All best wishes, Peter.

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106. **Joe Amato**

Re: Orono

Sun 7 Jul 1996

burt, yeah... my little rant has been brewing for a while, b/c it's become obvious to me over time how specific discourses operate with personnel in absentia, as it were... i mean to say that, while it's arguable that online exchange is not for all tastes, it's not arguable that such exchange (nevermind electronic publication) is becoming a vital part of academic communities, esp. b/c it presents possibilities for academics to learn from non-academics, for both groups to learn from one another---not least, to learn how to speak to one another... interestingly, too, there's also the little-big question of what "counts" in academic circles as professional service, and as you suggest, sometimes the old guard, or the new old guard (pardon moi), is culpable on the count of not taking this stuff too seriously... perhaps due to sheer lack of electronic exposure (academics can be so very anemic), perhaps b/c things can be so comfy post-tenure... not a blanket statement---there are plenty of tenured, visible, full-blooded folks on this list who for me are the exception proves the rule...

anyway, mebbe i only imagine (as i just posted to another list member backchannel) mebbe i only imagine a certain nonchalance when a legible name begins speaking from the margins, as it were, or from above... as much as i wish to behave w/o rancor, i just get steamed-up a bit when i sense that sort of intrusion (besides, it's hot and humid today in chicago)... and i mean this w/o finger-pointing at keith, and really by way of saying to robert von hallberg, a bit unfairly---

HELLOOOOO---YOU OUT THERE YET, ROBERT???--c'mon into the pool and join the fun!... you may get splashed a bit, either way...

all best,

joe

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107. **Burt Kimmelman**

Re: oppen

Sun 7 Jul 1996

I guess I must have missed something. Peter, could you say more about California and the Objectivist Nexus?

Burt

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108. **Steven Howard Shoemaker**

Tate/Pound/African-Americans

Sun 7 Jul 1996

Aldon's recent reference to Tate's and Pound's views of African-Americans moves me to put forward an odd bit of business I've been somewhat puzzled lately. In a review of Pound's *How to Read* published in *Poetry*, Tate uses a racially and ethnically charged image to make a point about what he sees as Pound's shortcomings. The review acknowledges Pound as someone who "understands, as no other living man...the craftsmanship of verse," but also points to a "logical confusion of his [Pound's] intellect when it is not performing the task which is specifically his own, that task being poetry." (So far, this is an argument that seems to have some merit.) From there Tate takes extended exception to a comment of Pound's to the effect that when one is studying great inventors (like Newton or Dante) one should be allowed to extract the gist of their discoveries without being bothered about "laundry bills" (i.e. an unnecessary clutter of biographical data). Tate sees poetry not as a science, with inventions and discoveries, but as a craft. As such, "It is the product of innumerable factors--of the relations among language, church and society, between fathers and mothers, butchers and bakers, between the poet and what society thinks of him." Accordingly: "the laundry bills of Dante should be zealously studied, by somebody like Mr. Pound who would know why he is studying them."

So what we have is a plea for an historically informed understanding of poetry and the poet's role in society. Not all that far from the Oppens' criticism that Pound would have been better off if he had spent some time in a factory before developing a theory of economics. But then comes Tate's final criticism of Pound: "Finally, I should like to intimate that Pound's own laundry bills might be studied with profit, for they are fuddling his logic. They would make an interesting collection, beginning with Idaho and Indiana, and ending up with the banks of the Susquehanna and the 'banks o' Italie.' There is Mr. Pound sitting in his heap of miscellaneous laundry bills, so confused outside the moment of his craft (which is the most lucid of our time), that he thinks the laundry bills did the washing: what Mr. Pound needs is just an ordinary Irish or colored washerwoman. To look an honest African wench in the face is better than a column of figures, and a fine cure for the belief that a poet can get along without having any laundry done at all.

As I see it, Tate is suggesting that what an appropriate historical grounding (i.e. looking an honest African wench in the face) will tell you is the absolute necessity of the current forms of racial and political oppression (somebody's gotta do the laundry and it's not gonna be Tate). The analysis is like the Oppens', but with an exactly opposed political valence. Also interesting because I have been trying to think about Pound's racism, but what happens here is that Tate's own

form of racism seems (in Tate's reading) to cancel out Pound's. For Tate, Pound is a "dyed-in-the-wool revolutionist" who wld abolish the social hierarchies.

So that's my reading, but the problem is that I don't know much at all about Tate and his other expressions of his views on race. Can anyone (perhaps Aldon) give me some more context here?

Sorry this is so long,
steve

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109. **maria damon**

Re: Tate/Pound/African-Americans

Sun 7 Jul 1996

In message <[REDACTED]> UB Poetics
discussion group writes:

>...

> So that's my reading, but the problem is that I don't know much at all
> about Tate and his other expressions of his views on race. Can anyone
> (perhaps Aldon) give me some more context here?

>

> Sorry this is so long,
> steve

walter kalaidjian has an extended analysis of the "New Critics" and Agrarian poets and critics on race. it's in a book forthcoming i think from michigan? edited by Stephen Watt and someone else??? and entitled something like "Marketing Modernisms." if you can't find that book, i'm sure walt will share his essay w/ you; he's in the the english dept at emory. bests, maria d

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110. **maria damon**

Re: Tate/Pound/African-Americans

Sun 7 Jul 1996

.

> So that's my reading, but the problem is that I don't know much at all
> about Tate and his other expressions of his views on race. Can anyone
> (perhaps Aldon) give me some more context here?

>

> Sorry this is so long,
> steve

ps. tate taught in the dept i now teach in, and he is known to have been rather retro in the fifties by his then colleagues. i've heard him thus characterized by leo marx, who was in the american studies program, who sd that, much as these english dept new-critics were admirable intellectual colleagues and congenial conversants, "I suspect that were the subject to have turned to politics we would have had little to say to each other." folks like marx lived in terror of the mccarthyite shadow, while folks like tate WERE that shadow.--md

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111. **maria damon**

Re: Tate/Pound/African-Americans

Sun 7 Jul 1996

In message <[REDACTED]> UB Poetics
discussion group writes:

>...

> So that's my reading, but the problem is that I don't know much at all
> about Tate and his other expressions of his views on race. Can anyone
> (perhaps Aldon) give me some more context here?

>

> Sorry this is so long,
> steve

3rd installment: i think that while tate and others were embarrassed by pound's fanaticism, which they saw as indecorous, basically they shared, if not his outright fascism which was, after all, unpatriotic, a horror of Jews, Blacks and other Others who could not quite conform to their standards of rational --enlightenment --humanity.

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112. **Steven Howard Shoemaker**

Re: Tate/Pound/African-Americans

Sun 7 Jul 1996

Thanks for responding Maria. I'm trying right now to apply some of your insights from the Stein chapter in **the dark end of the street** to a reading of a piece of "Yiddish" doggerel that was Pound's contribution to **An "Objectivists" Anthology**. Trying to think about what happens when an "in-between language" is staked out for use by a representative of the white, male, gentile modernist establishment rather by a member of the "minority" culture...

steve

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113. **Jerry Rothenberg**

Re: Covering Cherub

Sun 7 Jul 1996

For Rob Wilson, if it's of any interest.

In the second issue of SULFUR (1981, altho it doesn't seem to me that long ago) I had an attack piece vis a vis Harold Bloom called "The Critic As Exterminating Angel" -- at the end of which I go into a few pages about the Covering Cherub ("who in one tradition may be the Exterminating Angel himself, the [Hebrew] Malakh ha-Mavat" and who "guards the Tree of Life & blocks the return of fallen man to Paradise.") Bloom writes on this in considerably more detail and I'm in fact turning it on him, polemically, for reasons explained in the essay. Eshleman, who was editing Sulfur then as now, was very good on this matter, although I don't know off hand where -- if anywhere -- he has it in writing.

In that context, I think, Covering Cherubs are much more foreboding than what you're suggesting -- what I thought of at the time as that which "not only keeps the poet from the paradise of poetry but from a natural relation- ship to all those poets who inhabit it." I pin the label on Bloom in that one, tho there's clearly more to it than that.

Jerome Rothenberg



ps. If you're in Hawaii when I get there in September, maybe we can meet & talk about this & related matters.

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114. **Tony Green**

Re: poetry performance

Sun 7 Jul 1996

Hi Christopher Whipple. Response to your notion abt actors. Distaste for actors reading poetry for me goes with the felt difference between stand-ups and actors. "Stand-ups can't act" is a way of noticing that stand-ups do not seem to know they are assuming a role (even though, of course, they are). Actors always assume roles. Rather than actors you want really good poet-readers. Last year I had the pleasure of hearing Robert Creeley reading Williams et al. You want something like that: no putting on a special voice or tone, no change from Creeley-voice reading Creeley that I could identify, but a real intelligent sense of what the text was doing at any point. That was really engrossing. To turn up the volume, to turn up the decor, to turn up the video-presentation, may do something for people who don't actually like poetry, but there is a danger in

that of a deceptive kind of substitution. I guess I feel the poetry is damaged, more or less seriously by what you are thinking of.

best

Tony Green,

e-mail: [REDACTED]

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115. **Gabrielle Welford**
Ougarit (suite) (english/french) (fwd)

Sun 7 Jul 1996

More on this mag. Gab.

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

Date: Sun, 7 Jul 1996 08:01:45 -1000

From: J-C Helary <[REDACTED]>

To: Multiple recipients of <[REDACTED]>

Subject: Ougarit (suite) (english/french)

Happy to see that although I posted in french, some people replied. It makes me wonder about (so called ?) progressists on a moderated news group criticizing a french contributor who complained because his french posts were never sent. It was about cultural imperialism. He was replied (more or less) that it was really a joke that french criticize anglo-saxons for cultural imperialism and anyway, english was a lingua franca on this ng and throughout usenet so he would just have to cope with it...

Good to see it's not like this here.

=====

for GDGoodman ([REDACTED]) :

I'll try to make a summary of my previous post.

I'm working in a book shop specialized in the arab world, in Paris, and we received last week the first issue of a palestinian art magazine edited in Ramallah, in the occupied territories. I just decided to reproduce their presentation letter with their fax number so that interested people could get in touch with them. They don't seem to have Internet access (like most people on the world...).

The magazine is supposed to become an interdisciplinary art forum (which probably sounds quite pompous on our side of the world but might mean different things there), a place where they can share new visions and be in touch with currents developed abroad from which they had been cut off for a long time.

They say that the troubled times they live are the source of a cultural and artistic renewal that leads to high quality creations.

This letter, and the joined issue is supposed to be a bridge across mediterranean (?) to places beyond. They hope to be able to publish this magazine twice a year, depending on local conditions.

En vous souhaitant une bonne lecture, nous vous prions d'agréer Madame, Monsieur, l'expression de nos sentiments chaleureux. (sincerely yours,)

Le comité de rédaction.

Ougarit
c/o Hussein BARGHOUTH
Cultural Studies Department
Bir Zeit University
P.O.BOX 14 - Bir Zeit
Palestine
fax : (972 2) 995 78 10 ou (972 2) 995 76 56

=====

for Neil (██████ (esperanto))

Je m'appelle Jean-Christophe, Jean-Claude c'est mon père mais je ne crois pas que tu le connaisse.

La revue est bilingue, une partie française, une partie arabe. Je n'ai pas pris le temps de la lire (je ne connais pas encore assez bien l'arabe pour commenter la deuxième partie anyway).

Je suis mal placé pour parler de la langue des colons mais il me semble que toutes les langues majeures (du point de vue de la quantité de locuteurs) le sont parcequ'elles ont été la langue d'un peuple en position de supériorité à un moment de l'histoire. Donc on peut considérer une langue comme un média privilégié dans une aire culturelle donnée. A toi de choisir ton public.

Quant à leur utilisation du Français, je ne trouve pas ça bizarre vu "l'importance" qu'a eu la France dans cette région à une certaine époque. Peut-être que leur niveau de conscience n'est pas encore parvenu à la critique de l'impérialisme culturel... Mais je pense que le multilinguisme est quelque chose d'autre que ça (I mean l'absence de critique de l'impérialisme culturel). Le multilinguisme est une situation 'normale', c'est la standardisation unilingue qui ne l'est pas (IMHO).

=====

Amicalement,
Jean-Christophe.

=====

Stand up, all victims of oppression
For the tyrants fear your might
Don't cling so hard to your possessions
For you have nothing, if you have no rights
Let racist ignorance be ended
For respect makes empires fall
Freedom is merely privilege extended
Unless enjoyed by one and all

So come brothers and sisters
For the struggle carries on
The Internationale
Unites the world in song
So comrades come rally
For this is the time and place
The internationale ideal
Unites the human race

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116. **Gabrielle Welford**

Re: poetry performance

Sun 7 Jul 1996

nHi Christopher. My question is where are the women? Mina Loy began publishing around 1914. And other _Others_ folks. And and and.. gab.

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117. **Herb Levy**

Subtext Readings for July & August, solicitation for Fall readers

Sun 7 Jul 1996

I don't think that the last two Subtext readings curated by Nico Vassilakis have been posted yet, so here they are:

July 18th

Noemie Maxwell & (from Vancouver) Lisa Robertson (followed by a short, uncurated performance by visiting composer Ellen Fullman)

August 15th

Bryant Mason & (from Oregon) F A Nettelbeck (who will perform some collaborations with Seattle-area composer/performer Wayne Horvitz)

All readings start at 7:30 pm on the third Thursday of each month, at the Speakeasy Cafe, in Seattle's Belltown district.

See you there.

If any writers on the list know that they'll be in the Northwest this fall, please let me know via e-mail (address below). There's still some spaces available.

Bests

Herb

Herb Levy



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118. **Ron Silliman**

Listpersonship

Sun 7 Jul 1996

This will sort of be all over the place, but I got piqued by the discussion about von Hallberg's participation (and by extension, of others in a similar position).

My personal guess with regards to Bob not belonging to this (or any other) list is simply that he imagines himself as having better things to do with his time/energy. Ultimately, I think it falls outside our own ability to judge another's intentions. It's like suggesting that, say, Bruce Andrews is politically incorrect because he doesn't choose to own a computer.

There is also a certain hubris in suggesting that this list, as distinct from CAP-L, Wr-eye-tings, The Sixties, the Derrida, Deleuze, Baudrillard, Fluxus, High Tech Marketing or any other list is or is not at the center of the information universe.

But beyond those two very big caveats, the question is not a bad one. There is a very distinct phenomenon on many campuses of people, some of them "senior critical" or even directly poetry heavyweights, who do not participate in whatever avenues the scene in their vicinity takes. I recall being amazed that James E.B. Breslin, a favorite professor of mine at Cal, who could speak passionately about post-WW poetry and sympathetically read a wide range of it, never seemed to think to actually attend a poetry reading in Berkeley, let alone San Francisco. It was as if there was a total disconnect. Similarly, students and faculty at Stanford (with the notable exception of Marjorie Perloff) seem to find San Francisco impossibly far away. And I've met one person connected with the Stanford writing scene for over a decade who claims (facetiously?) never to

have physically laid eyes on Gilbert Sorrentino. I suspect the examples with regards to NYC are at least as mind boggling.

It is, as I think everyone of us knows all too well, very possible for people to be "professionally engaged" with contemporary literature without ever connecting to it as an active social phenomenon, something going on in their town. Sometimes that's just a reclusive personality (hermetic types from Anne-Marie Albiach to Karl Young are legion). I once knew a poet, someone who published several books in the 1970s, edited a magazine and published a few terrific books of other peoples, who hated to meet writers, because they were never the perfect beings he envisioned from their poems. I've also known others who had a seriously ill child, partner or parent, who were equally removed.

But what may be situational or neurotic can also be utilized cynically, and I think that was the question being suggested by someone like Bob having to have his inputs "forwarded" to the list. It suggests both that he's not so out of touch as to not know about its existence, but somehow too something (fill in your paranoia here) to be bothered to participate directly.

Of course, the day this list becomes the transparent medium of all poetry (or even of all post-New American poetry), it will be far too unwieldy to have any further value. Its value consists precisely through the work of people who do participate. And, frankly, it matters much more what somebody who actively participates on this list thinks than it does some distant critic who's not clued in. Why not badger Fred Jameson? Or Andrew Ross? Or, or, or?

How does von Hallberg's response, detailed and serious as it was (I can't tell if Aldon misrepresented him or not, although knowing the two of them I'm inclined to buy Nielson's account), differ from, say, Catherine Stimpson saying in the NY Times on the day that the MacArthur Foundation (whose fellowship process she directs) awarded a grant to Richard Howard that the fellowships were being given to those who are "pushing the envelope"? von Hallberg at least knows what the issues are.

It seems to me that a much closer and more tangible form of "passive aggressive" relation to any list like this one (including this one) comes from those people who function as "pure lurkers," who actively want to get some of the value produced by this collective mind (to use Marc Andreessen's definition of the internet) without wanting to contribute themselves. This one-way relationship falls somewhere between pure consumption and parasitism proper. If I were feeling intemperate (and I have my moments), I'd be inclined to suggest a rule on the order of deleting anyone who doesn't contribute to the discussion, say, once per month.

Now that's a modest proposal...

Ron Silliman



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119. **JOEL LEWIS**

Re: Tate/Pound/African-Americans

Mon 8 Jul 1996

memory is hazy.... but Tate does write the intro to Melvin Tolson's Libretto for the Republic of Liberia (??) in th 50's, remember the intro as serving as the official New Crit blessing on the African_american Modernist.

Joel Lewis

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120. **Aldon L. Nielsen**

Re: Tate

Mon 8 Jul 1996

By all means read Walter's essay, and tell him to send me a copy!

meanwhile, read Tate in I'll Take My Stand, his novel, The Fathers, his collected poetry reviews, his bio. of Stonewall Jackson, the intro. to Tolson that Lorenzo spoke about so effectively at the Maine conference --

AND it wdn't hurt to read the poems again --

I've been away from studying Tate too long to know what's been done just recently -- so fill me in, via the list, on anything further you come across --

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121. **Kevin Killian**

Re: Listpersonship/aldon/rvh

Mon 8 Jul 1996

At 12:19 PM 7/8/96, maria damon wrote:

>i'm somewhat struck by how a discussion about race, sociology and literary
>criticism has turned into a discussion of list etiquette. this is indeed
>one of
>the problems i think rob wilson touches on in his scathing "covering cherub"
>posts. volatile issues of materialist criticism get watered down into an
>internicene critique of our own teensy weensy little hierarchy of
>poetry-critics

Poetry-critics? Am I naive in my assumption that the poetics list was at least originally intended as a place for the discussion of poetics by *poets*?

this not to say that any one remark about list-politics and academic politics is trivial or ill-directed, but the cumulative effect of what draws discussion and what dies in silence is noteworthy. likewise, chris s's query last week about erotics and race, or aldon's challenge to the view that interracial sex is politically radical both got no pick-up.

Again, this is a *poetics* list. I'm sorry, but I find this holier-than-though attitude of your post very offensive, this accusing of 400 people of racism because no one picked up on threads that *you* found important.

Dodie Bellamy

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122. **Jonathan A Levin**

Re: Tate/Pound/African-Americans

Mon 8 Jul 1996

Just a footnote to Maria Damon's first note--

Marketing Modernisms (I think that title is correct) is forthcoming from Michigan, and is edited by Stephen Watt and Kevin J.H. Dettmar. I know the editors just received final proofs, so maybe the book will appear later this year.

Jonathan Levin

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123. **Robert J Wilson**

Re: Covering Cherub

Mon 8 Jul 1996

Dear Jerry Rothenberg, Thanks for the return of the uncanny Covering Cherub as a critical category/weapon to be used against those who would depoliticize and/or monopolize the sublime of vision in a narrow, lyric solipsism kind of way (HB). And one can only appreciate and applaud the detailed and painstaking and broadhearted way you have fought to keep this 'return to paradise' open to diverse traditions and contenders that the northeast hegemony has never heard of reckoning. All I meant, in this devious context of American liberalist poetics, that a third and mediating level (the state and its ideological agents, complicit, unconscious, sleepwalking and otherwise) has to be thought through, because when somebody tells me (arguing on a large scale, absorbing diverse poets left and right) that American poets work 'to consolidate empire at home and abroad' etc, then I say, let us blast that Covering Cherub out of the line of vision so that a non-imperialist poetics and a more trenchantly politicized vision of what trans/US poetics could and should be-- to invite such people as 'keynote' speakers at Orono or otherwise seems to me a dereliction of duty and vision.

When you know the details on what books, projects, essays etc such people have deviously rejected "anonymously," then I say let us take those people out and off the scene so that some poetic deep thinking can begin "In the Middle of [Reified] Modernism in the Middle of [Late] Capitalism on the Outskirts of New York [Chicago]." I am tired of crossing a desert of dead vision even if it means, for me or for some, that in visionary terms I can 'enter the paradise of Blakean heaven." That such people read and appropriate all the emergent energies of counter-poetics makes it all the more devious and urgent to get some agon going by which to overturn the temples of the moneylenders and their market-friendly babble.

And of course I look forward to your visit to Hawaii where you can enter into the Tinfoil/Bamboo Ridge/redflea indigenous poetics of the local in some helpful way. The president of HLAC (Hawaii Lit Arts Council), Gabriel Welford, urged me to send you some essays and works on and around local/Pacific poetics, and I just remembered I will do so. The Covering Cherub is out here too, and it may (at times) be me. take care, Rob Wilson

On Sun, 7 Jul 1996, Jerry Rothenberg wrote:

For Rob Wilson, if it's of any interest.

In the second issue of SULFUR (1981, altho it doesn't seem to me that long ago) I had an attack piece vis a vis Harold Bloom called "The Critic As Exterminating Angel" -- at the end of which I go into a few pages about the Covering Cherub ("who in one tradition may be the Exterminating Angel himself, the [Hebrew] Malakh ha-Mavat" and who "guards the Tree of Life & blocks the return of fallen man to Paradise.") Bloom writes on this in considerably more detail and I'm in fact turning it on him, polemically, for reasons explained in the essay. Eshleman, who was editing Sulfur then as now, was very good on this matter, although I don't know off hand where -- if anywhere -- he has it in writing.

In that context, I think, Covering Cherubs are much more foreboding than what you're suggesting -- what I thought of at the time as that which "not only keeps the poet from the paradise of poetry but from a natural relationship to all those poets who inhabit it." I pin the label on Bloom in that one, tho there's clearly more to it than that.

Jerome Rothenberg



ps. If you're in Hawaii when I get there in September, maybe we can meet & talk about this & related matters.

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124. **Dean Taciuch**
Re: poetry performance
Mon 8 Jul 1996

I agree with Tony Green's position on actors performing the poetry--best to have other poets reading the works. The readers need to be concerned with the medium itself--the language. I don't think actors generally would do this--their concern would be with the meaning, the emotions, of the poem. The temptation would be, I think, to render "dramatic" readings of the poems, which would damage them in the same way as using, say "dramatic" lighting to make sure the audience "got the point." In Joan Retallack's recent book of interviews with John Cage, Cage had a similar problem with using Julliard musicians to perform his compositions--they try to emote, rather than allowing the music to occur. Same with the poetry, I think--actors would tend to force meanings out, rather than allowing them to occur in the language.

Dean Taciuch
[REDACTED]

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125. **Gwyn McVay**
Re: Tate/Pound/African-Americans
Mon 8 Jul 1996

Steve, in the same vein, what about Berryman's Henry Pussycat?

On Sun, 7 Jul 1996, Steven Howard Shoemaker wrote:

*Thanks for responding Maria. I'm trying right now to apply some of your insights from the Stein chapter in *the dark end of the street* to a reading of a piece of "Yiddish" doggerel that was Pound's contribution to *An "Objectivists" Anthology. Trying to think about what happens when an "in-between language" is staked out for use by a representative of the white, male, gentile modernist establishment rather by a member of the "minority" culture...*

steve

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126. **maria damon**
Re: Tate/Pound/African-Americans
Mon 8 Jul 1996

steve: fascinating! could you send me that piece by pound. i shudder to think what the objectivists made of this. it seems that in this case, you are dealing

with something more charged than a "white male gentile modernist" but someone who dedicated much of his life and risked his national standing to participate in the war on the Jews,,, in other words, a confirmed anti-Semite of the un-subtle kind.--md

In message <[REDACTED]> UB Poetics discussion group writes:

> Thanks for responding Maria. I'm trying right now to apply some of your
> insights from the Stein chapter in *the dark end of the street* to a
> reading of a piece of "Yiddish" doggerel that was Pound's contribution to
> *An "Objectivists" Anthology. Trying to think about what happens when
> an "in-between language" is staked out for use by a representative of
> the white, male, gentile modernist establishment rather by a member of
> the "minority" culture...
>
> steve

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127. **Henry Gould**

Re: Tate/Pound/African-Americans

Mon 8 Jul 1996

On Mon, 8 Jul 1996 09:44:41 -0400 Gwyn McVay said:

>Steve, in the same vein, what about Berryman's Henry Pussycat?

See Miao Filene's monograph, "Catty Gossip, Anemic Cad : Berryman's Pseudo-Animalism in _The Dream Songs_", Manx University & Veterinarian Institute Press, 1995. A good critique of Berryman's uncritical presumptive style, employing an analysis of his use of CATalepsis and DOGberryisms in ahistorical and super-humanist frames (or, as she calls them, "c-oops"). - Henry Gould >..<

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128. **Joe Amato**

Re: Listpersonship

Mon 8 Jul 1996

ron, yo, i'm over here man...

hey: i can only imagine, again, what subject position someone is writing from who feels free to have his post forwarded (this latter construction the most lenient i can manage) to a list of some 400 plus folks, many or most of whom he doesn't know... i would never, never do this myself, and i've been hanging around online for some time now, here and there... which means either (1) robert von hallberg has no working knowledge of list communities, and doesn't

see this as a cheeky move or (2) he really doesn't care if this is seen as a cheeky move... let's be nice and go with (1)... which feeds my hunches about how senior folks in our profession, on the avg., have a print-based sense of themselves... i won't get into all of the various twists and turns of this latter assertion at this point... but von hallberg clearly has a critical rep. at stake, yes, and all's i'm asking that he do is subscribe to poetics formally to address what he takes as a challenge to same from aldon...

as to whether we can talk "about" anybody who's not on this list: well as you say, this ain't the center of the poetics world or anything... but again, me talking about, say, andrew ross is not quite the same thing as me talking about robert von hallberg... i mean, look at the dynamic that's developed: from now on, any time i write "robert von hallberg" i feel his absent presence... mebbe it's just me, but it's like i'm talking at once behind and in front of his back... and I DON'T KNOW THE MAN, and this is not my way... and this all b/c he stuck only his Big toe into the pool to test its temperature, as it were... whereas ross hasn't done so, except to the extent that his *public* post about the sokal affair (thankfully) ended up here (and if you wanna know what i think about ross's little stunt, just ask and i'll send you a 45kb draft of a piece i'm finishing up for _ebr_ on why the sokal situation shoulda been electronic from the get-go)...

so intentions and such aside, fact is that this list dynamic has been altered for me wrt

r-o-b-e-r-t v-o-n h-a-l-l-b-e-r-g... and i expect for a few others anyway...

now, as to "pure lurkers": ain't really no such thing, is there?... i mean, this presumes that there are some folks who will *never* leave lurk mode... granted, there may be many who rarely do... but at least we can imagine them, say, *listening* to some of what's being espoused by mouthier types like you and me and ____ (i assume they're not merely processing the messages into oblivion)... and listening is worth something, ron... now as i see it we should be working, all of us, to try to pull more folks out of lurk, make for more comfortable regions hereabouts... and it happens: there have been a number of folks who've waited quite some time, by their own accounts, to enter into the public discussion (i suspect in fact your remarks may provoke same, as i'm sure you're aware)... and this takes time, and it's time that allows these spaces to mutate, to register, say, different sorts of conversational possibilities---which is to say different gendering, different cultural potentials, and such like... so your "modest proposal" (setting aside how easy it would be to defeat same functionally) gives exceedingly short-shrift to the possibility of helping this space accommodate---if not all tastes, predispositions, what have you---at least a somewhat broader range of interests and motivations than you and i and ____ can hope to represent...

and again, i'm preaching to the choir now---you know this already...

ok?... just so's we're talking *to* each other, yknow...

peace//

joe

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129. **Christopher Reiner**
Witz Announcement

Mon 8 Jul 1996

Hi everyone,

Can this count as my once-a-month message?.....

WITZ: A Journal of Contemporary Poetics

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By Mark Wallace

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By Loss Pequeno Glazier

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130. **Burt Kimmelman**

Re: Listpersonship

Mon 8 Jul 1996

Ron,

I agree with you except for your suggestion that each list member have to say SOMETHING to the list at least once a month; then there'd be a lot of meaningless chatter, I fear, which demeans all the good talk that often also takes place. No, the list is fine as it is, terribly unfair at times, perhaps, but also incredibly free (or at least as free as we want to be since we may be worried about having what we say on the list repeated elsewhere; of course, again (as I said the other day--and this is no news to you but I'll say it anyway here), we're in a technowarp and questions about copy righting, patenting, authored (single and multiple) and authorless texts (even linearity?) are not to be resolved easily. I know I'm saying the obvious here but perhaps it needs saying and then maybe we can all move on to other matters?

Burt

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131. **Steven Howard Shoemaker**

Re: Tate/Pound/African-Americans

Mon 8 Jul 1996

Maria, Yes, I treat him as a "confirmed anti-Semite" throughout, and have already written about his anti-Semitism and how it affects his relations with Zukofsky in a piece that will be in the collection on Zuk edited by Scroggins, and due out anytime, i guess, from U of Alabama Press (any word, Mark?). What makes things complicated is that, unlike an anti-Semite like Eliot (whose public pronouncements are actually much less virulent), here is Pound in the

early '30s working with all these Jews! And, as Casillo shows and I am seeing as well, there is a thread of admiration, and competition, running thru the anti-Semitism. The point is not that this admiration mitigates the anti-Semitism but that it is weirdly part of it... and that ties into Pound's need to "try on" the Yiddish... steve

Maria wrote:

>

> steve: fascinating! could you send me that piece by pound. i shudder to think

> what the objectivists made of this. it seems that in this case, you are dealing

> with something more charged than a "white male gentile modernist" but someone

> who dedicated much of his life and risked his national standing to participate

> in the war on the Jews,,, in other words, a confirmed anti-Semite of the

> unsubtle kind.--md

>

> In message <[REDACTED]> UB Poetics

> discussion group writes:

> > Thanks for responding Maria. I'm trying right now to apply some of your

> > insights from the Stein chapter in *the dark end of the street* to a

> > reading of a piece of "Yiddish" doggerel that was Pound's contribution to

> > *An "Objectivists" Anthology. Trying to think about what happens when

> > an "in-between language" is staked out for use by a representative of

> > the white, male, gentile modernist establishment rather by a member of

> > the "minority" culture...

> >

> > steve

>

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132. **Rod Smith**

Re: Listpersonship

Mon 8 Jul 1996

Ron wrote:

>If I were feeling

intemperate (and I have my moments), I'd be inclined to >suggest a rule

on the order of deleting anyone who doesn't contribute >to the

discussion, say, once per month.

Ron, do we really want that many posts! My mailbox is always already stuffed.

Rod

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133. **maria damon**

Re: Listpersonship/aldon/rvh

Mon 8 Jul 1996

i'm somewhat struck by how a discussion about race, sociology and literary criticism has turned into a discussion of list etiquette. this is indeed one of the problems i think rob wilson touches on in his scathing "covering cherub" posts. volatile issues of materialist criticism get watered down into an internicene critique of our own teensy weensy little hierarchy of poetry-critics this not to say that any one remark about list-politics and academic politics is trivial or ill-directed, but the cumulative effect of what draws discussion and what dies in silence is noteworthy. likewise, chris s's query last week about erotics and race, or aldon's challenge to the view that interracial sex is politically radical both got no pick-up. md

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134. **Rod Smith**

Re: and john cage and car sickness

Mon 8 Jul 1996

In response to Mark's post of a few days ago. I think Cage's relationship to "the western tradition" was complex & highly contextual. & of course he could get angry on occasion. The maddest I ever saw him was at a concert at the Philips Collection, the pianist had chosen the program to be performed, which included Ives, Crumb, Cage, &, I believe he had wanted to play a longish piece by Liszt (clue, clue) which was turned down, or maybe he did play it, don't remember. Any case he played one of Cage's pieces from the fifties very badly. The pianist told us he had only read the score the day before. At the intermission he said to the curator, in a very congenial manner, "thank the pianist for me, and ask him never to play my music again" and we left.

By the time I knew him, his work, & that of many artists he felt kinship with, was internationally acclaimed. So his energy was consumed by doing the work rather than railing against a tradition. Also, I'm not sure it's accurate to say he left the or a tradition-- rather that he & others played a part in changing it.

Rod

Mark Wallace wrote:

Hey Rod:

Thanks for the clarification on my earlier remarks relative to John Cage and his feelings towards the musical traditions he leaves behind. But your post leaves me with a question I'd like to hear more from you about. When you say that "at a certain point, Cage simply didn't need that tradition anymore" (I'm paraphrasing), are you implying that he left it behind without antagonism, just decided it could be ignored? Or, if he continued to have reactions towards it, what were the nature of those reactions? Loathe is, I can see, probably too strong. But what, from your understanding, would be the proper way to characterize his feelings towards the tradition he leaves behind? There's something about your post that seems almost to be characterizing his reaction as strangely unemotional--i.e., oh there it is, I don't need that, it really doesn't bother me and let's talk about something else. That seems to me a little bit hard to believe--you're trained in a whole tradition, work in it for many years, and then one day decide it's not significant, and leave it without much feeling either way? I'm just curious as to whether you could try to characterize more fully his reaction to what he left behind.

mark

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135. **c.g. guertin**

Re: Listpersonship

Mon 8 Jul 1996

Lurker equals/does not equal listener? Is this a 'bad' moral equation? Silence is evil or simply undesirable?

cg

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136. **Joe Amato**

Re: Listpersonship/aldon/rvh

Mon 8 Jul 1996

but maria, isn't this just IT?... i mean isn't it exactly the case, *exactly*---that list politics, intentionally or otherwise, reflect the ongoing silencing of Other politics?... ergo attending to list politics, however one (which is to say, e.g., me) goes about same, is not merely an exercise in formal maneuvers, but a very (forgive me) *real* attempt not to be dismissive of such political undercurrents?... isn't it the case that issues of 'race, sociology and literary criticism' are over there (and where else could there be but print?) *and* over here?... i mean, if there's a there there, is there no here here?...

best,

joe

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137. **James Brook**
Re: poetry performance
Mon 8 Jul 1996

A case study of actors performing poetry:

Last fall in Paris I had the opportunity of hearing Bei Dao read at the new Maison de la Poesie at the recently renovated Theatre Moliere, sponsored by Covering Cherub Enterprises. Admission was 50 francs--about \$10--which seemed a little high. But we had to pay twice: the young woman at the counter wanted to know whether we had "reservations." No, we didn't. She made a big show of consulting her list, shaking her head, and making discouraging sounds--before turning back to us and declaring that she *might* be able to get us in. We paid, got tickets, and were ushered to our numbered seats in the half-empty theater.

Exactly on time the curtain(!) was raised to reveal the backlit silhouettes of five people seated on stage: an actor (Michael Lonsdale), a presenter, a critic, an interpreter (not Bei Dao's translator), and, off to the side, the poet himself. I guess they were all getting paid out of the ticket price. . . .

At least there was no dramatic music. . . .

The presenter presented in a vaguely presentational way. The actor moved up to the podium and gave his idea of a "poetic" delivery of the French translation of a short poem. Bei Dao was asked to read it in Chinese. And then the critic jumped in and harassed the poet with a series of profound questions in the form of retarded little essays about "the difficulty" of Bei Dao's poetry and its "problematic condensation." These stupid remarks were interpreted for an annoyed-looking Bei Dao, who replied brusquely to the effect that poetry tended to be "difficult" and "condensed." And so on for two hours.

In the course of the evening we heard no more than a dozen poems--massacred by the actor, whose dramatic and strictly-from-wardrobe-romantic air contrasted sharply with Bei Dao's seriousness and intensity. But it was the critic who really monopolized the stage--the large mouth in a small frame couldn't contain itself. But of course the French have a horror of poetry, a horror expressed in curious ways: they elevate it into a spectacle for the culturati, they encapsulate it as part of "the national heritage," and they carefully wrap it in criticism. They prefer the package to the contents. Like so many people.

Progressing a few months in time while digressing just a little in topic, I should also report on another "performance" at the Maison de la Poesie at the Theatre Moliere sponsored by Songs of Experience et Cie: Michel Deguy in

Conversation with Jacques Derrida. This event was billed as a meeting between Poetry and Philosophy. I assure you that Philosophy won the match. Michel Deguy began by introducing himself and his "friend Jacques" and outlining their program: to engage in a dialogue on the reciprocal relations between their disciplines. Ever courteous and by his own admission a little unprepared for the occasion, Deguy asked Derrida to go first. Deguy was surprised to see Derrida pull a sheaf of papers several inches thick from his briefcase and begin reading--and reading and reading and reading and reading. In fact, Derrida read for almost an hour straight as he went through all the problems posed by the first words of one of Deguy's poems, which was written in the form of a love letter addressed to "Ma chair" [My flesh] instead of the more usual "Ma chere" [My dear]. There was no attempt at dialogue; Deguy was never questioned or given an opening. He just sat there in evident discomfort and astonishment, crossing and uncrossing his legs, unsure of where to put his hands. . . . I don't think that Derrida noticed the other obvious pun: "Ma chaire" [My pulpit, rostrum, university position]. When Derrida finally relented, Deguy said he didn't at all know how to reply to such a demonstration and so he finished the evening by reading a few unrelated journal entries and taking a few even less related questions from the audience.

Now, do I have to stress that my remarks are not an "attack" on actors, critics, or philosophers? They have their uses. But what I saw at these two events was a hatred for poetry that masqueraded as a love for poetry, a love that wished to consume its object, to become its object, to take the place of its object (Freudian references intended).

Your reporter,

James Brook

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138. **Christopher Filkins**

Re: poetry performance

Mon 8 Jul 1996

Dean & Tony's positions are misinformed. An actor emotes or doesn't emote according to the direction they receive. There is a reason why we have directors after all. The virtue of actors is their ability to chameleon anyone who comes their way. Do not slam actors as emoting fools when they can do so much more.

Christopher Filkins

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139. **Henry Gould**

Re: in defense of parasites

Mon 8 Jul 1996

Lurkers win my admiration for their self control. Now as I was saying about Charles S. Peirce...

Perhaps John Milton's classic SONNET (yall hear that? I said S*O*n*n*e*t) is appropriate here:

Thine e-air, Lord, doth buzz with eerie speed
Postings innumerable from fair and noir;
Oft over snail mail doth thine angels soar,
Froward to advance, or staunch impede
Eelectronic eels athwart thy deep--
Yea, over hill and dale and chip and bleep
They fling their witty bits, or, bootless, weep;
Thus many a mungy wolf turn eep-eeep sheep.

Yet I, gone blind from staring at yon screen,
Will not despair, nor call o'duty shirk;
These keys annoy not I; my fingers keen
Tap yet, yon delphic "Ode on a String Bean".
- Technohysterical, tis true - and yet - 'twill work!
They also serve, who only sit and lurk.

- Henry "Johnny B. Milt" Gould

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140. **Judy Roitman**

Re: poetry performance

Mon 8 Jul 1996

Hi Christopher Whipple. Response to your notion abt actors. Distaste for actors reading poetry for me goes with the felt difference between stand-ups and actors. "Stand-ups can't act" is a way of noticing that stand-ups do not seem to know they are assuming a role (even though, of course, they are). Actors always assume roles. Rather than actors you want really good poet-readers. Last year I had the pleasure of hearing Robert Creeley reading Williams et al.

Amen. There was also the radio reading of Whitman with the Prairie Home Companion guy, the Deliverance guy (is my memory correct?) and Allen Ginsberg. The first two were self-conscious and silly, but AG's reading was tremendously illuminating. He *inhabited* Whitman's line is if it were his true home (why not? since it is). No change (to parallel Tony Green) from AG reading AG,

but, as Tony put it, "a real intelligent sense of what the text was doing at any point."

Worth finding if anyone knows how to find it.

----- Judy Roitman
| "Glad to have Math, University of Kansas | these copies of things
Lawrence, KS 66045 | after a while." [REDACTED]
Larry Eigner, 1927-1996

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141. **Dean Taciuch**
Re: poetry performance
Mon 8 Jul 1996

| *Dean & Tony's positions are misinformed.*

Not speaking for Tony Green, but I may in fact be uninformed rather than misinformed (I'm not actor, never studied acting, etc). But it is the actor's "ability to chameleon" that may be the problem. I'm not saying they are "emoting fools"; the question is one of focus--an actor looks for a character to get into. Yes, actors have directors--but poets don't, you see. Would an actor assume the character of the poet whose work is being read? That misses the point, doesn't it? So would, I fear, any attempt to "act" a poem out--it places the focus elsewhere (on character, emotion, story) rather than on the language. It shows, I think, a distrust of the audience as well--the idea that poetry needs to be a bit predigested (by the actor or director), already worked out so that the masses can more easily absorb it. So I'm not knocking actors--but performing poetry is not acting. . .

Dean Taciuch

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142. **maria damon**
Re: Listpersonship/aldon/rvh
Mon 8 Jul 1996

In message <[REDACTED]> joe a writes:

> but maria, isn't this just IT?... i mean isn't it exactly the case,
> *exactly*---that list politics, intentionally or otherwise, reflect the
> ongoing silencing of Other politics?... ergo attending to list politics,
> however one (which is to say, e.g., me) goes about same, is not merely an
> exercise in formal maneuvers, but a very (forgive me) *real* attempt not to
> be dismissive of such political undercurrents?... isn't it the case that

> issues of 'race, sociology and literary criticism' are over there (and
> where else could there be but print?) *and* over here?... i mean, if
> there's a there there, is there no here here?...
>
>

With all due respect, joe, for your politics and the sophistication thereof, no, i don't think the discussion of whether or not bob von hallberg signs onto POETIX is the same as a discussion of how to do responsible, anti-racist scholarship in poetry and poetics. I was hoping for a discussion of the latter, not the former.

so, how DO we respond, in our scholarship, to the challenges posed by both Bob and Aldon in their point counterpoint, regardless of who is quoting whom more accurately?

md

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143. **Robert Drake**

Re: Listpersonship

Mon 8 Jul 1996

| ... a modest proposal

that wouldnt be a Litterary ILLusion, would it? there, my post fr th month, and only 8 days into it...

lbd

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144. **Elisabeth W. Joyce**

in defense of parasites

Mon 8 Jul 1996

In Defense of Parasites

As a silent lurker on this list, I find a need to respond to Ron Silliman's remarks about lurkers as parasites. Yes, I am a parasite, but not in the sense that I want to kill the list, to suck out of it all of its essences. Instead, I think of myself in terms of the food which the list offers me and which I digest in thoughtful silence. I recall scoffing at silent members of classes in graduate school, thinking that they were not effectively immersed in their pursuits, but in retrospect perhaps I misjudged them. I am not on the cutting edge of the field, nor will I ever be, but I am deeply invested in it and in what it means to me. I teach a heavy load of courses and have two small children. I live in relative isolation. The poetics list is a lifeline for me, composed of active intellectuals engaged in

response to social and political effects on literature (poetry!). I pay attention to what you say; I am learning here. I sift through your endless reams of material for the more often than not superlative assessments of a wide range of topics. I am inspired by your reading lists. I am even moved by you (to tears even) as when you eulogized Larry Eigner, bringing in his life, his personality, and as always, his poetry. I am a reasonably active scholar, but I can't speak right now--perhaps later when my life is less strapped--but this doesn't mean that parasites are a negative force on this list. Rather, I would suggest, we are an everpresent supportive force, that audience which poetry often fears it lacks.

Lisa Joyce (██████)

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145. **maria damon**

Re: Listpersonship/aldon/rvh

Mon 8 Jul 1996

In message <v01520d00ae069d8574ae@[205.134.228.153]> UB Poetics discussion

group writes:

> At 12:19 PM 7/8/96, maria damon wrote:

> >i'm somewhat struck by how a discussion about race, sociology and literary
> >criticism has turned into a discussion of list etiquette. this is indeed
> >one of

> >the problems i think rob wilson touches on in his scathing "covering cherub"

> >posts. volatile issues of materialist criticism get watered down into an
> >internicene critique of our own teensy weensy little hierarchy of
> >poetry-critics

>

> Poetry-critics? Am I naive in my assumption that the poetics list was at
> least originally intended as a place for the discussion of poetics by
> *poets*?

>

> > this not to say that any one remark about list-politics and academic
> > politics

> >is trivial or ill-directed, but the cumulative effect of what draws
> discussion

> >and what dies in silence is noteworthy. likewise, chris s's query last week
> >about erotics and race, or aldon's challenge to the view that interracial
> >sex is

> >politically radical both got no pick-up.

>

> Again, this is a *poetics* list. I'm sorry, but I find this
> holier-than-though attitude of your post very offensive, this accusing of
> 400 people of racism because no one picked up on threads that *you* found
> important.
>
> Dodie Bellamy

i'm puzzled. this is the second time since the conference that you've come down on me for holier than thouness; both times, i've felt misrepresented in the way you characterize my posts. i have not accused anyone of racism, nor in general would i, since i find that kind of personal judgement to be counterproductive and not too meaningful. i'm saying i was disappointed at the way the discussion went. in my reference to poetry-critics, i was referring specifically to the discussion of robert von hallberg's presence and/or absence on the list and what it means. he is a critic rather than a poet; aldon too is a subject in this discussion, and it is true that he is a poet, but it was his work as a critic that was being discussed. i think "senior scholars" is the term joe used. bests, md

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146. **David Baratier**

Chapbook Contest

Mon 8 Jul 1996

Pavement Saw Press 1996/1997 chapbook contest

\$500 and 25 copies of the winning chapbook will be awarded for the finest collection of poetry received. The judge will be announced in an upcoming issue of AWP and Poet's and Writer's. Submit up to 32 pages of poetry. Include a cover letter with your name, address, phone number, poem titles, publication credits, and a brief biography. Do not include your name anywhere on the manuscript. Entry fee: \$7. Make all checks payable to _Pavement Saw Press_. All entries must be postmarked by December 20, 1996, for consideration in this year's contest. Each entrant will receive a copy of the winning chapbook provided a 6 1/2 by 9 1/2 SASE with \$1.01 in postage is included. All manuscripts will be recycled. Send all entries to:

Pavement Saw Press
Chapbook Contest
7 James Street
Scotia, NY 12302

About last years winner:

Pavement Saw Press

proudly announces the winner of our 1995-1996 chapbook award:

Permutations of the Gallery

by Joshua McKinney

Poems from this collection first appeared in publications such as the Columbia Poetry Review, Denver Quarterly, Situation, Santa Barbara Review, and Willow Springs.

Publication, a prize of five hundred dollars and ten percent of the book run are awarded to the winner of the annual prize. *Permutations of the Gallery* was selected by Naton Leslie as the 1996 winner of the Pavement Saw Poetry Chapbook Award.

About the book:

Permutations of the Gallery is an ambitious collection, even if recklessly so. Joshua McKinney's poems struggle against the confines of syntax and literal sense, in order to arrive at a uniquely clear grasp of the truces we must maintain with time and spacial existence. To attempt to paraphrase these knotty and paradoxical poems would be akin to stating that Wallace Stevens wrote about the weather. Don't search for narrative threads here, poems about Queen Anne's Lace or cicadas, or paeans for our humdrum, domestic lives. And don't expect to read this book once. Naton Leslie

Joshua McKinney knows that philosophy is not an abstract matter, nor in anyway separate from our everyday lives. His poems show that to engage the world intimately, we need to _think_ it in the most particular ways. In *Permutations of the Gallery* family friends, nature, and a troubling social world are not givens, but rather questions by which we explore the twisting, disruptive, estatic, sometimes even annihilating terms of our existence.

Mark Wallace

A poetry held taut, that revels in economy and clarity, is filled with insights and syntactical compassion. I highly recommend *Permutations of the Gallery*. Simon Perchik

Published in a limited edition of 250 copies, perfect bound, 6 by 9 size

Price \$5.00, includes postage & handling. Checks payable to:

Pavement Saw Press

7 James Street

Scotia, NY 12302

Thanks



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147. **Gabrielle Welford**
Re: in defense of parasites

Mon 8 Jul 1996

Just wanted to thank Elizabeth Joyce for her heartfelt message about lurking. Me too, small kids, lots of work and lots of learning. Also occasional bleeps. Ron, you can't have meant US!! :-) What sort of creature were you thinking of? gab.

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148. **Gabrielle Welford**
Ekphrastic Poetry by Women (9/15/96; NEMLA 4/4-4/5) (fwd)

Mon 8 Jul 1996

North East Modern Language Association
April 4-5, 1997
Philadelphia, PA

Session: Image and Text Topic: Ekphrastic Poetry by Women There has been considerable interest recently in the genre of ekphrastic poetry, that is, in A.J. Heffernan's useful phrase, poems which are "verbal representations of visual representations." W.J.T. Mitchell has discussed the tendency of poems in the ekphrastic tradition to treat the image as a "female other." The genre, he writes, "tends to describe an object of visual pleasure and fascination from a masculine perspective, often to an audience understood to be masculine as well." Somewhat offhandedly, he continues: "All this would look quite different, of course, if my emphasis had been on ekphrastic poetry by women." The session seeks papers which put the emphasis exactly there, papers which discuss poetry in which the speaking and seeing subject of the text is a woman. Can a "female gaze" be characterized? What does it mean when a woman is in the position of viewer, respondent, "envoicer," maker of the poetic meaning. How do ekphrastic poems written by women complicate current theories of ekphrasis? Other critical questions that arise in this context: why this painting, and why now? What does it reveal about the poet's temperament, her character, her situation in time and place? what does it reveal about her sense of self as artist, her aesthetic, political and moral position vis-a-vis her chosen painter? Papers are invited about all historical periods.

Prospective panelists need not be members of NEMLA to submit a proposal; but selected panelists must be members of NEMLA by November 1, 1996 in order to have their names included in the convention program. Send a brief abstract of your paper, postmarked no later than September 15, 1996 to the

following address or email. Selected panelists will be notified no later than October 15, [REDACTED].

Sara Lundquist
Department of English
University of Toledo
Toledo, OH 43606
email: [REDACTED]

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149. **Joe Amato**

Re: Listpersonship/aldon/rvh

Mon 8 Jul 1996

maria, listen: let me set my own record straight here, or gay, or whatever, and w/o any rancor (really!): i find a certain degree of discomfort---aside from my intentionally (there i go again ron, shit!) provocative remarks addressed 'at' my neighbor, robert von hallberg---who, as i say, i've never met, but who teaches right down the street from me---i find a certain degree of discomfort in debating 'about' the point-counterpoint discussion twixt aldon and robert, w/o robert being t/here...

you wanna know what i think?... for one, i found robert von hallberg's remarks to be---

but you see, whereas i might backchannel my response to you and others with whom i feel a certain affinity---friendship, trust---and have over time owing to our online interaction, to go public with my opines given robert's 'entrance' on this list just doesn't feel right to me, i can't help it... this is a feeling i get, and i think it's justified... and so i'm stuck with examining why i feel so, and how this is a function of how this list discussion works...

and of course, were robert to make a formal entrance, i think you know me well enough to know that i wouldn't be shy about agreeing or disagreeing etc...

that said, i think i can offer this much as a relative rule-of-thumb from my pov: i tend to measure comments that have to do with minority and ethnic textual representation in terms of how well these latter play to my idea of good pedagogy, and good curricula... i mean to say that, aside from issues of canonicity per se, there are issues here having to do with WHO the students are who are being taught, of what their needs are, of where they're coming from, and of what we think we should be teaching them and how this plays off against their needs...

maria, just imagine what i think of certain comments made wrt this latter tendency of mine to measure same against pedagogy and curricula...

best,

joe

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150. **Eliza McGrand- CVA Guest**

performance & poetry: "measure carefully, can be toxic"

Mon 8 Jul 1996

i don't think it is a matter of actor/non-actor/poet reading as it is the way the poetry is read, the experience of the reader with poetry reading and audience, the dynamics of the situation.

i have heard more than anyone's share of poets reading badly. one all too common and painful scenario is the Dramatic Reader. acting and dramatic reading is, as one might expect, a highly skilled art, not to be embarked upon by the extravagantly undertalented. too often, a new writer will write a shaky melodramatic paraphrase of all the shaky melodramatic works written since the dawn of time. the ethos of reading for such work is an earnest, admonitory expression, lots of william shatner pauses, and a speeded-up pace whose only virtue is that it ends the exhibition more quickly. the melodramatic pauses and sudden shrieked words, no doubt inserted at the urging of some would-be instructor or other to "make it interesting," have all the lethal quality of high school plays.

on the other hand, i have, myself, succumbed to the I Am A Poet Reading Poetry style -- monotone, odd pronunciation, rhythm subsumed to a throaty growl, eyes glued to the page. i don't know why i succumb to this; can only guess that one sees it at enough respectable readings to make it the default.

the finest readers i've heard -- grace paley, galway kinnel, adrienne rich, martin espada, alicia ostriker, tim o'brien and larry heineman (prose), maxine kumin, carolyn forche, [doubtless more but i want to get on with this] -- tend to 1) read very slowly; poetry is compressed, tight, and requires much more work to parse, so if it is read too fast, it deconstructs into a blur of nothing; 2) seem, as larry heinemann has put it, to "see/hear/feel" the images as they read them. in other words, as the reader reads, they too are experiencing the writing. it lingers where a listener needs time to hear, speeds up where a listener is eager to hear more; 3) have enough confidence in the material not to need to jazz it up with shatnerian excesses (ala flannery o'connor quote in someone's signature ~ 'i've had as much of this pleasure as i can stand').

one reading comes to mind particularly -- martin espada reading with a jazz band. it sounds as if it would be horrible and i wasn't expecting much but it was one of the most extraordinary experiences of poetry i've ever had. martin has a deep basso voice, flexible, burred, resonant. he waited, took in the

rhythm of the jazz peice, then entered combining rhythm of poem and rhythm of music. paused. listened. let the music make itself part of the sound in a compelling way.

if i were putting together a collection of performed work, i'd listen for non-hoakey readings (dylan thomas' "child's christmas in wales" is a gorgeous antithesis of hoakey -- really lovely, resonant, hypnotic). and only use people i'd heard reading the peice. no room for surprises. and emphasize slowness, respect and tenderness for the words rather than efforts to make them more exciting.

for WWI poets, MUST BE SLOW. poems are extraordinary stories, and if not paused over, heard, then becomes a jumble of rhymes.

also, i don't see any women writers in there and i also wish i did. norton anthology of literature by women, as well as magazines of the time, are good source material. i've always wanted to hear more of how women of that time experienced WWI. i had a teacher in high school who lost her two shining older brothers, her lover, her cousins -- an entire generation of british men were wiped out in that ghastly mess. she went to germany after wwII to the camps, part of her committment after WWI to not glorifying military, and translated for DP's. of camps, she has said only "i'll never forget the smell as i went through the gate that first day. never." and first women nurses were going over with nightingale in wwI. i think there must be some extrardinary women's writing from them.

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151. **Pritchett, Pat**
Re: poetry performance
Mon 8 Jul 1996

I would just add that the moment anyone "stands up" in front of someone else to speak that moment "becomes" theatrical and those who ignore this do so at their (and their audience's) peril. Actors can enhance a text; they can also make a hash of it. The key (as someone mentioned) is the presence of a director.

All of this begs the question, Is the poet always and necessarily the best reader of his/her own work? Usually, yes. But not always. I've heard some real botches, generally from people with a very poor notion of the intrinsic theatricality of even the most perfunctory spoken exchange. To assume that just standing there and "telling the truth" as James Cagney once described acting can result in readings that are painfully bad in their naivete. And also very powerful.

I think readings are both theatrical and anti-theatrical. That is, the encounter between the reader and the audience creates ipso facto a theatrical experience, but one which is anti-theatrical in that it forces our attention away from the expectations usually aroused by the idea of a performance.

Valery said the best way to read a poem is very plainly and without any adornment. Well, yes and no.

Patrick Pritchett

From: Judy Roitman
To: Multiple recipients of list POETICS
Subject: Re: poetry performance
Date: Monday, July 08, 1996 2:57PM

<<File Attachment: HEADERS.TXT>>

Hi Christopher Whipple. Response to your notion abt actors. Distaste for actors reading poetry for me goes with the felt difference between stand-ups and actors. "Stand-ups can't act" is a way of noticing that stand-ups do not seem to know they are assuming a role (even though, of course, they are). Actors always assume roles. Rather than actors you want really good poet-readers. Last year I had the pleasure of hearing Robert Creeley reading Williams et al.

Amen. There was also the radio reading of Whitman with the Prairie Home Companion guy, the Deliverance guy (is my memory correct?) and Allen Ginsberg. The first two were self-conscious and silly, but AG's reading was tremendously illuminating. He *inhabited* Whitman's line is if it were his true home (why not? since it is). No change (to parallel Tony Green) from AG reading AG, but, as Tony put it, "a real intelligent sense of what the text was doing at any point."

Worth finding if anyone knows how to find it.

----- Judy Roitman
| "Glad to have Math, University of Kansas | these copies of things
Lawrence, KS 66045 | after a while." [REDACTED]
Larry Eigner, 1927-1996

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152. **Charles Alexander**

Re: performance & poetry: "measure carefully, can be toxic"

Mon 8 Jul 1996

i don't think it is a matter of actor/non-actor/poet reading as it is the way the poetry is read, the experience of the reader with poetry reading and audience, the dynamics of the situation.

absolutely. And more, too, a kind of tuning, reader to what is read to audience. For often so much depends on this syllable with that, move to a particular kind of liquid consonant, or fricative, and echoing that two or three lines later with something else which one wants to be heard but which one doesn't want to stress too much. this is attention to the language at hand, having possibly nothing to do with "character." Yet there is also a personality projected in a reading. Lyn Hejinian does it very well; Mei-mei Berssenbrugge is extraordinary; Leslie Scalapino is captivating. And others. I like to think that great work is easy to read well -- it actually helps the reader. But still it may require some unusual attentions. Attentions which may not be at all easy for any actor, and which the writer may embody differently on different occasions, to more or less success.

Glad to hear of the success of a Martin Espada reading -- I heard him a couple of times early on, when he was a student, and then it seemed over-dramatized to the point that I didn't want to listen. But then bp Nichol's readings/sound poetry performances were extremely animated, and they are about the best I have ever heard.

charles

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153. **Joseph Zitt**

Re: Listpersonship

Mon 8 Jul 1996

On 7 Jul 96 at 20:15, Ron Silliman wrote:

*If I were feeling
intemperate (and I have my moments), I'd be inclined to suggest a rule
on the order of deleting anyone who doesn't contribute to the
discussion, say, once per month.*

Hmm... I'd much rather see those of us who have little to say remain active listeners rather than speaking just to be heard. I'm a newbie to poetics, and am learning a lot reading the list. When I have something to say, I do so, but I try not to when I don't. -----1-----1-----1-----1-----1-----1-----1----- |||/

Joseph Zitt ===== XXXXXXXXXX ===== Human Systems \||| ||/ Organizer,

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

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154. **David Baratier**

Re: Perchik

Mon 8 Jul 1996

Aldon

Perchik's selected poems have a number of textual problems which lead me to recommend the originals, if possible. The poems are manically compressed onto the page space in such a fashion that renders them either inadequately represented (through the loss of a readers eye) or unfathomable without extensive page flipping. The editors of this series decided to clump the work together as close as possible, instead of the full-page-per-poem demands of a syntax driven syndoché. Be well.

David Baratier

----- David -- I had been aware of that via the old Perchik _Selected_ ; but the book as a whole had left a bad feeling in me that kept mt from returning to it -- Now, I'd like to take a look at the fuller sequences (the Frank series in the selected appears to be less than half the sequence?) Will give Simon a second try on your advice --

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155. **Judy Roitman**

Re: performance & poetry: "measure carefully, can be toxic"

Mon 8 Jul 1996

| i'd listen
| for non-hoakey readings (dylan thomas' "child's christmas in wales" is
| a gorgeous antithesis of hoakey

Interesting. That reading *defines* hokey for me.

My husband (Stan Lombardo) recently gave a selected reading from his forthcoming translation of the Iliad (publ: Hackett), working with a director and a percussionist. It was great, and I'm a very tough critic of Stan's readings. The director definitely did something good. But he was working with a poet, not an actor, and was sympathetic to the difference.

----- Judy Roitman
| "Glad to have Math, University of Kansas | these copies of things

Lawrence, KS 66045 | after a while." [REDACTED]
| Larry Eigner, 1927-1996

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156. **Gabrielle Welford**
think of meeee!

Mon 8 Jul 1996

Going for an interview at a community college for a lit teaching job this afternoon (my first serious interview) so please send blessings this way at 3 p.m my time (3 hours behind SF), oh good people. gab.

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157. **Lisa Samuels**
Re: performance & poetry: "measure carefully, can be toxic"

Mon 8 Jul 1996

for poetry performance: i still want to see someone
at least *begin* a reading from behind an opaque
black (or whatever) curtain
-or-
put an enormous mirror in front of the curtain so the
audience sees only itself for a while (small venue
and large mirror required)
-or/and-
position mirrors on either side of the stage so
the audience can see the poet from the sides only,
still behind the curtain
something along those lines
and for eliza mcgrand --
as for #3, i prefer the phrasing of a country song:
'I've enjoyed as much of this as I can stand'
my month's worth,
lisa samuels

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158. **wystan**

Re: in defense of parasites

Mon 8 Jul 1996

Dear lisa,

good work. you can stay on the list for another month.

seriously though, ron didn't mean it. i who never mean it could add modest proposals of my own and so trivialise discussions of race, sex and class even further... think up rules specific to specific people. like if ron really loses his temper that's it, he's out. the list citizenship of boomers debating the merits of beatles and stones is already in question i understand ...

hope to hear from you more

wystan

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159. **wystan**

Re: performance & poetry: "measure carefully, can be toxic"

Mon 8 Jul 1996

dear eliza, i don't think poets read badly or well. (thinking back to the post which kicked this off, everyone responded to the actor's do it better bit, but what about Mr Whipple's abhorrence for coffee house readings upon the preference was predicated? for myself coffeehouses, or bars, disused churches, stinking holes in the wall ... are where I hear poetry. Actors read poems on stages, in school assembly halls, well appointed community centres... places i don't go. but where i really want to read myself next is in this great indoor rock-climbing place) poets have good days and bad days, but in my experience they read their work as they mean it to be heard and if it doesn't sound good to you then its poetry you don't like. wystan

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160. **Loss Glazier**

Server failures

Mon 8 Jul 1996

If you have trouble retrieving files or otherwise accessing the EPC, please keep trying intermittently. The hardware folks are having some problems with the machines so things that are really there at the EPC sometimes give you 'do not exist' error messages. Hopefully, these problems will be resolved soon!

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161. **Loss Glazier**

Private List/Public Space

Mon 8 Jul 1996

>okay keith, cool. good points all. i didn't realize we cd be cited in books
>w/out our permission. i'll have to start watching my tongue, my back, my mind
>and my fingers. bests, maria d

My 'read' on how this list is private is that the attempt is to keep it small in size. (A list in general is many things but most tend towards enormous sizes, fantasy-tinged anonymity, and a climate where hit-and-run incidents of spamming and flaming are considered, just like having a tv blaring in the room, normal.)

I think the goal here is to aim for a size where we can know each other as much as would be possible in a non-virtual world (if there could be that many jobs in one place).

As for being cited, this is how I'd think of it. In contrast to conversation, where one is rarely cited, a post to the list is like a post on a bulletin board in the hallway. It is a comment made in public. Though not considered 'formal' writing, I think some things get cited because the informality that nurtures them also gives them a liveliness that says more than is said elsewhere. (Well, ok. In addition, messages are also archived.)

And let's face it. In certain areas such as the discussion of new books and reports on conferences (crucial nutrients for many of our interests!) the print medium has long abandoned us. (As such we may be cited the way a comment in a good book review is occasionally cited) A list such as this can be a 'journal' in a truer sense than 'The Journal of ...'.

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162. **Loss Glazier**

!Orono Online!

Mon 8 Jul 1996

50s in Orono: the Reviews an online 'book' collecting reviews and comments upon the Orono conference will soon be announced as an active URL. If you were at the conference and were thinking of posting your reactions, please do so soon!

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163. **Emily Lloyd**
maria--/& performance
Mon 8 Jul 1996

Maria--didn't find your post offensive at all & think that yes, which threads do and don't get picked up merits observation, mention, critical examination etc., & thank you for boldly calling attention to it. I myself kept Chris S.'s post in my in-box for days, challenged & wanting to respond, & eventually giving up because I just didn't feel qualified to. I've been studying race and representation for years, & the more I study, the less qualified I feel to speak. Mostly I got worried & a little nauseated at the prospect of a predominantly-white-membered list discussing "race & erotics," esp. in the assertive and "I know what I'm talking about" voice many conversations here seem to take, even as I also get worried & perhaps more than a little nauseated at the prospect of same list skirting those issues. This is why I didn't respond. I personally couldn't care less about whether or not R V H signs on to the list, so I could post about it (although I won't) all day. It is not because I didn't care about the issues raised in CS's post that I didn't respond, but because I cared too much to respond quickly & maybe at all. & yes I'm aware this might sound sappy or irresponsible. But because I was worried & unsure how/if to proceed, holding off the procession seemed most "responsible" at the time. I'm not sure it was and--this sounds facetious but is meant sincerely--I'm sorry for not knowing, not being sure. It may be that others felt similarly-- ? --emily

On performance-- Wystan, I can't agree that all poets read their work the way they mean it to be heard. There's that nerves thing: some folks just can't read in front of others. I've got a friend who, in front of a group: tongue death, stuttering, accidental automatic reading of earlier drafts, self-corrections in medias res, etc. It's painful to watch him--especially, I think, because he *is* such an interesting poet--when he reads, you'd hardly know. On the other hand, some poets who are great readers read not "as they mean [the poem] to be heard," but as they mean it to be *read* (on the page, in the reader's head)--meaning, the reading is captivating but it just ain't there on the page. I know that when I began reading my live linebreaks were rarely the same as my page linebreaks--I was so into the rhythm that when I looked on the page I saw the one I was reading out loud, but *nobody* else would. Since fixed, but always a challenge for me. That said, best of luck in getting to read in the indoor rock-climbing place--that sounds fabulous--& I wonder if fake cliffs cause echoes--

Eliza--I think it was you who brought up "poetry voice"---that monotone thing so many seem to slip into? <laughing> I think I would rather hear Sally Field read than someone afflicted with poetry voice, all misplaced accents & drones. In less patient days, when that started to happen at readings, I'd get up and read "I...am at a PO-e-TRY...READ-ING...and ALL...of the PO-ETS...have

FOUND...their VOICE...and it ALL..SOUNDS....like THIS" etc. Like it wasn't enough to sit through Keanu Reeves playing Siddhartha.

~~~~~  
Emily Lloyd [REDACTED]  
"Emily said Emily said, Emily  
is admittedly Emily." --G. Stein

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164. **maria damon**

***Re: Listpersonship/aldon/rvh***

*Mon 8 Jul 1996*

---

In message <[REDACTED]> UB Poetics discussion  
group writes:

> maria, listen: let me set my own record straight here, or gay, or  
> whatever, and w/o any rancor (really!): i find a certain degree of  
> discomfort---aside from my intentionally (there i go again ron, shit!)  
> provocative remarks addressed 'at' my neighbor, robert von hallberg---who,  
> as i say, i've never met, but who teaches right down the street from me---i  
> find a certain degree of discomfort in debating 'about' the  
> point-counterpoint discussion twixt aldon and robert, w/o robert being  
> t/here...  
>  
> you wanna know what i think?... for one, i found robert von hallberg's  
> remarks to be---  
>  
..etc

joe: listen, (no rancor detected in your comments, none intended in mine) it makes perfect sense to me that you'd want someone to be present when his comments were being discussed. i get it; it's ethical. it's just that i thought some of the issues raised by aldon and robert were really interesting --pedagogically (tho i hate that word), in terms of how we go about doing our scholarship and presenting it, etc... and i was disappointed to see those go unresponded to. for example, as i sd in my longish post, i don't consider my primary responsibility to be canon-building; thus i don't weigh "merit" in terms of modernist aesthetic values when i decide what to teach or write on. i do, though, have definite tastes, which are, willy-nilly, shaped by those values --heck, that's what i learned in school. the issue of what r von h considers condescension is also interesting to me. i don't see "universality" per se --if there is a per se --to be what writers should necessarily strive for (as few "shoulds" as possible) and i don't think the criterion for great writing should be its "universal" appeal. but

there is a movement currently away from particularism in favor of SOME kind of universalism, tho that is constantly in tension with our sense of how vexed that term is. i've been interested to see folks i wouldn't have expected come to some kind of appeal to "universalism" in a way that would have been hard to imagine 15 years ago. at the same time, people seem to be qualifying it: "Jewish universalism", "marxist universalism" etc. I'm not sure quite what this means either, except that it announces the point of view from which everything is universalized (i think). From what i could gather of Bob's talk on Hayden, as well as his comments at the end of that panel (i was there, and i remember hearing it as aldon reported, tho i was not especially troubled by it --it just seemed like business as usual), he was not interrogating the category of universalism, or inflecting it in any way that moved it out of the vexed presumption-of-normative-values critical category; i'd like him to be on the list so we could find out if he really means that pound, eliot, etc set a standard other writers shd meet or if he means something different --perhaps more like what blurbs on bookcovers of books by writers of color appeal to the book's "universal appeal" --i.e. this is n't "just" an African-American book, etc. Both uses of the term are problematic, but is this really what he meant? I was touched by his reply because it was about ideas and a desire to be understood; though as i have sd, we come from very different places critically.

so, joe, what kinds of things do you consider when preparing to teach or write "ethnic" or "Other" materials?

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165. **James Brook**  
***Re: Private List/Public Space***  
*Mon 8 Jul 1996*

---

Loss, I appreciate your comments regarding keeping the list intimate--which in this case means about 300 people, I believe. This does help promote productive discussion and develop the bases of a critical public with common interests.

On the other hand, I'm uncomfortable with the idea that anything anyone writes here is available for citation elsewhere. I feel that if a comment is citable, then it must be a text--and subject to the same protections as any other text. No, I'm not particularly invoking copyright protection--but I do think that the citer should go ahead and ask the cited for permission. That's mere courtesy. Besides, if we feel that our words are subject to such reuse, then there's bound to be a chilling effect on discussion: fewer people willing to participate and the remaining participants under greater constraint.

James Brook



Loss Glazier wrote:

>

*I think the goal here is to aim for a size where we can know each other as much as would be possible in a non-virtual world (if there could be that many jobs in one place).*

*As for being cited, this is how I'd think of it. In contrast to conversation, where one is rarely cited, a post to the list is like a post on a bulletin board in the hallway. It is a comment made in public. Though not considered 'formal' writing, I think some things get cited because the informality that nurtures them also gives them a liveliness that says more than is said elsewhere. (Well, ok. In addition, messages are also archived.)*

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166. **Aldon L. Nielsen**

**Re: " . . . : . . . "**

Tue 9 Jul 1996

---

Dodie -- whatever else Maria's post might have been doing, it didn't seem to me to be accusing anyone of racism --

and despite my question, I don't suppose that if two interracial radicals have sex with one another they are any less radical -- It's just that there is, after all, quite a long history of reactionaries desegregating the sex act, on their own terms --

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167. **Aldon L. Nielsen**

**Re: Perchik**

Tue 9 Jul 1996

---

David -- Thanks for that info -- I wish I had known some of that back when I wrote that negative review of the book -- will make a habit in future of comparing ANY selected I get for review to samples from the original -- will be looking up those earlier books next time I have library card

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168. **Marjorie Perloff**

**Re: List wars**

Tue 9 Jul 1996

---

Here's what strikes me as slightly absurd in the recent controversy re: Aldon Nielsen and Bob von Hallberg and Bob's non-membership on this list etc etc. Lorenzo Thomas, a Live Black Poet and the only one present in Orono gave a

very interesting and moving talk about Melville Tolson. I knew almost nothing about Tolson and I learned a lot, also from Keith Leonard's paper. Lorenzo T is a fine poet but didn't get to give a poetry reading because he only came the last day? I'm not sure why. At any rate, instead of discussing this actual living poet-critic, we are now busy discussing the following: 1) Who was right about the Nielsen panel, Aldon or Bob? I am very fond of both and admire both very much; I wasn't there so I can't tell what really happened but I suspect there was less difference of opinion than appeared from Bob's and Aldon's letters. 2) Was it Ok for Keith Tuma to send on Aldon's remarks to a non-list member? 3) Was Bob von H within his rights in responding to the List? 4) Should Bob join the list asap?? 5) Should lurkers have to contribute to the list (as Ron suggested)?

and so on and so forth. Thus it is that an important (to me) issue gets wholly lost in the shuffle. And thus it is that instead of talking about the black poet who was in our midst (Lorenzo)--as a poet, not just because he's black--we end up, academic-style, arguing about what white men (Aldon and Bob) are supposed to say about black poets.

The whole thing strikes me as wonderfully silly. As Dodie said, I thought this was supposed to be a POETICS list. And what I want to know--since Bob's paper, fine as it was, doesn't convince me of the case is: why should I read Robert Hayden at all? I find his poems very boring and status quo? Why should I read him rather than such "forgotten white poets" as Archibald MacLeish or Babette Deutsch? Hadn't we better begin with such questions? Marjorie Perloff

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169. **Peter Quartermain**

**Re: *oppen***

*Tue 9 Jul 1996*

---

Burt:

I'm not sure whether it's me or Peter Nicholls you had in mind, Burt, but you didn't miss anything, actually. Peter Nicholls oopsed in sending to the List a message to me. So I might as well answer the question for everybody, if they don't already know. Over the last couple of years Rachel Blau DuPlessis and I have been assembling an anthology of critical essays on Objectivist poetics, with a fairly substantial Introduction which we drafted in April, entitled *\_The\_Objectivist\_Nexus\_*. The book is not yet \*quite\* complete, but the manuscript is currently under consideration.

Peter

At 03:00 PM 7/7/96 EST, you wrote:

>I guess I must have missed something. Peter, could you say more about



But then, Thomas and Marcuse were playing to the house, and reading poems familiar to the hearer. How would they have fared, I wonder, with a poem unknown and possibly unperformed (in public, at any rate) before that one occasion. Basil Bunting used to say the only place to read poetry aloud was the pub. I'm inclined to agree. The classroom is a loathsome thing, god wot, but it too might be a place where people learn how to turn that inner silent voice into the outward actual one, reading a poem. Better readings? worse readings? Everything -- or so much at any rate -- depends on the circumstance, the context, the poem.

At 11:34 AM 7/8/96 GMT+1200, Tony Green wrote:

>Hi Christopher Whipple. Response to your notion abt actors. Distaste  
>for actors reading poetry for me goes with the felt difference  
>between stand-ups and actors. "Stand-ups can't act" is a way of  
>noticing that stand-ups do not seem to know they are assuming  
>a role (even though, of course, they are). Actors always assume  
>roles. Rather than actors you want really good poet-readers. Last  
>year I had the pleasure of hearing Robert Creeley reading Williams et  
>al. You want something like that: no putting on a special voice or  
>tone, no change from Creeley-voice reading Creeley that I could  
>identify, but a real intelligent sense of what the text was doing at  
>any point. That was really engrossing. To turn up the volume, to turn  
>up the decor, to turn up the video-presentation, may do something for  
>people who don't actually like poetry, but there is a danger in that of a  
>deceptive kind of substitution. I guess I feel the poetry is damaged,  
>more or less seriously by what you are thinking of.  
>

+

Peter Quartermain  
128 East 23rd Avenue  
Vancouver  
B.C.  
Canada V5V 1X2  
Voice and fax: [REDACTED]

+

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(As when usenet poster Brian Bulkowski said, of a manic depressive's affair with a borderline personality: "He failed to fail, which was a failure in itself.")

[illegible]

Anyone who lurks might be a philosopher, and anyone who writes memorably deserves recognition. These are not posited ultimatums or dictums. These are merely my own tenets--for myself and for my own conduct. I give credit for selfish reasons--the act is almost as pleasurable as writing--and I listen to replenish depleted stock: I listen because I love to write.

As such, I list my--tenets, anyone? (sorry)--with faux-Lisztian flourishes--on y/our list of lists.

## "hands

that wander as they list"--Joyce, *Chamber Music*

At the best,

Rob Hardin

<http://www.interport.net/~scrypt>

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172. **Daniel Salmon**

***Re: Another ethnic group***

*Tue 9 Jul 1996*

At 09:43 AM 6/07/96 -0500, you wrote:

>>If one were so foolish as to try to describe contemporary Native American  
>>poetries briefly, what would that description be, and what names would be  
>>attached?

I was interested to read Charles response to this. Any such classification is by nature 'reductivist' I realise this is an obvious response, but i am interested as similar arguments have been going on here (on various levels) in NZ about Maori & Pacific Island Poetry. It seems that classification by ethnicity/race etc is at times even more meaningless than by geography - eg as a focus/reason for an anthology, though on the other hand this is a usefull 'tool' for facilitating getting other non-mainstream poets into print. I guess a large point here is that classifications are often more by POET than by POETRY. I could go into this more but am falling asleep at the keys, and will very soon make less sense (having immensely enjoyed Wystan's exhibition in Wellington this afternoon, then braved the emmissions of our awakening antipodean volcano flying back to Auckland.) Hope this is enough to keep my 'place' on the list.

Dan.

"The urge to silence penetrated every corner"

- Glen Simpson

>>

>>No, I'm not giving a course, and do have other sources (Haskell Indian  
>>Nations University is down the road a short piece), but I'm curious what  
>>members of this list would say.

>

>

>Mostly I wouldn't be so foolish. But one thing I would be careful about is  
>that adjective "contemporary." For me, it would have to include works from  
>the oral tradition, which are still living, therefore "contemporary." And  
>many of these works are subject to contemporary variations. Too often  
>(although I think this has changed somewhat in the last couple of decades)  
>the oral traditions have been treated as past, as relics. In many cultures  
>they are decidedly not so. Some of the primary work in this regard has been  
>done by Larry Evers through the Sun Tracks series at the University of  
>Arizona Press, and to my mind some of the very best of that is the work with  
>Yaqui oral traditions Evers has done in collaboration with Felipe S. Molina,  
>himself a Yaqui singer.

>

>But this is just one part of a huge story.

>

>good luck,

>

>charles

>

>

Daniel Salmon

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### 173. **Carnography**

#### **Re: poetry enurance**

Tue 9 Jul 1996

And then there are those who post when they ought to be lurking (And I don't mean Mr. Whipple).

Christopher K. Whipple typed:

*Does anyone have any ideas on why coffee house readings are so often lame and depressing; why do these horrible people have a monopoly on the espresso circuit, while so much that is delicious is abandoned to a half-life in academia?*

XV. The coffee-house is not simply a generic site for poetry. It carries with it overtones of beat-poetry, which, for the unimaginative, conjure a kind of Fred Flinstone version of a "poetry scene": pseudo-scat-singing, faux lyricism (doo-bee-doo-wah sound-patterns), comic-book-Picasso pastiches of abstract verse ("that blue/...\*now\*"), and even the notion that poetry ought to be autobiographical ("I [lived/hated] [X kind of downtown] life and I [loved/despised] it.") or preachy [I'm here to educate you by railing at the teachers I hate].

2. Careerism on the part of readers and organizers does much to kill the encouragement of individual talent. Also: mere poetry, and thoughtful performance, prove irrelevant to various cliques and clots of paradoxical careerists who proffer bios instead of brio and lyrics instead of the lyric.

Careerism is an invitation to mediocrity; to paraphrase Cicero, the insistence of those who shout is often a hindrance to those who wish to listen.

c. There's altogether too much self-aggrandizement in much contemporary poetry. Writers like Sapphire and Dael Orlandersmith are certainly worthy of interest, but the entire slant of merely autobiographical writing is responsible, I think, for providing even more impetus to the profoundly self-congratulatory. It was his exasperation at the plethora of musical cliches masquerading as emotion that led Stravinsky to say, "Music doesn't have the power to express anything." Also: when the writer is not vigilant, autobiographical detail can become an excuse for narcissism. I tend to think that the trick of autobiographical writing is *\*not\** to be self-absorbed.

Iv. The dumbing of poetic audiences is also responsible for the blinding tedium of many performances. Organizers have forgotten that poetry can function on difficult levels and still communicate in the basic sense. (Hindemith's *Gebrauchsmusik* is as common as it is chiseled.) Paradoxically, it is often the populist and not the cryptographer who obscures poetic meaning.

4. Many publicized poetic events are well-meaning attempts to assault high culture that result, inevitably, in more mere low culture.

| *Does anyone have any ideas on how poetry can be successfully performed?*  
| *Has anyone seen examples, even failed ones?*

I would like to see performances that combined music and words but didn't overuse popular cadences or stress-patterns, such as Nyorican cadences ("I saw/that/man, that/high-handed/Mosh-pit/religion of/lint/gone/lyric) I'd like to see (or rather, hear) performances in which sound and poetry are explored more closely, with textures as involved as those of chamber music. I'd be also be interested in readings that excluded overt autobiography.



More plays: the emergence of poetic theater, of plays in which, as in absolute music, texture, modulation and other abstract elements, were the primary source of tension and release rather than the narrative. I'd like to see performances and plays in which devices like simultaneous monologue and tergiversation functioned as dramatically as textured dynamics in baroque Concerto Grossi.

with props to Annie & Jerry:

readikns ik iknu khk, thy enormoranges  
ih? dhh, ips op/errant, scansion p'll ear-wheel  
ego deeno quagnum eensy ernst

Al Iz Blesterah,ht,

Rob Hardin

(According to Cankerian analysis)

<http://www.interport.net/~scrept>

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174. **Kevin Killian**

***Re: List wars***

*Tue 9 Jul 1996*

---

At 10:00 PM 7/8/96, Emily Lloyd wrote:

>yes, which

>threads do and don't get picked up merits observation, mention, critical

>examination etc.

The is Dodie Bellamy.

On the surface, Emily, this sounds just great--but serveral issues come up for me. First of all, this list is not going to change the world, it's a bunch of mostly-white middle class people shooting the breeze. It's a place of priviledge and leisure--the priviledge to have access to a computer hook-up, the luxury of all this time to shoot the breeze. Let me get this clear, I am not against anybody discussing race issues and/or teaching--even though for us non-academics, issues of teaching are rather boring--and academic approaches to literature and to poets themselves are something many poets I speak with find problematic. For instance I do not think M. Damon's erasure of poets in her original post was merely an oversight--perhaps a Freudian slip? As Ron pointed out, for many academics living breathing poets are not part of the picture. Furthermore--this isn't the 50s, no one that I know of, and few (if any) people on this list would challenge the need for representation of non-"white-middle-class" writers wher-ever writers are represented.

But creating a hierarchy of what's acceptable or more acceptable on this list is something I find highly problematic. It is that process of hierarchization which excluded non-"white-middle-class" writers and women from the literary canon in the first place. There is no god-given hierarchy of importance. It is this mindframe, for instance that has often disparaged conversation by women as "chatter." I have much difficulty when white middle class liberals use the issues of "oppressed" groups to guilt trip other white middle class liberals--and I think some of that has been going on here. Let me give an example from outside the list. Several years ago here in San Francisco there was a poet who became "engulfed" in the Gulf War. He marched against the Gulf War, did performance art against the Gulf War, wrote poems about the Gulf War, wore buttons. So, at least a year after the Gulf War ended he gave a reading--of course it was all poems about the Gulf War. During the course of the reading he took the opportunity to brow beat the audience by saying we're all here listening to poetry--but there was THE GULF WAR--in other words he posed himself as this messianic figure concerned with human suffering, and the audience was cast as a bunch of superficiales listening to Poetry. I have problems with the colonizing of another group's oppression and and wearing it as a badge. I am skeptical when someone makes an academic career out of Bob Kaufman then makes jokes about his "clunkers" on this list. This is not treating Kaufman with the dignity he deserves.

To conclude, I think the Beatles and list politics are just as valid topics of discussion here as anything else.

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175. **Kevin Killian**

**Re: List wars**

Tue 9 Jul 1996

---

Maria, you criticized a population I was a member of--the people on this list. I was defending that population.

Dodie

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176. **Kevin Killian**

**Re: List wars**

Tue 9 Jul 1996

---

At 3:47 PM 7/9/96, Emily Lloyd wrote:

*But I think the point was that there wasn't...certain issues were dropped like potatoes, for whatever reason (and I admit, yes, to an interest/concern in that reason). I'm not interested in falling into the "why are we talking*

*about this when we could/should be talking about THIS?" trap; on the other hand, I think "why \*aren't\* we talking about this?" is a valid question. emily*

I agree with you Emily. But my point is that the "why are we talking about this when we could/should be talking about THIS?" trap *\*was\** evoked--and that is what I was criticizing.

Dodie

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177. **Mark Roberts**

***Re: Listpersonship***

*Tue 9 Jul 1996*

---

One of the advantages of being on this list is that it gives those of us outside of the 'centre(s)' a chance to have some input etc. In many cases we may not post for months, but one learn much from lurking and reading about US or UK based discussions. While encouraging people to contribute to the list is a good idea it could also be counter productive in driving away those 'marginal' list members who occassionally may have something important to say.....

anyway that's my 20c worth...and should keep me on the list for another month!! :)

---

Mark Roberts  
Student Systems Project Officer  
Information Systems  
University of Sydney NSW 2006 Australia

██████████  
PH:(02) ██████████  
FAX:(02) ██████████

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178. **Joe Amato**

***Re: List wars***

*Tue 9 Jul 1996*

---

maria, emily, marjorie, all:

(((((and sorry folks for the little tirade i initiated re rvh's forwarded post (if in fact i initiated it) but i *\*did\** say that it bugged me and i was feeling "grinch-like" and so what the hell i said so---again and again!))))

my primary problem as a white guy addressing at times black and latino/a students is that, to put it as simply as possible, i don't come from where they're

coming from... i can generally relate along class-lines, given my own history, but i don't feel the same urgencies or necessities to validate my own racial or ethnic construction or gender construction (and combinations of same)... and even when i do feel this pull as a poet, i don't tend to come to it in the same terms... and this leads to all sorta problems in the classroom...

for example (and aldon, you've already heard some a this) i don't particularly care for maya angelou's or niki giovanni's poetry... i prefer, for lotsa reasons, ntozake shange's or erica hunt's or audre lorde's or rita dove's or wanda coleman's (which is not to say that i whole-heartedly embrace all work by these latter poets, either)... but maya angelou, for example, is extremely popular with black women in my classes these days... and she's popular in part, from what my students tell me, b/c her voice is one that they can relate to (an easily accessible identity formation)...

and here i come with all of my [cough] c-c-c-critical sophistication, talking about voice as a set of conventions, asking them (after folks like patricia hill collins) what are they gonna DO with \*their\* voices once they 'find' them? etc... kinda pulling the rug out from under...

of course, one could argue that the answer here is to work teaching in stages, developmentally... but for me this can all too often constitute indoctrination in a given stage (read 'aesthetic')... and besides, work that i like more, in order to appreciate it, already for me works at an advanced stage... uhm---no, not 'advanced,' i take that back---just more complex in the terms i indicate...

so what i then have to do is find a way to promote dialogue among my students (and me at times)---which i think i'm never too good at, no matter how hard i try, mebbe b/c i'm so wedded to my \*own\* dialogic or monologic tendencies---to see if i can't get them to talk about the voice complexities i believe need airing... but thing is, many times the majority of the students are white students... so i end up at times trying to 'fill in,' trying to provide some leverage for my black and latino/a students \*as a white guy\*...

i'm sure you can see the problem here... christ i've been through it over and over, and in my professional writing courses especially (which i teach many more of than lit. or creative writing courses, and which i teach in terms of institutional issues)... i'm lucky to have a mix of students in my classes, teaching on an urban campus as i do... but this is itself problematic to the extent that i don't have any humanities majors---all science, business, engineering...

anyway, that's a start i s'pose... ysee, when it comes to who should be canonized, and comments about owing it to---posterity?---to safeguard the 'quality' of work that's passed along, well---whose aesthetic is at (the) stake here?... who passes what along to whom?... i too am culpable on the count of simple 'liking' or 'valuing' that is no doubt rooted in an aesthetic of whiteness... how, i'm not

always certain, but i've no doubt this is true... at the same time, \*as a poet\*, i've simply got to be able to take my best guess at times as to work that doesn't, well, work!--incl. my own...i mean, I CAN BE VERY OPINIONATED (understatement of the month)... and even with peer review in a classroom, sooner or later an instructor gets involved in questions of evaluation, and in any case i evaluate all the damned time...

and whatever the thorniness of these problems, i can't quite imagine entering into a discussion of who gets anthologized, say, w/o recognizing that anthologies, for better and for worse, are classroom tools... and anthologizing is one measure of canonicity... so for me the question of 'condescending' to such & such poets had better \*begin\* by considering who speaks, and to whom... i think the various what's will tend to emerge with greater clarity this way...

best,

joe

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### 179. **Mary Hilton**

#### ***Submissions for "Political Diction"***

*Tue 9 Jul 1996*

---

In the spirit of July 4th (albeit 5 days late), submissions are now being accepted for "Political Diction 96," a magazine devoted to the electoral process, politics, government, and most specifically to the election year 1996. A multi-partisan magazine distributed each election year, it is hoped that "PD" will allow various views and thoughts about the democratic process to be expressed.

Innovative essays, poetry, short stories and visual art are welcome. Submission deadline is August 15, and the mag will be distributed in Sept/Oct. Please send to:

Political Diction 96 c/o Mary Hilton  
1706 U Street, NW, #102  
Washington, DC 20009

or send e-mail inquiries to [REDACTED]

Thanks!

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180. **maria damon**

**Re: " . . . : . . . "**

Tue 9 Jul 1996

---

aldon rites:

- > and despite my question, I don't suppose that if two interracial radicals
- > have sex with one another they are any less radical -- It's just that
- > there is, after all, quite a long history of reactionaries desegregating
- > the sex act, on their own terms --

okay, of course, i see. thanks for the clarification. still, i was thinking of folks like o'hara, who in the fifties was having gay sex w/ black men...a double taboo, though the taboo against miscegenation not so strong in his case since the fear of same was mostly due to the purported horrors of having "mixed" kids...i guess people can have radical practices (like gertrude stein) without necessarily having politically radical consciousnesses...and the reverse as well -- etc....maria d

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181. **Charles Alexander**

**Re: poetry enormance**

Tue 9 Jul 1996

---

*Christopher K. Whipple typed:*

*Does anyone have any ideas on why coffee house readings are so often lame and depressing; why do these horrible people have a monopoly on the espresso circuit, while so much that is delicious is abandoned to a half-life in academia?*

I think this is overstating the case. For example, a lot of good readings, including by people on this list or talked about on this list, have taken place in coffee houses & bars, such as the Ear Inn in NY. My guess is that the ratio of "delicious" to "lame and depressing" in coffee houses & bars is somewhere near the same ratio in publications, academic departments, or anywhere. And I think there's a lot of work that's far from delicious which also has a life or half-life in academia.

charles

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182. **maria damon**

**Re: List wars**

Tue 9 Jul 1996

---

thank you, marjorie, this is exactly what i was trying to point out.--maria d

In message <[REDACTED]> UB

Poetics discussion group writes:

- > Here's what strikes me as slightly absurd in the recent controversy re:
- > Aldon Nielsen and Bob von Hallberg and Bob's non-membership on this list
- > etc etc.
- > Lorenzo Thomas, a Live Black Poet and the only one present in Orono gave a
- > very interesting and moving talk about Melville Tolson. I knew almost
- > nothing about Tolson and I learned a lot, also from Keith Leonard's paper.
- > Lorenzo T is a fine poet but didn't get to give a poetry reading because
- > he only came the last day? I'm not sure why. At any rate, instead of
- > discussing this actual living poet-critic, we are now busy discussing the
- > following:
- > 1) Who was right about the Nielsen panel, Aldon or Bob? I am very fond of
- > both and admire both very much; I wasn't there so I can't tell what really
- > happened but I suspect there was less difference of opinion than appeared
- > from Bob's and Aldon's letters.
- > 2) Was it Ok for Keith Tuma to send on Aldon's remarks to a
- > non-list member?
- > 3) Was Bob von H within his rights in responding to the List?
- > 4) Should Bob join the list asap??
- > 5) Should lurkers have to contribute to the list (as Ron suggested)?
- >
- > and so on and so forth.
- > Thus it is that an important (to me) issue gets wholly lost in the
- > shuffle. And thus it is that instead of talking about the black poet who
- > was in our midst (Lorenzo)--as a poet, not just because he's black--we end
- > up, academic-style, arguing about what white men (Aldon and Bob) are
- > supposed to say about black poets.
- >
- > The whole thing strikes me as wonderfully silly. As Dodie said, I thought
- > this was supposed to be a POETICS list. And what I want to know--since
- > Bob's paper, fine as it was, doesn't convince me of the case is: why
- > should I read Robert Hayden at all? I find his poems very boring and
- > status quo? Why should I read him rather than such "forgotten white
- > poets" as Archibald MacLeish or Babette Deutsch? Hadn't we better begin
- > with such questions?
- > Marjorie Perloff

183. **maria damon**

***Re: maria--/& performance***

*Tue 9 Jul 1996*

---

emily rites:

> Maria--didn't find your post offensive at all & think that yes, which  
> threads do and don't get picked up merits observation, mention, critical  
> examination etc., & thank you for boldly calling attention to it. I myself  
> kept Chris S.'s post in my in-box for days, challenged & wanting to respond,  
> & eventually giving up because I just didn't feel qualified to. I've been  
> studying race and representation for years, & the more I study, the less  
> qualified I feel to speak. Mostly I got worried & a little nauseated at the  
> prospect of a predominantly-white-membered list discussing "race & erotics,"  
> esp. in the assertive and "I know what I'm talking about" voice many  
> conversations here seem to take, even as I also get worried & perhaps more  
> than a little nauseated at the prospect of same list skirting those issues.  
> This is why I didn't respond. I personally couldn't care less about whether  
> or not R V H signs on to the list, so I could post about it (although I  
> won't) all day. It is not because I didn't care about the issues raised in  
> CS's post that I didn't respond, but because I cared too much to respond  
> quickly & maybe at all. & yes I'm aware this might sound sappy or  
> irresponsible. But because I was worried & unsure how/if to proceed,  
> holding off the procession seemed most "responsible" at the time. I'm not  
> sure it was and--this sounds facetious but is meant sincerely--I'm sorry for  
> not knowing, not being sure. It may be that others felt similarly-- ?  
> --emily

yes, i see; e-mail is indeed a hard medium in which to have serious sustained inquiries about matters that require a lot of thought. this is certainly true; i often find myself fading out just when a big juicy issue that i really care about comes up, as if, as you say, i'm aware that the medium is working against me and a kind of pre-emptive weariness sets in. and no, you don't sound sappy and irresponsible in the least (to me), and yes, the prospect of mostly white folks holding forth confidently on the subject of race and eros is indeed a bit peculiar. but... i learned a lot from aldon's 4-line post clarifying his statement about un-radical desegregations of the sex act, that i wouldn't have learned if i'd just let it go. it was hard for me to ask for that clarification, cuz i had that inertia-feeling: "do i really want to open up this can o' words?" but i'm glad i did. i most emphatically did not mean to call anyone on the carpet --i really dislike this ad hominem/feminam stuff --but to point out, as marjorie has since, the way charged issues often get watered



down.

i think you may be right tht it's a function of the medium.--xo, md

>

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184. **maria damon**

**Re: List wars**

*Tue 9 Jul 1996*

---

joe: thanks for your considered reply. i myself tend not to teach stuff i don't feel i can get behind. once or twice i've taught adrienne rich and audre lorde -- which was interesting for the class but boring for me, and problematic, because i don't want to be put in a role that could be construed as anti-feminist, but i also need to feel free to criticise work that doesn't excite me, tho i can appreciate its skill. sometimes, with rich, w/ undergrads, i take the opportunity to talk about the academic tradition and how someone can be part of it, trying to break out, and succeeding in some ways, but being reinscribed in it...that usually works --to talk about "radical politics" v. "radical style" etc. i don't know, joe, if there is a "white aesthetic" --that term seems to encode something more? i.e. new critical? modernist? etc. bests, md

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185. **Joe Amato**

**Re: " . . . : . . . "**

*Tue 9 Jul 1996*

---

about this question of radical-ness (i got four days left hereabouts and then i'm away from my machine for three weeks, so i may as well post like hell): anecdotally speaking, some of the more radical poets i've known have led conservative lives---i'll let 'conservative' stand for mainstream living arrangements (by which i don't quite mean values), and i mean by 'conservative' at least as conservative as mine---whereas i can think of a few formal poets i've known who've been all over the charts in terms of how they've lived... i mean, i don't see any necessary connection, necessarily, twixt radical writing and radical living, though i do at times see connections... and i suppose necessity here is a function of what community one is a part of... so i guess what this means for biographically or culturally-based work is that it's best not to assume from the get-go such correspondences by way of 'explanation'?... love to hear more here...

joe

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186. **Herb Levy**  
**List, person, ship**  
Tue 9 Jul 1996

---

Mr Silliman's proposal does not adequately address the pernicious issue of the lurker slime on this e-mail list.

Requiring a single post per month from each list member would likely result in cutesy, off-topic messages about the weather (it's been warm & sunny here in Seattle, but there are early morning clouds today) or irrelevant "me-too" posts in ongoing threads. As several people have already noted, this will result in too much empty traffic, further allowing the vampiric lurkers in our midst to stay on for another month of reading the collected wisdom of others at no cost to themselves.

To actively combat these lurker vermin, we must require full participation by all list members in every current thread. After all, it is really not too much to ask that list members participate in the activities of the group.

To start with, we could allow brief (less than a hundred words) responses to be made within forty-eight hours of the intiation of any new topic.

However, to achieve the goal of total active participation, we would have to move quickly toward the more reasonable requirement that all list members respond within one hour to each post to the list (including their own) with a closely reasoned 250-500 word statement. To make it easier to follow the advanced discourse that would likely result under this new system, each list member would also have to provide a shorter abstract of their arguments.

This simple change in policy would most certainly cut down on the number of non-participating lurker scum on poetics list and we would soon arrive at the kind of total and immediate participatory democracy that one usually sees in only a few of the more progressive-thinking Usenet newsgroups.

Herb Levy  


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187. **Hank Lazer**  
**Re: List wars**  
Tue 9 Jul 1996

---

Marjorie asked why should she/we read Hayden, stating that she was unconvinced by Robt's plenary session paper. I have been reading Hayden rather carefully for about ten years, and my argument may overlap with a slightly different question: why teach Hayden's poetry. I suppose in some ways I read

and enjoy Hayden for reasons similar to the pleasure I take in re-reading Robert Frost--there is a subtle but serious self-criticism in their work, an undermining and ironizing, in Hayden's case a beautiful use of an occasional odd word in the poem (to my ear, similar to such a gesture in Oppen's work, though Robt's paper gave me a different and convincing way of hearing the indulgence in that savored single word in Hayden's poetry). Marjorie might even enjoy looking at Hayden's last poem, "American Journal," which, on the page, looks remarkably like David Antin's talk-poems. I teach Hayden in contemporary poetry classes, in part, for reasons that Robt discussed--to complicate and question certain assumptions about ethnic identity and to counteract a tendency to state what "the" African-American poet says etc. I generally teach Hayden (Collected Poems) along with a big unit on Baraka (I had been using The LeRoi Jones/Amiri Baraka Reader), discussing the many different positions taken by Baraka on Afro-centrism and on socialism, and putting Hayden's universalist pronouncements (which I read as somewhat in conflict with his actual poetic practice, reading that universalism as a "wish" rather than an actuality), then moving to considerations of gender as well in Audre Lorde's poetry and essays. In all three cases, I am making use of essays and poetry and interviews, trying to consider all these expressions as part of a single thinking, as part of a cultural critique, as part of a poet's activity as an intellectual. Also, I live and teach in Alabama, and Hayden's poems often push us into important and local considerations, including the complex intersections of Native American and African American culture here.

Before Marjorie (or Robt) or others accuse me of offering merely sociological reasons for reading Hayden, let me add that I consider his poetry GOOD. Which poems? Here's a partial list--The Diver, Electrical Storm, The Rabbi, "Night, Death, Mississippi," "Incense of the Lucky Virgin," The Whipping, Those Winter Sundays, Middle Passage, and I'm only on page 48 of the collected. Hayden, to my ear, has an extraordinary ear, writes beautiful sounding poems. In little snippets, as in "so sibling innuendoes all aver--" or "His pain/ our anguish and anodyne" or in entire poems. I also admire the complex and shifting sympathies of Hayden's poems--something which Robt argued for as well.

I don't think that my own enthusiasm for Hayden (and for Baraka and Lorde) will necessarily persuade others. I can vouch for the fact that re-reading Hayden's poetry over a number of years has been a pleasant experience, a re-reading that has re-paid the sustained attention. At any rate, on the way to the office, such are my quick notes to Marjorie (and others) about Hayden.

A quick note too on the exchange between Aldon and Robert. I was there. Yes, I did argue for seeking and articulating different modes of reading, interpreting, evaluating in relation to Hughes (whose early poetry can be read and appreciated in a way that is not merely an analysis of "themes" when juxtaposed

with some of the blues recordings he was listening to). (By the way, Hughes' "Theme for English B" raises interesting questions about ethnic identity vs. universalism in poetry....) It seemed to me that Robt came on a bit insulting and heavy-handed, though that was not, I think, his intention. Ultimately, I heard him arguing for a different balance (than he heard in this one panel) between sociological perspectives and close reading. He wanted more of the latter, as a means to defend or articulate the value and excellence of particular poems. Aldon explained that there were other panels (including the one done by him, Mark Scroggins, and Stephen Leonard, which I also attended, and which was excellent and informative and DID involve close readings of specific poems) that did precisely that, and that Robert should consider attending the CLA if he really wanted more information and to connect with what scholarship was being done. To my ears, some of the tension in their exchange has to do with issues of professional stature and the politics of the profession. Robert was ignorant of the CLA & indicated that he only attended (or mostly?) conferences where he was invited to speak. Aldon suggested that if Robt really was developing an interest in African American poetries that he should attend CLA conferences and join the CLA. I drifted away from the conversation at that point, trying to ask Aldon and Robt to continue to talk to one another. I know and like both of them, and believe that a sustained conversation between both would be of value.

De-lurked, and having said enough for July & August both,

Hank Lazer

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## 188. **Daniel Bouchard**

### ***Re: List wars***

*Tue 9 Jul 1996*

---

and so on and so forth. Thus it is that an important (to me) issue gets wholly lost in the shuffle. And thus it is that instead of talking about the black poet who was in our midst (Lorenzo)--as a poet, not just because he's black--we end up, academic-style, arguing about what white men (Aldon and Bob) are supposed to say about black poets. The whole thing strikes me as wonderfully silly. As Dodie said, I thought this was supposed to be a POETICS list.

---

Who can blame lurkers for keeping silent? ["vermin, scum, slime," says Herb Levy referring to lurkers.]

I'm pleased that Ron's post prompted at least one person to write in and say who she was, what she does, and why she's silent on the list. There's nothing wrong with keeping quiet in a discussion. On the other hand, it's better to type

something in once in a while (even if you're unsure of yourself, or going out on a limb. There's few instances of flaming here, if any, my perception of the list over the past year has been one of general friendliness).

Here are some other Herb Levy gems:

"allowing the vampiric lurkers in our midst to stay on for another month of reading the collected wisdom of others at no cost to themselves." "To actively combat these lurker vermin, we must require full participation" "This simple change in policy would most certainly cut down on the number of non-participating lurker scum on poetics list and we would soon arrive at the kind of total and immediate participatory democracy"

Democracy for you, Herb, is an elimination of the "scum?" Can the unfortunates help themselves if they (we) do not possess your "wisdom?" But I don't want to dwell on your post, I'm sure you have some vitriol headed your way.

Something struck me about M. Perloff's post: the way the terms were set, as in "the black poet in OUR midst." What does "our" refer to? The members of the list who also attended the conference? I'm not clear as to whether Lorenzo's attendance at Orono was important to you because he is a poet, or because he is a black poet. Also, could you clarify "academic-style" as a form of argument and maybe propose an alternative? I've seldom seen any other kind of argument on this list (Lurkers, speak up!)



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189. **Shaunanne Tangney**

**Re: poetry performance**

Tue 9 Jul 1996

---

On Mon, 8 Jul 1996, Pritchett,Pat @Silverplume wrote:

*I would just add that the moment anyone "stands up" in front of someone else to speak that moment "becomes" theatrical and those who ignore this do so at their (and their audience's) peril. Actors can enhance a text; they can also make a hash of it. The key (as someone mentioned) is the presence of a director.*

i have long argued that all art is ultimately performative because it ultimately requires an audience to be "complete."

*All of this begs the question, Is the poet always and necessarily the best reader of his/her own work? Usually, yes. But not always. I've heard some real botches, generally from people with a very poor notion of the intrinsic theatricality of even the most perfunctory spoken exchange. To assume that*

*just standing there and "telling the truth" as James Cagney once described acting can result in readings that are painfully bad in their naivete. And also very powerful.*

even if all art is ultimately performative, it does not mean that all artists are ultimately good performers. it takes practice, and an attention to details other than those that went into the poem, and into the writing of the poem.

*I think readings are both theatrical and anti-theatrical. That is, the encounter between the reader and the audience creates ipso facto a theatrical experience, but one which is anti-theatrical in that it forces our attention away from the expectations usually aroused by the idea of a performance.*

i suspect this also depends quite a bit on the poem, the way the poet wrote it. by this i mean that i tend to write more for the ear than the eye, because i think poetry is, finally, and oral medium. but there are many who would disagree with me, and so not write their poems with an ear for performance.

best,  
shaunanne

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## 190. **Don Cheney**

### **List wars: 100 Years, Star,...**

Tue 9 Jul 1996

---

while i don't consider my SELF a lurker on this list i also don't consider my self a big time contributor. i do think that Herb's post that Daniel quotes is a sort of hyperbole or maybe just a "hyper text" but i think he went out of his way to make sure we all knew he was kidding. no?

don cheney



Daniel Bouchard writes:

and so on and so forth. Thus it is that an important (to me) issue gets wholly lost in the shuffle. And thus it is that instead of talking about the black poet who was in our midst (Lorenzo)--as a poet, not just because he's black--we end up, academic-style, arguing about what white men (Aldon and Bob) are supposed to say about black poets. The whole thing strikes me as wonderfully silly. As Dodie said, I thought this was supposed to be a POETICS list.

---

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Here are some other Herb Levy gems:

"allowing the vampiric lurkers in our midst to stay on for another month of reading the collected wisdom of others at no cost to themselves." "To actively combat these lurker vermin, we must require full participation" "This simple change in policy would most certainly cut down on the number of non-participating lurker scum on poetics list and we would soon arrive at the kind of total and immediate participatory democracy"

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██████████

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## 191. **Charles Alexander**

### **Re: List wars**

Tue 9 Jul 1996

---

*Who can blame lurkers for keeping silent? ["vermin, scum, slime," says Herb Levy referring to lurkers.]*

*Here are some other Herb Levy gems:*

*"allowing the vampiric lurkers in our midst to stay on for another month of reading the collected*

*wisdom of others at no cost to themselves."*

*"To actively combat these lurker vermin, we must require full participation"*

*"This simple change in policy would most certainly cut down on the number of non-participating lurker scum on poetics list and we would soon arrive at the kind of total and immediate participatory democracy"*

*Democracy for you, Herb, is an elimination of the "scum?" Can the unfortunates help themselves if they (we) do not possess your "wisdom?" But I don't want to dwell on your post, I'm sure you have some vitriol headed your way.*

I know it's said that one can't read tone in email messages, but I had no problem being absolutely convinced that Herb's post was tongue-in-cheek.

charles

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192. **Fred Muratori**

**Re: List wars**

Tue 9 Jul 1996

Re:

*Democracy for you, Herb, is an elimination of the "scum?" Can the unfortunates help themselves if they (we) do not possess your "wisdom?" But I don't want to dwell on your post, I'm sure you have some vitriol headed your way.*

[REDACTED]

Damn, I knew I was too naive and culture-bound to subscribe to this list. I thought Herb Levy's post was meant to be satiric. This means that now I'll have to re-read everything I've ever read to correct all my earlier mis-frissonings. Where will I find the time?

\*\*\*\*\*

Fred Muratori

"Certain themes are incurable."

([REDACTED])

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\*\*\*\*\*

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193. **Joe Amato**

**Re: List wars**

Tue 9 Jul 1996

yes, ditto on herb's tongue-in-cheeky-ness...



joe

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194. **hen**

**Re: think of meeee!**

Tue 9 Jul 1996

---

*Going for an interview at a community college for a lit teaching job this afternoon (my first serious interview) so please send blessings this way at 3 p.m my time (3 hours behind SF), oh good people. gab.*

the vibes are with you. just emitted them - should be arriving gently in Hawaii around that time. Aloha. - Henry

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195. **henry**

**Re: think of meeee!**

Tue 9 Jul 1996

---

SORRY FOLKS...hit the dern reply button. All of you now, focus those stray vibes toward Hawaii. No Darren, that's not a volcano. - hg

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196. **Daniel Bouchard**

**Re(vision): List wars**

Tue 9 Jul 1996

---

So my server's getting drowned in messages to me saying "Herb Levy was just kidding." Yeah sure, so was Jonathan Swift--that murderous bastard! So I retract my previous post, and offer this revision (this is what happens when you try and engage in a discussion for fifteen second intervals during work).

I remain undaunted though. I don't "get" those Leslie Nielsen spoof movies either.

██████████

---

Marjorie Perloff wrote:

and so on and so forth. Thus it is that an important (to me) issue gets wholly lost in the shuffle. And thus it is that instead of talking about the black poet who was in our midst (Lorenzo)--as a poet, not just because he's black--we end up, academic-style, arguing about what white men (Aldon and Bob) are supposed to say about black poets. The whole thing strikes me as wonderfully silly.

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---

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197. **Rod Smith**

***Onward: Contemporary Poetry & Poetics***

*Tue 9 Jul 1996*

---

This is the Contents and Introduction for the forthcoming anthology *Onward: Contemporary Poetry and Poetics*, ed. Peter Baker, Peter Lang Pub., \$28 pb, 440 pgs. due out Sept '96. Peter is off line traveling and asked me to send it to the listwar. "The Rejection of Closure" is a revised and extended version.

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poeanth.pb (Introduction)

Poetics is a vast, ancient, yet understudied field. Except, of course, for poets. Yet many if not most poets would probably assent to the proposition that one's poetics can be deduced from the poem. A statement on poetics presents immediate difficulties within such an aesthetic, because it risks being seen as ancillary to the production of the poem, and may, in fact, misrepresent the implicit poetics in the poet's work. Given these risks, many poets choose reticence as their primary mode of statement, with the limit of reticence approaching silence, often accompanied by an attitude of active disdain. Belief in an implicit poetics can be seen to derive from an immanentist theory of language, or the idea that words bear direct relation to what they represent, even carrying a little bit of the essence of the thing in the word. Such immanentist theories deriving from the religious tradition ("and the word was with God and the word was God") drove William of Occam, in the twelfth century, to propose the complete separation of word and referent, in his philosophy of nominalism. Jacques Derrida is often thought to represent such a nominalist viewpoint in his philosophy of deconstruction (see my *Deconstruction and the Ethical Turn*). Ezra Pound's language theory is explicitly immanentist, as when he instructs his Italian translator of *The Cantos*: "Don't worry about the meaning of the poem. Translate accurately line by line. The meaning is inherent in the material." Pound's poetics in *The Cantos* thus demonstrates what I call (in *Obdurate Brilliance*) the "myth of transparency," or the ideology of direct apprehension of the surrounding context from the text of the poem. Without worrying too much (right now) about the accuracy of labels, much of what is called mainstream poetry today

operates either knowingly, or usually unknowingly, out of this model of transparency. Anthologies of poetics by mainstream poets are thus usually concerned with craft and technique—how the poem is put together—when the poet is not discussing where he or she went on his/her last vacation or MacArthur grant to gather material. The poem's meaning is either inherent in the material (themes) or what it represents (nature). This view of poetics as purely practical and personal both derives from and sustains the poetic practice variously termed workshop or MFA verse, and can be found exemplified in every issue of the AWP Chronicle. In the past twenty-five or so years vibrant alternatives in the theory and practice of poetry have risen out of the movement known as Language poetry. Following the "radical modernism" of Stein, Zukofsky and others, in Charles Bernstein's appellation, or what Marjorie Perloff has called "the other tradition," this practice has as one explicit goal, quoting Zukofsky, "to stop the gaze on words as things." By now, Language poetry has been around long enough that, like deconstruction or Mt. Pinatubo, it no longer exists, but its practitioners, many of them represented here, are still very active and its effects, as John Ashbery indicates in his interview, may be even more interesting than the initial productions of those associated with the movement. Literary history (which H. R. Jauss terms "conceivably the worst medium through which to display the historicity of literature") is already at work deriving a genealogy to explain the transition between the "radical modernism" of Stein, Zukofsky and others, and the Language poets. Materials for such a genealogy are generously represented here in the selections by John Ashbery and Robert Creeley, as well as those of Clark Coolidge and Bernadette Mayer. There is no raw material. So Harry Mathews begins his contribution. Mathews, a member of the *Ourvoir de littérature potentielle*, or OULIPO group, brings impeccable credentials to his theorizing, or non-theorizing, of the production of the poem. As with Lyn Hejinian's already-classic essay, "Against Closure" (revised and expanded for publication here), Mathews' statement is a kind of manifesto, reminiscent of the radical modernism of Andre Breton and early surrealism. Manifestos are less concerned with explanation than with demonstration; they attempt not to analyze, but rather to make manifest artistic practices and attitudes. Looking at the materials assembled here, I have been struck that there are two clear poles, or limits, or borders, to their expressive strategies. If the manifesto is one such border, the other is collage. Some of these collage assemblages, such as those of Charles Bernstein and Nicole Brossard, were created or at least shaped explicitly for this collection. Others are the results of collaborations between the poets and/or the editor and/or the editor's friends, notably Rod Smith, Lee Ann Brown, and Peter Gizzi. The relation of poetics to poetry always to some extent resists explanation. Yet we are drawn to explore it as part of a life commitment to poetry, a commitment those in the present volume recognize under the sign of necessity, Beckett's "all that I

can, more than I could." Each poet's approach also necessarily involves questions of individual history and practice while somehow managing to ground the communities of poets and artists actively committed to the creative imagination. This volume emerges from these multiple communities and hopefully will serve as a resource for those already involved in the work and those yet to come. Or, as Bernadette Mayer likes to say, "Onward."

Peter Baker  
Washington D.C., 1996

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198. **Jordan Davis**  
***amusing and depressing***

Tue 9 Jul 1996

---

Hey, who sent me that little golden book of lesser New York School poets? It's amusing. Thanks. Is that really a reprint of some previous anthology?

I suppose silence is a topic. Ford Madox Ford writes about reading with some surprise mid 19th c numbers of popular american periodicals filled with letters to the editor not about the fine moral shadings of the tales published in the magazines, but questions about the technique of short story writing. Isn't it funny that none of the poets here talks much about technique? Whatever that is. I guess I bring it up because I found it amusing and depressing, as I usually find Ford. The satires on lurking and on cross posting are also amusing and depressing. Bummer! And then I remember Bill Luoma's injunction not to write without having some feeling to send across, otherwise one produces a dull brown feeling in the reader. Why is that. What is the emotional reading that obtains to even a torn scrap of paper lying the street, that makes us accountable for the tone of our writing in ways we spend all our grace to avoid acknowledging? Heh? Eh? J

PS It was Ben Friedlander who wrote that, about it being all right to think of O'Hara's poems as fascinated with surface, as long as one acknowledges that the surface is quicksand..

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199. **Gabrielle Welford**  
***Re: performance & poetry: "measure carefully, can be toxic"***

Tue 9 Jul 1996

---

Sounds like Edith Sitwell... gab.

On Mon, 8 Jul 1996, Lisa Samuels wrote:

*for poetry performance: i still want to see someone  
at least \*begin\* a reading from behind an opaque  
black (or whatever) curtain*

*-or-*

*put an enormous mirror in front of the curtain so the  
audience sees only itself for a while (small venue  
and large mirror required)*

*-or/and-*

*position mirrors on either side of the stage so  
the audience can see the poet from the sides only,  
still behind the curtain*

*something along those lines*

*and for eliza mcgrand --  
as for #3, i prefer the phrasing of a country song:  
'I've enjoyed as much of this as I can stand'*

*my month's worth,*

*lisa samuels*

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200. **Gabrielle Welford**  
***thanks***

*Tue 9 Jul 1996*

to all for well wishes. All the traffic lights on the way there were green, I made it in time, the committee smiled a lot. I had fun teaching them for 10 minutes. Now, back to area exams... Don't stop wishing. You guys are good. gab.

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201. **Maria Damon**  
***Re: List wars***

*Tue 9 Jul 1996*

dodie: this is the third time you have attacked my person, my character, and my motives in a public conversation. what's going on? i have admired and respected your work as a writer and editor and contributor to the list. you know this. we have had a very warm (i thought) working relationship. now, every-time i utter a sentence, it seems, i get targeted for being holier-than-thou, careerist, making "freudian slips", etc -- my words are being twisted around,

caricatured, and then ridiculed, with unsavory motives ascribed to these inaccurate representations. clearly something's up. if i have offended you personally in any way (and your remarks seem clearly personally directed), please let me know, back channel, how i have done so. This is extremely painful to me and i would like it to stop maria d.

In message <v01520d01ae07d1e76e81@[205.134.228.72]> UB Poetics discussion group

writes:

> At 10:00 PM 7/8/96, Emily Lloyd wrote:

> >yes, which

> >threads do and don't get picked up merits observation, mention, critical

> >examination etc.

>

> The is Dodie Bellamy.

>

> On the surface, Emily, this sounds just great--but serveral issues come up

> for me. First of all, this list is not going to change the world, it's a

> bunch of mostly-white middle class people shooting the breeze. It's a

> place of priviledge and leisure--the priviledge to have access to a

> computer hook-up, the luxury of all this time to shoot the breeze. Let me

> get this clear, I am not against anybody discussing race issues and/or

> teaching--even though for us non-academics, issues of teaching are rather

> boring--and academic approaches to literature and to poets themselves are

> something many poets I speak with find problematic. For instance I do not

> think M. Damon's erasure of poets in her original post was merely an

> oversight--perhaps a Freudian slip? As Ron pointed out, for many academics

> living breathing poets are not part of the picture. Furthermore--this

> isn't the 50s, no one that I know of, and few (if any) people on this list

> would challenge the need for representation of non-"white-middle-class"

> writers wherever writers are represented.

>

> But creating a hierarchy of what's acceptable or more acceptable on this

> list is something I find highly problematic. It is that process of

> hierarchization which excluded non-"white-middle-class" writers and women

> from the literary canon in the first place. There is no god-given

> hierarchy of importance. It is this mindframe, for instance that has often

> disparaged conversation by women as "chatter." I have much difficulty when

> white middle class liberals use the issues of "oppressed" groups to guilt

> trip other white middle class liberals--and I think some of that has been

> going on here. Let me give an example from outside the list. Several

> years ago here in San Francisco there was a poet who became "engulfed" in

> the Gulf War. He marched against the Gulf War, did performance art against  
> the Gulf War, wrote poems about the Gulf War, wore buttons. So, at least a  
> year after the Gulf War ended he gave a reading--of course it was all poems  
> about the Gulf War. During the course of the reading he took the  
> opportunity to brow beat the audience by saying we're all here listening to  
> poetry--but there was THE GULF WAR--in other words he posed himself as  
this  
> messianic figure concerned with human suffering, and the audience was cast  
> as a bunch of superficiaals listening to Poetry. I have problems with the  
> colonizing of another group's oppression and and wearing it as a badge. I  
> am skeptical when someone makes an academic career out of Bob Kaufman  
then  
> makes jokes about his "clunkers" on this list. This is not treating  
> Kaufman with the dignity he deserves.  
>  
> To conclude, I think the Beatles and list politics are just as valid topics  
> of discussion here as anything else.

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202. **Bill Luoma/Vanstar**

***Re: tonight's HRs***

*Tue 9 Jul 1996*

---

C har,

I wanted biggio and there's no more permanent billy ripken.

so NL goes: chipper, hundley, larkin.

AL: knoblauch, anderson, carter.

with a wiff

To: bluoma @ vanstar.com @ VSMail

cc:

From: LancerLeg @ aol.com @ VSMail

Date: 07/09/96 05:32:42 PM PDT

Subject: tonight's HRs

National League: Bagwell, Ellis Burks, Biggio

American League: R.Alomar, Pudge Rodriguez, Buhner

pitch to maz ... gawn

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203. **Paul Naylor**

**Re: List wars**

Tue 9 Jul 1996

---

I'm with Charles on this one. I think Ron's allusion to Swift's "A Modest Proposal" and Herb's allusion to Ron's allusion suggests that a satire is coming or has come our way.

Paul Naylor

MAIL

SEND

in% "[REDACTED]"

in% "[REDACTED]"

SEND

in% "[REDACTED]"

in% "[REDACTED]"

>From: IN% "[REDACTED]" "UB Poetics discussion group" 9-JUL-1996 12:23:08.59

>Subj: RE: List wars

>

>>

>>Who can blame lurkers for keeping silent? ["vermin, scum, slime," says Herb

>>Levy referring to lurkers.]

>>

>

>>

>>Here are some other Herb Levy gems:

>>

>> "allowing the vampiric lurkers in our midst to stay on for another month of  
>>reading the collected

>>wisdom of others at no cost to themselves."

>>"To actively combat these lurker vermin, we must require full participation"

>>"This simple change in policy would most certainly cut down on the number  
of

>>non-participating lurker scum on poetics list and we would soon arrive at

>>the kind of total and immediate participatory democracy"

>>

>>Democracy for you, Herb, is an elimination of the "scum?" Can the unfortunates

>>help themselves if they (we) do not possess your "wisdom?" But I don't want  
to

>> dwell on your post, I'm sure you have some vitriol headed your way.

>  
>  
>I know it's said that one can't read tone in email messages, but I had no  
>problem being absolutely convinced that Herb's post was tongue-in-cheek.  
>  
>charles  
SEND  
in%"[REDACTED]"  
in%"[REDACTED]"

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204. **Robert A Harrison**

***L. Thomas***

*Tue 9 Jul 1996*

---

Has anyone mentioned that Lorenzo is not only black, but Hispanic? He's Panamanian-American, a non-native speaker of English. Haven't been able to keep up with all the details of the conversation, I'm at work ... so if this is old news, then...

I happened to be looking for his current address before this discussion started. Does anyone have it?

Bob Harrison  
[REDACTED]

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205. **David Baratier**

***Re: List wars***

*Tue 9 Jul 1996*

---

Dear owners of the list,  
Do advertisements count?  
David Baratier

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206. **Christina Fairbank Chirot**

***posters***

*Tue 9 Jul 1996*

---

interesting to scroll down the screen and read alternating messages: "poetry performance"/"list wars".

Remember that poster, "What if they held a war and nobody came?"

Thanks to Bob Harrison for his message regarding Lorenzo Thomas.

Dave Baptiste Chirot

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207. **David Baratier**

*poetry parformir*

Tue 9 Jul 1996

---

| Christopher K. Whipple typed:

`Does anyone have any ideas on why coffee house readings are so often lame and depressing; why do these horrible people have a monopoly on the espresso circuit, while so much that is delicious is abandoned to a half-life in academia?

The tension between the academic and the street (or spoken word) poets have created the coffee-house lameness in most cities I've lived in. The problem is two-fold: many academics believe that poetry worth reading is to be institutionalized and therefore works outside of this sphere are improperly crafted or have a lower unit value, while many of the street poets believe that reading other's poems or revising their own are both unnecessary aspects of the craft. One of the few reading series I have chanced upon with a full mixture and a successful open mike, was sponsored by an independent bookstore in Philly (now out of business) which actively sought out both university and non-university readers willing to take smaller (guaranteed) amounts of money. For this reason, plus the owner's stable of consistent readers he supported, out of a crowd of twenty readers, at least a fourth, and usually more, were excellent.

Does anyone have any ideas on how poetry can be successfully performed?

Joy Harjo uses a slow reading style with bursts of animation and/or inflection to add to the lyrical scenery. A good sample can be found on the \_Woman who fell from the sky\_ cassette which accompanies the book. But a more representative example (not so over produced and the like) can be found on an earlier tape (I think it's called \_Furious Light\_.

Jack Gilbert is a contemporary master of silence. Of how silences can be manipulated to fit the reading space for the most impact in relation to the poem. His use of rhetorical questions followed by long pauses fell entire audiences into thought, tense with answer. One keeps waiting for an escape, the brilliance is his refusal to withdrawal, to slacken the question.

Michelle Boisseau the length of her poems accumulate in an audiences head in such a way as to bring the weight of the poem upon the ending. For

one who listens intently during the entire piece, the ending is a miraculous articulation of associative values built upon throughout the piece.

Be well

David Baratier

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---

208. **Gabrielle Welford**

***herb levy's scum***

*Tue 9 Jul 1996*

---

Hey daniel, I have an eensy feeling herb's modest proposal was a little tongue in cheek. But I'm looking forward to the 200-500 wd responses from 300 people with abstracts attached. I think we should all take this very seriously wink wink nudge nudge gab.

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---

209. **Kathrine Varnes**

***Re: poetry performance***

*Tue 9 Jul 1996*

---

As far as I'm concerned, a good performance is a good interpretation, or at least an interesting one. (The reverse is also true.) A bad performance is one that has no interpretation, or at least not a complete one. This re-states some of what folks have already said, except I'd also add that what kills poetry for me (which is often what happens when actors are reading) is when the reader has already decided what the perfect reading is and tries to create it -- some static idea -- instead of actively interpreting while reading. Better to be imperfect and lean on the words.

Kathrine Varnes

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---

210. **Emily Lloyd**

***Re: List wars***

*Tue 9 Jul 1996*

---

Ok, Dodie. I see your point clearly w/the example of the Gulf guy, although I'm not sure that Maria's etc. posts were coming on in that way. Having attended 2 of the most supposedly "leftist" and "activism-oriented" undergrad schools I can think of, I'm all-too-aware of the kind of unconstructive self-righteousness you describe, & tend to respond to Gulf-guy types by holding out my hand, slapping it, and crying "bad little activist." I just didn't read the post that way. And I

pretty much agree that there should be no "godgiven hierarchy of importance" as to what will be discussed here (although perhaps that part of your post should be addressed to Marjorie's last, and not Maria's?). I'd hope there was a place for Beatles & teaching & race & list politics (after all, we're "mostly-white middleclass people shooting the breeze"--we've got the time) But I think the point was that there wasn't...certain issues were dropped like potatoes, for whatever reason (and I admit, yes, to an interest/concern in that reason). I'm not interested in falling into the "why are we talking about this when we could/should be talking about THIS?" trap; on the other hand, I think "why \*aren't\* we talking about this?" is a valid question. emily

~~~~~  
Emily Lloyd [REDACTED]
"Emily said Emily said, Emily
is admittedly Emily." --G. Stein

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211. **Loss Glazier**
Orono papers & other authors
Tue 9 Jul 1996

--> An update on a topic that arose on this list. I've had a couple of people offer to give me Orono papers so I will be making a small number of papers a part of the online Orono book. If you have a paper from the conference to put online, you are very much encouraged to get in touch with me via individual e-mail.

--> For their home pages, I'd also be very interested in essays/works on:

Enslin
Cervavalo
Irby
Robert Creeley
Ray Federman
Steve McCaffery
Fiona Templeton
Cecilia Vicun~a
Lyn Hejinian
Barbara Guest
Bruce Andrews
Jackson Mac Low
Susan Howe

If you have writing on any of these authors you'd like to make available online, please let me know.

--> I'm interested in putting papers about other authors online also. So please let me know if you have other papers too!

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212. **David Kellogg**

Re: List wars

Tue 9 Jul 1996

Marjorie has made an important point about the dominance in these here threads of silly issues. She also points out that a lot of energy is expended on peripherals when more important issues are staring us in the face.

But I don't think it's easy to separate the central from the peripheral. To wit:

On Tue, 9 Jul 1996, Hank Lazer wrote:

Before Marjorie (or Robt) or others accuse me of offering merely sociological reasons for reading Hayden, let me add that I consider his poetry GOOD.

Now, why does Hank feel a need to say this? What the hell's the matter with reading a poet for sociological reasons, or for reasons other than that poet's value? Why the obvious debasement of "mere" sociology? What's wrong with sociology? Bob von H stated the assumption explicitly, somewhere in his response to Aldon, that the goal of scholarship should be, more or less, to separate the wheat from the chaff. Marjorie in her post assumes something similar, and now Hank has to make an obligatory nod to that belief.

Well that's not MY goal, or not most of the time, and I don't see why it should be. From the posts of those critics who are on this list, it seems to me that the world (or at least the Net) is filled with people yakking about why such-and-such a poet is good, and another is bad. The last thing I want or need is another tastemaker. Save that, as Foucault might say, for the police.

I'm not trying to exclude considerations of value. We have to evaluate all the time anyway. But prior definitions of the proper job of the critic or poet are a lot sillier than examinations of net-politics.

When people talk about "mere" sociology, or slag critics as somehow less credible than poets (thank you Dodie), or talk about the proper role of poetry, or criticism, or whatever, I get alternately bored or angry. Mainly, though, I think that if sociology draws this much uncontested ire and obvious anxiety, there must be something to it. A "pure" poetics outside of sociology doesn't exist, and if it did I wouldn't want it.

Cheers,
David

~~~~~  
~~~~~  
David Kellogg Duke University
[REDACTED] University Writing Program
[REDACTED] Durham, NC 27708
FAX [REDACTED]

The time is at hand.
Take one another
and eat.

-- Thomas Kinsella

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213. **maria damon**

Re: Orono papers & other authors

Tue 9 Jul 1996

loss --if our papers are being published somewhere, what are the print-copy-right politics of sending them also to you; wd it be seen as undercutting the print-publisher's market? i don't wanna do anything "wrong."--md

In message <[REDACTED]> UB Poetics
discussion group writes:

> --> An update on a topic that arose on this list. I've had a couple of
> people offer to give me Orono papers so I will be making a small
> number of papers a part of the online Orono book. If you have a paper
> from the conference to put online, you are very much encouraged to get
> in touch with me via individual e-mail.

>

> --> For their home pages, I'd also be very interested in essays/works on:

> Enslin
> Ceravalo
> Irby
> Robert Creeley
> Ray Federman
> Steve McCaffery
> Fiona Templeton
> Cecilia Vicun~a
> Lyn Hejinian
> Barbara Guest
> Bruce Andrews
> Jackson Mac Low
> Susan Howe

> If you have writing on any of these authors you'd like to make
> available online, please let me know.
>
> --> I'm interested in putting papers about other authors online
> also. So please let me know if you have other papers too!

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214. **Jerry Rothenberg**

Re: Covering Cherub

Tue 9 Jul 1996

Dear Rob Wilson --

Thanks for yours, & please feel free to send any essays/works etc. concerning local & Pacific matters. We'll be arriving there on the 4th of September & I understand from Gab Welford that there's a big Bamboo Ridge reading on the 5th, so certainly we'll plan to get to that one. I have an interest in all of that, so looking forward very much to this particular visit. Tell me if you have any ideas or suggestions, and in the meantime

all good wishes

JERRY

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215. **Charles Alexander**

Re: Orono papers & other authors

Tue 9 Jul 1996

Dear Maria:

Welcome back to town. I'm very swamped this week, but I'd love to see you sometime soon. Perhaps next week, even on a weekday, you could come over to our house for coffee/tea, meet my wife Cynthia, talk a bit? so very lovely yes yes

And I'm sorry Dodie is giving you such a hard time. To these eyes it's not apparent why she's giving you a hard time. I've always had a good time with Dodie in email conversations, have met her a couple of times at San Francisco readings I've given, but I don't know her very well.

Hope it passes.

love,

charles

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216. **Charles Alexander**
Re: Orono papers & other authors
Tue 9 Jul 1996

Well now I feel embarrassed having goofed with the reply button and passed on a personal message to the list. Sorry to all.

charles

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217. **Eliza McGrand- CVA Guest**
the guy and the gulf war
Tue 9 Jul 1996

a year or so ago, the dance critic from the new yorker (arlene croce? i know i am blanking on the name here) had an extraordinary essay on victim art. she took an extreme position against it, refusing to attend bill t. jones' latest dance peice, about death and dying, because she felt it was a category she defined as "victim art" -- work written about hardship that causes the creator to be evaluated as a victim, rather than as an artist.

her refusal to even go to the concert was extreme, certainly, and her essay sparked much protest in artistic sectors. but the point was valid. there is a tendency to evaluate art about hardship not as art but as a test of audience compassion, liberalism, etc. your gulf-war fellow was just another remove of this.

i am working on a book about domestic violence and it has been very difficult for me to evaluate the writing, to decide whether it should be public or not. i think putting victimhood out in writing, submitting the writing to forums as writing, and then complaining, if it doesn't go over well, that the critics are being as abusive as the initial source of hardship is, to say the least, being a bad sport. but on the other hand, the source of a terrifying amount of art (can't, for gods sake, we write/draw/sing/compose about anything but pain i ask myself sometimes in frustration) IS pain. and art works can bring the audience into a close understanding of what a hardship is, and does, as very little else can.

all of this is old ground, covered by the new yorker essay and numerous responses to it... and the gulf war poet is yet another wrinkle. do we admire someone for at least caring about a painful issue and taking on the burden of making art about it? on the other hand, to harangue an audience for being an audience, instead of performing some undefined activist task, seems absurd, almost sartre... when does a work become too personal and too painful to be evaluated as art? e

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218. **Gabrielle Welford**

Collaborator on M.E.T. Lambert article, 19th c poet (fwd)

Tue 9 Jul 1996

I am seeking possible collaborators for an article on 19th-c American woman poet Mary Eliza (Perine) Tucker Lambert, whose works are included in *_Black Women's Poetry_* from the Oxford UP series, the Schomburg Library of 19th-c Black Women Writers, and excerpted in Cheryl Walker's anthology of 19th-c American women poets. An important component of the article will be reception of the poem in classrooms, so that any classroom experience with her works would be a valuable asset for a collaboration.

Janet Gray



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219. **Michelle Roberts**

Re: bumb bunny

Tue 9 Jul 1996

Thanks all for the responses to my inquiry. It turns out that the essay on the new sentence was in file in my cabinet, and I'd read it four years ago while getting my masters -- somehow, and don't take this personally, Ron -- I just forgot it!! And I was reading lots of L-poetry at the time. Sheez. Again thanks, I'll be re-reading now.

M

Meaghan Roberts-Jones

Candidate - Humanities-Lit.&Ideas

of Texas at Dallas

Irigaray

Our exchanges? An engendering Ph.D.

through rare and always The University

infinte fortune.



-- L.

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220. **Michelle Roberts**

Re: Listpersonship

Tue 9 Jul 1996

On Mon, 8 Jul 1996, c.g. guertin wrote:

> Lurker equals/does not equal listener? Is this a 'bad' moral equation?

> Silence is evil or simply undesirable?

>

> cg

>

Actually, Ron made some excellent points. Devolving is no fun. And as to the ethics and morality of lurking: 95% of the time I lurk on this list because y'all are already a community, some it appears were before the list existed, and I'm not going to shoot off my mouth and mess up the party -- also, the level of thinking here is simply smore sophisitcated than mine at present and y'all serve as a good model (for lots of reasons, some contradictory) of what this little poet-critic could aspire to. Combine those, and I'm quiet cuz I'm not silly. I know when I'm being taught, that's all. And thanks for being good at what you do.

Yours in gazing,
m

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221. **Burt Kimmelman**
Re: Private List/Public Space

Tue 9 Jul 1996

Loss,

yes, but how often do one's notes tacked onto a bulletin board get taken down and shipped off to some archive; archiving (electronic or otherwise) seems to legitimize the mere missives, no? And then they get quoted perhaps, and so on.

Burt

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222. **Michelle Roberts**
Re: poetry performance

Tue 9 Jul 1996

| *that wished to consume its object, to become its object, to take
| the place of its object (Freudian references intended).*

James, that sounds more like Lacan. I wish we could get over him. And I wish Derrida would quit demolishing people, and I wish poetry or poets would defend themselves. Or at least quit why is poetry on the side of the feminine in dynamic?? Actually, I've read my Kristeva, so I have an answer for that. pffft.

M>

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223. **Bruce Malcolm**

(no subject)

Tue 9 Jul 1996

PLEASE HELP!

Date: 09 Jul 1996 07:43:47

From: [REDACTED]

Subject: KEY SENATE BURMA VOTE: THURSDAY, JULY 11

To: Recipients of burmanet-l <[REDACTED]>

Lines: 65

From: [REDACTED] (Simon Billenness)

Subject: KEY SENATE BURMA VOTE: THURSDAY, JULY 11

SENATE MAY VOTE ON BURMA SANCTIONS THURSDAY, JULY 11

BUMRA SANCTIONS UNDER THREAT! CALL YOUR SENATORS TODAY!

July 9, 1996

The news from Senator McConnell's office is that the Foreign Aid Bill, containing an amendment section 569) by Senators McConnell and Moynihan imposing economic sanctions on Burma, may come up for a vote on Thursday, July 11.

Section 569 is under severe threat. One or more Senators will attempt to remove the sanctions on Burma through a floor amendment.

It is vital that we each call our Senators and urge them to keep the sanctions on Burma (section 569) in the Foreign Aid Bill.

CALL YOUR SENATORS TOLL-FREE AT [REDACTED]

1. Ask for the staff person responsible for foreign policy issues.
2. Stress that you want your Senator to support the economic sanctions on Burma contained in Section 569 of the Froeign Aid Bill.
3. Ask your friends, family and co-workers to call too.

MAKE SURE YOU CALL BY 5PM, WEDNESDAY, JULY 9!!

Simon Billenness

Franklin Research & Development

[REDACTED] x 225

[REDACTED] fax

[REDACTED]

SECTION 569 OF THE FOREIGN AID BILL & CURRENT TEXT OF THE
"BURMA FREEDOM AND DEMOCRACY ACT" (S.1511).

1. LIMITATION ON FUNDS FOR BURMA

2. Sec. 569. Until such time as the President determines
3. and certifies to the Committees on Appropriations that an
4. elected government of Burma has been allowed to take office,
5. the following sanctions shall be imposed on Burma:
6. (1) No national of the United States shall make
7. any investment in Burma;
8. (2) United States assistance to Burma is prohib-
9. ited;
10. (3) The Secretary of the Treasury shall instruct
11. the United States executive director of each inter-
12. national financial institution to vote against any
13. loan or other utilization of the funds of the respective
14. bank to or for Burma; and
15. (4) Except as required by Treaty obligations,
16. any Burmese national who formulates, implements,
17. or benefits from policies which hinder the transition
18. of Burma to a democratic country shall be ineligible
19. to receive a visa and shall be exclude from admission
20. to the United States.

DON'T DELAY! CALL TODAY!



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224. **Burt Kimmelman**

Re: Private List/Public Space

Tue 9 Jul 1996

James (and Loss et al.),

I guess we should simply acknowledge that the list is as public as potential citationers make it. If you give a talk somewhere, does every scholar in the audience need to ask your permission before quoting/citing you? Of course not. But a reader will understand the level of formality of the discourse, and perhaps thereby its seriousness, when the reader finds out that this was a talk you were giving and not, say, a paper published in a button down refereed journal or whatever.

burt

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225. **Kevin Killian**

Re: List wars

Tue 9 Jul 1996

At 6:41 PM 7/10/96, wylan wrote:

>Dear Dodie,

> I am sorry Charles is saying those things about you. (said in
>a personal, feeling, tone of voice) But seriously, Ms. Bellamy despite
>the fact unlike Mr. Alexander I don't know you at all, your motives
>seem clear and above board to me.

Wylan,

I'm fine with Charles.

*I observe some kind of comprehensive confusion about 'the personal'
developing here. What's to be done?*

I think the line between the personal and non-personal is always messy--and I wouldn't want it any other way. I think I, at least, should move on to new topics. If *I'm* getting tired of this one, I can only imagine what the poor lurkers are going through.

Dodie

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226. **wylan**

Re: List wars

Tue 9 Jul 1996

Dear David, The matter with reading poetry for sociological reasons is the kind of closure it applies to response/interpretation. Of course, if culture=the real, then there's no validity to my objection, but I don't happen to think it is. For you sociology subsumes poetics, for me poetics subsumes sociology. But I agree with you, if there are lots of people on the list who find sociology nauseating and don't say why, then we should get a discussion going. So I've offered two, or is it one? reason. Can we have some more? Does anyone recall the text of the Bruce Nauman piece at the last DOCUMENTA which begins: Anthropology, sociology?? Wylan

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227. **Dean Taciuch**

(no subject)

Tue 9 Jul 1996

On Tue, 9 Jul 1996, Kathrine Varnes wrote:

> As far as I'm concerned, a good performance is a good interpretation, or
> at least an interesting one. (The reverse is also true.)

...

> what kills poetry for me (which is often what happens when
> actors are reading) is when the reader has already decided what the
> perfect reading is and tries to create it -- some static idea -- instead
> of actively interpreting while reading. Better to be imperfect and lean
> on the words.

>

> Kathrine Varnes

>

OK, but how to offer an interpretation without having an interpretation in mind?
This is a serious question..I wonder this myself when reading--do I try to ex-
press an ambiguous line break verbally (and how?) or do I collapse the distinc-
tion, choose a reading, and present that?

I think the key is "static"--the performance should not be a single thing, or at
least not the same single thing to everyone.

Also, I don't mean to knock actors/acting. It certainly is possible for an actor to
give a good reading of a poem, just as it is obviously possible for a poet to give
a bad reading.

Dean Taciuch

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228. **Michelle Roberts**

Re: List, person, ship

Tue 9 Jul 1996

As regards Herb's post on "lurker vermin:" Dude, I do seriously hope you were
kidding. Your system would require a life lived on line what with the pace of
discussion on this list. Some of us "vermin" are sincerely listening, not ripping
y'all's posts to use in our papers or poems, not interested in damaging a valu-
able source of expansion for our our own sad little minds -- and some of us are
busy! I regret that you feel that way, but your democracy sounds facsist, a little
to Texas Christian Coalition usurps the REpublican party for me. But thanks
for the in-put, we son't mean to bug you.

Meaghan Roberts-Jones

Candidate - Humanities-Lit.&Ideas
of Texas at Dallas

Irigaray

Our exchanges? An engendering Ph.D.
through rare and always The University

infinte fortune. [REDACTED]

-- L.

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229. **Carnography**
Re: poetry parformir
Tue 9 Jul 1996

David Baratier typed:

The tension between the academic and the street (or spoken word) poets have created the coffee-house lameness in most cities I've lived in. The problem is two-fold: many academics believe that poetry worth reading is to be institutionalized and therefore works outside of this sphere are improperly crafted or have a lower unit value, while many of the street poets believe that reading other's poems or revising their own are both unnecessary aspects of the craft.

I cite this paragraph baldly because it is breathtakingly apt. This is one of the deepest, most problematic schisms in NYC's poetic mileau. It is also why brilliant autodidacts fall through the cracks--only to be discovered generations later.

Nice one (as the singer in Speedway says).

All the best,

Rob Hardin

<http://www.interport.net/~scrypt>

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230. **Michelle Roberts**
Re: herb levy's scum
Tue 9 Jul 1996

(blush) see what happens when the unitiated go blabbing? Excuse me, Herb -- you were kidding. Cool. Very funny, might have enjoyed the post, shucks.

Meaghan Roberts-Jones	Our exchanges? An engendering Ph.D.
Candidate - Humanities-Lit.&Ideas	through rare and always The University
of Texas at Dallas	infinte fortune. [REDACTED]
Irigaray	-- L.

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231. **Carnography**
Re: maria--/& performance
Tue 9 Jul 1996

emily writes:

*I've been
studying race and representation for years, & the more I study, the less*

Mostly I got worried & a little nauseated at the prospect of a predominantly-white-membered list discussing "race & erotics" esp. in the assertive and "I know what I'm talking about" voice

I can understand your frustration. But:

The best way to involve more women and people of color in this group is to invite them here, don't you think? Why slam others for being white or male, why transfer the abuse from patriarch to matriarch, why pass racism back and forth, like any dysfunctional family? Let's involve more voices, let's encourage more people to speak. But let's not show disrespect for the voices that have spoken.

I'm not being contentious or smug. What I'm saying is difficult, not easy. It would be easy to agree with you and to rail at the villain I resemble. Yet I can't do that, because the supposition makes me ethically *un*easy.

All the best,

Rob Hardin

<http://www.interport.net/~scrypt>

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232. **Rod Smith**

Re: amusing and depressing

Wed 10 Jul 1996

J--

Who's in that lesser known NY poets anth. I've heard tell of its existence. Howe bout a quick contents.

"war is other people"

--rrpfet

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233. **wystan**

Re: Orono papers & other authors

Wed 10 Jul 1996

Dear Charles,

Was that a goof-on-purpose, or an honest-to-goodness-goof?

Wystan

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234. **wystan**

Re: List wars

Wed 10 Jul 1996

Dear Dodie, I am sorry Charles is saying those things about you. (said in a personal, feeling, tone of voice) But seriously, Ms. Bellamy despite the fact unlike Mr. Alexander I don't know you at all, your motives seem clear and above board to me.

I observe some kind of comprehensive confusion about 'the personal' developing here. What's to be done?

Wystan.

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235. **Thomas Bell**

Re: Listpersonship

Wed 10 Jul 1996

can i stay if i promise to close my ears?

tom

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236. **Andrew John Miller**

Value Judgments and Sociology (was Re: List wars)

Wed 10 Jul 1996

David Kellog wrote (among many other things):

- > From the posts of those critics who are on this list, it seems to
- > me that the world (or at least the Net) is filled with people
- > yakking about why such-and-such a poet is good, and another is bad.
- > The last thing I want or need is another tastemaker. Save that,
- > as Foucault might say, for the police. [...] A "pure" poetics
- > outside of sociology doesn't exist, and if it did I wouldn't want
- > it.
- >

David:

I agree with the general tenor of your remarks. Poetic value is contingent and contextual; it is circulated and produced under conditions that are mediated by forces of the sort that we have been taught to describe as social, economic, and/or cultural. I strongly disagree, however, with your contention that an entity called "sociology" forms an essential and necessary part of our understanding of poetry and poetics.

Sociology is an academic discipline, one that has its own rules, traditions, procedures, and sacred texts. Like most academic disciplines, it is marked by a broad array of disagreements over its basic aims and methods; even the question of what does or does not qualify as "social" remains open to considerable debate. Those of us who define ourselves as literary critics and scholars can derive considerable benefit from reading the work of sociologists; we can even, much of the time, make effective use of that work. So long, however, as we continue to define ourselves--institutionally, professionally, and/or personally--as literary critics and scholars, we will be doing something that is not "sociology" in any precise or specific sense. We will find ourselves compelled, moreover, to deal with rules, traditions, procedures, and sacred texts that are profoundly different from those favored by sociologists. Of course, we can attempt to persuade our colleagues to think more like sociologists--an enterprise in which you, among others, have enjoyed at least some degree of success. I believe, however, that it would be a serious mistake to proceed as if sociology somehow provided us with a higher level discourse by means of which we could loftily point out the errors of those (supposedly) primitive and unenlightened colleagues who continue to approach literature in other ways.

While I'm at it, I might as well confess that I see nothing wrong with the production of value judgments, poetic or otherwise, **provided** that those judgments are forthrightly presented as judgments and are not cloaked in the aura of some pseudo-objective theory of poetics, society, history, etc. For me, one of the most helpful things about this list has been the opportunity to hear intelligent and informed people describe their poetic likes and dislikes. I personally feel that, if anything, there has not been enough of this sort of discussion. I greatly appreciate it when friends share with me their value judgments about wines, restaurants, movies, music, and cars. Why should poetry be any different?

--Andrew John Miller
Department of English
Duke University
Durham NC 27701

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237. **Rod Smith**
trolling for newbies
Wed 10 Jul 1996

Ochre
yo
to obtain "exactitude" a

substituted herb splash he
devoted to from childhood atmospherization

I like it vertical
to infinity

Sokal's a landscapism
of the Cubist
overleaf

drop your right ear
in fault tone

imp carnivore
of the mechanical ample in us
by us

analogues

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238. **Aldon L. Nielsen**

Re: in which will be found what is set forth therein

Wed 10 Jul 1996

-- thanks for identifying Ben Friedlander as the author of that wonderful liner about the quickenbing sands of O'Hara's poems -- should have been IDed in my post, but I didn't have a tape of that session!

--Bob, I have an address for Lorenzo somewhere in my apartment -- backchannel me next chance you get & I will try to find it in the meantime --

--Loss -- want some pages on Lorenzo Thomas for that set of author pages? can excerpt from forthcoming book if you want --

--DOOR PRIZE -- I will send a book (NOT by me!) to the first person who identifies the author of these lines:

To a Captious Critic

Dear critic, who my lightness so deplores,
Would I might study to be prince of bores,
Right wisely would I rule that dull estate--
But, sir, I may not, till you abdicate.

--Mangled quote of the week --

I don't have the book with me, but here is an approximation of a poem by Dudley Randall:

Black Poet / White Critic

A critic advised me
to use images that appeal
to the universal,
like a white unicorn.

A white unicorn?

--Hank: whenever you feel you have the time, I'd be interested in hearing more of your take on "American Journal" -- That's a poem I've never been able to enjoy, and I'd like to hear from somebody who has worked with it more than I have -- I talked with Hayden any number of times about the poem, but it seemed a stretch to me -- I always thought it was the occasional poem he felt he had to write as Poetry Consultant -- but I suspect there's more to it than that --

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239. **Marjorie Perloff**

Re: List Wars

Wed 10 Jul 1996

Thanks, Hank, for that marvelous posting: I really learned a lot and you really make me want to read more Hayden. Daniel Bouchard asked me a few questions I want to answer. "In our midst" meant literally there at Orono, at the conference. The fact that Lorenzo is black (and also Hispanic as someone else has reminded me) is important insofar as at this particular conference there was much interest (naturally, given the time) in questions of race. More, interestingly, than in gender at this point. So--this being the big topic of discussion and of the argument between Aldon and Bob von H, I just meant that I was surprised no one was even discussing Lorenzo's own poetry or even his talk but was busy determining how to judge Langston Hughes. I said it badly, but anyway... As for David Kellogg's point that Marjorie is assuming that one can separate the wheat from the chaff, an idea David rejects out of hand, I want to say I plead guilty. Absolutely. If criticism doesn't at least in part do that, what are we writing for? Moreover, David, you too separate the wheat from the chaff. Everyone does everyone he/she makes a choice as to what to read, what to teach, what to write about. Right now I'm rereading MAN WITHOUT QUALITIES, for me one of the great novels-ever. It's very long. In the amount of time it takes to read Musil, I could read all of Robert Hayden or, for that matter, Robert Frost, to whom Hank compares Hayden. So whom to pick? David, don't you think some critical methodologies are better than others? Isn't that separating the wheat from the chaff? Why don't you base your critical writing on F. R. Leavis? Or on Arthur Quiller-Couch? Don't you believe certain articles you read in scholarly journals are better than others? Why, then, can't we, heaven forbid, think some poets are better than ours? Why is there so much

discussion of O'Hara (or Baraka) on this list and so little of Mark Strand? No value judgements involved?

The question, I think, is not whether or not we make value judgments--because all of us do--but what we do with them? I agree with the people who wrote in "What's wrong with sociological criteria?" Nothing at all, as long as you know they're your criteria. But since no one can read everything, we all make choices. So I was amused when Hank said Robert Hayden was good in the way Robert Frost is good. In all my years of teaching modern poetry, I've never yet taught Robert Frost. If I have 10 weeks (a quarter at Stanford) or even 15 (a semester), there are just poets I'd rather be teaching and I figure Frost gets taught enough anyway. That doesn't mean my criteria should be yours. But I'm just trying to say that if someone is going to convince me that X is worth a lot of discussion, I want to know why. Aldon, who's a good friend, has gone a long way in alerting me to African-American poets he feels are especially interesting and he makes a case for those poets--but not just for any poet who happens to be black. In fact, he's down on quite a few of the above. Wheat from the chaff, why not??? No hard and fast binary divisions of course. But how do you make actual practical choices??

Marjorie Perloff

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240. **Tom Malone**

A Closer Reading

Wed 10 Jul 1996

Date: Tue, 9 Jul 1996 08:42:13 -0700

NOT FROM: Herb Levy <[REDACTED]>

Subject: List, person, ship

Mr Silliman's proposal does not adequately address the pernicious issue of the Academic slime on this e-mail list.

Requiring a single, coherent post once per month from each Academic list member would likely result in cutesy, off-topic messages about the Von H. Affair or other irrelevant "me-too" posts ("I'm delivering a paper on The Canon vs. More of the Same." "No way! Me too!!") in ongoing threads. As not enough people have noted, this will result in too much Academic traffic, further allowing the vampiric Academics in our midst to stay on for another month of reading the collected wisdom of others.

To actively combat these Academic vermin, we must NOT require full participation by all list members in every current thread. After all, is it really too much

to ask that Academic members refrain from participating in the activities of the group.

To achieve the goal of total Non-Academic participation, we would have to move quickly toward the more reasonable requirement that all Academic members respond within one hour to each post to the list (including their own) with a closely reasoned 250-500 word statement outlining the many ways universities perpetuate socio-economic distinctions of class. To make it easier to follow the incoherent discourse that would likely result under this new system, each Academic member would also have to provide a shorter abstract of their denials.

This simple change in policy would most certainly cut down on the number of Academic scum on poetics list and we would soon arrive at the kind of total and immediate Revolution that one usually sees in only a few of the more progressive-thinking Usenet newsgroups.

Tom Malone



As an aside: At the very least it is a misguided notion to say the poetics list is private. ANYONE can (and do) read, download, and forward posts from the p-list archive at the Poetics Website.

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241. **Daniel Salmon**

Re: List, person, ship

Wed 10 Jul 1996

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13a 13b 13c 14 15

At 08:42 AM 9/07/96 -0700, you wrote:

>To start with, we could allow brief (less than a hundred words) responses
>to be made within forty-eight hours of the initiation of any new topic.

>

>However, to achieve the goal of total active participation, we would have
>to move quickly toward the more reasonable requirement that all list
>members respond within one hour to each post to the list (including their
>own) with a closely reasoned 250-500 word statement. To make it easier to
>follow the advanced discourse that would likely result under this new
>system, each list member would also have to provide a shorter abstract of
>their arguments.

>

>This simple change in policy would most certainly cut down on the number of
>non-participating lurker scum on poetics list and we would soon arrive at
>the kind of total and immediate participatory democracy that one usually

>sees in only a few of the more progressive-thinking Usenet newsgroups.

>

>

>Herb Levy

> [REDACTED]

>

>

Daniel Salmon

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242. **Schuchat**

Cult of poetry in China

Wed 10 Jul 1996

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

Since Ron asks, here follows some precis and quotes from the Michelle Yeh article in THE JOURNAL OF ASIAN STUDIES which I had mentioned in an earlier post. My apologies for the length of this post, (its hard to do justice to a 30 page essay in an email) and also for my numerous typos, spelling errors and transcription errors. I hope it is of interest.

The article deals with the "avant garde/experimental" poetry scene in post-Mao China, which is unofficial though not necessarily "illegal."

"By 'cult of poetry' I am referring to the phenonemon and the concomitant discourse in the 1980s and 1990s that bestows poetry with religious significance and cultivates the image of the poet as the high priest of poetry. The word cult has no exact equivalent in Chinese and is used here as an approximate translation for 'worship' or chongbai with strong religious connotations. The 'cult of poetry' thus denotes a religious poetics that is based on the worship of poetry and that inspires a religious-like devotion among poets."

The late 80s/90s generation of experimental Chinese poets, according to Yeh, are alienated both from the traditional Communist orthodoxy and also from the rising commodity/westernizing/pop culture environment around them. Both of these options do not particularly value the poet or poetry:

"Most of the avant-garde poets who choose to continue to write, however, tend to be in the lower echelon of the current economic structure, holding low-paying state-assigned jobs or no jobs at all."

A quote from poem by Zhou Lunyou, "A cofounder and editor of the long-running Sichuan-based poetry journal Feifei, Zhou spent seven months in a prison in Xichang before he was sentenced to three years in a labor reform camp on Mount Emei for "counter-revolutionary incitement":

To prove through my writing: to be alive is important
What is food? What is Sarte?
The blows of commodities are more gentle, more direct than violence,
More cruel too, pushing the spirit toward total collapse."

"The image of the poet as someone who chooses a life of wandering and poverty in order to follow the sacred calling of art, who rejects the dehumanizing system and vulgar society with courage and defiance, finds a vivid expression in the following description of the poet Hei Dachun (b. 1960). Nicknamed "the Drunkard of Yuanmingyuan," Hei is a central figure in a group of poets, artists and rock-and-roll singers who live a bohemian life near the ruins of the leisure palace from China's last dynasty: 'Much of his food and clothes are gifts from his friends. Seeing his religious spirit of dedication, his friends feel that they should do something for art. The worship of art and the eternal need of humans for art makes him believe firmly in the art of poetry which he engages in. He will not waste his energy and life on things he dislikes just in order to lead a normal life; therefore, he does not work, does not bow to the leadership, does not sell his life which belongs to art. He'd rather drift about, embrace death.'"

Yeh discusses several highly-publicized suicides among avant garde Chinese poets, including Gu Cheng, who hung himself after murdering his wife. She notes that "many reminiscences and memorial essays that appeared after the tragedy held a rather understanding, if not forgiving, attitude toward Gu. Referring almost always to his precious poetic talent and occasionally also to his previous attempts at suicide...they tend to see in his a romantic genius beyond the laws of this world, who consequently perhaps should not be judged in accordance with the "normal" criteria of right and wrong."

Discussing the current Chinese avant gardes self-admitted forebears, after several Chinese poets including the early 20th century modernist Zhu Xiang, the pre-Han Qu Yuan and Tang dynasty's Li Bai (Li Po), she notes that "some of the most frequently mentioned names in the poetry and prose discussions are" Holderlin, Rilke, Borges, Tsvetayeva, Mandelstam, Rimbaud, Plath, Pasternak, Brodsky, Celan, Keats, Shelley and Dante.....what the majority of the poets on the above list have in common is personal tragedy."

"Perhaps a ready-made explanation for the 'cult of poetry' is this: it is a response of poets to the spiritual vacuum in the wake of the Cultural Revolution in the post-Mao era. In view of the destruction of traditional Chinese values and mores, coupled with the widespread disaffection among the intellectuals with the Communist party in the post-Mao era, it is understandable how poets seek to redefine themselves beyond the pale of official ideology. The "cult of

poetry' represents a search for an alternative value system, a new identity of the self in contradistinction from, and in defiance of, that dictated by the Party."

"When the poet is held as more important than the poetry, death -- especially self-imposed death--becomes the ultimate poem, the poem to end all poems."

"What is probably most problematic about the overwhelming interest in the poet rather than the poetry is its ambivalent relation to the mentality underlying the culture of an earlier era -- the personality cult of Mao. ...The deification of poetry and the canonization of the poet reveal an absolutist, Utopian frame of mind that at least implicitly excludes other approaches to poetry both in theory and practice. Are alienation and the sense of crisis the necessary driving force behind the creation of poetry? Why is the poetry that emphasizes suffering and sacrifice regarded nobler or better than the poetry that does not? Why does the poet have to be perceived in heroic terms?"

"Throughout the discussion thus far I have used male personal pronouns whenever I refer to Chinese avant-garde poets as a group. Rather than committing a sexist oversight, I mean to make a point about another significant aspect of the discourse of the "cult" few women poets can be found actively participating or involved in the discourse [of the cult of poetry]. It is true that a number of women poets have achieved a national, even international reputation in post-Mao China, most notably Shu Ting and Wang Xiaoni in the early 1980s and Zhai Yongming and Lu Yimin since the mid-1980s. However, none of them have played a significant role in the discourse of the cult..."

"In the final analysis, the 'cult of poetry' in post-mao China is a paradox. It advocates creative freedom and individuality, however, in elevating poetry to the status of a supreme religion, it imposes arbitrary limits on poetry. It defies the official ideology, yet is unable to escape entirely the absolutist, Utopian mentality in its worship of the poet and deification of poetry. It resists and detests consumerism, yet it is by no means immune from itself becoming a commodity. When it is perceived by the outside world as "dissent literature" in a totalitarian regime, Chinese avant-garde poetry can easily be turned -- or some may say, has already been turned -- into a commodity in the international (especially Western) cultural market. These contradictions and pitfalls--artistic, ideological and economic--point to the intrinsic limitations of the "cult of poetry," and we can already see "anti-cult" reactions coming from various perspectives in recent years..."

**** again, my apologies for lacunae etc. It is not easy to do justice to a 30 page essay in this post, especially one that presupposes some knowledge of recent Chinese history and literature. Anyway, I hope the above quotes are interesting, and of course, following up with the article itself from the Journal of Asian Studies will give a better sense than my excerpts.

Ta ta

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243. **henry gould**

Re: Onward: Contemporary Poetry & Poetics

Wed 10 Jul 1996

On Tue, 9 Jul 1996 14:07:31 -0400 Rod Smith said:

>This is the Contents and Introduction for the forthcoming anthology _Onward:
>Contemporary Poetry and Poetics_ ed. Peter Baker, Peter Lang Pub., \$28 pb,
>440 pgs. due out Sept '96. Peter is off line traveling and asked me to send
>it to the listwar. "The Rejection of Closure" is a revised and extended
>version.

Peter Baker's preview of the new anthology is interesting - is it just me, or is there really a kind of response in his intro to some list discussions (am I being too "immanentist"?). PB draws up a new genealogy specifically contrasting Pound (the immanentist) with Zukofsky (the nominalist) and lining up contemporary & language poets with Zukofsky. This is not really new but it seems to take things from both the dreaded Blasing discussion from months back & the Peirce harangue from weeks back, & turn them on their heads. (Ie. the language poets, contra Blasing's pantheon, are the true purveyors of the split between assumed reality & the word - in terms of Scholasticism!) Here's what sounds familiar to me:

Belief in an implicit poetics can be seen to derive from an immanentist theory of language, or the idea that words bear direct relation to what they represent, even carrying a little bit of the essence of the thing in the word. Such immanentist theories deriving from the religious tradition ("and the word was with God and the word was God") drove William of Occam, in the twelfth century, to propose the complete separation of word and referent, in his philosophy of nominalism. Jacques Derrida is often thought to represent such a nominalist viewpoint in his philosophy of deconstruction (see my Deconstruction and the Ethical Turn). Ezra Pound's language theory is explicitly immanentist, as when he instructs his Italian translator of The Cantos: "Don't worry about the meaning of the poem. Translate accurately line by line. The meaning is inherent in the material." Pound's poetics in The Cantos thus demonstrates what I call (in Obdurate Brilliance) the "myth of transparency," or the ideology of direct apprehension of the surrounding context from the text of the poem. Without worrying too much (right now)

I don't see how the concluding few sentences above follow logically. Pound's saying the meaning is inherent in the material certainly does not "demonstrate" a belief in language's transparency, though I'd grant that Pound certainly did have a kind of idealist-realist faith in the access of poetry to the real. Pound's statement above, though, that the meaning is inherent in the material, would

hold as true for Objectivism as for high modernism. The differences, real or imagined, between the poetics of Pound and those of the anthologized poets perhaps hinge less on their approaches to language than on the status of meaning & belief. Language, as I see it, though changing and evolving, is something of a constant in comparison with the astonishing pressures of ideology, history & the zeitgeist on culture's idea of what is artistically necessary or important. These pressures, of course, influence trends in the philosophy of language (exhibited clearly both in the Scholastics and in the above intro), but poetry operates, hopefully, by digging toward the permanent functions of language, which persist THROUGH the "zeitgeist". - Henry Gould

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244. **Loss Glazier**

Re: Private List/Public Space

Wed 10 Jul 1996

Burt, Yes, true. But some of the great literary archives consist of just these sorts of notes (and letters) that some kind soul just happened to save... Loss

At 05:54 PM 7/9/96 EST, you wrote:

>Loss,

>

>yes, but how often do one's notes tacked onto a bulletin board get

>taken down and shipped off to some archive; archiving (electronic or

>otherwise) seems to legitimize the mere missives, no? And then they

>get quoted perhaps, and so on.

>

>Burt

>

>

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245. **Loss Glazier**

Re: Orono papers & other authors

Wed 10 Jul 1996

At 03:02 PM 7/9/96 -0500, you wrote:

>loss --if our papers are being published somewhere, what are the
print-copyright

>politics of sending them also to you; wd it be seen as undercutting the

>print-publisher's market? i don't wanna do anything "wrong."--md

Maria, If a piece will be published in print, it's courteous to ask the publisher if it's ok if it's also available online. Some publishers are barbaric enough

to think of online space as a threat. (Of course, if the online paper is a different version somehow, it makes it less of a threat!)* If the publishers says no then maybe they'd let the piece go online say six months after serial publication in print (tho not as timely, this might also work). I know people have valid reasons to prefer print publication, but if making the ideas public is what writing is about, there are few (maybe no?) journals that can circulate so widely. I know from handling the mail here that these pieces are getting read. (Also the statistics reinforce this.) (Studies I've seen actually show that online versions actually help sales of print publications.) But I think also of pedagogical uses. How many libraries don't have subscriptions to most magazines I adore - and will students or others be willing to use ILL (interlibrary loan) if it is even available via ILL, etc. etc. I have people request permission to use EPC materials for courses and I always say OK enthusiastically! But I do of course understand that sometimes people just can't make their work available. Best, Loss ----- *In this case you might think of how your paper would be without certain constraints. It can be longer. With some knowlege of html, you can have color graphics/ illustrations, etc.)

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246. **Michael Coffey**
Re: Irby Matters -Reply
Wed 10 Jul 1996

More on the availability of Ken Irby's work; last week Ron Silliman enthusiastically parsed a section for Irby's *Orexis*, listfolk may recall.

Kenneth Irby, *CALL STEPS: PLAINS, CAMPS, STATIONS, CONSISTORIES*, 154 pgs,

\$12.95, ISBN 0-88268-090-0, Station Hill Press, in association with Tansy

Press, Distributed to the trade by The Talman Company, but available from

Small Press Distribution and other wholesalers. Direct from Station Hill, Barrytown, NY 12507, \$3.00 shipping & handling. (This volume contains all of the long-poem *Orexis*)

OREXIS is still available for \$10, ISBN 0-9930794-17-6. Same as above (minus the Tansy association).

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247. **Gwyn McVay**

Re: Orono papers & other authors

Wed 10 Jul 1996

Related to which--

The National Museum of Women in the Arts is currently devoting a whole floor to an exhibit of 20th-century women artists, including Theresa Hak Kyung Cha, whose "Passages/Paysages" is installed, and a new column/yarn setup by Cecilia Vicuña that is deeply moving to look at. The catalogue, pleasantly enough, is well-researched, highly informative, and chocked with bibliographical refs, so if you're going to be in DC, hit 12th and New York, and go there, and see the concurrent artists' books exhibit there too.

Gwyn

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248. **Nada Gordon**

poetry performance

Wed 10 Jul 1996

Since readings are embodied voicings,
I'm happy to see readers who remember their bodies
instead of keeping most of their *ki* upwards of their necks

I also like to notice eye contact and verbal contact with the audience, comprehension (grokking?) checking even a page poem can live without a gloss but a read poem doesn't need to

When I read here it's true I have to rely on all kinds of gimmicks -- the only real venue is a faux-British pub of mostly non-poets -- but I find if I crawl on the floor, sing acappella and gaze into people's eyes I can read the subtle stuff once I get the audience's attention

It's a far cry from the well-lit gallery spaces of my salad days, full of folding chairs and captive fellow-writers, yet there's a feeling of challenge here, albeit hoop-jumping

Tokyo is having a typhoon now after three days of solid rain. And how are you?

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249. **Nada Gordon**

Re: Listpersonship

Wed 10 Jul 1996

'twas the voice of the flea, I heard it declare. . .

While it may be
true I
use this
list as a
kind of highbrow
entertainment,
it keeps
me away
from the quiz shows and
samurai
dramas
--nada

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250. **maria damon**

Re: List wars

Wed 10 Jul 1996

db rites: I think I, at least, should move on to
> new topics. If *I'm* getting tired of this one, I can only imagine what
> the poor lurkers are going through.
>
hear hear.
md

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251. **Joe Amato**

Re: the guy and the gulf war

Wed 10 Jul 1996

e, yr point about victimhood well-taken... it can be an aesthetic dilemma if one is simply exhibiting pain... how to get around, or better, through this?...

for one, i think what's necessary, and this pace dodie's hammering on the white middleclass, is to pull apart some of these categories we rely on... already there's humor on this list to suggest intervention in the seeming rift between academic/non-academic... there may be more overlap here than is customarily (publicly) allowed (in fact i'm sure there is)... and though half the income-earners in this country are below \$21k, you're called "middleclass" at \$30k, and you're called "middleclass" at \$70k... you're called middleclass if you own a four bedroom house, and you're called middleclass if you rent a one bedroom

apartment... you're called middleclass if you're going to inherit property, and you're called middleclass if you have no inheritance...

lotsa room here to debate about what "middleclass" means... one thing it does not mean is that there's no grief or urgency or despair in this so-defined group... class is shifty, b/c one can shift in and out of different class structures... but speaking personally, my memories remain intact, thank you... in any case, the point would be not to negate or trivialize experience w/o first (somehow) coming to terms with what that experience is... i can feel more for the poverty-stricken than for the wealthy, sure, but this at the level of economic circumstance... and b/c of who i am i might relate a lot more to the former (and sometimes err accordingly)... but as an artist/poet, part of what i'm about is not mistaking the truth of my experience for the truth of my art (however i construe both sorts of truth)...

i wouldn't want, for example, to fall into that (current) marxist trap of arguing against any discourse that isn't specifically needs-based, on the grounds that non-needs-based discourse (if we could identify such a beast) does not address global-economic realities or some such (and regarding which rob wilson's cherub is a downright illuminating construction)... also, i'm reminded of a line from a zappa tune, where he sez something like "yknow something people? i'm not black but there's a whole lotta times i wish i weren't white, either"... yeah, 'sixties liberal white guy,' but at least i hear in this an inkling of an attempt (in a pop-cultural space) to confront one's own advantage (if not quite privilege)---social/ontological issues relating to skin color---from the inside... it's important to examine racial discourse from the point of view of the other, but i'll still hold to the value of addressing, each of us, our own position and status in our institutional systems---and yeah, as a matter of fact, our own complicity, without getting whiny about it... and i don't find that it helps much to constantly defer to real anguish on another part of the planet (though i'm all for recognizing real anguish on other parts of the planet)...

there's always enough grief to go around... mebbe, to create meaningful art that attends to our grief, mebbe we need to attend to the ways we tend to categorize social experience???...

best,

joe

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252. **Burt Kimmelman**

Re: Onward: Contemporary Poetry & Poetics

Wed 10 Jul 1996

William of Ockham in the 12th century!?! Not by a long shot. COMPLETE separation of word and object--hardly, and anyway this is a terrible oversimplification, and I suspect this kind of sloppiness informs the Pound-Zuk split. Anyway, this is a big discussion and as many of us know a long ongoing one, i guess. I do like what I see when I read about "the status of meaning and belief" and, yes, NOW one can return to Ockham for some help.

Pardon this perhaps non-sequitural and willy-nilly grouchiness.

Burt

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253. **maria damon**

Re: List wars

Wed 10 Jul 1996

In message <v01520d00ae07ff2f56d8@[205.134.228.78]> UB Poetics discussion group

writes:

> Maria, you criticized a population I was a member of--the people on this
> list. I was defending that population.
>
> Dodie

It was not my intention to criticize a population of which i've been a very happy, active part. I'm sorry for any distress I might have caused you or any other individuals who felt as you did. in my view, inspired by rob wilson's "covering cherub" posts (sorry if i'm quoting you out of context, rob, but this is what i got from it), i made some observations about what seemed to me the difficulty of discussing certain issues --primarily race -- on the list, and as emily helped me to see, this is a difficult medium for volatile topics, in part because the possibilities of misunderstanding are so high, as the recent herb-levy-lurker flurry instanciated. i most emphatically was not, as others have also pointed out, setting out to be an arbiter of pc-ness or list content. i was not invoking any "shoulds," nor do i see myself as any kind of "expert" on the topics i was calling attention to. this is the only list i'm on, and perhaps it's unrealistic to think it can address all my intellectual community needs; on the other hand, my larger project has to do precisely with bringing cultural studies and poetry/poetics to bear on each other, and i'd like to feel that i can explore this perspective on this

list, rather than having to compartmentalize (as the academy does) my intellectual life. md

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254. **Shaunanne Tangney**

Re: Cult of poetry in China

Wed 10 Jul 1996

m/m schuchat--

i seem to have missed your earlier post--could you please send me the issue/date of the journal of asian studies to which you refer in yr post?

i am v. interested in chinese poetry--

thanks,

shaunanne

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255. **Marjorie Perloff**

Re: Lorenzo Thomas

Wed 10 Jul 1996

I owe Bob Harrison an apology. He's the one who alerted the list to the fact that Thomas is Hispanic (Panamanian-American) as well as black. I referred to Harrison as "someone"--inexcusable but it happens sometimes when the list gets as long as it got last night and when it comes as a listserv and when it's midnight...

But herewith apologies to Bob!

Marjorie

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256. **Rod Smith**

Re: Onward: Contemporary Poetry & Poetics

Wed 10 Jul 1996

HG wrote:

>but poetry operates, hopefully, by digging toward the permanent

>functions of language, which persist THROUGH the "zeitgeist".

Henry, what does this mean? I see raising questions re Peter's distinctions, but this seems even less explanatory-- a kind of social-constructivist mysticism.

"Permanent functions of language"? What are we talking some kinda deep structure metaphor? Seems we don't have a handle on these issues, which leads many toward religiosity & others toward skepticism. I tend to prefer eastern

ideas, which, I think, rest in an acceptance of immanent transparencies-- to torque the classification a bit. Rather than talking about Pound/Zuk perhaps Peter should have talked about Pound/Wittgenstein.

The "meaning & belief" question reminds me of Carla Harryman's "Both belief and denial throw existence into question." Perhaps the "schism," if there is one, is at the level of practice-- between those that are self-reflexive (Wittgenstein) & those that aren't. One cld talk about Olson's "from where the poet got it over to the audience" (sic)-- someone taking what I would call an eastern or Wittgensteinian approach wldn't trust that sort of formulation, however many APR folks seem to see meaning operating in just that way, i.e. as a package to be delivered.

Rod

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257. **Henry Gould**

Re: Onward: Contemporary Poetry & Poetics

Wed 10 Jul 1996

On Wed, 10 Jul 1996 12:40:30 -0400 Rod Smith said:

>HG wrote:

>>but poetry operates, hopefully, by digging toward the permanent

>>functions of language, which persist THROUGH the "zeitgeist".

>

>Henry, what does this mean? I see raising questions re Peter's distinctions,

>but this seems even less explanatory-- a kind of social-constructivist

>mysticism.

If it's mysticism, it's a kind of aesthetic idol-worship. It's a fascination from a proto-Acmeist carpenter's perspective. What makes something built to last? Why do some artworks still grip us while others seem hackneyed by timebound blinders? It's language talking through the obsessions and neuroses & sleepwalking and timeserving of an era - not denying it, but mastering it & throwing light on it - and in the process gripping us with real experience, on the scent of truth.

>

>The "meaning & belief" question reminds me of Carla Harryman's "Both belief

>and denial throw existence into question." Perhaps the "schism," if there is

>one, is at the level of practice-- between those that are self-reflexive

>(Wittgenstein) & those that aren't. One cld talk about Olson's "from where

>the poet got it over to the audience" (sic)-- someone taking what I would

>call an eastern or Wittgensteinian approach wldn't trust that sort of

>formulation, however many APR folks seem to see meaning operating in just
>that way, i.e. as a package to be delivered.

I think we're all roaring with hunger for those very packages, & that's why packaged truth, & poetry, & anthologies, are so winning... What I meant by the "status of meaning & belief" was the idea that the forces shaping a historical era also pressure various groups' energy level & sense of breakthrough - so that Pound's "epic quest" fulfills demands and expectations in a truth-odyssey at a level or in a way that has dissipated or grown more obscure or latent at a later period (waiting for the next explosion). Later on we invent our genealogies & ascribe organized styles or differentiations.

- Henry Gould

"Classicism is revolution" - O. Mandelstam

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258. **Rod Smith**

Re: Onward: Contemporary Poetry & Poetics

Wed 10 Jul 1996

P.S.-- yes, I know it wasn't that simple for Olson.

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259. **Jordan Davis**

sports and wine

Wed 10 Jul 1996

Why value judgments about poetry are different from consumer judgments about wine, food, cars, etc. Not as easy a question as it seems. How to live. The development of a poetics runs parallel to the life one lives, right? It's like a second allegedly intelligent childhood, you learn things, it's like choosing (Wallace Stevens thought it was choosing.. so he went into business), but with this difference--you meet it. That is, the car one drives, one's consumer profile, is at a remove from this. Which is something like a soul, or a mind. This and that.

Sports and wine.

Once more, from the top. A poetics can only be individuated from any other poetics if it can manage to persist in its idiosyncratic diplomacies. These may consist of: willful good nature, perverse sarcasm, topiary artifice, technical foul, cranberry juice, ectopia broadband arsenio fallout, rodeo maser, let's go, pinball. I like pinball, because of its simultaneously centrality and diffuse irrelevance--its harmonization of chance and teleology--I guess they used to call it peripeteia.

Also I like a cuvee from Cain vineyards in california, and I have a Jordan chardonnay in my fridge.

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260. **Judy Roitman**

Re: Onward: Contemporary Poetry & Poetics

Wed 10 Jul 1996

>HG wrote:

>>but poetry operates, hopefully, by digging toward the permanent

>>functions of language, which persist THROUGH the "zeitgeist".

Rod Smith writes of "an eastern or Wittgensteinian approach" to language and semantics.

Could you unpack that a little?

Related to this discussion is a new book, "The Spell of the Sensuous," by David Abram. It's touted as a book on ecology from a phenomenological perspective, but (but?) much of it is rooted in issues of language and also in David's experience as a master sleight-of-hand magician hanging out with shamans in traditional cultures. It's Poundian in more ways than one: the alphabet is seen as distorting perception. Fun to read and I've been looking for an excuse to tell you all about it.

----- Judy Roitman
| "Glad to have Math, University of Kansas | these copies of things
| Lawrence, KS 66045 | after a while." [REDACTED]
Larry Eigner, 1927-1996

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261. **Jordan Davis**

past tense mope dream

Wed 10 Jul 1996

Oops! simultaneous.

Also, ain't no prize for persisting in your idiosyncratic diplomacy, either, unless you're a painter and can sell x hundred near-identical instances of said diplomacy, which is actually paint, and not language, and not the same. Except that x thousand years later, people will say, oh yeah, that kind of poetry. Got to be redundant to make it in poetry.

J

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262. **Rod Smith**

Re: Onward: Contemporary Poetry & Poetics

Wed 10 Jul 1996

Well, an eastern or Wittgensteinian approach wld be a contextual approach-- an understanding of context as multiply & complexly constitutive. The emphasis being not only on what we can "compute" but also upon acknowledgement that any given context is more complexly constituted than one can apprehend-- which is why intuition is such a powerful & real aspect of our experience & also why it is so individualized.

Seems to me both Wittgenstein & aspects of buddhist & taoist thought share a concern with pointing out limits of apprehension & *using them.* One cld also talk about Duchamp in these terms.

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263. **Jordan Davis**

mis/guide

Wed 10 Jul 1996

to the extent that we participate in the terms of someone else's debate--the sumerians, the greeks, the cherokees, the democrats--we're what, learning? except that information, poetic information, is located at once in the capitol and the kitchen, we've been lured into 'the zone' and we've been talking, we need these common terms, and that's it, that's all, inscribe it and if you can 'say it without saying it', all the better, all the best, save a lull, pause, take a breath. No stride like the strident, eschew the received phrase, find file, hey. only music is information? J

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264. **Pritchett, Pat**

(no subject)

Wed 10 Jul 1996

Dean raises a good point. I think the way we must finally come to understand "how to read a poem" to an audience is that, for most poets (and most poems), a reading only constitutes 50% (or so, it varies, naturally) of the poem's quiddity (gotta love that word!). For Shaunanne, it would seem to constitute a greater percentage. Any reading is, of course, an interpretation, i.e. it presents a particular profile of the poem at a particular moment. If you go to the same play on two different nights, that play will vary in minute particulars per performance. But it's still the same text. Which implies that the poem itself, silent on the page, occupies some kind of Platonic/Ur-dimension from which it "descends"

when invoked/pronounced by the speaker. A dubious notion, perhaps, but intriguing.

As for how to get across ambiguous line breaks: maybe read the same line more than once, each time differently to stress its multiple weights/meanings/emphases...

Patrick Pritchett

From: Dean Taciuch

To: Multiple recipients of list POETICS

Date: Tuesday, July 09, 1996 11:39PM

<<File Attachment: HEADERS.TXT>>

On Tue, 9 Jul 1996, Kathrine Varnes wrote:

> As far as I'm concerned, a good performance is a good interpretation, or
> at least an interesting one. (The reverse is also true.)

...

> what kills poetry for me (which is often what happens when
> actors are reading) is when the reader has already decided what the
> perfect reading is and tries to create it -- some static idea -- instead
> of actively interpreting while reading. Better to be imperfect and lean
> on the words.

>

> Kathrine Varnes

>

OK, but how to offer an interpretation without having an interpretation in mind? This is a serious question..I wonder this myself when reading--do I try to express an ambiguous line break verbally (and how?) or do I collapse the distinction, choose a reading, and present that?

I think the key is "static"--the performance should not be a single thing, or at least not the same single thing to everyone.

Also, I don't mean to knock actors/acting. It certainly is possible for an actor to give a good reading of a poem, just as it is obviously possible for a poet to give a bad reading.

Dean Taciuch

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265. **Burt Kimmelman**

peter quartermain

Wed 10 Jul 1996

Peter Quartermain,
I've been trying to email you and have had my mail spit back to me.
could you let me know where you are and how to reach you?

thanks,
burt kimmelman
[REDACTED]

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266. **Gabrielle Welford**

two film reviews (fwd)

Wed 10 Jul 1996

After the mention of interracial sex, I couldn't resist this forward. gab.

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

Date: Wed, 10 Jul 1996 08:15:34 -1000

From: Julian Samuel <[REDACTED]>

Two Film Reviews

by

Julian Samuel

Bhaji on the Beach,

A film by Gurinder Chadha, 1994, 100 minutes

reviewed by Julian Samuel

Bhaji on the Beach is an energetic, race-and-sex-relations comedy that is a must see for anyone who thinks that putting these issues-of-the epoch in the mass media is a nice way to deal with the traumas plaguing South Asian women.

Community orientated films are a superb way to dramatize, confront, and to come to terms with interracial sex and pregnancies, and other configurations that are a source of endless trouble for South Asian parents who just can't forget India, Pakistan, Kenya, Uganda etc.

Bhaji follows hot on the heels of but does not go beyond other "Black" British masterpieces such as Hanif Kureshi's My Beautiful Laundrette, The Bhudda of Suburbia; and Isaac Julien's gay landmark, Young Soul Rebels.

Bhaji's plot does not strain the imagination. Here's a part of it: a Southall Black Sisters type South Asian community leader takes an all-ages-all-classes group of

South Asian women to Blackpool. In the old days, before we all got to England and improved the English diet it was a white holidaying spot. But UK immigration changed all that.

The insertion of these splendidly dressed women on the beach include a battered wife who during the trip makes up her mind to leave her husband forever; a teenage couple who, one gets the impression, are sexually involved; a shilvar kamees clad granny who is mechanically scripted in to contrast old-world values with "English" ones. Chastity, obedience to Gods, and a reverent respect for the family bread-winner are up for gentle feminist review. The granny stereotype has to act shocked most of the time. Boring. The biggest shock for her is the pregnancy of one of the young Asian women by her black boyfriend. This dilemma is elegantly solved, as the rest of the group drive back to town, with a tender lingering kiss during an interracial sun-set. Thank god this scene will bother some Asians.

At Blackpool, sexually explorative members of the outing meet English cowboys who work at a hot-dog stand. One of the women gets into a bit of interracial necking, but before anything exciting happens her protective about-to-de-cloak lesbian friend pulls her back into the virginal harem of the Asian community.

The acting is earnest cardboard stereotyping au maximum. No one evolves, everyone stays in the same character rut, and the story is as tense as watching Rajiv Gandhi have tea and biscuits at a press conference on the Tibet question. However, it is stereotyping with a huge difference: its brown stereotyping.

Bhaji is more than mundane; check this for excellence: "I just needed you to be there" says the pregnant woman. And there are hundreds of lines like this. But even at that, Bhaji is saved by being more or less a first of its kind, and it does not grind on inexorably. It is ultra light race-sensitive entertainment, for the lily-livered.

Notwithstanding the simplistic editing -- there is not one unpredictable cut -- this film is brilliant even if the South Asian in-jokes will pass over the heads of both white Canadian tribes. British audiences, however, are hip to all this post-colonial modernity, so they will get most of the culturally anchored funnies.

Bhaji is better than most films made in Canada in the last five years. Quebec films don't even come close, and of course, Quebec lives in mortal fear of black actors, artists, intellectuals and directors and therefore does not encourage them. Director Gurinder Chadha is lucky to have generous film funders who take her so very seriously.

Imagine the National Film Board or the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation putting bucks into such a film without getting utterly terrorized by the

racegender questions. Forget it. Canada will not catch-up, not even by the time Hong Kong slips into Beijing control.

A warning: there are hectares of songs and dances: You can take the Asian out of Asia but you can't take the Bollywood out of the Asian. end Julian Samuel

Bandit Queen directed by Shekhar Kapur

reviewed by Julian Samuel

Bandit Queen is based on the true life story of a peasant woman who established an earth-shattering reputation throughout India for having fought against her oppressors.

Her story is tragic: a forced marriage to someone centuries older than her -- she was about 10 at the time. After a few rapes she escapes her "husband" and, a few years later joins a band of country-side highway men who engage in various nasty activities. She is caught by rival forces and is raped by scores of men. She escapes and the same thing happens: she is caught again, raped, and again takes revenge. Finally, she politicizes the entire Indian country-side and attempts to besiege Delhi capital of the "largest democracy in the world." Well no not exactly: the filmmaker has made an exaggerated and simplistic account of her life.

The real Bandit Queen (Poolan Devi) in fact wanted to stop the distribution of this film because she thought that it did injustice to cause. She is right: The film should have been pulled out of distribution not because it did an injustice but because it is repetitive to the point of making the viewer suicidal and as inelegant as Benazir Bhutto attempting to defuse the civil war now raging in Karachi.

Her narrative is important for those who want to learn about political struggles with the bazaar rituals of Mother India. However, this film is malignantly marred by gun shots in every scene and screechy rape scene after rape scene. You'll only be able to sit through it if you're a masochist or if you've taken sleeping pills with your cholesterol loaded popcorn.

Julian Samuel

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267. **Robert A Harrison**

onward: +

Wed 10 Jul 1996

Thanks for the apology and the acknowledgment, Marjorie.

Glad to see there're a bunch of other threads going on now. Not to hold those up, wanted to send the list a quote and a coupla references. Here's a quote from one of Lorenzo Thomas' recent talks ("... first presented as part of "Revolutionary Poetry: Directions for Further Investigation," the concluding panel of the Poetry Project's 1994 Symposium,....")

from *Nothing Slow and Careful About It*

"In the past couple of days I think we've heard some very interesting and nice rhetoric: the principle of "continual revolution"; a return to the '60s via a "counterculture." Lots of individualistic and ethnocentric expressions. The Yenan forum revisited. And so on and so forth. What bothers me is that much of what we heard was flawed by unsystematic thinking and I think that might have something to do with the fact that we're poets. Y'know, "We cool like that we write like that we think like that." Anyway, I was suffering from all the cybernetic stuff that I was hearing and I finally came down with something like Dada overload....."

hmm

published in

The World #51

The Poetry Project

St. Mark's in-the-Bowery

131 East 10th St

NYC, NY 10003

Some of Lorenzo's early work is in "None of the Above," Michael Lally's anthology, 1976.

There is also a "comprehensive collection" called "The Bathers." Published in 1981 by

I. Reed Books

isbn #0-918408-18-0

ok. ONWARD!! As the the subject says!

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268. **Burt Kimmelman**

Re: Onward: Contemporary Poetry & Poetics

Wed 10 Jul 1996

Hey Judy Roitman and anyone else interested in poetry/lang phil/ecology: Abram's book sounds like territory covered by my colleague David Rothenberg's new journal Terra Nova; maybe someone would want to review "The Smell of the Sensuous" for it. David can be reached at [REDACTED].

burt

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269. **maria damon**

Re: Value Judgments and Sociology (was Re: List wars)

Wed 10 Jul 1996

andrew miller wwrites a longish post on sociology that you've all seen;

andrew: i agree with you that the category "sociology" is a scientistic, academic discipline and an ugly rubric under which to classify something as broad as, say, "attention to social, biographical, historical context." i think it's crucial not to, to use the language of one of the New Zealanders (tony green? wystan?i've deleted the actual post, so can't quote specifically, sorry) said, "subsume" "poetics" into/under "sociology" or vice versa --this is why a project that would treat text and its surrounding environment as one continuous --"ecological" system as it were --is dear to my heart. in order to talk to people in my world, that is, the academy, i use the terms "poetics" and "cultural studies", which shouldn't, but are, segregated and seen as mutually inhospitable terrains of inquiry. i was thrilled to see, in the papers at Orono, the degree to which this kind of treatment is becoming acceptable and even respected, though there is still, in most cases, a leaning toward one or the other poles of the false binary.

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270. **maria damon**

Re: Value Judgments and Sociology (was Re: List wars)

Wed 10 Jul 1996

ps to my post to andrew miller --and david kellogg, indirectly -- on "sociology": i also like it when a "critical" text aspires to or achieves the poetic. that's why i come back again and again to walter benjamin; not just cuz he's one of the current gods of cult studs, but because he language and insights are so inspired, so...well, poetic. no one could call his essay on some motifs in Baudelaire "mere" sociology, though it has a strong component of social concern and sociological observation. to me this is a kind of "texte ideal." (it teaches great with o'hara's lunch poems, btw). susan stewart, who is "also" a poet, is another writer/"critic" whose essays embody a lovely poesis of their own. others, y'all? rachel bdp's talk at orono was in that realm. bests, maria d

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271. **Mark Wallace**

e-mail politics

Wed 10 Jul 1996

Of course, since this poetics list involves more than one person, it will be by definition "political"--that is, not only will different people be on it for different reasons, but it's also quite possible that those reasons will conflict, and that everybody here will not get along. Many of us have different senses of what this poetics e-mail "virtual community" should be--and indeed the word "community" is wholly inadequate for the complexity of the environment itself. Perhaps "network" would be better--although that implies something perhaps less intimate than e-mail often is (and, among many other characteristics, I think poetics e-mail does have an odd intimacy). Still, we don't all "get along" here, and there are instances when we shouldn't get along.

It's interesting, for instance, that it might be easy to assume on this list that people who primarily write poetry and people who primarily write poetry criticism would get along--after all, it's theoretically simple, at this point, to undermine any notion of the distinction as absolute, i.e. each poem has a critical element, and (perhaps, but I'm not convinced) each piece of criticism has some poetic element. So one might think that the historical relation between poets and critics, often antagonistic, would not be antagonistic here. But is that really the case. While I agree with the person (help with names here please, I'm getting so many messages) who said he's bored by "tastemakers," or by people who dislike all poetry criticism by definition, on the other hand it's true that the cultural and institutional situations of poetry and poetry criticism are NOT THE SAME, and in fact those differences can and do lead to conflict. So what? Some level of conflict is good for discussion--I applaud your (whoever) right to disagree with me. On the other hand, if I think your wrong I'm going to say so.

All that fairness aside, though, I find myself inevitably siding with poetry and poets, even as I know that poetry criticism is unavoidable (and I right enough of it myself, even). So I sympathize with Dodie Bellamy's recent frustration about this list. Here's what I'm wondering--is this list equally divided between poets and poetry critics? Does one group do more posting than another, and what does that say about the POLITICAL dynamic of this list? I have some sympathy for Ron Silliman's post too, although I have sympathy also for the ENGAGED lurkers who spoke up in their own defense--I think what Ron was getting at was something that a lot of poets feel, that is, that a lot of people get to stand around pointing out our faults while never putting themselves through the ringer of creating a poem.

So, here's my riddle. I'll bet if you said "poetry and poetry criticism" have a fundamentally generative and symbiotic relation, a larger proportion of those

people who write criticism mainly would agree, whereas a lesser number of people who mainly write poetry would agree. In fact I bet it would make some poets actively annoyed. I'd love responses to this riddle: is what I'm saying true, or not? If it is true, why?

I once referred to Anthony Easthope's POETRY AND DISCOURSE as "Poetry as primitive culture" because it seemed to view poetry and poets as an odd aberration that needed to be further studied by the sensible.

A truly active criticism engages its own fear of writing.

mark wallace

(please excuse--or celebrate!--any typos. I'm working on an old-fashioned moden today)

```
/-----\ |
||      "I have not yet begun      ||
to go to extremes"      ||  GWU:      |
|  http://gwis2.circ.gwu.edu/~mdw      ||  EPC:      |
||  http://writing.upenn.edu/epc/authors/wallace      ||
|-----|
```

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272. **Judy Roitman**

First Intensity

Wed 10 Jul 1996

Lee Chapman asked me to inform this list that the new address of First Intensity is PO Box 665, Lawrence, KS 66044.

```
----- Judy Roitman
|  "Glad to have Math, University of Kansas      |  these copies of things
Lawrence, KS 66045      |  after a while."      |
|  Larry Eigner, 1927-1996
```

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273. **David Kellogg**

Re: List Wars

Wed 10 Jul 1996

Marjorie,

Much of what you have said is all fine, and wonderful, but it DOES NOT ADDRESS what I said. For example, I *never* said that one can't separate the wheat from the chaff, but only that the *a priori* assumption that that's what

critics must do is a little silly. To take a point you've made many times, it's like limiting poetry to the free-verse lyric.

Of course we all evaluate every time we make a choice (and, I would add, every time we decide not to choose). I never said otherwise -- I would argue that you're confusing a relativist stance with a subjective one. The idea that a relativist stance on value precludes choice is a red herring.

I've very happy that you're reading A MAN WITHOUT QUALITIES; bully for you.

But that experience doesn't answer at all the question of what to read, much less what to teach. I imagine that your experience in teaching is much like mine: my estimate of "the value" of work for me enters into a rough equation that includes such things as the possible value of the work for students, what I've taught recently, the points I'm trying to make in the course, my mood, what I ate, and a couple hundred other factors. What is "the value" of the work in such a context? How can I dare fix it? It changes for me all the time. One way it changes is by reading this list, and that's a "good" thing -- i.e., something I value.

Marjorie, I have no doubt you would object to someone who defined "the role of the poet" up front; such roles usually, though not always, exclude many of the folks you and I find most interesting. Yet you write that "If criticism doesn't at least in part do that [separate the wheat from the chaff], what are we writing for?" Imagine substituting "poetry for "criticism" and some feature of much, but not all poetry for *separating wheat from chaff*, and you'll see the nature of my objection. It's not to evaluation -- it's to the installation of evaluation as the *telos* of prose about poetry.

Cheers,
David

First addendum: I'd like to apologize for my loose use of the term "sociological," for which Andrew Miller has rightly criticized me. The fact that I was mainly *extending* the already loose use of the term as it was thrown around on the list doesn't let me off the hook.

Second addendum, for Wystan: neither poetry nor the social subsumes the other; but neither does either escape the other.

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274. **David Kellogg**

Re: List Wars

Wed 10 Jul 1996

As an addition to the debate, this from Ron Silliman's introduction to *In the American Tree* (which I've been rereading having bought a new copy at Orono after my first copy fell apart -- why is this book so poorly bound?):

"It is now plain that any debate over who is, or is not, a better writer, or what is, or is not, a more legitimate writing is, for the most part, a surrogate social struggle. The more pertinent questions are what is the community being addressed in the writing, how does the writing participate in the constitution of this audience, and so on." (xxi)

Since this thread really started with the question of race and community at Orono and in the papers there, I thought this little passage might get us back to more important matters.

Cheers,

David

~~~~~  
~~~~~

David Kellogg Duke University
[redacted] University Writing Program
[redacted] Durham, NC 27708
FAX [redacted]

The time is at hand.
Take one another
and eat.

-- Thomas Kinsella

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275. **David Kellogg**

Re: List Wars

Wed 10 Jul 1996

A clarification of my last paragraph, which read:

Since this thread really started with the question of race and community at Orono and in the papers there, I thought this little passage might get us back to more important matters SUCH AS THESE.

Cheers,

David

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276. **Aldon L. Nielsen**

Re: why is "bad" poet a silly category, but not "great" poet? (fwd)

Wed 10 Jul 1996

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

Date: Wed, 10 Jul 1996 15:21:12 -0700 (PDT)

From: Aldon L. Nielsen <[REDACTED]>

To: robert von hallberg <[REDACTED]>

Subject: Re: why is "bad" poet a silly category, but not "great" poet?

Given my understanding of your procedure now, I will post this to the Poetics list immediately after I post it to you.

I can appreciate your desire to have your views represented accurately in public. However, I am startled by the divergence between even the statements that you have posted in public. You now speak of "one" factual discrepancy, and you select the one that is not on the tape. Go back and read your first message to me. You do in fact claim more than one misrepresentation.

In my last post about this I pointed to one of these. As you did in your first message, you now make a distinction between worthwhile sociological approaches and "simplistic" approaches. That distinction is difficult to locate in your original remarks. You said, and I will send the tape as soon as I have duplicated it: "When we do the sociology thing it comes out real simple."

Another example -- In your first message to me you state: "The example I gave in Orono, you will recall, was not your own remark about the number of papers on minority poets, but instead the listing by the first presenter . . ." In fact, as you will hear on the tape, the very first thing that you mention is the set of numbers I gave in my opening remarks.

Please compare your first message carefully to your second, and then compare both to the tape when it arrives. Meanwhile, I will ask the Poetics list members to note that while you raise a number of supposed misrepresentations in your first message, you now say that you only raise one factual question. Your own messages indicate that this is not the case.

Now, because the other remarks are not on the tape, I am willing to admit the possibility of some misunderstanding. It may be that you did not mean to include Kaufman in the remarks that you made at the podium, and if that is so I am sorry to have misunderstood you. On the other hand, since on that day you not only did not indicate any poem by Hughes that you thought was good (I'm trying to follow through on your distinction between a bad poet and a good, great, whatever poet who has authored some, or many, bad poems), I am not so sure I didn't hear you correctly. You can clear this up for me now by letting me know which of these things you did mean to convey to the four of us you were

speaking to at that moment. Do you believe that Hughes is simply the author of some bad poems (the poems that were read & discussed in the papers I suppose), and if so, what are the not so bad Hughes poems in your opinion?

Now, I do not have time to go into each and every matter you raise beyond the remarks themselves, though perhaps we can at a future meeting or in future email exchanges when I'm not in the process of moving -- But please keep in mind that one of my clearest objections to your remarks was the divergence between what you said and what the presenters had in fact presented. I began with your use of my numbers, because I felt that I could speak with assurance about your response to my own words. Your first message attempts to deny that you used this number as an example, but goes on to make certain remarks about the percentage of papers on minority poets. Here is what you said at the panel: "a bunch of white people gather to have a conference and they want to talk mainly about white people. What's the problem, if what we're doing here is talking about literature as sociological reproduction and as identity formation?"

Some quick observations --

Talking about sociological reproduction and talking about identity formation are not exactly the same thing --

I realize there is a danger in responding to any question as rhetorical as your is, but I think there would be a problem even if what we were doing was sociological reproduction and identity formation -- unless what you mean really is that this would be a great way to find out how white people keep themselves white? but I don't think that's what you had in mind -- Please explain to me why this would not be a problem --

Elsewhere on the tape you say "When it's sociological it's real simple." Now, as I think about your remarks as a whole, I find it difficult to square them with what you've been saying, much more agreeably, in your messages. Your conference remarks say that when it's sociological it's simple, and that when we do the sociology thing it comes out real simple. And you ask why it's a problem, if we're doing sociological reproduction, if a bunch of white people at a conference choose to talk about mostly white poets.

Now, this string of statements would seem to indicate that a) doing sociological literary work comes out simple -- b) there's no problem, really, if white people doing sociology at a literature conference want to talk about mostly white people

That would seem to indicate that the result will be a bunch of white people doing sociology and being simplistic mostly about white poets --

I don't know about you, but that does not sound like an appealing prospect to me --

Lastly, because I have to meet an estimator from Bekins, let me address quickly your remarks on Pound --

I would certainly agree that, as you put it at Orono, Pound's other is not my other (though you were looking at Joe as you said this). I would also agree that attention, close attention, has to be paid to Pound's constructions of Italian-America -- BUT, this evades a few important points.

a) Pound makes ref. to black people early, middle and late - b) your remark, again, elides one of the points in the paper you are dismissing -- While I would not agree that Pound's self-exile is a matter of "white flight," the fact that his "other" was at times Italian is not an objection to that claim. As Joe pointed out in his paper, many powerful Americans, including any number of those making immigration policy and testing "intelligence," did not think of Italians as white people at the time in question. Joe is not saying that Italians and African-Americans are the same -- he is, though, saying that Italian immigrants were often part of that which whight flight flew from. To my mind, this is another instance of your having mashed the papers you didn't like into a shape that fit the remarks you wanted to make.

There is much more of this nature, but in sum

--your second message misrepresents the contents of your first message; You did claim more than one factual misrepresentation, and you seem now to have dropped those which are on the tape in favor of the one that is not

--I will here beofre the entire Poetics list admit that I cannot now be sure that you meant to convey to me that Kaufman was a bad poet -- I will even go so far as to add that you may indeed have meant only to tell me that Hughes was the author, so far as you knew, of only bad poems, not that he is a bad poet. Again, if I'm wrong here set me straight at once

--Please tell me why it would not be a problem, if we're doing sociological reproduction, for white people to want to talk mainly about white people -- You appear to have gone beyond a mere statistical note here and addressed a matter of desire -- also, "mostly" could have been 51% as easily as the 94% you invoke -- this seems to admit of degrees, no?

and I suppose I should give at least one example of what I might consdier a more direct critical engagement with Joe's paper -- Joe built many of his comments around the absence of Hughes and Brooks from the Donald Allen anthology -- I believe Hughes would fall outside the scope of Allen's collection on the basis of the chronology he was working with, and I believe that Brooks's aesthetics would make her a more likely candidate for the Hall anthology than for Allen's -- In my own closing remark I was gently suggesting that this line of inquiry might more profitably look at the absence of poets who shared the

aesthetics that seemed to link the varied groups in Allen's volume -- and Hughes, as it happens, did just that,

"ask your mama." pp 472-531
don't neglect the "liner notes"

here's some identity formation for you

"WHERE IS LOTTE LENYA
AND WHO IS MACK THE KNIFE
AND WAS PORGY EVER MARRIED
BEFORE TAKING BESS TO WIFE
AND WHY WOULD MAI (NOT MAY)
BECOME JEWISH
THE HARD
WAY?

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277. **Kevin Killian**
Re: the guy and the gulf war

Wed 10 Jul 1996

At 1:28 AM 7/11/96, Joseph Zitt wrote:

>On 10 Jul 96 at 9:22, Joe Amato wrote:

>

>> for one, i think what's necessary, and this pace dodie's hammering on the
>> white middleclass, is to pull apart some of these categories we rely on...

>

>The way I hear it (from lotsa nonrigorous eavesdropping), the
>middleclass tend to be those whose incomes are in a range from
>slightly below the speaker's to slightly above. It's kind of the way
>that people think that "the Rich" who should be heavily taxed are
>those who earn more than a little more than they do.

>

>I've bounced ridiculously among economic brackets in recent years,
>but have always felt middle class. But friends of mine who live in
>hovels with intermittent electricity, as well as those who live in
>mansions with lotsa household help think of themselves as
>middleclass, too.

This is Dodie Bellamy speaking.

I think that you two Joes are equating class with money, which is, I think, a rather narrow definition. I was raised in a background where not being on welfare was social climbing. My father, who quit school in the 7th grade, got into

the carpenter's union and was very proud of never being on welfare--unlike his sibblings. He made more money probably than either of you two, but our family never approached being middle class--the middle class was this alien world whose members we called Mr. and Mrs., but we were called by our first names.

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278. **maria damon**

sociopoetic poetry/lyrical critique

Wed 10 Jul 1996

sorry if this is redundant, but my computer's doing annoying things that make it hard for me to know if this was actually bounced back to me or got sent:

ps to my post to andrew miller --and david kellogg, indirectly -- on "sociology": i also like it when a "critical" text aspires to or achieves the poetic. that's why i come back again and again to walter benjamin; not just cuz he's one of the current gods of cult studs, but because he language and insights are so inspired, so...well, poetic. no one could call his essay on some motifs in Baudelaire "mere" sociology, though it has a strong component of social concern and sociological observation. to me this is a kind of "texte ideal." (it teaches great with o'hara's lunch poems, btw). susan stewart, who is "also" a poet, is another writer/"critic" whose essays embody a lovely poesis of their own. others, y'all? rachel bdp's talk at orono was in that realm. bests, maria d

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279. **Aldon L. Nielsen**

been there done that (fwd)

Wed 10 Jul 1996

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

Date: Wed, 10 Jul 1996 15:54:00 -0700 (PDT)

From: Aldon L. Nielsen <[REDACTED]>

To: robert von hallberg <[REDACTED]>

Subject: been there done that

Turned out that was not the Bekins person yet -- so here's one more quick note --

You say, with regard to the numbers that I cited, that it is not surprising to learn that only 6% of the papers were on race or minority writers -- Again, please look back at my report & listen to the tape -- I did not include papers "about race" in the tabulation, for one thing. (The percentage swells appreciably if we add in all those good O'Hara presentations.) More significantly, you have once again elided the point I made with those numbers, as you did at the

conference. My point was that if certain conservative critics are to be believed, this number should surprise us very much indeed -- My point, therefore, was that these critics are not to be believed --

Secondly -- you remark that the demonstration of the influence of racism in the construction of literary canons has been done cogently --

Quickly now, name five books for me on the subject of racism and canon formation in the area of poetry --

More importantly (I suppose one could argue that the few articles, comments, conference papers etc. that exist were so cogent that we don't need whole books on the subject [at least in poetry studies]), to tell me that the demonstration has been done cogently is not to tell me that it need not be done again. In fact, had the job been done so cogently, perhaps we should have been very surprised to find a percentage as low as 6% in 1996.

And further in this regard, the "sifting" you call for is going on -- The fact that you do not agree with the critics you responded to about the poems they discussed hardly suffices as proof that we are neglecting the important work of calling attention to those really important poems out there -- I'm not at all sure that "sifting" is my primary task as a critic or an historian, but I will admit that I do my share of it --

to be as blunt as I can, and still be remotely logical, the fact that you say the poems discussed in the first two papers were "bad," and you appear to agree that you at least said that much, and the fact that you said the first presenter didn't do anything very interesting with the poems (you will recall this is when I broke in and said that you were being insulting) is not a demonstration of either point. There clearly was not time at the session for anybody to even attempt to convince you otherwise, but you didn't seem even to feel that any demonstration was required on your side.

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280. **maria damon**

Re: e-mail politics

Wed 10 Jul 1996

mark wallace writes at some length abt poets/poetry critics you've all read it and i cant excerpt meaningfully:

mark: interesting points. i know that poets often feel colonized by those of us who write "about" poetry and i can understand why. that's one reason why the "arbiter of taste" role is so not to my liking; on the other hand, one could argue that for me to disavow this role is disingenuous: i.e. like it or not, that's what i do. one thing that's been marvelous about this list has been the opportunity to

meet, cyberly and personally, people who are practicing poets. i have felt, with the exception of the last couple days, extraordinarily welcome, to the degree that i naively started to think that this world was less ugly and contentious than the academy. what i have found on the list happily confounded the cliches one hears on both sides. the poets here are extremely critically and theoretically up to date and sophisticated, overturning the dumb academic assumption that "creative" folks are blindly instinctual, "feeling rather than thinking" etc. --the "poetry as primitive culture" model (nice phrase). conversely, some critics are close-minded and scared, hostile to any developments that threaten an earlier model of teaching/writing/thinking that they learned. many of the critics here are also very supportive of poets, contrary to their image as destroyers of spontaneity, joy and inventiveness. both parties can play the aggrieved and under-appreciated, both parties can claim importance. many people on the list are both poets and critics, and publishers, and editors, and visual artists, etc. that's been manna from heaven, for someone who daily faces a workplace that separates not only "creative writing" from "language and literature", but "practical criticism" from "theory," and has not taken my work seriously (because it was on Bob Kaufman rather than Chaucer, Milton or Shakespeare --boy do i feel vindicated with the Beat Show and Cranial Guitar, despite my difficulties with the latter).

as for myself, i had no idea that this list was intended primarily for one or the other group of writers --in fact, just a few days ago there was some flurry because a prominent critic, bob von hallberg, was *not* on the list. i was signed on to the list (with my permission of course) by charles bernstein whom i met at a conference --predictably enough, he was a featured "creative" writer, I was a "critic." and i've never felt unwelcome because of my status as "primarily a critic" (though thanks to this list and some of its offshoots, i've ventured into the waters of more unabashedly "creative" collaborative enterprises) until recently. however, i don't think you're suggesting, mark, that critics get off the list. md

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281. **Joseph Zitt**

Re: the guy and the gulf war

Wed 10 Jul 1996

On 10 Jul 96 at 9:22, Joe Amato wrote:

for one, i think what's necessary, and this pace dodie's hammering on the white middleclass, is to pull apart some of these categories we rely on...

The way I hear it (from lotsa nonrigorous eavesdropping), the middleclass tend to be those whose incomes are in a range from slightly below the speaker's to

slightly above. It's kind of the way that people think that "the Rich" who should be heavily taxed are those who earn more than a little more than they do.

I've bounced ridiculously among economic brackets in recent years, but have always felt middle class. But friends of mine who live in hovels with intermittent electricity, as well as those who live in mansions with lotsa household help think of themselves as middleclass, too.

But this probably isn't news to anyone.

-----1-----1-----1-----1-----1-----1-----1----- |||/ Joseph Zitt =====
===== Dallas, Texas \||| ||/ Question Authority, The == SILENCE: The John
Cage Mailing List \|| | / http://www.realtime.net/~jzitt == <*> <*> == The Data
Wranglers! \|

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282. **Loss Glazier** **EPC - Connecting**

Wed 10 Jul 1996

Some interesting stats just out re: EPC. Here's some contextualization:

Avg. transactions per day 1,347

or another way to look at it

2550 times the EPC's main home page ALONE was accessed in 9 days

(See end of message for most 'popular' menus hit)

Busiest time to access the EPC 7 pm EST

2nd busiest 1pm - 4pm EST (each hour tied for second busiest)

Connections by country. Here is a ranked list of countries accessing the EPC:

3714: 28.72%: .edu (USA Educational)

2346: 17.94%: [unresolved numerical addresses]

2290: 20.93%: .com (Commercial, mainly USA)

2251: 15.24%: .net (Network)

258: 1.73%: .uk (United Kingdom)

226: 1.91%: .ca (Canada)

225: 1.72%: .org (Non-Profit Making Organisations)

186: 1.62%: .us (United States)

144: 1.23%: .au (Australia)

100: 0.82%: .jp (Japan)

71: 0.48%: .it (Italy)

70: 1.01%: .de (Germany)

70: 0.35%: .no (Norway)
67: 1.49%: .nz (New Zealand)
65: 0.64%: .fr (France)
49: 0.29%: .gov (USA Government)
44: 0.34%: .nl (Netherlands)
42: 0.30%: .dk (Denmark)
41: 0.47%: .fi (Finland)
39: 0.41%: .se (Sweden)
32: 0.28%: .ch (Switzerland)
31: 0.13%: .es (Spain)
27: 0.14%: .il (Israel)
26: 0.31%: .mil (USA Military)
23: 0.14%: .my (Malaysia)
21: 0.09%: .si (Slovenia)
20: 0.13%: .kr (South Korea)
20: 0.10%: .lu (Luxembourg)
18: 0.07%: .uy (Uruguay)
16: 0.14%: .br (Brazil)
14: 0.05%: .yu (Yugoslavia)
6: 0.04%: .pt (Portugal)
6: 0.05%: .za (South Africa)
5: 0.02%: .in (India)
4: 0.11%: .is (Iceland)
4: 0.12%: .sg (Singapore)
3: 0.09%: .cn (China)
2: 0.03%: .hk (Hong Kong)
2: 0.12%: .mx (Mexico)
1: 0.01%: .at (Austria)
1: 0.02%: .bh (Bahrain)
1: : .cl (Chile)
1: : .cz (Czech Republic)
1: 0.03%: .id (Indonesia)
1: 0.05%: .mt (Malta)
1: 0.01%: .pl (Poland)
1: 0.06%: .su (Former USSR)
1: : .tw (Taiwan)

July most 'popular' menus EPC

2550: 4.09%: /epc/
395: 6.09%: /epc/authors/
242: 5.41%: /epc/images/authors/

230: 0.67%: /epc/poetics/
207: 0.74%: /epc/connects/
183: 9.98%: /epc/ezines/tree/
163: 7.33%: /epc/sound/
148: 0.96%: /epc/mags/
143: 0.93%: /epc/presses/
137: 0.86%: /epc/documents/
129: 2.61%: /epc/rift/rift05/
120: 2.14%: /epc/rift/rift04/
109: 2.70%: /epc/epclive/
101: 2.36%: /epc/rift/rift01/
93: 2.08%: /epc/authors/bernstein/visual/
85: 1.18%: /epc/rift/
85: 0.11%: /epc/ezines/treehome/
82: 0.83%: /epc/authors/bernstein/
77: 0.19%: /epc/forms/
69: 0.66%: /epc/ezines/diu/
67: 0.05%: /epc/poetics/archive/
66: 0.13%: /epc/ezines/tinfish/tinfish01/
65: 0.79%: /epc/authors/joris/
64: 0.43%: /epc/forms/poem/
63: 0.26%: /epc/display/
58: 0.25%: /epc/biblioteca/
57: 0.04%: /epc/ezines/treehome/tree01/
55: 1.58%: /epc/rift/rift02/
48: 0.86%: /epc/rift/rift03/
47: 0.98%: /epc/ezines/exper/
44: 1.05%: /epc/authors/funkhouser/
44: 0.14%: /epc/linebreak/
43: 0.52%: /epc/ezines/spt/
43: 0.35%: /epc/documents/obits/
40: 0.63%: /epc/ezines/we/
38: 0.02%: /epc/authors/glazier/e/e/
36: 0.56%: /epc/documents/reading/
35: 0.58%: /epc/ezines/tinfish/

End of Stats

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283. **Robert J Wilson**

Re: Covering Cherub

Wed 10 Jul 1996

--

Dear Jerry, I am on the Big Island of Hawaii now, really a sublime and sacred space, and suggest that you ask Gab and HLAC to send you here to give an "Outer Island" reading-- there is a bookstore in Kamuela that is willing to host you and would be perfect. Have to run now. Will get back to you soon. Rob Wilson

On Tue, 9 Jul 1996, Jerry Rothenberg wrote:

Dear Rob Wilson --

Thanks for yours, & please feel free to send any essays/works etc. concerning local & Pacific matters. We'll be arriving there on the 4th of September & I understand from Gab Welford that there's a big Bamboo Ridge reading on the 5th, so certainly we'll plan to get to that one. I have an interest in all of that, so looking forward very much to this particular visit. Tell me if you have any ideas or suggestions, and in the meantime

all good wishes

JERRY

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284. **George Bowering**

Re: tonight's HRs

Wed 10 Jul 1996

Ho ho, I just got back from a poetry festival in Cape Town, to find that my fantasy team is in first place by 10 games!

.....

"The Moose stood in the yard."

--Daniel Pinkwater

George Bowering.
2499 West 37th Ave.,
Vancouver, B.C.,
Canada V6M 1P4

fax: [REDACTED]

e-mail: [REDACTED]

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285. **George Bowering**

Re: List wars

Wed 10 Jul 1996

| *db rites:*

What does this mean? Has something happened to Bromige? I have been off the continent.

.....

"The Moose stood in the yard."

--Daniel Pinkwater

George Bowering.

2499 West 37th Ave.,

Vancouver, B.C.,

Canada V6M 1P4

fax: [REDACTED]

e-mail: [REDACTED]

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286. **Emily Lloyd**

Re: maria--/& performance

Thu 11 Jul 1996

Rob to me:

>>But let's not

>>show disrespect for the voices that have spoken.

Eryque to Rob:

>so: i don't think anyone is particularly knocking those that have spoken

>because they spake, but what they have speaketh-ed.

>

I was thinking more along the lines not of what they have speaketh but the *ways* in which "they" (and I'll change that to "we," which is what I mean/t) sometimes speak in discussion. I don't think of aggressive, "I know what I'm talking about" speech as a masc.-gendered thing (though it's popularly supposed to be--to which I say--men are from Mars; women are from Venus; I'm from suburban Virginia). And in most cases, I don't have a problem with this kind of speech & often engage in it myself. It's cool for you (Rob) to be "I know what I'm talking about" about the Stones' sloppy rhythm guitar, because, well--(I'm convinced) you do. But I'd get anxious about a bunch of white folks arguing that adamantly about race & eros in the absence of voices of color, I think,

& that's all. I respect the fact that that may still offend you & others. As for inviting people to join, see Eryque's message--and thanks for that, Eq. emily. sigh.

~~~~~

Emily Lloyd [REDACTED]  
"Emily said Emily said, Emily  
is admittedly Emily"--G. Stein

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287. **Diane Marie Ward**  
***Fwd: New Orleans Performer List (fwd)***  
*Thu 11 Jul 1996*

---

White Fields Press & The Literary Renaissance and others are planning another Poetry Feast - this time in New Orleans. Please find below an incredible list of performing poets - a "poetic dream team." Ron Whitehead has surpassed himself and the previous Rants with this itinerary.

----- Diane Ward [REDACTED] State University of New York at Buffalo

THE AESTHETE'S LIST : <http://www.acsu.buffalo.edu/~dward/>

"I dreamt I dwelt in marble halls,  
And woke to find it true;  
I wasn't born for an age like this;  
Was Smith, Was Jones, Were you?" -- George Orwell written in 1935.

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

Date: Wed, 10 Jul 1996 23:54:10 -0400

From: [REDACTED]

To: dianemarieward <[REDACTED]>

Subject: Fwd: New Orleans Performer List

-----  
RANT for the renaissance, The Majic Bus, & TRIBE present VOICES WITHOUT RESTRAINT 48-Hour Non-Stop Music & Poetry INSOMNIACATHON at The New Orleans

Contemporary Arts Center and The Howlin Wolf Club August 16-18

PERFORMERS:

Amiri Baraka (poet, NJ), David Amram (musician, NY), Diane di Prima (poet, CA), Ed Sanders (poet, NY), The Iguanas, Storeyville, E. Ethelbert Miller (poet, D.C.), Willie Smith (poet, CA), WAMO (poet, TX), Robert Creeley (poet, NY), Ramblin' Jack Elliott (musician, CA), Robert Palmer (writer), Nicole Blackman (poet, NY), Hersch Silverman (poet, NJ) & Channel Nine (musicians, NY),

Douglas Brinkley (writer, LA), Steve Dalachinsky (poet, NY), Frank Messina & Spoken Motion (poet/musicians, NY), Louis Bickett & The Cultural Mudding Ritual (poet/artist, KY), Yusef Komunyakaa (poet), Richard Hell (poet/musician, NY), Mark Reese (filmmaker: Premiere documentary on Jackie Robinson), Chris Iovenko (filmmaker: Harry Crews documentary), MouthAlmighty & Bob Holman's THE UNITED STATES OF POETRY (New Orleans Premiere), Chris Felver (photographer/filmmaker, Premiere of Lawrence Ferlinghetti documentary), The Amazing Chan Klan (pop, KY), The Black Pig Liberation Front (multi-media band of future here now, NY), Grand Passion (new wave from Northeast), Tyrone Cotton (blues), Susi Wood (KY mountain folk), Erik LaPrade (poet, NY), Brian Foye (poet, writer/Founder Kerouac Festival, MA), John Rechy (writer, CA), Andrei Codrescu (renaissance man, LA), Jay McInerney (writer), William S. Burroughs II (live phone conversation), James Grauerholz (writer, KA), Ron Seitz (poet/writer, AZ), Jim McCrary (poet, KA), Ron Whitehead (poet/writer, KY), John Sinclair (poet/musician, LA), Dennis Formento (poet/writer, LA), Eleven Eleven (guilt punk, KY), Sander Hicks (playwright/publisher, NY), Soft Skull Press (NY), Little Molasses Theatre Company (production of RAPID CITY, NY), Matt Kohn (poet/photographer, NY), Kalamu Yasalaam (poet/musician, LA), Denis Mahoney (poet/musician, RI), Arthur Pfister (poet, LA), Hozomeen Press (NYC, CT, RI), Pop rocket Records (CT), Ring Tarigh (RI), White Fields Press (KY, TX), the literary renaissance (KY), COMPOST Magazine (NY, MA), Ralph Adamo (poet, LA), W. Loran Smith (poet, KY), Umar Aki Williams (poet, KY), rich Martin (poet/musician, CT), Kent Fielding (poet, AK), Todd Colby (poet, NY), John Deer (low punk), Anastosias Kozaitis (poet, NY), Kevin Gallagher (poet, NY), Casey Cyr (poet, NY), Phil Paradis (poet, KY), Lori Turner (poet, KY), The New Orleans Poetry Forum, MESECHABE (LA), SPLEEN (KY), GREENPEACE, Bops, Crack, Boom! Press (KY), Al McLaughlin (OH), Jordan Green (poet, KY), Will Kotheimer (poet/filmmaker, KY), Wendy-Charly Lemmon (poet, LA), Paul McDonald (poet, KY), NEMO (poet, NY), Annie McClanahan (poet, KY), Mickey Hess (novelist, KY), Michelle Fowler (poet, CO), Andrea Roney (poet, KY), Heather Kolf (poet, KY), IMPALA SUPER (scruff punk), John Hagan (writer, KY), Mike Forman (poet/musician, KY), Bruce Beroff (poet, KY), Jeff Eckman (poet, KY), Debi Coombs (poet, KY), J.B. Wilson (poet, KY), Kevin Coombs (poet, KY), Rebekah Reeves (poet, KY), Paul Levitch (poet, KY), Luke Buckman (poet, KY), Deirdre Skaggs (poet, KY), Gui Stuart (poet, KY), Amanda Hammons (poet, KY), David Minton (poet, KY), Kelly Render (blues & country musician, KY), Matthew Osborn (poet, KY), Randall Keenan (poet), Jason Powell (poet, KY), Cotton Seiler (poet, KA), Michael Leonard (writer, NY), Allison Bona (poet, KY), Aaron May (poet, KY), Margie Nicoll (poet, MA), Marina Karides (poet, MA), Danielle Legros Georges (poet, NY), John Ryan (poet, MA), Seth Cohen (poet, KY), Chris Kubicek (poet, FL), Reverend Jayne Praxis (poet, KY), Kirstin Ogden (poet, AK), Gene Simmons (poet, AK), Kevin Johnson (poet, LA),

Lee Grue (poet/musician, LA), TRIBE Performers, Dorothy Henriques (playwright, LA), Paul Chasse (poet/moto-biker), LA), Dr. Ahmos Zu-Bolton, LA), Christine Trimbo (poet, LA), David Rowe (poet, LA), Dr. Jerry McGuire (poet, LA), Anne Marie (poet, LA), John Bigunet (poet, LA), Cynthia Hogue (poet, LA), Kerry Poree (poet, LA), Barbara Lamont (poet/singer, LA), Nancy Harris (poet, LA), Dell Hall (poet, LA), Ben Gunn (poet/musician, LA) Andrea Gereighty (poet, LA), Bonnie Fastring (poet, LA), Nancy Cotton (poet, LA), Chris Champagne (poet, LA), Stan Bemis (poet, LA), Rene Broussard (video artist, LA), Mada Plummer (poet, LA), Keith Clatyon (vibraphonist, LA), Karen Celesan (poet, LA), Robin Harris Thompson (singer/poet, LA), Kyla Thompson (9 year old singer/poet, LA), Samara Jones (11 year old poet, LA), Michael Clatyon, Valentine Pierce (poet, LA), Kerry Poree (poet, LA), Quo Vadis Gex Breau (poet, LA), Ted Graham (musician, LA), Gina Ferrera (poet, LA), Robert Menuet (poet, LA), Clara Connell (poet, LA), plus more to be added plus last minute special guest appearances.

#### EVENT SPONSORS:

the literary renaissance, White Fields Press, The Eisenhower Center for American Studies & the Majic Bus at University of New Orleans, TRIBE Magazine, The New Orleans Contemporary Arts Center, The Howlin Wolf Club, EXQUISITE CORPSE Magazine, The City of New Orleans, The New Orleans Poetry Forum.

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#### 288. **Eryque Gleason**

##### ***Re: maria--/& performance***

*Thu 11 Jul 1996*

---

Rob H writ:

>I can understand your frustration. But:

>

>The best way to involve more women and people of color in this group  
>is to invite them here, don't you think? Why slam others for being white  
>or male, why transfer the abuse from patriarch to matriarch,

yeah, but. well, first, i don't think that's quite what emily was getting at, but that's a side issue right now (although maybe not to emily, and apologies if this is redundant, there's quite a few more messages waiting to be read. y'allsses have been talkative lately!)

could someone explain to me why, more or less, any marginalized group of people would want to come into an area that is quite clearly not theirs (economically speaking), has been colonized so thoroughly as to be left dead for all newcomers? makes me think of when my aunt and uncle (who are loaded)

invite me over for thanksgiving dinner. sure, it's a free meal but they've not once let me even sit in the '63 corvette, the biggest kick of the evening is playing fetch with the (highly groomed and pedigreed) elkhound while we watch football on the nine hundred inch television. getting back to campus was always more comforting than aunt rita's carefully-planned soft lighting (i think because i knew that it was, in some sense, mine). might have something to do with the fact that they try to pull off a blue-collar persona, spending more money on plastic bags in a week than i could spend on all of my groceries. though i gotta admit, those new heavy duty zippers are kinda cool, kept the leftovers from spilling.

*But let's not  
show disrespect for the voices that have spoken.*

so: i don't think anyone is particularly knocking those that have spoken because they spoke, but what they have speaketh-ed.

happy summering!  
eryque

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289. **Carnography**  
**Re: maria--/& performance**  
*Thu 11 Jul 1996*

---

At 11:25 PM 7/10/96, Eryque Gleason is rumored to have typed:

*Rob H writ:  
I can understand your frustration. But:*

*The best way to involve more women and people of color in this group  
is to invite them here, don't you think? Why slam others for being white  
or male, why transfer the abuse from patriarch to matriarch,*

I appreciate your civility, Eryque. I will try to respond in kind, you ulcerous flounder-mount.

*yeah, but. well, first, i don't think that's quite what emily was getting  
at, but that's a side issue right now*

Is it really a side-issue? Would it be a side-issue if I commented on a plethora of "overly-aggressive" women in this list? What exactly was she getting at such a necessitated this backhanded compliment? I'm not criticizing anyone's intention here: I presume our motives are good ones. But but but: This--

*Mostly I got worried & a little nauseated at the  
prospect of a predominantly-white-membered list discussing "race & erotics"  
esp. in the assertive and "I know what I'm talking about" voice*



--seems an unfortunate choice of words, not because the passage is horribly offensive, but because it stoops to the stereotyping it denounces.

*could someone explain to me why, more or less, any marginalized group of people would want to come into an area that is quite clearly not theirs (economically speaking)*

Marginally speaking, I'm a Jew (on my mother's side). Consider me privileged if you dare, but in the words of Joe Woods, "anti-semitism is the socialism of fools." Also: I'd mention my sexual orientation, but I'm trying to finish my sandwich.

Economically speaking, when I was nine, my parents divorced and my mother was left with nothing. At fourteen, I lived with a prostitute and paid my own rent (though I still took lessons, and practiced piano almost every evening). Even now, my yearly income defines me squarely as lower class. Yet I don't feel I've stumbled into anyone else's economic territory.

*has been colonized so thoroughly as to be left dead for all newcomers?*

Since I myself am a newcomer who doesn't take said colonization for granted, and since there seems to be space here for my voice, why shouldn't there be equal space for newer voices?

*makes me think of when my aunt and uncle (who are loaded) invite me over for thanksgiving dinner. sure, it's a free meal but they've not once let me even sit in the '63 corvette, the biggest kick of the evening is playing fetch with the (highly groomed and pedigreed) elkhound while we watch football on the nine hundred inch television. getting back to campus was always more comforting than aunt rita's carefully-planned soft lighting (i think because i knew that it was, in some sense, mine). might have something to do with the fact that they try to pull off a blue-collar persona, spending more money on plastic bags in a week than i could spend on all of my groceries. though i gotta admit, those new heavy duty zippers are kinda cool, kept the leftovers from spilling.*

And enclosed within those bags are the leftovers of the poor: \*their own cadavers\*. (Raus! Raus! Kommen Sie schnell!)

(The author wishes to apologize for characterizing Germans as nazis and morbid humor as indigenously German. Why? Because I care, Enryque.)

This is funny stuff, and I like your eye for ironies. But your loaded-relative analogy posits a loaded economic disparity.

*But let's not show disrespect for the voices that have spoken.*

| *so: i don't think anyone is particularly knocking those that have spoken  
because they spake, but what they have speaketh-ed.*

(Are you suggesting that I write like an Elizabethan? Then blame it on my parents: Mom quoted Hamlet whenever I burned my eggs. When it comes to archaisms, I invoke the Menendez defense.)

I can understand anyone's problem with the "I know what I'm talking about" argument, when conclusions are untested and reasons unexplained. But if white males are the only perpetrators of this crime, then eugenicists have had the right idea all along.

Death to reductivism! (Wait a minute--was that reductive?)

| *happy summering!  
eryque*

Sumer is icumen in  
or so they sing at breakfast inns

<http://www.interport.net/~sccrypt>

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290. **Aldon L. Nielsen**

***Re: riposte***

*Thu 11 Jul 1996*

---

This time my response to Robert von Hallberg got to the poetics list before his message -- This may mean that he has rejected my advice to sign onto the list if he wants to continue the discussion in public, and that he is waiting for Keith Tuma to return home to forward his message -- who knows -- It will appear here some day I am sure --

and by the by -- just got a letter from David Bromige, who is just fine, and I thought that was the abbrev. for decibels anyway --

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291. **R I Caddel**

***Invisible books***

*Thu 11 Jul 1996*

---

Ah - OK if I just mention a couple of new books? Call it my monthly shot or whatever....

NEW FROM INVISIBLE BOOKS :

Bill Griffiths : Rousseau & The Wicked : £5.50 : 0 9521256 3 3

A man in a silver suit.  
A briefcase left in a minority-interest club.  
And a cabal of business and government.  
The agenda of a banana county.  
Not lasses of lotional warm-flower skin  
not wives of cracky chat / matrons  
But a senate that kisses horses.

and here's one for the list:

29

What better disguise for evil  
than sonnets?  
How can you divide  
without rhyme?  
How can you obey  
without art?  
O be ready  
there are some sick mysteries and mirages  
in the sweetest story.

And Due Soon from Invisible Books:

Catherine Walsh : Idir Eatortha & Making Tents : £5.50 : 0 9521256 4 1

Invisible Books are available direct from the publishers:  
INVISIBLE BOOKS, BM INVISIBLE, LONDON WC1N 3XX

or from SPD

Thanks. Same place next month then?  
Richard Caddel

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292. **Ron Silliman**

***The List***

*Thu 11 Jul 1996*

---

173 messages in three days? Boy, am I glad that I have the digest option. Still, there are problems with it -- it makes it hard, for example, to save just Simon's elegant synopsis of M. Yeh's article (which I found fascinating and actually not too dissimilar a history from what one might have expected in the old USSR circa 1980). One problem is that in replying to a single message out of a large

bundle, one does tend to forget just who said what, so that leads to writing "someone" when one should have written "Joe Amato," for example.

Nobody's written about Lorenzo Thomas as a Texas poet either. He is one of literally hundreds of regionally dispersed (and from the perspective of a "national scene" thus marginalized) poets doing great work in this country.

I recall once seeing a great long poem of his in, of all places, Monthly Review, tho I don't think that work is captured in The Bathers. Does anybody out there in cyberspace have a copy from which they could make me a xerox?

It was also a piece of his in Monthly Review, I think, that first turned me onto the work of Frank Stanford.

And nobody's written yet about that other category of "vermin" (to use Mr Levy's paradigm), writers working in the computer industry, of which this list has many examples (some of them also in the pure lurker mode too). I even saw the PR manager for the Bank of America on the directory the last time I checked it on the EPC (Hi, Peter).

All of the lists that I'm on that have heavy academic participation are quieter than the city of Paris during the month of July right now (viz. the Cage list, which is taking its name "silence" too literally).

So, yes, I do want to note that I am aware that there are varieties of lurking (I do a fair amount of it myself), the only kind of which I find truly obnoxious being the ones who, when you talk to them in person, complain about how "low level" the discourse here is. As if their nonparticipation weren't one of the defining conditions of same!

But 173 messages in three days? Wowie zowie.

Ron Silliman

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293. **Bill Luoma/Vanstar**  
***Poets, Critics, and Computrix***

*Thu 11 Jul 1996*

---

Ron,

The computer industry is really cool.

"The Regional Analyst may need to assist the Logistics Analyst with part escalations and will seek the aid of the Logistics Analyst in the de-escalation of the 'people' escalations."

Bill

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294. **henry**

**Re: e-mail politics**

Thu 11 Jul 1996

---

On Wed, 10 Jul 1996 16:38:10 -0400 Mark Wallace said:

>

>So, here's my riddle. I'll bet if you said "poetry and poetry criticism"  
>have a fundamentally generative and symbiotic relation, a larger  
>proportion of those people who write criticism mainly would agree,  
>whereas a lesser number of people who mainly write poetry would agree. In  
>fact I bet it would make some poets actively annoyed. I'd love responses  
>to this riddle: is what I'm saying true, or not? If it is true, why?

Poets & critics go together like firemen & insurance companies, like doctors and lawyers, like big sister and the kid who tags along, like whales & barnacles, like doctors and leeches, like leeches and fish, like fish and lemons, like lemons and lawyers. Drive on.

Poets don't write, they are written. Critics are smitten; they write.

Poetry better be good enough for criticism; otherwise, it's just criticism.

Critics live in the world created by poets and bequeath it to the little baby barnacles of the future.

- Henry Gould (forthcoming in "Opie's Post Humors: the Nervous Tics of An Aphorism" Peter Lang Press, 1997, \$800. if you order early)

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295. **henry**

**Re: Onward: Contemporary Poetry & Poetics**

Thu 11 Jul 1996

---

On Wed, 10 Jul 1996 13:33:23 -0400 Rod Smith said:

>Well, an eastern or Wittgensteinian approach wld be a contextual approach--  
>an understanding of context as multiply & complexly constitutive. The  
>emphasis being not only on what we can "compute" but also upon  
>acknowledgement that any given context is more complexly constituted than  
one

>can apprehend-- which is why intuition is such a powerful & real aspect of  
>our experience & also why it is so individualized.

>

>Seems to me both Wittgenstein & aspects of buddhist & taoist thought share a  
>concern with pointing out limits of apprehension & \*using them.\* One cld also  
>talk about Duchamp in these terms.

My response is typically arrogant Western: yes, the context is there - so what? What can you DO with it? The poem is made of choices - it's the spine on which context attaches itself like a barnacle. Elena Shvarts (a St. Petersburg westerner) said to me at the Hoboken conference: "Americans use the poem to find out what they're going to say. That's why they don't memorize & recite like the Russians." (this is a very rough adaptation of what she said to me). Choices give the edge, the structure, the limit, the character. At least in my imagination. It's the leap - even if it's into the dark. - Henry Gould

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296. **Larry Price**

***Re: Onward: Contemporary Poetry & Poetics***

Thu 11 Jul 1996

---

What I find suggestive in this thread about poetics is all that, in it, points toward the "problem" of poetic language. The bit Rod paraphrased from Olson is of course relatively early. A much more accurate token of Olson's practice would be the Black Chrysanthemum: that which exists through itself is what is called meaning. But that which exists in and of itself isn't necessarily going to be FOR itself or even for \_an\_ other. That is, as a term it's going to exist outside language. But then I think it's clear there are agencies by which one thing \_becomes\_ another thing. And why I agree with Rod about transparency. That is, to posit language at all as \_a\_ thing (esp. one outside the zeitgeist) DENIES it the agency which otherwise does get the fly out of the flybottle - ie, poetic language as the transformation of one thing into another thing, either one of which or both may exist OF it/themselves but which, in the elision, the agency, casts forward for us - often the feeling is \_into us\_ - the possibility that that meaning \_would\_ be. It's that heuristic call forward of poetic language that tells me I no longer need the eternal moods of the bleak wind to ground my agency. Rather it's the swirling motion of that call forward - the adequacy of it and by implication and in general poetic language - that I think I respond to in, say, Dickinson, Villon, or Sappho, and not some iron ribbing in language.

Larry

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297. **henry gould**

***Re: Onward: Contemporary Poetry & Poetics***

Thu 11 Jul 1996

---

On Thu, 11 Jul 1996 09:08:26 -0400 Larry Price said:

>agencies by which one thing \_becomes\_ another thing. And why I agree with Rod

>about transparency. That is, to posit language at all as \_a\_ thing (esp. one  
>outside the zeitgeist) DENIES it the agency which otherwise does get the fly  
>out of the flybottle - ie, poetic language as the transformation of one thing  
>into another thing, either one of which or both may exist OF it/themselves  
>but which, in the elision, the agency, casts forward for us - often the  
>feeling is \_into us\_ - the possibility that that meaning \_would\_ be. It's  
>that heuristic call forward of poetic language that tells me I no longer need  
>the eternal moods of the bleak wind to ground my agency. Rather it's the  
>swirling motion of that call forward - the adequacy of it and by implication  
>and in general poetic language - that I think I respond to in, say,  
>Dickinson, Villon, or Sappho, and not some iron ribbing in language.

This is very interesting and sounds like a transcription of, yes, here we go again, Mandelstam's essay "Conversation about Dante" where he distinguishes between the transformative impulse and the replaceable materials of language. But I don't think I posited language as a thing or denied it's agency or said it was outside the zeitgeist - I said it mastered the zeitgeist by being free comprehension WITHIN the zeitgeist, and that this activity of language is a kind of constant, an activity if you like, within the changing pressures of history. - Henry Gould

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298. **Pierre Joris**

**George Orwell, informer (fwd)**

Thu 11 Jul 1996

---

& now for something completely different.... Pierre

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

Date: 11 Jul 96 02:48:37 EDT

From: John Whiting <[REDACTED]>

To: Forum KPFA <[REDACTED]>

Subject: George Orwell, informer

No apologies for this "off-topic" posting. Without indulging in simplistic analogies, this revelation echoes endlessly down the halls of KPFA's history - Orwell's essay on "Politics and the English Language", for instance, was broadcast again and again on Pacifica stations.

Perhaps the bottom line is Ezra Pound's plaintive cry,  
"Every man has the right to have his ideas examined one at a time."

John

#####  
#####

The [London] Guardian July 11 1996

## ORWELL OFFERED WRITERS' BLACKLIST TO ANTI-SOVIET PROPAGANDA UNIT

Richard Norton-Taylor and Seumas Milne

GEORGE ORWELL, the socialist author, offered to provide a secret Foreign Office propaganda unit linked to the intelligence services with names of writers and journalists he regarded as "crypto-communist" and "fellow-travellers" who could not be trusted, documents released yesterday at the Public Record Office reveal.

He made the offer in 1949, shortly before he died, to the covert Information Research Department, which used well-known writers and publishers - including Bertrand Russell, Stephen Spender and Arthur Koestler - to produce anti-communist material during the cold war. Documents also show that the IRD singled out articles from Tribune, the leftwing but then anti-Soviet paper, to back up its hidden crusade.

In March 1949 an IRD official, Celia Kirwan, visited Orwell at a sanatorium in Cranham, Gloucestershire, where he was suffering from tuberculosis. "I discussed some aspects of our work with him in great confidence," she told her colleagues. "He was delighted to learn of them, and expressed his wholehearted and enthusiastic approval of our aims."

Although too ill to write himself, he gave the names of potential contributors. Early the following month, Orwell wrote to Kirwan offering to give her "a list of journalists and writers who in my opinion are crypto-communists, fellow-travellers or inclined that way and should not be trusted... "

He said his notebook with the names was at his home in London. He insisted that the list was "strictly confidential" since it would be libellous to call somebody a "fellow-traveller."

The revelation is likely to shock many of Orwell's admirers, for whom he is a 20th century radical icon. The files released yesterday do not contain the list of names but a



card placed next to Orwell's letter to Kirwan says that a document has been withheld by the Foreign Office.

Bernard Crick, Orwell's biographer, confirmed yesterday that Orwell had kept a "notebook of suspects" containing 86 names. "Many were plausible, a few were far-fetched and unlikely," he said. Michael Foot, a friend of Orwell's in the 1930s and 1940s, said he found the letter "amazing".

"There's been a lot of argument about him deserting his socialism at the end of his life. I don't think that's true, but I'm very surprised he was dealing with the secret services in any form."

The papers show that the IRD promoted the foreign language publication of Animal Farm, Orwell's classic anti-communist allegory. "The idea is particularly good for Arabic in view of the fact that both pigs and dogs are unclean animals to Muslims," noted an embassy official in Cairo.

The unit feared communism in Saudi Arabia, notably among oil workers in Dhahran, the scene of last month's bombing of an American base.

The IRD arranged the distribution of Tribune to British missions abroad. Officials noted: "[It] combines the resolute exposure of communism and its methods with the consistent championship of those objectives which leftwing sympathisers normally support".

They added: "Many articles in it can be effectively turned to this department's purposes."

Documents show that the IRD was closely involved with the Trades Union Congress, lobbied against unions supporting the National Council for Civil Liberties, and played an active role in splitting the international union movement in the late 1940s.

A note from a senior IRD official in 1949 warned that the NCCL (now renamed Liberty) was "heavily communist-penetrated and is in fact... being used for little if nothing more than attacking our colonial administration and policies at every opportunity".

The "persuasion" was done through the TUC, where IRD's main contact was Vic Feather, who later became general secretary.

#####  
#####

This is the text of George Orwell's letter to Celia Kirwan of Whitehall's secret Information Research Department.

"I DID suggest DARCY GILLY, (Manchester Guardian) didn't I? There is also a man called CHOLLERTON (expert on the Moscow trials) who cld be contacted through the Observer.

Cranham  
6.4.49.

Dear Celia,

I haven't written earlier because I have really been rather poorly, and I can't use the typewriter even now, so I hope you will be able to cope with my hand-writing.

I couldn't think of any more names to add to your possible list of writers except FRANZ BORKENAU (the Observer would know his address) whose name I think I gave you, and GLEB STRUVE (he's at Pasadena in California at present), the Russian translator and critic. Of course there are hordes of Americans, whose names can be found in the (New York) New Leader, the Jewish monthly paper "Commentary", and the Partisan Review. I could also, if it is of any value, give you a list of journalists and writers who in my opinion are crypto-communists, fellow-travellers or inclined that way and should not be trusted as propagandists. But for that I shall have to send for a notebook which I have at home, and if I do give you such a list it is strictly confidential ...

Just one idea occurred to me for propaganda not abroad but in this country. A friend of mine in Stockholm tells me that as the Swedes didn't make films of their own one sees a lot of German and Russian films, and some of the Russian films, which of course would not normally reach this country, are unbelievably scurrilous anti-British propaganda. He referred especially to a historical film about the Crimean war. As the Swedes can get hold of these films I suppose we can; might it not be a good idea to have showings of some of them in this country ...

I read the enclosed article with interest, but it seems to me anti-religious rather than anti-semitic. For what my opinion is worth, I don't think anti-anti-semitism is a strong card to play in anti-Russian propaganda. The USSR must in practice be somewhat anti-semitic, as it is opposed

both to Zionism within its own borders and on the other hand to the liberalism and internationalism of the non-Zionist Jews, but a polyglot state of that kind can never be officially anti-semitic, in the Nazi manner, just as the British Empire cannot. If you try to tie up Communism with anti-semitism, it is always possible in reply to point to people like Kaganovich or Anna Pauleer, also to the large number of Jews in the Communist parties everywhere. I also think it is bad policy to try to curry favour with your enemies. The Zionists Jews everywhere hate us and regard Britain as the enemy, more even than Germany. Of course this is based on misunderstanding, but as long as it is so I do not think we do ourselves any good by denouncing anti-semitism in other nations.

I am sorry I can't write a better letter, but I really have felt so lousy the last few days. Perhaps a bit later I'll get some ideas.

With love,  
George.'

END

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299. **henry gould**

***Onward: Contemporary etc.***

*Thu 11 Jul 1996*

---

Addendum to previous post: if you agree with Larry Price that language is not so much a thing as the shadow of a transformative activity (this is bad shorthand), the call or gesture of possible meaning, then perhaps it's not language but poetry-making which is the "constant", persistent thing pervading the "zeitgeist" - a bridge between the oracle and the prophet to the demotic & mundane (Al Cook frames his recent book around this tandem). Because, through conversation and constructive signalling, it REACHES the timebound, it becomes the door for the prophetic - doesn't transcend just the zeitgeist but ordinary Time itself (time in its tapeworm or metronome aspect) - door into the carnival, liminal, mardigras, playground area. - Henry Gould

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300. **maria damon**

**white rose**

Thu 11 Jul 1996

hey everyone, just saw the beat exhibit at the walker art center here in mpls. i'd seen it very briefly in nyc, but like it better in mpls (howz that for a surprise! a pleasant one). i was especially touched by the way jay defeo's white rose is lit -- it has a radiance that seems to come from inside of it, that makes it look as if its actually growing larger and breathing as one gazes --and the short film of its removal from her sf apt (by --is it bruce conners?) almost had me in tears. i think it's going west (ca) next, tho i'm not sure where. sf? probly. and get this, the African American special collections at the university's library has the original typed ms of an unpublished bob kaufman poem, "hospitalgram," now on display in the exhibit. wow. my very own institution finally has something i can write home about. maybe this'll be a good year after all. optimistically yrs, md

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301. **David Baratier**

**Re[2]: List wars**

Thu 11 Jul 1996

testing

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302. **Dean Taciuch**

**Re: Onward: Contemporary Poetry**

Thu 11 Jul 1996

| P.S.-- yes, I know it wasn't that simple for Olson.

I'm working now on recasting the paper I read at Orono--it was on Olson and Wittgenstein (and there was a short passage on Buddhist methods as well). Anyway, yes, coming from a Wittgensteinian perspective, Olson's "stance" runs into a limit: I had cast this in terms of language games--within a particular game, one can try to "project" ("from where the poet got it, over to, etc"). But once one leaves that game, there's the limit of common usage. The example, for me, is Olson's vision or version of the Maya--as much as he sets them up as models for the projective stance, they're not. As much as he admires their way of being in the world, he can't be them. And the language he uses to describe them (as "animals") reveals the limits of the language (Western aesthetics) he has available to him, the language game in which he is involved.

I want to explore the individual applications of this--to what extent do these limits exist between individuals in the same language game?

"Limits / are what any of us / are inside of"

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303. **Dean Taciuch**

**Re: Onward: Contemporary Poetry & Poetics**

Thu 11 Jul 1996

---

*What I find suggestive in this thread about poetics is all that, in it, points toward the "problem" of poetic language. The bit Rod paraphrased from Olson is of course relatively early. A much more accurate token of Olson's practice would be the Black Chrysanthemum: that which exists through itself is what is called meaning. But that which exists in and of itself isn't necessarily going to be FOR itself or even for \_an\_ other. That is, as a term it's going to exist outside language.*

Compare Wittgenstein's formulation of meaning as "use." That keeps it within the language, doesn't it? And does Olson's sense of the "only absolute" as "this instant, in action" bring him closer to Wittgenstein's sense of meaning ("in action" -- "in use")? That is, that which exists in and of itself within this instant, in action, would be use. I'm sure I'm oversimplifying here; I mean, Olson doesn't simply collapse into Wittgenstein. But can such an approach point out the limits of Olson's stance (or of \_any\_ stance)?

Dean Taciuch

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304. **Emily Lloyd**

**Re: maria/&performance**

Thu 11 Jul 1996

---

Rob Hardin--ok, one last time, because I couldn't tell if you'd read my response to Eryque before you wrote your response to him--\*nowhere\* in my post did I say "white male." Nowhere! When I say "white-membered," and you assume white male, that's problematic (unless you thought that "member" was used in the euphemistic anatomical sense). To read it as male when it isn't specified that way is not to read it, but to have a knee-jerk reaction (assuming I'd "bash" white males) or to be wildly male-centric. So, what's on that sandwich? & please, no "look ma, I'm marginalized!" contests, ok? Really reductionary. "I myself am a newcomer who doesn't take said colonization for granted" reflects more on you (not a value judgment, there) than on whether or not there's "colonization." over & over & out, emily

~~~~~  
Emily Lloyd 

"Emily said Emily said, Emily
is admittedly Emily"--G. Stein

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305. **Jordan Davis**
Loesser NY sch pts
Thu 11 Jul 1996

Rod-- it says Bibliophasia Reprint Service... epigram's from Lewis Warsh, "...my life with each new drug starting anew...", toc reads as follows, Dick Gallup, Larry Fagin, Charlie Vermont, Kit Robinson, Tom Veitch, Joe Brainard, Stephen Rodefer, Joseph Ceravolo, Alice Notley, Lewis Warsh, Maureen Owen, Hilton Obenzinger, Merrill Gilfillan, Alan Senauke, Harris Schiff, Bernadette Mayer, Anne Waldman, Jamie MacInnis, Ted Greenwald, Bill Berkson, Alan Bernheimer, Tony Towle, Simon Schuchat, Michael Brownstein, John Godfrey, Robert Creeley, Peter Schjeldahl, Tom Clark, Michael-Sean Lazarchuck, Jim Brodey.. 'it' is th little golden book of lesser ny school poets.. J

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306. **Jordan Davis**
W's fly, lppl's ground
Thu 11 Jul 1996

Some problems with flies and bottles:
 There may be sugar in the bottle.
 It may be a Klein bottle.

That is, poetry is not only a game with restrictive rules, but it can productively be so. Or, someone accustomed to thinking of poetry writing as rule-governed behavior would think of the 'call-forward' of language as a rule-system that was claiming transcendence from rule-systems? Inspiration? What film studies people call 'diogenesis'?

Rules is obviously the wrong word.

Is calling it 'language' positing it as a 'thing'? Reification as productive mistake. Normalization, enforcement, of productive mistakes as tyranny?

More please about this 'calling-forward'.

Jordan

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307. **Mark Wallace**
critics vs. poets (tag team round three)
Thu 11 Jul 1996

Dear Maria:

Absolutely I would not suggest that poetry critics get off this list--the presence of yourself, Marjorie Perloff, many others too numerous to name make this list both more engaging and complex AND intellectually frustrating, which for the most part is all to the good. I guess my thinking has more to do with the social structures that intersect with/underlie the roles of both poet and poetry critic. We'd all like to think of ourselves as individuals, because we are, but it can be much more difficult to recognize that we are also all moving inside a very complex institutionalized social network that we simultaneously critique and constitute, to various degrees (and even those people on this list who don't work in colleges--and thankfully there are many of them--have some relation to other kinds of institutionalization).

At the various colleges where I teach part-time, I would absolutely love to have colleagues like yourself, that is, literary theorists and critics who recognize not only that contemporary poetry is a worthwhile endeavor, but even, frankly, that it exists. I don't want to name names here, but at one college where I teach, the one critic who knew anything about contemporary poetry was let go after several years (funding, etc), and there are only several other people who have even HEARD of language poetry, say. At another where I teach, I've become good friends with an older scholar who studied with Yvor Winters, and has a different sense of poetics entirely (he does, however, teach Ashbery and O'Hara, say) and yet has come to like me because it seems to him that I'm one of the few people in the department who actually reads contemporary poetry (there are some others, poets primarily but not exclusively). There are certainly mainly good scholars at both schools, but poetry is simply not a primary concern for many critics at the moment ANYWHERE, as you well know. This older scholar, for instance, is fond of complaining about someone else in the department who once said to him, "But you know, we don't want to privilege literature."

So I guess I would say that the problem is not the presence of individuals like yourself, by any means, but rather a cultural environment in which, increasingly, critics read other critics as if those other critics were the only "field" of writing that matters much. Clearly, inside such a situation, critics like yourself and Marjorie and Peter Quartermain, etc, constitute a presence that can be only beneficial to poets. On the other hand, the fact remains that inside an academic context, only certain kinds of writing are allowed to be labelled "critical." That, for instance, was one of the points behind the collection I've mentioned on

this list before, A POETICS OF CRITICISM, edited by Juliana Spahr, Kristin Prevallet, Pam Rehm, and myself--in that collection were a whole host of clearly "critical" essays which, because of their non-standard form, simply can't be recognized as such in any institutional context. Do their writers want such recognition? In some cases yes, in some cases, probably no. But until a whole multiplicity of writing processes are recognized as "critical," I think that even those poets highly aware of criticism and literary theory will continue to have skepticism not so much of individual critics, but of a whole institutionalized system which valorizes the "dispassionate, objective" observer at the expense of any other mode of critical engagement.

mark wallace

```
/-----\ |
||      "I have not yet begun      ||
to go to extremes"      ||  GWU:      |
|  http://gwis2.circ.gwu.edu/~mdw      ||  EPC:
||  http://writing.upenn.edu/epc/authors/wallace      ||
|-----|
```

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308. **James Brook**

Re: George Orwell, informer (fwd)

Thu 11 Jul 1996

Pierre, thanks for forwarding the disheartening news about George Orwell.

It's sad to hear that he aided--or attempted to aid--secret British anticommunist propaganda and provided the names of "unreliable" people. On the other hand, it's not shocking that he did so. At the end of the Second World War the independent left was fragmented and disorganized, and Stalinism was triumphant. Many anti-Stalinist leftists found it tempting to support Western liberal democracy against what they considered the greater enemy--just as they had supported liberal democracy against the Nazis. After all, it was the separate efforts of the Nazis, supporting Franco, and the Communists, supporting the Spanish Republic, that crushed all chances for a social revolution during the Spanish Civil War, in which Orwell fought. (This story is told very well in Ken Loach's recent film, *Land and Freedom*.) I think this is the context for Orwell's turn--a turn parodied thirty years later by Octavio Paz, who came to see the U.S. as a great friend in the struggle against what Reagan called "the Evil Empire." (Speculating on personal motivation, I imagine that Orwell felt desperate and isolated. But Paz? I don't know--was it stupidity and opportunism? And then there's the question of the writers and poets who remained true to their fascism and Stalinism; e.g., Pound and Neruda.)

--James Brook

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309. **Michael Davidson**
research stipends at ANP

Thu 11 Jul 1996

The Archive for New Poetry at the University of California, San Diego is offering small stipends (ca \$500.00) to graduate students and scholars interested in working in the archive. The funds can cover travel expenses or lodging/per diem while in San Diego. The Archive, in addition to its extensive collection of small press poetry monographs, magazines, broadsides and tapes, owns the papers of a number of writers: George Oppen, Charles Reznikoff, James Schuyler, Jerome Rothenberg, Joanne Kyger, Paul Blackburn, Lyn Hejinian, Ron Silliman, Joe Brainard, Jackson MacLow, Clayton Eshleman, John Taggart, David Bromige, editor, Donald Allen, United Artists Press. For further information about the stipends, contact Lynda Claassen, Dept. of Special Collections, University Library, University of California, San Diego, La Jolla, CA 92093 ([REDACTED]).

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310. **Robert A Harrison**
Re(2): maria--/& performance

Thu 11 Jul 1996

eryque,

could someone explain to me why, more or less, any marginalized group of people would want to come into an area that is quite clearly not theirs (economically speaking), has been colonized so thoroughly as to be left dead for all newcomers?

can't speak for anyone else of course, and not to paint a picture of myself as being marginalized, those details incredibly complicated as they are for anyone else, but ... a simple response an attempt to start at one might be

because the space belongs to no one else either.

does this space belong even to those who write to it the most? no

bob harrison

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311. **Rod Smith**

Re: Onward: Contemporary Poetry & Poetics

Thu 11 Jul 1996

Judy-- I'd like to hear more abt the Abrams book. Terence McKenna's an interesting nut dealing a bit with similar issues. How, exactly, does "the alphabet distort perception"

Henry--

we seem to be talking past each other. You wrote

"I think we're all roaring with hunger for those very packages, & that's why packaged truth, & poetry, & anthologies, are so winning... "

in response to my "many APR folks seem to see meaning as a package to be delivered."

I wasn't talking about commodification's pros or cons, at all. Nor was I talking about mastering historical epics -- a truth package I'd just as soon send back unopened thank you. I'm talking Wittgenstein & Tsong Khapa, you're talking Hegel (which is cool) & Helen Vendler (which sucks) -- seems a little hopeless, but maybe not.

Your question "Why do some artworks still grip us while others seem hackneyed by timebound blinders?" -- The key word in this sentence for me is "us." It privileges the "masterpiece" over the "timebound." & who decides what's hackneyed & on what basis is a question that matters. Is that "us" the Zeitgeist you're talking? Is it some kinda Jungian thing, this Zeitgeist? Or worse, some kinda ideologically unaware masquerade with power aplenty. This seems the appeal of Jameson's totalizing in academia, the idea that "the era" can be apprehended-- when such almost always turns out to be an exercise in excluding/dismissing what don't fit the critic's lens cap. . . . I wouldn't dismiss it, but. . . I would like to be able to.

Rod

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312. **henry**

Re: Onward: Contemporary Poetry & Poetics

Thu 11 Jul 1996

On Thu, 11 Jul 1996 12:32:32 -0400 Rod Smith said:

>we seem to be talking past each other. You wrote

>

>"I think we're all roaring with hunger for those very packages, & that's

>why packaged truth, & poetry, & anthologies, are so winning... "

>

>in response to my "many APR folks seem to see meaning as a package to be
>delivered."

>

>I wasn't talking about commodification's pros or cons, at all. Nor was I
>talking about mastering historical epics -- a truth package I'd just as soon
>send back unopened thank you. I'm talking Wittgenstein & Tsong Khapa,
you're

>talking Hegel (which is cool) & Helen Vendler (which sucks) -- seems a little
>hopeless, but maybe not.

Now you do got me confused, Rod. Maybe I am missing the finer grain (linguistics Wittgensteinian) of what you're saying, granted. But my "roaring with hunger" comment does seem apropos to your making a distinction between "APR folks" & us avant-garde Eastern folks. My response is that absorbing ideas & hunches in bits & pieces small & large is just a human trait. As for historical epics - huh? When did I bring that in? Helen Vendler? Wha?

Your question "Why do some artworks still grip us while others seem hackneyed by timebound blinders?" -- The key word in this sentence for me is "us." It privileges the "masterpiece" over the "timebound." & who decides what's hackneyed & on what basis is a question that matters. Is that "us" the Zeitgeist you're talking? Is it some kinda Jungian thing, this Zeitgeist? Or worse, some kinda ideologically unaware masquerade with power aplenty. This seems the appeal of Jameson's totalizing in academia, the idea that "the era" can be apprehended-- when such almost always turns out to be an exercise in excluding/dismissing what don't fit the critic's lens cap. . . . I wouldn't dismiss it, but. . . I would like to be able to.

Let me quote from Hermann Nautical of Liebfraumilch Univ. again on this one: "Der Zeitgeist, ja. Der Zeitgeist, vell let me zee. Ja. Vell. Iss ven owl de multi-furiowze aspektes uff de hysterical period, ja, ezpecially in de art un kultur, exhibit ein kind uff unity of characterizticks und exprezzions across de many many varied fielts uff endeavors. Unt let me recomment to you unt to everyboody on de liszt a ferry interesting book in dis regardt: "Terrible Honesty" by Ann Douglas, about 20s New York in de US uff A." - And let me just add to Prof. Nautical's comments the following: you say the key word is "us". I assume you mean as in Goethe's famous remark, "The enemy is us." Whut ah wuz tryin t'say wuz that the really heavy-duty poetry, drama, prose, etc. has this primordial human quality that conquers all the particular "us's" of a particular age - those cussed us's that usually vaunt what is most timebound as the "great works of the age". Of course in the suspicious academia of today any expression of overly-strong

emotion for past works of art is regarded as hopelessly recherche, don't you think? - Henry Gould

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313. **Judy Roitman**

Re: Onward: Contemporary Poetry & Poetics

Thu 11 Jul 1996

Well, an eastern or Wittgensteinian approach wld be a contextual approach-- an understanding of context as multiply & complexly constitutive. The emphasis being not only on what we can "compute" but also upon acknowledgement that any given context is more complexly constituted than one can apprehend-- which is why intuition is such a powerful & real aspect of our experience & also why it is so individualized.

*Seems to me both Wittgenstein & aspects of buddhist & taoist thought share a concern with pointing out limits of apprehension & *using them.* One cld also talk about Duchamp in these terms.*

Many thanks, Rod, for the clarification.

I would add, at least for Buddhist thought (and I think it's true for Wittgenstein as well) that it is not only context, but that language necessarily distorts/hides/distracts/etc., language as the great deceiver. Was this implicit in your comments? No news here, but often forgotten. I think this is what Wittgenstein means by his "fly out of the fly-bottle" remark, but not being a Wittgenstein scholar am relying on intuition here.

Also, at least some Buddhist practices hold up the hope of direct apprehension -- "limits of apprehension" are (themselves) delusions, cut through them and BINGO there you be. But the categories used to describe context are not relevant here, being, you should excuse the expression, empty.

Cheers.

----- Judy Roitman
| "Glad to have Math, University of Kansas | these copies of things
Lawrence, KS 66045 | after a while." [REDACTED]
Larry Eigner, 1927-1996

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314. **Aldon L. Nielsen**

door prize --

Thu 11 Jul 1996

The first person to correctly identify Paul Laurence Dunbar as the author of the poem "To a Captious Critic" is the incredibly well-read Alan Golding -- who gets as his prize a lovely paperback volume of literary criticism (just what he wants more of, no doubt) --

Watch this space for further contests -- keep reading those poems!

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315. **Charles Alexander**

poecrititry

Thu 11 Jul 1996

These battles between poets & critics seem to be forgetting that some of the best critics are poets. Like Rachel Blau du Plessis & Charles Bernstein & Ron Silliman & many others.

Personally I tend to read a lot more essays/criticism by "poets" than I do by "scholars," but even stating this makes my stomach turn a bit, as if assuming that these are necessarily separate camps. Are they? Why?

BUT I am not certain this fact is so recognized by the editors/sponsors of such journals as PMLA, ELH, Contemporary Literature, & various others. I am definitely speaking off the hip here, and without recent experience with so-called scholarly journals, and would love to be corrected to find out that, say, one of these journals would be as open to a critical piece written by a non-university poet with no Ph.D., as, for example, a journal like Chain is to an essay by Maria Damon or a poem by a lit professor with full accreditation.

I hope I'm not adding flame to the fire, as I'd really rather heal the rifts between poets & critics than extend them.

charles

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316. **Rod Smith**

Re: Onward: Contemporary Poetry & Poetics

Thu 11 Jul 1996

Henry wrote: "As for historical epics - huh? When did I bring that in?

Helen

Vendler? Wha?"

On 7/10 Henry wrote:

"It's language talking through the obsessions and neuroses & sleepwalking and timeserving of an era - not denying it, but mastering it & throwing light on it"

also the term "zeitgeist" you used originally & since is defined as "the spirit of the time." May be a little unfair to accuse you of Vendlerism but confidence in the existence of a or the "zeitgeist" seems loaded with that crap to me. This is not to deny historical processes-- but they are that, I believe, processes, multiple, & only partially apprehendable. I like the Goethe ("The enemy is us") but of course from many perspectives the enemy is legitimately "them."

You said today: "Whut ah wuz tryin t'say wuz that the really heavy-duty poetry, drama, prose, etc. has this primordial human quality that conquers all the particular "us's" of a particular age"

This I don't believe. For me it is a matter of use-- I read Shakespeare or Dickinson or Oppen not because they have "conquered" but because they are of use. I prefer that construct to the idea that they have achieved some sort of summation, & insist that what will be of use for one won't necessarily be for another, or even for the same person at different times in their life.

"Its apparition is the mold of it"

Rod

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317. **George Bowering**

Re: Thomas

Thu 11 Jul 1996

I remember Lorenzo Thomas from the early sixties as a Long Island poet, I think. There was one magazine that misprinted his name as Lorenzo Toomes. Or is that somethin i didnt know about?

.....

"The Moose stood in the yard."

--Daniel Pinkwater

George Bowering.
2499 West 37th Ave.,
Vancouver, B.C.,
Canada V6M 1P4

fax: [REDACTED]

e-mail: [REDACTED]

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318. **william marsh**

Re: e-mail politics

Wed 31 Dec 1969

Mark & others,

to offer one response to the "riddle" -- "I'll bet if you said 'poetry and poetry criticism' have a fundamentally generative and symbiotic relation, a larger proportion of those people who write criticism mainly would agree, whereas a lesser number of people who mainly write poetry would agree." -- although i admit i'm not exactly sure how the discussion got to this end, it seems odd to me that it has, since distinctions between so-called "poetic" and "critical" writings, as you point out, have been effectively eradicated, most profoundly by those poet/theorists (Susan Howe, Charles Bernstein, among several others) whose work is very much concerned with blurring the distinction.

my first impulse, for the sake of responding to your question, is to group myself among those who "mainly write poetry", but i quickly stumble over such a categorization due in most part to the fact that when i write, i do so in such a 'critically' engaged manner that the distinction is fruitless and, in my mind, wrongly put. i'd say that any thoughtful writing is critical and poetic by nature, moreso that the critical and poetic "elements" of which you speak are twin directives in any thoughtful engagement of language, and really shouldn't be posed diametrically.

elsewhere Mark writes that he finds himself "inevitably siding with poetry and poets," even though he recognizes that "poetry criticism is unavoidable." perhaps i misconstrue the body of writing he means to identify by "poetry criticism," but in any event what could possibly motivate a "side" taking of this kind? and to say that it's "unavoidable" is almost as damning as to consider it "avoidable," since both suggest that criticism is somehow painfully endured.

bill marsh

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319. **Henry**

Re: Onward: Contemporary Poetry & Poetics

Thu 11 Jul 1996

On Thu, 11 Jul 1996 14:38:26 -0400 Rod Smith said:

>Henry wrote: "As for historical epics - huh? When did I bring that in?

> Helen

>Vendler? Wha?"

>

>On 7/10 Henry wrote:

>"It's language talking through the obsessions and
>neuroses & sleepwalking and timeserving of an era - not denying it, but
>mastering it & throwing light on it"

Well, I guess that proves it. Heck, when you said "historical epics" I thought you were talking about a genre of poetry or something! Shows how wrong you can be. My mistake. Should have never used the term. But wait a minute - didn't YOU use the term? Huh?

>

>also the term "zeitgeist" you used originally & since is defined as "the
>spirit of the time." May be a little unfair to accuse you of Vendlerism but
>confidence in the existence of a or the "zeitgeist" seems loaded with that
>crap to me. This is not to deny historical processes-- but they are that, I
>believe, processes, multiple, & only partially apprehendable. I like the
>Goethe ("The enemy is us") but of course from many perspectives the enemy
is
>legitimately "them."

Vendlerism - is that like - retailing?

You said today: "Whut ah wuz tryin t'say wuz that the really heavy-duty poetry, drama, prose, etc. has this primordial human quality that conquers all the particular "us's" of a particular age"

This I don't believe. For me it is a matter of use-- I read Shakespeare or Dickinson or Oppen not because they have "conquered" but because they are _of use_. I prefer that construct to the idea that they have achieved some sort of summation, & insist that what will be of use for one won't necessarily be for another, or even for the same person at different times in their life.

Funny - I read the same people because they're totally useless. - Henry

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320. **Rod Smith**

Re: Onward: Contemporary Poetry & Poetics

Thu 11 Jul 1996

Judy wrote: "I would add, at least for Buddhist thought (and I think it's true for Wittgenstein as well) that it is not only context, but that language necessarily distorts/hides/distracts/etc., language as the great deceiver."

Certainly this is true for certain of Zen, but not for the Mahayana school-- Tibetan Buddhism puts great emphasis on book learnin'. & Zen is deeply textual & verbal-- the emphasis on the koan etc.

& also J wrote: "at least some Buddhist practices hold up the hope of direct apprehension -- "limits of apprehension" are (themselves) delusions, cut through them and BINGO there you be."

Yes, the emphasis on the breakthrough-- which leads to that grt quote, can't remember which teacher: "Now that I'm enlightened I'm as miserable as ever." Reminds me of that great master George Bowering. . .

A favorite Wittgenstein quote, which Joan Retallack has in 4 or 5 different languages scattered about her house:

"For what reply does one make to someone who says: 'I believe it merely strikes you as if you knew that?'"

to which I addend in Aerial 5 David Tudor's "If you don't know why do you ask?"

But wld like to hear from you more specifics on Abrams or your take on language's distortions, is he arguing for a less absrtact iconicity?

--rrpfet

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321. **Charles Smith**

Ken Irby

Thu 11 Jul 1996

I'd like thank Ron for the detailed & sympathetic analysis of Irby's poem, which points the way toward the richness of sound patterns embedded there. The music in Ken's poetry has always struck me as extraordinary--carefully constructed & 'scored' on the page, insistent in its certainties. Ron pointed to Ken's use & development of Olson's caesura, noting that Irby's lines are seldom breath based. Irby's musicality derives just as much from things he learned from Duncan, & even more I think, from Bunting & Zukofsky. (When I mention Bunting, I'm thinking specifically of the use of consonants Peter Quartermain demonstrates in his piece on Whitman, Pound, Bunting.) But Zukofsky still seems to be the richest source Ken has developed (maybe because Zukofsky has such rich musical resources to offer?).

From the sequence "Etudes", also from the book *_Call Steps_*:

call snow draw cold moon sawm

comb new leaver lean

so shadows dough

or take a look at "{requiem etudes 7 for Louis Zukofsky}" which closes "Etudes." I'd also recommend to anyone who didn't see it, his review (it's really more than that) of Michelle Leggott's *_Reading Zukofsky's 80 Flowers_* that

appeared in Sulfur a few years ago (& curiously has been his only appearance in that magazine i believe, although he was a frequent contributor to Caterpillar).

The reasons for the neglect of Ken's work seem complicated & have always confused me. Part of it rests on his shoulders; he doesn't seek much attention for himself. But Call Steps received a remarkably quiet reception; the only notices I'm aware of are a short, impressionistic piece by Ben Friedlander that appeared in Notus, & a longer take by Stephen Ellis in Poetics Briefs. (If anyone is aware of others, I'd appreciate hearing about them.) His work was excluded from both the Hoover & Weinberger anthologies; thankfully there is a good selection in the Messerli (including the sequence "Heredom" Ron was writing about).

To subsume Irby's work as "carrying forward the Olsonian project" as Ron did is to pigeonhole it & to give short shrift to its scope. I can't help but think Ken was one of the casualties of the late 70's/early 80's poetry wars; his work had some things in common w/ the emerging Language poetry & he himself read it with interest, but never fell in step w/ the 'movement.' Poems appeared in an early issue of Barry Watten's magazine, This, & Lyn Hejinian published Archipelago in the Tuumba series. But as the lines became more fiercely drawn, people like Irby & Ron Johnson started to fade from sight in that milieu. I'm really not in a position to know how much that had to do with Ken & how much had to do with the literary politics of that time & am curious how others view this.

We are left now with Call Steps as the most recent, readily available book which collects work only through 1979!!!! That leaves over 15 years of writing out of circulation. As Paul Naylor noted, Lee Chapman has been publishing recent work in First Intensity. Some poems also appeared in that a few years ago. A chapbook of 11 poems was letterpress printed at Naropa in 1994, Antiphonal And Fall To Fall in an edition of 200 & has never been distributed. If anyone is interested, I have the address & phone number (as of last fall) of Patrick Tillery who printed it, and Ken himself may still have some copies. BTW, although the Tansy Catalpa is long gone (& a candidate for a Sun & Moon classic?), John Moritz of Tansy was closing the press & advertising copies of the 2nd edition of To Max Douglas a year or two ago, so they may still be around somewhere.

There are many writers today who consider Irby one of the important (& most neglected!) poets of his generation. His engagement with the long line is one of the more interesting & unique today. Where are the critics & publishers?

I'll close this with a poem from Antiphonal And Fall To Fall:

Would you take the diaphany of ivory and of brightness to be behind the name,
and power,
and carry into the portraying and then into the writing by the way the ear
itches from the air
the elephant of interior grace and strength or the bear of insistent nub just
by the style itself and not by any subject of depiction
an elegy of cradle song for the mother, and that for the nations and for
history, and for the full orchestra
an extended fantasy in meditation for the father, solo, and of the touch
or would that be reversed, or would there be the elephant and bear of crossed
arms to wonder at
hanging not in what is made but in its air, swinging

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322. **Judy Roitman**

Re: Onward: Contemporary Poetry & Poetics

Thu 11 Jul 1996

Judy--

*I'd like to hear more abt the Abrams book. Terence McKenna's an interesting
nut dealing a bit with similar issues. How, exactly, does "the alphabet
distort perception"*

David Abram is coming from a magician's/shaman's as well as a phenomenologist's (sp? my spell-checker broke) perspective, so he sees intimate connections (complex and not reductive, but essential, connections) among language, meaning, the body, the world. He sees the alphabet as breaking that connection, forcing the mind away from body sensations/ground of experience, and into an abstract realm in which human constructs mediate perception rather than perception creating human constructs. Learning how to read essentially changes the nature of consciousness. Having a dyslexic son, I'm not so sure that he isn't right.

He somewhat exempts the Hebrew alphabet from his general condemnation, because it is still grounded in pictures -- aleph is an ox (do I remember the icon correctly?) etc. and he has a long eloquent section towards the end of his book on some of classical mystical uses of the Hebrew alphabet.

He does not claim total originality for these views, and acknowledges his sources. Terrence McKenna may be one of these. And I am leaving out in this discussion his real motivation, which is to provide a deep philosophical justification for radical ecology. I think it's fair to say that in his view it's a short step

from the alphabet to the shopping mall. Having a dyslexic son, I'm somewhat skeptical.

It was a conversation with David that triggered a major shift in my own work, for which I am most grateful. "Interesting nut" yeah, well, not a bad thing to be.

----- Judy Roitman
| "Glad to have Math, University of Kansas | these copies of things
Lawrence, KS 66045 | after a while." [REDACTED]
Larry Eigner, 1927-1996

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323. **Christina Fairbank Chirot**

re Irby reviews

Thu 11 Jul 1996

Thanks to Charles Smith for his excellent message re Ken Irby's work. A review of Call Steps by Edward Schelb appeared in Sulfur 36, and Schelb quotes from Irby's comments on Lansing in the Talisman Lansing issue just out.

To Max Douglas is available at Woodland Pattern Book Center here in Milwaukee.

Here is their address and phone:

720 East Locust Street

Milwaukee, WI. 53212

[REDACTED]

I'd highly recommend the book--3 long poems--one of which, "Delius" has as theme music.

LISTEN--

dave baptiste chirot

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324. **Charles Smith**

Re: white rose

Thu 11 Jul 1996

Maria,

Yes, the film about Jay deFeo's "White Rose" was done by Bruce Conner. I got to see it in 1990 when Bruce showed it in conjunction w/ an exhibition at the Natsoulas Gallery in Davis documenting the art & activities surrounding the 6

Gallery. That exhibit followed on the heels of another one documenting the King Ubu Gallery, run by Robert Duncan, Jess & Harry Jacobus, which had earlier occupied the same space. Exhibition catalogues from both shows were issued & are probably still available from:

Natsoulas Gallery
132 E Street
Davis, CA 95616



Looking forward to seeing the Beat show when it comes out here.

all best,
charles

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325. **Jordan Davis**

The High Points

Thu 11 Jul 1996

To the keeper of the tone--please back up.
As one who has been hit by a broom,
I would ask the language not to explain itself
But <http://www.pma.com>
To adjust the valves, what about you?
In world overlap, get calm
And consider
That's the way, or how bout

Rod--what are the conditions on that use? Terms of rental? (Or, how to get closer, to be more [perpetually] useful?) J

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326. **Hank Lazer**

Re: Aldon, Hayden, "American Journal"

Thu 11 Jul 1996

Aldon wrote:

--Hank: whenever you feel you have the time, I'd be interested in hearing more of your take on "American Journal" -- That's a poem I've never been able to enjoy, and I'd like to hear from somebody who has worked with it more than I have -- I talked with Hayden any number of times about the poem, but it seemed a stretch to me -- I always thought it was the occasional poem he felt he had to write as Poetry Consultant -- but I suspect there's more to it than that --

Aldon, and anyone else who's interested:

Thanks for alerting me to the fact that the poem was an occasional composition. I was unaware. I had approached "American Journal" as a slightly different take on Hayden's universalism. What interests me in "AJ" is the sci fi construction that Hayden gives it (similar to the various agent-observers in Doris Lessing's *_Canopus in Argos_* series). Hayden begins, "here among them the americans this baffling/ multi people." For me, Hayden's position as alien must involve some self-criticism and some degree of self-mockery. He says that his task is to "disguise myself in order to study them unobserved/ in their varied pigmentations." So, Hayden's distance from "them" (cf. Oppen in "Of Being Numerous"?) becomes exaggerated in "AJ," and for me asks for some re-thinking of his strategies in other poems, essays, and interviews to achieve a similar position outside the conflicts and identities that both trouble and exalt him. In "AJ" he calls "america as much a problem in metaphysics as/ it is a nation." And I remain intrigued by Hayden's use of a conversational mode (and spacing) in the poem. Did he ever tell you, Aldon, why he put the poem on the page that way? I'd be interested. Back to the poem--I'm also struck by the way that sensuality in "AJ" (as in many of Hayden's other poems) constitutes a confusion and a disturbance. In this poem, he does begin to give in:

confess i am curiously drawn unmentionable to
the americans doubt i could exist among them for
long however psychic demands far too severe
much violence much that repels i am attracted
none the less their variousness their ingenuity
their elan vital and that some thing essence
quiddity i cannot penetrate or name

For me, this poem, by the extremism of its sci fi plot, brings out tensions (of identity and repulsion) that are present throughout the earlier poems (such as "The Whipping"). Perhaps on its own, not a poem worth lots of attention, but as a last poem, of interest?

Hank

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327. **Carnography**

Critics *vs.* poets? What I miss here are criticisms of poetic technique.

Thu 11 Jul 1996

1. (Uttered in a nasal, pestering monotone):

Were Pound and Eliot poets or critics? What about Mathew Arnold?

level, "free" and "formalist" poetry do not strike me as very different. The distinction seems an impediment, a cliché.

%%

3.

I keep looking for new essays on that adequately address poetic construction. I found *_In The American Tree_* quite useful, and I'm very fond of *_Content's Dream_*. But I can't help noticing that there are levels of prosodic technique (in Creeley, for example) that Bernstein and Silliman seem to have learned from themselves but do not address in these two important books. I'm not saying that there has been a critical failure here: Silliman and Bernstein have done what what they intended admirably. I'm only saying that I'd like to address the musical aspect of Creeley's writing (or Irby's, for that matter) as well as questions of voice or of readerly expectations.

I find it unsatisfying to hear that Irby has an exquisite ear and then to hear no more on that exquisite subject.

The virtue of ancient modernist New Criticism was that it tried to study the poem like a kind of layered cadaver--like a cadaver that minute investigation could bring to life. What I miss in UB Poetics are posts that investigate poetic language on a technical level. Too often, our language seems to slide over the corpse without engaging it.

I'm also interested in how poets here think **as** they write, in what processes they employ and in what decisions they make.

Most of my own compositional decisions have to do with:

*refining a progression of images, of disjunct evocations (jarring formulations), or of surprises (I hope)(and yes, I do know that this is partially decon at work);

*arcane, perhaps medieval formal processes (more on those later, if anyone is interested) that mostly derive from musical composition and early training in prosody (I think in terms of scansion, etc);

*the relationship between the sound and tone of a poem.

(I hesitate to get into this in greater depth because I'm not certain that others share my interests, and because describing my own work seems conspicuously narcissistic when nobody else is committing the same shoe-gazing sin.)

Does anyone else here want to get down into the burial site and discuss the texture of poetry? I'd love to know how the rest of you read and write.

All the best,

Rob Hardin

<http://www.interport.net/~sccrypt>

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328. **Jordan Davis**
oh

Thu 11 Jul 1996

so then as off
a thing as we is
how--
as a co-op board would
go to meat
to me
to me
and there be a good

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329. **Carnography**
Re: maria/&performance

Thu 11 Jul 1996

Emily:

Rob Hardin--ok, one last time, because I couldn't tell if you'd read my response to Eryque before you wrote your response to him

There is often a delay in receiving posts. I'd written my response hours before both of our responses were forwarded to me by UB Poetics.

*--*nowhere* in my post did I say "white male." Nowhere! When I say "white-membered," and you assume white male, that's problematic (unless you thought that "member" was used in the euphemistic anatomical sense).*

You've caught me on that one. My apologies, member. I stand corrected.

(However, your racial classification is no less suspect than the gender classification that I wrongly attributed to you, honk honk.)

To read it as male when it isn't specified that way is not to read it, but to have a knee-jerk reaction (assuming I'd "bash" white males) or to be wildly male-centric.

However, you haven't caught anyone here. A contextual mistake does not imply a sexist motive. What I read was the context of arguments I'd heard before,

arguments in which the word "male" was used instead of member. As I said above, that was my mistake. However, your conclusions about me partake of what you would protest.

Just as it would be absurd for me to insist that you secretly "meant" male in your post, so it is equally absurd of you to posit motives and emotional twitches that are not evident in my response. If I'm going to be wildly "male-centric," you'll need to lend me your bongos.

Also: saying that I'm "wildly male-centric" is as sexist as it would be for me to say that you were hysterical.

| *on that sandwich? & please, no "look ma, I'm marginalized!" contests, ok?*

On the contrary: it was you who raised the subject of marginalization. Enryque fleshed it out and initiated the contest with his complaint of a lack of space for marginalized people. I merely responded by pointing out that, by his definition, I am marginalized, yet I find no evidence of the racial/economic suppression of marginalized groups on UB Poetics. Being vocal here isn't a question of privilege (unless one addresses the economic considerations involved in being on the internet (\$400 for a passable computer, \$85 for a modem, and \$25 per month for a SLIP account.). It is a question of whether or not people have the courage to speak when they must and the self-control to restrain themselves when they shouldn't. (In their terms, not mine.)

| *"I myself am a newcomer who doesn't take said colonization for granted" reflects more on you (not a value judgment, there) than on whether or not there's "colonization."*

Enryque's generalization about cultural colonization impacted on all "marginalized" newcomers. I myself am a "marginalized" newcomer to whom the generalization does not apply. Therefore it is the generalization that is reductive and not my own example of its inconsistency.

By the way: suggesting that I reveal more about myself than about you reveals more about you than it does about me, and I hope you will write back to say that my statement about your statement reveals more about my last statement than it does about your statement before that one, and so on and so forth, ad infinitum and stir vigorously, whap that Sackbutt and ring around the Rosicrucian.

(Ignore that outburst, E. I just felt like doing that.)

And by the bye (and I do mean bye (but not really)): My response to Enryque and to you was mostly a joke! I don't recall saying anything seriously derogatory about you, your argument or anything else. I even said I presumed your intentions were good. (And just when I'd concluded that humor was the best way to dispel the tension in a debate.)

All the best,

Rob Hardin

<http://www.interport.net/~scrypt>

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330. **Charles Alexander**

Re: critics vs. poets (tag team round three)

Thu 11 Jul 1996

Hey Mark,

*Is Charles Bernstein's *Artifice of Absorption* poetry, lit crit, crit theory, or what?*

Burt

Yes

(oh but i'm not mark)

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331. **George Bowering**

Re: critics vs. poets (tag team round three)

Thu 11 Jul 1996

Hey Mark,

*Is Charles Bernstein's *Artifice of Absorption* poetry, lit crit, crit theory, or what?*

Burt

Yes

(oh but i'm not mark)

[hell, neither am I!]

.....

"The Moose stood in the yard."

--Daniel Pinkwater

George Bowering.

2499 West 37th Ave.,

Vancouver, B.C.,

Canada V6M 1P4

fax: [REDACTED]
e-mail: [REDACTED]

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332. **Burt Kimmelman**
Re: critics vs. poets (tag team round three)
Thu 11 Jul 1996

Hey Mark,

Is Charles Bernstein's *Artifice of Absorption* poetry, lit crit, crit theory, or what?

Burt

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333. **Jordan Davis**
trouble in river
Thu 11 Jul 1996

that's the word.. debate!

which reminds me of a poem a ninth grader wrote:

Mickey Mouse turned 60 today.
He still looks as young as 60 years ago.
He's still the handsomest
mouse in show biz.
If only people could age
as well as him.
I bet he didn't have to
write while holding
his breath.

--Sarah Blonstein, School for the Physical City

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334. **filch**
satire #2
Thu 11 Jul 1996

```
<html><head><title>poets vs. critics</title><base  
href="http://www.chronotope.com/epcane/"></head><body bgcolor="#ffffff"  
link="#000000" alink="#000000" vlink="#000000"><blockquote><p>Stud-  
ies have  
shown the incidence of peeing in pools to be larger,<br>by far, among
```

members of the [adult male](/artifice/dolt.html) population.

Subsequent [studies](/ee/) will show whether this figure can be broken down by [race](/limited/space.html), socioeconomic [status](/simply/stated.html), and/or sexual [orientation](/cundarah/).

If you would be interested in participating in such a study please [contact me](mailto:██████) at your earliest convenience.

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335. **Eliza McGrand- CVA Guest**

word, thing narrative.

Thu 11 Jul 1996

The Dreary Familiar, That Story

... reading *_Where I Stopped_*, another of them

Odysseus came back from his war, tells the stories to *_Poetry_*, to Namebrand Review. His father dies. They print that because it's important -- his father, the dying, the ironic glances and love each buries.

We never came back. We never went there.

War came when we were eleven and the uncle stuck his fingers in our Down There, when our father stopped kissing us and we stopped wanting him to. When we weren't hidden in childhood but were called out by hate spewed from cars. It came in the dorm room where we lay, still saying no as he rolled away the rock that held down our assurance.

War came and it will never leave and we will live in this everyday of it without the luxury of sitting peacefully under an olive tree and telling young men in words printed in That Significant Review because they don't signify, because the space after Troy allows the reflection of the young mens' jealousy, hope of glory and the father dying.

We will tell it, as we tell it, over and over, in the knives and bruises and wrenching betrayals of the eternally present story.

EMC

@copyright EMC, 1996

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336. **Gabrielle Welford**

ANNC: Literature resource list and publication opportunity (fwd)

Thu 11 Jul 1996

Thought this might be an opportunity for some to get word out. gab.

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

New Resource Listing for Computer-Supported Writing About Literature

You're invited to contribute to a collaborative resource list for the Epiphany Project, an Annenberg/CPB project developing resources for educators. If we use sites or sources you suggest first, you will be credited as a contributor both in the project publication, *A Field Guide to 21st Century Writing*, and on the Epiphany Project's Web site.

Please send me a list of your favorite resources on Computer-Supported Writing About Literature. And don't hesitate to include your own, your students', and your colleagues' work.

= E-mail your suggestions to me privately, Donna Reiss <[REDACTED]>, by July 23 (I'm the collector of resources for this topic and will assemble and forward them to Judy Williamson, project administrator)

= Give appropriate data about the source (for example, full bibliography info about a book or article or film) and of course the URL if it's a web site, the subscription info if it's a listserv.

= Include a sentence or two annotation just to let us know why the source is notable.

= Don't forget to include info about yourself: your name and school as you want them listed; what you do/teach/or whatever; your e-mail address; if appropriate, your own home page address.

= Repost this invitation to other lists and individuals that you think would be able to offer similar resource listings.

So what's Epiphany, anyway? See their sites through the home page:

<http://mason2.gmu.edu/~jwillia9/epiphany.html>

Or see what they did at their summer institute in Richmond:

<http://www.vcu.edu/hasweb/eng/junebug/index.html>

Looking forward to your suggestions-- Donna

=====

===== Donna Reiss, Department of English, Tidewater Community College-Virginia Beach 1700 College Crescent, Virginia Beach, VA 23456 Phone: [REDACTED] Fax: [REDACTED] Internet: [REDACTED] VCCS-mail: [REDACTED] WWW Home Page: <http://www.infi.net/tcc/tcresourc/faculty/dreiss/dreiss.html>

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337. **Poetics List**

To a Captious Critic (fwd)

Thu 11 Jul 1996

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

Date: Thu, 11 Jul 1996 12:57:20 -0400 (EDT)

From: Alan Golding <[REDACTED]>

To: Poetics List <[REDACTED]>, "Aldon L. Nielsen" <[REDACTED]>

Subject: To a Captious Critic

Associate Professor of English, U. of Louisville

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

Aldon--I'm posting this to the list and backchannel to you 'cause the list has been rejecting my messages lately, for reasons not entirely (or even slightly) clear to me.

Anyway: "To a Captious Critic" is by Paul Laurence Dunbar, right? Though at first I'd mixed it up in my head with Cullen's "To Certain Critics"--worth a second look in the context of the recent conversation on the list around the race / universalism / sociology / etc. nexus, as Cullen's defense of his own aspirations to universalism (which I've always taken to be ambivalent ones). I'm guessing Cullen was a pretty important poet for Hayden, though you'd know better than I.

Happy moving, if such is possible.

All best,

Alan

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338. **Jordan Davis**

summer reruns (amphetamine use of the gods...)

Fri 12 Jul 1996

or aporia use

or asymptote use

well, or the calculus, the consciousness of limits is
either, again, having a death waiting for us someplace
or finding what's sufficient of which I'm suspicious
and often delighted, yes. but the recurring issue of
speed

which everybody seems to think was a boring movie
but I admired its structure at least as much as
I admired the structure of back to the future i, ii, iii
Keanu playing motionless for once was nice

rallies me and not because I hate futurism
rushing around crazily bores and flatters
and being all you can be has always sent me
to the refrigerator for halftime

so acknowledging "cognitive limits" is a
fairly beautiful part of talking to people
and I have no need to take issue with
Bruce or Watten except that I miss that

necessary vulnerability I admire their
"speed" I worry where they're going so
fast though and what they step on
or in on their way now O'Hara in "easter"

or "hatred" although the first articulates
his position as alcoholic and the second
steals ruthlessly from Rimbaud and so
puts him way back on the poursuivre meter

is a model of speed with isolable frames
unlike the blurry stills we get from
more recent demons which may mean that
he wasn't going as fast I think it means

he had better form at any rate
I'd like to get out from under
this thinking of myself, ourselves
as in the parameters of the recent past

which has stridently claimed I think
to be patrolling the borders of sense
and nonsense when they are pace Larry
more like barrier islands

usually where the maps say but
not necessarily so I'm with that
wet meaning, Rod, but I wish for
a superhuman ordinary life

you know like the greeks said they had
it may have just been grade inflation
to keep the kids out of the Trojan war
but that constant praise made itself known

gratefully,
Jordan

(previously posted elsewhere)
(we all say the same things over and over anyway)
(goin' mahayana on your ass)
(tarantino = gingrich)

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339. **Aldon L. Nielsen**
Re: The Clarify Brothers

Fri 12 Jul 1996

Hank -- "American Journal" was not, in the usual sense, an occasional poem --
What I meant was that i had always read it as the occasional poem he felt called
upon to write as our (for two years anyway) sort of national poet -- meredith
wrote a (much shorter) kind of national poem during his time in the office --
and thanks for your comments on the poem -- will give it a further look with
that in mind

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340. **Aldon L. Nielsen**
Re: Ur Irby and others

Fri 12 Jul 1996

Michael -- Now that's useful information -- With all my migrating northward
these past years I've never had the chance to use the UCSD collection, and am
now removing to another state -- will get in contact with Special Collections
about possible return visit --

On Irby -- There was a special Irby issue of, I think it was, Credences many
years ago that is well worth digging out and looking at again --

Ron -- If you can narrow down your Monthly Review memories to at least a year
or two, I will look for those pieces before I leave town and try to xerox them for

the both of us -- On the subject of Texas -- When I introduced Lorenzo Thomas at Orono I repeated something a friend of his had told him when Lorenzo decided to make the move to Houston permanent -- the friend told him: "You won't be a southern poet, you'll be a forgotten poet."

I am told, though, that there will be a book of Lorenzo Thomas poems in Germnay later this year --

Filch -- THAT ONE had me rolling on the floor with laughter -- I needed that --
AND NOW EVERYBODY --

Sterling Brown used to recite this as his example of a universal poem:

I
have
a
belly
ache

of course, this did not prevent critics from accusing him of simply belly-aching

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341. **Aldon L. Nielsen**

hidden Hayden

Fri 12 Jul 1996

lest I leave everybody even more confused, let me add that Robert Hayden's poem was occasional on at least one accasion -- It was read as the Phi Beta Kappa poem at the University of Michigan in 1976. The cover of the first edition of *American Journal*, (Effendi Press 1978) is well worth looking at -- a sort of space collage with Hayden looking on --

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342. **Christina Fairbank Chirot**

Ken Irby

Fri 12 Jul 1996

Besides the credences Irby issue Aldon Nielsen pointed out on this list, Vort #3 Summer 1973 is an Irby/Bromige issue--has an excellent interview and the poem 'Jesus" later collected in To Max Douglas, as well as essays and reviews--including one on To Max Douglas by Don Byrd. An interview with Irby is also in Lee Bartlett's Talking Poetry (New Mexico Press, 1987). SPD still has Orexis--for \$4.50, as well as Call Steps. Big Deal and Truck published Irby often if you have access to them and arelooking.

I woke up hearing Delius
wondering why I'd forgotten
making the walk to paradise
("Delius")

dave baptiste chirot

PS: thanks to Charles Smith for his comments, suggestions on finding Irby texts--Charles mentioned Ronald Johnson--new Chicago Review has interview, poetry, essays on Johnson--Vort had interview and comments (can't recall the issue number--I think from '74) well worth checking out in conjunction with Chicago review issue-- as Ark in its entirety available now from Guy Blaisdell's Living Batch Books. Johnson's Radi Os--from Sand Dollar--seems to have resurfaced in some places--"get it while you can"--

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343. **Kevin Killian**

Re: white rose

Fri 12 Jul 1996

Hello everyone, it's Kevin Killian. Maria, your post (and the post of Charles Smith) about Jay de Feo inspired me to tell y'all a little bit about my new play. When the Beat Culture show comes to SF, I hope all of you who are in town for the opening can come to see my play, "Wet Paint" which Bill Berkson has asked me to stage at the SF Art Institute. This play will be the life of Jay De Feo.

Yes, I have rounded up an all-star cast to act out the different parts. Phoebe Gloeckner will have the main part, Jay De Feo, a feminist artist working in the heyday of the North Beach beat bohemia. Norma Cole will be playing Kay De Feo, her unruly twin sister, who spoils Jay's life by sneaking into her studio at night and adding yet more paint to her "Rose" picture. Leslie Scalapino and Jonathan Hammer will be playing representatives of Hallmark Cards, who have commissioned "The Rose" as a tiny little cameo piece. They like everyone else are annoyed at how large it's getting, and Jay really has no explanation. Rex Ray will be Bruce Conner. Tosh Berman, you will be glad to know that your father, Wallace Berman, will be portrayed on stage too. They were all part of the scene for sure. Let's see what else happened. I called up Michael McClure and asked him to play himself as a young man. He demurred, gee, I wonder why! He said he was too overbooked, but sympathized with my dilemma--who on the current scene is handsome, studly, sexy enough to play the young Michael McClure? (Suggestions, please). I thought it would be a great coup de theatre, all the characters would be standing around saying things like, "Hey, what's Michael McClure been up to lately?" and then he (the real Michael) would come

out in those leather pants he invented. But alas, someone else will have to fill those well-worn leathers.

I'm especially gald to announce that Rebecca Solnit will be acting in my play. I hope you all know Solnit's book "Secret Exhibition: Six California Artists of the Cold War," which is really a great book about De Feo, Jess, Conner, W. Berman, George Herms and Wally Hedrick. She will be playing Frida Kahlo, and Cliff Hengst will "be" Diego Rivera. Margaret Crane will be Jay's psychiatrist, unconvinced that she really has a twin sister who is ruining her life. Scott Hewicker will play Tuesday Weld, one of the outlaw Hollywood crowd who made North Beach a kind of Hollywood North in the late 1950s, and D-L Alvarez will be the very young Janis Joplin, drawn to "The Rose" as a kind of avatar of meaning of her own confused life. There will be plenty of other parts too, so come on everybody, bring your bongos and your collage vision of California junk/funk assemblage and buy a ticket today, or be in it! Needless to say this will be yet another benefit for Small Press Traffic! Thanks!

Kevin K.

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344. **Christina Fairbank Chirot**

Ken Irby

Fri 12 Jul 1996

Note: Glitch, not Big Deal (of ones I've seen) published Irby (collected in Oresis.) Bezoar also. Truck also published Enslin. Niedecker special issue #16 well worth a search.

dave baptiste chirot

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345. **Kevin Killian**

Re: e-mail politics

Fri 12 Jul 1996

At 4:00 PM 12/31/69, william marsh wrote:

distinctions between so-called "poetic" and "critical" writings, as you point out, have been effectively eradicated, most profoundly by those poet/theorists (Susan Howe, Charles Bernstein, among several others) whose work is very much concerned with blurring the disinction.

I think we should pause here and give tribute to those who promoted this blurring as a feminist project, particularly the editors/associate editors/contributing

editors of _HOW(ever)_. Such as Kathleen Fraser, Bev Dahlen, Rachel Blau DuPlessis, Frances Jaffer, Susan Gevirtz, Carolyn Burke, and Chris Tysh.

Dodie Bellamy

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346. **hnry**

Re: Critics *vs.* poets? What I miss here are criticisms of poetic technique.

Fri 12 Jul 1996

On Thu, 11 Jul 1996 17:39:47 -0400 Carnography said:

>1. (Uttered in a nasal, pestering monotone):

>

>Were Pound and Eliot poets or critics? What about Mathew Arnold?

>

>Was Sir Walter Raleigh an explorer or a writer?

>

>Is Charles Bernstein an *ip-ap-grrr-whing* or a critic?

>

>What was like Campion, who wrote treatises on prosody?

>What were Peacock and Shelley, who wrote long essays on poetics?

>

>(Since many studious poets have written critical essays, and

>some do so regularly, the dichotomy between critic and poet

>strikes me as problematic.)

There are lots of cases of poet-critics, and every poet is a critic and probably every good critic is something of a poet; but maybe what Mark was getting at is the clashes in the arena when the center of the one activity tangles with the other.

When the informed and weaponed reader-critic becomes the arbiter of taste & the explainer of how who done what. Impossible not to cross those lines.

>

>Does anyone else here want to get down into the burial site

>and discuss the texture of poetry? I'd love to know how the

>rest of you read and write.

Curiosity killed the carp. You're delving into two taboo areas: "secrets of the craft", and "inspiration". I'm not criticizing, just commenting. - Henry Gould

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347. **k.a. hehir**
the loveliest of all
Fri 12 Jul 1996

dreamy
black unicorn
 vision
the god of cult
 studs
lurking lurking
nocturnal
eloquence

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348. **k.a. hehir**
Pe: rformance
Fri 12 Jul 1996

hello all,

i've been away for a spell and have just waded through 212 messages, so i have a few short comments.

firstly- the second of the londonOnt poetry series takes place this monday the 15, same place and time as before - carolyn guertin, mark tovey, mike gallay, theresa smalec, kyla brown and curt moeller. now i realise that most(well, practically all) of you can't make it but if i may be allowed to use this announcement to respond to a thread. the success of the first of the series three weeks ago was due to the diversity of voices heard. at least 40 years seperated tthe some of the 8ight readers. the audience reflected the program - from graduate to high school- and had a lot of fun. how is success measured? well, 70 people sat for almost three hours with a 30 min break, drank beer and cider, clapped, laughed, were offended and asked when the next one was.

the combination of townies and university types in the crowd and ont the boards leads me to make a comment about the poet/critic melee. most poets started writing before they knew what poesis was or realised that one could make a living as a literary coroner. one young poet commented to me that the poets from the university had lost all sense of wonderment and used allusion clinically rather than as an homage. i didn't really know what to say. 10 years ago when i was eighteen i wrote this cinquain:

scholars
bumbling down corridors

bu bling down
the poets ha e set t
salvation by equation
black laughs

i'm not sure how far i've come now that i pay money to talk about rimbaud in a classroom.

sorry, getting rambly on you and the text is starting to do it's own thing. but i too often think that sometimes when the critics go out to play the poets can only come along if the play net. well at least you can have a smoke when the play is at the other end.

take care,
kevin

"i won't bore you with quotation"
David Bromige

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349. **k.a. hehir**

Pe :rformance

Fri 12 Jul 1996

sorry the cinquain got juiced,
scholars
bumbling down corridors
the poets have set traps
no salvation by equation
black laughs

must go poster!
kevin

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350. **Larry Price**

Onward

Fri 12 Jul 1996

Dear Jordan, Dean, and Henry:

My response will be direct in some cases, glancing in others. Some of this repeats another context, for which I apologize, but the things here are the points to which my thought runs concerning this, for me, largely the issue of the status of poetic language.

As much, Dean, as I'm intrigued by your enjambment of Wittgenstein and Olson, I don't think I'd ever be satisfied with a definition of meaning that accounts for it strictly in terms of language (nor for that matter, strictly in terms outside of it). And I think it was that same discomfort that elicited Wittgenstein's fly-bottle amulet. Which is to say, I've never been comfortable with that formula, Meaning is Use. It seems to shine its light only on the feet, finding there footprints leading back up the wall they've just traversed. What I intend to say is: as a term, "use" can only be a partial definition, albeit an important part. And it's true that it is "in" language, but that still leaves me in the fly-bottle. Here I agree with Elena Shvarts and Henry to this extent: I write to engender what isn't. To write what I already know, my use/age, is simply to retrace the hermeneutical (or equipmental) ring already implied in my terms and which those terms determine.

But, Henry, that hardly points to context as a set of barnacles to be mastered. As you yourself say, the writer is written. Here again, Olson with his conic sections registers the potential of limits - outside those limits. It's that intersection, call it elision of registers, that gives us most powerfully the image of what stands beside those limits.

First of all, Henry, you seem to have posed various terms - language and poetry most notably - AGAINST time. Which puzzles me, assuming as I do that temporality fundamentally constitutes all the threads of and through which we are written. And (what I really want to say) just as THEY are constitutive of IT. So then the call forward, the heuristic limning I wrote of yesterday that thinking is, recalls to me Tony Green's careful attention some weeks ago to the "never more than" in Creeley's formula. Nonetheless, I think the answer to the NO NEW FORMS swamp is to reverse it: that is, I think form can actually precede and illuminate the context and/or content, and in that becomes new form (Olson's intersections). But, Henry, that hardly constitutes "mastery." For example, I've been trying to come to an adequate reading of Rod Smith's IN MEMORY OF MY THEORIES - a great book which I unreservedly recommend - not because I particularly like Mr. Smith but because I particularly like this book. One of the things I'm trying to understand is how form functions in it. The book is all disjunction and yet the line holds, remarkably tensile over and across such displacement of registers. Lexical materials come from everywhere and despite my, the reader's, lack of specificity as to what or how, the contexts come as well. That is, the world is pulled up, across, into the form, such that the form is continuant AND new, both in its discovery to me and in my availability to it.

And in thinking of availability, the "at home" registration of the fundamental research thinking's call forward delivers, two more things occur to me:

First, Santiago Ramon y Cajal's "neuron doctrine" - that nerve cells communicate with others through contiguity rather than continuity - and all the attendant neural machinery: receptors, adjustors, effectors, transduction, afference, and my personal favorite, the Sodium-Potassium Pump (as Rod said, Duchamp is useful in this context), moving as it does Na⁺ outward and K⁺ inward against their concentration gradients, thus maintaining neural availability by setting the "membrane potential."

Second: Contingency, which as a term, has three implications:

1. The past is NOT the single, determining condition of the present. The past could have been otherwise.
2. The present leaves the past behind in a state of indeterminateness (and incompleteness). Thus, the present stands alone in its temporality, as it were, awaiting our operations.

and

3. The present AND the future are to be determined in the contingent present.

Thus Emerson: "No facts are to me sacred; none are profane; I simply experiment, an endless seeker, with no Past at my back."

So that, if we conjoin the neuron doctrine and its string

place >> stimulus >> receptor >> adjustor >> effector >> history

with that three-headed dog of contingency, call me a mystifier hopelessly enamored of water, but it begins to look like a poetics and a politics in which poetic language is more than a limit case of the larger set, Language, accounting for use, prospective, but at the same time thoroughly implicated in all the strains of its temporality.

Sorry to have gone on at such length and I'm sure with too many unresolved conflicts. Still, as writers (and I suppose this is my real argument with you, Henry), I think it's important to determine the point at which the work is effective: Is it effective in and of (as well for) itself AT the point at which the text is enacted? Or must it await canonization. Obviously from the above, I think that poetic language IS adequate in and of itself and is more than decorative arrangements for the corridors of time.

Baldly: I live here.

lp

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351. **henry**
Re: Onward
Fri 12 Jul 1996

On Fri, 12 Jul 1996 10:04:12 -0400 Larry Price said:

>

>But, Henry, that hardly points to context as a set of barnacles to be
>mastered. As you yourself say, the writer is written. Here again, Olson with
I didn't say the context (barnacles) was to be mastered. I said it attaches itself
willy-nilly to the choices the writer makes. I was trying to counterbalance Rod's
"eastern" (and currently popular?) emphasis on the complete multivalence of
meaning, the supremacy of context.

*First of all, Henry, you seem to have posed various terms - language and
poetry most notably - AGAINST time. Which puzzles me, assuming as I do that
temporality fundamentally constitutes all the threads of and through which we
are written. And (what I really want to say) just as THEY are constitutive of*

My point was that language, and perhaps poetry-making in particular, breaks
through to a deeper strata of time, deeper than the ordinary "metronome
tapeworm" sense of time. The pleroma, the playground, the fulness of time.
Ripeness is all.

>

>Sorry to have gone on at such length and I'm sure with too many unresolved
>conflicts. Still, as writers (and I suppose this is my real argument with
>you, Henry), I think it's important to determine the point at which the work
>is effective: Is it effective in and of (as well for) itself AT the point at
>which the text is enacted? Or must it await canonization. Obviously from the

I can't understand why my very first post on this question, in which I remarked
a fascination on my part with artworks that "last", gets me fingered as some
kind of Vendlerian canonizer. Why do we immediately jump into the academic
"critical" framework? Do we think critics are SO powerful? I'm talking about
the lastingness which gets Shakespeare played by mechanics in smalltown ho-
tels in Connecticut in the 19th century, or gets the Bible read, or gets Willa
Cather read in spite of all the critics. About works that transcend the popular/
elite dichotomy (the Blues is probably America's most powerful, intricate, pro-
found, and at the same time popular poetry). Your dichotomy about the effec-
tiveness of a work is a false one. Of course the work is effective in an of itself in
its own time - my point was that some works (and this doesn't make them "bet-
ter" - just strong) live beyond the present. - Henry Gould

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352. **henry**

Re: barnacle a (onward)

Fri 12 Jul 1996

On Fri, 12 Jul 1996 11:45:13 -0500 Jordan Davis said:

>It's not a fair assumption that fashion is false. You miss a lot that way.

>

>'deeper' 'beyond the present' 'profound' -- I want to say I know what you mean.

>

>I think though we had different playgrounds. I too read Willa Cather, but

>it's not that mysterious to me why I want to (or Sarah Orne Jewett, or

>Milton, or T.S. Eliot, or Langston Hughes, or Turgenev). Is affection

>mysterious? Is dancing? Is mystery mysterious? Nope. Is thinking

>mysterious? Thinking is often foggy, but fog is not mysterious.

>

>As they say in the song, 'let's be undecided.'

I agree with you, Jordan. What I said in my last post was that it was a false dichotomy. But I still think that ONE measure of greatness (a middle term between "strong" & "better") is continuing interest & relevance, that lasts beyond the current fashion. The thing about fashion is that it is ONLY current. That's the definition of fashion, I'm not saying it's good or bad. And some academic poets (and I'm not just talking Vendler or APR here) as well as other poets dig themselves in very sophisticated ways into the present - fashion included. (The current fad is: "let's be undecided"). Why does the world read Whitman rather than James Russell Lowell? This seems to be a troubling question, even for fashionable anti-canonizers and trendy outsiders. The ironic thing about the American experience has been that unfashionable truth: "The first shall be last, and the last first." - Henry Gould

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353. **Jordan Davis**

barnacle a (onward)

Fri 12 Jul 1996

It's not a fair assumption that fashion is false. You miss a lot that way.

'deeper' 'beyond the present' 'profound' -- I want to say I know what you mean.

I think though we had different playgrounds. I too read Willa Cather, but it's not that mysterious to me why I want to (or Sarah Orne Jewett, or Milton, or T.S.

Eliot, or Langston Hughes, or Turgenev). Is affection mysterious? Is dancing? Is

mystery mysterious? Nope. Is thinking mysterious? Thinking is often foggy, but fog is not mysterious.

As they say in the song, 'let's be undecided.'

Jordan Davis

██████

46 e 7 no 10

I believe

NYC 10003

Spumoni

\$1.00

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354. **william marsh**

Re: Critics *vs.* poets? What I miss here are criticisms of poetic technique.

Wed 31 Dec 1969

At 05:39 PM 7/11/96 -0400, you wrote:

But in many ways, I don't feel that

>linguistics and semiotics adequately address the texture of a poem

>as it was written by a specific poet who used idiosyncratic compositional

>processes.

My question would be why would we ever expect linguistics and semiotics to "adequately address the texture of a poem"? Linguistics and Semiotics adequately (arguably) address language and meaning, and to the extent that explorations of this type suggest avenues of inquiry when dealing with a particular poem or poetry, they are useful -- in my mind enormously useful -- without necessarily addressing the whole issue of writing. To get to the texture of the poem, we read the poem, right? To get to the texture of theory, read theory.

But what intrigues me about the "open" poetries of this and the last decade is the extent to which they seem, to me at least, to share the interest and perspective of ling/semio studies, so that distinctions of these kinds (poetry vs. criticism/theory, etc) seem pointless. Language arts and language philosophies share the same venue, as much of the work of the last two decades demonstrates (the work not only of "poets" like Howe, Bernstein and Silliman, but also of "critic/theorists" like M. Perloff (Howe, Bernstein and Silliman!)). The way I see it, this suggests a practice in contemporary poetics that goes beyond neat packages like "theoretical poetry" or "poetic theory".

>

>Does anyone else here want to get down into the burial site

>and discuss the texture of poetry? I'd love to know how the

>rest of you read and write.

>

>

How 'bout if we discuss the poetry of texture, which might adequately address the writing of poetry.

Bill Marsh

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355. **Rod Smith**

Re: barnacle a (onward)

Fri 12 Jul 1996

HG wrote:

>The

>current fad is: "let's be undecided"

well, I'm undecided whether this is true. Actually, this isn't that different from the use of "zeitgeist" -- there is no one fashion any more than there's one zeitgeist, eh? Go to a slam or a CK Williams class at Princeton and see abt undecideability, you'll find a bit, but not what it wld mean here. & even on this list what folks wld mean by or agree upon with reference to that term is way up in the air, maybe over the wall in left-center.

One "fad" I'd like to see sucess for is the Philly Borders boycott.

Rod

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356. **Ward Tietz**

Re: Onward

Fri 12 Jul 1996

Larry Price,

I haven't been following the exchange between you and Henry, Dean, Jordan and Rod as much as I probably should have, but a few things came to mind after reading your recent post.

I wonder if some of these issues wouldn't perhaps be better conceptualized as textual phenomena rather than language phenomena, and I would apply that also, I think, to your sense of poetic language, since it seems to me we are still very much in the domain of discursive form.

With Wittgenstein it does certainly appear that his "language" games occur on the level of language, but I think these may be textual as well. If they really occurred on a level of language we should be able to translate them into other non-discursive languages, quantitative or pictorial say, and this it seems we can't quite do. They're too propositional, linear and cumulative.

I think this text / language distinction might carry over to some of your other ideas, and also to Henry's idea of being "against time." Language, it seems to me, is subject to an enormous range of presentational and performative contexts and reformulations in ways that text isn't. Text also has a particular speed to it and with that a certain temporal limit or paradigm. By comparison language has a wider range and can get around some of these limitations, but this capacity is finally quite a lot more, I think, than what text supports.

In general though, I think I agree with you, as long as poetic language doesn't only mean poetic text.

Ward Tietz

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357. **Burt Kimmelman**

Re: Critics *vs.* poets? What I miss here are criticisms of poetic technique.

Fri 12 Jul 1996

okay Bill Marsh,
What DO you exactly mean by texture?
Burt

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358. **Joe Amato**

fyi...

Fri 12 Jul 1996

so what do you folks make of the appended?...

((love to continue on with dodie about how i think the term "middle class" has sucked up what used to be called "working class," but---

i'll be away from my machine, my apt., and my creditors beginning saturday... i know---i can hear (in my egocentric head) many of you already ('WHAT A RELIEF!')...

won't be back till approx. 1 august, hopefully a bit suntanned and mountain-aerated... hope y'all have a nice summer (and winter for you folks down-under!) in the meanwhile... and apologies for any unnecessary mouthiness or presumption on my part of any but good intentions...

all best to *all*,

joe

From [REDACTED] Sun Jun 23 18:47:58 1996
Received: from localhost by world.std.com (5.65c/Spike-2.0)
id AA05055; Sun, 23 Jun 1996 14:47:58 -0400
Date: Sun, 23 Jun 1996 14:47:58 -0400 (EDT)
From: Steve Robinson <[REDACTED]>
To: Steve Robinson <[REDACTED]>
Subject: ON-LINE POETRY WORKSHOP
Message-Id: <[REDACTED]>
Mime-Version: 1.0
Content-Type: TEXT/PLAIN; charset=US-ASCII
Status: RO
X-Status:

MEDIAWORKS is proud to offer an On-Line Poetry Writing Workshop with Hilda Raz!

Hilda is editor of the quarterly literary journal PRAIRIE SCHOONER, poet, critic, and associate professor of English at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln.

This unique On-Line Poetry Writing Workshop will take place over a three week period beginning on July 15. The workshop is for poets interested in reading contemporary poetry, and honing their poetry writing skills. Subjects include the tools of contemporary poetry, the writing process, voice, narrative, non-traditional forms, and collaboration -- with a strong emphasis on YOUR writing.

The workshop will be limited to 12 people, and is being offered for \$125. Each participant will be part of a private mailing list. Everything participants post to the list will be seen only by the other participants, Hilda, and the workshop moderator.

Ideal participants in this workshop should have experience reading and writing contemporary poetry, have taken poetry writing classes at the college or senior high school level, or be adult poets who have experience writing in groups. People with a penchant for rhyming might better study with another poetry group.

IF YOU ARE INTERESTED IN PARTICIPATING IN THIS UNUSUAL POETRY WORKSHOP, PLEASE SEND AN E-MAIL MESSAGE TO:

[REDACTED]

We will contact you within a few hours to discuss the details.

Hilda Raz's books include _What Is Good_ and _The Bone Dish_ and a new manuscript _Divine Honors_. Her poems have been published or

are forthcoming in *Ploughshares*, *The Southern Review*, *Colorado Review*, *Hollins Critic*, *Poems for a Small Planet: Contemporary American Nature Poetry*, *Literature and Medicine*, *Judaism* and elsewhere. She is also a critic and writer of creative nonfiction. Her experience in teaching includes writing workshops at the Bread Loaf Writers Conference, the University of California/Chico, University of Tennessee, City University of New York at Brockport, Florida State University at Tallahassee, the University of Massachusetts-Boston, Hollins College, the University of Denver, the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, and elsewhere.

Since 1987, she has been editor of *PRAIRIE SCHOONER*, the venerable literary quarterly, now entering its 70th year of continuous publication. Contributors include winners of the Pulitzer, Nobel, MacArthur, NEA and other major grants and prizes, and have been Poets Laureate of the United States, as well as beginning and mid-career writers. *PRAIRIE SCHOONER* publishes poetry, fiction, creative nonfiction, and reviews.

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359. **Rod Smith**

Re: Onward

Fri 12 Jul 1996

Ward T. wrote:

- >With Wittgenstein it does certainly appear that his "language" games occur on
- >the level of language, but I think these may be textual as well. If they really
- >occurred on a level of language we should be able to translate them into other
- >non-discursive languages, quantitative or pictorial say, and this it seems we
- >can't quite do. They're too propositional, linear and cumulative.

Not sure abt this, Witt did a lot of work in other areas, mathematics from early on, pictorial: the famous figure ground bunny/duck. He investigated vision & color extensively in *Remarks on Colour* in similar terms to the language-games. & *On Certainty* as well as aspects of the Investigations seems to me to move into areas of perception generally, not strictly "language-games." Any case, my understanding of the term language-games is that it is contextual, i.e. perceptual. Also, I generally don't find Witt "linear" but definitely cumulative.

As Larry sd "I don't think I'd ever be satisfied with a definition of meaning that accounts for it strictly in terms of language (nor for that matter, strictly in terms outside of it)." I think we don't know enough to adequately describe these

processes, which is perhaps why Derrida or cognitive science can seem brilliant at times, & useless at others.

>In general though, I think I agree with you, as long as poetic language doesn't

>only mean poetic text.

yup.

Rod

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360. **Steve Carll**

Re: barnacle a (onward)

Fri 12 Jul 1996

At 11:45 AM 7/12/96 -0500, Jordan Davis wrote:

Is affection

mysterious? Is dancing? Is mystery mysterious? Nope. Is thinking

mysterious? Thinking is often foggy, but fog is not mysterious.

Fog itself may not be mysterious, but fog grants mystery to what it touches, a mystery that may not be dispelled by our knowing what it covers without having to see it. Fog imparts this to thinking, and thinking to what is thought.

Steve Carll



"So I start a revolution from my bed

'Cos you said the brains I had went to my head"

--Oasis

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361. **henry**

Re: Onward

Fri 12 Jul 1996

On Fri, 12 Jul 1996 13:46:06 EDT Ward Tietz said:

>

>I think this text / language distinction might carry over to some of your other
>ideas, and also to Henry's idea of being "against time." Language, it seems to
>me, is subject to an enormous range of presentational and performative contexts

>and reformulations in ways that text isn't. Text also has a particular speed

>to

>it and with that a certain temporal limit or paradigm. By comparison language

>has a wider range and can get around some of these limitations, but this

>capacity is finally quite a lot more, I think, than what text supports.

Is text the dead letter, the poison cure, the marrow in them dead bones? Bones gonna dance too - they come last. Right, Mr. Bones? - Henry Hankovitch conquit

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362. **Gabrielle Welford**

Re: barnacle a (onward)

Fri 12 Jul 1996

On Fri, 12 Jul 1996, Rod Smith wrote:

> One "fad" I'd like to see success for is the Philly Borders boycott.

>

> Rod

>

Yes, and for those so inclined, there are boycotts in many other cities too--and even boycotts you can start yourselves. gab.

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363. **Gabrielle Welford**

text/language

Fri 12 Jul 1996

How can text and language be distinguished? I guess have to take a long look at how the word "language" and "text" can and can't sensibly be used. Otherwise into the foggy dew we go. gab.

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364. **Charles Alexander**

Re: text/language

Fri 12 Jul 1996

How can text and language be distinguished? I guess have to take a long look at how the word "language" and "text" can and can't sensibly be used. Otherwise into the foggy dew we go. gab.

Isn't language much broader? It includes music & other sound-language, visual languages of many kinds, all sorts of symbolic language other than the ones

which use letters & words; & usually text is grounded in those letters & words, although I'd be glad to conceive of text more broadly, too.

Or, for example, dealing with book arts/artists' books, the text of the book would be whatever language-text is presented therein, but the language of the book would have to include all its other parts (visual, structural, sometimes aural, etc.) as well. Books can (they don't always, or do they?) make literature physical.

charles

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365. **maria damon**

Re: white rose

Fri 12 Jul 1996

kk, yr play sounds wonderfully delicious. if it's playing between aug 27-sept 3, i'll look forward to taking it in.

md

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366. **filch**

Re: barnacle a (onward)

Fri 12 Jul 1996

Get yer boycotts, yer red hot boycotts! Get em while they last!

Yes, and for those so inclined, there are boycotts in many other cities too--and even boycotts you can start yourselves. gab.

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367. **George Bowering**

Re: text/language

Fri 12 Jul 1996

How can text and language be distinguished? I guess have to take a long look at how the word "language" and "text" can and can't sensibly be used. Otherwise into the foggy dew we go. gab.

Isn't language much broader? It includes music & other sound-language, visual languages of many kinds, all sorts of symbolic language other than the ones which use letters & words; & usually text is grounded in those letters & words, although I'd be glad to conceive of text more broadly, too.

Or, for example, dealing with book arts/artists' books, the text of the book would be whatever language-text is presented therein, but the language of

the book would have to include all its other parts (visual, structural, sometimes aural, etc.) as well. Books can (they don't always, or do they?) make literature physical.

charles

Also depends, I think, on whether yr saying "langue" or "parole", eh? I mean "text" means that which has been twisted into shape, like the material in a rug.

.....

"The Moose stood in the yard."

--Daniel Pinkwater

George Bowering.
2499 West 37th Ave.,
Vancouver, B.C.,
Canada V6M 1P4

fax: [REDACTED]

e-mail: [REDACTED]

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368. **George Bowering**

Re: british women poets

Fri 12 Jul 1996

I would have thought that someone wd mention Mina Loy.

.....

"The Moose stood in the yard."

--Daniel Pinkwater

George Bowering.
2499 West 37th Ave.,
Vancouver, B.C.,
Canada V6M 1P4

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369. **George Bowering**

Re: British Women Poets

Fri 12 Jul 1996

Daphne Marlatt

Margaret Avison

.....

"The Moose stood in the yard."

--Daniel Pinkwater

George Bowering.
2499 West 37th Ave.,
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370. **George Bowering**

Re: of the whole art/spam two generations

Fri 12 Jul 1996

| *Hi. What's the unconscious?*

| *Jordan*

I dont know what yr talking about.

.....

"The Moose stood in the yard."

--Daniel Pinkwater

George Bowering.
2499 West 37th Ave.,
Vancouver, B.C.,
Canada V6M 1P4

fax: [REDACTED]

e-mail: [REDACTED]

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371. **Kevin Killian**

Re: white rose

Fri 12 Jul 1996

For those who have asked, Kevin's extravaganza about Jay De Feo will play one night only, Wednesday, October 9, 8 p.m. at the San Francisco Art Institute.

Another "official" announcement about it will be posted closer to the date.

Dodie Bellamy

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372. **George Bowering**

Re: my stack

Fri 12 Jul 1996

1. *_Stones_* by Chenjerai Hove. This was published around 1988 or 1989, but it is still in print, and still current. Hove's second novel in English, *_Shadows_* is also very interesting, about people who ask for descriptions of their loved ones who died in the war of independence in Zimbabwe, so memory will live. His third novel in English is just out.

2, *_Horns for Hondo_* by Lesego Rampolokeng. includes some of the best rap you will ever hear. Lesego is a wonder in a live reading, and if you get the chance to hear him, you'll be better able to read the poems on page.

3. *_Guava Juice_* by Sandile Dikeni. If you don't know, you will be interested to hear that "Guave Juice" is code for "Molotov cocktail" in the Townships. You can't go to jail for saying "Guave" yet.

4 *_Para que no me Olvides_* by Marcela Serrano. Her third novel, now in 9th printing, to deal with life in the Pinochet and post-Pinochet era.

.....

"The Moose stood in the yard."

--Daniel Pinkwater

George Bowering.
2499 West 37th Ave.,
Vancouver, B.C.,
Canada V6M 1P4

fax: [REDACTED]

e-mail: [REDACTED]

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373. **Charles Alexander**

Re: british women poets

Fri 12 Jul 1996

| *I would have thought that someone would mention Mina Loy.*

someone did

& what about Canadian women poets writing in French, or is that too complicated? & elsewhere in "the commonwealth" aren't their poets writing in any number of languages, & what might their positions be with regard to various conceptions of British poetry?

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374. **James Brook**

Re: text/language

Fri 12 Jul 1996

Gabrielle--

Unless one stretches the concept of "text" into very obscure shape, there's no possibility of a text before the advent of writing.

Language is above all *spoken*--linguists tend to see writing systems (which underlie texts) as secondary, derivative, and imperfect recording devices of the spoken language. Of course, once a language does acquire a writing system, the written language begins to affect the spoken language. The effects of writing were broadened and intensified by printing--spelling, meanings, and usages becoming more fixed and employment prospects for copy editors brightening. (Renaissance scholars were employed by publishers for this task. By the way, their efforts at restoring Latin to its classical form helped kill off Latin as a living, spoken language.)

James Brook

Gabrielle Welford wrote:

>

> How can text and language be distinguished? I guess have to take a long
> look at how the word "language" and "text" can and can't sensibly be used.
> Otherwise into the foggy dew we go. gab.

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375. **Burt Kimmelman**

Re: text/language

Fri 12 Jul 1996

George, Gab, et al.

"text, texture, textile"--Kenneth Burke. Long Western history of text and skin and clothing and words via the Christian dispensation (Christ is the word incarnate etc.) but of course it all goes back much further. I'd love to know what the Eastern version of this is. But I'm going on vacation now for a week, so maybe I'll catch up when I get back and if I get to read the backlog stuff (I'm doing the "nomail" set). couldn't resist sticking my oar in the water though.

burt

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376. **Burt Kimmelman**

Re: text/language

Fri 12 Jul 1996

James,

You couldn't be more wrong about "text"--it exists long before writing-- unless, of course, you are construing "text" in a modern sense.

But, again, if you wish to answer me personally on this, you'll have to do it backchannel.

burt


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377. **Burt Kimmelman**

nomail

Fri 12 Jul 1996

I won't be reading Poetics mail for a week or so. i can be reached backchannel. Thanks for your indulgence.

burt kimmelman


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378. **Schuchat**

As for poets and critics

Fri 12 Jul 1996

Having been partially trained at one point as a literary critic, but specifically as a literary critic of Chinese literature, I thought I'd note a few observations:

both writing poetry and writing criticism proceed from mystery, or lack of understanding. but with criticism the goal is understanding, lifting the mystery, explanation.

when a poet writes criticism it isn't criticism, its documentation. (except when the poet is writing as a professional critic)

criticism wants to be science, not journalism. poets generally don't have a big problem with journalism, except when it doesn't act to their advantage (bad reviews).

critics usually like philosophy more than rhetoric.

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379. **william marsh**

Re: Critics *vs.* poets? What I miss here are criticisms of poetic technique.

Wed 31 Dec 1969

>What DO you exactly mean by texture?

>Burt

>

>

Burt -- my intent in reversing the terms (poetry of texture as opposed to texture of poetry) was to punctuate my point that we might be better off talking about texture, materiality, shape, design (choose your term) regardless of genre distinctions, rather than talking about a texture of poetry as distinct from, say, a texture of criticism. (Especially when, yeah, there's no established sense of what 'texture' is when applied to...)

Otherwise, to be honest, i'm not too fond of the word, which i had picked up from the previous post.

Thanks for responding.

bmarsh

ps. does email have texture?!

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380. **william marsh**

Re: e-mail politics

Wed 31 Dec 1969

At 11:38 AM 7/12/96 +0100, you wrote:

>At 4:00 PM 12/31/69, william marsh wrote:

>

>>distinctions between so-called "poetic"

>>and "critical" writings, as you point out, have been effectively eradicated,

>>most profoundly by those poet/theorists (Susan Howe, Charles Bernstein,

>>among several others) whose work is very much concerned with blurring the

>>disinction.

>

>I think we should pause here and give tribute to those who promoted this

>blurring as a feminist project, particularly the editors/associate

>editors/contributing editors of _HOW(ever)_. Such as Kathleen Fraser, Bev

>Dahlen, Rachel Blau DuPlessis, Frances Jaffer, Susan Gevirtz, Carolyn

>Burke, and Chris Tysh.

>

>Dodie Bellamy

>

>

very good point.

also should point out that the current issue of Chain, which Charles Alexander praised a few days ago, is dealing with 'genre-bending' in some nifty ways.

bmarsh

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381. **henry**
travelin

Fri 12 Jul 1996

Bigmouth Hankovitch is headin to Minneysota for a week (MN - the center of the universe), and he's taking all his awful redundant ideas with him - but keep talking - he'll be his old irascible self when he gets back (look - he's starting to refer to himself as Checkers in the third person - that proves it) - have fun everybody - net some keepers for me - Henry Gould woof woof

Just packin up gettin ready to go...

Gonna leave you now

Goin anyhow

Know where I'm bound

I'm just packin up gettin ready...

to go

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382. **maria damon**
Re: text/language

Fri 12 Jul 1996

burt k writes:

"text, texture, textile"--Kenneth Burke.

this is a conjunction that has fascinated me since i became a weaver at 14 (i was already a writer). a few years ago a friend and i were planning to write about this as a meditation on the ironies and complexities of "women's work" --i had been struck by the way feminist lit critics have so often used textile metaphors in ways that are intended to reclaim this pun as "women's work" -- but often they reveal, through their use of that metaphor, that they don't know the basics of the craft they are using as metaphor ("broken tapestry" is the name of one such text; what is a broken tapestry? another didn't understand

the way images are created in a woven tapestry, line of weft by line of weft, and was trying to make a complex point about women's writing, sexual violation and philomela or someone else where this lack of knowledge ended up mattering). not that people have to know all the intricate mechanics of every technology they allude to in creating word-texts, or that this is peculiar to feminist literary critics (this just happens to be where we noticed it, since it was the kind of stuff we were reading at the time), but there's a way that this combination pointed, for us, to the ways in which artisanal work is often sentimentalized/gendered in misleading ways. from there we got into stuff like: wanting to get someone to write about actual women working in textile factories and the LACK of artisanal glamor in those modes of production; the economy of circles of women trading and recycling baby-clothes, free stores, etc --textile "businesses" that subvert corporate economies; the ways in which creating text IS like creating textile, despite the occasional clumsy or sentimental ways the trope has been used; the ways in which intellectual labor IS "women's work" because women do it, and doesn't need to be justified by hearkening to an "ancient", socially-coded-feminine art. at first we were going to edit a book, then we were going to collaborate on an article; neither has materialized (so to speak). but i was just thinking about it today and wondering if there was something useful i could "do" with these fragments (like send them to Chain) when burt posted this line.

what *is* the burke reference?

md

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383. **maria damon**

Re: PUI

Fri 12 Jul 1996

naylor rites:

> a big eraser for Christmas -- OK, that

> and tenure.

>

>

ok pau, tenure-vibes coming your way.--md

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384. **Robert Drake**

Re: Critics *vs.* poets? What I miss here are criticisms of

Fri 12 Jul 1996

| *ps. does email have texture?!*

as in the structure, frm entymology, text/texture/textile
meaning a weaving ov words, & hence various "threads" ov email
discussion... tho the pessimist in me sees a looming shroud...

lbd

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385. **Paul Naylor**

PUI

Sat 13 Jul 1996

Well, I expect the List Police to pull me over after this one for Posting Under The Influence, but, after a nasty trip to the dentist and, oh, a few glasses of my favorite personal anesthetic, I feel some comments on this poet/critic thing coming on. Seems like there's still a host/parasite hierarchy lurking around, lo, these many years after the new criticism. I write both poetry and criticism, as do so many on this list, and, although they do constitute different forms of attention, I'd like to think I'm still taking notes in the aviary when I do either. As someone who straddles both lines in my professional life, I'm asking Santa for nothing but a big eraser for Christmas -- OK, that and tenure.

Paul Naylor

SEND

in%"██████"

in%"██████"

SEND

in%"██████"

in%"██████"

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386. **Rod Smith**

Re: As for poets and critics

Sat 13 Jul 1996

Simon--

There's an old reporters saying here in Washington --

"The purpose of journalism is to shoot the wounded." I have to say I find that a little to accurate. As a poet, journalism means nothing, because poetry

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387. **Rod Smith**

Re: As for poets and critics

Sat 13 Jul 1996

woops, here's what it was getting to be

*poets generally don't
have a big problem with journalism, except when it doesn't act to their
advantage (bad reviews).*

Simon-- There's an old reporters saying here in Washington -- "The purpose of journalism is to shoot the wounded." I have to say I find that a little too accurate. As a poet, journalism means nothing, because poetry is almost entirely ignored by major press. & of course I'm being overly rhetorical, most journalists are just shlubs like me, trying to get by. It's all there in Chomsky etc.

Rod

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388. **Tristan D. Saldana**

Re: of the whole art/spam two generations

Sat 13 Jul 1996

On Fri, 12 Jul 1996, George Bowering wrote:

*Hi. What's the unconscious?

Jordan

I dont know what yr talking about.*

Nor do I, you.

Tristan

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389. **Peter Quartermain**

DON'T call me!

Sat 13 Jul 1996

Hi, everybody. Sorry to bother you all, but this is the most efficient way I can deal with this problem. Yesterday (11 July) my Eudora crashed in the middle of downloading e-mail from the list, and I can no longer access my incoming mail because the home computer won't accept my password. But for some reason I can still send mail out -- or I can if you get to read this! Since I shall be away in the Queen Charlotte Islands (boast! boast!) from 17 - 27, I will not get this fixed until the end of the month. So if anyone needs to get hold of me or Meredith,

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Date: Sun, 7 Jul 1996 16:11:46 -0700

X-Sender: [REDACTED]

To: [REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED] (Angela Szeto)

Subject: Notice for PQ letters

(ahem!)

ATTENTION ALL STUDENTS OF PETER ALLAN QUARTERMAIN PAST AND PRESENT

Peter Quartermain will be retiring in two years' time from his position at the University of British Columbia. A group of his students at UBC wish to nominate him for next year's Killam teaching prize as a long overdue gesture of institutional recognition. We need as many anecdotal letters as possible giving details of how wonderful a teacher Peter is. The letters need not be particularly long but they should avoid sounding wishy-washy and vague. If you can cite specific incidences of brilliance then that would be good but otherwise just try to write something that sounds conventionally credible. You should also include when Peter taught you and the course name (if applicable).

Letters should be addressed to Dr. Herbert Rosengarten (the head of the English Department at UBC) and sent to the following address:
104-989 West 20th Avenue,
Vancouver, British Columbia,
V5Z 1Y4

We would appreciate receiving the letters by September 1, 1996.

If you have any questions, you can e-mail them to: [REDACTED]

Thanks everyone.

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392. **Alan Sondheim**

cath

Sat 13 Jul 1996

Clara: thinking and loving, writing, the murmur of the world Alan: heard in the hollow of its shell, close by Tiffany: sounding through fathoms of conversations, these souls Honey: who have lost their fathermothers, mewling and Travis: pity! pity! those unborn, unbearable to this dimmed life Joan: changing bodies and directions, changing moods and genders Sandra: down where ripples no longer reflect surface striations, Clara: languages, terms, obsequious semiologies Alan: as if language conveyed meaning humped against the physical Tiffany: which

we hear in our everyday networking and speaking Honey: against or within the abdominal terminal screen Travis: ghosts! ghosts! Joan: the swollen world of the murmur of the world, the ocean Sandra: gone, this gone world, where this speaking forms the cap

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393. **Carnography**

Re: Critics *vs.* poets? What I miss here are criticisms of poetic technique.

Sat 13 Jul 1996

At 12:59 PM 7/12/96, Burt Kimmelman [REDACTED] is rumored to have typed:

*okay Bill Marsh,
What DO you exactly mean by texture?
Burt*

Burt:

It depends. What exactly do you mean when you say Bill Marsh?

Hardin

<http://www.interport.net/~scrypt>

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394. **Carnography**

Re: Critics *vs.* poets? What I miss here are criticisms of poetic technique.

Sat 13 Jul 1996

hnry:

There are lots of cases of poet-critics, and every poet is a critic and probably every good critic is something of a poet; but maybe what Mark was getting at is the clashes in the arena when the center of the one activity tangles with the other.

I suppose that's where our takes on writing are different: I revel in the "tangle," in the unresolved dissonance, of an exalted activity (poetic composition) sleeping with what is often dismissed as rational, and parasitic (criticism). *_Artifice of Absorption_* is an excellent example of this, as are works like *_The Duncaid_*. One can also argue that works like Kristeva's *_Black Sun_*, or De Quincey's and Pater's criticism, obviously, are themselves poetic.

When the informed and weaponed reader-critic becomes the arbiter of taste & the explainer of how who done what. Impossible not to cross those lines.

It isn't necessary to know whether or not "The Raven" was composed as Poe claims it was. To some degree, the posthumous invention of elegant recipes for the composition of pre-existing poems are like the imaginary worlds in Ficciones: intricate confections, often delicious in and of themselves.

Does anyone else here want to get down into the burial site and discuss the texture of poetry? I'd love to know how the rest of you read and write.

Curiosity killed the carp. You're delving into two taboo areas: "secrets of the craft", and "inspiration". I'm not criticizing, just commenting.

Coleridge, Poe, Mallarmé, Campion, Alan Davies--these poets never killed their craft or inspiration by writing about them. I see this in terms of classical music, perhaps, where **texture** and **form**--ie, counterpoint, orchestration, registration, harmonic syntax, linear syntax, units of phrases and their balance within larger units--constitute the music's "meaning." In music, signification is a surface operation: practically speaking, there are no metaphors.

I do respect an individual's reluctance to talk about unconscious activities. When I was friends with Kathy Acker, she used to scream and cry when I asked technical questions. Consequently, I saved my questions for writers who were interested. People whose inspiration depends on a kind of divine ignorance need not respond to my questions about technique.

Still, I find most compositional techniques fascinating, even when they are arbitrary. I have already mentioned Roussel's *_How I Wrote Certain of My Books_*. Even Keats's letters still fascinate me to this day.

All the best,

Rob Hardin

<http://www.interport.net/~sccrypt>

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395. **Carnography**

Re: Critics *vs.* poets? What I miss here are criticisms of poetic technique.

Sat 13 Jul 1996

william marsh typed:

My question would be why would we ever expect linguistics and semiotics to "adequately address the texture of a poem"?

This was merely my polite way of saying that linguistics and semiotics do not entirely address my interest (critically and practically) in poetry.

Linguistics and Semiotics

adequately (arguably) address language and meaning, and to the extent that explorations of this type suggest avenues of inquiry when dealing with a particular poem or poetry, they are useful -- in my mind enormously useful -- without necessarily addressing the whole issue of writing.

I don't disagree with you, for the most part. But L and S address language and meaning within a context that is not always relevant to the systems and conventions of poetic diction and devices. In *Seven Types of Ambiguity*, Empson tried to address poetic meaning as embodied in poetic technique; in some ways, he came closer than Jameson to examining the question.

To get to the

> texture of the poem, we read the poem, right? To get to the texture of
> theory, read theory.

I disagree with you completely. Texture is as subject to critical examination as anything else. In the case of poetry, it is often more relevant to discuss assonance or sibilance than it is to discuss bourgeois referents.

But what intrigues me about the "open" poetries of this and the last decade

I did not suggest that "open" poetries were unworthy of discussion. If anything, I suggested that these are as worthy of prosodic scrutiny as "closed" or "formal" poetry: I suggested that the distinction hindered more than it helped. If a line makes you stumble or feels sinuous, nine times out of ten, the result is a measure of the poet's rhythmic skill. Linguistics has little direct information to teach us about rhythm. If the subject of prosodic rhythm were irrelevant, then Pound's criticism would have been useless to Olsen, et al.

(Also: a line that makes you stumble is not necessarily bad. Much language poetry intentionally makes you stumble: *The Art of the Rhythmic Non Sequitur*, *The Art of the Double-Take*.)

But what intrigues me about the "open" poetries of this and the last decade is the extent to which they seem, to me at least, to share the interest and perspective of ling/semio studies, so that distinctions of these kinds (poetry vs. criticism/theory, etc) seem pointless.

But I, too, am uninterested in such distinctions. I merely pointed out that certain aspects of the poetry of the last three decades, whatever its school or formal orientation, are inadequately addressed by linguistics as currently practiced. I haven't seen a synthesis of linguistics, semiotics, prosody and diction that addressed what are for me the most exciting and visceral aspects of reading or writing a poem.

The purpose here is not to dismiss linguistics. It is to get poets to talk about how they write and read.

Language arts and language philosophies share the same venue, as much of the work of the last two decades demonstrates (the work not only of "poets" like Howe, Bernstein and Silliman, but also of "critic/theorists" like M. Perloff (Howe, Bernstein and Silliman!)). The way i see it, this suggests a practice in contemporary poetics that goes beyond neat packages like "theoretical poetry" or "poetic theory".

I get the feeling you're speaking to some earlier poster in this thread. I've read lots of Bernstein, Silliman, Davies, Palmer and so on. I have been intrigued and interested by what they say. But with all due respect, there are other ways to analyze language poetry than the methods employed by their own critical writing. It seems to me that what you're asking for is a very un-postmodern approach: language poet purism.

Does anyone else here want to get down into the burial site and discuss the texture of poetry? I'd love to know how the rest of you read and write.

How 'bout if we discuss the poetry of texture, which might adequately address the writing of poetry.

That would be great, Bill. But I also want to address the texture of the poetry itself. The patterns of assonance and alliteration i Keats's "Eve of St. Agnes" will always thrill me (and Robert Gluck) more than anything (however useful and astute) Kristeva ever wrote.

All the best,

Rob Hardin

<http://www.interport.net/~scrypt>

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396. **Carnography**

Re: Critics *vs.* poets? What I miss here are criticisms of poetic technique.

Sat 13 Jul 1996

Bill Marsh typed:

Otherwise, to be honest, i'm not too fond of the word, which i had picked up from the previous post.

You find the word *texture* to be too vague, perhaps? Look again:

Texture: [L *textura*, fr. *textus*, pp. of *texere* to weave--more at *technical*]
1.: something that is composed of closely interwoven elements. 2.a: The disposition or manner of union of the particles of a body or substance. 3.a: A composite of the elements of prose or poetry <"All these words...meet violently to form

a *texture* impressive and exciting."--John Berryman.> 4.: A pattern of musical sound created by tones or lines sung together. 5.: a basic scheme or structure; overall structure.

--from Webster's *Third International Dictionary*

my intent in reversing the terms (poetry of texture as opposed to texture of poetry) was to punctuate my point that we might be better off talking about texture, materiality, shape, design (choose your term) regardless of genre distinctions, rather than talking about a texture of poetry as distinct from, say, a texture of criticism.

Then I *was* correct. Your response to my post was actually a response to some other post--since mine had already suggested that distinctions between poetry and criticism were arbitrary. However:

I never said anything about "a texture of poetry as distinct from, say, a texture of criticism." I spoke only of wanting to read new criticism that addresses the texture of poetic language.

| *ps. does email have texture?!*

Of course it does--especially *typographical* texture.

<http://www.interport.net/~sccrypt>

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397. **Charles Alexander**
Re: As for poets and critics

Sat 13 Jul 1996

both writing poetry and writing criticism proceed from mystery, or lack of understanding. but with criticism the goal is understanding, lifting the mystery, explanation.

Everything proceeds from mystery, pretty much ends there too. Isn't that the human condition, never to "know" with completion? But I still think a lot of good criticism (Kristeva has been mentioned in this thread, & so has Keats, Olson, and I'd certainly add Walter Benjamin) extends the mystery, perhaps even illuminates without necessary explaining.

| *when a poet writes criticism it isn't criticism, its documentation.
(except when the poet is writing as a professional critic)*

This to me doesn't come close to explaining the poets named above, or many essays by Pound, Woolf, Howe, Silliman, . . . So could you explain this a little bit. Or are these cases of the poet writing as professional critic??

criticism wants to be science, not journalism. poets generally don't have a big problem with journalism, except when it doesn't act to their advantage (bad reviews).

Science Journalism Are these the only two choices?

critics usually like philosophy more than rhetoric.

Many poets do, too. But then philosophy can be presented in rhetorical form, too.

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398. **Schuchat**

Re: As for poets and critics

Sat 13 Jul 1996

Rod, what I meant by journalism wasn't so much Bob Woodward's latest revelations of the first lady's inner life, or even Jonathan Yardley's fulminations, as the kind of criticism that Rexroth wrote, in columns for the Saturday Review, San Francisco Examiner, the Nation, etc. Pound's criticism is often the same kind of journalism. for that matter, while I don't particularly appreciate James Fenton's poetry, I do take his reportage as a poet's journalism. of course, what Chomsky is talking about has more to do with why there is no Kenneth Rexroth writing in the SF Examiner today. but equally, The Classics Revisited are probably considered beneath contempt in the academy.

on another topic, wasn't Lorenzo Thomas the best American poet in Vietnam?

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399. **Schuchat**

Re: As for poets and critics

Sat 13 Jul 1996

Charles,

Re "documentation" -- in many cases (Pound, Silliman, Howe, Bernstein, etc), whatever else the poet is doing, the poet is also creating or furthering a context in which his/her own work can be understood. does a critic write the first book to make it possible for you to understand the second book? (maybe Harold Bloom?)

what other options besides science and journalism are there? literature?

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400. **Ron Silliman**

Joyce Conference

Sat 13 Jul 1996

In keeping with our reportage of conferences, somebody sent me the following from the Asian Wall St Urinal.

Joycean scholarship bloomed in China this past week with the convening of the First International Academic Conference on James Joyce in China. While the five-day conference included Joyce scholars from the United States, Hong Kong and Taiwan, and a representative from the James Joyce Center in Dublin, its acknowledged, but humble star was Chinese "Ulysses" translator Professor Jin Di.

Prof. Jin's involvement with Joyce began with a single chapter. After Deng Xiaoping came to power and launched the era of opening and reform, Joyce's works were freed from their classification as "poisonous weeds." The editors at the Tianjin Academy of Social Sciences, seeking to compile an anthology of modern Western literature, approached Jin Di and convinced him to translate one chapter of "Ulysses."

As anyone who has ever begun it can attest, just reading the novel from beginning to end is a major accomplishment. Without access to Western reference materials, translating the shortest chapter -- 12 pages -- took Professor Jin six months. Painful though it was, this effort launched him on his own odyssey that took him to Yale, Oxford, Notre Dame, the National Humanities Center in North Carolina, and the University of Virginia.

Encouraged by the Joyce scholars he encountered and supported by university grants and publishing house advances, Prof. Jin devoted most of the next 16 years to translating "Ulysses." Several of his translated chapters were published in a prestigious Chinese literature journal in the mid-1980s and a separate volume was released in 1987. Volumes containing 12 translated chapters appeared in Taiwan in 1993 and in China in 1994.

However, in 1990 a professor named Xiao Qian began his own translation of "Ulysses," in collaboration with his wife. Prof. Xiao finished first, and it was his translation that drew the attention of the international news media when it appeared last year. A controversy has subsequently developed as to whether Prof. Xiao made unfair use of Prof. Jin's published translations in crafting his own, and as to whose translation is better.

The controversy is unfortunate, but more important is the availability of "Ulysses" in Chinese; both translations have together been purchased by several hundred thousand Chinese readers over the past two years. Conference

attendees gathered not to dwell on the controversy, but to celebrate Joyce's genius, and Prof. Jin's accomplishment.

The conference opened with the reading of a letter from Irish President Mary Robinson in which she praised Prof. Jin's "16-year labor of love in bringing to one billion people the greatest work of twentieth century literature." Mr. Joe Hayes, Ireland's amiable and learned ambassador to China, then addressed the group, reminding them that Chinese intellectuals saw early on in Ireland a link between nationalism and literature which they themselves wished to establish.

At the close of the first day, Ambassador Hayes hosted a dinner reception at his residence where conference participants were joined by Beijing's Irish denizens. Besides facilitating scholarly contacts, the reception also provided Beijing's Irish with an excuse for a party. When the scholars had gone, coolers of Guinness suddenly appeared, Irish music resounded through the residence's formal parlors, and the gathering moved to the patio where the conversation progressed on to more modern Irish concerns.

The conference moved on to Tianjin, where a full schedule of scholarly presentations began, with simultaneous interpretation for the foreign guests. Prof. Jin shared with the participants his views of "Ulysses" and his philosophy of translation.

Simply put, Prof. Jin's goal in translating "Ulysses" was to achieve what he terms "the closest possible approximation in total effect." In other words, he wanted a Chinese reader of "Ulysses" to get the same impression from reading his translation as an English reader would from reading the original. This was a lofty goal, one that required making creative adjustments so as to preserve the flavor of Joyce's prose.

Take, for instance, the palindromes interjected into a conversation by a character named Lenehan. Says Lenehan, "Madam, I'm Adam. And Able was I ere I saw Elba." Faithfully translated into Chinese, "Madam I'm Adam" would read "Furen, wo shi Yadang." It would not be a palindrome and the remark would likely strike a Chinese reader as a non sequitur. To keep the palindromes intact, Prof. Jin changed their meanings. In his translation, Lenehan says, "Furen a, Wo a renfu. Ren neng sheng tian sheng neng ren." Literally translated back from the Chinese, the palindrome now means, "Madam, I am somebody's husband. Man can beat heaven beats able man." (Neng means both "can" and "able" in Chinese.) Prof. Jin thus sacrificed the meaning of the palindrome so he could convey to the Chinese reader the fact that Lenehan is a clown.

Not surprisingly, many of the Chinese scholars chose to discuss Prof. Jin's translation, offering both praise and constructive criticism. A Taiwan scholar argued provocatively that Prof. Jin's use of mainland Chinese dialects to replicate English dialects -- like Shandong dialect for Suffolk English -- made the

translation too difficult for Taiwanese readers. "Taiwan wants to assert its own linguistic uniqueness," she stated, going on to suggest that there be separate translations for Taiwanese and mainland Chinese readers.

Western scholars presented on such topics as "James Joyce and Irish Cultural Rebirth" and "Ulysses in the Context of Modern Western Thought." It was the first trip to China for all the Western participants and their thrill at being here was matched only by their Chinese counterparts' delight at being able to discuss James Joyce with renowned experts. Like foreign businessmen who salivate over the China market, the Western scholars made repeated reference to the fact that 1.2 billion more people are now able to read -- or at least buy -- the "product" they are promoting, Joyce's greatest work.

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401. **Joel Kuszai**
Meow Press Reading in Toronto

Sat 13 Jul 1996

MEOW PRESS READING / Book Launch

Featuring 3 New Meow Press books:

Michael Basinski, Heebie-Jeebies

Natalee Caple, The Price of Acorn

Wendy Kramer, Patinas

also out from Meow Press:

Meredith Quartermain, Terms of Sale

Lisa Robertson, The Descent

Idler Pub on Sunday July 21 at 8pm.

The reading is free.

The Idler Pub is located at 255 Davenport Rd. TORONTO

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402. **Thomas M. Orange**
credences

Sat 13 Jul 1996

listfolks:

whatever happened to credences? has it folded or did my library simply drop its subscription?

tom orange

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403. **jms**
order chain
Sat 13 Jul 1996

Chain has a new main address:

215 Ashland Avenue
Buffalo, NY 14222
(this is Jena Osman's new address)

I also have a new Chain related address as of 8/1:

182 Elm Street
Albany, NY 12202

Chain can be easily ordered at the rate of
\$18 for two issues or \$10 for one issue
from Jena Osman or Juliana Spahr by e-mail (we will
bill you) or by mail (send check to UB Foundation).



Thanks for interest.

Juliana Spahr

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404. **McGuire Jerry L**
poetry performance
Sat 13 Jul 1996

It's a hoary argument between poets and actors over which in principle ought to be the better interpreters of poetry. The reasons actors tend to assume they'll be better--their training in voice, pacing, textual analysis, stage presence--can lead to a kind of clinical frigidity that is just the opposite of the absorbed precision that Elizabeth McGrand notes: "as larry heinemann has put it, [good readers] 'see/hear/feel' the images as they read them. in other words, as the reader reads, they too are experiencing he writing." This is to say that even actors who do a _good_ job of reading other people's poetry (and some actors, of course, write and perform their own poems) work from a different set of public assumptions from most poets who read their own. (And, as E.M. notes, plenty of us give excruciating readings, with excesses and deficiencies enough to go around.)

The idea, of course, that actors couldn't possibly be good readers of poetry because actors are natively stupid or inept at public presentation is pretty dim. I am so pleased that no one here made it (in so many words).

And yes, no doubt Creeley is one of the greatest readers of Williams, and Ginsberg is a hoot no matter what. But R.C. has been doing his aw-shucks just-plain-Bob readings so long, and has brought them to such rarity of measure and pace and intonation and persuasion--like any fine actor, he creates the illusion that the words are arising within him as they're spoken, even while you know the things are there on paper--that all his pals and fans (all of us, to be sure) find it hard to keep in mind that he's doing an artful thing in artificial circumstances. Would he do as good a job with Stevens, I wonder, or Donne, or Frost, or Dickinson? He probably wouldn't want to.

Or, to take him off the hook, another problem the actor faces is that his/her skills are designed for specific analysis and adaptation to whatever task is at hand. Theatrical audiences regard this kind of performance when it's successful--when the actor is transparent and transcends his or her immediate, personal presence--as a high achievement. But poetry audiences are different (and Christopher Whipple ought to be given credit for trying something to subvert the preconceptions that separate these audiences), and they differ among themselves pretty considerably--slam audiences, "dramatic reading" audiences, workshop-auxiliary cafe series, culture-hero honors-college public viewings, peer-review artfests, not to mention the best of all, the one where across the coffee table or lying on the rug, one poet reads his/her latest poem to someone to whom all this matters. Dean Taciuch thinks that what matters is "the language," and worries that actors would be concerned with the emotions and meanings. Elizabeth singles out a reading where Martin Espada puts his words and voice in the service of collective improvization. Tony Green worries about a "danger" in the kind of reading he supposes actors would do, and feels that "the poetry is damaged" by it. It seems to me that if "poetry" can be "damaged" by the efforts of a dedicated but incompetent assortment of readers, then (a) it's not worth saving, and (b) it must already be damaged beyond help.

The real problem for Christopher Whipple's actors is one many poets are mostly inclined to shrug off and fake--that of preparing oneself to do justice to a set of poems quite different from one's immediate work. (Unless we have an "instinctive," "natural" gift for discovering the perfectly appropriate commonalities among all "good" "poems" of any place/time/culture. Anyone buying that?) Like E.M. says, the "throaty growl" reading has become so standardized--tougher for women, perhaps, some of whom may in consequence be reduced at times to public declarations of communal merger with their audiences that they don't perfectly make a full-time part of their daily lives--that it does get pressed into

service in circumstances in which it appears (no longer just dull but) craven and silly.

At bottom I think the actors will fail and the audiences will stay split, because what matters for making poetry come alive involves a manifestation of the personal in the reading that all the actors' training tends to efface. A good poetry reader is more like Schwarzenegger--always Arnold, no matter the role--than like Streep. To achieve that with the kinds of poetry in question means finding readers who will get not just to the language of those poems (an actor can do that fine) and not just to his/her own personal/public performance mode (any hack can do that, however bad it looks to others) but to a public living-out of the specific energies that makes those specific poems come specifically into a human world and matter. C. W. needs to find poet/readers who do this all the time with their own work and who really believe in and love in a specific way the works selected for presentation. A better system yet: find the willing poets, and let them pick their own favorite works from those historical moments that matter to them.

And to E. McGrand, thanks for that really lovely summary and analysis of so many of the issues here--if you don't mind, I've got some friends I'd like to pass it on to. And I'm with you all the way on Tim O'Brien, who certainly is one of the finest readers on the planet--lots of poets could take some direction there.

Jerry McGuire

P.S. Does this satisfy the concerns of the Lurker Police?

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405. **Sam Pereira**

A Warning Re: The Decisiveness Of Glitches

Sat 13 Jul 1996

This is in response to Peter Quartermain's notice of having difficulty with Eudora. As I faxed Peter, and spoke to him via telephone this day, I too have had a similar occurrence. My mail is unreadable. It begins to download and then suddenly freezes and crashes my system.

While I tend to be a rather crafty middle aged poet, I never claimed to be e-mail letter carrier of the year! I AM capable of reading your posts on my AOL account, but it just seems so...so...non-literary there. :)

Anyway, pardon my rambling...I told Peter that I would post this as warning to anyone out there having problems. You are not alone. And if you have corrective measures, please, send them in this direction.

All the best,

Sam Pereira ([REDACTED] and [REDACTED])

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406. **William F. Walsh**

Re: A Warning Re: The Decisiveness Of Glitches

Sat 13 Jul 1996

Don't know if this will be of any assistance to those encountering Eudora problems in the US, as I'm across the water with Ireland on Line. However, my system crashed at about 6PM yesterday (1PM east coast US time), in a similar fashion to that described by Sam Pereira--started to download mail, then froze and offered in explanation: "Error Transmitting Mail," or something equally less than helpful. The folks at IOL had me adjust my settings for POP Account from wwalsch@iol.ie to [REDACTED]. The addition of "gpo" did the trick. Hope this helps.

Lurking in Dublin,
William Walsh

This is in response to Peter Quartermain's notice of having difficulty with Eudora. As I faxed Peter, and spoke to him via telephone this day, I too have had a similar occurrence. My mail is unreadable. It begins to download and then suddenly freezes and crashes my system.

While I tend to be a rather crafty middle aged poet, I never claimed to be e-mail letter carrier of the year! I AM capable of reading your posts on my AOL account, but it just seems so...so...non-literary there. :)

Anyway, pardon my rambling...I told Peter that I would post this as warning to anyone out there having problems. You are not alone. And if you have corrective measures, please, send them in this direction.

All the best,

Sam Pereira ([REDACTED] and [REDACTED])

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407. **Carnography**

Re: The Decisiveness Of Glitches: poss solution

Sat 13 Jul 1996

Possible Solution:

Open your mail with a raw text editor (subh as BBEdit).
Then create a new inbox and save the old mailbox as a text,
which you'll then be able to open in Word.

Possible problem:

Your mailbox is probably too large too load.

Hope this helps you.

All the best,

Rob Hardin

temporary shut-in (Hurricane Urethra)

<http://www.interport.net/~scrypt>

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408. **robert von hallberg**

Orono 2

Sat 13 Jul 1996

>To: [REDACTED]

>From: [REDACTED] (robert von hallberg)

>Subject: Orono 2

>Cc:

>Bcc:

>X-Attachments:

>

>Dear Aldon,

>

> I have your reply to my reply. I will post this on the Poetics board after I send it to you. I appreciate the offer to keep our correspondence private, but this all began with your discussion of my statements on the Poetics board, and my intention now is simply to see to it that my views are represented accurately.

> 1. I am glad that you tape-recorded the session. And I accept your warning to me about being careful about denying that I said this or that. However, the one statement that I accuse you of misrepresenting (item #1, in my last letter) is, you say, "off the tape." So the tape seems not to resolve the one matter of factual misrepresentation. I repeat now that I did not say that Hughes and Kaufman are bad poets. However, I do not question that I said that the poems cited in the first paper in particular, or even in the first two papers, were bad poems. Since I advocated the critical sifting of the poems of Hughes, I have no embarrassment about admitting here that I use the phrase "bad poems." You say in your reply to me, "you did in fact say to me that the poems discussed were 'bad poems.'" I never denied saying such a thing, but you have now alleged two quite different statements by me about "bad" this or that. The difference between the two statements hypothesized, or remembered, matters significantly. As a

critic, the category of the "bad poem" is part of my discourse; whereas to claim that Hughes (or Kaufman) is a "bad poet" would be to speak dismissively of serious writers. (Thomas Hardy seems to me a great poet who wrote an amazing number of bad poems, but he is properly assessed by his successes, not his failures.) If you now agree with me that I did not say that Hughes and Kaufman are bad poets, I would appreciate your saying so in the same place where you alleged that I did say that silly thing.

> 2. You say in your reply that your objection to my criticism of the sociological approach of the first paper in particular, but of your introductory remarks too, is that I "[seem] to [rule] out other efforts [than close reading] that I feel are worthwhile and needed."

> My objection was (I am repeating myself, because you have not met the point of my reply [item #2 in my reply]) to "simplistic sociology," as I termed it in my reply. It is not surprising to learn that only ca. 6% of the papers at the Orono conference were on race or minority writers, and similarly it is not surprising that many distinguished black writers were excluded from most mainstream anthologies. Who would have suspected otherwise? You cite Alan Golding's work, which I have treasured for many years; I seem to be ruling out the utility of that sort of work. Not at all. Alan's work gets at the not perfectly visible political impulses behind anthologies; his work is very surprising. A tabulation of racist exclusion from mainstream anthologies just isn't surprising now, in 1996. We need to move on to the next phase, which I claimed is close analysis and evaluative argument, because the demonstration of the influence of racism in the construction of literary canons and histories has been done cogently. This was my claim at the Orono conference.

> 3. You say in your reply that what angered you was that "you did not ask a question, nor did you offer your comments in a way directed specifically to elements of the papers that might help their authors (or even me) to improve the work in hand. . . . You would be far more likely to achieve the result you seem to have aimed at by engaging directly with an element of the readings about which one might argue productively."

> This is a little complicated. I am sorry that I angered you, really. You're right about the objective of my comments: they were not aimed at improving the first two papers presented. I feel that another sort of work should be done, viz. close evaluative argument of particular poems. I could not, however, have engaged with "the readings," because no readings were presented, by my lights. That is the point.

> Yes, I might have commented in such a way that I could have helped the authors to write a more sophisticated sort of literary sociology. If I had felt that they were likely to develop those papers into surprising sociological analysis, I might have done so. My judgment was that as

literary sociology these papers were best left alone.

> 4. You say that you remain puzzled by my comments about Pound and race. My point was straightforward, and I hope that it is on your tape. I had difficulty seeing the advantage of calling Pound and Eliot's moves to London as "white flight." Furthermore, I claimed that if one wanted to meet Pound's ideas about race, segregation, miscegenation, etc., one needed to realize that the Other for him in his formative years and in the peak period of his modernism (ca. 1909-1939, say) was not African American but Italian. Pound lived in Philadelphia when Italians were the controversial new immigrants. His parents did social work aimed at integrating Italians in Philadelphia. Pound left the States to begin his career in Italy. He devoted much of his literary critical efforts in London to advocating the importance of an understanding of southern, Mediterranean literary and intellectual culture. He retreated from London in 1920-21, then from Paris before 1924, and stayed in Italy until he was transferred as a prisoner to Washington in 1945. He was not in flight from the culture he knew in his early American years as the butt racist jokes and bigotry. This is not to say that he had no racist views about African Americans, only that a convincing account of his thinking about race and racism must deal centrally with his dealings with Italian culture. The racism of the post-1945 era is negrophobic; the racism of the first years of the century in Philadelphia was Italophobic. I felt that the attack on Pound as in flight from black people was anachronistic.

> I think that I have dealt with the remaining areas of disagreement between us that I could see in your reply. I have not commented on the areas of agreement, though I was pleased to see that they exist. If I have overlooked something, please let me know.

> I would of course like to have a copy of the tape.

>

>

Yours, Robert von
Hallberg

>

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409. **robert von hallberg**

re orono 2

Sat 13 Jul 1996

Several days ago I sent a reply to Aldon Nielsen entitled Orono 2. I have now posted that here for others to read, if they wish. My replies are now getting repetitious. Unless something new comes up in the replies of Aldon's that I have not yet read, I will probably drop the matter, because I can't imagine it

being of any more interest to people. One last little matter: I do, I do, read Callaloo. Am I on tape denying that too, Aldon?

Bob

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410. **Charles Bernstein**

██████████

Sat 13 Jul 1996

//////////Fiftieth//////////

| Birthday<<<<<

=====Greetings>>>>>

^^^^^^to^^^^^^^^^^

^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^

Pierre Joris

***** born July 14, 1946 *****

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411. **filch**

Eudora

Sat 13 Jul 1996

You might try making more memory available to the app. Eudora, as any app., will crash if the total size of files it is dealing with are too large for its buffer.

Good Luck.

This is in response to Peter Quartermain's notice of having difficulty with Eudora. As I faxed Peter, and spoke to him via telephone this day, I too have had a similar occurrence. My mail is unreadable. It begins to download and then suddenly freezes and crashes my system.

While I tend to be a rather crafty middle aged poet, I never claimed to be e-mail letter carrier of the year! I AM capable of reading your posts on my AOL account, but it just seems so...so...non-literary there. :)

Anyway, pardon my rambling...I told Peter that I would post this as warning to anyone out there having problems. You are not alone. And if you have corrective measures, please, send them in this direction.

All the best,

Sam Pereira (██████████ and ██████████)

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412. **Schuchat**
Re: Joyce Conference

Sat 13 Jul 1996

The Xiao Qian mentioned as author of the possibly plagiarized translation of Ulysses into Chinese is much better known as novelist/journalist than professor. Among other things, he covered WWII in Europe for Chinese papers. His autobiography, TRAVELLER WITHOUT A MAP, is available in English, translated by Jeffrey Kinkley, I think from Stanford.

The idea of using of regional dialects in Chinese to approximate dialect usage in European fiction is pretty old. One of Thomas Hardy's novels was translated into Shanxi dialect, if I remember right. A separate Taiwan translation would be like insisting that South Carolinians need their own translation of Dostoevsky so that they can understand it read aloud.

In any case, Jin's translation is the one easily available here in Taipei. I am told by those who have read both that Jin's is the more academic, Xiao's is a contribution to the development of Chinese prose. But they no doubt have their own axes to grind.

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413. **George Bowering**
Re: of the whole art/spam two generations

Sat 13 Jul 1996

On Fri, 12 Jul 1996, George Bowering wrote:

Hi. What's the unconscious?

Jordan

I dont know what yr talking about.

Nor do I, you.

Tristan

--Neither do I, I.

.....

"The Moose stood in the yard."

--Daniel Pinkwater

George Bowering.
2499 West 37th Ave.,
Vancouver, B.C.,
Canada V6M 1P4

fax: [REDACTED]
e-mail: [REDACTED]

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414. **Charles Alexander**
Re: of the whole art/spam two generations
Sat 13 Jul 1996

On Fri, 12 Jul 1996, George Bowering wrote:

Hi. What's the unconscious?

Jordan

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Nor do I, you.

Tristan

--Neither do I, I.

i do not i

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415. **James Brook**
Re: text/language
Sat 13 Jul 1996

Gabrielle, Burt, Maria, George & Co.,

I realize that the dictionary definition of a word is not, well, the last word. But it does mean something; and, in this case, the OED gives some perspective on the word "text" that might dissuade from a sudden plunge into "weaving" and wondering whether all the world's a text. (In my opinion, one of the great mistakes of structuralism was taking the model of Saussurean linguistics and projecting it absolutely everywhere.)

In a way, though, I could see an argument for a kind of "reading" that historically precedes writing and text; one that might even have laid the foundation for the development of writing: divination, the reading of natural signs to reveal

hidden truths. ("Divine: To make out by supernatural or magical insight; hence, to interpret, explain, make known. . . .") I think Walter Benjamin speculates along these lines somewhere. . . .

Anyway, this is not to say that someone can't extend the meaning of "text" to include all manner of objects. But to apply the word to, say, the productions of oral cultures would, in my view, obscure what distinguishes oral from literate cultures or, in our impending case, postliterate cultures.

--James Brook

from The Shorter OED, 3rd ed.:

Text [note on the word's derivation from the French "texte," which derives from the Latin "textus"--meaning "the style of literary works" (Quintillian) and, in Medieval Latin, "the Gospel, written character" --and, ultimately, from "texere" (weave)] 1. The wording of anything written or printed; the structure formed by the words in their order; the very words, phrases, and sentences as written. . . . 2. esp. The very words and sentences as originally written. . . . 3. spec. The very words and sentences of Holy Scripture; hence, the Scriptures themselves; also, any single book of the Scriptures. . . .

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416. **Carl Lynden Peters**

Re: of the whole art/spam two generations

Sat 13 Jul 1996

>
> >> On Fri, 12 Jul 1996, George Bowering wrote:
> >>
> >>> > Hi. What's the unconscious?
> >>> >
> >>> > Jordan
> >>>
> >>> I dont know what yr talking about.
> >>
> >> Nor do I, you.
> >>
> >> Tristan
> >
> >
> >--Neither do I, I.
>
>
> i do not i

>

id, we're getting closer!

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417. **Aldon L. Nielsen**

Re: OrOno release 2.3

Sun 14 Jul 1996

Robert -- the tape is in the mail -- I didn't see a listing for you in the MLA directory, so I mailed it to the Chicago address listed in Modernism/Modernity. I enclosed what I hope will be my last letter on this subject. I will not burden the other listmembers with it here.

I will, again, invite any who do care about this to read your first and second messages on this post. It's not really true that they repeat; as I pointed out last time, the claims change from one to the next.

As you well know, you did not say: "I don't read x, y, z." I named a series of journals in which close readings of texts and notices of conferences often appear. You replied that you cannot be an expert in every field. Excuse me for not knowing that this reply did not apply to each of the journals I had named. On the other hand, since you now tell me that you do read *_Callaloo_*, your other responses with regard to knowing about conferences having to do with African-American poetry are even more inexplicable. (Though it is all too often the case that, as with many journals, the notices appear too late.)

Your most recent note also clarifies much else. I was profoundly troubled by your remark (which, as you will hear, is on the tape) that very little had been heard at the panel about the poems. Now you indicate that there were no close readings, or satisfactory readings, or good uses of sociological approaches, in the first two papers, by your lights. This clarification is sure to put everything in its proper perspective. You have now made it clear that you had no intention of offering anything of real use to the authors of these papers because you didn't believe they were likely to profit from such a critique -- This, still, does not explain how you reached the conclusion that arguments opposing exclusion on the basis of identity formations were in fact arguments assuming that poets should primarily represent identity formations.

I will gladly discuss with you any of the substantive issues regarding race, poetics, representation, identity formation, literary history, etc. that might arise from this episode. I will gladly listen to any further explanations you may offer about what appears on the tape of your remarks. I will not engage further in any discussions about anything that is not on the tape. In your first message, as I pointed out last time, you denied having used my opening remarks as an example. You can now hear on the tape that my remarks were the first thing

you mentioned. In your first message you carefully explained what you really objected to in certain sociological approaches to literature, without ever acknowledging that this differed from what you had said after the panel, and what you will now hear on the tape. Now that you know the tape exists, you seem to have shifted to arguments about that which was not recorded. I will not follow you into that thicket. If any of the other people who were around the podium during that portion of the discussion indicate to me that my memory has been in any way inaccurate, I will then post that information here.

and that, as they say, is all she wrote. happy listening.

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418. **Aldon L. Nielsen**

Re: Having now resigned from professional wrestling, I ask

Sun 14 Jul 1996

Can anyone on this list give me any information about a poet named Gloria Tropp? She was active on the East Village scene in the arly sixties, and was then married to poet Stephen Tropp -- I'm particularly interested in tracking down any publications by this poet -- It's possible her name may have changed since that time --

For that matter, does anyone know Stephen Tropp?

Is Dick Higgins still on this list, who might have encountered them ?

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419. **Aldon L. Nielsen**

Re: You May Already Have Won

Sun 14 Jul 1996

This Week's Contest -- Prize goes to first person on the list to identify the poem from which the following is excerpted -- and the poet --

You remember I said that Poe was three parts genius.
As to Whitman, can you think of an action more heinous
Than to write the same book every two or three years?
It's enough to reduce any author to tears
At the thought of this crime to the writing fraternity.
A monstrous, continual, delaying paternity.

Winner gets a copy of *The Unruly Voice: Rediscovering Pauline Elizabeth Hopkins* U of Illinois Press, 1996 -- ed. John Gruesser

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420. **Gabrielle Welford**

Re: text/language

Sun 14 Jul 1996

On Fri, 12 Jul 1996, James Brook wrote:

*Unless one stretches the concept of "text" into very obscure shape,
there's no possibility of a text before the advent of writing.*

*Language is above all *spoken*--linguists tend to see writing systems
(which underlie texts) as secondary, derivative, and imperfect recording
devices of the spoken language.*

Yes, I think linguists probably do this. But I don't think we normally make such a distinction, in everyday life, so to speak. Aren't poets and all writers dealing with language? I would think Gertrude Stein was playing with language. She produced texts out of her play with language. The texts are written in language. I know we have (the royal academic we) made a special word of "text" and probably also out of "language." So texts are written language? gab.

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421. **George Bowering**

Re: of the whole art/spam two generations

Sun 14 Jul 1996

On Fri, 12 Jul 1996, George Bowering wrote:

Hi. What's the unconscious?

Jordan

I dont know what yr talking about.

Nor do I, you.

Tristan

--Neither do I, I.

i do not i

--Oh, I'll bet you I from time to time.

.....

"a vivid weightless bean"

--A. Hollo

George Bowering.
2499 West 37th Ave.,
Vancouver, B.C.,
Canada V6M 1P4

fax: [REDACTED]
e-mail: [REDACTED]

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422. **George Bowering**

Re: text/language

Sun 14 Jul 1996

Some people, when talking to me about text, use it in a sense resembling the sense of "context,"-- i.e., the spoken or written word, say, in its relationship with other words and things in the world into which it enters. In that way, we might be said to be enacting a text all the time. It is a nice notion, though I would tend not to entertain it all the time, because I want to get things done, not just think about them.

.....
"a vivid weightless bean"
--A. Hollo

George Bowering.
2499 West 37th Ave.,
Vancouver, B.C.,
Canada V6M 1P4

fax: [REDACTED]
e-mail: [REDACTED]

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423. **Robert Mitterthal**

The Parasite Rules!

Sun 14 Jul 1996

[As Herb Levy suggested, the following mess has been pre-Digested -- just the way us parasites like it.]

Hey Ron Silliman--you've got it all wrong--parasites are all for noise--but not for rules. In fact, thinking of M Serres, our very presence on the list may be disruptive to what would otherwise be a much less complex system of exchange.

Your successful email agit prop -- inviting all the parasites to table (thereby bringing Eudora to her knees on computers across the globe--finally a

revolution!) -- reminds me of a long troubling _statement_ (??) from your collaboration in Legend (p 71) w/Bruce Andrews.

BA (presumably?) posits: COMMODITY/PRACTICE : ECONOMICS/POLITICS

RS (presumably?) translates: any reader (this means YOU) who is not also a writer is (by definition) a victim

Both your recent _parasite_ post and this 16yr old quote set up non-dynamic binaries of writer and reader (or active and passive elist participants). Impersonally, I crave those rare moments when I dont know if I'm reading or being read -- a sort of intense suspension which occurs, e.g., when reading certain Blanchot texts, Ballard's Crash, or gosh maybe Steven King (hi Kevin!). But this doesn't make me a victim. In a weird way maybe this is what a certain kind of writing (by dictation anyway) is all about. It's okay to embrace the radical passivity posited by Agamben -- that is -- a passivity which is not simply opposed to activity but passive in regard to itself -- submitting to itself as if to an external power. For some reason, this always makes me think of Spicer. A passivity that produced an imaginary which still captivates.

Anyway, here's hoping that yr agitating tongue was at least half in cheek.

Robert Mitterthal

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424. **George Bowering**

Re: Beatle Bones and Smokin' Stones

Sun 14 Jul 1996

I've heard that one---the 60's started in 11-22-63 when kennedy died and "i wanna hold your hand" was released in u.k. and the fifties didn't start until 1955. but the difference between the fourties and the fifties is minor in comparison unless the fourties started BEFORE and/or at PEARL HARBOUR rather than when the boys came home and tvs. etc. pushed women back into domesticity becoming suburban and the car began ruining things.....

and the 70's--b--1974. d 1979 (when jimmy carter decided to part his hair to the right rather than left?) or perhaps died when phil ochs did--i.e. when carter got elected ("oatmeal man" gil scott heron) but what were the 70s? the 80s were clearly the 80s all throughout and they spilled over into 1992--and thne there was that brief euphoria on the pumice of morons when GUITARS started dominating rock and roll again and visions of canadian style health car plans danced in the amerikan head.....brief, briefheart, cap n crunch....

---Dear Chris:

I noticed that your suggestions on the beginnings of decades are almost all connected to things that happened in one country, the USA. Didn't they have fifties and sixties and seventies in the rest of the world?

For instance, the idea that the forties started with Pearl Harbor. You know, quite a few people were busy fighting fascism for some time before the Yanks were finally dragged into the business. I'd say that the forties started in Sept. 1939.

.....
"a vivid weightless bean"
--A. Hollo

George Bowering.
2499 West 37th Ave.,
Vancouver, B.C.,
Canada V6M 1P4

fax: [REDACTED]
e-mail: [REDACTED]

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425. **George Bowering**

Re: [REDACTED]

Sun 14 Jul 1996

So Pierre Joris was conceived just after WW2 shut down in Europe.

Hmmmm.

Is there something to be deduced from this?

Is Pierre the spirit of the new age?

.....
"a vivid weightless bean"
--A. Hollo

George Bowering.
2499 West 37th Ave.,
Vancouver, B.C.,
Canada V6M 1P4

fax: [REDACTED]
e-mail: [REDACTED]

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426. **Eryque Gleason**

Re: Eudora

Sun 14 Jul 1996

if these email problems haven't been resolved, and if someone could pass it on to those in need: occassionally eudora will do odd things if it's got too many messages in any one mailbox (sometimes the way this list moves, leaving mail unchecked for a couple days might do it), eudora will sometimes get a little uppity, doesn't like to work that hard. when i ran into this problem i was able to fix it by creating new mailboxes and transferring some of the mail to those, that way eudora only has to deal with all that mail in smaller bundles.

also, if using eudora for macintosh, try trashing the eudora preferences file. this forces the app to make a new set of preferences (though don't empty the trash unless this works!) which usually cleans up minor problems. if using eudora on a pc, might try re-installing it (uninstalling first, if possible), but only after backing up the eudora directory.

happy eudoring!

eryque

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427. **Sam**

Re: Eudora

Sun 14 Jul 1996

Thanks to all who offered their expertise in the above matter. I found that, for myself anyway, going into the mail via VT100 and clearing it out that way freed up the system. All is well again...all those fabulous minds hitting my mailbox in rural hell!

And, over the weekend, an offering to do a newspaper column regularly...anything my heart desires...I am warning the readers in my first born, that it may even include an occasional mention of POETRY. That ought to scare the living bejeezus out of em, eh?

Thank you all for the prompt efforts. I could have tried contacting tech support somewhere, but it wouldn't have been nearly as much fun.

As always,

Sam

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428. **Tony Green**

O sole cism

Sun 14 Jul 1996

For Robert Drake's attention --

HEGEMONEY

As clear as a whistle the forces
Of nature are taking their tool
On mankind. I wouldn't say
A lack of inexperience.

No praise is too high enough for him. She turned
The canvas on the evil. The laugh
Was on the other foot.

[n.b. collected, not made up]

Tony Green,

e-mail: [REDACTED]

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429. **Joseph Zitt**

Re: O sole cism

Sun 14 Jul 1996

On 15 Jul 96 at 11:32, Tony Green wrote:

*As clear as a whistle the forces
Of nature are taking their tool
On mankind.*

Is it just me, or did this sentence immediately play in other people's heads to the tune of "I'm Called Little Buttercup"? (I gotta replace these brainscape plugins !-]) -----1-----1-----1-----1-----1-----1-----1----- |||/ Joseph Zitt
===== [REDACTED] ===== Dallas, Texas \||| ||/ Question Authority, The ==
SILENCE: The John Cage Mailing List \|| | http://www.realtime.net/~jzitt ==
<*> <*> == The Data Wranglers! \|

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430. **Steve Carll**

Re: Eudora

Sun 14 Jul 1996

At 02:40 PM 7/14/96 -0700, Sam wrote:

> Thanks to all who offered their expertise in the above matter. I found

>that, for myself anyway, going into the mail via VT100 and clearing it out
>that way freed up the system. All is well again...all those fabulous minds
>hitting my mailbox in rural hell!

The same problem hit me three days in a row (Thu-Fri-Sat). I don't leave more than a few messages in my mailbox, so that can be ruled out, and I reinstalled Eudora twice. The common factor in all these occurrences was that Eudora was downloading messages posted to this list from Bill Marsh (hi Bill!) I telnetted into my shell account and used Elm to delete just Bill's posts, and the rest downloaded into Eudora just fine. Whenever Eudora tried to download one of Bill's, it crashed with an "application error: integer divide by zero" (whatever that means.) I got the same error thereafter trying to repair the "in" mailbox table of contents. I noticed when reading the posts in Elm that all are dated December 31, regardless of when they were actually sent. Otherwise, they're no different from any other e-mail as far as I can see. I would think that something odd is happening to the mail at Bill's end (either with his email program or his service provider) that's configuring his mail in such a way that certain of our email programs don't know how to deal with. Of course, the tech support guys I've talked to in the last couple days aren't much help. One said, "You might try downloading your email with Netscape." Which may or may not get around the problem, but it doesn't really explain much about it.

+++++

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<http://writing.upenn.edu/epc/eazines/antonym/>

"In seed-

sense

the sea stars you out, innermost, forever."

--Paul Celan

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431. **Akitoshi Nagahata**

Hisao Kanaseki

Sun 14 Jul 1996

Last week one Japanese academic(?), Hisao Kanaseki, passed away. He taught at different universities and wrote about American poetry extendedly, though he didn't write in an academic style. His book on Gertrude Stein (there are only two books written in Japanese on Stein), for example, was written in a style that read like a parody of Julian Barnes (_Flaubert's Parrot_). He translated Gary Snyder and Robert Bly, native American poetry and Joseph Brodsky, but he also translated *Tender Buttons* and wrote about Ashbery and Mina Loy (both

perhaps for the first time in Japanese), Cage and the Beat as well. Many people who are now writing about American poetry used to be his students and many poets, including Shuntaro Tanikawa, were his friends. I myself didn't have the chance to study with him, but I started to read Ashbery after I read his article in *_Eigo Seinen_*, and it was fun to discuss Stein with him over cups of sake. He died of lung cancer. He was 78.

Akitoshi Nagahata
email: [REDACTED]

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432. **Tony Green**

Re: critics vs. poets (tag team round three)

Sun 14 Jul 1996

"Artifice of Absorption" is a text that can be read as, it itself suggests very early on, as poetry or as this or that. So saying, it is clear that "readings" are perspectives on a text, from a given view-point, such as that which takes the text mainly on the level of its philosophical argument, or mainly as a play of syntax, or syntax and sound, or sound. Some perspectives are less usable than others, as for instance reading the text as an instruction on how to build a shed. With representational arts like picture-making, the texture that is in question here is the specifics of the graphic materials and their manipulation so that a scene can be seen. The absence of attention to the process by which one reads from this texture to the picture and its contents is virtually absent from art writing. This is a serious deficiency (and a matter I have been giving my attention to for many many years). I believe that the equivalent in writing is that between the words heard or read and the sense that we have them make. In all of the arts the crucial critical issue is the understanding of the passage from the texture to the reading of the text established by the know-how of the artist. That is what we should probably recognise as the art that criticism concerns itself with as fundamental. What is doleful is the large-scale absence from criticism of this fundamental process of reading which underpins all other contents. Criticism for the most part functions as if the given were the contents, whereas it is the inert stuff of paint or words or whatever turning into contents that artist make happen.

Tony Green,
e-mail: [REDACTED]

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433. **Carnography**

Re: Hisao Kanaseki

Mon 15 Jul 1996

Akitoshi:

From your description, Hisao Kanaseki's work sounds fascinating. His style would seem to address certain problems with critical language: immediacy and invention, for example. What was Mr. Kanaseki's practice when it came to critical terminology-- spec., the idea that critics must use a limited repertoire of academically accepted terms, ideas and interdisciplinary approaches? I've found that, for all its seeming disregard for the phallogocentric engines of European history, and for the so-called ivory towers of the academy, American letters seems to revere a only limited number of critical approaches, most of them derived from linguistics and semiotics (Lacan, Barthes, etc.).

| *He died of lung cancer. He was 78.*

My condolences to your and to your culture's loss. Are there any translations of Kanaseki's books in English?

All the best,

Rob Hardin

PS: Are you familiar with the criticism of Takayuki Tasumi and Mari Kotani?

<http://www.interport.net/~scrypt>

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434. **Marjorie Perloff**

Re: Akitoshi's note

Mon 15 Jul 1996

I'm very sad to hear about Dr. Kanaseki. I had drinks with him in Tokyo a couple of years ago and he gave me his beautiful translation (beautiful to look at, I can't tell how good it is) of TENDER BUTTONS. He was a lovely person, devoted to U.S. new poeties, had worked with Gary Snyder closely, and so on. Will there be any sort of memorial?

Thanks, for passing on the news, Akitoshi! And hello from Los Angeles! Hope all is well with you.

Marjorie

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435. **Carnography**

Re: critics vs. poets (tag team round three)

Mon 15 Jul 1996

Tony:

In all of the arts the crucial critical issue is the understanding of the passage from the texture to the reading of the text established by the know-how of the artist. That is what we should probably recognise as the art that criticism concerns itself with as fundamental. What is doleful is the large-scale absence from criticism of this fundamental process of reading which underpins all other contents. Criticism for the most part functions as if the given were the contents, whereas it is the inert stuff of paint or words or whatevers turning into contents that artist make happen.

Thanks for addressing what I consider to be a fundamental deficiency in the poetic discourse I find both here and in most English departments across America. A case in point: The first thing one notices about Mr. Watten's stanza-work, *_Progress_*, is its innovative, idiosyncratic surface (style, diction, syntax, scansion, rhythm) and the relentless subversion of figures of speech, conventional metaphors and common syntactical grids. Yet the only place I've ever found an accurate description of its technical properties was not in one of the myriad of language poetry journals of the eighties, not in a paper taught at Brown University or Cal Arts, but rather in *_The Princeton Encyclopedia of Poetics_*. What does this say about our critical interest in the texture of the writing itself?

Neither/Nor restored

To remark upon this dearth of critical attention is neither to incite vitriol nor to invite mere silence from those who do not share my interests: other modes of critical discourse need not be usurped or ignored simply because I choose to write and read technical analyses of the texture of poetic language. I am still interested in hearing from other poets as to how they approach what they write. I'd also like to read analyses of the surfaces of poems. If poets are not comfortable using what they perceive to be an accepted critical vocabulary, so much the better.

Question: Melville is almost universally considered to have been a wretched poet. But after a century of systematic truncations, diminutions and elisions of the iambic line, does Melville's doggerel now yield a rhythmic richness that was unavailable to more conventionally competent poets of his period?

All the best,

Rob Hardin

<http://www.interport.net/~scrypt>

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436. **Christopher K. Whipple**

Thank you for your responses

Mon 15 Jul 1996

I want to thank everyone who responded to my request for ideas and advice concerning a project I'm doing. The project is a season of performed poetry built around themes and using actors. The intelligently thought out responses I received have become a real resource for me.

It seems the idea of using actors in order to deliver the poetry has touched on a kind of fault line, at which notions of spontaneity versus rehearsal, language versus interpretation, immediacy versus preconception, honesty versus training, clash and grind against one another. Hopefully I will find a way to harness the unstable energy underlying the merger of the two traditions of theater and poetry--thank you for making me aware of it.

I would like to make my actors aware of the complexity of these issues, and of the diversity of opinions and even prejudices that may be waiting to receive our work. I thought of putting excerpts from your responses on the web site I created for this project (it's a kind of "conferencing zone" for my far flung actors), but I cautiously went back and read the conditions of my subscription to this newsgroup and found the following caveat:

"IMPORTANT: This list is confidential. You should not publicly mention its existence, or forward copies of information you have obtained from it to third parties."

I think that's pretty straightforward. I cannot duplicate and disperse your responses. Which is really a good policy, after all.

But I do invite you to visit my web site at Verseworks and post your comments directly via the site's "blackboard".

Thanks again, to Shananne Tangney, David Baratier, Lisa Samuels, Kathrine Varnes, Rob Hardin, Peter Quartermain, Tony Green, Charles Alexander, Dean Tariuch, James Brook, Christopher Filkins, Judy Roitman, Pat Pritchett, Eliza McGrand, Wystan, Nada Gordon and Michelle Roberts for your responses.

Christopher K. Whipple

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437. **Ron Silliman**

Two from Bowering, one for Rob

Mon 15 Jul 1996

(1) "I noticed that your suggestions on the beginnings of decades are almost all connected to things that happened in one country, the USA. Didn't they have fifties and sixties and seventies in the rest of the world?"

Sheesh. You probably don't date the founding of Canadian literature from the day when Robin Blaser, George Stanley and Stan Persky moved to British Columbia either....

(2) So Pierre Joris was conceived just after WW2 shut down in Europe.

>

>Hmmmmm.

>

>Is there something to be deduced from this?

Arkadii Dragomoshchenko and I (both of whom will be turning 50 this summer) once noted that there are a lot of "victory babies" in this scene, and that they aren't all descended from the same army either.

(3)

Rob,

I always write with tongue posted firmly in cheek. Where else can one get the most serious writing done?

All best,

Ron Silliman

██████████

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438. **Jonathan A Levin**

Re: text/language (fwd)

Mon 15 Jul 1996

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

Date: Fri, 12 Jul 1996 15:16:21 -0600 (MDT)

From: Marisa Januzzi <██████████>

To: ██████████

Subject: Re: text/language (fwd)

Jon--

They apparently have not straightened out this problem-- can you forward for me? Thanks.....

I still miss you. Will call to give the newsless update!

xx,M

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

Date: Fri, 12 Jul 1996 15:09:50 -0600 (MDT)

From: Marisa Januzzi <[REDACTED]>

To: UB Poetics discussion group <[REDACTED]>

Cc: Multiple recipients of list POETICS <[REDACTED]>

Subject: Re: text/language

On Fri, 12 Jul 1996, Gabrielle Welford wrote:

How can text and language be distinguished? I guess have to take a long look at how the word "language" and "text" can and can't sensibly be used. Otherwise into the foggy dew we go. gab.

Text as score for linguistic performance? How's that? (Textual editors make the distinction for pragmatic reasons...) Why do you ask? _____

And here's my bedside exhibitionist booklist, and I guess my lurker dues:

1) Loy and more Loy-- Carolyn Burke's bio, and Roger Conover's edition of the poems, are both out. It's a Loyfest. (And it may well happen, soon, in Aspen... I'll keep y'all posted.)

2) Johnson's ARK. And all the cookbooks of his I've gotten hold of! (Thanks again to Charles Alexander et al. for putting me in touch with Living Batch)(My near neighbors right next door in New Mexico!!)

3) Dawn Powell-- MY HOME IS FAR AWAY, and the diaries. Funny, tart, and totally unmistakably WRITTEN if not experimental.

4) And as if I am plugged in to poetics even when not, Notley (UNBORN SECOND BABY book), the Niedecker TRUCK issue, and Larry Eigner (the Oyez Selected, which I found in a remote poetry section of a bookstore which is the house of this guy who, I discovered, translates Trakl)

5) Wasatch Winter Trails (for insomnia)

6) Paul Gilroy's Black Atlantic book

and 7) lots of stuff for courses I've got to teach in the fall, including an intro to lit theory for majors. If anyone's ever had a kind of theory or poetics breakthrough/breakout/breakdown (or whatever!) enmeshed in a text, I'd love to hear about it... I remember feeling those paradigms shift as I struggled to read, and then finally DID read Derrida's "White Mythology." You know the feeling: the blood carbonates, the long workvistas open, the sleep goes... etc. And so what is teaching? i wonder

Bye for now-- Marisa

439. **Lisa Samuels**

Re: Critics *vs.* poets? What I miss here are criticisms of poetic

Mon 15 Jul 1996

dear rob hardin,

in response to the last part of your 11 July post:
how one writes poems. for me the process is very
like a verbal string theory at work, or the physical
way i used to imagine string theory: under a
particular kind of emotional and intellectual pressure,
a phrase or title comes into my mind. like, say,
"Hyperplastic iconography buffers". i sit at the
computer fairly soon after that verbal occurrence
and begin to write. the form of the poem asserts
itself, usually, pretty quickly: either it wants space
and dislocation among its phrasal pieces, or it
wants a compression or intimacy. the pieces
themselves seem to feed out one from the other,
according to some distended story-like material
that floats around in the background of unreal
images, or according to a pattern of sound-connectives,
or according to a seemingly self-generating vision
of space and color for which it is necessary to
imagine words. or all three. this describes, to some
extent, a poetic trance, i realize, and tremendous
poetry gets written with a much higher degree of
compositional consciousness in the moment of the
writing. but not by me; or anyway not since i started
to write without worrying about whether i was making
sense. so i end up with work like these two samples,
(each is only the first section of two different poems,
and the spacing is not quite right here):

(1) Iconoclastic relationship to suffering

there is no clean verso to crawl under, anyway nominal
crisp devolution into status angles, mine and yours
and the terminal pathos in between

wrecked integer of head modules, the ones we saw and
sawing, made wooden
in other

words

gone bad in their fidelity, construed according

shaped as armlessly as this one

for when the parachute falls, it's no descent at all
not kin, not dementia-held

but when I found it striking, you were

not in the air, not plugged in the outlets

entirely unlit schema

and (2) The stupefaction of her clothes

Informal synaloepha: let's get dressed
upon the luminous imaginary bed

of idea's thetic absolute,
the migratory information spread around.

The form of crows, the wing of wings,
wholesome dilatory things, creeping through

rapt dreaming, adjust the head's
coarse irradiance, a search

to realign a steadiness
the lungs translate, the body glides

not as though time is a gift, not as if
one were made for it

and so on. the slow pondering of the made poem
happens afterwards, not during, and revision is for me
a process of chipping away what seems redundant
or unnecessary pieces of word-wood, let's say, from
the primary sculpture, and sometimes in reimagining
how the spacing should go, whether to introduce more
air among the words, or less.

long enough.

yours,

lisa samuels

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440. **filch**

Re: Beate Bones and Smokin' Stones

Sat 15 Jul 1995

Didnt they have
>fifties and sixties and seventies in the rest of the world?
Actually George, no, they did not.

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441. **Charles Alexander**

Re: Critics *vs.* poets? What I miss here are criticisms of poetic

Mon 15 Jul 1996

Thanks, Lisa, for the description of the texture of your writing process. It sounds, in its own way, like a personal adaptation (although not necessarily consciously adapted at all) of Olson's sense of composition by field. I particularly like the way you articulate the conscious process of listening/writing/attending to the work as it comes, with some sense of the revision as simply a further listening to what matters.

For me part of this process also involves materials. For example, in one work in progress I am writing on some paper saved from being thrown away somewhere. The sheets are 11 x 17 and I am writing on them by hand, virtually filling the sheet from top to bottom, although there is no constant left or right margin. But again, like you, as soon as I began, this ragged completion of space seemed to be the demand of the materials, including the writing as it emanates, the hand & pen in action, and the paper as it exists. The primary revision is then enacted during the translation from this medium to word processing file on the computer. At the same time I'm working on something else considerably different, poems of mid-length lines, 13 lines each, very orderly on the page, although that order belying a consistency of invention throughout and a lack of "finished-ness." These poems are composed at one sitting each at the computer keyboard. But this work too is conditioned by the writing of the first piece in this series, which actually predated the continuation by a few months. What both of these distinct works share is a lack of interest in completion, so that they both now have several installments and are at the point where I am wondering if their form will change, if more complexity of shaping will be part of the evolution, and if varying senses of completion will begin to enter in.

thanks again for opening up this conversation.

charles

a phrase or title comes into my mind. like, say, "Hyperplastic iconography buffers". i sit at the computer fairly soon after that verbal occurrence and begin to write. the form of the poem asserts itself, usually, pretty quickly: either it wants space and dislocation among its phrasal pieces, or it wants a compression or intimacy. the pieces themselves seem to feed out one from the other, according to some distended story-like material that floats around in the background of unreal images, or according to a pattern of sound-connectives, or according to a seemingly self-generating vision of space and color for which it is necessary to imagine words. or all three. this describes, to some extent, a poetic trance, i realize, and tremendous poetry gets written with a much higher degree of compositional consciousness in the moment of the writing. but not by me; or anyway not since i started to write without worrying about whether i was making sense. so i end up with work like these two samples, (each is only the first section of two different poems, and the spacing is not quite right here):

and so on. the slow pondering of the made poem happens afterwards, not during, and revision is for me a process of chipping away what seems redundant or unnecessary pieces of word-wood, let's say, from the primary sculpture, and sometimes in reimagining how the spacing should go, whether to introduce more air among the words, or less.

long enough.

yours,

lisa samuels

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442. **Rod Smith**
Re: The High Points
Mon 15 Jul 1996

Jordan wrote:

>Rod--what are the conditions on that use? Terms of >rental? (Or, how to get closer, to be more [perpetually] useful?) J

Well J, let's just say I didn't want to depend on my painting for a living.

Rod

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443. **Jerry Rothenberg**
Re: Hisao Kanaseki
Mon 15 Jul 1996

dear Akitoshi Nagahata --

I heard of Kanaseki's death from Ito Hiromi, who has been staying up the street from us and with whom I had sent a fax to Kanaseki and had spoken to his wife only the day before. It was thru Kanaseki that I came to know Hiromi and many others in Japan, and we (my wife and I) were very much looking forward to seeing him again this November. We knew each other from the time that he was working on his book about (and of) American Indian poetry and he got in touch with me through Dan MacLeod and possibly Gary Snyder. He was, as far as I could tell, bound to no school or academic mode of criticism as such, but his devotion to poetry and those who made it was very real and very moving. He was an active and experimental (adventurous) reader and enthusiast, who must have seen some kind of bridging as a primary function of his work as critic/scholar. We felt very needed in his presence and feel immensely saddened by his loss.

If there is to be any memorial or any way of contributing to a memorial, please let me know.

Jerome Rothenberg



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444. **filch**
BookStore
Sat 15 Jul 1995

(Thanks again to Charles Alexander et al. for putting me in touch with Living Batch)(My near neighbors right next door in New Mexico!!)

Of course one of the best book stores around. Sorry to hear about the death of the salt of the earth.

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445. **Judy Roitman**

Wittgenstein

Mon 15 Jul 1996

Rod Smith wrote

> Also, I generally don't find Witt
> "linear" but definitely cumulative.
>

How about simultaneous?

----- Judy Roitman
| "Glad to have Math, University of Kansas | these copies of things
Lawrence, KS 66045 | after a while." [REDACTED]
Larry Eigner, 1927-1996

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446. **Rod Smith**

Re: [REDACTED]

Mon 15 Jul 1996

GB wroted:

>Is Pierre the spirit of the new age?

This not to do with Pierre, but just to mention--

Anselm calls it "newage" pronounced with similar inflection as, yes, you guessed it, sewage.

R

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447. **David Baratier**

tag teamsters local 354 (poet vs critic)

Mon 15 Jul 1996

I got the feeling from these posts that the subject had shifted from earlier discussions on "can a poet be a critic also?" into one about how a mutual relationship can or does exist. And this is off the subject a bit, but I'm tired of a bunch of whinny-ass "poets" telling me about academia ruining writers. As if

this was a situation unique to employees of a university. This insider/out-sider status a lot of these folks are ego-tripping on is a large load, as an out-sider why does one claim the marginalia as a methodology to defeat the inner sanctum (ie Here outside of the academic realm _our_ ideas are purer because we are not in danger of being assimilated into the "university sameness" of ideology, do not have free funding for our journal like the academics who publish each other (ad infinitum), or do not have our writing diluted through a desire for tenure). As if claiming the outside gives a righteous stance of finger pointing. They did this to us, give me sympathy, or one of them NEA funded pick-up trucks. Sorry to drop the bomb, but my continual experience with the outside non-academia has a similar and substantitive threat of ruining your writing, bucko. None of this is to say the academics are off the hook either, I could live without about a half-dozen of the I'm having problems with tenure or I don't go to non-university sponsored readings because the quality is suspect types of discussions. As if we sit in the audience and say: there's one of them university critters from the mansion on the hill, guess they wanted that yearly check-up so they'd have some thing real to write about. As if anywhere is less real than here. Hello, I'm a publisher and editor on the tenth floor of a white tower in a creative corporate environment, therefore my experience is more valid (as informed by the real world) but less crafted (ie not academically supported). This is the foundation peg I have been expected to lie in, come visit me and tack on your framework joineries. I think the validity of the writing accomplished during a particular period is a question whose answer lies in universal determinates, where the natural human desire for comfort does not simply equate to a particular writer's complacency and stability occurs in what ever bastion it arrives.

Paul - erasist vibes coming your way--

Jordan - Suburbs present us with a negation of the present, a landscape consumed by it's past and present.

Rod - If you don't know why do you ask? Still chewing.

Henry - Everyone does everyone. Recherche!!!!

Be well.

Davbid Baratier

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448. **Mark Wallace**

poetry and criticism as the same

Mon 15 Jul 1996

Dear Bill Marsh and others:

A quick thanks to Henry Gould and Charles Alexander for making some valuable additions to my remarks about poets and critics, and to you, Bill, and some others for asking me helpful questions.

Let me see if I can briefly answer your question.

Theoretically, and aesthetically, the difference between poetry and poetry criticism can be easily and successfully collapsed.

Sociologically, except for a few avant garde publications, the difference between poetry and poetry criticism is absolute. For proof of this, please try to send one of your own, highly theoretical (and successfully so) poems to a standard academic journal, or any magazine that pays contributors, and tell them that it is criticism. Or, were you working at a university, turn in your published collection of poems to a tenure committee for evidence that you have been "critically active."

I pay attention to aesthetic and philosophical questions because I enjoy them.

I pay attention to sociological problems because I have no choice.

Frankly, I'm still enough of a Marxist to believe that sociological conditions determine artistic production--although the weakness of much Marxist criticism has been its tendency to oversimplify what is meant by "determine." What that means is that I do not think there are any purely "aesthetic" questions.

Thus, the fact that we can aesthetically collapse the distinction between poetry and poetry criticism does not mean that anything of sociological significance has changed, at least to any significant extent.

I do not really understand Robert van Halleburg in his recent debate with Al Nielsen when he starts talking about "sociological" readings of poems as separate from some other possibilities for reading poems. I'm pretty much convinced there are ONLY sociological readings, and that the whole history of "close reading" itself is based in social phenomena. The difference is between readings that recognize their social conditions, and those that are under the illusion that they transcend them.

The extent to which my poetry raises questions that can be discussed as purely "aesthetic" rather than sociological is the extent to which my poetry, or its readers, have failed to understand what is at stake.

mark wallace

(please excuse any typos over this long distance, semi-functional modem)

/-----\ |
| | "I have not yet begun" | |

to go to extremes"		GWU:	
	http://gwis2.circ.gwu.edu/~mdw		EPC:
	http://writing.upenn.edu/epc/authors/wallace		

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449. **maria damon**

Re: of the whole art/spam two generations

Mon 15 Jul 1996

In message <[REDACTED]> UB Poetics discussion group
writes:

> >
> > >> On Fri, 12 Jul 1996, George Bowering wrote:
> > >>
> > >>> > Hi. What's the unconscious?
> > >>> >
> > >>> > Jordan
> > >>>
> > >>> I dont know what yr talking about.
> > >>
> > >> Nor do I, you.
> > >>
> > >> Tristan
> > >
> > >
> > >--Neither do I, I.
> >
> >
> > i do not i
> >
> id, we're getting closer!
super!

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450. **maria damon**

Re: text/language

Mon 15 Jul 1996

thanks for the "divination" stuff; i like that as a notion of "reading" --one last
quickie about weaving (sorry about the pomposity of my earlier post about how
i "became a weaver" ... "writer" ...) --one of the things that charms me about

weaving is the technical terms, which are childish and fun: "shuttle," "heddle," "treadle" (pronounced "treddle"), "raddle," "bobbin." can any of you linguists shed light on why these terms might be the way they are? (backchannel wd be cool, so as not to distract others with this sidelight)--md

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451. **maria damon**

Re: [REDACTED]

Mon 15 Jul 1996

yes indeed, happy birthday, hope yr out reveling in sun and joy, and here's to another 50 just as fab.
md

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452. **Tony Green**

Re: critics vs. poets (tag team round three)

Mon 15 Jul 1996

Rob Hardin: one more word (repeated ad lib) " doleful "

Tony Green,

e-mail: [REDACTED]

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453. **Peter Quartermain**

eudora crash

Mon 15 Jul 1996

(Still sending, not receiving)

For those who need to know, and for Bill Marsh in especial:

EUDORA crashed because the server sending Bill Marsh's message dates his message

--wait for it!!!--

1969

instead of 1996.

This is known to Eudora (their technicians tell me) as a BAD DATE for which you get the message "Application Error Integer Divide by Zero".

So I set my system up again, having had my server delete Bill Marsh's messages, got going nicely, and dammit there was another one! The bad date does not affect Winsock (which I use to interface) but does affect Netscape and Eudora, on a PC486 (memory is no problem that i can see on my machine) -- it has

no effect on a MAC. Once again I have lost half my mail (downloaded and then scrambled / garbled by a second wrong date -- origin unknown: you again, Bill?))

In any case, I'm off-line till 1 August; I can however download (horribly, and sort of) through Windows 3.1 Terminal (yuck) till I fix myself up again.

Madre dios!

Peter.

+

Peter Quartermain
128 East 23rd Avenue
Vancouver
B.C.
Canada V5V 1X2
Voice and fax: [REDACTED]

+

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454. Tony Green

listwars&ironeey

Mon 15 Jul 1996

Email is ironyless? dripdry?

Tony Green,

e-mail: [REDACTED]

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455. Tony Green

summer?

Mon 15 Jul 1996

Eryque: you know I've been reading horoscopes and they are all as unfunny as anything I've ever met, can't find anything there for you, but thanks for the good wishes for the summer, I love that since it's middle of winter, and summer is half a year away. It's been raining a lot and more to come and further south snow, polluted by volcanic ash. It's a time when poets go up the wall. So have a good winter -- Eryque.

Tony Green,

e-mail: [REDACTED]

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456. **Tony Green**

Re: of the whole art/spam two generations

Mon 15 Jul 1996

On Fri, 12 Jul 1996, George Bowering wrote:

Hi. What's the unconscious?

Jordan

I dont know what yr talking about.

Nor do I, you.

Tristan

--Neither do I, I.

i do not i

--Oh, I'll bet you I from time to time.

-- no,no no, no, meaning yes

Tony Green,

e-mail: [REDACTED]

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457. **trace s. ruggles**

Re: the texture of poetry

Mon 15 Jul 1996

considered the world of texture
in a poem

listened to my body
went to the poetry room (as
opposed to the short story room)
heard the soundvoice who
doesn't exist with the audible (went
to the syntax room)
processed a line
of energy through
head neck chest abdomen crotch

then turned to edit as another
being
being
emptied space and filled space
one word as another
moves an
other wise simple page

i don't know exactly what i'm saying but this whole business is so damn organic
that the 'voice' that exists is something larger than me and comes through me,
filtered with the body, the body as a resonance tool

and it all creates a tactile song apprehended but once and remembered many
times

how do we forget what we've done to make another?

trace
(from the vermin lurkers...)

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458. **Aldon L. Nielsen**
Re: Kweisi he calls me
Tue 16 Jul 1996

Won't have time after all to post that report on the Bob and Elizabeth Dole book signing at Westwood Borders -- Just let me tell you it's not true what they say about me "setting them up." Nor was that me in the big cigarette suit -- Noticed, by the way, that Mr. Cigarette got more requests for autographs than did Bob & Elizabeth -- But Mr. Cig. probably has a larger constituency --

BUT THE REAL POINT OF THIS NOTE is to say that I'm going away for six days -- will leave mail ON so as to receive any additional stabs at that poem I posted here for the contest -- Several VERY good efforts so far (and Alan Golding figured out by means of literary history that it could not be the poet most people were guessing) -- Will check mail for first correct answer when I get back & will then post the awful truth of that poem -- (This is not a particularly tricky one, by the way -- This is a poet you've all heard of)

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459. **Gabrielle Welford**

Re: of the whole art/spam two generations

Tue 16 Jul 1996

> >>>> >Hi. What's the unconscious?
> >>>> >
> >>>> >Jordan
> >>>>
> >>>> I dont know what yr talking about.
> >>>
> >>>Nor do I, you.
> >>>
> >>>Tristan
> >>
> >>
> >>--Neither do I, I.
> >
> >
> >i do not i
>
> --Oh, I'll bet you I from time to time.
>
> -- no,no no, no, meaning yes
>
 i yes i yes i you

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460. **George Bowering**

Re: of the whole art/spam two generations

Tue 16 Jul 1996

Hi. What's the unconscious?

Jordan

I dont know what yr talking about.

Nor do I, you.

Tristan

--Neither do I, I.

i do not i

--Oh, I'll bet you I from time to time.

-- no,no no, no, meaning yes

i yes i yes i you

:oh, yez, I ewes too
but no now, no I i's

.....
"a vivid weightless bean"
--A. Hollo

George Bowering.
2499 West 37th Ave.,
Vancouver, B.C.,
Canada V6M 1P4

fax: [REDACTED]
e-mail: [REDACTED]

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461. **Carnography**

Re: text/language

Tue 16 Jul 1996

maria damon typed:

*(sorry about the pomposity of my earlier post about
how i "became a weaver"..."writer"...)*

What do you mean "pompous?" Your lack of pomposity was evident (you weren't lecturing anybody), and you were far too informative to be accused of self-absorption. Like any really good performance poet (Dael Orlandersmith) will attest, autobiography is just a mode. To confuse autobiography for narcissism is to mistake the writer's approach for the quality of the writer's attention.

*--one of the things that charms me about weaving is the technical terms,
which are childish and fun: "shuttle," "heddle," "treadle" (pronounced
"treddle"), "raddle," "bobbin." can any of you linguists
shed light on why these terms might be the way they are? (backchannel*

"Linguists?" You don't need to be a linguist to study the origins and sounds of words. Your weaver's lexicon sounds far too fun.

wd be cool, so as not to distract others with this sidelight)--md

Etymology isn't off-topic on a poetics list. The subject certainly leaves me more interested than impatient.

All the best,

Rob Hardin

<http://www.interport.net/~scrypt>

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462. **Carnography**

Re: critics vs. poets (tag team round three)

Tue 16 Jul 1996

Tony Green:

| Rob Hardin: *one more word (repeated ad lib) "doleful"*

And you'd like this ||:word:|| to be repeated in response to...Melville's poetry?

§

Still thinking about Lisa, trace, and Charles's recent missives concerning their real-time approaches to composition. It's a pleasure to read people speaking about their work.

§

And no, my interest in fugitive theory doesn't mean I'm anti-academic. It merely means that I'm researching other approaches to theory. So far as I know, that kind of research was one of the primary critical activities of many of the educated (but not always tenured) poets we discuss in UB Poetics.

All the best,

Rob Hardin

<http://www.interport.net/~scrypt>

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463. **cris cheek**

Carla Harryman and Barrett Watten

Tue 16 Jul 1996

A Reading Performance by North American Language Writing Artists, Carla Harryman and Barrett Watten. (part of this year's East International)

Date: Wednesday 17 July at 15.00

Venue: Riverside Lecture Theatre, Norwich School of Art and Design, St Georges Street, Norwich (phone 01603 610561)

all are welcome and admission is Free

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464. **Kevin Killian**

Re: press survival

Tue 16 Jul 1996

At 1:23 PM 7/16/96, Charles Alexander wrote:

And here's possibly a devil's advocate thought, concerning the demise of Coach House. That is, part of my experience with the institutionalization and bureaucratization of nonprofit arts and publishing since I've been in the Twin Cities has only reinforced my feelings that many institutions live past their richest artistic periods as they achieve stabilization. Often such stabilization means doing work which is more fundable and which can demonstrate reaching larger audiences. Certainly art & literature needs those audiences, and those audience needs deserve to be met.

Charles,

I'm sure you've written grants and are aware how hard it is to write grants for the desperately-need funding a nonprofit needs--how difficult it is to keep true to the mission of the org and yet please the whims of funders. Increasingly on grant applications I'm seeing, audience development seems to be a bigger and bigger focus--sometimes it seems the actual programming is an after-thought. Putting on experimental poetry readings for a bunch of over-served snobs (which is what I think my programming would look like to many funders) is not going to be seen as audience development, even though SPT's audiences are quite large by poetry standards. Looking at grant applications I often think, "Now how can I sneak in an intelligent project." It's not easy. Sometimes it seems that literature has it worse than other arts. It's not all that rare to see interesting projects in visual arts funded, but for literature it's heart-strings projects all the way. I was a judge for one artist in residency program, and consistently there was a high intellectual standard for visual arts, whereas when I tried to get an award for a white male experimental poet I practically got laughed out of the room. Recently SPT got to the second round for one of those grants that cycle through disciplines--the year before, visual arts was the category, and I was impressed with some of the awards. But the literature awards the year we applied were gruesome. When I read them to our graphic designer, he said they sounded like topics for the Rickie Lake Show.

Just needed to bitch.

Dodie

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465. **Michael Boughn**

Bad news

Tue 16 Jul 1996

The bad news here this a.m. is the announcement of the closing of Coach House Press, much esteemed publishers of Robin Blaser, George Bowering, Michael Ondaatje, Sharon Thesen, and many many others, after 31 years due to the continuing implementation of knee-jerk neo-con economics by the provincial and federal governments. Chalk up another victory for the New York bankers.

Mike
[REDACTED]

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466. **Alan Sondheim**

Coach House

Tue 16 Jul 1996

CH is closing? I can't believe this - the best editions of Nicole Brossard in English... it's hard enough to get hold of Quebecois work in translation outside Mtl.... Alan

http://jefferson.village.virginia.edu/~spoons/internet_txt.html
images: http://www.cs.unca.edu/~davidson/pix/
Canis caninam non est.

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467. **maria damon**

Re: Bad news

Tue 16 Jul 1996

this news is really sad. i'm sorry and mad. what next.--md

In message <[REDACTED]> UB Poetics discussion
group writes:

> The bad news here this a.m. is the announcement of the closing of
> Coach House Press, much esteemed publishers of Robin Blaser, George
> Bowering, Michael Ondaatje, Sharon Thesen, and many many others, after
> 31 years due to the continuing implementation of knee-jerk neo-con
> economics by the provincial and federal governments. Chalk up another
> victory for the New York bankers.
>
> Mike
> [REDACTED]

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468. **Lisa Amber Phillips**

Re: Coach House (re-post due to delivery failure)

Tue 16 Jul 1996

From: IN%"██████████" "PMDF Mail Server" 16-JUL-1996 10:34:11.42 To: IN%"██████████", IN%"██████████" CC: Subj: Undeliverable mail: SMTP delivery failure

(PMDF V4.3-10 #10451) id <██████████>; Tue, 16 Jul 1996 10:34:05 -0500 (EST)

Date: Tue, 16 Jul 1996 10:34:05 -0500 (EST)

From: PMDF Mail Server <██████████>

Subject: Undeliverable mail: SMTP delivery failure

To: ██████████, ██████████

--Boundary (ID PxZB22RCVXxwGm025Ae1zw)

The message could not be delivered to:

Addressee: ██████████

Reason: Illegal host/domain name found.

--Boundary (ID PxZB22RCVXxwGm025Ae1zw)

(PMDF V4.3-10 #10451) id <██████████>; Tue, 16 Jul 1996 10:34:02 -0500 (EST)

Date: Tue, 16 Jul 1996 10:34:02 -0500 (EST)

From: ██████████

Subject: Re: Coach House

To: ██████████

Mike, I'm interested in the details behind "the continuing implementation of knee-jerk neo-con economics by the provincial and federal governments." What, in your view, are the particulars of those kinds of economics? I ask because in the last year, in conversation with one or two people who publish poetry (at the moment I'm thinking of Sam Hamill of Copper Canyon Press), I've gotten the distinct impression that there are a great number of small presses out there who are in more danger than usual of going under. I have also gotten the impression that, due to the always-rising costs of publishing (especially the price of paper), small presses have become increasingly dependent upon grants from governmental arts institutions like NEH, which have of course recently and drastically reduced funding due to their own decreased funding b by Congress. Since small presses publish a very high percentage of the contemporary poetry in this country--especially experimental work--then I also get the impression that poetry itself is in some danger; not only will the already-published works of

poets like Robin Blaser and Sharon Thesen fall out of print (which is tragic), but there will be fewer places and opportunities for poets to publish as well (which is also tragic).

The next question I want to ask (because I've been turning it over in the back of my mind for some months now and would be interested in other viewpoints) is: Is it possible for small presses of today to remove themselves from live-or-die dependence upon the fickle funding of governments, or avoid it altogether, or are publishing costs just too high and returns on sales too small? And, are there any alternatives to this situation to keep distributing the work of contemporary writers (I know there are, but I want to hear suggestions from others, as well as pro-and-con evaluations of those alternatives if there are any). I'd especially be interested in hearing from those who are currently publishing contemporary poets. Thanks.

Lisa Amber Phillips

[REDACTED]

--Boundary (ID PxZB22RCVXxwGm025Ae1zw)--

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469. **Charles Alexander**

Re: BookStore

Tue 16 Jul 1996

(Thanks again to Charles Alexander et al. for putting me in touch with Living Batch)(My near neighbors right next door in New Mexico!!)

Of course one of the best book stores around. Sorry to hear about the death of the salt of the earth.

And of course if you're looking for rare first editions, out of print poetry, limited edition handmade books, etc., in Albuquerque, you have to check out Passages, begun a few years ago by the incomparable David Abel (some in New York will know David from the Bridge Bookstore several years ago there). His email is

[REDACTED]

charles

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471. **Charles Alexander**

Re: Bad news

Tue 16 Jul 1996

I ache at this announcement. Not only for Canada, but certainly one of the world's great publishers of important, innovative literature over the last few decades. They will be sorely missed.

Soon after beginning a press, in 1981, I visited Coach House for the first time, and visited bp Nichol in Toronto. Both visits, for a variety of reasons, were providential to the future of my work in writing and publishing. Just over a year ago I visited the original Coach House site again, having no idea it would be the last time. I still encourage all to go there, at least to see the concrete poem etched in the concrete lane in the back, now named bpNichol Lane. And perhaps Stan and others involved will still find ways to make & publish books there, even if it's not Coach House.

One good thing come to an end. Bless it.

charles

The bad news here this a.m. is the announcement of the closing of Coach House Press, much esteemed publishers of Robin Blaser, George Bowering, Michael Ondaatje, Sharon Thesen, and many many others, after 31 years due to the continuing implementation of knee-jerk neo-con economics by the provincial and federal governments. Chalk up another victory for the New York bankers.

Mike

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472. **Charles Alexander**

press survival

Tue 16 Jul 1996

Mike, I'm interested in the details behind "the continuing implementation of knee-jerk neo-con economics by the provincial and federal governments." What, in your view, are the particulars of those kinds of economics?

There is certainly a relationship between conservative politics and the de-funding of the arts in America, and probably in Canada, although I know much less about that. And the more limited funding tends, in my view, to go to the most established presses publishing the most commercially palatable/successful literature. Although even those presses are struggling more than usual (but it would be wrong to deny that it has always in this century and probably before been a struggle to publish literature of practically any kind). In addition, with national funding cutbacks there were many hopes that more funds could be leveraged in state legislatures to replace lost federal dollars for the arts. For the most part, in most states, the opposite may be happening. States are saying they can't & won't replace the federal dollars, and in many cases are cutting back their own dollars. Most states are as politically conservative as the federal government, if not moreso, and this absolutely effects arts funding.

I ask because in the last year, in conversation with one or two people who publish poetry (at the moment I'm thinking of Sam Hamill of Copper Canyon Press), I've gotten the distinct impression that there are a great number of small presses out there who are in more danger than usual of going under.

Yes, they are. See above.

I have also gotten the impression that, due to the always-rising costs of publishing (especially the price of paper), small presses have become increasingly dependent upon grants from governmental arts institutions like NEH, which have of course recently and drastically reduced funding due to their own decreased funding by Congress.

Paper costs are actually descending once again, and I am not finding it considerably more expensive to publish books this year than five or six years ago. But I am finding it more difficult to find dollars to pay the costs, and somewhat more difficult to distribute & sell books, although this is somewhat offset by the advantage of having been at it now for several years, and the audience-building that the ongoing activity achieves. The NEH almost never funds small presses, unless the activity is specifically scholarly. The NEA has consistently funded a small number of presses, although the record with regard to more experimental/innovative poetries has been spotty.

Since small presses publish a very high percentage of the contemporary poetry in this country--especially experimental work--then I also get the impression that poetry itself is in some danger; not only will the already-published works of poets like Robin Blaser and Sharon Thesen fall out of print (which is tragic), but there will be fewer places and opportunities for poets to publish as well (which is also tragic).

This is not so clear to me. There seem to be more journals popping up each year, although they are not necessarily long-lived. Also, the possibilities of electronic publishing and distribution have barely been tapped. And the presses which perhaps have the best chance of survival are the micro-presses publishing chapbooks off the desktop and keeping expenses at the minimum. I think this is all good news, and we may have to lose some of our hierarchical ideas about what constitutes an important book (looks of book, whether or not we find it in many bookstores or in creative independent channels, etc.)

The next question I want to ask (because I've been turning it over in the back of my mind for some months now and would be interested in other viewpoints) is: Is it possible for small presses of today to remove themselves from live-or-die dependence upon the fickle funding of governments, or avoid it altogether, or are publishing costs just too high and returns on sales too small?

There are some presses which do so. The answers here are as multiple as the presses. A recent article in Publishers Weekly (perhaps a couple of months ago) was by the director of The Permanent Press and discussed that press's ability to keep afloat, not as a nonprofit organization. I would certainly not encourage new presses beginning now to go the nonprofit corporation route, at least not without some deep thought and research about it. On the other hand, I don't think I'd yet encourage those who already have that status and have learned how to work with it, to throw it out the window. But no doubt about it, presses are going to have to be creative in developing survival strategies.

And, are there any alternatives to this situation to keep distributing the work of contemporary writers (I know there are, but I want to hear suggestions from others, as well as pro-and-con evaluations of those alternatives if there are any). I'd especially be interested in hearing from those who are currently publishing contemporary poets. Thanks.

I certainly would like to hear other ideas about this as well. Thanks to Lisa Amber Phillips for bringing it up.

charles

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473. **Judy Roitman**

Re: press survival

Tue 16 Jul 1996

... we may have to lose some of our hierarchical ideas about what constitutes an important book (looks of book, whether or not we find it in many bookstores or in creative independent channels, etc.)

But combined with the dominance of B&N & Borders, and the resulting difficulties of independent bookstores, how will these creative independent channels flourish, and how will people find them?

This is a serious question. There is (always -- the natural course of things) too much of an insider/outsider situation, and a whole school of writing going samizdat will make things worse.

----- Judy Roitman
| "Glad to have Math, University of Kansas | these copies of things
Lawrence, KS 66045 | after a while." [REDACTED]
Larry Eigner, 1927-1996

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474. **Carnography**

Re: Coach House (re-post due to delivery failure)

Tue 16 Jul 1996

Lisa Amber Phillips typed:

The next question I want to ask (because I've been turning it over in the back of my mind for some months now and would be interested in other viewpoints) is: Is it possible for small presses of today to remove themselves from live-or-die dependence upon the fickle funding of governments, or avoid it altogether, or are publishing costs just too high and returns on sales too small?

My fellow editors and I at _Sensitive Skin_ have been wondering exactly the same thing. It is easy enough for us to sink dough into an issue of the magazine when we've each got lots of freelance work (see 89-92). But when we're coasting financially, like we are now, there is absolutely nowhere to turn. For two years, we've tried for grants without success. In our current unpublished issue, we've got original work by Luc Sante and Lynne Tillman, an unpublished interview with William Burroughs conducted by Ginsburg, and photographs by Richard Kern. None of this work is particularly difficult (except, subtly, for Lynne's), yet no one has given us the financial time of day. Not to be able to find

the backing to publish a Burroughs issue in 1996 seems tragic if not downright mystifying.

My strategy in editing SS and other magazines has always been to use names to attract readers, but to concentrate on promoting writers who are relatively obscure. If we can't find the funding to publish Burroughs, then how will we publish the difficult writing that people ought to know? Autonomedia has faced similar problems; Prof. Doug Rice has been publishing his magazine *_Nobodaddies_*, out of his own pocket. Are the arts to follow a kind of economic arch form?

Have we reverted from the financial independence of Beethoven to the patrons of Haydn and Mozart? And if so, what literate millionaire is going to understand the writing of, say, Rae Armantrout? I've just been speaking to the heir to Prentice-Hall; let's just say that he is interested in reportage and despises the entire notion of literature, of fiction and poetry, on principle. I wouldn't trust him to write a literate sentence, let alone to value important or difficult work.

Defunding, I think, is partly at fault for the dumbing of readings that people complain about in UB Poetics. Lowest common denominators begin to look good to artists who are fighting for economic survival. What we're dealing with, of course, is financial censorship. A kind of *_On the Waterfront_* close-out of artists who don't reflect the Deaf, Dumb & Dumber values of the culture.

It's odd, how *_Skin_* eds have begun to look at publishing in terms of escape from financial famine. Just get to Germany, we've been thinking. Get the magazine to Europe and tap our resources there.

All the best,

Rob Hardin

<http://www.interport.net/~sccrypt>

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475. **Carnography**

Re: BookStore

Tue 16 Jul 1996

Charles Alexander typed:

And of course if you're looking for rare first editions, out of print poetry, limited edition handmade books, etc., in Albuquerque, you have to check out Passages, begun a few years ago by the incomparable David Abel (some in New York will know David from the Bridge Bookstore several years ago there). His email is [REDACTED]

Thanks, Charles. David's bookstore, The Bridge, was the only one of its kind in NYC: no one else was interested promoting in difficult poetry and prose. The Bridge was only bookstore here to face-out the entire Sun & Moon catalog, the

only place where you might enter into a conversation about Clark Coolidge, to have a book-signing party for Robert Pinget. You should have seen how moved Pinget was by David's interest.

The Poetry Project was always interested in a kind of interdisciplinary pop culture strategy that I don't find particularly useful as a writer. David was our resident monk, our interlocutor. We miss him sorely.

All the best,

Rob Hardin

PS: Segue and other presses are certainly based in NYC. But so far as I know, The Bridge was and remains the only cross-plat poetry *bookstore* of the late eighties. Anselm Hollo, David Rattray and Keith Waldrop in beautifully dissonant succession.

<http://www.interport.net/~scrept>

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476. **Mark Wallace**
experiments and identities

Tue 16 Jul 1996

For anyone interested in the recently ongoing thread about experimental poetries and identity politics, Harryette Mullin's piece "Poetry and Identity" in the new West Coast Line is really a must read. Well argued, precise, and right there.

But as I was reading it last night, I also saw this new commercial for Colgate toothpaste, whose main character is an African American woman poet who uses Colgate and recites her poetry on stage, the key line being "Free. Free to be me." Has anyone else seen this?

I wanted to quote another choice bit from the new West Coast line. I think it applies to all sorts of contexts other than the one for which it is perfectly well-suited. In this piece by Jessica Johnson, Sam ("a smallish Cub Scout of indeterminate gender") knocks at the door of a house where there is a party hosted by Judith Butler, with Monique Wittig as one of the guests. Sam doesn't know whether to "become a Girl Guide or a Boy Scout." Here's how the scene ends:

"But what am I supposed to do right this minute?" asked Sam. "I can't stay in your kitchen forever. I have to go out and play on a team." "You could alternate teams, for maximum effect," suggested Judith Butler. "Or you could simply forget about being a scout. Deny teams. In my case, I find it necessary to suppress them. That is the point of view of the lesbian," said Monique Wittig. "I've been meaning to talk to you about that," said Judith Butler.

And that started a debate. This gave Sam the opportunity to take a muffin from the counter, and slip quietly out the back door.

mark wallace

```
/-----\ |
||      "I have not yet begun      ||
to go to extremes"      ||  GWU:      |
|  http://gwis2.circ.gwu.edu/~mdw      ||  EPC:
||  http://writing.upenn.edu/epc/authors/wallace      ||
|_____||
```

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477. **Kevin Killian**

Re: press survival

Tue 16 Jul 1996

At 3:21 PM 7/16/96, Judy Roitman wrote:

| *Dodie, I thought that only happened in Kansas.*

Actually, a project involving Toto would probably have a good chance of getting funded.

db

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478. **Charles Alexander**

Re: press survival

Tue 16 Jul 1996

*... we may have to lose some of our
hierarchical ideas about what constitutes an important book (looks of book,
whether or not we find it in many bookstores or in creative independent
channels, etc.)*

*But combined with the dominance of B&N & Borders, and the resulting
difficulties of independent bookstores, how will these creative independent
channels flourish, and how will people find them?*

*This is a serious question. There is (always -- the natural course of
things) too much of an insider/outsider situation, and a whole school of
writing going samizdat will make things worse.*

Perhaps you are right, and I don't have the answers about how the creative channels will flourish. But in the last year Chax Press has sold more books

through this Poetics list than it ever has through any single source other than specific book distributors like SPD. More through Poetics than through library jobbers like Baker & Taylor. So that indicates to me that, while it may be samizdat, the potential for the actual number of readers to grow through such channels may be great.

Look forward to another Chax sales announcement very soon (within the next week) for a new book by Tom Mandel, *Prospect of Release*, and for a couple of previous handmade books (by Nathaniel Mackey & Gil Ott). This is a sale prior to our return move to Tucson, Arizona, which will take place before the end of August.

And I will extend a thank you right here to the terrific participants on this poetics list who have supported Chax Press and other presses as well, and for the ongoing conversation of which it is a pleasure to be a part.

And here's possibly a devil's advocate thought, concerning the demise of Coach House. That is, part of my experience with the institutionalization and bureaucratization of nonprofit arts and publishing since I've been in the Twin Cities has only reinforced my feelings that many institutions live past their richest artistic periods as they achieve stabilization. Often such stabilization means doing work which is more fundable and which can demonstrate reaching larger audiences. Certainly art & literature needs those audiences, and those audience needs deserve to be met. But I still feel that not every (& possibly not even most) arts organizations and activities need to live on in perpetuity (or close) & that it's perfectly fine to serve a dedicated mission for any period of time from a few days to several years and then simply stop, for whatever reasons. Some of my favorite presses and magazines historically (The Objectivist Press, Black Sun Press, HOW(ever), etc.) were not particularly long-lived. In comparison, Coach House lived a long and very productive life. I think I'd rather celebrate its glory than bemoan its passing.

charles

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479. **Mark Wallace**
readings in Washington, D.C.

Tue 16 Jul 1996

We may have some openings for poetry readings here in D.C., so if there's anyone who is interested in that possibility, please contact me at this e-mail address. Unfortunately, we don't have any travel money to offer at this time, but we can always offer an informed and committed audience.

But please, no requests for readings around the time of MLA in late December. Things here will be very hectic then. We're hoping to put something together at that time, and more information will be posted as it becomes available.

Mark Wallace

```
/-----\ |
||      "I have not yet begun      ||
to go to extremes"      ||  GWU:      |
|  http://gwis2.circ.gwu.edu/~mdw      ||  EPC:
||  http://writing.upenn.edu/epc/authors/wallace      ||
|
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480. **Herb Levy**

Re: Bad news

Tue 16 Jul 1996

It is obviously very sad news that Coach House is going under, and I agree with much of what people have said (& no doubt will continue to say) about the problems of distribution, marketing, and selling new, experimental poetry to an audience of people who aren't on this e-mail list; etc. But distribution for avant garde work has always sucked, finding that audience (one person at a time) has always been a pain in the ass, & grants have rarely, if ever, been enough to support a project of the scale of Coach House.

Historically, how many small presses have lasted thirty years or more? How many small presses from the mid-Sixties are still going strong? (For that matter, how many adventurous, experimental, or whatever non-profit arts organizations in any field have lasted this long?)

In the US, I can think of City Lights, New Directions & Black Sparrow (which may not be quite that old), but these seem to have survived because they have reprint rights for books used in college & university courses or some other works that have guaranteed sales (is Bukowski on the syllabus anywhere?). (& yes, I do know that New Directions started with a wad of family money, but the continued survival of ND as a business is at least as related to the number of copies of books by Pound, WCW, HD, Duncan, & others that are sold to students yearly.)

I'm not trying to minimize the impact that the loss of Coach House will have: It is (& I'm consciously using the present tense here) clearly THE major press for new poetry in Canada, they have a great backlist, they know what work is important to publish and have been able to find ways to get it out there.

Still, I'm not sure that the forces at work here are simply the current economic state of the Corporate/State. We're not talking best sellers here. Small presses, & arts organizations in general, which last more than thirty years have developed some kind of financial stability (whether it's market share, donor base, or stylish t-shirts & gimme caps) that has been, unfortunately, all too often unrelated to artistic merit.

Herb Levy



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481. **maria damon**

Re: Coach House (re-post due to delivery failure)

Tue 16 Jul 1996

lisa amber philips writes:

>

>... I've gotten the distinct impression that there are a

> great number of small presses out there who are in more danger than

> usual of going under...

> The next question I want to ask (because I've been turning it over in the

> back of my mind for some months now and would be interested in other

> viewpoints) is: Is it possible for small presses of today to remove

> themselves from live-or-die dependence upon the fickle funding of

> governments, or avoid it altogether, or are publishing costs just too

> high and returns on sales too small? ...

>

>

i know some presses (coffee house, arte publico, etc.,) have gone non-profit as a way of becoming eligible for lots of private foundation money like lila wallace reader's digest, lannan foundation, etc. the trouble is, many small presses are basically the vision of one or two people, and when going non-profit they have to have a board of directors, staff, etc. and there can be some uncomfortableness, basically, in shifting to a more corporate model of operation.

md

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482. **David Baratier**

press haus

Tue 16 Jul 1996

The rising cost of paper has occurred for a very simple reason: it is bought on the futures market, in the same way one might reserve oil now (through purchase) which will not be freed up for the buyer until one year from the purchase date. Large publishing houses are buying up millions of pounds of paper in this advance method, making smaller lots of paper for purchase scarce. While I'm glad that this period of scarcity seems to have lightened, I do keep in mind the fact of the almost decimation of independent films in the mid-seventies through this same kind of process (competing with the major studios for film purchase).

As a publisher who does not depend on grants at all, I find the recent lack of NEA and other funds in the US for literary publications to be an excellent opportunity for our journal. Publications which have outlived their life-expectancy through government monetary support will finally have wake-up and-- SURPRISE!-- pay attention to what their re-formed public constituency of readers is looking for. They will have to build a community of writers and readers instead of assuming there is one nebulously floating in some provincial area. Many journals will fold, lacking the aptitude to adapt to this new found circumstance, and many will lament the occurrence in the same way that newspapers lament the closing of an independent bookstore without ever having run a positive write-up of that same store when in business.

Distribution is in a horrible state. When Charles mentioned that people need to change their thinking on what constitutes a publication to also include xerox staple-bound books (such as Tom Beckett's *Interruptions* book of work by Fielding Dawson) or smaller free-bound publications (with an envelope as binding, such as the old *Hanging Loose* issues, or the one we are doing by Robert Grenier) or e-mail/web sites as publications. But what I think is as important is re-tooling the ideologies of the consumer towards a willingness to purchase products through direct-to-publisher mail order methods. Unless piggy-backing onto a larger organization, small press publishers have a difficult time finding a distributor. And if a press purely publishes work which is not perfect bound, none of the major distributors will carry the product. Period.

Be well.

David Baratier

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483. **Charles Smith**

Re: press survival

Tue 16 Jul 1996

In a message dated 96-07-16 12:02:59 EDT, Charles Alexander writes:

<< I would certainly
not encourage new presses beginning now to go the nonprofit corporation
route, at least not without some deep thought and research about it. >>

Charles, would you amplify on this?

& deep regrets at the passing of Coach House

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484. **Daniel Salmon**

Re: Marsh

Tue 16 Jul 1996

Hi all,

Exactly the same thing happened to me, ie "integer divide by 0" i have swapped modems, deleted my entire c drive, been convinced it was a hard ware problem and nerely bought more memory, spent about 3 days trying to sort it out with my provider and the people i bought the computer from, perhaps Bill Marsh could talk to his people before continuing to mail. It sounds as though its fuck-
ing a lot of people up, do others use pegasus or something. A bit bloody frus-
trating really, Dan.

BTW using netscape to access it works today, but didn't when it first happened.

Yours 'ludditedly'

Dan.

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485. **Charles Alexander**

Re: BookStore

Tue 16 Jul 1996

Dear Rob

Thanks for your moving tribute to David Abel & The Bridge. I'll forward it to David who I am certain will be his usual gracious self, very glad to be appreciated in such a way. And I hope to see him in about a month in Albuquerque, and hopefully give a report sometime after that to this list.

charles

486. **Gabrielle Welford**

Language in Contemporary American Poetry (9/15; NEMLA) (fwd)

Tue 16 Jul 1996

Call for Papers:

Panel for 1997 Northeast Modern Language Association Convention, Philadelphia, PA. Notes Toward "Notes Toward A Supreme Fiction": Language in Contemporary American Poetry

Postmodern theory, ideas that have dominated academic circles for the past three decades, has again come under heavy negative criticism, rending fresh philosophical "rifts" in universities worldwide. This backlash, harboring academia's desire to re-affirm its identity in the face of theory that renders our pursuit for meaning meaningless, exemplifies the perpetual modern dilemma (and our endless quest to solve it) that both artists and humans in general confront: justification for the creation of art (and literary criticism); validation of one's self in an indeterminate world. Traditionally, American poets have attempted to come to terms with this paradox and situate our collective thought on this always fluctuating issue; I wish to review, in this panel, where contemporary poetry currently finds itself with regards to the use of language and the making of meaning. Working in a medium that has been declared "slippery," unable to convey fixed meaning, American poets may (or may not) need to look beyond the postmodern inconceivable notions of meaning, guaranteeing their place in society as an artist and an individual. In order to satisfy the contradictory desires for absolute meaning and a multiplicity of meaning generated by our use of language in a diverse, pluralistic society, where the fragmentary nature of our culture contributes to the "slipperiness" of language, contemporary poets appear to attempt to sustain simultaneously the interplay and interdependency of the possibilities of language as metaphor explaining some "truth" and language as fragmentation, the making of many meanings. My goal for this panel is to assess how "well" contemporary poets are dealing with our paradox of language, a paradox that begs for unification of the idea of existentialism with the reality of communal life and a balancing between truth and absurdity. It would be worthwhile to observe how concerned our poets are with the notion that there is no meaning in a medium in which they create something of permanence; how close do they reflect/reveal the thought behind the postmodern rebellion (outlined above); what, if anything, do our contemporary American poets, traditionally our spokespeople, our seers, predict for what lies ahead for language-using humans beyond our postmodern age.

Deadline for abstracts or papers is September 15, 1996.

Papers should be limited to ten double-spaced pages
(an absolute maximum of 20 minutes).

All panel participants must be members of NEMLA by November 1, 1996.

Please send abstracts or papers to:

John R. Woznicki

Dept. Of English

Lehigh University

35 Sayre Drive

Bethlehem, PA. 18015

If you have any questions, feel free to e-mail at: [REDACTED]

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487. **Gabrielle Welford**

Re: text/language

Tue 16 Jul 1996

I know I've flaked on this discussion because here I am supposed to be studying away. Wanted to say a few things, though.

On Fri, 12 Jul 1996, Charles Alexander wrote:

> >How can text and language be distinguished? I guess have to take a long
> >look at how the word "language" and "text" can and can't sensibly be used.
> >Otherwise into the foggy dew we go. gab.

>

> Isn't language much broader? It includes music & other sound-language,
> visual languages of many kinds, all sorts of symbolic language other than
> the ones which use letters & words; & usually text is grounded in those
> letters & words, although I'd be glad to conceive of text more broadly, too.
>

Yes. I think what I was trying to get at is just that--pushing our way around the interstices of the meanings of words like "language" and "text" until we can see what we can or can't say with them, rather than making arbitrary decisions about what we are going to accept or not as far as meaning goes.

Or, for example, dealing with book arts/artists' books, the text of the book would be whatever language-text is presented therein, but the language of the book would have to include all its other parts (visual, structural, sometimes aural, etc.) as well. Books can (they don't always, or do they?) make literature physical.

Isn't it amazing? Then we have to start looking/pushing at the edges or in-betweennesses of what "physical" can mean. And "literature." Make language

physical? But isn't it always? If physical means to do with bodies. Could there be a way of conceiving of language that wasn't physical? Is thinking physical? Hmmmm. That's a nice one. I guess we can say it is and we can say it isn't. It hums between perhaps. So text can be language, but language doesn't need to be text. Certe. Unless we do one of those overboard things and say anything that can be read is text (read my lips), as I suppose some people do. My life as text. My life as language? Pushing it, huh? gab.

| *charles* >

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488. **George Bowering**

Re: BookStore

Tue 16 Jul 1996

Speaking of which, for years and years I was looking for Charyn's *_Eisenhower*, my *Eisenhower_* and never found it in a bookstore; but last February on a cold night in Ottawa, I got it from the amazing collector Rod Anstee. I have him a copy of Ted Joans's first book.

For almost as many years now I have been looking for Markson's *_Going Down_*. Meanwhile looking for somewhere to sell old *_Trobars_* and the like.

.....

"Lifting belly is so kind."

George Bowering.
2499 West 37th Ave.,
Vancouver, B.C.,
Canada V6M 1P4

fax: [REDACTED]

e-mail: [REDACTED]

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489. **George Bowering**

Re: press survival

Tue 16 Jul 1996

Sometimes it seems that literature has it worse
>than other arts. It's not all that rare to see interesting projects in
>visual arts funded, but for literature it's heart-strings projects all the
>way. I was a judge for one artist in residency program, and consistently
>there was a high intellectual standard for visual arts, whereas when I
>tried to get an award for a white male experimental poet I practically got

>laughed out of the room. Recently SPT got to the second round for one of
>those grants that cycle through disciplines--the year before, visual arts
>was the category, and I was impressed with some of the awards. But the
>literature awards the year we applied were gruesome. When I read them to
>our graphic designer, he said they sounded like topics for the Rickie Lake
>Show.

I don't know who Rickie Lake is, but I have a feeling that Dodie is right about the comparison between visual and writing grants. I was on a recent grant-giving panel, and it tried to be as fair as possible, but you know? the stuff with content and the stuff with current ethnocorrectness too easily seen, etc. (My sentence got screwed by the 33rd ringing of doorbells and phones in the past hour. Anyway, sure you complain a lot, Dodie, but one would rather hear you complain than hear Louis Simpson complain, eh?

.....

"Lifting belly is so kind."

George Bowering.
2499 West 37th Ave.,
Vancouver, B.C.,
Canada V6M 1P4

fax: [REDACTED]

e-mail: [REDACTED]

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490. **George Bowering**

Re: [REDACTED]

Tue 16 Jul 1996

Hey, Pierre!

As soon as you turn fifty you get hairs growing out of your ears and around your nipples, and you get a few long hairs in your eyebrows. Neat.

.....

"Lifting belly is so kind."

George Bowering.
2499 West 37th Ave.,
Vancouver, B.C.,
Canada V6M 1P4

fax: [REDACTED]

e-mail: [REDACTED]

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491. **c.g. guertin**

Re: Bad news/Coach House

Tue 16 Jul 1996

I am shocked and terribly saddened to hear the news of Coach House's impending demise.

Coach House has a 30 year history of financial woes to be sure, having constantly lived on the verge of bankruptcy and having been chronically underfunded. The ramifications of this for Canadian poetry and experimental writing are immeasurable. I cannot imagine the devastation that this will bring to the Canadian literary community and to teachers and professors of Canadian lit across the country as well. Authors who have all or some of their backlist with Coach House include Robin Blaser, George Bowering, Daphne Marlatt (whose new novel was supposed to be published this fall), Phyllis Webb, Sharon Thesen, Michael Ondaatje, bpNichol, Lola Lemire Tostevin, Nicole Brossard, Steve McCaffery, and Gail Scott.

As a former publicist for Coach House, I know how important the press has been for writers with its unique position in this country as a writer's press. Its focus has shifted and changed many times, but it has survived so long because it remained adaptable *and* stayed on the cutting edge. Coach House has had that rare talent to turn literary works into bestsellers as well as continuing to win award after award for its list. These are sad times indeed when a mere pittance (as far as the governments are concerned) could save the press, but when arts funding has no value in the eyes of the different levels of government.

Arts organizations are always prime targets in times of fiscal restraint. How do we fight back?

Carolyn Guertin

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492. **Charles Alexander**

Re: press survival

Tue 16 Jul 1996

In a message dated 96-07-16 12:02:59 EDT, Charles Alexander writes:

*<< I would certainly
not encourage new presses beginning now to go the nonprofit corporation
route, at least not without some deep thought and research about it. >>*

Charles, would you amplify on this?

Just a little, I will.

I think, first of all, that when I began making/publishing books in about 1981, and then when I incorporated Chax in 1985, there was the sense that an individual could set up a nonprofit organization and rather easily become eligible for grants from government & foundation sources without following some corporate model or becoming professionalized in the way Dodie (I think it was Dodie) described. As competition for such dollars has increased I think that avoiding such corporate models (which are highly rewarded by funders, which attract rather powerful & corporate board members, etc.) is increasingly difficult. So, first of all, think about the hoops one has to jump through, or how terribly hard one must work to not jump through such hoops (& what the consequences of either jumping or not jumping might be) -- before one goes that nonprofit route.

Also, given the scarcity of dollars particularly for the sorts of work that seems to attract a lot of people on this list, it may be incumbent on a press to do other sorts of work to raise money. For example, if one has design skills, sell design services. Or if one is moved to make the most of some publishing opportunity and publish something outside the realm of fundable projects, say for example a hot cookbook or whatever, to actually generate good income -- that may be very difficult to do as a nonprofit organization, but rather easy as a for profit organization. And if one goes the "for profit" route, organizes as a sole proprietorship, chances are there won't be a lot of money made & there won't be much of a tax bite, in fact it's quite possible that all kinds of expenses will be deductible. This nation rewards entrepreneurship more than it rewards nonprofit arts enterprises (but yes of course there is such a thing as nonprofit entrepreneurship, but I'm not certain how easy that is for extremely small organizations, and by extremely small I probably mean anything with a budget of less than \$75,000 or so a year -- even organizations with a half million dollar budget find it really difficult to mount the kinds of promotions and other activities necessary to make things like museum shops succeed).

But these are just two of the things to think about, and they don't go at all into an investigation of specific tax laws or legal niceties. Just that I have a general notion now that it's extremely difficult to succeed as a small nonprofit publishing organization, perhaps with no visible benefits over a small "for profit" publishing company. Plus you might consistently find hands tied and forms aplenty. I even heard the head of one of the largest arts-funding foundations here criticize small presses in the area as having bad cases of what he called "founderitis," meaning the founders of the presses couldn't get beyond their own personal visions enough to be able to create successful, stable (and ostensibly somehow less personal) organizations. Now if that's the kind of press one wants to create, then by all means go nonprofit.

charles

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493. **Thomas M. Orange**

Bad News

Wed 17 Jul 1996

Mike Boughn:

Why is Couch House's demise "another victory for the New York bankers?"

Tom

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494. **Tenney Nathanson**

Mullen piece?

Wed 17 Jul 1996

Date: Tue, 16 Jul 1996 13:35:16 -0400

From: Mark Wallace <[REDACTED]>

Subject: experiments and identities

*For anyone interested in the recently ongoing thread about experimental
poetries and identity politics, Harryette Mullen's piece "Poetry and
Identity" in the new West Coast Line is really a must read. Well argued,
precise, and right there.*

Mark--

do you have an address handy for West Coast Line, or order info of any kind? or
does anyone?

I'm getting ready to add /Muse & Drudge/ to the reading list for my fall u.g.
contemporary poetry class, and am getting nervous....

are you on the list Gil (or Harryette?)?

thanks for any help

Tenney

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495. **Robert Drake**

Re: Mullen piece?

Wed 17 Jul 1996

West Coast Line

2027 East Academic Annex

Simon Fraser Univ.

Burnaby BC V5A 1S6 canada

lbd

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496. **Gwyn McVay**

Re: [REDACTED]

Wed 17 Jul 1996

George, does that mean the birthday boy will be achieving eyebrows like Czeslaw Milosz's?

Gwyn

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497. **Charles Alexander**

Opening of the San Francisco Center for the Book

Wed 17 Jul 1996

I thought some people, particularly those in the Bay Area and those interested in "the art of the book and the visible word," would be interested in this announcement, so I'm forwarding it. Sometimes good news comes, too.

charles

Return-Path: [REDACTED]
Date: Wed, 17 Jul 1996 01:00:25 -0700
Reply-To: "The Book Arts: binding, typography, collecting"
<[REDACTED]>
Sender: "The Book Arts: binding, typography, collecting"
<[REDACTED]>
From: Mary Katherine Austin <[REDACTED]>
Subject: Opening of the San Francisco Center for the Book
To: Multiple recipients of list BOOK_ARTS-L
<[REDACTED]>
X-UIDL: 67ad917c988c930a7ddb1ade31b2b429

The San Francisco Center for the Book celebrates its opening on Tuesday, July 30, from 5 to 9 p.m. , at 300 De Haro Street, between 16th and 17th Streets. The opening will be a great opportunity to meet members of the book arts community and to learn about upcoming events, exhibitions, and classes at The Center.

The San Francisco Center for the Book is a newly-formed arts organization devoted to exploring the art of the book and the visible word. Centrally-located at the foot of Potrero Hill, The Center has set up a stylish public facility that will house the activities and studio practice of the growing book arts community. Drawing upon the creative talents and expertise of members of Bay Area book arts organizations, The Center offers

a wide range of workshop classes in bookmaking such as experimental printmaking and book structures, as well as exhibitions, special events, a resource library. The Center also intends to facilitate interdisciplinary collaboration of artists exploring the book format.

The three founding directors staff The San Francisco Center for the Book: Mary Austin, Kathleen Burch, and Susan Landauer. The Center also houses the activities of The Pacific Center for the Book Arts and The Hand Bookbinders of California, two lively Bay Area book arts organizations.

Starting with the local expression of the Arts & Crafts movement a century ago, some of the world's most creative book artists have worked in the Bay Area. Their diverse arts have decorated Berkeley coffee house menus, lined the bookshelves of the Bohemian Club, or been given away in The Haight. During the seventies, the practice and perception of book arts began to move from "craft" to "fine art," as museums began to mount major exhibitions, and as the prices of the works mounted as well. Current interest in the book arts has never been higher, perhaps due to the visual stimulation of changing publishing technologies. To book artists, "the death of the book" really means a transformation of its form, and a way for all of us to re-examine reading, sequence, and content.

Publicity photos available. For more information, call Mary Austin or Kathleen Burch at [REDACTED].

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498. **Daniel Bouchard**

Boston reading

Wed 17 Jul 1996

Gerritt Lansing and Ken Irby will be reading Sunday, July 21 from 3-5 p.m. at T.T. the Bears in Central Square, Cambridge. John Wieners will introduce the readers.

Come early for the poetry, stay late for the poetry.

[REDACTED]

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499. **Michael Boughn**

Re: Bad News

Wed 17 Jul 1996

Dear Thomas Orange:

I know this not a political discussion group, so I'll try to keep my rant short.

Last year, our social democratic government was defeated, partly because of its own inexperience and occasional stupidity, but largely because of the economic fallout from free trade and the manipulation of bond interest rates by said bankers who weren't crazy about having a bunch of socialists in power and weren't shy about letting people know it.

The current gang of goofs we've got running things is more to their liking: a golf-pro for premier, a highschool dropout for education minister, a used car salesman in charge of rapid transit, etc etc. You guys probably thought nobody could outdo having a grade B actor with Alzheimer's for president. What we lack in quality, we try to make up for in sheer quantity.

Last month the golf-pro was down in NY kissing bankers' ass left right and center, showing his credentials: revocation of equity legislation, the dismantling of inexpensive public education, protection of the "rights" of scabs, the use of the provincial riot squad to kick the shit out of striking workers, the sell-off of conservation areas and parks, oh yeah, and a promise to corporations to undo any environmental legislation they found unduly restrictive of their business practices. As he told the bankers, "Ontario is open for business." I could come up with an obscene translation of that idea (an old cartoon by Paul Krastner comes immediately to mind), but I'll spare you. Needless to say, they loved it, and showered him with promises of lower interest rates.

Here's the same golf-pro on Coach House, from this morning's Globe:

Ontario Premier Mike Harris said yesterday that Coach House Press went under not because the province cut its grants to the publisher but because "they can't compete in the marketplace."

Harris told reporters before a meeting of the inner cabinet that the fact the company blames the province for its demise "probably speaks to their management capabilities."

Last year, the Ontario government cut its grant to the publisher by 74% and a loan guarantee by the Ontario Development Corp. will not be renewed when it expires in October.

etc. etc.

I don't think any particular banker was out to get Coach House. I don't even think the golf-pro was, largely because he's never heard of them before, and in fact, hasn't read a book since high school. But this idea of "competition in the market place" as the _summa summarum_ of human potentiality and the determining fact of existence guarantees us only an utterly degraded world.

Best,
Mike

██████████

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500. **Michael Boughn**
New H.D. Stories

Wed 17 Jul 1996

For those on this list interested in the work of H.D., I'm pleased to announce the publication of 2 short children's stories by her on the H.D. Home Page. These stories were first published in Sunday School magazines around 1910, and have never been seen since. I discovered them several years ago when I was working on the H.D. Bibliography. Heather Hawkins has been generous enough to edit them and post them to the home page.

The address is: <http://www.well.com/user/heddy/hdstor.html>

Mike

██████████

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501. **Charles Alexander**
chax books number one

Wed 17 Jul 1996

This is the first of three messages with special offerings from Chax Press. Please do not post any replies to the Poetics List. Rather respond with orders to

Chax Press

Box 19178

Minneapolis, MN 55419-0178

or respond with questions to ██████████, or call at ██████████

Because Chax Press is moving in one month, we are taking only orders by mail accompanied by a check to Chax Press, and to insure you have books mailed to you before our move, you should get them in to us by August 6. And just in case you are worried about tracking us down, our Tucson address will be 101 W.

Sixth Street, Tucson, AZ 85701, but we will not be at that address until about August 30. And mail will be forwarded from the Minneapolis address as well.

ANNOUNCING:

Prospect of Release, by Tom Mandel

ISBN 0-925904-11-2

Retail Price: \$12.95

Price to Poetics List & whoever else may see this message and order prior to August 6, 1996: \$8.00, including shipping/handling

Available in 1 week

Ron Silliman writes of this book:

Memento mori: sonnets. These 50 poems, 700 lines (neither number divisible by three), confront self, other, identity, loss, history, language and meaning through the most concrete instance we have of what the poststructuralists call "an absent presence" — the death of a parent. This loss of apparent meaning (who gave you your name?) doubles (this father arrived by marriage, already a rhyme for the dead blood kin that came before), invoking tradition, transmission, instruction. Ritual (the sonnet, the ceremonies of grief) kaleidoscopes through its own echoes. "Do not speak these / words, but repeat them." "Ghosts, all of them," as Spicer said, though here it is Paul Celan's Shakespeare (of all possible bards) who thrusts the blade from behind the curtain:

The knife comes out clean; the cake
is done. Why does time pass? Because one
observes a rule. Why wear clothes? To model
a soul in paradise, clothed in its days.

These are the most intensely felt poems I have ever read."

And here are the first two poems of the series:

That one is conscious and not know why
like cleaved rock or two that never joined
eyes blue in life become brown coals
silent as the Kodak into which they stare

from the rear of a backyard family gathering.
Brothers-in-law caper in the foreground.
Seasons, months, weeks, moments flatten

against the horizon, forgotten. To whom
now do I belong? An infinity of numbers
whose factor is three. I saw it was

a volume. At sea when I met him, light
poured in unrecalled, he offered no answers
to the questions I asked whose answers
were obvious, and I did not know why.

Of the ten things made at twilight
the greatest was 'speech-act.' Think
of the orator moving in memory's rooms.
Imagination speaks, a matter of meaning,

internal volumes. It was like him to
know me. Articulate in perplexity, like
all bodies in a state of erratic motion

unless compelled to uniform motion or rest
by a mental law that unfolds phenomena
in time, words as it were want to live

their 'truth until the heavens.' Thorough,
transparent, opaque, coded (undecoded),
tragedy studies us to divine our terms
of meaning. It is no absolute entity.

Thank you in advance for your orders.

charles alexander
chax press
box 19178
minneapolis, mn 55419-0178



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502. **Charles Alexander**

chax books number two

Wed 17 Jul 1996

This is the second of three messages with special offerings from Chax Press.
Please do not post any replies to the Poetics List. Rather respond with
orders to

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Box 19178
Minneapolis, MN 55419-0178

or respond with questions to [REDACTED], or call at [REDACTED]

Because Chax Press is moving in one month, we are taking only orders by mail accompanied by a check to Chax Press, and this particular offer is only available if your order makes its way to us by August 6. And just in case you are worried about tracking us down, our Tucson address will be 101 W. Sixth Street, Tucson, AZ 85701, but we will not be at that address until about August 30. And mail will be forwarded from the Minneapolis address as well.

ANNOUNCING:

Three of Ten, by Hank Lazer,
including three sequences: H's Journal, Negation, & Displayspace
168 pages

cover image by Jess

ISBN 0-925904-18-X

Retail Price: \$14

Price to Poetics List & whoever else may see this message and order prior to August 6, 1996: \$8.00, including shipping/handling

Available in October 1996. Respondents to this order by August 6, 1996 will receive the first copies.

Here is an excerpt from the opening of Three of Ten. The works in this book make creative use of a number of source materials which are noted in the book's notes.

From H's Journal, Number 1:

1 In a show of independence for which no crowing is called for, I went home to spend my fortieth birthday with my parents and my sister, for I have settled deliberately at some distance, knowing that to go home bestirs the confused marrow of one's imagined autonomy.

2 As said in a friend's words: "you do that again, & I'll beat the dog out of you."

3A distrust of feelings transcendental is itself a bracing tonic.

4 Product of its given day, each sentence a citizen in full.

5 "Like cuttlefish we conceal ourselves, we darken the atmosphere in which we move; we are not transparent."

6 "'Life in the Words' suggests much of the genuine significance of the book to Thoreau: it was life and self re-created and revised in words, and he lived in the words he had created."

7 Redundant wonder — the learned arpeggio of an appreciative, sensitive observer — amounts to a truncated intellect and failure to recognize the place of rhetoric in governing written (and thus constructed) expression.

Thank you in advance for your orders.

charles alexander
chax press
box 19178
minneapolis, mn 55419-0178
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

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503. **Charles Alexander**
chax press books number three

Wed 17 Jul 1996

This is the third of three messages with special offerings from Chax Press. Please do not post any replies to the Poetics List. Rather respond with orders to

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Box 19178
Minneapolis, MN 55419-0178

or respond with questions to [REDACTED], or call at [REDACTED]

Because Chax Press is moving in one month, we are taking only orders by mail accompanied by a check to Chax Press, and to insure you have books mailed to you before our move, you should get them in to us by August 6. And just in case you are worried about tracking us down, our Tucson address will be 101 W. Sixth Street, Tucson, AZ 85701, but we will not be at that address until about August 30. And mail will be forwarded from the Minneapolis address as well.

ANNOUNCING:

A special offer on two deluxe handmade, letterpress books.

OUTLANTISH, by Nathaniel Mackey

This book was published in late 1992. Recently we have bound a few copies which were not released at that time, although they still make up part of the 100 copies in the edition. Just one dozen copies are available at this time. The original price of the book was \$110. To members of the Poetics List these dozen copies are now available for \$40 each.

Outlantish contains "mu" fourth part through eleventh part. Its epigraphs read " . . . a myth is not merely a word spoken; it is a re-utterance or pre-utterance, it is a focus of emotion. . . . Possibly the first muthos was simply the interjectional

utterance mu . . ." (Jane Harrison); and " . . . a continent of feeling beyond our feeling . . . " (Robert Duncan).

The book measures 11 & 3/4 inches high by 6 inches wide. It is letterpress printed on Mohawk letterpress paper with covers letterpress printed (title is printed blind or without ink, thereby debossed into the cover) on Cross Pointe Genesis recycled paper. The binding is a variation of the lang-stitch method, with threads sewn and visible through the spine. Sheets of Japanese Fuji Unryu paper in a soft brownish-grey with neutral-colored fibers visible in it, are wrapped around the first and last signature of the book to offer a dramatic and sensual break in the reading of the text, and in a sense extending the outside of the book to the inside. Mackey's text is accompanied by three collage illustrations by Tucson Arizona artist Sonia Telesco. One of these illustrations is printed on a double-page sheet so that the halves of the illustration are separated by four pages of text. The illustrations make no attempt to conventionally "illustrate" the text (something we're not that fond of at Chax), rather are the result of the artist's response to that text in her own way -- collaboration rather than accompaniment.

WHEEL, by Gil Ott

Wheel was also originally published in 1992, and only a dozen or so copies remain available.

The original price was \$38. It is available to Poetics List members at this time for \$20.

Both text and linoleum block prints in the book are by Gil Ott. The book measures 7.5 inches wide by 8 inches high. It is printed letterpress all in black, text and block prints on Mohawk paper with one smaller-sized leaf of Frankfurt paper sewn in. The cover of the book is made of handmade paper made by Tom Leech at the San Miguel Paper Workshop in Colorado Springs and is a beautiful burnt orange color. The unusual cover is intentionally undersized, becoming a cover which does not entirely cover, leaving the inside of the book visible to the outside, enacting a kind of ongoing wheel in its engagement, physically, of book with world.

An excerpt from WHEEL:

sheet to the line, perspective

in that book

any instant

bound

wind rise or fall

where to begin, or end. A breath describes another passage, that tugs. Or "point of view." Without us, it has no

Thank you in advance for your orders.

charles alexander
chax press
box 19178
minneapolis, mn 55419-0178



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504. **David Baratier**
r h y m m s by Robert Grenier

Wed 17 Jul 1996

Pavement Saw Press
is taking advance orders for our newest publication
which is a selection of poems
from *r h y m m s* by Robert Grenier.

The 12 pages are reproduced
in a loose leaf, arrangeable,
four color reproduction format,
on acid-free paper, with a handpress
printed envelope for containment.

There will be a limited edition of 110 copies made
of which 10 are signed and numbered. The pre-press
cost for the unsigned copies of this edition will be \$20,
including p & h.

Libraries and institutions are also welcome to inquire
Reserve one now. Copies will be distributed in 6 to 8 weeks.

Pavement Saw Press
7 James Street
Scotia, NY 12302

An informative article which elaborates the intricacies of Grenier's complete project of *r h y m m s* can be found in Witz, Spring 1996.

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505. **Kevin Killian**

Re: Bad news

Wed 17 Jul 1996

At 3:58 PM 7/17/96, MAXINE CHERNOFF wrote:

>Dear Herb, Dodie, etc.,

>

>It is obviously the case that nowhere in the arts as they are now funded by
>government grants is aesthetic difference, complexity, depth, what have
>you, taken as a serious value.

This is Dodie. I just returned from the first of a two day arts administration seminar. Learned helpful tips like forming partnerships with non-arts organizations, such as joining forces with a save-the-swans group and putting on a production of Swan Lake and getting a corporate sponsor--that way the corporate sponsor gets to fund an arts org and an environmental org at the same time! Perhaps we could put on a Virginia Woolf festival with a save-the-wolves organization?

Also, learned that corporate funding is more and more about point of purchase advertising. A great example given was somebody put on some event and got Pepsi to hang advertisements for their event on Pepsi bottles, and for each six-pack of Pepsi purchased you get a dollar off admission to the event!

Government grants were basically jumped over--just many suggestions to get the bucks from other places.

Oh, oh =8A

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506. **Kevin Killian**

Re: press survival

Wed 17 Jul 1996

At 5:14 PM 7/16/96, George Bowering wrote:

| *I don't know who Rickie Lake is.*

Rickie (and I don't know if I'm spelling her name right) hosts one of those low-rent rip-offs Oprah--you know, talk shows where people cry and yell at one another about their perverse living situations/problems. Rickie was discovered by John Waters, played Divine's daughter in one of his movies. Waters hired her because she was a fat girl who could dance. But now that she's a talk show queen she's svelt.

Dodie

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507. **Kevin Killian**

Re: press survival

Wed 17 Jul 1996

Rickie (and I don't know if I'm spelling her name right) hosts one of those low-rent rip-offs Oprah

That should be:

Rickie (and I don't know if I'm spelling her name right) hosts one of those low-rent rip-offs OF Oprah

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508. **Louis Cabri**

my slack

Wed 17 Jul 1996

1. 756 posts & finally here now to record that my fascination remains, 2hrs later, with Ron Silliman's "modest proposal." It really is a bit of subtle cunning, once its angles are displayed in a sunny logic. I fully agree to implementat it - and will volunteer to delete my own too-infrequent posts even before they hit the screens: saving people the trouble. And will save my finger - constantly worrying over the delete key - for pleasure- seeking/-giving pursuits instead. Bliss!
2. Wal here's a mess, shows am not reading poetry to feed a horse at the moment. The machines are hungrier right nu.
3. "Agency" seems to be where the friction lies between sociological and speculative/formal approaches.... (But when exactly was this concept rescucitated from the social sciences? Pardon my ignorance, I don't know - was it Bourdieu when he "did" Flaubert? ...Paul Smith critiques postruc theories of the "subject" with it - in Discerning the Subject 1988. It's there in a 1987 Barrett Watten essay on Louis Zukofsky and Bruce Andrews, as Bourdieu's "habitus." That essay is peculiar and telling of the problems encountered when one tries to argue-for/examine formally innovative poetry in terms of "agency." There's that long-winded book by Charles Altieri, Subjective Agency, 1994, which doesn't talk about poetry, but provides a sketch of various positions on "agency," from constructionist to essentialist, in a footnote. Steve Knapp, from an unabashedly liberal individualism, negotiates agency through Wimsatt's concrete universal to come up with the astonishing formula that "the self is a formalist," thus literary interest provides best analogue of what it is like to be an "agent in general" (Literary Interest: The Limits of Anti- Formalism) - yep. Maybe "agency" was under different guise - the authorial persona, biographical studies - before.
4. Or as Steve McCaffery has informally said it, a fold of identity onto ontology. As a formulation for "agency," this is witnessed in the problems of

representational politics in poetry, which Harryette Mullen describes in the essay in new West Coast Line mentioned previously. (Incidentally, there's a collaborative interview with her that appears in next BOO Magazine, transcribed from various responses she gave to questions after her talk and reading here in Calgary. - Qs by Jeff Derksen, S McCaffery, Fred Wah, Nicole Markotic, Cheryl Teelucksingh, the transcriber & others.)

5. Some reading found here at the house I'm "sitting": Journal of the Charles Olson Archive, including O's record of a 3-wk swordfish-hunting trip in '36 (they found them in trees); plans for a long poem then entitled "West," where he's explicit about the "Western box" he was wanting out from - although the last & first time I ever met R Creeley he denied Olson had ever used that term; worthy notes by student worthies, including Clark Coolidge and Pauline Butling, of O's Vancouver '63 seminars; O notes for an incomplete essay on "totality" as the sort of ultimate reach of an "individual" ("single intelligence") an essay which helps in reading the recent O archive retrieval "Culture and Revolution" in A flex of the M, #2.

6. Wlad Godzich's The Culture of Literacy. "[A]ny tendency to abstract general statement is a greased slide" - E.P. But Godzich has interesting things to say about the strange movements of theory down the halls of social mirrors through these years. He remarks there's no history yet done (or is there?) on historical formation of the concept of agency.

7. Some of Lenin's pieces (e.g. in Pravda) for Jn-Sept 1917, months during the crisis when the slogan "All power to the soviets!" had to be rescinded due to increasing counter- revolutionarism.

8. Chapter 4 in Thousand Plateaus on "order-words"
(slogans would be example: they cite Lenin's, above)

9. Agenda 4:2 1965 (London, ed. William Cookson), special for Pound's boiday. Anecdote from John Wieners on Pound at Spoleto poetry fest that year, together in company of Olson... "We saw LeRoi Jones' Dutchman, and asking him after, what he thought of the play, Pound said, 'Tremendous', to Charles going up the stairs." Foto of that fest proly the one of Pound that is in Behind the State Capitol - beside the piece on Olson?

10. New Reflections on the Revolution of Our Time, Ernesto Laclau. Intrinsic to social antagonism is a constitutive outside. Take this list, for example, the Von Hall flare, or last summer, the Alfred Corn. "Von Hall" as The Actuality. His symbolic presence is enough for me. It bothers me to have the symbolic action of this listserv used as if it were an actual boundary (which is to say, as if the symbolic - boundary or no - were not actual enough). To belabour a point others have already made, this listserv's boundary is not really actual, in the sense that, if I have the interest (poetic & financial) I can meet you whoever "you" are

tomorrow if we so choose (of course, we had to have met Charles Bernstein somehow to begin with, etc etc).

-Louis

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509. **william marsh**

Re: "Marsh"crash/sorries

Wed 17 Jul 1996

Dear all -- especially all those burdened by the "error":

First, apologies. I was astonished to learn that the Eudora problems were traceable back to little-ol me. I just recently bought a new system, and it seems the people who installed my OS entered 2096 in the date column. Being, as of 1996, something of a systems dummie, I didn't bother to check it, didn't even think of it, I guess under the foolish assumption that something as rudimentary as a date would be the least of my worries as I learned to navigate this beast. Now I see the error of that assumption. So, to any who lost time, sleep or (gosh) even money to this glitch, I'm truly sorry. And genuinely flabbergasted, I have to add, that the repercussions would stretch so far and wide. The date has of course been changed, and I hope (but could never be certain) that the problem fixed.

All best,

Bill Marsh

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510. **George Bowering**

Re: [REDACTED]

Wed 17 Jul 1996

George, does that mean the birthday boy will be achieving eyebrows like Czeslaw Milosz's?

Gwyn

I hope so. Pierre is pretty cute; but shaggy eyebrows would make his irresistible.

I hope he doesnt develop that other thing that happens to men that are 50. They often buy convertibles and sports cars. That would take away from the eyebrows entirely.

.....

"Lifting belly is so kind."

George Bowering.
2499 West 37th Ave.,
Vancouver, B.C.,
Canada V6M 1P4

fax: [REDACTED]
e-mail: [REDACTED]

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511. **David Baratier**

Vanguard

Wed 17 Jul 1996

Thinking about the "Toward a multiplicity of form" essay of Mark W in Witz, and remembering a riotous panel at AWP in Pittsburgh on "what constitutes the avant garde," re-focussed my attention toward the prevailing ignorance among many of the "avant-garde" practitioners and followers regarding the issue of traditional forms. As any critique has to include oneself, or one's lay of the land, I keep running into this situation where someone asks "why did you place it in this form?" and I find myself metrically decomposing --say-- Hopkins, receiving a nod of understanding, then a subsequent accusation which parlays and reifies the individual's ignorance of the sonnet (or in this case the curtal). It's as if the revolution of Stevens (through most would call it WCW's) has led to a generalist assumptive visual form, that is to say one which is based on visual similarities sans awareness of the metrical composite. I've expressed in earlier posts my concerns with (and avoidance of) upholding the "I'm a card carrying member of the avant-garde" position, but what about the appropriation of the avant-garde into the institutions they were in opposition with a mere 20 years ago (ie have the institutions really changed enough to warrant the absorption) or has the linguistic codification of the word avant-garde turned into another marketing terminology through repetitive use.

Be well

David Baratier

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512. **David Baratier**

Re: [REDACTED]

Wed 17 Jul 1996

George, would owning a mansion detract from or enhance the eyebrow effect?

513. **MAXINE CHERNOFF**

Re: Bad news

Wed 17 Jul 1996

Dear Herb, Dodie, etc.,

It is obviously the case that nowhere in the arts as they are now funded by government grants is aesthetic difference, complexity, depth, what have you, taken as a serious value. Having recently served on several such panels, local and national, I was depressed but not surprised at how grossly evaluations were made ("This magazine has 12 women and 7 men-- the editors must be very progressive!" etc.). When New American Writing still lived in Chicago and used to apply for Illinois grants, people would ask in panel review, "Why do they publish John Ashbery? Is he so important?" (not to mention the rest of our contributors who were far less recognizable.) Anyway, we decided to come out once yearly and to never write grants again.

As for presses that survive, they seem to somehow gain institutional credibility-- you mean you're not dead yet? Hey, let's give you a grant. But getting to that point is extremely painful. When we were still applying for grants, we were told to "build a board," etc. No one seemed to care about our publication itself in the money world.

As for New Directions, it was Herman Hesse and Tennessee Williams that finally stabilized them and allowed them to grow.

MaXINE cHERNOFF

On Tue, 16 Jul 1996, Herb Levy wrote:

It is obviously very sad news that Coach House is going under, and I agree with much of what people have said (& no doubt will continue to say) about the problems of distribution, marketing, and selling new, experimental poetry to an audience of people who aren't on this e-mail list; etc. But distribution for avant garde work has always sucked, finding that audience (one person at a time) has always been a pain in the ass, & grants have rarely, if ever, been enough to support a project of the scale of Coach House.

Historically, how many small presses have lasted thirty years or more? How many small presses from the mid-Sixties are still going strong? (For that matter, how many adventurous, experimental, or whatever non-profit arts organizations in any field have lasted this long?)

In the US, I can think of City Lights, New Directions & Black Sparrow (which may not be quite that old), but these seem to have survived because

they have reprint rights for books used in college & university courses or some other works that have guaranteed sales (is Bukowski on the syllabus anywhere?). (& yes, I do know that New Directions started with a wad of family money, but the continued survival of ND as a business is at least as related to the number of copies of books by Pound, WCW, HD, Duncan, & others that are sold to students yearly.)

I'm not trying to minimize the impact that the loss of Coach House will have: It is (& I'm consciously using the present tense here) clearly THE major press for new poetry in Canada, they have a great backlist, they know what work is important to publish and have been able to find ways to get it out there.

Still, I'm not sure that the forces at work here are simply the current economic state of the Corporate/State. We're not talking best sellers here. Small presses, & arts organizations in general, which last more than thirty years have developed some kind of financial stability (whether it's market share, donor base, or stylish t-shirts & gimme caps) that has been, unfortunately, all too often unrelated to artistic merit.

Herb Levy

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514. Steve Carll

Re: "Marsh" crash/sorries

Wed 17 Jul 1996

Hey Bill:

My program handled your last message with no problem. I think we're in the clear!

+++++

<http://writing.upenn.edu/epc/eazines/antonym/>

In seed-

sense

the sea stars you out, innermost, forever.

--Paul Celan

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515. **maria damon**

Re: Bad news and good

Wed 17 Jul 1996

having served on the board of directors of a high-profile, "small" literary press that went non-profit, i can attest to the seemingly endless time we spent at meetings trying to think of rich influential people to be on the board compared to the milli-seconds spent talking about books. (i stepped down from the board cuz i ended up not really pulling my weight; i didn't know any rich influential folks in the area).

good news: michael bibby's book, Hearts and Minds: Bodies, Resistance, and Poetry in the Viet Nam Era, is out from Rutgers UP, in their perspectives on the '60s series. it's a good example of the poetry/cultural studies nexus i keep yammering about on the list, esp the chapter on GI Resistance Poetry. bests, maria d

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516. **Gjoseph Farrah**

monthly posting

Wed 17 Jul 1996

That the level reflects the night somewhat
has become a fact to build with
estimation of this content overthrown
with thunder of craftsmen started it
no longer willing to levitate with that pleasure
what becomes fixated with duration
or a simultaneous excavation of memory
wherein history as currency disappears into itself
and that is the problem again
moments churning above the apparent links

george f
(another vermin lurker)

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517. **Rod Smith**

New Perelman, Loys, Jarnot etc @ Bridge Street

Wed 17 Jul 1996

Here's another list of the latest.

1. *_Becoming Modern: The Life of Mina Loy_* by Carolyn Burke, FSG, \$35. "Mina was more absorbed in efforts to earn a living that spring than in her friends' antics."
2. *_Scatter Matrix_* by Abigail Child, Roof, \$9.95. "plecta pitchflower / coincide with pitched midi / an impulse / literally naive"
3. *_Powers & Prospects: Reflections on Human Nature and the Social Order_* by Noam Chomsky, South End, \$16. "The reason for this rather implausible assumption is that we do not know that it is wrong."
4. *_Merchants of Misery: How Corporate America Profits from Poverty_* ed. Michael Hudson, Common Courage, \$14.95. "I couldn't see how anyone could claim otherwise," he said repeatedly throughout his testimony.
5. *_Some Other Kind of Mission_* by Lisa Jarnot, Burning Deck, \$11. Lisa's long-awaited excellent tome. Here comes the Brooklyn Renaissance.
6. *_Lotion Bullwhip Giraffe_* by Tan Lin, Sun & Moon, \$10.95. "This end dupes / this dead fun."
7. *_The Lost Lunar Baedeker: Poems_* by Mina Loy, FSG, \$22. "A vagabond in delirium / aping the rise and fall // of ocean / of inhalation / of coition."
8. *_Selected Declarations of Dependence_* by Harry Mathews, Sun & Moon, \$10.95. With terrific art by Alex Katz. "Every drug has its day"
9. *_The Marginalization of Poetry: Language Writing and Literary History_* by Bob Perelman, Princeton, \$15.95. "Making the sentence the basic unit of composition separates the writer from three widely held positions."
10. *_Charles Ives: A Life with Music_* by Jan Swafford, Norton, \$30. "To assume that business is a material process, and only that, is to undervalue the average mind and heart." --Ives, not Swafford
11. *_Twentieth-Century Latin American Poetry: A Bilingual Anthology_* edited by Stephen Tapscott, Texas, \$24.95. Big 8 1/2 x 10" 400 page book. Variety of translators, some I'd trust, some I certainly wouldn't, but the spanish is there, so cool. "palabras que son flores que son frutos que son actos."

Poetics folks receive free shipping on orders of more than \$20. Free shipping + 10% discount on orders of more than \$30. There are two ways to order. 1. E-mail your order to [REDACTED] with your address & we will bill you with the

books. or 2. via credit card-- you may call us at [REDACTED] or e-mail [REDACTED] w/ yr add, order, & card # & we will send a receipt with the books. We have to charge some shipping on orders outside of the US.

Bridge Street Books, 2814 Pennsylvania Ave NW, Wahsington, DC 20007.

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518. **Charles Alexander**

Re: Bad news and good

Wed 17 Jul 1996

having served on the board of directors of a high-profile, "small" literary press that went non-profit, i can attest to the seemingly endless time we spent at meetings trying to think of rich influential people to be on the board compared to the milli-seconds spent talking about books. (i stepped down from the board cuz i ended up not really pulling my weight; i didn't know any rich influential folks in the area).

I think I know which press you're talking about, and it's actually one of the largest "small" literary presses, or at least one of the largest nonprofit literary presses, in the country -- and it says something that even one like that can not attract such people on the board.

But I spent time with an organization which had certain people on the board with considerable financial capability and influence. And while those people tended to be fairly generous, they were not really willing to use their influence actively and often, and in general to do the intense work nonprofit fundraising requires. Even after I was sent to The Fundraising School at their request, I returned to find them unwilling to put what I was sent to learn into practice. I'd rather have a committed and active board, willing to work hard for the organization, using whatever limited resources & influence they may have.

And with regard to time spent talking about books or not talking about books, I don't think it has to be that way, but it's a struggle to keep a board educated and interested. And sometimes can be downright confrontational. After one board retreat session about innovative writing, a board member responded that ideas presented by Sheila Murphy were "a menace to art." But I don't mind having those discussions. I do, however, believe in a division of responsibilities between board and staff. It's the staff's responsibility to develop vision, determine programs and carry them out. It is the board's responsibility, though, to try and understand the vision and why those programs exist -- and the staff's responsibility to make sure the board does understand those things. But the vision itself is generally the one of an executive director or artistic director (or whoever else they choose to ask to become involved), and not that of the board, whose role is concerned with hiring the executive (executive hires everyone else), longterm

policy, financial planning & stability (including lots of fundraising to achieve it). In smaller organizations it's generally the founder who becomes the executive director and invites/appoints a board of directors, and from that point on the board works on such things as financial stability and long-term policies. And it is true that such organizations have a board which may feel they have less stake in what happens, because they did not hire the person with the vision.

Still, I don't think all of this precludes art or even risk-taking art. But it can significantly complicate the picture.

charles

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519. **maria damon**

Re: monthly posting

Wed 17 Jul 1996

g farrah writes:

- > That the level reflects the night somewhat
- >
- > has become a fact to build with
- >
- > estimation of this content overthrown
- >
- > with thunder of craftsmen started it
- >
- >
- >
- > no longer willing to levitate with that pleasure
- >
- > what becomes fixated with duration
- >
- > or a simultaneous excavation of memory
- >
- > wherein history as currency disappears into itself
- >
- > and that is the problem again
- >
- > moments churning above the apparent links
- >
- >
- >

> george f
> (another vermin lurker)
nice job, you verm you.

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520. **Loss Glazier**

Re: eudora crash

Thu 18 Jul 1996

No Eudora crash here either.
Did the possessors of the crash copies have the latest versions?
Did they contact the "publisher"?
Any details appreciated
since these are not just words
but writing.

At 10:45 AM 7/16/96 -0500, you wrote:

>I'm sorry for everyone's Eudora problems. And while glad to see my friend
>Bill Marsh's name here so much, I'm sorry it's in such a circumstance. I had
>a feeling the problem might be with someone's internet service provider.

>

>But I'm puzzled about presumably all the systems, including my own, which
>weren't affected at all. And mine is a PC, not a MAC, running Windows 3.11,
>Eudora, Netscape, etc.

>

>charles

>

>

>

>>(Still sending, not receiving)

>>

>>For those who need to know, and for Bill Marsh in especial:

>>

>>EUDORA crashed because the server sending Bill Marsh's message dates his
>message

>>--wait for it!!!--

>> 1969

>>instead of 1996.

>>This is known to Eudora (their technicians tell me) as a BAD DATE

>>for which you get the message "Application Error Integer Divide by Zero".

>>

>>So I set my system up again, having had my server delete Bill Marsh's

[illegible]

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521. Steve Carll

Antenym 10 publication and celebration

Thu 18 Jul 1996

(Apologies for any cross-posting; I can't remember who's signed up on what)

Announcing the appearance (and accompanying celebration) of _Antenym_ 10:
THE CELEBRATION takes place on Sunday August 4th at 3:00 p.m. at Canessa Park Gallery (708 Montgomery St. @ Columbus) in San Francisco and will feature Edmund Berrigan, Chris Daniels, Karen Garman, Elizabeth Robinson (all

Thu 18 Jul 1996

524. **David Columbia**
Re: Proles vs. the Pulitzer

Thu 18 Jul 1996

Dear Frenz,

Found this on other list and stole it to repeat since it's relevance to list overwhelming, obvious:

I AM INCOHERENT AND WIN PULITZER

Dear Sir or Madam,

The recent Pulitzer Prize award for poetry went to me.
I write incoherently and lack ability to understand.

Dateline.

After re-reading the award and reading one of my "poems" within my book called *_Des Moines Register_*, I was curious. Suspicious. Historically, "poetry" consists of long streams of incoherent babbling. I find it a publisher. I accept my work. It is especially hard to believe that I have won a Pulitzer Prize.

Today while writing the off-the-cuff "Contro-Verse" to add to my Pulitzer Prize, the subject of my elitist understanding of my own work and life occurred to me, and I realize now deserves mention in Weekly World News.

Here is the poem of mine which won the Pulitzer Prize:

HOW TO WIN PULITZER PRIZE BY DRAWING
HUCK, OUR FRIENDLY RABBIT
by WEEKLY WORLD NEWS COLUMNIST

Try to read heavy disjointed muck --
Charlotte Walker, WWW, 7/13/96
Did you ever try to read it?
Did you ever try to read it?
Well, I assure you, you'll get the Pulitzer
Prize. I wrote it and I did.
Now I savor the elitist rambling.

My flow is words, wearing on and on.
Jori Graham wrote the last one.
Whos next, Galway Kinnell?
Whos next, William Stafford?
Whos next, Richard James?
Whos next, X. J. Kennedy?

Im like a poor thing. My sanity is gone.
Long strings of words bump meaning out.

This is result of winning Pulitzer Prize
For writing incoherent verse like mine.

I do it quick.

I rip off Jori Grahams versus

I rip off Johnny Rotten -- yeah, great.

I cut off my finger.

I win Pulitzer Prize.

Thank you very much.

--



David Golumbia

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525. **Robert A Harrison**

Re(2): eudora crash

Thu 18 Jul 1996

there's such a thing as the year 2000 problem, caused by bad date management.

its been a hot topic in the programming community, and now here it is on poet-ics.

attached are some descriptions of the problem, etc.

bob harrison

~~~

from <http://www.cai.com/products/ca2000/disc2000.htm#challenge>

The Challenge Of The New Millennium

January 1, 2000. The dawn of the new millennium strikes fear in the hearts of Information Systems professionals. And for good reason. If no action is taken, the crippling effect of disabled enterprise systems will be devastating. As this inescapable deadline approaches, some crucial questions must be addressed. Are all your systems ready for the Year 2000? Will your applications continue to process date information accurately? Or will they collapse on or before January 1, 2000?

Information Systems professionals who have yet to address this issue will find that time is quickly running out. Consider the fact that every line of code must be scrutinized to ensure Year 2000 compliance. For many enterprises, that's 50

to 100 million lines of code to be inspected at an estimated cost of \$0.50 to \$1.00 per line--a substantial expense not accounted for in most enterprise budgets. Consider too, that a Year 2000 initiative typically requires many person-years to complete. For example, a company with 20 million lines of code or 5,000 to 10,000 programs that require modification would face costs of \$10 to \$20 million for a manual conversion process and 24 person-years to complete. This is just to keep the existing systems in production and includes no provision for new enhancements or new technology of any sort. The time, cost and effort involved in a Year 2000 initiative is further exacerbated by a lack of adequate documentation for the complex program logic of existing systems, the absence of the original programmers, and the challenges inherent in managing a project of this scope and magnitude.

As time runs out, the millennium date change will likely become your primary IS concern. After all, it has the potential of derailing all your other IS initiatives and significantly impacting the competitiveness of your enterprise. What can you do to ensure that your Year 2000 initiative is thorough, cost-effective and efficient?

and from <http://www.bozemanlegg.com/year2000.html>

To put it simply, the Year 2000 Problem stems from the fact that most software programs were written using the date format: MM/DD/YY. As you can see, there is no way the computer can distinguish between the 20th and the 21st centuries. This is a major problem for the thousands of companies that rely on computers for their everyday business.

It was estimated that 20 percent of business applications would fail because of invalid date computations in 1995, according to the Gartner Group. Without corrective measures, this number is estimated to increase to more than 90 percent by 1999, potentially resulting in interruptions of service due to errors in mission-critical systems. Application failure includes programs ending abnormally, or worse, returning incorrect results to the trusting user.

Who will be affected?

Just about every business that uses computers, especially those in data and date

intensive industries, such as finance, insurance, and retailing.

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526. **Brigham Taylor**

**Poetry Funding**

Thu 18 Jul 1996

This is in response to Dodie's account of an arts grants board's attitudes toward literature in general and poetry in particular. Why is it that people who can be very sophisticated regarding innovations in visual art, music, etc. are so reactionary when it comes to poetry? I wonder if it's that unless people have a specific interest in poetry, its marginal status in the world of the arts leads many perhaps well intentioned people to regard it as a means to an end. They consider its value to be in the "expression of personal feeling" and therefore its function becomes principally therapeutic (we can thank Mrs. Sexton's shrink for this). Therefore an individual can "let out emotion" and become happy and balanced. Or on a collective level, it becomes a means of "sharing your feeling," a means of achieving multicultural understanding. Of course the unspoken and unexamined assumption behind such a position is that poetry is not valuable as living art forms, that the great poems have already been written, and there is no reason to take it seriously. But even if we acknowledge the validity of everyone's experience of the world, it does not follow that all formal expressions of this experience are of equal value. No matter how worthy the political, therapeutic or educational goal might be, to regard the chief function of any art form as a means of achieving that goal serves only to devalue and limit the potential of that art form.

A mini manifesto for my first post.... lurker no more!

Brigham Taylor

██████████

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527. **Charles Alexander**

**Jewish women artists**

Thu 18 Jul 1996

Please spread the word about this.

Thanks,

charles

Return-Path: ██████████  
Date: Wed, 17 Jul 1996 23:47:35 -0700  
Reply-To: "The Book Arts: binding, typography, collecting"  
<██████████>  
Sender: "The Book Arts: binding, typography, collecting"  
<██████████>  
From: "Judith A. Hoffberg" <██████████>

Subject: Jewish women artists  
To: Multiple recipients of list BOOK\_ARTS-L  
<[REDACTED]>  
X-UIDL: 7f500e393d7deab9797846b8e44dc5c9

To women book artists:

*I am making a proposal for a museum exhibition of Jewish Women Artists who make books. I am seeking them in North America and in the rest of the world. If you are, or know a Jewish woman artist who is making artist books or who has made artist books in the past or who might even attempt to make a special book for the exhibition, please have them contact me. I want to see who will respond to this call. I would not mind if anyone posted this on another Listserv, since I am in the process of leaving for New York City for a week. So--spread the word and let me see if there are identifiable artists in this category--enough beyond my own list to create a fascinating show called Women of the Book.*

Judith  
Judith A. Hoffberg  
Umbrella/Umbrella Editions  
P.O. Box 3640  
Santa Monica, CA 90408

[REDACTED]/fax: [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

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528. **Ken Norris**  
***Somewhere Across the Border #3***  
*Thu 18 Jul 1996*

The third issue of SOMEWHERE ACROSS THE BORDER, a Canadian Interactive Poetry Magazine, is currently available for viewing at  
[www.letelier.com/sab/sab.html](http://www.letelier.com/sab/sab.html)

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529. **Tony Green**  
***Re: Carla Harryman and Barrett Watten***  
*Thu 18 Jul 1996*

"North American Language Writing Artists". Haven't seen that one before, but quite like that as a Brit way of advertising C.H. & B.W. best



Tony Green,  
e-mail: [REDACTED]

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530. **Tony Green**  
**Re: poetry performance**  
Thu 18 Jul 1996

---

Chris Whipple, please re-read what i wrote. It's not saying what you think it is saying. Nothing to do with emoting. best

Tony Green,  
e-mail: [REDACTED]

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531. **Bill Luoma**  
**growlie**  
Thu 18 Jul 1996

---

We're getting more than one and a half times  
the science we originally anticipated.  
We're getting more science each orbit  
and are able to accept larger programs.

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532. **George Bowering**  
**Re: [REDACTED]**  
Thu 18 Jul 1996

---

*George, would owning a mansion detract from or enhance the eyebrow effect?*

It would depend on whether the mansion has eyebrow windows, my wife's favourite kind of windows.

Come to think of it, Pierre is one of my wife's favourite men.

Hmmm.

.....  
"Lifting belly is so kind."

George Bowering.  
2499 West 37th Ave.,  
Vancouver, B.C.,  
Canada V6M 1P4

fax: [REDACTED]  
e-mail: [REDACTED]

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533. **George Bowering**

***Re: press survival***

*Thu 18 Jul 1996*

---

Dodie,

Thanks for the information on Rickie Lake. No relation to Veronica Lake, I guess. Sigh. Veronica Lake. It was she who first made me think of the possibility of manipulating parts of my own body so that I might somehow respond to the inchoate thrill Ms Lake's visage seemed to emanate, if that is possible. I take it that R. Lake does not have that effect, except maybe on strange people such as, maybe, David Bromige. That's just a speculation, mind you. I have never discussed TV with David. But we did have martinis at a soccer game together last sunday.

I am so damned ignorant about some parts of popular culture, and knowledgeable about others. 5 years ago I knew all about Marvel Comics and the World Wrestling federation, but I didnt recognize the name of the fashion guru-ess people were mentioninbg on this list last year, the one who apparently teaches people to make cocktail dresses out of old popsicle sticks.

I do know who Divine was, though.

.....

"Lifting belly is so kind."

George Bowering.  
2499 West 37th Ave.,  
Vancouver, B.C.,  
Canada V6M 1P4

fax: [REDACTED]  
e-mail: [REDACTED]

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534. **George Bowering**

***Re: Bad news***

*Thu 18 Jul 1996*

---

*Perhaps we could put on a Virgina  
Woolf festival with a save-the-wolves organization?*

*Dodie.*

How about a Virginia Woolf festival with a save-the-river organization?

.....

"Lifting belly is so kind."

George Bowering.  
2499 West 37th Ave.,  
Vancouver, B.C.,  
Canada V6M 1P4

fax: [REDACTED]

e-mail: [REDACTED]

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535. **Gwyn McVay**

**Re:** [REDACTED]

Thu 18 Jul 1996

---

George,

OK, I'll bite: what is an eyebrow window?

Keep dem European smoothies away from da wife.

Gwyn

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536. **Eliza McGrand- CVA Guest**

***feelingth, nothing more than feelingth... try to forget***

Thu 18 Jul 1996

---

this problem about poetry being regarded as "principally therapeutic" (from Brigham Taylor's message) is at the heart of the victim art controversy i mentioned on earlier posting.

on the one hand, writing, especially poetry, is for many fueled by internal emotional jihads and hurricanes. also writing has a long history as force for social change, especially when an issue is placed within a personal narrative. on the other hand, emotional flux does not, as such, automatically make a writer, either in that one having it will be a writer or that one writing must have it. ditto issues needing social change.

perhaps dodie's gulf war fellow might be considered an example of the latter -- fellow feeling in need of a cause to be credible.

what is the place of a writer with a personal issue/cause for social change? my personal feeling is that one needs to be very, very wary of falling into the trap

of letting one's victimhood, neediness, social credentials be used, or considered to, or overwhelm the art.

re: b. taylor's message, though we swipe at what sexton's work is sometimes used to justify, and though new unsavory biographical tidbits continue to come out almost hourly, her work still stands on its own incredible power and brilliance. consider a more extreme case -- lillian hellman. here we have someone whose "autobiographical" work is coming into increasing question even as her biographical details emerge as increasingly despicable. the autobiographical works, seen as complete fiction, are fascinating, books about how we'd LIKE to think art and writing and writers are... but CAN they be seen as complete fiction? can we ever divorce the text from its supposed biographical context? think of cellini... [probably even better example of this but he comes to mind right now].

e

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537. **Daniel Salmon**

***Re: eudora crash***

Thu 18 Jul 1996

---

Mine was running eudora 154, but is a fairly small 486, which could contribute to the problem i guess, the strange thing is that when both i and my provider (at different times) tried to look at it through netscape 2 it came up with the same error, it was only when i looked at it in the old netscape with its less complex mail prog. that i could get in and delete the corrupt message.

Dan

At 01:54 AM 7/18/96 -0400, you wrote:

>No Eudora crash here either.  
>Did the possessors of the crash copies have the latest versions?  
>Did they contact the "publisher"?  
>Any details appreciated  
>since these are not just words  
>but writing.

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538. **Tristan D. Saldana**

***Re: Proles vs. the Pulitzer***

Thu 18 Jul 1996

---

On Thu, 18 Jul 1996, GRAHAM W. FOUST wrote:

### INCOHERENT "POETIC" BABBLE GETS THE PULITZER

*After reading about the award and reading one of her "poems" within the story in the \_Des Moines Register\_, I was curious enough to get two of her books from the library. My suspicions were right. Her "poetry" consists of long streams of incoherent babbling. I find it hard to believe that any publisher would accept her work. It is especially hard to believe that she merits a Pulitzer Prize.*

I don't know . . . I mean it's sometimes problematic to tell a language poet from a coxcomb . . . where a language poet departs and where an imposter may slip in. Their may have been imposters who have "hitched a ride" under this aesthetic category of putting language first as the primary world of experience, or at least it would be convenient to do so. However, (at least from having read \_Materialism\_ and \_The Dream of a Unified Field\_) I find her stuff wonderfully -linguistically - conspicuous. I wouldn't call it "long streams of incoherent babbling" in any event. Inarticulate (more reticulated), non-linear, and spatial . . . by all means. Whether Graham deserved the Pulitzer is another thing. I am not sure about her "liberal" appropriation of other texts. She pushes Eliot's belief of what mature and amateur/immature poets do.

What does anyone else think?

Tristan

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539. **Thomas Bell**

***Re: feelingth, nothing more than feelingth... try to forget***

*Thu 18 Jul 1996*

---

On Thu, 18 Jul 1996, Eliza McGrand- CVA Guest wrote:

*this problem about poetry being regarded as "principally therapeutic" (from Brigham Taylor's message) is at the heart of the victim art controversy i mentioned on earlier posting.*

*flux does not, as such, automatically make a writer, either in that one having it will be a writer or that one writing must have it.*

As a professional therapist I find the connection of therapy and victim art problematic and close to offensive. The nconnection might be out there somewhere in the popular imagination, but effective therapy has never had any connection to personal revalation. It is an art (or science) just as poetry is art or criticism(?).

some days tom, other days Thomas Bell, Psy.D.

late night steam dissapating.

540. **Eliza McGrand- CVA Guest**

***Re: feelingth, nothing more than feelingth... try to forget***

*Fri 19 Jul 1996*

---

"connection of therapy and victim art problematic and close to offensive" --  
huh? connection is as follows:

person told as part of therapy, produce art centered on your problems. or patient reads how sexton's art was therapeutic for her and decides producing art about problems will be therapeutic for them.

--> they produce art about traumas ---> this art makes people think they have to describe it about art because whoops, as great art because person putting it out in public as art wants to believe themselves a great artist. if they aren't told it is great art, their feelings will be hurt. ---> as editors/evaluators/grantees, we begin giving/granting/evaluating well "victims," people whose art is about their victim hood because we feel bad for them, we want to go on record as thinking the source of their trauma is bad, we are so empathetic to the trauma we want to respond based on how bad trauma was and how sorry we feel for them, etc ALL NOT having to do with the art as art, all at the expense of non-victim artists. leading the mid-ground to search for trauma of the day because that makes them a victim which will make their art worthwhile as other victim's art is because they are victims. and i KNOW these exist because i see/receive/struggle with/see in other people's evaluative/grant/editing process same struggle arriving at different places. this is what croce's article was about, how as critic she is meant to evaluate art by victim as art when all around her she is feeling/perceiving pressure to evaluate it as suffering by victim.

-----

reverse of this connection, which i've also seen:

artist feels something is off in her/his work, it is not 'deep' or 'meaningful' enough. there is not enough of the stuff of real important human lives.... yes, you hear it coming, not enough suffering, not enough of the trauma that other important people write about -- no drugs, no alcohol, so...

---> artist decides in order to make their art more relevant they have to experience life, suffer, so --> they start shooting up, having sex with most of the east village, going out drinking and...

== they end up junkies (a very close relative of mine has) == they get aids (i'm afraid to count any more -- there have been too many) == they black out a lot of their life in drinking and == get killed in auto accident (couple i know, and

several i've heard of) == lose major parts of their life, family's life, sanity to drink == don't stop drinking

and all of these don't do much for their art. i've seen alot of terrible artists who did one of above to get sense of being more "in" to the marrow of creation and now they are terrible artists who drink alot/shoot up/have aids and write about it. lost people. had people die.

all of this IS real life true, not just "popular" myth. i don't know what you meant, or thought you meant that was offensive. this is what i meant and i don't think it is offensive, i think it is scary and sad.

i also meant, on another plane, that when you've gone through something tough, there is, of course, the fact that for a lot of us, it comes out in the writing. and it is very hard to know if the writing is just trauma working its way out and not really very good art, and the "buzz" of energy we get from looking at that work of our own is from having conquered the trauma enough to write about it. and of course people evaluating/editing/ grantmaking, are brought by first set of responses into seeing it through the filter of you the poor victim.... artist. and you could mistake the sympathy, carefulness, kindness, as awe, as reward, as whatever it is that good work touches off. we WANT good work so much we do mistake it. keep telling ourself the work MUST be great or people wouldn't like it so much. i am having alot of trouble seperating out and getting others reading to separate out, sympathy/victim response from critical response. i'm not sure when i get praise for art as such or when someone feels sorry for me. i'm not sure when my "buzz" is because it is good or because i've written myself out of it. again, real life, lived, mine, not "popular" misperception. again, don't know what you thought you saw, but don't see that that struggle is offensive. damn well OUGHT to struggle that way says i -- got to keep ourselves honest, our work honest. i don't want to end up 50, a terrible writer, whinging at readings and forcing scraps of awfulness on bored, embarrassed outsiders so i can get off on their scraps of uncomfortable sympathy. and i've seen those too, gotten their scraps of paper pressed on me and had to come up with what i want to make the most helpful, not the most easy, response. e

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541. **Kevin Killian**

***Re: feelingth, nothing more than feelingth... try to forget***

*Fri 19 Jul 1996*

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At 9:29 AM 7/19/96, Robert Drake wrote:

*i'm thinking, frinstance, about various poetries by Nam vets,  
bill shields & elliot richmond, or various ov the Viet Nam  
Generation publications (mostly prose)... & since i think yr*

*talking more about "our" critical reception of the work, i might suggest that for some folks, a cathartic working-out of what that (now mythic) figure in our social history is useful work, and such writing might be useful Culture... owens etal might have provided such after WW1... but you seem to be positing a single use-value--Art--that all writing shd be evaluated by?*

Luigi,

I couldn't agree with you more. I think that the relationship between art and content is random to say the least--in other words I think that dreck can be produced no matter the content and that great writing can be produced out of just about anything. This is also harmonizing with Bill Luoma's nonose comment. I'm speaking here more from a prose perspective--in poetry I think the whole issue of content becomes more problematic/complex. But look at the history of Great Works of Fiction--it's loaded with suffering and victims--but goes beyond that self-indulgence somehow. Much of my writing project is to take disenfranchized female experience and hurl it into the avant-garde. Recently I was delighted by *The House of Mirth* because in many ways the content of it doesn't differ that much from the content of *Cosmo*, the most petty and superficial of female obsessions and occupations, and how Wharton writes through that to show its absolute poignancy and oppression and tragedy. I think that one can write out of a position of victimhood and make it work. In my Mina Harker project I made Mina a sort of half goddess, half woman--that way I had the pleasure of letting Mina wallow in her sense of victimhood, to be a Garbo, a Bette Davis of victimhood--but I never try to pull a fast one over on the audience and hide that Mina is wallowing. It's nearly impossible to be a woman writing and to not be writing out of some position of abuse--some of us are abused more than others, to be sure, but all women are abused in this culture. This is just an example, plenty of men are also abused. To propose that writing about abuse is valuable as art, merely because it is about abuse is absurd--not that there isn't some value in writing workshops whose sole purpose is for people to write about their abuse. But, I don't see why this has to be rationalized as art.

The whole issue of victim art often comes up in my life in terms of writing about AIDS--all the crappy writing that comes out of AIDS, and how to deal with that. Once a friend who was teaching a course on writing and AIDS called up Kevin and asked him, rather desperately, for suggestions of good writing about AIDS that he could teach--because he was having a hard time pulling together a list. It was after that that Kevin himself began writing about AIDS, out of a sense, I believe, that skilled writers have a responsibility to confront this epidemic. The other obvious example of someone making art (art really is a dreadful word) out of this incomprehensible tragedy is Aaron Shurin. Neither Kevin nor Aaron are



avoiding the devastating emotional impact in all this by falling into some safe stance of objectivity.

I think I'm rambling here. But I guess what I'm saying is that I don't believe that there are these privileged subjects that should therefore blind us to the fact that what the person is producing is bad writing. That's not doing anybody any favors. Difficult, painful material deserves the same cut-throat technical proficiency as anything else.

As far as Sexton goes, though she has her moments, I think much of her stuff *\*is\** dreck. But then you have her unfortunate twin Plath, who is, in my opinion, a brilliant writer. Content isn't what makes the difference here.

Dodie Bellamy

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542. **Kevin Killian**

***Re: feelingth, nothing more than feelingth... try to forget***

*Fri 19 Jul 1996*

---

This is Dodie again.

R. Drake's mentioning of Viet Nam made me think of one more thing. Several years ago I read an oral history of Viet Nam. It was an amazing book, some cheap paperback that I may or may not still own. One chapter in particular that still haunts me was by this American soldier who had spent something like six years locked in a tiny bamboo cage, I can't remember the dimensions, but he couldn't stand up in it. In straightforward, clean prose he proceeded to explain in detail what he did to keep from going insane, memory games, mathematics, etc. It was horrifying and awesome. I think this *\*is\** an important cultural document. Thank god nobody talked him into writing some sappy poem about the scariness of some metaphorical cage.

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543. **Robert Drake**

***Re: feelingth, nothing more than feelingth... try to forget***

*Fri 19 Jul 1996*

---

eliza--

i'm interested, & potentially troubled, by yr contentions re: "victim art", but i'd like to understand better what you are trying to say. praps some of my confusion has to do w/ the generality of yr remarks? could you give concrete examples (beyond sexton) of the problems you see? wd be easier fr me to evaluate yr

argument in ref. to specific works, rather than broad generalizations ov "how victim/art functions"...

i'm thinking, frinstance, about various poetries by Nam vets, bill shields & elliot richmond, or various ov the Viet Nam Generation publications (mostly prose)... & since i think yr talking more about "our" critical reception of the work, i might suggest that for some folks, a cathartic working-out of what that (now mythic) figure in our social history is useful work, and such writing might be useful Culture... owens etal might have provided such after WW1... but you seem to be positing a single use-value--Art--that all writing shd be evaluated by?

i'm looking, to, at a recent collection edited by Cynthia Edelberg called \_Scars: American Poetry in the Face of Violence\_... i'm having all kinds of questions abt the book, which contains work from a range of authors (frm Rachel Blau Duplessis, Rosemarie Waldrop & Robert Creeley to Amy Clampitt & Joyce Carol Oates) addressing violence by catagory--domestic, race, war... one of the selection criteria (which i'm guessing you wd agree with?), seems to be that the writers generally present a voice of "objectivity", rather than firstperson & "emotional"... i mself am not convinced that there is such a thing as objectivity beyond a basically rhetorical gesture, and if there were such a thing i'm not sure i'd value it very highly... but are you suggesting that "victim art", in the pejorative, is work that lacks enuf objectivity, or emotional distance, to be credible? or something else?

i'm also wondering about "victim art", which implies i guess a connotation of autobiography, and other topical work that addresses emotionally charged subjects... certainly problematic if there wd be a different critical response to a text based on the "authenticity" of the writer's experience--is that part of what you're critical of...

ultimatly, i'm very interested in the place of poetry \_in\_ the society, as living culture, and some of yr concerns seem to be about just that-- i'd like to know more about what you think, particualarly about specific texts or writers...

asever  
lbd

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544. **Bill Luoma**  
***Anne Sexton's shrink***  
*Fri 19 Jul 1996*

---

Brigham,

why do you want to dis anne sexton? she wrote a good poem about the van allen belt. (Don Allen's anthos). which is just another belt like the salem

pack  
that sits  
on her file cabinet  
parallel to her wrist  
watch as she buttons  
and unbuttons  
her die

I mean Jed Rasula told me some things I didn't want to know.

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545. **Bill Luoma**  
*Bromige & nonose*  
Fri 19 Jul 1996

---

George,

have you read Bromige's work in Kevin & Dodie's mirage mag? is that new work? it's much fun. i hope it's part of a book about to come out.

i even laughed at the language-referential bits which usually make me cringe when i see or hear them around.

yes, he upset my nono, which is using troped-out words like this or sign or word or major signifiers like history or thinking or poem etc. but somehow he managed to pull it off. does anyone have an example they'd like to share about getting your nonose upset in a good way?

for example, maybe Jeff Derksen has been struck by a two word title that he liked?

Bill Luoma

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546. **Herb Levy**  
*clear-cut*  
Fri 19 Jul 1996

---

I doubt that Nico Vassilakis (one of the few local lurkers on this list who hasn't come out during the recent spate of, uh, odd de-lurkings from the Northwest) will get around to noting this before leaving for an extended road trip (watch for readings by him, Noemie, & Quixote somewhere near you shortly), so I'll briefly announce a new publication/Web site that debuted at last night's Subtext reading.

Clear-cut is an extremely ecumenical anthology of writing by more than thirty Seattle writers, including some people some of you know: Antero Alli, Laynie

Brown, Maxfield Pol Chandler, Steve Creson, Jerome Gold, Jeane Heuving, Paul Hunter, Jay Jaworski, Joseph Keppler, Marion Kimes, Charlotte London, Michael Magoolaghan, Tom Malone, Bryant Mason, Noemie Maxwell, Heather McHugh, S P Miskowski, Robert Mitterthal, Doug Nufer, Mickey O'Connor, John Olson, Roberta Olson, Belle Randall, Robbo, Steve Shaviro, Willie Smith, Curtis Taylor, Craig Van Riper, Nico Vassilakis, Don Wilsun, J Yarrow.

There's a clear-cut Web site just down the road from the Subtext site:

<<http://www.speakeasy.org/clear-cut/>>

You'll find information there about ordering a print copy of the book. The texts should be available online there, sometime real soon now, but they aren't there now.

Herb Levy



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#### 547. **Herb Levy**

##### ***Another "Yasusada" Sighting***

*Fri 19 Jul 1996*

---

While out doing errands this morning, I looked through the newest American Poetry Review & was amazed to see four pages devoted to the legendarily non-existent Araki Yasusada.

But wait, there's more: a limited edition selection of verse is forthcoming from Northern House in the UK, as well as a larger manuscript being readied for publication.

Do any of the list readers from Britain know the Northern House people? They should probably be told of the spurious nature of the work they're planning to publish.

How much further can this hoax go? Will work by "Yasusada" end up in a Norton anthology before the end of the century?

Herb Levy



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548. **Eliza McGrand- CVA Guest**

**Re: Another "Yasusada" Sighting**

Fri 19 Jul 1996

---

i know i'm being a dummy here, but what is the yasusada legend? i've never heard of araki yasusada...

e

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549. **George Bowering**

**Re:** [REDACTED]

Fri 19 Jul 1996

---

George,

OK, I'll bite: what is an eyebrow window?

Oh, how can I tell you without drawing it. Well, it is a kind of gable window in that it juts out from the roof. But instead of having an inverted V shape it has its little personal roof in the shape of an eyebrow.

.....

"An occasional crow makes poetry more interesting but not prophetic."

--Carl Rakosi

George Bowering.  
2499 West 37th Ave.,  
Vancouver, B.C.,  
Canada V6M 1P4

fax: [REDACTED]

e-mail: [REDACTED]

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550. **George Bowering**

**Re: Bromige & nonose**

Fri 19 Jul 1996

---

George,

have you read Bromige's work in Kevin & Dodie's mirage mag? is that new work? it's much fun. i hope it's part of a book about to come out.

I havent been fortunate enough to see it, and though Brom and I see each other often, I havent talked about his new poems with him lately. Mainly we talk about our recently-finished co-authored novel, for which we have no publisher. But i can say that ever since I first knew him, circa 1959, he has had a deft

comic, satirical touch that does not dump him into the canister labeled satiric poet. I think he can do it to almost anyone.

.....

"An occasional crow makes poetry more interesting but not prophetic."

--Carl Rakosi

George Bowering.  
2499 West 37th Ave.,  
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Canada V6M 1P4

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e-mail: [REDACTED]

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551. **MAXINE CHERNOFF**

***Re: feelingth, nothing more than feelingth... try to forget***

*Fri 19 Jul 1996*

---

Dodie's right about sappy poems on important subjects and the suitability of other media with the same subject matter. No one, of course, should censor anyone else or his/her subject matter, but what grates is that crass marketers of writing often dwell on subject matter. I was recently at a gathering where a local poet told another what she was reading in just that way: a great book of poetry on incest, another on the war, etc. Try to tell someone that you write about flux or the perilous language of human communication and you're in trouble. What's your subject--language-- might go over here but try it on the general public or on a polite gathering of "writers" and you're in big trouble. Wish it weren't so but it is.

Maxine Chernoff

On Fri, 19 Jul 1996, Kevin Killian wrote:

*This is Dodie again.*

*R. Drake's mentioning of Viet Nam made me think of one more thing. Several years ago I read an oral history of Viet Nam. It was an amazing book, some cheap paperback that I may or may not still own. One chapter in particular that still haunts me was by this American soldier who had spent something like six years locked in a tiny bamboo cage, I can't remember the dimensions, but he couldn't stand up in it. In straightforward, clean prose he proceeded to explain in detail what he did to keep from going insane, memory games, mathematics, etc. It was horrifying and awesome. I think this *\*is\** an important cultural document. Thank god nobody talked him into writing some sappy poem about the scariness of some metaphorical*

cage.

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552. **Herb Levy**

**Re: Another "Yasusada" Sighting**

Fri 19 Jul 1996

i know i'm being a dummy here, but what is the yasusada legend? i've never heard of araki yasusada...  
e

"Araki Yasusada" is a fake poet whose work has been turning up in several very presitigious mags over the last few years. Outside of this list I've seen little or no mention of the fact that this is a rather tacky hoax. The mention of forthcoming work in the APR header makes it possible for someone to actively stop some future publication rather than merely note another instance of this.

Here's a better description of the situation than I could give myself from the poetics archives:

Date: Tue, 29 Aug 1995 21:45:29 -0400  
Reply-To: UB Poetics discussion group <[REDACTED]>  
Sender: UB Poetics discussion group <[REDACTED]>  
From: Lee Chapman <[REDACTED]>  
Subject: Yasusada = Hoax?  
To: Multiple recipients of list POETICS <[REDACTED]>

*As one of the editors who recently published work by Araki Yasusada (Brad Morrow, CONJUNCTIONS, and Jean Stein, GRAND STREET, were others), I feel a responsibility to inform anyone who may have read the work (in FIRST INTENSITY #5) that it is more than likely a hoax; that is, a person or persons unknown to me at this time concocted the bio and writings of this supposed Hiroshima poet. The person who submitted the work to me refuses to confirm or deny the rumors of fakery, and with absolutely no evidence in favor of Yasusada's existence, while there is plenty against it, I think it's safe to assume that the rumors are true.*

*I don't want to interrupt the flow of current discussions to use this forum for a big screechy diatribe on the ethical ramifications of such practices, but I want everyone to know that I did not know of the hoax when I accepted the work, which obviously I found very moving--and timely, of course. However, I believe that the author's deliberate targeting of some major literary magazines, such as CONJUNCTIONS, just in time for the 50th anniversary of the horror of the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki is indefensible.*

*If the purpose was to bring attention to this 50-year-old horror, well I*

*think we are already perfectly aware of that--many of us have been living "under that bomb" for all our lives! If the author's purpose was to assure that he/she/they received closer attention by synchronizing their attack with the anniversary, well they succeeded. They got our attention. But now what are they going to do with it?*

*My main purpose here is to alert you all to this hoax, and to warn any publishers who may have been approached by anyone (such as Kent Johnson of Freeport, Illinois, who submitted the work to me) claiming to be associated with "Yasusada's editors."*

*The perps did a nice job of writing, but they trashed their own creation when they decided to trash their readers' hearts. Thousands of human beings died in Hiroshima and Nagasaki, and thousands of their family members are still alive today, to remember the horror personally. To use their pain as a springboard to some kind of notoriety is unconscionable. There are hoaxes (such as the Ern Mally affair in Australia during World War II, in which the target was a single editor) and there are hoaxes (such as Yasusada, in which the pain of millions of people--as everyone on earth is affected to some extent by what happened in Japan 50 years ago this month--was callously ignored, apparently in favor of personal gratification); this one really stinks.*

*I guess I diatribed after all. Sorry. As it seems that the Renga got started after someone posted a note about the Yasusada business in FIRST INTENSITY, I'm somewhat to blame for the seemingly endless renga-ing. You know, I almost didn't publish the renga part of the Yasusada submission--see what happens when you don't listen to your instincts?*

*Best to all,  
Lee Chapman*

Herb Levy



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553. **Tristan D. Saldana**

***Re: Another "Yasusada" Sighting***

*Fri 19 Jul 1996*

---

What might be a poet hoax? How can we recognize one?

Tristan

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554. **Pritchett, Pat**

***Re: feelingth, nothing more than feeling***

*Fri 19 Jul 1996*

---

The book you're referring to, Dodie, is "Nam," compiled by Mark Baker (or possibly Barker). I've been haunted for years by that particular chapter. As I recall (it's been over ten years since I read it), the POW in question would spend each day building his dream house. In his imagination, he pored over every aspect of construction with the same kind of deliberation as the actual building would have required. In this way, it took him years to finish "the project." It sounds like something straight out of Borges and is a real testament to poesis in its most elemental form.

Best,

Patrick Pritchett

-----

From: Kevin Killian

To: Multiple recipients of list POETICS

Subject: Re: feelingth, nothing more than feelingth... try to forget

Date: Friday, July 19, 1996 4:26PM

<<File Attachment: HEADERS.TXT>>

This is Dodie again.

R. Drake's mentioning of Viet Nam made me think of one more thing. Several years ago I read an oral history of Viet Nam. It was an amazing book, some cheap paperback that I may or may not still own. One chapter in particular that still haunts me was by this American soldier who had spent something like six years locked in a tiny bamboo cage, I can't remember the dimensions, but he couldn't stand up in it. In straightforward, clean prose he proceeded to explain in detail what he did to keep from going insane, memory games, mathematics, etc. It was horrifying and awesome. I think this *\*is\** an important cultural document. Thank god nobody talked him into writing some sappy poem about the scariness of some metaphorical cage.

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555. **Joseph Zitt**

***Murmurings from the Renga Pits***

*Fri 19 Jul 1996*

---

For anyone who's interested: after a six month wandering of attention, I've gotten back to working on boiling the Renga down into a hypertext.

I'm toying with doing it as a Java app rather than in simple HTML. The question boils down to whether the wait involved in schlepping lines back and forth across the Net is more or less annoying than waiting once to drag the whole file, with the program (well, Java classes) along with it, down. Either way, I'm trying to keep the interface clear and the program platform-independent.

It's not going to be ready really soon, but will emerge in the fullness of time :-).

-----1-----1-----1-----1-----1-----1----- |||/ Joseph Zitt ====   
===== Dallas, Texas \|| \|| Question Authority, The == SILENCE: The John  
Cage Mailing List \|| \|| http://www.realtime.net/~jzitt == <\*> <\*> == The Data  
Wranglers! \||

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## 556. **Thomas Bell**

**Re: feelingth, nothing more than feelingth... try to forget**

Fri 19 Jul 1996

Yes, exactly - this has nothing to do with competent therapy. It has to do with popular misconceptions, critics, and academic fashion.

On Fri, 19 Jul 1996, Eliza McGrand- CVA Guest wrote:

*"connection of therapy and victim art problematic and close to offensive" --  
huh? connection is as follows:*

*person told as part of therapy, produce art centered on your problems.  
or patient reads how sexton's art was therapeutic for her and decides  
producing art about problems will be therapeutic for them.*

*--> they produce art about traumas*

*---> this art makes people think they have to describe it about art because  
whoops, as great art because person putting it out in public as art  
wants to believe themselves a great artist. if they aren't told it is  
great art, their feelings will be hurt.*

*---> as editors/evaluators/grantees, we begin giving/granting/evaluating  
well "victims," people whose art is about their victim hood because  
we feel bad for them, we want to go on record as thinking the source  
of their trauma is bad, we are so empathetic to the trauma we want to  
respond based on how bad trauma was and how sorry we feel for them,  
etc ALL NOT having to do with the art as art, all at the expense  
of non-victim artists. leading the mid-ground to search for trauma  
of the day because that makes them a victim which will make their art  
worthwhile as other victim's art is because they are victims. and  
i KNOW these exist because i see/receive/struggle with/see in other  
people's evaluative/grant/editing process same struggle arriving at  
different places. this is what croce's article was about, how as  
critic she is meant to evaluate art by victim as art when all around*

*her she is feeling/perceiving pressure to evaluate it as suffering by victim.*

-----

*reverse of this connection, which i've also seen:*

*artist feels something is off in her/his work, it is not 'deep' or 'meaningful' enough. there is not enough of the stuff of real important human lives.... yes, you hear it coming, not enough suffering, not enough of the trauma that other important people write about -- no drugs, no alcohol, so...*

*--> artist decides in order to make their art more relevant they have to experience life, suffer, so*

*--> they start shooting up, having sex with most of the east village, going out drinking and...*

*== they end up junkies (a very close relative of mine has)*

*== they get aids (i'm afraid to count any more -- there have been too many)*

*== they black out alot of their life in drinking and*

*== get killed in auto accident (couple i know, and several i've heard of)*

*== lose major parts of their life, family's life, sanity to drink*

*== don't stop drinking*

*and all of these don't do much for their art. i've seen alot of terrible artists who did one of above to get sense of being more "in" to the marrow of creation and now they are terrible artists who drink alot/shoot up/have aids and write about it. lost people. had people die.*

*all of this IS real life true, not just "popular" myth. i don't know what you meant, or thought you meant that was offensive. this is what i meant and i don't think it is offensive, i think it is scary and sad.*

*i also meant, on another plane, that when you've gone through something tough, there is, of course, the fact that for a lot of us, it comes out in the writing. and it is very hard to know if the writing is just trauma working its way out and not really very good art, and the "buzz" of energy we get from looking at that work of our own is from having conquered the trauma enough to write about it. and of course people evaluating/editing/grantmaking, are brought by first set of responses into seeing it through the filter of you the poor victim.... artist. and you could mistake the sympathy, carefulness, kindness, as awe, as reward, as whatever it is that good work touches off. we WANT good work so much we do mistake it. keep telling ourself the work MUST be great or people wouldn't like it so much. i am having alot of trouble seperating out and getting others reading to separate out, sympathy/victim response from critical response. i'm not*

sure when i get praise for art as such or when someone feels sorry for me. i'm not sure when my "buzz" is because it is good or because i've written myself out of it. again, real life, lived, mine, not "popular" misperception. again, don't know what you thought you saw, but don't see that that struggle is offensive. damn well OUGHT to struggle that way says i -- got to keep ourselves honest, our work honest. i don't want to end up 50, a terrible writer, whinging at readings and forcing scraps of awfulness on bored, embarrassed outsiders so i can get off on their scraps of uncomfortable sympathy. and i've seen those too, gotten their scraps of paper pressed on me and had to come up with what i want to make the most helpful, not the most easy, response.

e

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557. **Thomas Bell**

**Re: feelingth, nothing more than feeling**

Fri 19 Jul 1996

I do resonate with this. I would however call it hero art. It is certainly not victim art, and it is legitimately therapeutic as well as inspiring. tom

On Fri, 19 Jul 1996, Pritchett,Pat @Silverplume wrote:

*The book you're referring to, Dodie, is "Nam," compiled by Mark Baker (or possibly Barker). I've been haunted for years by that particular chapter. As I recall (it's been over ten years since I read it), the POW in question would spend each day building his dream house. In his imagination, he pored over every aspect of construction with the same kind of deliberation as the actual building would have required. In this way, it took him years to finish "the project." It sounds like something straight out of Borges and is a real testament to poesis in its most elemental form.*

*Best,*

*Patrick Pritchett*

-----

*From: Kevin Killian*

*To: Multiple recipients of list POETICS*

*Subject: Re: feelingth, nothing more than feelingth... try to forget*

*Date: Friday, July 19, 1996 4:26PM*

*<<File Attachment: HEADERS.TXT>>*

*This is Dodie again.*

*R. Drake's mentioning of Viet Nam made me think of one more thing. Several years ago I read an oral history of Viet Nam. It was an amazing book, some*

*cheap paperback that I may or may not still own. One chapter in particular that still haunts me was by this American soldier who had spent something like six years locked in a tiny bamboo cage, I can't remember the dimensions, but he couldn't stand up in it. In straightforward, clean prose he proceeded to explain in detail what he did to keep from going insane, memory games, mathematics, etc. It was horrifying and awesome. I think this *\*is\** an important cultural document. Thank god nobody talked him into writing some sappy poem about the scariness of some metaphorical cage.*

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558. **Louis Cabri**

**si**

Sat 20 Jul 1996

---

The concept gradually ate  
Until only a scifi movie  
Remained, & gradually  
Ate the scifi movie remains

The day when incoherence  
Became obvious  
Something happened, as if  
By thinking

I feared for my life & friends  
"Once again," upon a rhyme  
It pounced as proof, science  
Nor seances suede

\*\*\*

Re: Gulf War/Political poetry, I patch this from my scrapbook, a rather cynical assessment:

"[A] poet is an "unacknowledged legislator" who bravely takes a stand against corruption in power. It is this model, dimly remembered, that leads the poets I heard read during the Gulf War to choose their antiwar poem to read first; that tang of forbiddenness with (the best part) no real risk behind it.... A quick index of the difference between this purely simulated forbiddenness and the real thing may be got in comparing reaction to these antiwar poems (applause, indulgence, boredom) and the reaction to a Stanford University lecturer who, a few months later, publicly declared that he used marijuana and that he had sometimes brought it to work with him. He was fired. No one reacted." ("A

Show of Defiance: Poetry as 'Protest' in Contemporary America," John C. Dolan, in Rhetorical Republic - I didn't take down who the editor is nor biblio details).

It's interesting to me where and how the line is drawn on the question of the political a/effect of poetry/language. Dolan here draws it one way. Stanford U may not get too much contrastive sympathy, however. Another way to draw it would be as a legal limit of, say, defamatory libel, as it's called in the Cdn Criminal Code. I think it's Derrida who has an interesting essay on the "undecidable performative" in a French poet whose names escapes me right now, a rhetorical manoeuvre of self-reflexive language that freaked de Man out (he said the u.p. couldn't be "tolerated"). I can't give example of the u.p. right now (but McCaffery's poetry has lots of instances of it, I think). Anyway, one could call the legal limit a "decidable performative." There was a recent case in Canada concerning the legality of a protester's poster outside the court, whose message was ultimately directed toward a Crown decision concerning charges of manslaughter brought against Kingston Penitentiary guards in the case of Robert Gentles. I don't know if the protester was charged under the Code.

\*\*\*

Re: victim art, imposters, concepts, perhaps these lines may suggest new  
...Behind every survival is a whole totality in words.

i.e., parenthesis it is a text. To answer a  
question in runic workings of quotations  
behind which passion slips.

And left, imagining a sum: an I inverted  
to an it.

At the same time as an imposter.

B. Watten, from "Conduit" in Conduit (Gaz, 1988)

-Louis

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559. **Kevin Killian**

***Re: feelingth, nothing more than feelingth... try to forget***

*Sat 20 Jul 1996*

---

At 8:02 AM 7/20/96, Carnography wrote:

*Speaking of victim art: "Every woman adores a fascist" seems rather simplistic. Plath's suburban pain was hardly comparable to the suffering of Jews, gypsies, dissidents and homosexuals in WWII concentration camps.*

Rob,

Jacqueline Rose addresses this issue in her excellent *\_Haunting of Sylvia Plath\_*. I won't attempt to paraphrase from a book I read a few years ago, but one thing that Rose points out is that in fact Plath was much more politically engaged than is commonly known--one of her many aspects "edited" out of her myth by her executors. Rose argues that Plath's references to the Holocaust, fascism, Rosenbergs, etc., aren't as gratuitous as they seem.

Michael Davidson picked up on this at his recent talk at the Orono conference when he led off his talk on Cold War Politics with a discussion of the *\_Bell Jar\_*.

"Every woman adores a fascist." Of course it's simplistic--and I'm sure Plath knew that in this sing-songy nursery rhyme poem. I think she's very much in control in this poem and is being in-your-face provocative.

Plath's hard for a lot of people to like because she's mean. I admire that about her.

Sexton's the bored well-to-do housewife who drank too much and liked to screw around. Plath at least struggled in her life, financially and socially, had some real tragedy. As far as suburban goes, wasn't she living in London when she wrote "Daddy?" Or maybe she was still in the country with the bees?

Dodie

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560. **Rachel Loden**

***Re: feelingth, nothing more than feelingth... try to forget***

*Sat 20 Jul 1996*

---

MAXINE CHERNOFF wrote (in part):

*Try to tell someone that you write about flux or the perilous language of human communication and you're in trouble. What's your subject--language-- might go over here but try it on the general public or on a polite gathering of "writers" and you're in big trouble. Wish it weren't so but it is.*

Hear hear. I just spent much too much time trying to jump through all the byzantine hoops on a local arts council application (including a demand for a "statement" which seemed more appropriate for a lepidopterist than a poet). I found myself liberally quoting from Frank O'Hara's brilliant tapdance before the Paterson Society: "I don't want to make up a lot of prose about something that is perfectly clear in the poems...At any rate, this will explain why I can't really say anything definite for the Paterson Society for the time being." Which will no doubt win me lots of points with the bureaucratic Cerberus who guards the gateway to the judges, and probably with the judges themselves--but the alternative was vile.

Rachel Loden (briefly delurking)

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561. **Carnography**

**Re: feelingth, nothing more than feelingth... try to forget**

Sat 20 Jul 1996

---

Dodie typed:

*I think I'm rambling here. But I guess what I'm saying is that I don't believe that there are these privileged subjects that should therefore blind us to the fact that what the person is producing is bad writing. That's not doing anybody any favors. Difficult, painful material deserves the same cut-throat technical proficiency as anything else.*

The problem of the reader's (and critic's) identification with the author's persona is as pervasive as a virus. I find it odd that many of our champions of multiculturalism have denounced in "victim art" what I consider to be equally problematic in multiculturalism: it posits inherent values to the experience/ethnicity/gender/sexual orientation of the poet. To argue by authority is the fastest possible way to lower the level of a dialogue between diverse parties.

*As far as Sexton goes, though she has her moments, I think much of her stuff \*is\* dreck. But then you have her unfortunate twin Plath, who is, in my opinion, a brilliant writer. Content isn't what makes the difference here.*

Are you saying that craft makes the difference? If so, I'd have to agree. Still, I thought that much of *\_To Bedlam and Part Way Back\_* was good, and that much of Plath is overstated or overly dramatic.

Speaking of victim art: "Every woman adores a fascist" seems rather simplistic. Plath's suburban pain was hardly comparable to the suffering of Jews, gypsies, dissidents and homosexuals in WWII concentration camps. The problem here, I think, *\*is\** one of craft (Plath's verbal felicity and fecundity notwithstanding). The difficulty for the writer is to avoid getting painted into a corner: not to make blank statements in an attempt to be powerful, but to address the complexity and subtlety of an experience as well as its power. Plath's suffering was horrible enough as it was. She didn't need to sing anapestic similes involving Hitler to prove her point.

All the best,

Rob Hardin

PS: A horrible confession: I used to listen to library recordings of Plath in high school. (For all I know, I probably cried.) Later, I discovered Thomas Lovell Beddoes, whom I love far more than Plath and Sexton combined.



Plath and Sexton, Eliot and Pound. Have you ever \*heard\* Plath's expatriate accent on those recordings?

PPS: I'm not \*dissing\* Plath and Sexton, I'm \*reading\* them.

<http://www.interport.net/~scrept>

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562. **Ron Silliman**

### ***Hoaxification***

*Sat 20 Jul 1996*

---

I'm curious -- and maybe a little disturbed -- at the idea that one would want to stop the publication of any of "Asusada's" work before it comes into print just because it's a hoax. Besides being a classic instance of prior censorship, I think it fails to see what's going on in the whole phenomenon.

After the Social Text "hoax" and the lengthy discussion here of the Ern Malley affair (which I'd not heard of before this list), it seems worth looking a little more closely at the ideas that are put into play.

Let's look at the basics:

(1) Asusada doesn't exist -- he is a social construct built by one or (more likely) more people. There's been speculation here about who that might be, but it seems to me unimportant.

(2) The work as writing is pretty good. One reason it's getting published is because it IS better than just decent.

(3) The social narrative that is Asusada's "background" (Japanese survivor of Hiroshima, lost his family, got into the work of Spicer and Barthes in the 1960s, etc) is compelling enough to get the work into places (Grand Street, APR) that, frankly, wouldn't publish Spicer if he was alive today (oh, maybe Grand Street would, now that Corbett's the poetry editor).

(3a) It would be possible to argue that the work crosses over from the ordinary to the publishable BECAUSE of the context the hoax creates -- but I'm not convinced of that.

(4) "Asusada" is the only "poet" publishing right now who foregrounds the horror of nuclear war. Think about that. Is that "tacky"? It may in fact be just the opposite.

(5) "Asusada" also plays on the orientalism of various English-speaking writers/editors/readers in complex ways. Is it an exploitation of it or an expose? I think it may be both, but a lot of what makes people uncomfortable with this

hoax is that it sets it up pretty ambivalently and we don't like to feel those dynamics at play in ourselves -- even when they are.

(6) "Asusada" by now must know that lots of folks recognize the project as a hoax and that when he/they appear in APR or elsewhere they give its editors (and readers) the opportunity to feel for a moment the way Andrew Ross and the editors of Social Text must feel. I hear that same tone of defensiveness in some of the posts on Asusada here that I heard in Ross' replies (there's been more of the same in the Nation of late as well). I think we all know how SILLY that sounds to others. Maybe we should try to hear it in ourselves as well.

(7) Having been the person who first brought Asusada's name up on this list (I wrote a note about how good I thought the work in Conjunctions was), I write this from the perspective of "one of the \_taken\_."

Having "said" all that, I don't see why anyone would want to stop the publication of this work. I can see that, if the editor were your friend, you might want to let them know that the context is different from/more complex than they might think. But why stop it?

All best,

Ron

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563. **Robert Drake**

***Re: Hoaxification***

*Sat 20 Jul 1996*

---

ron--

author as a social construct? that might be "Asusada", but it couldn't be "me"...

[chetongueek]

asever

lbd

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564. **Herb Levy**

***Re: Hoaxification***

*Sat 20 Jul 1996*

---

Ron -

Acouple of quick things & then I gotta run.

I agree that my use of the term "stop" was an overstatement, but I still think it makes sense for potential publishers of poetry "by" Yasusada to have the opportunity to make an informed decision of the work they are considering.

Your comparisons with Ern Malley & the recent Social Text fiasco are right on. But those works were submitted for publication to show that the editors were rubes who didn't know what they're doing. This is not the same as the avant garde tradition of false identities, which have most often included collaborations from within an artistic community to "fool" those outside it. One could make the argument that this is partly what's at work in the Yasusada project, but then where do you draw the line as to who is within & outside of the artistic community under consideration? APR, Grand Street, First Intensity, Conjunctions, Aerial?

At this point there's no way of knowing who Jack Spicer would be "if he were still alive", but APR has published work by others who were in the New American Poetry & so have other mags w/o roots in the experimental tradition that wouldn't (yet) touch anyone in, say, In the American Tree.

I also agree that some of the Yasusada poems are good. But the "social narrative" of the author is becoming more & more of the recent publications, which seem mired in footnotes and other explanatory material. A lot of the APR stuff is letters and journal entries with lots of accompanying apparatus. If this more recent stuff is indicative of the larger project, I think we're ultimately going to see an awkwardly parodistic "novel" with some good poetry in it.

As for Yasusada's being the only poetry dealing with the atomic bombing of Japan, I think you were moving from the Bay area to Philadelphia during at least a part of the fiftieth anniversary of these bombings and so may have missed some of what seemed to be A LOT of related poetry. Much of this work wasn't in an "experimental" tradition, but I think there's a project that Karl Young is involved in that might better fill that bill.

Have a good weekend

Bests

H

Herb Levy



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565. **Christina Fairbank Chirot**

***poetry and nuclear war***

Sat 20 Jul 1996

---

Thanks to Ron Silliman for his thoughtful note re Asusada. A cautionary note is well taken when the issues of censorship and nuclear destruction are found in conjunction. Actually there is an excellent ongoing forum for work concerned with Hiroshima and its ongoing after effects: the International Shadows Project. The Project has mounted exhibits and events for several years now, from here in Milwaukee to California to, this year, Finland. For information on the Project, there is a site at Grist On-Line: <http://www.thing.net/~grist> Check on Jukka Lehmus' Page for info on how to participate and for photos of this year's work in progress (including wooden dice made by Karl Gartung, of Woodland Pattern Book Center here in Milwaukee). Also on Grist On-Line, check Karl Young's Light and Dust Books for available catalogues of previous Shadows Projects and for Young's poem Three, Hiroshima done as part of the 1990 Project. Get in touch and participate--the anniversary of Hiroshima and Nagasaki is approaching--another way to think of that "deadline".

who are you/the moment is escaping/ we couldn't do anything so hideous/  
our death keeps going on and on/we couldn't do anything so hideous/the citadel  
faces its own darkness/it'll be over in just a minute/the moment is escaping/who  
are you

from Three, Hiroshima by Karl Young

---get in touch with the International Shadows Project--

--dave baptiste chirot

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566. **Curt Anderson**

***Re: Hoaxification***

Sat 20 Jul 1996

---

My impression of the Asusada hoax is quite different from Ron Silliman's. I don't think the poems are particularly good, and I doubt they would have been widely accepted independent of their poetically correct pedigree. The instructive and insidious thing about the work is that it manipulates the editor, and thus the reader, by virtue of the circumstances it clothes itself in. It presents itself as exotic, critically and aesthetically current, and socially conscious. I acknowledge the value of appropriation of materials to some extent, but appropriating identities is something else altogether, especially when that identity manipulates its relationship to an event in which thousands of innocent people

were extinguished. I got thrown off the list by the Eudora bouncer, and haven't been privy to previous posts on the subject, other than Silliman's, but I know a couple editors who have been taken in by the hoax and the distress the publication of misrepresented material has caused them. Just thought I'd put in my monthly two bits, Ron. Now back to the darkness.

Curt Anderson



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567. **Mark Wallace**  
*avant garde as production network*

Sat 20 Jul 1996

---

Dear David Baratier:

I have some sympathy for the problems you speak about regarding being "a card-carrying member of the avant garde," that is (and I'm reading you implicitly here) your sense that working in a range of "avant garde" poetries, you sometimes get the sense that people read that as a commitment on your part to believe certain things and not others, to practice certain ways and not others, and yet you're not sure always that you want to believe or practice these things, and certainly not in every instance.

There have been a lot of debates on this list about what the notion of an avant-garde really could be in 1996, and whether using the world itself is even valid, so I don't think at this time I really want to repeat those arguments here. But what I would suggest, as a way of thinking about the problems you bring up, is two different definitions of avant garde, both of which describe different areas of phenomena. One is that group of poems which at various points and times have been described by that term, the other is a social network of people who claim in various degrees to be involved in something called "avant garde" practice.

The difference is important (and could be further characterized). But it seems pretty clear that what's frustrating you, at times anyway, is the issue of the avant garde as a social network committed to the production and distribution of certain kinds of texts. Frankly, many poets actively resist seeing themselves as part of a production "network" at all--they like to think of themselves as free individuals who critique the very notion of production/consumption, and the idea that they themselves are both producers and consumers is an uncomfortable one. What it seems to me that you're questioning, in valuable ways, is your relation to this kind of production activity. Is there really some part of avant garde practice that is just simply capitalist production, is there any part that gets beyond that? Are you, when labelled "a card-carrying member" of the

avant garde, simply a production manager for certain kinds of texts? Are you a member of a significantly oppositional community? Are you committing yourself to the creation only of certain kinds of products, and what if you don't want to create only those products? Are there ways in which the creation of a poem, and the reading of one, can critique or escape production-consumption relations?

A lot of writers have attempted answers to these questions, and many of them have failed, too. I'm just now reading Raymond Williams' *THE POLITICS OF MODERNISM* in which, so far anyway, he sees the failure of high modernism as the way in which it was eventually "bought out" by capitalist modernity and became the "postmodern," which he reads often as modernism without any real subversive capability, a failure which he sees as arising at least in part from the unresolved internal contradictions of modernism. I've heard this before from Jameson, and thought it was wrong then too--Williams seems to be implying that if postmodern art really was what it should be, then normative capitalist production couldn't continue--therefore, postmodern art must in some way "support" capitalist production. In so saying, I think he misses the idea that postmodernist art can indeed critique capitalist relations of production PERFECTLY, and still not make a damn bit of large scale difference. Why? Because people who make art are not in charge. Should they be?--that's a problem for another day.

I think, finally, that there's no way out of production/consumption relations. HOWEVER, there are different kinds of production, and different kinds of use of that production, not all of them fundamentally exploitative. That is, production is not at all negative by definition--it's only negative when it's a certain KIND of production (at the moment, the mass production of standardized products of relentless and alienating banality, as just one for instance).

The question then becomes, if I want to produce something, how do I conceive of that? And I think I remain committed to the possibility of an "avant garde" not because avant garde art is unproblematic, or because one's existence as a producer of any kind is without ambivalence, but because it's my sense that the "production network" of the avant garde is the only public social environment, at this time, in which such questions are even raised. That is, the avant garde production environment holds out the POSSIBILITY of being a producer who is not deluded about production, that is, of being someone who has become not a producer only but more importantly a CREATOR (a term I'm using here in clearly polemical fashion).

mark wallace

/-----\ |  
||      ██████████      "I have not yet begun      ||

|                    |                                              |      |      |
|--------------------|----------------------------------------------|------|------|
| to go to extremes" |                                              | GWU: |      |
|                    | http://gwis2.circ.gwu.edu/~mdw               |      | EPC: |
|                    | http://writing.upenn.edu/epc/authors/wallace |      |      |

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568. **Rod Smith**  
***Re: Hoaxification***  
*Sat 20 Jul 1996*

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As Yasusada's "debut" took place in *\_Aerial 6/7\_* with an extremely well-informed, and very funny piece called "Renga and the New Sentence" I thought I'd weigh in on this again. First, I agree with Ron on many points-- whoever's doing it is a very good writer, who is I think aware of the complexities of what they're doing. I'm curious to see what this work in APR will be. Let them publish it, then have the hullabaloo. If it appears and becomes a "controversy" -- I'll be curious to see if APR handles it any better than the Sokal slather. When I published the piece in *\_Aerial\_* I suspected it was fake, or more accurately, was almost sure it was fake. I think on close reading it becomes obvious. The only thing I regret somewhat is the fake Spicer footnote, which I take some responsibility for. I have to admit at the time I published it I thought whoever it was wld come forward sooner. The questions raised re subsequent publications-- "cashing in" on Hiroshima *\_are\_* very problematic. However, interestingly, many of those who attack Yasusada assume the writer is not Asian or Asian-American-- my guess is they're right, but we don't know that to be the case yet now do we? Maybe "Yasusada" is making a point about "author as construct"-- which is that it's *\_not\_* accepted. Motivation is given primacy within interpretation, & if you don't have an identity to hang that motivation on? Interestingly "the lid" came off at Conjunctions when Harpers wanted to reprint some of the material-- the question of where to send the check. . . I don't know how that was resolved, I doubt anybody got paid anything, even a contributor's copy. One might argue that, as long as Yasusada's identity remains obscure, the gesture is truly purely *\_literary\_*. I'm not sure I'd make that argument, & it's all this not-sureness which is fascinating. One is challenged to read the work on its own terms-- which quickly, even more quickly than usual, become our own.

Rod

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569. **Emily Lloyd**

*like a big pizza pie, that's Eudora...*

Sat 20 Jul 1996

---

...quick note to say that I, too, had Eudora fall-out like Peter and others, so haven't seen mail from the list in a week--managed to download some garbled messages eventually, so Rob (Hardin)--I know you responded to my last post to you, but don't know what you said--backchannel me, maybe? yers in accidental aloofness, emily

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570. **Kathrine Varnes**

*Re: feelingth, nothing more than feelingth... try to forget*

Sat 20 Jul 1996

---

Mainly, I agree with what's been said on this thread, but I've known some art therapists who do wonderful work. What their clients produce may not be "art," but it is valuable. This is different, of course. Therapy as Art, as opposed to Art as Therapy. It operates under different rules, but I'm loathe to completely reject it.

So, what are the 7 seven deadly sins of suburban life anyway? Is this class anxiety, or what, that suburbs are so despised?

But back to Sexton and Plath. Yes, I'm tired of seeing these two names together. You'd think they were joined at the hip. Joining them like this means that one always has to come out on top, our binaried damsels in distress. Enough already. They both struggled. They both wrote.

Kathrine

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571. **maria damon**

*Re: feelingth, nothing more than feelingth... try to forget*

Sat 20 Jul 1996

---

trying again to post something written a few daze ago; my computer's acting funny; most of the discussion has by now covered most of what went thru my mind, esp luigi drake and dodie, but here're my 2 cents;;;

In message "maria damon" writes:

> i have difficulty with the concept of "victim art" as a problem. first of  
> all, it's a pejorative term coined by someone who refused to see a dance by a  
> well-known choreographer/dancer who is hiv positive and whose show explicitly



> addressed this. so? aren't all registers of human experience reasonable  
> material for art? i think she just didn't want to deal with it; or that the  
> critical tools she had acquired thru writing and studying were not equipped  
> to handle the complexities of the situation, but she couldn't admit that, so  
> had to make it the art's problem rather than hers. i think it hard to  
> separate art from context, and am not sure what the point is; the phrase  
> "the work should stand on its own" seems particularly empty to me. what  
about  
> something like the diary of anne frank, whose fame is very much due to the  
> circumstances under which it was produced? is there a problem with its  
> popularity?  
> md  
>  
>  
>  
>

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572. **maria damon**

***Re: feelingth, nothing more than feelingth... try to forget***

*Sat 20 Jul 1996*

---

tom bell writes:

effective therapy has

> never had any connection to personal revaluation.

tom: can u say more abt this?

md

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573. **Judy Roitman**

***Re: Hoaxification***

*Sat 20 Jul 1996*

---

Re: "author as construct"

One of Anne Carson's books has as its only biographical note "Anne Carson lives in Canada."

This attempt to deflect attention away from the usual biographical comforts was siezed by a reviewer in the Flash as a clue to hypothesize (not incorrectly, as it turns out) about her persona.

Can't win.

----- Judy Roitman  
| "Glad to have Math, University of Kansas | these copies of things  
Lawrence, KS 66045 | after a while." [REDACTED]  
| Larry Eigner, 1927-1996  
-----

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574. **Judy Roitman**  
***Re: feelingth & hoaxification***  
*Sat 20 Jul 1996*

---

Th victim art strand and the Yasusada strand -- aren't they the same?

----- Judy Roitman  
| "Glad to have Math, University of Kansas | these copies of things  
Lawrence, KS 66045 | after a while." [REDACTED]  
| Larry Eigner, 1927-1996  
-----

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575. **maria damon**  
***Re: catching up***  
*Sat 20 Jul 1996*

---

hi guyzies: i'm recovering from a few days of enforced lurkerhood due to my inability to post messages. it was actually useful to be in th receiving-only position for a while, cuz i found that most of the points i was burning to make were made eventually, though of course w/ different nuances, agendas and conclusions than i may have arrived at. so if my posts seem after-the-fact redundant, that's why.

last night i was part of a "bob kaufman night" at the walker art center. the evening featured allan kornblum of coffee house press hand-pressing (or whatever the term is --hand printing?) a broadside of a kaufman poem, "no more jazz at alacataz," which was offered free to audience and participants. (kornblum and i have settled our skirmish abt. cranial guitar without my having to bring a formal grievance, btw). i picked up a bunch, so ---if you want one, send me yr snail mail and i'll mail you one.. . first five folks to respond get um.

on plath/sexton: there's no doubt in my mind that plath is by far the superior poet. also, i think when both plath and sexton use nazi/holocaust imagery to express their own pain they are telling us how painful in fact life was for middle class women in the 50s and early 60s. i'm pretty into my jewishness and the horror of the holocaust and all that, but for some reason i don't find their

appropriation of images of jewish suffering offensive; it just reminds me of the horror lurking under the plastic image of feminine "fulfillment" in the so-called age of prosperity, probably cuz i can see how destructive those gender expectations were to my older female relatives --my mother, my aunt, etc. however, i must admit to preferring sexton's poetry; i think i'm put off by plath's meanness, and also a sense i get from her of tremendous performance anxiety; she reviles "daddy" but will do anything, including being vicious to others, to get his approval...hard to substantiate, and as far as i know she was not a vicious person, but it's a subtext i pick up from the strenuous brilliance of her performances in verse...whereas sexton seems so desperate to be liked in her verse that i feel more invited to interact w/ it, it seems "warmer," whatever that means. at the same time, it really irked me when, as a teenager in the 1970s, i'd tell people i wrote poetry and they assumed my models were plath and sexton and that i was doomed to suicide, or wanted to be, or something--like, they couldn't see past my gender and my class..... it may be that, in general, i'm attracted to art that's not perhaps as technically "perfect" as other art, or as ambitious...for instance, as i wrote to bob von hallberg, i've never been that drawn to pound or eliot (though i prefer pound's aesthetic risk-taking over eliot), though they are the acknowledged masters of the modernist era. stein, it seems to me, completely sidesteps the issue of "perfection," which is why i find her so brilliant. i also often find i prefer "folk art" to "high art", and that i appreciate roughness and unfinishedness over the dazzling, polished tour de force (the one big exception being hawthorne's short stories, which leave me breathless)... anyway, blah blah blah. md

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576. **maria damon**

***Re: Hoaxification***

*Sat 20 Jul 1996*

---

i'm with ron on this one.--md

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577. **Gabrielle Welford**

***Re: feelingth, nothing more than feelingth... try to forget***

*Sat 20 Jul 1996*

---

nNot to dis Rob Hardin here, but I think comparisons between pain hardly every are useful. Who can assess the pain of a small child in an abusive situation, wherever they are? gab.

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578. **Robert J Wilson**

**Yasu/Sada**

Sat 20 Jul 1996

---

Re Ron's comments on the "Yasusada" effect in mags like Grand Street and APR, it is helpful to recall the devious page of acknowledgments that Jack Spicer affixed to the "Book of Magazine Verse": "None of the poems in this book have been published in magazines. The author wishes to acknowledge the rejection of poems herein by editors Denise Levertov of THE NATION and Henry Rago of POETRY (Chicago)." At the same time the books of magazine verse were being filled with (what Oppen called) "the Merwin" and "the Simpson" and so on, 'voice' a crafty crafted function of aesthetic/market consistency. So I take "Yasusada" to be a function of that same search for pained subjectivity, cum a glimmer of historical pathos and multicultural aura now that the market has shifted a bit, and a touch of Spicer thrown in for hip measure. By the way, as some Japanese allies here have advised me, "Yasusada" is not a Japanese name: "Yasu" is a name and "Sada" is a name but Yasusada is a hoax name, sort of like calling yourself "Sillimanwilson" and writing about Brass factories and your abjected Japanese aunt. Now Yasu/sada is a real poet, and he is a typesetter for Bamboo Ridge Press when he is not selling futures for Castle and Cook in a taro patch. Cynical reason rules at Grand Street, and I am trying not be cynical and morose about seeing Yasu/sada's face on the baseball-card-like cover of APR next month.

By the way, if you want to see one of the best, weirdest, and most disjunctive love lyrics ever written in USA, see "After the Pastoral, Driving With My Grandfather to the Place Where Scott Coles Died, the realities, an Aside for Rochelle" in Occident Vil 3 (spring/summer 1969) by "Ronald Silliman" who just at that point (as a kid as it were) was tossing off such poems in his sleep. I admired it then, and still do now, let the Yasu/sadas come and go like sneakers on the shelf life shelves. Regards, Rob Wilson

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579. **Nada Gordon**

**roughness**

Sat 20 Jul 1996

---

maria damon wrote

*i'm attracted to art that's not perhaps as technically  
"perfect" as other art, or as ambitious...for instance, as i wrote to bob von  
hallberg, i've never been that drawn to pound or eliot (though i prefer pound's  
aesthetic risk-taking over eliot), though they are the acknowledged masters of  
the modernist era. stein, it seems to me, completely sidesteps the issue of*

*"perfection," which is why i find her so brilliant. i also often find i prefer  
"folk art" to "high art", and that i appreciate roughness and unfinishedness  
over the dazzling, polished tour de force*

Me too. I prefer sketches to paintings, a clunky ear to grand rhetorical flow, e.g. my students' unfinished utterances, their traces of grappling, sentences "ending" with "but..." -- even when such a rough or naive aesthetic is deliberate (as in tea bowls or Klee drawings). As Kokan (Japanese zen monk of the 14th century) wrote of his students' poems

    Their poems may be halting, uneven, doltish, and clumsy,  
    and sometimes make no sense at all; but still, they are  
    often filled with a self-possessed purity and integrity  
    that make me marvel.

(As quoted in David Pollack's \*The Fracture of Meaning\*)

Besides, words like "mastery" really get under my skin

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580. **Gabrielle Welford**

***Re: roughness***

*Sat 20 Jul 1996*

---

Oh, I like this, yes. There's a discussion going on on the MLA grad students list at the moment about plagiarism--a lot of moralistic hohumming--and I do believe so much of that desire to cheat comes from never being valued for the clunky insights, instead the teacherly humanistic "try to better yourself, dear" before you even know who you are! Grrrr. I love to encourage my students to clunk while I clunk along with them. :-) gab.

On Sat, 20 Jul 1996, Nada Gordon wrote:

e.g. my students' unfinished utterances, their traces of grappling,  
> sentences "ending" with "but..." -- even when such a rough or naive  
> aesthetic is deliberate (as in tea bowls or Klee drawings). As Kokan  
> (Japanese zen monk of the 14th century) wrote of his students' poems  
>

>     Their poems may be halting, uneven, doltish, and clumsy,  
>     and sometimes make no sense at all; but still, they are  
>     often filled with a self-possessed purity and integrity  
>     that make me marvel.

> (As quoted in David Pollack's \*The Fracture of Meaning\*)  
>

> Besides, words like "mastery" really get under my skin  
>

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581. **Charles Alexander**

***Re: roughness***

*Sun 21 Jul 1996*

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>maria damon wrote

>

>>i'm attracted to art that's not perhaps as technically

>>"perfect" as other art, or as ambitious...for instance, as i wrote to bob von

>>hallberg, i've never been that drawn to pound or eliot (though i prefer  
pound's

>>aesthetic risk-taking over eliot), though they are the acknowledged masters  
of

>>the modernist era. stein, it seems to me, completely sidesteps the issue of

>>"perfection," which is why i find her so brilliant. i also often find i  
prefer

>>"folk art" to "high art", and that i appreciate roughness and unfinishedness

>>over the dazzling, polished tour de force

>

>Me too. I prefer sketches to paintings, a clunky ear to grand rhetorical

>flow, e.g. my students' unfinished utterances, their traces of grappling,

>sentences "ending" with "but..." -- even when such a rough or naive

>aesthetic is deliberate (as in tea bowls or Klee drawings). As Kokan

>(Japanese zen monk of the 14th century) wrote of his students' poems

>

> Their poems may be halting, uneven, doltish, and clumsy,

> and sometimes make no sense at all; but still, they are

> often filled with a self-possessed purity and integrity

> that make me marvel.

>

>(As quoted in David Pollack's \*The Fracture of Meaning\*)

>

>Besides, words like "mastery" really get under my skin

I do agree with Maria, but perhaps not so much with Nada -- just that I think sometimes it takes some fairly amazing "mastery" (forgive me) to make works which manage to maintain that roughness or immediacy which is so attractive. Living with a painter for more than a decade now, and one whose work does exhibit that sense of roughness, I find her work (& that of others who manage it) far more interesting than student work (although some students manage it, too)

whose constructions seem so often to not quite know what they want to do. And I may not care that much for grand rhetorical flow, but I think the alternatives might include music like Thelonius Monk's, whose ear I would hardly call "clunky." But yes I do like work which includes its "traces of grappling."

charles

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582. **Nada Gordon**

**Re: Yasu/Sada**

Sun 21 Jul 1996

---

Robert Wilson wrote

*By the way, as some Japanese allies here have advised me, "Yasusada" is not a Japanese name: "Yasu" is a name and "Sada" is a name but Yasusada is a hoax name*

Yes. Sada is the name of the woman in "In the Realm of the Senses" who, um, dismembered her lover. The film is based on a true story.

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583. **Nada Gordon**

**Re: roughness**

Sun 21 Jul 1996

---

In reply to Charles Alexander, who wrote

*I do agree with Maria, but perhaps not so much with Nada -- just that I think sometimes it takes some fairly amazing "mastery" (forgive me) to make works which manage to maintain that roughness or immediacy which is so attractive.*

Well yeah, why do you think I mentioned tea bowls and Klee? Can't we just substitute "practice" for mastery?

*Living with a painter for more than a decade now, and one whose work does exhibit that sense of roughness, I find her work (& that of others who manage it) far more interesting than student work (although some students manage it, too) whose constructions seem so often to not quite know what they want to do.*

So then for you "mastery" = intention? Hmm. Can we take a poll of listmembers to find out how many of us and how many of our constructions know quite precisely what we/they want to do?

I wasn't talking specifically about student attempts to make art, visual or verbal, but their maneuverings in a distinctly foreign language, a kind of flapping around in a linguistic twilight zone. Tony Green not so long ago posted some

student "mistakes" ("logoparaphernalia") that I perceived as not merely funny but poetic too. Those students obviously didn't know the art value of their words -- mine don't either. Clark Lunberry wrote about this phenom in an article called "The Poetless Poem: Deviant English and the Para-Poetic" that appeared in the "Word" issue of Kyoto Journal #29, 1995. Pat Reed's beautiful chapbook on her experiences teaching Vietnamese and Laotian refugees is infused with her students' 'para-poetic' language.

The startling thing about such language is ... they do it by accident. And it takes a \*practiced\* reader to perceive it aesthetically.

Anyway for me the problems with the word, the concept, of \*mastery\* -- aside from the patriarchal/slaveowner overtones -- is the deadness and finality of it. Mastery means the end -- you get your black belt, you don't need to try anymore. Mastery obviates discovery. Recently I heard a poet referred to as "a master of language" and I shuddered at the image -- no more grappling, he'd won the wrestling match.

My students ask me sometimes, Nada, how can I master English? And I say you can't, but that's OK, no one can

(but there are an awful lot of things you can do to practice)

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#### 584. **Carnography**

##### **Re: avant garde as production network**

Sun 21 Jul 1996

---

Mark Wallace:

*Williams seems to be implying that if postmodern art really was what it should be, then normative capitalist production couldn't continue--therefore, postmodern art must in some way "support" capitalist production. In so saying, I think he misses the idea that postmodernist art can indeed critique capitalist relations of production PERFECTLY, and still not make a damn bit of large scale difference.*

*Why? Because people who make art are not in charge. Should they be?--that's a problem for another day.*

A "perfect" critique of normative capitalist production is not necessarily a perfect solution to the problems of normative capitalist production. Thus, it is questionable that the artist who is put "in charge" will be able to fix or replaced what s/he has successfully criticized.

Semiotics, which was supposed to be our Nietzschean bullshit decoder for linguistic systems of ideological propaganda, has only made advertisers ever more efficient. The problem was not that Barthes's criticism failed. It was that people



used semiotics to encode as well as to decode. The ethical ramifications of Barthes's criticism were often ignored by the very people who were fascinated with his analytical methods.

The artist, forge a new career by running for office?  
I'd settle for a society that was responsive to the  
conscience of the artist.

All the best,

Rob Hardin

<http://www.interport.net/~sccrypt>

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585. **Kevin Killian**

**Re: Loy readings**

Sun 21 Jul 1996

---

At 10:16 AM 7/21/96, Maerra Yaffa Shreiber wrote:

>Carolyn Burke (Mina Loy's biographer) will be reading from \*Becoming  
>Modern\* around the Bay area  
>during the next few weeks:

|      *A Clean Well Lighted Place, August 6, 7:30*

This is Dodie. I've been looking forward to this event, even though readings at A Clean Well Lighted Place give me the creeps--the huge gap that is promoted between reader and audience, everybody feeling very elitist because they read books, etc. This is where I saw Linda Gray Sexton and Donald Spoto (twice).

For those of you who can't make this reading in SF, if you hold tight you'll get a second chance: Carolyn Burke will be speaking on Loy at Small Press Traffic in January.

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586. **Robert Drake**

**Re: roughness**

Sun 21 Jul 1996

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|      *... Mastery means the end -- you get your black belt, you don't  
|      need to try anymore*

from my understanding of martial arts, nothing could be further from the truth... likewise, not at all how i understood ca's remarks. now, substitute "ten-ure" for "blackbelt", and i might know of examples that fit... but none of them wd qualify as "masters" in my book...

lbd

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587. **Maerra Yaffa Shreiber**

***Re: Loy readings***

*Sun 21 Jul 1996*

---

Carolyn Burke (Mina Loy's biographer) will be reading from *\*Becoming Modern\** around the Bay area during the next few weeks:

Printer's Inc.- Palo Alto, July 25- 7:30

Barnes and Noble, Sacramento, August 5, 7:30

A Clean Well Lighted Place, August 6, 7:30

She is eager to meet poetics folks....

Maeera Shreiber

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588. **Kevin Killian**

***A plea for Ginny***

*Sun 21 Jul 1996*

---

This is Kevin Killian speaking. I know y'all are busy watching the Olympics and too busy to have yet read the new issue of Minneapolis' "James White Review," which features a new interview with Allen Ginsberg. The interviewers spoke to AG over a speakerphone and had more than the usual trouble transcribing the tapes afterwards, I thought I'd share a few good ones with you:

Who are the good poets of today?

AG: Eileen Myles, Sharon Mesmer, Bono (from U2) , Andy Clausen, and Ann Tyler.

[I have racked my brains to think who "Ann Tyler" could be, but Dodie figured out it must be "Antler," who AG has named for the last 25 years when asked for his favorite poets of today.]

Can you comment on other influences on the Beats?

AG: One of my mentors was William Carlos Williams. I also knew Ezra Pound. We had many connections with the daddies of the past. And the mommies, because when I worked back in the 50s, I sent books to Marianne Moore, and connected with a lot of the womenfolk that were not so well-known-like Marine Heidegger.

[Marine Heidegger, of Fort Atkinson, Wisconsin.]

Tell us a little about Naropa.

AG: West Coast poets Philip Whalen, Gary Snyder, Michael McClure, and Robert Duncan could come and cross paths with Paul Orlovski, Sid Corman, Creeley, John Ashbery, Kenneth Cope, Sharon Holmes and me. About a month ago we did a big, big benefit with Patti Smith and Annie Kay (her guitarist) in Hale Auditorium.

Why is the Beat Generation now of interest to younger people?

AG: The sexual, spiritual liberation, liberation of the word, and the private poetic candor, which actually got us in trouble with the law. We had to overcome the legal trials for 57 to 62, which liberated Henry Miller, Burroughs, Ginny, myself, and everyone like that. The word was liberated.

[Ginny: "Thief's Journal," "Our Lady of the Flowers," "Flowers by Ginny"]

AG: There was the association with the psychedelic world, as well as the whole Eastern meditative world; the old European surrealist world; and the old homemade Americanist Williams, Morrison and Heartly world.

[Context is everything and I believe that AG is referring to the homemade W.C. Williams/Marsden Hartley world.]

What kind of advice would you give to a young poet today just starting out?

AG: Recognize the vast consciousness you already have. Then, if possible, read a lot of Burroughs, Kerouac, Corso, Ginny, and Rimbaud. Maybe get that big book by Pierre Joris and Jerome Rothenberg of international writing. Poems for the Millenium, University of California Press. It's a big, thick, thousand-page book of world poetry.

[Pierre and Jerome, I hope you are including plenty of Ginny's work in Vol 2 of your anthology. Young poets must learn! Have a heart!]

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589. **Megana Camille Roy**  
***poetry & performance (plays)***

*Sun 21 Jul 1996*

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....Dean Taciuch thinks that what matters is "the language," and worries that actors would be concerned with the emotions and meanings. ...Tony Green worries about a "danger" in the kind of reading he supposes actors would do, and feels that "the poetry is damaged" by it.

In my experience (with poetic plays) there are problems working with conventionally trained actors. Their training doesn't match the task. They look for sub-text, psychological underpinnings etc. I've found actors who can go with the

text, the texture and word play etcetera but they're pretty rare. The problem is uncertainty. The actors look for certain responses for the audience and look in the play for ways to get those responses, which may be totally inappropriate to the play. The difficulty is that the confidence of the actors is undermined. The best person to address this is the director, but it's also hard to find directors who can really go with a "poetic play". There's not much interesting writing going on for theatre today and the split between playwrights in the theatre community and every other writing community makes finding the right actors/director harder. An alternative is not to use actors much, but artists and poets and others, as Kevin Killian does.

Camille Roy.

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590. **Charles Alexander**

***Re: roughness***

Sun 21 Jul 1996

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No, Nada, I wouldn't want to equate "mastery" with intention. And I don't much like the word either. And I think one can absolutely begin & proceed without quite knowing what one wants to do or where one wants to go -- and still have the final work come out with a surety which is there, and yet which may include, and even reveal, its traces of grapplings. In fact that's what much work I love does. So I think we're probably in agreement more than I realized -- and I thank you for setting me straight about what you mean.

thanks,

Charles

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591. **Carnography**

***Re: pathos, nothing more than bathos***

Sun 21 Jul 1996

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Dodie:

*Rose argues that Plath's references to the Holocaust, fascism, Rosenbergs, etc., aren't as gratuitous as they seem.*

Yes, but even though I worship the keyboard you type on, I can't just take your word for it: I'd have to read Rose's argument to know whether or not I agreed. But somehow, I doubt Rose's case is a strong one: Plath isn't citing historical stats about the women in Pakistan. She's talking about herself, her own history, her own psychology, and comparing her plight to that of the survivors of the

holocaust. "Every woman adores a fascist?" Plath and the Jewish women of Dachau's Joy Division occupy two distinct levels of suffering. Many of us have experienced Plath's kind of suffering: mental illness, depression, a sense of political/emotional powerlessness and betrayal, that-gas-in-a-sealed-garage sense of anger helplessly directed inward. However, none of us has ever lived a concentration camp.

*"Every woman adores a fascist." Of course it's simplistic--and I'm sure Plath knew that in this sing-songy nursery rhyme poem. I think she's very much in control in this poem and is being in-your-face provocative.*

Being in control of one's poetic technique is not the same as maintaining one's historical perspective. And being provocative isn't the same as being perceptive.

*Plath's hard for a lot of people to like because she's mean. I admire that about her.*

I have no problem with Plath's meanness, when it is focussed and specific. Her anger at Ted Hughes was fine until she reinvented herself as Elektra and railed at the cosmos at large instead of him.

Plath walks a delicate tonal tightrope, as did many of the so-called confessional poets (Snodgrass, for example). Irony on one side, sentimentality on the other. Conscious anger here, intolerance and specious inductive reasoning there. Often, she succeeds. But nearly as often, she fails. "Daddy" is incantatory and effective. But that doesn't mean it is truthful or politically astute.

Also: Pop culture is littered with the corpses of privileged suicides who lashed out at the society that praised them. Kurt Cobain, too, could be "mean," like Plath. But a cruel tone is usually most effective, it seems to me, in humor and satire. At her best, Plath manages a balance of anger and grim wit. Her anger is given some degree of sophistication by her sense of irony.

Unfortunately, "Daddy" is campy in a way that Sylvia Plath never intended. Suicide poetry will always exemplify a certain campiness, no matter how earnest the practitioner. The best poets have grim fun with the role they've assumed.

*Sexton's the bored well-to-do housewife who drank too much and liked to screw around. Plath at least struggled in her life, financially and socially, had some real tragedy.*

In this context--in the context of lasting craft--what do autobiographical details have to do with the quality of the poet's work? Plath brought up her own suburban life and made parallels to Nazi Germany. That was the only reason I mentioned her life in the burbs.

Yes, I, too, tended to prefer Plath to Sexton, initially. Prosodically--in terms of diction, word-music, formal intricacy--I still do. But a bit of perspective is always in order. Plath could be mannered and shrill. And Sexton was a far better technician at the beginning of her career than she was at the end. \_To Bedlam and Part Way Back\_ and \_All My Pretty Ones\_ contain many poems that are in an entirely different mode than Sexton's later work. There is less self-conscious lyricism and more description, as if the slow accretion of detail were a matter of amassed, localized identity. The tone is relatively restrained. I find the narrative range of Sexton's early poems more satisfying than Plath's earlier attempts.

And by the way, to whomever complained about it: Plath and Sexton are usually mentioned together because they were both confessional poets who studied with Lowell, came from the same aesthetic and political milieu, were contemporaries, knew each other, talked about suicide together, wrote about suicide obsessively, were troubled by mental problems, shared the iconography of the asylum, and eventually killed themselves. Yes, I'd say it is a \*great injustice\* that Plath and Sexton are ever mentioned together.

*As far as suburban goes, wasn't she  
living in London when she wrote "Daddy?" Or maybe she was still in the  
country with the bees?*

How many Nazis brought their victims to London to take care of babies in semi-provincial neighborhoods? Hughes might be bad, but he ain't no Mengele.

Also: To say that a suburb is not a concentration camp is not to insult suburbia itself or to condemn suburban life. If "Daddy" is a tribute to suburbia, then I certainly won't be visiting my mother in Lake Oswego.

By the way: An attempt to assess Plath reasonably is not an attempt to dismiss her work. Poets, even lasting ones, are rarely perfect. If praise sounds qualified, judgment reserved, it is because I try to read poets fairly. Thoughtful criticism comes out of respect and not contempt.

All the best,

Rob Hardin

PS: to maria:

*i think when both plath and sexton use nazi/holocaust imagery to  
express their own pain they are telling us how painful in fact life  
was for middle class women in the 50s and early 60s.*

That's exactly my point. The parallel is false and overly dramatic. Bosnian survivors have every reason to make such parallels. However, a relatively well-off, academically-ordained white-collar poet of the sixties is simply misrepresenting her condition, even trivializing her own pain, by making such a comparison.

PPS:

*Not to dis Rob Hardin here, but I think comparisons between pain hardly every are useful. Who can assess the pain of a small child in an abusive situation, wherever they are? gab.*

Not to diss gab, but her analogy illustrates my point.

To compare the experience of a small relatively unabused child in a suburb (Plath) with a small child in a \*concentration camp\* is extremely useful. If the first child calls her captors Nazis, she is being accurate. If the second refers to her parents as Nazis, she is being hyperbolic.

<http://www.interport.net/~scrypt>

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592. **Tony Green**  
***philosophers & poets***

Sun 21 Jul 1996

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I've been thinking this weekend about Derrida and poets. It does not seem a bad thing for poetry to have to face a philosopher (for which read a "writer") who plays at capturing attention by 1)self-presentation with props = sheaf of papers to read at length 2)seemingly long and seemingly uninteruptable discourse Surely it is open to poets (for which read "writers") to respond by brazen interuption, by demonstrative headshakings and laughter and attempts to take over the platform/ audience situation.

If "poetry" means ONLY a tightly specific kind of writing, with no sense of poet-presentation, it will go down where it perhaps may belong in the present time. The competition from the "philosopher" should perhaps be a wake up call. Not an occasion for calling "foul".

best

Tony Green,

e-mail: 

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593. **Tony Green**  
***Re: Bad news***

Sun 21 Jul 1996

---

that, George, wd be almost as good as a Larry Rivers Festival with a save-the-wolves organization

Tony Green,

e-mail: 

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594. **Dan Horne**

***Victim Art***

*Sun 21 Jul 1996*

---

I've been following the thread on "victim art" with some interest, as I recently found myself in a situation where a nurse asked me to evaluate the poetry of one of her teenage patients who recently died of cancer. She wanted to know if I could recommend any of them to any editors I knew. It was an unenviable situation, since as a lay person I felt unqualified to judge, and secondly, such a task is inherently subjective. I was asked to weigh the very real emotional pain the writer was going through with a set up aesthetic criteria that, rightly or wrongly, I bought to the poems. In the end, I had to say to the nurse that the poems didn't align themselves with the ideologies of the journals I knew. The nurse wasn't too happy about that, and I felt even worse for saying so...

Regards

Dan Horne

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595. **Carnography**

***Pastiche for Charles***

*Sun 21 Jul 1996*

---

This glyphic cyst,  
Now sinuous cutworm etched in lead and lemon,  
Would, if it were veined,  
So drain the caves within these aphid hives  
That the Heretical Manor of Hands would prove  
Vermiform steeple, and Adam Kadmon,  
A skein of fistic hymnals  
Whose dirge-pearl slivers raked my window-skin--  
See, it gleams toward doors.

<http://www.interport.net/~scrypt>

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596. **Henry Gould**

***My Vacation in Minnesota***

*Sun 21 Jul 1996*

---

MY VACATION IN MINNESOTA



5th Grade

Mrs. Peterson, Home Room

Minnesota was very quiet and cool.

Up north in Minnesota there are a lot of pine trees and not people. There are loons that make weird calls at night across lakes from very far away. My Dad says there are bears but not to be scared they won't bother you if you don't bother their Moms and cubs.

My Mom had a paragraph written by a guy named Thoreau in the cabin. In his writing he said we were given life here on earth so we could live, and that was good enough for him. My Dad likes to make deals. He talked to 3 different guys plus a guy in Tower (where it was 75 below last January) just to buy a motor for his rowboat. Eveleth is where the Hockey Hall of Fame is. There is also the Thunderbird Iron Mine where there is a big hole and you can see a long ways almost to Canada.

My Dad will be 70 in 1997. He was too young for World War Two. He joined the Navy as soon as he could and sailed around Lake Superior. My Mom says "we are all God's children". She has white hair and is a good camper, she makes pots too with clay. Every morning I took the Grumman down to the end of the bay. There are tamaracks there and no roads all the way to the arctic circle almost. The water was smooth. It was very, very quiet. There was a little bird called a White-Breasted Sparrow that makes a very clear-toned song so high clear sweet, penetrating not piercing, that carries so far through the solemn melancholy pines. Somewhere between Chet Baker and Morse Code. I just drifted there for a long time, the lake water licking the canoe. By Henry Gould

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597. **Julia Stein**

***Re: victim art***

*Mon 22 Jul 1996*

---

>In message "maria damon" writes:

>> i have difficulty with the concept of "victim art" as a problem. first of

>> all, it's a pejorative term coined by someone who refused to see a dance by a

>> well-known choreographer/dancer who is hiv positive and whose show explicitly

>> addressed this. so? aren't all registers of human experience reasonable

>> material for art? i think she just didn't want to deal with it; or that the

>> critical tools she had acquired thru writing and studying were not equipped

>> to handle the complexities of the situation, but she couldn't admit that, so

>> had to make it the art's problem rather than hers. i think it hard to  
>> separate art from context, and am not sure what the point is; the phrase  
>> "the work should stand on its own" seems particularly empty to me. what  
about  
>> something like the diary of anne frank, whose fame is very much due to the  
>> circumstances under which it was produced? is there a problem with its  
>> popularity?  
>> md  
>>

Since Anne Frank's diary was mentioned, I'd like to also refer to the  
Holocaust literature as part of "victim art."

*In dealing with "victim art" I'd recommend Lawrence Langer's book The Holocaust and the Literary Imagination. Langer analyzes poetry and novels of the literature of atrocity. He looks at works by both Jews and non-Jews, by those who survived the death camps and those who were not imprisoned or interned. A lot of the issues regarding "victim art" are also discussed by Langer. On page 1 Langer asks, 'How should art-how can art--represent the inexpressibly inhuman suffering of the victims, without doing an injustice to the suffering.'*

One of the poets Langer analyzes is Paul Celan who spent the war years in a camp in his native Romanian. Throughout his "years of alienation (and, presumably, incarceration) only one thing, Celan reports, remained attainable in the midst of other other casualties of war: language." Langer quotes Celan on language saying that "It went on living and gave birth to no words to describe what had happened; but it survived these events. Survived and came to light again, 'enriched' by it all."

>>  
>>

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598. **Kevin Killian**

***Re: pathos, nothing more than bathos***

*Mon 22 Jul 1996*

---

At 6:51 PM 7/21/96, Carnography wrote:

>Dodie:

Rob,

First of all I worship your website. Believe it or not, I'm tired of spewing out opinions, so this will be brief. But, I think that your emotional responses to the Holocaust are blinding you to the postmodern trope that nobody owns an experience. Plath has just as much right to it as anybody else.

Secondly, you're right--Plath's early work is stilted and weak. But so what?

Thirdly, I disagree with the whole notion that Plath *is* a confessional poet. Just because she took a workshop with Robert Lowell should she be punished for it the rest of her (after)life? Her "I", to me, is a performance and is conscious of itself as a performance--and it shifts from poem to poem, sometimes line to line. To me this is a different agenda than the confessional school's whatever (I won't make any value judgement here). "Ariel" a confessional poem?

Sexton's fairy tale poems (which I haven't read in like a dozen years) also in my foggy memory of them seem an attempt to stretch beyond the tunnel-blindness of confession.

Also, I agree with you about assessing a poet's work by his or her life, it sucks, and I won't ever hint at that again.

Dodie

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599. **Kevin Killian**

***Re: Victim Art: the girl w/ cancer***

*Mon 22 Jul 1996*

---

At 10:26 AM 7/22/96, Charles Alexander wrote:

>[T]here is a place and a value for this  
>so-called "victim art," it just may not be the value everyone on this list  
>wants to find in art. I originally was somewhat dismayed at this thread, in  
>that it seemed to want to posit stereotypes of sufferers who make art out of  
>their suffering, and on the other hand of artists who feel like they are  
>supposed to suffer in some specifically destructive ways. That seemed to me  
>to deny the specific nature of anyone who makes art out of any circumstance,  
>also seemed to want to lump all victims together, and I found that rather  
>insulting to large numbers of people who are really all different, despite  
>some shared social circumstances.

Charles,

Don't you think this broad stab at the Victim Discussion Thread is rather unfair, kind of passive-aggressive even? Clearly you have certain comments by certain people in mind here. Your post makes it sound like the thread itself were this self-generating entity. Isn't it insulting to lump together all the discussors of Victim Art? Aren't they too really all different despite shared social circumstances?

I'm not contesting that you're a nice guy, Charles, but, again, I take issue with the notion that white middle class liberals have the right to decide what's insulting to other groups of people. I'm reminded of a scene I saw on the street here in San Francisco. There's this black guy with an artificial leg, who sits on the sidewalk, removes his artificial leg and stands it in front of him, then asks passersby for money. I was standing near him one day, waiting for a bus or something, so I had some time to observe. White folks walking by averted their eyes and looked like they were going to faint with guilt. Then a black woman approached, she pointed to the man's plastic leg, and exclaimed to her friend, "Look at that!" Then they proceeded to laugh heartily, like they hadn't seen anything that funny in ages.

Dodie

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600. **Akitoshi Nagahata**  
**"Araki Yasusada"**

Mon 22 Jul 1996

---

The name "Yasusada" is perfectly all right as the first name of a Japanese man--kind of oldish, though. "Araki" is also a common last name. I don't know if the "Yasusada project" is a hoax or not. Is he hailed as a tanka poet? I've never heard of him myself, but there must be thousands of tanka or haiku poets I've never heard of. Could someone post his (pseudo-)bio? I'm going to check a Who's Who. (Our library has none of the magazines referred to. A shame, indeed.)

Akitoshi Nagahata



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601. **Kevin Killian**  
**Re: Victim Art: the girl w/ cancer**

Mon 22 Jul 1996

---

At 1:54 PM 7/22/96, henry gould wrote:

>On Mon, 22 Jul 1996 10:52:06 +0100 Dodie said:

>>

>>I'm not contesting that you're a nice guy, Charles, but, again, I take  
>>issue with the notion that white middle class liberals have the right to  
>>decide what's insulting to other groups of people.

>

>Dodie, doesn't this contradict your previous thread arguing for the postmodern

>notion that "nobody owns an experience"? (A notion I find dubious myself.)  
>- Henry Gould (card-carrying flesh muddle clash weirdo)

Why, Henry, maybe you're right.

db

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602. **Kevin Killian**

***Re: Victim Art: the girl w/ cancer***

*Mon 22 Jul 1996*

---

At 1:54 PM 7/22/96, henry gould wrote:

>On Mon, 22 Jul 1996 10:52:06 +0100 Dodie said:

>>

>>I'm not contesting that you're a nice guy, Charles, but, again, I take  
>>issue with the notion that white middle class liberals have the right to  
>>decide what's insulting to other groups of people.

>

>Dodie, doesn't this contradict your previous thread arguing for the postmodern

>notion that "nobody owns an experience"? (A notion I find dubious myself.)

>- Henry Gould (card-carrying flesh muddle clash weirdo)

But, then, Henry, maybe you're wrong. I think there's a difference between using an experience in your work versus claiming to speak for someone else. My words here aren't very clear. Like in my work--if I steal a scene from Carrie, that's different than me claiming to speak *for* Carrie and her victimization. In the first instance I'm making some sort of personal response to one aspect of Carrie's plight. Incorporation (as in eating) as an act of love, you know, back to the oral phase. This is different than my acting like I have the right to speak for telekinetic abused teenagers. What if I took that a step further and tried to make you, Henry, feel guilty for your non-p.c. attitudes towards telekinetic abused teenagers--you wouldn't like that very much, would you Henry?

Dodie

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603. **Robert Drake**

***Re: poetry & performance (plays)***

*Mon 22 Jul 1996*

---

>In my experience (with poetic plays) there are problems working with  
>conventionally trained actors. Their training doesn't match the task. They look  
>for subtext, psychological underpinnings etc. I've found actors who can go

>with the text, the texture and word play etcetera but they're pretty rare. The  
>problem is uncertainty. The actors look for certain responses for the

^^^^^^

>audience and look in the play for ways to get those responses...

thanx camille, for finding that word for me... i'm reading "certain" as "sure" or  
"determined", tho i'm not sure that's what you meant... but ive been thinking  
about similar issues around slam poetry & other attempts to bring poetry to the  
popculture marketplace... fr all but the most accomplished slammers, the possi-  
bilites of uncertainty are sacrificed fr the immediate & certain "effect"--& those  
lost multiple possibilites are essentially \*all\* of what i'm drawn to in poetry. ov  
course, if the poetry & the performers (\*and the audience\*) are up to it, it's still  
possible; only that marketplace values push in the other (defined, packaged,  
known) direction...

lbd

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604. **maria damon**

***Re: Victim Art: the girl w/ cancer***

*Mon 22 Jul 1996*

---

i have not been in this situation often but when i am i sometimes recommend  
not a literary mag or journal but one that deals, with, say, cancer, or children  
w/ diseases, etc, whatever is specific to the art at hand. there's a magazine for  
almost everything, including one for parents of kids w/ disabilities. the nurse  
cd write a short piece contextualizing the poems. i once was asked to evaluate  
an essay on sylvia plath's "daddy" as a poem about incest for an academic femi-  
nist journal. i thought the paper made a perfectly plausible reading of the poem,  
but it was written in a style not suitable to the venue. i suggested the journal of  
sexual violence. i also, like you, had mixed feelings; maybe that journal wd turn  
the essay down and say, try a feminist/literary journal. i do think there's a place  
for everything. aha --i've got it;i have a friend who's editing an anthology of  
writing of kids w/ disabilities. she may be interested. i'll backchannel you w/  
info. bests, md

dan horne writes:

> I've been following the thread on "victim art" with some interest, as I  
> recently found myself in a situation where a nurse asked me to evaluate the  
> poetry of one of her teenage patients who recently died of cancer. She  
> wanted  
> to know if I could recommend any of them to any editors I knew. It was an  
> unenviable situation, since as a lay person I felt unqualified to judge, and  
> secondly, such a task is inherently subjective. I was asked to weigh the

> very  
> real emotional pain the writer was going through with a set up aesthetic  
> criteria that, rightly or wrongly, I bought to the poems. In the end, I had  
> to say to the nurse that the poems didn't align themselves with the  
> ideologies  
> of the journals I knew. The nurse wasn't too happy about that, and I felt  
> even  
> worse for saying so...  
>  
> Regards  
>  
> Dan Horne

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605. **Kevin Killian**

***Re: Victim Art: the girl w/ cancer***

*Mon 22 Jul 1996*

---

At 3:55 PM 7/22/96, henry wrote:

| *Maybe I'm right AND wrong.*

Ditto for me Henry. A truer thing was never said on this list.

Dodie

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606. **Carnography**

***Pastiche for Ted***

*Mon 22 Jul 1996*

---

This limping gland,  
now worm and cuticle  
of ornamental gasping  
wood, if it were,  
(add ampersand & channel Robert Duncan if regular meter persists)  
so hint at dais, and chili, that drimping nibs  
would wash thin oaken harnesses dry of bean=E9d broth  
so in me vase, Rent-Boy, lice might steam again  
& thou trou be concupiscence-clammed  
damn, Shmeeracles,  
meet my holster ward: Hughes.

--Jean Cleats,  
semi-neglected gimp,  
on the Anniversary of  
the Birth of Our Master,  
one Welt Pittman

<http://www.interport.net/~sccrypt>

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607. **Charles Alexander**  
***Re: Victim Art: the girl w/ cancer***  
*Mon 22 Jul 1996*

---

Thanks, Maria, for the reminder that there is a place and a value for this so-called "victim art," it just may not be the value everyone on this list wants to find in art. I originally was somewhat dismayed at this thread, in that it seemed to want to posit stereotypes of sufferers who make art out of their suffering, and on the other hand of artists who feel like they are supposed to suffer in some specifically destructive ways. That seemed to me to deny the specific nature of anyone who makes art out of any circumstance, also seemed to want to lump all victims together, and I found that rather insulting to large numbers of people who are really all different, despite some shared social circumstances. But now the conversation seems to be broadening in any number of ways, and I've enjoyed the comparisons of Plath & Sexton, & more.

charles

>i have not been in this situation often but when i am i sometimes recommend not

>a literary mag or journal but one that deals, with, say, cancer, or children w/ >diseases, etc, whatever is specific to the art at hand. there's a magazine for >almost everything, including one for parents of kids w/ disabilities. the nurse

>cd write a short piece contextualizing the poems. i once was asked to evaluate

>an essay on sylvia plath's "daddy" as a poem about incest for an academic >feminist journal. i thought the paper made a perfectly plausible reading of the >poem, but it was written in a style not suitable to the venue. i suggested the >journal of sexual violence. i also, like you, had mixed feelings; maybe that >journal wd turn the essay down and say, try a feminist/literary journal. i do >think there's a place for everything.

>aha --i've got it;i have a friend who's editing an anthology of writing of kids >w/ disabilities. she may be interested. i'll backchannel you w/ info.

>bests, md



608. **Herb Levy**

***Re: Bad news***

*Mon 22 Jul 1996*

---

Hi Maxine Chernoff,

Sorry I'm late getting back to your response on this topic.

One of the things that I found so depressing about the earlier discussion was that so many of us have recently been on funding juries and were unable to deal with issues of style because of trendy issues that funding agencies fund to be more important. My last experience on a panel in the Seattle area was particularly depressing 'cause it was for the only local source of money with virtually no strings attached (hotel/motel tax funds) but in numerous fields (not just literature, but music, dance, & visual arts too) MANY good people & organizations (working in modes that you describe as "aesthetic difference, complexity, depth, what have you,") just didn't bother to apply. Feh.

But back to the original topic, I think that actual DEPENDENCE on public grants is often a mistake. If an organization (&I'm not just thinking of presses here) can't get by on sales, admissions & donations from other sources, government grants ARE obviously a good source of added funds. But if the government is the primary source of funds, then the organization is probably producing far more work than it's audience can support. While the money may be good for a while, the overall glut of work isn't good in the long run for the audience, the artist, or the organization. & as we have seen over the last 30 years (not just the last five) of government funding for the arts in the US, this money is very fickle.

Especially when dealing with work that has a limited audience, it's better to produce fewer events, books, or whatever, and be able to keep going, than it is to produce more than the market can support and fall apart. In the long run a press or other organization that does fewer works per year which is able to survive, can do more than an organization that is forced to cut back or collapse if a non-audience-related source of support dries up. Organizations, large or small, which are responsive to an audience's needs & desires, even (perhaps, especially) a tiny, idiosyncratic audience like the one for experimental poetry, rather than the needs & desires of public funding sources, MAY be able to survive better without having to resort to "management by crisis."

I'm suggesting only that organizations be more careful in how they select work to present, NOT that they begin to present only stars to try to appeal to a mass audience.

As an aside, the local university book store's sale always has a ton of overstock New Directions books (this year including many things published as late as 1995!) for \$3 or less, & you're of course right about Hesse & T Williams.

Bests

Herb

*Dear Herb, Dodie, etc.,*

*It is obviously the case that nowhere in the arts as they are now funded by government grants is aesthetic difference, complexity, depth, what have you, taken as a serious value. Having recently served on several such panels, local and national, I was depressed but not surprised at how grossly evaluations were made ("This magazine has 12 women and 7 men--the editors must be very progressive!" etc.). When New American Writing still lived in Chicago and used to apply for Illinois grants, people would ask in panel review, "Why do they publish John Ashbery? Is he so important?" (not to mention the rest of our contributors who were far less recognizable.) Anyway, we decided to come out once yearly and to never write grants again.*

*As for presses that survive, they seem to somehow gain institutional credibility-- you mean you're not dead yet? Hey, let's give you a grant. But getting to that point is extremely painful. When we were still applying for grants, we were told to "build a board," etc. No one seemed to care about our publication itself in the money world.*

*As for New Directions, it was Herman Hesse and Tennessee Williams that finally stabilized them and allowed them to grow.*

*MaXINE cHERNOFF*

Herb Levy



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609. **Herb Levy**

***Re: A plea for Ginny (& Alice)***

*Mon 22 Jul 1996*

---

Kevin's post reminds me of the German (& only) bilingual edition of the complete "Radio Happenings," a transcription of conversations between John Cage & Morton Feldman, that was mentioned on poetics a few months ago. The transcriptions seem very good and for many individuals named in the talks brief identifying footnotes are provided, along the lines of "Jasper Johns, American painter" followed by birth & death years. These are mostly useful, except when

someone mentions the writer Alice James, who in the course of the discussion, is identified as something like "the sister of the James brothers."

The footnote for the James brothers gives the dates and occupations for Frank and Jesse James.

Herb Levy



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610. **T-Bone Prone**  
***Re: philosophers & poets***  
*Mon 22 Jul 1996*

---

On Mon, 22 Jul 1996, Tony Green wrote:

> I've been thinking this weekend about Derrida and poets. It does not  
> seem a bad thing for poetry to have to face a philosopher (for which  
> read a "writer") who plays at capturing attention by  
> 1)self-presentation with props = sheaf of papers to read at length  
> 2)seemingly long and seemingly uninterruptable discourse  
> Surely it is open to poets (for which read "writers") to respond by  
> brazen interruption, by demonstrative headshakings and laughter and  
> attempts to take over the platform/ audience situation.

You are complaining about reading, not "writing" or "writers". I think if you do not have the ears for the performance, in any setting, you ought to keep that information to yourself, letting others listen.

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611. **Mark Wallace**  
***avant garde as production network***  
*Mon 22 Jul 1996*

---

Dear Rob Hardin:

Yes, I suppose I too would settle for a "society responsive to the conscience of the artist." Only seeing as how it would be the first time in history such a thing has been the case--since in Europe at least the history much more commonly, though by no means exclusively, is that of "artists speaking the conscience (AS IF) of their rulers"--it doesn't seem to me very likely. I don't get the impression that anyone can be trusted with anyone else's conscience more than a little perhaps here and there, and this unfortunately holds true for artists as well. It's hard to avoid feeling that no one's got the right to govern, or can be trusted to do it. This was of course THEORETICALLY the idea behind the formation of the U.S. government-various branches balancing each other because no

one can be trusted to govern. Too bad everyone wasn't really allowed a piece of the action...

What we need, I guess, is a system that really balances everyone's LACK of a right to govern the conscience of others.

Only that doesn't seem very likely either, does it?

mark wallace

```
/-----\ |
||      "I have not yet begun    ||
to go to extremes"      ||  GWU:      |
|  http://gwis2.circ.gwu.edu/~mdw      ||  EPC:
||  http://writing.upenn.edu/epc/authors/wallace      ||
|
```

---

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612. **william marsh**

***Re: Jorie Graham***

*Mon 22 Jul 1996*

---

>What does anyone else think?

>

>Tristan

>

Back in grad school I was studying with Jorie's good friend Jane Miller who one day announced in class that Jorie Graham was touting her then most recent book *The End of Beauty* as the "first post-modern book of poetry." I don't know if that's true or not, but after reading the book I decided it did have the slippery sheen of the carefully disjunctive, an "imported" radical flair (don't know how else to put it), so maybe the quote was allegorical.

Bill Marsh

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613. **henry gould**

***Re: Victim Art: the girl w/ cancer***

*Mon 22 Jul 1996*

---

On Mon, 22 Jul 1996 10:52:06 +0100 Dodie said:

>

>I'm not contesting that you're a nice guy, Charles, but, again, I take

>issue with the notion that white middle class liberals have the right to  
>decide what's insulting to other groups of people.

Dodie, doesn't this contradict your previous thread arguing for the postmodern notion that "nobody owns an experience"? (A notion I find dubious myself.) - Henry Gould (card-carrying flesh muddle clash weirdo)

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614. **Judy Roitman**

**Re: Jorie Graham**

Mon 22 Jul 1996

---

| Jorie Graham was touting her then most  
| recent book *The End of Beauty* as the "first post-modern book of poetry."

You've got to be kidding.

----- Judy Roitman  
| "Glad to have Math, University of Kansas | these copies of things  
| Lawrence, KS 66045 | after a while." [REDACTED]  
| Larry Eigner, 1927-1996  
-----

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615. **David Baratier**

**Yasusada**

Mon 22 Jul 1996

---

Ron,

On Thursday I was talking with Ethel Rackin, the managing editor at APR, and after hearing the reasoning behind the yasusada publication I have to state that the historical context was a part of the process. By this I do not mean to say that the "orientalism" dynamic that you mention was the context that established the work as worthy of print but rather a poetry that predated French existentialism, Lacan, etcetera, with similar ideas. While I know from your essays that you have a definite interest in exposing the multicultural marketing of conscience, if one believes the year of the work the historical context in and of itself establishes merit. The impression I received from Ethel, in so far as publication, was one of discovery, where yasusada was admired as a precursor, not published as a exploitation of a social narrative of guilt. I can say that the elaborate deception set up by Kent Johnson in Illinois was not merely a simplified "5 pieces in a SASE" like many would like to believe. There were contacts set-up in Japan, Illinois, at least one other state, & another country (I forget!) three translators (plus yasusada), who

each had pages of biographical material, a sketch of yasusada, supplied by Johnson and many other intricacies involving permissions from yasusada's estate. Why stop publishing yasusada? Besides the ethical concerns of the sham, it reifies Greenblatt's New Historicism, through the decontextualization of time through subsequent historical revision of the work in relation to refashioned time zones. The two-flex mirror of the critic as a reflecting and deflecting construct of the moment they are writing within and the one they are writing about has it's continuity flawed-- actually, this shift is interesting-- I'm going to think about this a bit longer before I ram foot in mouth-- any ideas on the consequence appreciated-- As for whether APR would publish Spicer if he was alive, while it's speculative to make any assessment, I can mention that Bernstein, Seidman, Stroffolino and many others have recently graced its pages. Be well.

David Baratier

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## 616. **Gabrielle Welford**

### ***Re: pathos, nothing more than bathos***

Mon 22 Jul 1996

But you see, you just did what I said you can't do, assess one child's pain in comparison with another's. I like what Dodie says about nobody owning experience. gab.

On Sun, 21 Jul 1996, Carnography wrote:

*Not to dis Rob Hardin here, but I think comparisons between pain hardly every are useful. Who can assess the pain of a small child in an abusive situation, wherever they are? gab.*

*Not to diss gab, but her analogy illustrates my point.*

*To compare the experience of a small relatively unabused child in a suburb (Plath) with a small child in a \*concentration camp\* is extremely useful. If the first child calls her captors Nazis, she is being accurate. If the second refers to her parents as Nazis, she is being hyperbolic.*

*<http://www.interport.net/~script>*

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617. **Tony Green**

**Re: feelingth, nothing more than feelingth... try to forget**

Mon 22 Jul 1996

---

Someone ought to check up on the context of Sylvia Plath's writing: especially the available options around Cambridge University in the mid 1950's, available especially in Delta and in other mags of the time, excavate the likes of Dickie Drain and co, that'd be amusing. As far as I can recall there were not many ways to go: Thom Gunn socialist verse was one; tomb and womb and doom another, which is probably where S.P. comes in; Ted Hughes at that time was after Lawrencian sounding allegories, in between fist fights with people on Saturday nights, so they used to say; I had friends who took Dylan Thomas seriously, as much as anything because the available modes were curiously unaware of how much they were largely overflows from sentimental prose. vaguely remember what S.P. looked like, seeing her in lecture-classes, but don't recall that I ever met her. But, I do know that that was a particular literary context with its ambitions set, as much as anything by available publication possibilities in London, e.g. John Lehmann's London Magazine. best

Tony Green,

e-mail: [REDACTED]

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618. **henry**

**Re: Victim Art: the girl w/ cancer**

Mon 22 Jul 1996

---

On Mon, 22 Jul 1996 12:46:24 +0100 Dodie said:

>

>But, then, Henry, maybe you're wrong. I think there's a difference between  
>using an experience in your work versus claiming to speak for someone else.  
>My words here aren't very clear. Like in my work--if I steal a scene from  
>Carrie, that's different than me claiming to speak *\*for\** Carrie and her  
>victimization. In the first instance I'm making some sort of personal

Maybe I'm right AND wrong. That would be in line with the nebulous distinction you're pointing out. Is speaking *FOR* someone always an imposition? Sometimes an advocate is a lifesaving necessity. Both "scene-stealing" and advocacy are based on empathy (not a very p.c. trait these days).

*response to one aspect of Carrie's plight. Incorporation (as in eating) as an act of love, you know, back to the oral phase. This is different than my acting like I have the right to speak for telekinetic abused teenagers. What if I took that a step further and tried to make you, Henry, feel*

*guilty for your non-p.c. attitudes towards telekinetic abused teenagers--you wouldn't like that very much, would you Henry?*

You seem to be stealing a scene I never played in the first place... - Henry

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619. **Tony Green**

**Re: roughness**

Mon 22 Jul 1996

---

/For mastery!( gendered term) read, when appropriate,  
mistressly! as in M.A.= Mistress  
of Arts. I'm surprised this has not yet been done.

Tony Green,

e-mail: [REDACTED]

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620. **Charles Alexander**

**Re: Victim Art: the girl w/ cancer**

Mon 22 Jul 1996

---

Charles,

*Don't you think this broad stab at the Victim Discussion Thread is rather unfair, kind of passive-aggressive even? Clearly you have certain comments by certain people in mind here. Your post makes it sound like the thread itself were this self-generating entity. Isn't it insulting to lump together all the discussors of Victim Art? Aren't they too really all different despite shared social circumstances?*

Yes you're right, Dodie. I did have one particular comment in mind, but I decided not to post when it came up (& now I'm not sure I remember who posted it), probably for better reason than my less hesitant post you are responding to. And I certainly could have seconded Maria's comments without knocking anybody else. Guilty.

charles

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621. **Jonathan A Levin**

**Re: feelingth, nothing more than feelingth... try to forget**

Mon 22 Jul 1996

---

on Plath, Gunn, Cambridge, the 50s--a question, a footnote, and a response:



I wonder what you mean, Tony Green, by Gunn's "socialist verse" of (I guess) the 50s? Having just written 16,000 words on him, I'm not sure what you have in mind, but would like to know. Most of that early stuff is just about bikers and other assorted types doing the existential errand thing, so far as I can tell. In any event, there's an excellent description by Donald Hall (in a 1989 issue of PN Review) of what Gunn's first appearances in Oxford were like, the "general flabbbergast" of his reading--"Oxford recoiled before stanzas militant, intransigent, tough, brainy, swashbuckling and violent." Gunn has an infamous nazi reference in a poem called *The Beaters* that appeared in *The Sense of Movement* (the 1957 book, Gunn's second, written during his first year in California, 1955/56) and that he removed from later editions and from the 1994 *Collected Poems*. Gunn is playing around in the poem with s/m, the "tools of perversity," etc., and has a "swastika-draped bed" in the second stanza. What's a little disturbing is that the beaters, here, really aren't very far from the usual bikers and soldiers of Gunn's first two books: "They know they shall resume pursuit, elsewhere, / Of what they would not hold to if they could." I guess Gunn was himself a little embarrassed to look back on this.

A last thought, while I'm entering the thread: perhaps I'm just unwilling to be postmodern, but I don't see how one can live with the possibility that an experience is equally available to all. That's not a metaphor I could live by. I, for example, constantly find myself unable to "appropriate" certain "female experiences," for example: I play in a softball game with men and women, and am a moderately good player, so often "command respect" of others in the game. I don't, for example, usually get "poached"; I get a good batting spot; etc. Once, when a particularly self-confident third baseman poached a couple of balls from me at short, at one point nearly killing me (and screwing up a force out I would have easily had at third), a friend pointed out that now I "knew" what it was like to be a woman in the game. She's of course right--I had a taste of it--but in another sense, I'll never really know what it's like to be a woman in this game, because too many default assumptions are "always already" working in my favor. Alas. That's a trivial example, in the long run, but I think it gets the dynamic right: some experiences, despite their public dimension, will never belong to anyone but those who experience them, and it's misleading, I think, to think otherwise. Nasty deeds will unfortunately always be appropriated in ways that diminish, obfuscate, or erase their nastiness, and the best we can do is to insist on the historical specificity of those deeds and their consequences. We respond to the particular face of suffering (to echo Levinas, loosely)--we're not responding to anything in ourselves.

Best--

Jonathan Levin

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622. **Tony Green**

***Re: feelingth, nothing more than feelingth... try to forget***

*Mon 22 Jul 1996*

---

Jonathan A Levin. Loose talk about Gunn. He'd gone by the time I arrived, but he had friends and supporters who I encountered and the impetus was to bring real working class images and values into the foreground, to oppose middle-class literary values. It obviously did that in the figure invoked and in the versification. This -- at second hand -- I took to be a rather programmatic social realism in verse. It, about that time, seemed to coincide with the "social realism" of several British painters, Jack Smith, Middleditch, who else? early John Bratby. It also resonates for me with Lucky Jim. However, you are clearly really close to the texts of then poems as I am not. The question was definitely being asked about the relations between class structures and expectations and universities and literature. And of course, in retrospect, it raises questions about the viability of varieties of poetics for social change. I would like to think it raised that question way back then too.

Does anyone close to the texts, as I am not, recognise this kind of questioning in Sylvia Plath?

latera , i uppose

Tony Green,

e-mail: [REDACTED]

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623. **Douglis Beck**

***\_Yasusada\_ on the move...***

*Mon 22 Jul 1996*

---

sorry that I've missed the whole of the \_Yasusada\_ controversy, but it seems there's some interesting things said in Saturdays digest from Ron & Rod, who definitely act as a 1-2 punch on the subject. I would only add that such an issue would not be an issue if \_Yasusada\_ were merely a pseudonym, or other sort of mask. perhaps \_Yasusada\_ is accomplishing things for a particular poet or group of poets that they feel they themselves cannot express because of their own personal baggage; perhaps a poet has as a bio exactly that of yasusada but has not fully dealt with that in their publishing to date. thus it becomes an experimental preface/footnote to a certain poet's work. there are numerous examples we can all sit around & dream up. the point does indeed seem to be that, perhaps more than other \_Hiroshima\_ poets, the Yasusada controversy is generating a discussion. for now the talking is centered on how we should be

concerned with the poet him/her/itself. hopefully everyone will realize that this too is a mask of sorts, & eventually deal with both our own reactions to the work itself & feelings about the atrocities sitting beneath both text&bio. if all this talk is merely fodder for email, then who cares, but if years from now people remember the \_Yasusada\_ controversy & more importantly, remember whether, why & where they were @ the time, then it seems the poet/poetry involved has indeed fulfilled (one of) the purpose of poetry: to affect ourSelves in some way, to alter our aspect of seeing things, to shew a difference. read now, deconstruct later. perhaps this will be sufficient.

douglis.

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624. **Tony Green**

***Re: roughness***

*Mon 22 Jul 1996*

---

Thanks, Emily, for the Spinster of Arts note. It's interesting that someone has thought to do something about this. The majority of my students are women and it has seemed strange to persist with mastery and masters degrees. Is mastery or mistressery of texts and or of images as dubious from the point of view of sado-masochism as mastery and mistressery in relations between persons? best

Tony Green,

e-mail: [REDACTED]

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625. **maria damon**

***Re: Victim Art: the girl w/ cancer***

*Mon 22 Jul 1996*

---

gosh, this is so smart, i wish i'd thought to say it. --md

*At 3:55 PM 7/22/96, henry wrote:*

*Maybe I'm right AND wrong.*

*Ditto for me Henry. A truer thing was never said on this list.*

*Dodie*

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626. **Tony Green**

**Re: feelingth, nothing more than feelingth... try to forget**

Mon 22 Jul 1996

---

Jonathan Levin, a line got left out shd have been something about "early John Bratby" and then went on to say "you are clearly closer to the texts than I am". Technical incompetence on my part, I bet. And by the way good luck with the softball, I really can say nothing whatever abt that, even tho New Zealand has just won the world Championship. best

Tony Green,

e-mail: [REDACTED]

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627. **Emily Lloyd**

**Re: roughness**

Mon 22 Jul 1996

---

Don't know about mistresses of arts, Tony, but I know it's possible to get a Spinster of Arts degree (as opposed to a Bachelor) at New College USF...personally, not a fan of mistress \*or\* master, unless in Sade...emily

Tony Green wrote:

>

> /For mastery!( gendered term) read, when appropriate,

> mistressly! as in M.A.= Mistress

> of Arts. I'm surprised this has not yet been done.

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628. **maria damon**

**Re: roughness**

Mon 22 Jul 1996

---

In message <[REDACTED]> UB Poetics discussion group writes:

> Thanks, Emily, for the Spinster of Arts note. It's interesting that  
> someone has thought to do something about this. The majority of my  
> students are women and it has seemed strange to persist with  
> mastery and masters degrees. Is mastery or mistressery of texts and  
> or of images as dubious from the point of view of sado-masochism as  
> mastery and mistressery in relations between persons? best  
>

> Tony Green,

> e-mail: [REDACTED]

i guess textual mistery is too old-fashioned, too evocative of mistress vendler  
and other dominatrixes ...?  
md

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629. **Gabrielle Welford**

***Re: feelingth, nothing more than feelingth... try to forget***

*Mon 22 Jul 1996*

---

I'm going to risk talking again about the experience thing, in response to Jonathan, because perhaps what's important about Plath's move in associating her childhood (and others' childhoods) with existence in a concentration camp is not that it belittles the experience of concentration camp victims but that it raises the question (which I think very pertinent) of the experience of small children in bad news families. I want to say, "who are we to know what Plath's childhood felt like to her?" I cringe at the fingerpointing that says, oh she was just a dramatic female who was making use of historical horrors to aggrandize herself. I guess what it boils down to is that both myself and my sister have experienced our own childhoods in such a way that what we've read, seen, heard about concentration camps rings bells for us. I don't doubt that she chose an image that made sense to her. We underrate the terror of children all the time. Also growing up in suburbia is no guarantee, believe me, of things being "nice." Just hidden.

gab.

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630. **Eliza McGrand- CVA Guest**

***on the interpretation of posts, or, Good Reasons To Lurk***

*Mon 22 Jul 1996*

---

although i've posted some, i have been ambivalent from the start about posting on this list because so often the posts seem contentious and confrontational to a fault. but even more distressing, so often posts seem almost willfully misunderstood.

this brings me to the post in response to postings on victim art. i am not sure if the reply post was directed to me and my original post (jeez, a post on a post on a post. a goddess will strike me dead for this), but some of the posts seem to be depressingly off the mark in interpretation of what i said, meant, asked, hoped to bring into discussion -- i don't have quote feature used frequently so here is cut and paste (best i can do) of chax's particularly depressingly astray interpretation (if indeed he was referring to my posting):

" I originally was somewhat dismayed at this thread, in that it seemed to want to posit stereotypes of sufferers who make art out of their suffering, and on the other hand of artists who feel like they are supposed to suffer in some specifically destructive ways. That seemed to me to deny the specific nature of anyone who makes art out of any circumstance, also seemed to want to lump all victims together, and I found that rather insulting to large numbers of people who are really all different, despite some shared social circumstances."

i am not sure what you find problematic about positing a stereotype, if by "posit" you mean affirm the existence of. more to the point, i didn't "want to posit," i was bringing forth real actual meat people examples of a disturbing stereotype that is taking hold of the popular imagination, as stereotypes all too often do. the people embodying stereotype exist, the effect of the stereotype, the effect of the perceived stereotype, the effect of the perceived necessity for this stereotype (recognized and unrecognized as such), etc. all exist. why would the existence of this stereotype, as well as the recognition of the existence of this stereotype, the damage such stereotypes do, the perception of such stereotypes, "deny the specific nature of anyone who makes art out of any circumstance"? one of the specific circumstances people make art out of IS stereotypes as well as responses to stereotypes, responses to responses, etc.

if you recall, i made very careful note of both the stereotype as a stereotype, and as a problematic to art and suffering and the relationship between the two. in other words, i was speaking of the ACTUAL, REAL, MEAT PERSON existence of actual real suffering people who make art and often, make it out of suffering. in fact, as this comment seems to pass right over...

\*\*\*\* i am one of those "people" who found themselves making art from personal suffering!\*\*\*\*\*

how could that POSSIBLY "deny the specific nature of anyone who makes art out of any circumstance," much less "lump all the victims together" in an insulting way -- am i insulting myself? if i, as one of the "large numbers of people" (talk about lumping!) say i'm not feeling insulted by my comments about myself, can we then assume they weren't offensive to me and the others assumed as a lumpen mass to be rising up, insulted, or anyway being so described by one who has not placed himself in that group but rather, stands outside of it telling us all how we all feel? i mean, can i decide for myself what i feel is insulting to me, or do i have to wait for a proper literary male to tell me when i and others of my sort have been insulted?

nowhere in any of the posts did i say all the people who have suffered, or people who have "shared that social circumstance," are alike except insofar as we HAVE had an experience of suffering and have had it intertwine with our art. nowhere.

for heaven's sake, i made this posting, and was very CLEAR about making this posting BECAUSE as an artist, i am trying to sort out the way suffering and art interact (an issue concerning me a great deal right now) and i wanted to get other lister's particular experiences with that interaction. and as an editor and fellow artist and reader, i've seen the two interact to the detriment of the art all too often lately and i wanted to find out other lister's specific experiences with that. i've also felt pressure (almost crippling at times) to assess and affirm the artistic quality of a peice when, IF i evaluate as an art peice, i will be under fire for evaluating it as an art peice rather than just blindly affirming it because of the victimhood of the creator. and guess what -- i wanted to get other listers' particular experiences with that.

since i make all sorts of distinctions, explain the unresolved nature of my thinking on the matter, describe the tangles i perceive, and ask the list to work on untangling or further tangling or just think about the relationship of suffering and art, and i give my personal experience, as well as experience i've had with others, i hardly think i ought be accused of either wanting to "deny the specific nature of anyone who makes art out of any circumstance," or of wanting "to lump all victims together" -- if indeed chax's comments were directed to me.

of course i may be misreading chax (and possibly dodie), who may not have had me in mind in the least in their posts, thus meaning i am committing the very act that has my knickers in a twist here! (...who has that saying about becoming the thing we hate...?) and if so i am contrite and sorry.

but SHEESHSSSHH, i made that posting to see how other artists and academics and literati handle the art that comes from suffering in the current storm of me-too victim writing. and NO i am NOT saying all art about victimization is me-too victim writing, i'm saying that there are a number of people out there touting works they claim are art about their claimed victimhood, requesting funding, support and publication for the works in high art venues with the claim that the works deserve such support BECAUSE they are high art, but when the "art" of the work is called into question, the victimhood gets invoked as the reason why the work is art and why the work should not be criticized.

i've said, and am still saying, that there is GREAT GREAT art about suffering. and work about suffering doesn't have to be really great art to be worth writing, or reading, certainly in many contexts. but work about suffering which claims to be great art and claims it is off limits to normal literary processes and critiques because of the suffering of the writer, well, i have a problem with that. and in part, i have a problem because as a writer who has and is writing about suffering, i am deathly afraid of falling into that hole and struggle with what i feel, sometimes, is a slide down the slope while at the same time feeling like it is important to be a witness when we've been called to witness something. i'm

saying i don't know what to do, or how to sort out conflicting ideas i have about it and i was asking for more ideas, probably equally conflicting, because i'm a passive-aggressive subconscious masochist and did not feel i was suffering enough with o'hara-ian "quandriness," and i wanted others to suffer WITH me! 'nuff said?!

e

[↑ Contents](#)

631. **Thomas Bell**

***Re: feelingth, nothing more than feelingth... try to forget***

*Tue 23 Jul 1996*

---

> tom bell writes:  
> effective therapy has  
> > never had any connection to personal revalation.  
>  
> tom: can u say more abt this?  
>  
> md  
>

It's much like content vs. form. It's not what the trauma was, for example, but how it was (is) dealt with. The art of therapy is in changing the way something is revealed (maladaptively to creatively, for example, or intellectually to emotionally) to resolve a problem. \_What is revealed really doesn't mean a whole lot. \_Effective\_ treatment is a process that doesn't get stuck in the endless rut of pity. I can send some references if you like.  
tom

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632. **Craig Douglas Dworkin**

***Re: POETICS Digest - 21 Jul 1996 to 22 Jul 1996***

*Tue 23 Jul 1996*

---

Greetings,

I'm sorry to make my first posting to this group a tedious technical question, but I've been working through Zukofsky's "A-8" and unlike the conic sections of "A-9," I can't quite figure out how the "r" and "n" sounds are deployed in the two relevant sections. I've read Ahearn and Quartermain, but neither go into specifics and my calculus is pretty rusty; has anyone actually worked out the math? In the final "Ballade," apparently, "the ratio of the accelerations of two



sounds (r, n) is equal to the ratio of the accelerations of the co-ordinates (x, y) of a particle moving in a circular path for nine symmetrically located points on the path." I get the general idea ("revolution," "movement," "value," "mass" in both political and mathematic/kinetic terms), but what is really going on mathematically?

Many thanks,  
--Craig

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633. **George Bowering**

***Re: Bad news***

*Tue 23 Jul 1996*

---

How about a Silvia Plath festival organized by an organization dedicated to saving energy by switching to natural gas?

.....

"An occasional crow makes poetry more interesting but not prophetic."

--Carl Rakosi

George Bowering.  
2499 West 37th Ave.,  
Vancouver, B.C.,  
Canada V6M 1P4

fax: [REDACTED]

e-mail: [REDACTED]

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634. **George Bowering**

***Re: A plea for Ginny***

*Tue 23 Jul 1996*

---

Kevin

Thank you so much for the quotations from the Midwest interview with Adam Ginsbert.

.....

"An occasional crow makes poetry more interesting but not prophetic."

--Carl Rakosi

George Bowering.  
2499 West 37th Ave.,  
Vancouver, B.C.,  
Canada V6M 1P4

fax: [REDACTED]  
e-mail: [REDACTED]

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635. **John Geraets**

***Re: roughness***

*Tue 23 Jul 1996*

---

I think that having been in Japan a while the notions of mastery, intention, roughness have lost some of their specificity for me.

The best book I've read this year was on the faces of three of my students. They told me they'd put on a "face poem" presentation, that's all I knew. Their friend'd brought a video camera to record it; another got up and turned on the tape of the Swedish (I think) electrobeat group so popular now amongst young Japanese. The three young women marched in--yes, marched--they had put on white t-shirts beforehand over their regular clothes, their faces had been decorated with make up and some script I couldn't make out as yet. They marched in, lined themselves behind the front table, then one at a time half-shouted half-sung

E N J O Y      Y O U R      N O W.

Then, of course, they laughed, I laughed, we all did. It was a great seven or eight seconds. Later, when we talked about it as a class--you'll understand, in the difficult English medium we share--they showed how they'd written on the cheeks of each in turn enjoy-your-now in mascara (eh??sp?); also, the first had written the kanji character for enjoy on her chin; the second nothing; the third in katakana (a further Japanese syllabry (?) used for introduced foreign words) now.

A few things got me. I enjoyed their sense of innovation, the fact that they'd capitalized on (inadvertent no doubt) such a classical english poetry theme, the tacticity, the unexpected slight twist of the expected conventional syntax, the joy (so different from my and my culture's sense of it, I think)...

Another group wanted to write a love poem, but found the going tough. So they culled odd lines and snippets from Shakespeare, Keats, and others gleaned from a collection of classical english poetry that they'd found in the library (and boy! are Japanese university libraries under-utilized!). Now that had a beautiful roughness, and all the charm of our confabulation with found objects, poems, whatever. Not quite satisfied, they built the poem into a brief dramatic script based on a Costner film 'Revenge' (as I recall). I mean...

Another group presented a story about a baby that a Sumo wrestler discovered one day in his clothes drawer and who as she grew up had her dream of becoming a supermodel in Italy almost thwarted because she was overfed on chunko...

Watching and being with my 4th-year English majors "creative writing" (eh?) class has been very interesting, not only because we're really having fun but also because for me at least it's opening up such notions as intentionality, mastery, roughness to their own limitedness. And limitedness in a positive sense, valuable in itself but also valuable in its denial.

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636. **Lisa Jarnot**

***new books/soho letter press***

*Wed 24 Jul 1996*

---

Howdy you all,

Soho Letter Press has put out four new chapbooks under the Situations banner:

Situations #1: Lapsus Linguae by Marcella Durand, 16pp, \$5. Durand's Lapsus Linguae is about how one of the cats is afraid of the stuffed rabbit. Lyrics in series that cross. Teeth in the mystery of public places & tonguing is ok. "This office & all the computers in it are God."

Situations #2: Thunk by Kevin Davies, 16pp, \$3. Davies' Thunk is a mutating passage of prose blocks and short lyrics that move in and out of hilarious and nasty exhortation to revolve. "Quit naming the animals." You may not wear a mask but you may get ripped on Cary's secret stash.

Situations # 3: Western Love by Bill Luoma, 44pp, \$5. Luoma's Western Love is a series of short lyrics spoken by cowboys, jack rabbits, and saloon girls. Images by Charles Buckley. "I want to crouch around your merry mack."

Situations #4: Sea Lyrics by Lisa Jarnot, 40pp, \$5.

Jarnot's Sea Lyrics are set as a series of prose poems about Jack London Square, Alameda, and buying jam in the early morning. I am is the refrain.

They smart. As much music as you can handle. "I am a drag queen named Heather not quite ready for New York."

The Situations chapbook series is published by Joe Elliot. So make Checks out to Joe Elliot.

Send Orders to:  
Soho Letter Press  
71 Green Street  
NYC 10012

phone: [REDACTED]  
fax: [REDACTED]

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637. **Thomas Bell**  
***Re: comparative suffering***  
*Wed 24 Jul 1996*

---

"trauma" was defined by psychiatrists as "an event that is outside the range of usual human experience and that would be markedly distressing to almost anyone..."

I use this almost daily on insurance forms, etc. and still puzzle over its meaning.  
tom

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638. **Carnography**  
***Re: feelingth/holocaust***  
*Wed 24 Jul 1996*

---

*I guess you guys get an A.*

*Dodie*

What, are you nuts, darling? You get an A in this course:  
All of us get A's for effort and C's for self-restraint.  
Is there truly a person on this list who can read his/her own posts without sighing and thinking "why did I say that?"  
Tapping his ruler on the edge of the desk with such precision that the rhythm of his report spells the word \*mastery\* in morse code,

Rob Hardin

"We must take care to control our passions. Otherwise, madness and violence are the result."--John Wesley Hardin, distant relation

<http://www.interport.net/~scrypt>

[↑ Contents](#)

639. **Gabrielle Welford**  
***Re: comparative suffering***  
*Wed 24 Jul 1996*

---

being examined... hello to those other experiencers of hell on the list--my examiners. :-) gab.

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640. **Robert Drake**  
***seattle in sept. (forwarded message)***  
*Thu 25 Jul 1996*

---

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

Date: Wed, 24 Jul 1996 20:02:59 -0600

From: Frank Moore <[REDACTED]>

To: "J.A. Heriot" <[REDACTED]>

Cc: [REDACTED]

Subject: seattle in sept.

PRESS RELEASE

They have called him "art outlaw" (CHICAGO NEW READER), "obscene artist" (Sen. Jesse Helms), "transformative" (HIGH PERFORMANCE MAGAZINE). He has made a reputation for himself as a controversial performance artist and video maker. But it has been his poems, books, and essays about art, magic, and life...and his zine THE CHEROTIC (r)EVOLUTIONARY... which have inspired young radical artists and writers all over the world during the last 30 years and have made him the voice for many different alternative communities and forces of cultural change.

He is Frank Moore and he is coming to Seattle.

911 MEDIA ARTS will show his award-winning, intensely moving video Out of Isolation...a unique love story, on SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 21, 1996 at 8 p.m. Mr. Moore will be available after the screening for questions.

911 MEDIA ARTS is located at:  
117 Yale Avenue North, Seattle  
[REDACTED]

(Out of Isolation) "stayed in my mind far more persistently than I first expected, at least based on what the film-makers with millions of dollars at their disposal call 'production values' and 'professional polish'. What most of these high-priced pieces lack, of course, is substance and a genuinely different -- and deeply challenging -- point of view. Something to shake up, shatter, shame, inspire, perspire, ponder and play with long after the cassette gets rewound. Your



Jersey, and was wearing a black, one-piece tank-top dress and black sandals. If you have any information about Walsh's whereabouts, please call [REDACTED].

~~~~~

She was my girlfriend for four years (though we've been broken up for two).

I won't be on this list for a little while. I barely feel as if I'm here at all.

All the best,

Rob Hardin

<http://www.interport.net/~script>

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642. **Michael Coffey**

poetry month, as reported in pw

Thu 25 Jul 1996

We have a piece in Publishers Weekly this week, reporting some figures and impressions about the success, on the retail level, of the National Poetry Month promotion, which i post without comment.

Poetry Month Survey: Sales, Interest Up

The first National Poetry Month (News, March 25) was launched this past April with hopes of increasing both the general awareness of poetry and poetry sales. The strategy appears to have succeeded, according to a survey carried out by the Academy of American Poets, the organizer and one of the sponsors of the campaign. The study found that booksellers who already sell a lot of poetry are reporting substantial increases in sales. Even for those booksellers who sell less, the event increased customers' awareness of poetry, the first step toward increasing sales, the report noted. Based on the April promotion, many bookstores—including those that hold many poetry events during the year—have found that their communities will support increased poetry-related events year-round. The report also suggests that publishers tour poets the way they tour other authors, at least during the annual April poetry push. NPM also showed that many publishers, not all of them small presses, are committed to promoting poetry. The momentum in poetry sales has yet to die down for Borders, which reports that April sales increased significantly over March's as well as over those of the previous April, in many cases by as much as a third. Recent titles, prize-winning collections and collections advertised in conjunction with NPM performed well, as did core backlist titles by such classic authors as Dickinson, Whitman and Yeats. Poetry-on-cassette sales were also successful, quadrupling from the previous month. Barnes & Noble showed an average increase of 25%. For titles specifically promoted during NPM, increases ranged from 50% to

100%.Prairie Lights Books in Iowa City, Iowa, had a ?substantial increase? in poetry sales, and they increased by ?at least 600%? for the UCLA Bookstore in Los Angeles, with \$3500 in poetry sales in the first week of April alone.The academy report notes that the enthusiasm generated during the first National Poetry Month will get a boost when plans get under way for the second NPM in April ?97.

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643. **Gabrielle Welford**

Schlaflly letter (fwd)

Thu 25 Jul 1996

There's an address where Schlaflly can be reached at the bottom. gab.

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

Date: 7/24/96 2:29 PM

From: Tim Stroshane

Forwarded mail received from:

CENTER1:CENTER2:TCPBRIDGE:CI:SMTPGATE:"[REDACTED]"

Here's something forwarded twice from a feminist economists' list to the progressive economists' list. It's quite an exhortation from the greatest of them all...

How can this woman sleep at night? Read on at your own peril, and not on a full stumach. 'sister rat' maggie coleman [REDACTED]

Forwarded message:

From: [REDACTED] (Eric W Swank)

To: [REDACTED] (Multiple recipients of list)

Date: 96-07-23 13:27:56 EDT

Listers,

Check this out. Also, Schlaflly can be reached at the Eagle Forum's email address is at the bottom of this posting.

Eric Swank

Ohio State

Forwarded message:

> From [REDACTED] Mon Jul 22 19:52:40 1996

> Message-ID: <[REDACTED]>

> Date: Mon, 22 Jul 1996 14:07:32 -0400

> Reply-To: "Women's Studies List" <[REDACTED]>

> Sender: "Women's Studies List" <[REDACTED]>

> From: Jenny Thigpen <[REDACTED]>
> Subject: schlafly letter
> To: Multiple recipients of list WMST-L <[REDACTED]>

>

>

>

> Open Letter to VMI Alumni

>

>

>

> June 11, 1996 by Phyllis Schlafly

>

> This is an open letter to Virginia Military Institute Alumni.

>

> Dear Alumni:

>

> Your VMI training not only taught you to be tough, courageous
> and honorable, but also to survive humiliation and harassment. You
> are now facing your greatest challenge.

>

> You've lost a major battle. Are you going to be survivors, or
> are you going to let the enemy wipe you and your kind from the face
> of the earth, pour salt in the soil that produced you, and drop you
> down the Memory Hole?

>

> The most important factor in any confrontation is the ancient
> maxim "Know your enemy." I'm not sure you ever understood the
> nature of your enemy.

>

> The massive government lawsuit against VMI wasn't about "ending
> sex discrimination" or "allowing women to have access to the same
> educational benefits that men have at VMI." It was a no-holds-barred
> fight to feminize VMI waged by the radical feminists and their
> cohorts in the Federal Government.

>

> The radical feminists just can't stand it that any institution
> in America is permitted to motivate and train real men to manifest
> the uniquely masculine attributes. Feminists want to gender-
> neutralize all men so they can intimidate and control them. The
> feminists' longtime, self-proclaimed goal is an androgynous society.
> Repudiating constitutional intent, history, tradition and human
> nature, they seek to forbid us, in public or private life, to

> recognize the differences between men and women.

>

> Feminist strategy is straightforward: whine that women are
> victims of centuries of "oppression" and "stereotyping," lay a
> guilt trip on men, and use all the stereotypical cultural techniques
> that women have always used to wheedle what they want out of men.
> Then, use feminists on the public payroll in all three branches of
> government to change the laws in order to force us to conform.

>

> Since feminists successfully got women admitted into the
> military academies, and got the Clinton Administration to assign
> women to military combat positions, VMI and the Citadel remained as
> the most visible fortresses of the concept that men and women are
> fundamentally different. The feminists hate you just because you
> exist.

>

> The notion that a military institution that has functioned with
> success, public acceptance, and significant prestige for 157 years,
> suddenly, one day in June 1996, can be rationally said to violate the
> Constitution is patently ridiculous. Black robes and Ruth Bader
> Ginsburg's devious rhetoric about "scrutiny" can't make such judicial
> arrogance any less ridiculous.

>

> The idea of setting up a VMI course for women at Mary Baldwin
> College to save VMI from an adverse decision was a futile gesture,
> and Ginsburg held this expensive effort up to ridicule as "invented
> post hoc in response to litigation." You need to understand that
> the lawsuit against VMI had nothing to do with securing opportunities
> or benefits for women; it only had to do with destroying the
> masculine integrity of VMI.

>

> Ginsburg's opinion asserted that "women's successful entry into
> the federal military academies" proves that women can successfully
> matriculate at VMI. That assumption is false because VMI's regimen
> is very different from the military academies'. The VMI trial record
> proved that women's so-called "successful" experience in the federal
> military academies is based on quotas, dual standards, and gender
> norming. Female cadets compete against other female cadets for
> designated female slots, rather than competing against the men.

>

> The VMI decision was wholly predictable when Clinton appointed
> Ruth Bader Ginsburg to the Court. Her activist determination to

> write her radical feminist goals into the Constitution was all
> laid out in her published writings, but no Senator questioned her
> about them. Every Senator who voted for her confirmation shares in
> the shame of this decision.
>
> VMI Alumni, your response to this Supreme Court defeat should
> be to reject the state subsidy and embark on a national fundraising
> drive to raise the money to keep VMI functioning exactly as it always
> has. If the still-existing single-sex colleges, such as Wellesley and
> Smith, can survive on private fundraising plus government student
> loans, and if Hillsdale College can survive without any government
> funds at all, there's no reason why VMI and the Citadel can't do
> this, too.
>
> Don't make the mistake of changing VMI's unique lifestyle to
> try to accommodate Sister Rats. The women who seek a military career
> based on dual standards and gender norming can go to West Point,
> Annapolis, or the Air Force Academy.
>
> VMI Alumni, if you allow Ginsburg et al to do to VMI what Pat
> Schroeder et al have done to the United States Navy, you are not
> the exemplars of manhood we thought you were. And that goes for
> Citadel alumni, too.
>
>
> EAGLE FORUM -- [REDACTED]
> PO Box 618
> Alton, IL 62002
> Phone: [REDACTED]
> -----
> Tell a friend about us!
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----- RFC822 Header Follows -----

by
nak.berkeley.edu (8.7.3/8.6.10) with SMTP id OAA11430 for
<[REDACTED]>; Wed, 24 Jul 1996 14:26:41 -0700 (PDT)
From: Tim Strohane
<[REDACTED]>
(WordPerfect SMTP Gateway V3.1a 04/27/92)
MMDF-Warning: Parse error in original version of preceding line at
ci.ci.berkeley.ca.us
To: [REDACTED]
MMDF-Warning: Parse error in original version of preceding line at
ci.ci.berkeley.ca.us
Subject: Fwd: Schlafly letter
Date: Tue Jul 23 16:39:54 1996

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644. **Gabrielle Welford**
English-only Update -- VI (fwd)
Thu 25 Jul 1996

Yuk. All call. gab.

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

> Update on English-Only Legislation -- VI

>

> July 25, 1996

>

>A modified English-only bill, approved yesterday by the House
>Economic and Educational Opportunities Committee, appears to be
>on a legislative fast track. After months of inaction, H.R. 123
>(the "Language of Government Act") is suddenly a priority for
>House Republican leaders. The measure is expected to come to a
>vote late next week, before Congress leaves for its August
>recess. With nearly 200 cosponsors and a clear display of
>party discipline in committee, the English-only bill seems
>likely to pass in the House, although Senate support remains
>uncertain.

>

>If enacted, H.R. 123 would designate English as the official --
>and sole permissible -- language of U.S. government business,
>with only a few exceptions. The use of other languages would be
>permitted for purposes of national security, international trade
>and diplomacy, public safety, and criminal proceedings.

>

>To mollify critics of the bill's restrictiveness, Rep. Randy
>Cunningham (R-Calif.) proposed an amended version of H.R. 123
>that would also waive the English-only mandate in the case of
>language education -- including programs funded under the
>Bilingual Education Act and the Native American Languages Act --
>public health, census activities, and civil lawsuits brought by
>the U.S. government. It would also exempt oral communications
>with the public by federal employees, officials, and members of
>Congress. Federal publications -- that is, virtually all written
>materials -- in languages other than English would still be
>banned. The House committee passed the Cunningham "substitute"
>on a vote of 19 Republicans in favor and 17 Democrats against.

>

>The committee's day-long session was remarkable for its rancor
>and partisanship, even by the standards of the 104th Congress.
>Democrats accused the Republican majority of desperately seeking
>to exploit anti-immigrant feeling in an election year, even if
>that meant violating constitutional principles of free speech
>and equal rights. "What about people who think in another
>language?" asked ranking Democrat Bill Clay (Mo.). "Would your
>bill prohibit that?" Republicans labeled such attacks as
>"demagoguery," insisting they merely want to unite the country
>through a common language and help newcomers learn English.

>

>Rep. Matthew Martinez (D-Calif.) argued that the bill would
>deprive limited English speakers of essential rights and
>services while doing nothing to address the acute shortage of
>adult English classes in cities like New York and Los Angeles.
>(In the past two years, Congressional budget cutters have
>substantially reduced federal support for such classes.) "The
>idea that people who come to this country don't want to speak
>English is the sickest thing I've ever heard," Martinez said,
>accusing the bill's proponents of "promoting fear" of language
>minorities. "I'm sorry that people on the other side of the
>aisle are so insecure that they feel they need to do this," he
>said.

>

>Cunningham responded to Martinez: "You want to keep people in
>the barrio" by discouraging them from learning English. "We want
>to empower them." Rep. Cass Ballenger (R-N.C.) added that "the
>purpose of this bill isn't just to make people speak English;

>it's to help them reach the American dream." As a small business
>owner, Ballenger said he had personally sponsored language
>classes for his foreign-born employees. "My Vietnamese are the
>best workers in the world because they can speak English," he
>said.
>
>Citing the majority's refusal to discuss constitutional
>objections or to justify any need for the legislation, Rep. Pat
>Williams (D-Mont.) called the session "the most maddening debate
>I've sat through in my 18 years in Congress." Rep. Chaka Fattah
>(D-Pa.) observed that even though everyone was speaking English,
>there was little communication taking place between the two
>sides.
>
>Throughout the day the partisan split was consistent in votes on
>several proposed amendments, with not a single defection from
>either the Democratic or Republican side.
>
>The committee rejected an amendment by Del. Carlos Romero-
>Barcelo (D-P.R.) that would have allowed federal agencies to
>communicate in other languages to promote government efficiency.
>Rep. Jan Meyers (R-Kans.) argued that such an exemption would
>"totally gut the bill. What we're saying is that agencies must
>communicate in English. ... If I was in China, I wouldn't expect
>their government to print everything in my language."
>
>The lawmakers then approved a proposal by Rep. Lindsey Graham
>(R-S.C.) to extend English-only restrictions to all
>"publications, informational materials, income-tax forms, and
>the contents of franked [i.e., Congressional and other U.S.
>government] mail." Under questioning, Graham conceded that his
>amendment would forbid virtually any written communication by a
>federal agency in another language, including the tourist-
>oriented pamphlets of the National Park Service. Graham
>insisted, however, that "common sense" would eliminate any need
>to remove the slogan "E Pluribus Unum" from U.S. currency and
>coins.
>
>Rep. Patsy Mink (D-Hi.) offered an amendment to keep the bill
>from infringing the freedom of speech, due process, and equal
>protection of the law. But Republicans objected to including
>what Graham called a "laundry list" of constitutional rights.

>Instead, they inserted an assurance that H.R. 123 was not
>intended to conflict with the U.S. Constitution.
>
>Finally, the committee rejected an English Plus substitute
>proposed by Rep. Xavier Becerra (D-Calif.). It would have
>removed the bill's restrictive features and advocated a policy
>of encouraging the acquisition of English, plus other languages,
>to promote international competitiveness and preserve cultural
>resources. Before voting against the Becerra amendment,
>Cunningham conceded that "we're fools if we don't learn other
>languages in this country." But he insisted that language
>restrictions are necessary because of "a propensity for more and
>more Americans not to speak English" -- citing anecdotal
>evidence from his own Congressional district in south San Diego.
>
>Until this week, H.R. 123 had appeared to be going nowhere. Its
>chief sponsor, Rep. Bill Emerson (R-Mo.), recently died after a
>long bout with cancer. House Speaker Newt Gingrich, a longtime
>backer of English-only legislation, apparently decided the
>measure could boost Republicans' prospects in the 1996 election.
>As recently as May, Committee chairman Bill Goodling (R-Pa.) had
>assured the Joint National Committee for Languages that he
>would block the bill from reaching the House floor. But Goodling
>did an unexplained about-face yesterday, along with Rep. Steve
>Gunderson (R-Wisc.) and other members of the majority side who
>had expressed reservations about H.R. 123 during committee
>hearings.
>
>In the Senate, Republicans have postponed three scheduled votes
>on a companion measure, S. 356, where support is weaker than on
>the House side of the Capitol. Meanwhile, the Justice and
>Education departments have spoken out in opposition. But
>President Clinton, who once signed a similar measure as governor
>of Arkansas, has yet to commit himself publicly on federal
>English-only legislation.
>
>
>Jim Crawford
>[REDACTED]
>** Feel free to forward electronically or recirculate in print**
>
>

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645. **Aldon L. Nielsen**

Re: indigestible?

Fri 26 Jul 1996

Last night's digest proved to be a repeat of the previous day --
Did non-digest recipients get anything yesterday?
Who will translate for Bob Dornan if the English only bill passes?
Tried to go to the Beatnik Bookstore in Boulder last week -- the proprietor
didn't show up! seemed appropriate --

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646. **Pierre Joris**

EMF GENERAL ALERT (fwd)

Fri 26 Jul 1996

Thot this message wld be of interest to a number of people on the list -- the
Electronic Music Foundation is a great site & well worth checking out & sup-
porting -- Pierre

=====
===== Pierre Joris | "Form fascinates
when one no longer has the force Dept. of English | to understand force
from within itself. That SUNY Albany | is, to create." -- Jacques Derrida
Albany NY 12222 | tel&fax: [REDACTED] | "Poetry is the promise of a lan-
guage." email: | -- Friedrich Holderlin [REDACTED]
=====

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

Date: Thu, 18 Jul 1996 11:59:46 -0500

From: Electronic Music Foundation <[REDACTED]>

To: [REDACTED]

Subject: EMF GENERAL ALERT

EMF GENERAL ALERT

===== July 18, 1996

In brief, Electronic Music Foundation has just uploaded a completely new Web
site, packed with interesting information and leads to magnificent music and
related materials. The URL is

<http://www.emf.org>

This email message is being sent to you either because you've already asked to be on our list or because someone passed on your address in the belief that you'll be interested in what we have to say. If you would rather not receive future messages from us, simply let us know. If you've received this message from a friend and you'd like to hear from us directly, just tell us so in no uncertain terms.

Contents:

1. CDeMUSIC becomes a Magellan 3-star site!
2. An overview of our new Web site
3. An invitation to participate

=====

1. CDeMUSIC becomes a Magellan 3-star site!

We're very pleased to announce that Magellan has awarded our CDeMUSIC site a three-star status. Their review mentioned elegant design and the performance of an important function in making noncommercial CDs available.

<http://magellan.mckinley.com/review.cgi?sid=63596>

=====

2. An overview of our new Web site

It's not only a new site, it's a whole new ballgame. Our goal, remember, is to provide access to materials and dissemination of information regarding the history and current practice of electronic music. Well, here's some significant progress. For an overview, read a letter from the president.

http://www.emf.org/emf_letter.html

In the access to materials department, CDeMUSIC has reopened its doors in a big way and we're in process of a continuing extension of our CD catalogs. Our plans are to extend the scope of CDeMUSIC to include all forms of exceptional and experimental music, even if it doesn't use electronics.

http://www.emf.org/cde_frontdoor.html

Further, we've redefined the Inner Circle to offer people better guidance through the new music terrain.

http://www.emf.org/cde_circle.html

The EMF Store has begun operations with books by Barbara Golden, Iannis Xenakis, Reynold Weidenaar, and Trevor Wishart; a videotape on the theremin by Robert Moog; and M, the first interactive composing program, originally published by Intelligent Music. Not only books, videotapes, CD-ROMs, and other items that we think are important, we'll also offer historically important software.

http://www.emf.org/store_frontdoor.html

The Open Market continues to allow composers to present their work directly to the public.

http://www.emf.org/om_frontdoor.html

In the dissemination of information department, there's the EMF Worldwide Calendar where you'll soon be able to find the most interesting events in this most interesting of musical worlds.

http://www.emf.org/cal_frontdoor.html

Our guide to Web sites includes pointers to exceptional items (even if occasionally ephemeral) and ongoing important resources. And just in case you know what you're looking for, there's a real directory to the virtual world.

http://www.emf.org/sites_frontdoor.html

And if you prefer to look rather than listen, we've begun to put together a photo archive project. Our first group of photos is by Renee Moog. But more. Have a look also at Renee's photo group from Senegal, called "A Global Village." Navigate from the photo archives page.

http://www.emf.org/photo_frontdoor.html

=====

3. An invitation to participate

We invite you to send us calendar information, recommend web sites, and let us know if you have important photos. If you want to sell a CD or a tape or some other item, contact us.

And if you'd like to support our activities, we'd be grateful. We've extended the enrollment period for Charter Subscribers until September 15. But please don't wait. The current list of Charter Subscribers is distinguished not only by the excellence of the professional activity it represents but also by its generosity in helping us get started. We will recognize our Charter Subscribers forever.

http://www.emf.org/emf_csubs.html

We invite you to make a small investment, become a Charter Subscriber, and achieve virtual immortality.

=====

=====

Electronic Music Foundation
116 North Lake Avenue
Albany NY 12206
USA

████████ Voice

████████ Fax

████████

<http://www.emf.org>

#

=====

Electronic Music Foundation

116 N. Lake Ave.

Albany, NY 12206

USA

<http://www.emf.org>

████████ - voice

████████ - fax

████████ - email

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647. **Gwyn McVay**

Re: English-only Update -- VI (fwd)

Fri 26 Jul 1996

Gab, this may be typical of our Zeitgeist, but it betrays a really twisted Weltanschauung and a complete lack of savoir-faire, not to mention joie de vivre. ?

Como no?

Gwyn

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648. **maria damon**

Re: comparative suffering

Fri 26 Jul 1996

In message <████████> UB Poetics
discussion group writes:

> being examined... hello to those other experiencers of hell on the

> list--my examiners. :-) gab.

good exam vibes coming your way...md

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649. **Pritchett, Pat**

Re: indigestible?

Fri 26 Jul 1996

Dear Aldon,

Welcome to Boulder. Yes, the Beat Bookshop keeps, appropriately as you said, "odd hours." It's run by Tom Peters, who knows his books. Only last week I scored a first edition of Ronald Johnson's "Ark: The Foundation" (sic) on the cheap. Are you here for kicks, or is this a "career move?"

"Wake up new & strange
displaced,
at home" (Ted Berrigan)

Patrick Pritchett

██████████

From: Aldon L. Nielsen

To: Multiple recipients of list POETICS

Subject: Re: indigestible?

Date: Friday, July 26, 1996 3:20AM

<<File Attachment: HEADERS.TXT>>

Last night's digest proved to be a repeat of the previous day --

Did non-digest recipients get anything yesterday?

Who will translate for Bob Dornan if the English only bill passes?

Tried to go to the Beatnik Bookstore in Boulder last week -- the proprietor didn't show up! seemed appropriate --

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650. **Eliza McGrand- CVA Guest**

Re: feelingth/holocaust

Fri 26 Jul 1996

re "Is there truly a person on this list who can read his/her own posts without sighing and thinking "why did i say that" -- you get that too? thank god. i thought i was the only one. e

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651. **Gabrielle Welford**

Re: English-only Update -- VI (fwd)

Fri 26 Jul 1996

Claro que si! How can we comprendre each other s'il y a seulement one lingua? Newyddion drwg! gab.

On Fri, 26 Jul 1996, Gwyn McVay wrote:

Gab, this may be typical of our Zeitgeist, but it betrays a really twisted Weltanschauung and a complete lack of savoir-faire, not to mention joie de vivre. ?Como no?

Gwyn

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652. **Maria Damon**

Re: feelingth/holocaust

Fri 26 Jul 1996

In message <[REDACTED]> UB Poetics discussion group writes:

> re "Is there truly a person on this list who can read his/her
> own posts without sighing and thinking "why did i say that"
> -- you get that too? thank god. i thought i was the only one.
> e

o geez--truer words were never typed.--md

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653. **Michael Leddy**

Lacy and Creeley et al.

Fri 26 Jul 1996

I've been reading, not contributing. Okay, lurking. I'll show my face--

1. I've noticed discussion here and there of Steve Lacy's settings of poems. But I don't think anyone has mentioned that the title track of his fairly recent quartet recording *_Revenue_* is presented as a portrait of Robert Creeley. Another piece on *_Revenue_*, "This Is It," is based on words by James Broughton (no vocal though).

2. The NY Times ran an obituary for Merrill Gilfillan this week, confusing the naturalist father (who died, at 85 or 86) with his son the poet. (I.e., the three books *To Creature*, *Light Years*, and *River through Rivertown*, along with

others, were credited to the elder MG.) Does anyone know whatever became of MG the poet? Is he still writing? The Times said that he lives in Boulder. (I've found all three books here in "east-central Illinois.")

3. There was also a Times obituary for M. L. Rosenthal. (I remember looking at The Modern Poetic Sequence many years back and at some point realizing that the book did not include Louis Zukofsky.)

4. Finally, from last Sunday's Times Book Review, Richard Tillinghast on Seamus Heaney: "He has been and is here for good."

Michael Leddy / Charleston, IL

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654. **Aldon L. Nielsen**

Re: Jazz/Text alert

Sat 27 Jul 1996

Thanks for the tip on new Lacy --

Two additional CDs might be of interest to folk on the list --

Anthony Braxton's _Composition No. 173_ for four actors and 14 instrumentalists just released on Black Saint -- Not sure what I make of the dialogue in this "play," but the recording makes fascinating listening -- Things have come a long way since Hemphill's _Roi Boye_ -- The new Braxton was recorded in 94 in New York --

Not as new, but new to me, is Cecil Taylor's _Iwontunwonsi_, recorded at Sweet Basil way back in '86, but mastered in March of 95 -- Session begins with a Taylor poem -- CD Booklet also includes a poem, in both English and Japanese versions! -- well, maybe the Japanese isn't a translation of the poem; how would I know -- to further confuse things, the end of the poem in the notes says "to be continued to SSCD-8066 -- Anybody seen that anywhere yet??"

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655. **Aldon L. Nielsen**

Re: this crime to the writing fraternity (fwd)

Sat 27 Jul 1996

since one digest seems to have disappeared, I'm sending this through again.

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

Date: Tue, 23 Jul 1996 22:17:45 -0700 (PDT)

From: Aldon L. Nielsen <[REDACTED]>

To: UB Poetics discussion group <[REDACTED]>

Cc: Recipients of POETICS digests <[REDACTED]>

Subject: Re: this crime to the writing fraternity

Nobody has identified the segment I posted here from "A Critical Fable" -- to my very great surprise --

Several on the list guessed James Russell Lowell -- Alan noted that internal refs. made that unlikely -- several guessed a 20th century parody of Lowell -- but nobody guessed that the poem is by --

AMY LOWELL

By the way, On my copy of _The Complete Poetical Works_ the subtitle reads: "A Militant Crusader for the Cause of Modern Poetry"

but she never, in the entire volume, explains just what did cause modern poetry --

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656. **Thomas Bell**
cancer poetry

Sat 27 Jul 1996

Some info in response to request last week:

Audre Lorde's _Cancer Journals_

Dreifuss-Katten lists 12 books of English and German poetry related to Cancer experiences (Dreifuss- Kattan, E. (1990). Cancer stories: Creativity and self-repair. Hillsdale, NJ: The Analytic Press). tom

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657. **Eliza McGrand- CVA Guest**
Re: cancer poetry

Sat 27 Jul 1996

one of the best books i read in 1990 was helene davis's _chemopoet_, poems written during and about experiencing breast cancer.

e

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658. **Bob Holman**
Gloria Tropp

Sun 28 Jul 1996

In a message dated 96-07-15 00:14:45 EDT, you write:

<< Can anyone on this list give me any information about a poet named Gloria Tropp? She was active on the East Village scene in the arly sixties, and was then married to poet Stephen Tropp -- I'm particularly interested in tracking down any publications by this poet -- It's possible her name may have changed since that time --

For that matter, does anyone know Stephen Tropp?

Is Dick Higgins still on this list, who might have encountered them ? >>

Steve and Gloria Tropp, fascinating jazz poets, were around at the first readings I saw in New York in 1969. They were Beat fringe, and good buddies with the exquisite populist, Don Lev. Steve was a big white guy, a messenger, who read surreal jazz bursts hilariously from a red springback binder. Gloria, a beautiful black woman in a long gold fall, would scat behind and in front. My favorite Steve was an "ALice in Wonderland" poem; Gloria's outrageous "How Are Tings in Gloccamorra" was a universe-stopper. The most astonishing performance I saw them give was in 1977 when the NYC Poetyr Calendar had its first Benefit at the Basement Workshop. Gloria, who has a tendency to forsake time when she performs, was last, and turned the event from a Reading to an all-inclusive Performance, complete with umbrellas. Jim Brodey got wild.

Steve dies about ten years ago. Gloria still lives on Upper Riverside Drive, as far as I know, and still performs on occasion.

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659. **Tony Green**

Re: cancer poetry

Sun 28 Jul 1996

Anyone in the U.S. read Wystan Curnow's Cancer Diary? That is a must...for one thing, right away from the personal-confessional mode. It asks among other things: "Is there humour in a tumour?"

Tony Green,

e-mail: 

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660. **Burt Kimmelman**

Re: cancer poetry

Sun 28 Jul 1996

Paul Blackburn's *The Journals* has some harrowing and beautiful cancer poetry--very moving stuff; be warned.

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661. **Aldon L. Nielsen**

Re: dp

Mon 29 Jul 1996

New address and phone number as follows:

Aldon L. Nielsen

3055 30th St.

Apt. #2

Boulder, CO 80301



If you've sent material for _lower limit speech_, be patient. I hope to get the next number out early Sept., from Boulder.

and THANKS for the info. on Gloria Tropp. I'm hoping to get an address for her based on this --

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662. **Susan Schultz**

Tinfish Net\work announcement

Mon 29 Jul 1996

Tinfish Net\work announces the publication of red flea's _virtual fleality_, the first in a series of chapbooks of poetry by writers from Hawai'i and the Pacific. red flea's work appears in _Tinfish_ #2 and #3. "red flea biography" reads:

red flea says

it's all the same

never ends

he jumps the gun

biting the hand

that feeds him

han shan's poems carved

on rocks

and trees

archilochus epigrams mere fragments

ishikawa takuboku's ears red with truth

bukowski's cup empty

echoing his laughter

incessant

ratta tat tat

the dead lecturer
rises from the dead

_don don don ka ra ka ka
don don don ka ra ka ka ka_

and to all who dare enter
waikiki babylon
remembereth westlake
and the dagger
in the hand of aloha

_the silent falling of the leaves of the trees
is a whisper to the living_

The chapbook costs \$3.50 and can be obtained from Tinfish Net\work at 1422A Dominis Street, Honolulu, HI 96822. It can also be ordered at [REDACTED]. In approximately one month the chapbook will be available with a cd of red flea reading his poetry to music (he calls it "amplified poetry"); price to be announced later.

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663. **FUNKHOUSER CHRISTOPH**

cancer poetry

Mon 29 Jul 1996

Kamau Brathwaite's _The Zea Mexican Diary_ chronicles the six month period between the time he found out his wife of many years (who took care of nearly all the details of his life) was terminally ill, & when she died. It's one of the most emotionally wrenching books I've ever read. Poetry & prose poetry done up in KB's "sycorax video style." University of Wisconsin Press, 1993.

cf

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664. **Robert Drake**

Re: cancer poetry

Mon 29 Jul 1996

also, _Our Cancer Year_ by Harvey Pekar & Joyce Brabner...

lbd

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665. **Bob Gale**

Line Break

Mon 29 Jul 1996

Does anyone here have an info about "Line Break," a poetry radio show produced out of Buffalo, and supposedly available for free to public radio stations across the country? I live in the land of MPR -- which means there's little chance we'll hear it hear -- but I'd like to learn more about this show and how it was/is put together.

Thanks in advance.

Peace,

Bob

\\ The Spoken Word Network: Home of Shout! Newspaper, \\ \\ the Cacophony Chorus, and London Productions \\ \\ 3010 Hennepin Ave S, #245, Minneapolis, MN 55408 USA \\ \\ [REDACTED] http://www.bitstream.net/london \\

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666. **Bob Gale**

spoken word recordings

Mon 29 Jul 1996

I'm working on creating a discography of commercially available spoken word (all styles) recordings for use by a monthly review column that appears in Shout! But been having trouble track down material (it's not like many record stores carry poetry). I've noticed a few recent posts that mention some jazz/text pieces, and if anyone else has any recommendations I'd love to hear them. Referrals to any supportive labels, or existing discographies, also appreciated.

Peace,

Bob

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667. **John Geraets**

Re: cancer poetry

Mon 29 Jul 1996

Folks should also check out Wystan Curnow's *_Cancer Daybook_* (1989), another set of poems involving cancer treatment & experience.

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668. **Pritchett, Pat**

Re: spoken word recordings

Mon 29 Jul 1996

Bob,

This may be of help, or maybe you already know about it. Lindsay Hill has produced several poetry/music CDs featuring Nathaniel Tarn and Nathaniel Mackey. I don't know any details beyond that, but I could get his address for you if you need it.

Also, Jack Collom and musician Ken Bernstein have just released a poetry CD called "Calluses of Poetry." Can't recall label, but again, could get details if so desired.

Patrick Pritchett

██████████

From: Bob Gale

To: Multiple recipients of list POETICS

Subject: spoken word recordings

Date: Monday, July 29, 1996 10:56AM

<<File Attachment: HEADERS.TXT>>

I'm working on creating a discography of commercially available spoken word (all styles) recordings for use by a monthly review column that appears in Shout! But been having trouble track down material (it's not like many record stores carry poetry). I've noticed a few recent posts that mention some jazz/text pieces, and if anyone else has any recommendations I'd love to hear them. Referrals to any supportive labels, or existing discographies, also appreciated.

Peace,

Bob

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669. **Robert Drake**

Re: spoken word recordings

Mon 29 Jul 1996

a good place to check, online, would be Fournier Anderson's *Brazen Oralities*, at <http://www.infobahnos.com/~brazen/> . much current work, including hard-to-find cassette & much wonderful canadian content...

lbd

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670. **maria damon**

Re: spoken word recordings

Mon 29 Jul 1996

bob holman (████████) shd be able to help a lot, w/ the mouth almighty project and all. my guess is that there's more stuff out there than you can shake a lamb's tail at. bests, maria d

In message <v01540b01ae228a49942a@[204.73.77.101]> UB Poetics discussion group writes:

> I'm working on creating a discography of commercially available spoken word
> (all styles) recordings for use by a monthly review column that appears in
> Shout! But been having trouble track down material (it's not like many
> record stores carry poetry). I've noticed a few recent posts that mention
> some jazz/text pieces, and if anyone else has any recommendations I'd love
> to hear them. Referrals to any supportive labels, or existing discographies,
> also appreciated.
>
> Peace,
> Bob
>
> \ The Spoken Word Network: Home of Shout! Newspaper, \\
> \ the Cacophony Chorus, and London Productions \\
> \ 3010 Hennepin Ave S, #245, Minneapolis, MN 55408 USA \\
> \ ████████ http://www.bitstream.net/london \

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671. **David Baratier**

Re: Spoken Word recordings

Mon 29 Jul 1996

Steven Taylor has a CD which just came out

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672. **Eliza McGrand- CVA Guest**

Re: spoken word recordings

Mon 29 Jul 1996

there is an extraordinary bookstore in the boston area called The Grolier, Poetry Bookshop, [REDACTED], o 1-800-234-poem. 6 plympton street, cambridge, ma 02138. the bookstore carries ONLY poetry, and some (not much) text about poetry. she has a huge selection of tapes, and is very good at hunting things down. she takes orders from everywhere and ships things. proprier's name is louisa (blanking on last name) and she is VERY helpful. she actually READS what she sells, and is great at figuring out "who was it who wrote that poem about the rabbit on the rug in front of the fire" kinds of questions. e

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673. **maria damon**

Re: spoken word recordings

Mon 29 Jul 1996

eliza writes:

> there is an extraordinary bookstore in the boston area called The Grolier,
> Poetry Bookshop, [REDACTED], o 1-800-234-poem. 6 plympton street,
> cambridge, ma 02138. the bookstore carries ONLY poetry, and some (not
> much) text about poetry. she has a huge selection of tapes, and is very
> good at hunting things down. she takes orders from everywhere and ships
> things. proprier's name is louisa (blanking on last name) and she is
> VERY helpful. she actually READS what she sells, and is great at figuring
> out "who was it who wrote that poem about the rabbit on the rug in front
> of the fire" kinds of questions.
> e

it's louisa solano; she's great. get her talking about john wieners. or anyone.
she says great thing about our own kathryne lindberg ("going to dinner w/ her
was like taking a graduate seminar" meaning that it was exhilerating). md

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674. **maria damon**

bargain books, mpls

Mon 29 Jul 1996

to those in the twin cities area: Banks, a huge discount store that specializes in buying up entire stocks of places that have gone under, etc, has a bunch of excellent books at half price. i got Real: the letters of mina harker and sam d'alexandro, creativity/anthropology, feminist measures, poetry by thylia moss,

patricia smith and dana bryant, as well as some anthologies of caribbean, chinese-american, "chicago saloon" etc., poetry. passed on wm bronk, robt. kelly, keats, wanda coleman (i'd paid full price abt 2 months ago), some goodlooking routledge specials, comparative youth cultures, etc. quel find! plus washcloths and hooks for my closet doors at a fraction of normal. maria d

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675. **Bob Holman**

Amygism

Mon 29 Jul 1996

For me, Amy's battles against Pound was plenty good enough to lay claim to Militant Crusader for Modern Poetry. Christ, what are patterns for!

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676. **Aldon L. Nielsen**

Re: spoken word

Tue 30 Jul 1996

Has anyone out there ever laid eyes on a recording of four Cleveland area poets (ca late 60s early 70s) that includes selections by Russell Atkins? I've been trying to find this for three years now -- Atkins himself does not have a copy -- can't find it in the usual discographies --

Have seen printed ref. to it at least three times, so I'm reasonably certain it's not a phantom entry --

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677. **Bob Gale**

(no subject)

Tue 30 Jul 1996

*Date: Mon, 29 Jul 1996 13:51:28 CST
From: David Baratier <[REDACTED]>
Subject: Re: Spoken Word recordings*

Steven Taylor has a CD which just came out

Do you have a label or contact info on that?

Thanks,

Bob

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678. **Sylvester Pollet**

cancer poems

Tue 30 Jul 1996

Don't miss Ramon Guthrie's long heroic last shot, Maximum Security Ward. Easiest to find in the Persea edition MSW & Other Poems, ed. Sally M. Gall, NY 1984. Sylvester Pollet

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679. **JOEL LEWIS**

melvin tolson

Tue 30 Jul 1996

i found copies of Melvin Tolson's Harlem Gallery & Gallery of harlem Portraits in a used bookstore in the Berkshires. I understand he was a controversial figure in his time -- apparently he was the lone black high modernist. Is anyone doing work on him? what is the take on his work these days? Odd that Tolson in publishing Harlem Gallery in '65 was taking on an High Modernist project that was being abandonned by many of its disciples.

Joel Lewis

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680. **Douglis Beck**

Re: POETICS Digest - 28 Jul 1996 to 29 Jul 1996

Tue 30 Jul 1996

maria--
what bronk did you stumble over @ banks?
& do you have their # so I can call for it?
douglis.

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681. **maria damon**

Re: POETICS Digest - 28 Jul 1996 to 29 Jul 1996

Tue 30 Jul 1996

i cant remember title, it was a "slim volume" w/ glossy cover, a two-word title i believe, talisman house press. i'll give u Banks's phone # but i shd warn you they're a huge place, not a bookstore, just a close-out discount store; specify that it's in the 2nd floor book room, on the poetry table [REDACTED]. good luck. apparently they had stuff like ginsberg's snapshot poetics hardcover dirt cheap

when they first got the shipment --i'm getting the leftovers, which is good, cuz it's esoterica that folks like us dig... bests, maria d

In message <[REDACTED]> UB Poetics discussion group writes:

> maria--
> what bronk did you stumble over @ banks?
> & do you have their # so I can call for it?
> douglis.

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682. **maria damon**

Re: conference fwd

Tue 30 Jul 1996

From: Center for Advanced Feminist Studies <[REDACTED]> Date: Tue, 30 Jul 1996 16:58:15 -0500 To: Multiple recipients of list CAFS-F2 <[REDACTED]> Subject: CFP: Property, Commodity, Culture

Sixth Annual Cultural Studies Symposium, Kansas State University, Manhattan, Kansas, March 6-8, 1997

PROPERTY, COMMODITY, CULTURE

Keynote Speaker: Peter Stallybrass (University of Pennsylvania), author of *The Politics and Poetics of Transgression*
Topic: "Marx's Coat"

"Property was thus appalled
That the self was not the same."
-- William Shakespeare

Hark how the Trumpets Sound,
Proclaims the Land around,
The Jubilee;
Tells all the Poor oppressed
Nor more shall they be cess'd,
Nor landlords more molest,
Their Property.
-- Thomas Spence

"I'll--why, I'll go home to Tara tomorrow."
-- Scarlett O'Hara

Property: its very properties are now in question. If we are, as some say, on the brink of virtualization, what becomes of property? What happens when the old address that united name, goods, and legal responsibility refers only to a

city of bits? Or is this in fact only the daydream of postmodern escapists who leave unthought and unthinkable an earth grown poisonous? Is it the ruse of the capitalists, disguising obvious and egregiously material inequities in the distribution of wealth? Even taken in the old-style sense of turf, property remains the pretext for marital, parental, class, and national warfare. We invite discussion on these and a variety of other related topics, proposals of individual papers, panel sessions, and innovative conference formats.

Possible topics:

*Personal property/public responsibility *Visual rights *Tenure
*Transnational capital, globalism, *Mode of production, social formation,
and deterritorialization and forms of property *The revival of na-
tionalism: cultural *Education as consumer good and economic
property *Children: property or persons *Virtual property and copyright
*Prostitution and sexwork *Class and turf *Marriage: history and fu-
ture *Enclosure and commons *Slavery *Property and
crime *Privatizing the Internet *New populism and Wise Use *Trade-
marking species: biotechnology *Fetishism: ritual, commodity, sexuality
*Property and propriety *Privatizing public schools *Queer propri-
ety&properties of gender *Black markets *White collar crime: property &
penalty *Nation and immigration *Labor and global capital: GATT, NAFTA,
*Ownership, subjectivity, identity *Property and performativity *Native
American land *Collaboration, credit, and property *Copying, copyright,
copyhold

Abstracts for papers and panels: Limit proposals to one page, single spaced, per paper; proposals for non-standard format sessions welcome. Due date: October 4, 1996. Address proposals and queries to Tim Dayton, Department of English, Denison Hall, Kansas State University, Manhattan, KS 66506. Phone: [REDACTED]. FAX: [REDACTED]. E-mail: [REDACTED].

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683. **Robert Drake**

Re: bargain books, mpls

Tue 30 Jul 1996

maria

who & or what are "chicago saloon" poets/poetries?

also wd be curious to hear more about patricia smith & dana bryant & how their stuff works on paper (patricia is reigning slam poetry queen, dana was a close contender at the national slams a coupla years ago)...

everwandering
lbd

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684. **Aldon L. Nielsen**

Re: Tolson

Wed 31 Jul 1996

Glad to hear you found these books -- MUST read his 50s +Libretto for the Republic of Liberia_ -- Not at all the case that he was adopting "high modernism" just as others were abandoning it --

Yes, people are doing work on Tolson --

See Robert Farnsworth's bio. of the poet, and his edition of Tolson's newspaper columns, both from U of Missouri Press -- Check out Michael Berube's book on Tolson and Pynchon -- Lorenzo Thomas gave a talk on Tolson at the Orono conference last month, which will appear eventually somewhere -- perhaps in a new edition of Tolson's poems if we have any luck with the National Poetry Foundation, who appear interested at last post-conference -- Hermine Pinson did a good Tolson dissertation a few years back -- and there is one intro. book of criticism on _Harlem Gallery_ (as well as the usual Twayne book) --

More in the works -- Tolson's "high modernism" is not quite the modernism of Eliot, Crane, etc. --

and no, he was not alone in working these veins -- Take a stroll through _New Negro Poets U.S.A._ or Clarence Major's newly issued _The Garden Thrives_ anthology for minimalist clues to a large history --

and a certain Dr. Anna Everett was heard at the American Literature Association not long ago offering the first ever paper on Tolson as film critic -- Carole Doreski, appearing on the same panel, did a good paper on Tolson's 40s poems and newspaper work -- which will appear in a book from Cambridge later on --

SIGNING OFF FOR A FEW WEEKS __ BLESSINGS TO ALL --

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685. **Christina Fairbank Chirot**

address for Christopher Dewdney

Wed 31 Jul 1996

Might anyone have an address for Christopher Dewdney? I'd much appreciate knowing it if you do. His work I'd highly recommend. Several books published by The Figures, three available from SPD.

HAIKU

My roof was once firm
yet now it cannot even
keep the stars out.

(from Alter Sublime)

thanks for any assistance
dave baptiste chirot

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686. **Charles Alexander**

gone

Wed 31 Jul 1996

dear poetics:

I'll be away for one week starting tonight, and I'm stopping list-serv mail for that period. So if anyone wants to contact me about chax press books or anything, please wait until after August 6.

thank you,

charles alexander
chax press
p.o. box 19178
minneapolis, mn 55419-0178



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687. **maria damon**

conference

Wed 31 Jul 1996

hey everyone, stay tuned for a call for papers for a conference on CROSS-CULTURAL POETICS organized by Mark Nowak and yours truly, to be held in minneapolis the last weekend of june 1997. bests, maria d

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688. **Laura Moriarty**

Re: cancer poems

Wed 31 Jul 1996

The last part of Jerry Estrin's book Rome: A Mobile Home,(Roof, the Figures, O Books, Potes and Poets) "Nudes," was written while he had cancer. And the last

part of my book Symmetry (Avec Books) "Forever" was written during my experience as a caregiver, though I don't think the word cancer appears in either book.

Laura Moriarty



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689. **Julie Marie Schmid**

Re: bargain books, mpls

Wed 31 Jul 1996

Chicago Saloon poetry is spoken word poetry performed at such venues as the Green Mill, Weeds, and at many of the other bars around the city where poetry is being read. I assume Maria is referring to the book *Stray Bullets* which Tia Chucha press (great press run by poet Luis Rodriguez and distributed by Northwestern) published about 6 years ago but is still in print. It includes people like Patricia Smith, Marc Smith, Luis Rodriguez, Carlos Cumpian, E. Donald Two-Rivers, et al. Also, Patricia Smith is fabulous on the page--check out her book Close to Death.

Would love to talk to any and all who are interested about this more--I'm doing a dissertation of public poetries and have been here in the Windy City for three months immersing myself in the poetry scene here and loving every minute of it! Reach me here or at .

Ciao!

On Tue, 30 Jul 1996, Robert Drake wrote:

maria

who & or what are "chicago saloon" poets/poetries?

also wd be curious to hear more about patricia smith & dana bryant & how their stuff works on paper (patricia is reigning slam poetry queen, dana was a close contender at the national slams a coupla years ago)...

everwandering

lbd

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690. **Tristan D. Saldana**

Language Poetry; Deconstruction; New Criticism

Wed 31 Jul 1996

Would a deconstruction of language poetry -- non-representational language which strives to produce the primary world of experience to the dis-ease of such poetics as Louis Simpson's -- be essentially a New Critical attempt to render a text definitively (or unify textualities within a poem) what Marjorie Perloff has noted as its vitally indeterminate qualifying characteristics?

What does anyone think?

Tristan

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691. **maria damon**

Re: bargain books, mpls

Wed 31 Jul 1996

In message <[REDACTED]> UB

Poetics discussion group writes:

> Chicago Saloon poetry is spoken word poetry performed at such venues as
> the Green Mill, Weeds, and at many of the other bars around the city
> where poetry is being read. I assume Maria is referring to the book
> *Stray Bullets* which Tia Chucha press (great press run by poet Luis
> Rodriguez and distributed by Northwestern) published about 6 years ago
> but is still in print. It includes people like Patricia Smith, Marc
> Smith, Luis Rodriguez, Carlos Cumpian, E. Donald Two-Rivers, et al.
> Also, Patricia Smith is fabulous on the page--check out her book Close to
> Death.

>

yes that's the one. --md

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692. **George Bowering**

Re: address for Christopher Dewdney

Wed 31 Jul 1996

| *Might anyone have an address for Christopher Dewdney?*

You can get him c/o his publisher, McClelland & Stewart.

481 University Ave.,
Ste. 900.

Toronto, ON,
M5G 2E9

.....

"The squid is in fact
a carnivorous pocket
containing a pen"

--Robert Bringhurst

George Bowering.
2499 West 37th Ave.,
Vancouver, B.C.,
Canada V6M 1P4

fax: [REDACTED]

e-mail: [REDACTED]

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693. **T-Bone Prone**

Re: Language Poetry; Deconstruction; New Criticism

Wed 31 Jul 1996

On Wed, 31 Jul 1996, Tristan D. Saldana wrote:

> Would a deconstruction of language poetry -- non-representational language
> which strives to produce the primary world of experience to the dis-ease of
> such poetics as Louis Simpson's -- be essentially a New Critical attempt
> to render a text definitively (or unify textualities within a poem) what
> Marjorie Perloff has noted as its vitally indeterminate qualifying
> characteristics?
>

> What does anyone think?

Well, I don't think so. A 'deconstructive' reading itself would be not a unity, but a quarrel amongst possible readings. When Derrida reads a poet, even Celan or Ponge, it is to -affirm- the specificity and singularity of their poetic idioms, without turning that into a 'unified textuality', and surely not to praise anything as vague as 'vitally indeterminate qualifying characteristics'. It's a difficult trick, to think the singular or idiomatic without thinking unity or essence. Not everybody gets it.

| *Tristan*

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694. **Ian Wilson**

Re: Language Poetry; Deconstruction; New Criticism

Wed 31 Jul 1996

In a message dated 96-07-31 16:15:12 EDT, Tristan D. Saldana writes:

Would a deconstruction of language poetry -- non-representational language which strives to produce the primary world of experience to the dis-ease of such poetics as Louis Simpson's -- be essentially a New Critical attempt to render a text definitively (or unify textualities within a poem) what Marjorie Perloff has noted as its vitally indeterminate qualifying characteristics?

I think it would be a mistake to assume that the effect of using a post-structural theory on a poetry which can be viewed as a literary manifestation of that post-structural theory is the same as negating the negation -- thus a return to the originary.

Ian Wilson

Loyola Marymount University, Los Angeles



<http://users.aol.com/ibar88/private/ian1.htm>

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695. **george hartley**

Re: Language Poetry; Deconstruction; New Criticism

Wed 31 Jul 1996

Tristan:

Would a deconstruction of language poetry -- non-representational language which strives to produce the primary world of experience to the dis-ease of such poetics as Louis Simpson's -- be essentially a New Critical attempt to render a text definitively (or unify textualities within a poem) what Marjorie Perloff has noted as its vitally indeterminate qualifying characteristics?

What is "the primary world of experience"? To the best of my knowledge, Nick Piombino is the only poet related to language writing who explicitly uses the language of "experience" (although he has something very specific in mind). Barry Watten talks about "the world" lots in Total Syntax, but again in ways that would undo some uses of the concept. What experiences and what worlds do you have in mind?

The potential connections between a certain deconstruction & New Criticism are in themselves intriguing--I'd want more time to construct something there, but I think I'd begin by questioning how deconstruction would unify textualities: the word "unify" might be the point at which we could distinguish between the

two projects, both of which depend on intense scrutiny (close reading) of the text(s). Does the "its" of "its vitally indeterminate qualifying" refer to deconstruction or language poetry or new criticism?

Maybe I've missed some earlier parts of this thread.

George

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