

@poetics

The UB Poetics Discussion Group

Archive of Electronic Correspondence

December 1996

657 messages · Sat 30 Nov 1996 – Tue 31 Dec 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

The world into which these letters were written was itself in a season of transitions. A newly re-elected American president was assembling his second cabinet, naming Madeleine Albright to the State Department; at the United Nations, Kofi Annan was being raised to Secretary-General; and the year drew toward its close having taken both Carl Sagan and Marcello Mastroianni. Into all of it the poets of Buffalo went on writing to one another, nightly and at length.

The month's presiding quarrel, which runs to some eighty messages beneath a drift of mutating subject-lines, concerns taste. Michael Boughn calls it, wearily and near its close, *"that totally frustrating taste thread,"* and one sympathizes; yet the frustration was rather the point. Wystan — Curnow, one presumes — supplies the winter's most durable epigram: *"taste judgements are about not explaining yourself."* Around this the list divides into parties: those who would rescue the word by translating it, Boughn reaching for Castaneda's heart and for Freud's cathexis, and those who catch in it only the old class perfume.

For relief the poets went to the pictures, and to the American West. What began as an aside upon Burt Bacharach hardened into a small canon of the unorthodox western — Nicholas Ray's Johnny Guitar, of which Tom Mandel reports simply *"yes it's amazing,"* then Fritz Lang's Rancho Notorious, and at length Jarmusch's Dead Man. That a distaste for John Wayne might be, like bad writing, a position one could defend was lost on no one.

Beneath the play ran graver questions. A newcomer signing only *"ms,"* who had lurked a week before speaking, asked the room to name whoever first held that there could be *"no writing in the aftermath of the Holocaust"* — and Adorno's shade duly crossed the threshold. Elsewhere the practical anxieties of the guild: Burt Kimmelman confessing that of the creative-writing doctorate *"there is something scammish about it,"* and Linda Russo answering, disarmingly, that one pursues the thing for *"library access, email, an income."*

Judy Roitman, turning over Cid Corman's selection of Lorine Niedecker, copied out a jacket blurb that praised its poet as *"easily the finest female American poet"* and let the qualifier detonate unassisted; the thread grimly titled *"patr-iarchy/onization"* was the crater. It is, to my eye, the month's most necessary argument, and the least resolved.

And all the while, beyond the poets' window, a winter of consequence: among the very first of these messages is not poetry at all but a forwarded appeal from the students of Belgrade, then filling the squares against Milošević in the cold — history leaking, as it will, into the inbox. I have arranged what follows so that each voice stands forward under its own name, its telephone and its address returned to privacy, its machinery swept aside. The reader who wishes to enter at any point will find the contents entirely obedient to the touch. I ask only that you remember, as I do nightly, that these were letters before ever they were literature.

— *K. M. F.*

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1. **Gabrielle Welford**

Forwarded mail....

Sat 30 Nov 1996

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

Date: Sat, 30 Nov 1996 04:30:47 -1000

From: Petar Ramadanovic <[REDACTED]>

Studenski protest 96 (<http://147.91.8.64/~protest96>)

Date:

Tue, 26 Nov 1996 22:35:56 +0100 (MET)

From:

Student Protest 96 <[REDACTED]>

To:

nasa-borba

Dear Colleagues,

considering the information blockade in our country, we are trying to inform universities all over the world via Internet. The situation in Belgrade and Serbia is more and more dramatic. The protest of students is on for three days already, with full support of our professors. Beside Belgrade University, all larger university centers in Serbia are also in protest. We ask you to inform students of your universities as to what is happening here. Every kind of support coming from you will be highly appreciated.

Declaration of Decency

We, the students of the Belgrade University, support the citizens of Serbia, who demand the protection of their rights, guaranteed by the Constitution. Brutal violation of law and annihilation of regular electoral results are the unprecedented attack on the basic principles of democracy.

We are not taking sides between the party in power and the opposition - what we insist upon is the rule of law. Any government unwilling to acknowledge the electoral defeat is not worth of our support, and we are overtly opposing it.

Therefore, we demand:

Immediate establishment of State's Electoral Committee, which will be formed on proportional principles by the parties that took part in a second ballot. The purpose of this Committee will be to objectively establish the outcome of the second ballot. We appeal on all participants of the current

political crisis to sustain from any and all violence. The students of the Belgrade University will endure in their protest.

University of Belgrade

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2. **Tosh**

Re: Burt Bacharach's Western music

Sun 1 Dec 1996

Kevin -- For years I thought that Gene Pitney and Lee Harvey Oswald were the same person --

That is such a perverse thought. Town without Pity indeed!

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3. **Chris Stroffolino**

Re: Burt Bacharach's Western music

Sun 1 Dec 1996

speaking of burt bachrach--i heard dionne warwick's version
of wishin and hopin' the other day...i didn't realize she did it first====
maybe i'll just have to dig up the musical comedy i wrote
bachrach melodies and beowulf--
"we must find a way to beowulf" to tune of san jose...
I could build a big mead hall" to alfie...
oh what else (tis MADDening, this memory thing)
"what;'s up grendel's mom, wo oo oo oo oo oo..."
"one less scylding living" (sung by grendel mcco)oo
there was more--but this is enough i'm sure....cs

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4. **amato**

Western music

Sun 1 Dec 1996

in addition to gene pitney, what about frankie laine?...

for that matter, i've always liked the way tex ritter's "do not forsake me"
rumbles around in the background of *high noon*...

and then there's the 'sons of the pioneers' too (as in *the searchers*)...

what about the soundtrack to *urban cowboy*... which puts us smack dab in the
middle of c & w, and with somebody like charlie daniels (whose more recent
stuff is really problematic) we fall over into 'southern rock' and such...

anyway, that singin cowboy stuff goes back a looong way---and it's still a vital aspect of u.s. americana... i don't mean grand ole opry either---all's you have to do is attend a c & w performance at one of the major rodeos to see how passionate the following is (this is probably not news to anybody here)... and that brings us back to cowboy poetry...

almost typed 'cowbody' poetry---now THERE'S somethin new...

hey, anybody seen that off-broadway show *cowgirls*?... i'm wondering if it's pulling in the direction of *oklahoma* or *guys and dolls*?...

joe

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5. **Burt Kimmelman**

Re: teaching good/bad writing: good/bad?

Sun 1 Dec 1996

on this topic. i'd be curious to know what people think of awarding a ph.d. in creative writing. to my mind, there is something scammish about it, but i 'm ready to be convinced otherwise.

burt kimmelman

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6. **amato**

Re: teaching good/bad writing: good/bad?

Sun 1 Dec 1996

burt, why is a phud in creative writing (say, writing a novel for a diss) any more scam-ish than writing a critical-theoretical diss?... i say this as somebody who holds a doctor of arts (d.a.---not a ph.d, though an earned doctorate) and who has had to put up with a LOT of grief for not possessing those other three letters... the two singular characteristics of my degree program (and the history of the d.a. goes back to mit in the 60s) was that it (1) provided courses in pedagogical theory (which most phuds in english now do, to a greater or lesser extent) and (2) permitted a "creative" diss. (which many phuds in english did then, and do now)...

anyway... i feel a bit personally invested in this distinction (or lack thereof) twixt d.a. and ph.d, and for many it turns primarily on (2) above...

joe

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7. **Burt Kimmelman**

Re: teaching good/bad writing: good/bad?

Sun 1 Dec 1996

joe,

one of my colleagues has a d.a. in creative writing from syracuse; luckily, at my school (njit) no one has a problem with this. also, a friend of mine, and a fine poet (i'll not name him without permission), opted not to flesh out a wonderful doctoral thesis on critical theory and beckett and instead to submit a collection of poems for a ph.d. in creative writing. i think highly of both of these people. however, as you have suggested, they would do better with classical ph.d.--not to say that there may not be room for change in this regard. first of all, i would have loved (pace, those out there who might feel that there is already too much narrowly focused or perhaps frivolous literary scholarship, and thus it's good that university presses are now looking to operate in the black) to have read the finished theory-beckett product, and so would have others. second, and here's my original point, unlike the world of scholarship (though, again, this may change if something is not done about the university press situation), there is a "real" world beyond the academy for people to publish and perhaps thrive in; that is, a phud in journalism, say, or novel writing, is superfluous, since the ultimate test/recognition comes from the communications media and either small or large presses, respectively. There is something of the hothouse flower about a phud in creative writing, it seems to me. does a writing program, furthermore, which is looking for new faculty, take an applicant with a phud in creative writing more seriously than someone without one? Indeed, it seems to me that I would rather hire someone who has actually published books, or at least someone who has a portfolio of interesting work (to say nothing of teaching ability), than someone with the degree (let's throw in the mfa here too) as the sine qua non of certification. and isn't academe too institutionalized already, when it comes to literary scholarship (where are the Alfred Kazins, Irving Howes and George Lyman Kittredges--all with only bachelor's degrees--or yesteryear)? so why create some new overly wrought system, when systems can in fact have a stifling effect?

burt

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8. **C. Alexander**

Re: PhD creative writing

Sun 1 Dec 1996

re: burt kimmelman: " to my mind, there is something scammish about it, = but i'm ready to be convinced otherwise."

to preface: i'm suspicious of the way "writing" becomes/became "creative = writing." I wrote as a kid, I write as an adult, I happen to be a = student of poetics in a ("diverse" to some minds, "bifurcated" to = others) phd-cw program. (SF State it ain't -- but if they had a phd, i'd = have applied there.)

I can't speak to a(re?)warding cw phd's, but I'll say a thing or 2 = about why i'm pursuing one -- not to be writing, not for "a community of = poets" -- but for (sheer pragmatics?) library access, email, an income, = and critical discourse. =20

sure, workshops ("required") have their limited usefulness -- a "slash = & burn" (i.e. workshop) mentality does tend to want to prevail, & and a = kind of ("industry") verse is, to a certain extent, practiced. But = even the most industrious students at Utah are fighting for workshop = pedagogy that involves recognition/discussion of poetic/aesthetic = "differences."

I think poets will get what they demand/come looking for. If, as Donald = Revell says, american poetry is written to figure out the problems of = american poetry, (un)fortunately workshops can only somewhat accomodate = that (i'm okay with that myself). As for the program -- there are = students & faculty who do & can speak to my not-so-mainstream concerns = as a (postmodern) (post-structuralist) poet. =20

As for "the spectres of "good"/"bad" and a single correct upper middle = class media culture. <><>shiver><><" (tom bell) -- of course the U. can = only do what it can do. Academia _is_ disturbingly platonic, but the U. = I know is riddled with heraclitians. Students & faculty (at Utah) who = shiver along with you, and then do something "academic" about it. It's = the need/demand thing again. =20

I don't know who's scamming who. (Maybe i'll have a sense of that after = i've earned my three letters.) I also know a phd-cw is no commodity. = Certain kinds of poetry are more of a commodified than others. When the = "avant garde" is mainstreamed (via academia?) what will the new avante = garde look like? how will poets go about solving the problems of = american poetry?=20

(I'm not sure but i think it's written somewhere in the bylaws that i'm = required to acknowledge the university (& state) of Utah for its = patronage.)

L.V. Russo/phd-cw - poetry/Univeristy of Utah, SLC

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9. **amato**

Re: teaching good/bad writing: good/bad?

Sun 1 Dec 1996

burt, i guess i view the matter from the pov of one who has seen the d.a. go the way of the dodo bird, at suny/albany, and who has been forced to ponder long and hard over what exactly happened... albany in effect *had* to convert to the phud in order to maintain solvency... and the history and continuing turmoil resulting from that turn-of-events was and is a thing to behold... but here i would like to be certain to distinguish between the "realities" of the marketplace for d.a.'s or phud's in creative writing (what IS) and what we might be able to do under the rubric of same (what OUGHT to be)....

(in fact, albany *lost* it's phud in the late 70s, which left it with only the d.a. as a 'terminal' degree... long story, but as i say, to understand the d.a., you needs must look at how it came into being, was popularized at places like u of michigan, etc... and subsequently dropped by a number of campuses, though it still lives on at a number of campuses...)

i see the hothouse flower development you suggest in phud programs all over... that is, i see the development of a particular sort of academic professional as no less problematic than the development of a particular sort of creative writer... i'm not sure i see this as a creative writing problem, b/c in effect the proof for creative writers may not be in any 'real world' pudding, esp. given the small press publishing situation you refer to... i would submit that *any* phud program these days is jeopardized with the 'credentializing' stigma that currently associates with a terrible marketplace (both wrt publishing and wrt jobs)...

but here, again, i'm not quite sure exactly you mean, burt, by a phud in creative writing???.. how do you envision this?... my wife kass fleisher has a phud in english, did a novel for her diss, and had in effect not only to pass all the 'regular' english-phud requirements, but had to repeat coursework she'd already completed b/c of a negative perception of creative writers... now surely when she applies for a job, there are those academics who look at her vita and say, 'well HERE'S somebody who doesn't understand literary scholarship'... as opposed, say, to observing that her decision to complete a novel was perhaps motivated by an informed decision to enter into a somewhat different discourse community...

you see burt?---i'm not quite sure why i should be predisposed against creative writing as an academic pursuit, *except* to the very extent to which i am predisposed against *any* such academic pursuit... though academe-centered writing would appear to be, on the surface of it, a more suitable justification of pursuing a phud than, say, non-academe-centered writing, the current

economies writers are faced with, whether situated inside or outside of academe, suggest similar problematics and similar possibilities... albeit i grant that there are differences, as you suggest, i don't grant, not anymore anyway, any hard & fast distinctions between these pursuits insofar as academic programming goes...

best,

joe

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10. **Judy Roitman**

Re: teaching good/bad writing: good/bad?

Sun 1 Dec 1996

on this topic. i'd be curious to know what people think of awarding a ph.d. in creative writing. to my mind, there is something scamish about it, but i'm ready to be convinced otherwise.

burt kimmelman

Okay, I don't live in an Eng. dept so I've kept my mouth shut, but hey, scam or not, it gets money to folks who write; some of them even write (forgive me Maria) well.

It's like back in the glory days of NSF when research grants were easy to get and my mother (of all people) complained out that it was her tax dollars paying people like me to do what I would do anyway. A scam? Maybe, but it kept people in the business.

----- 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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11. **Tenney Nathanson**

Erica Hunt

Sun 1 Dec 1996

nervously getting ready to teach Erica Hunt's /Local Histories/ to a (very good) ug class--have never taught her work before.

any words of wisdom floating around out there?

key essays by her that folks would recommend?

line of the day:

"I could throw away my hat, I need the target practice." (/Local Histories/ 9)

we're coming off a discussion of Leslie Scalapino's /Way/, which I think provides a good context ("Bum Series" especially).

thanks in advance

Tenney

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12. **finchar**

Re: Welcome Message

Sun 1 Dec 1996

resubscribe poetics Annie Finch

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13. **Charles Bernstein**

Experimental - Visual - Concrete (fwrđ)

Sun 1 Dec 1996

EXPERIMENTAL - VISUAL - CONCRETE

Avant-Garde Poetry Since the 1960s

Ed. by K. David Jackson, Eric Vos, Johanna Drucker

Editions Rodopi

Amsterdam/Atlanta, GA 1996

442 pages

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Description of general contents:

This is an up-to-date consideration of 20th century visual and concrete poetry by major participants in its creative and critical exposition. Critical approaches,

historical contexts, and basic concepts are surveyed in two introductory essays, while the study of poetic movements in historical context and the chronological trajectory of production of experimental texts are discussed in the first major segment of the volume, "Experimentation in Its Historical Moment." The second major theme, focused upon in the section "Experimentation in the Language Arts," is that of language as a vehicle for experiments and cognitive quests, aimed not at the production of truth or social emancipation but at experiential aspects of language and language use. The development of the basic tenets of concrete poetry and current critical perspectives on its status in poetical experimentation constitute the basis of the third section of the book, "Concrete and Neo-Concrete Poetry." Synthesizing historical and theoretical perspectives, this volume is of crucial interest to students of contemporary poetics, theories of poetic language, and the visual component of literary production. Derived from a symposium held at Yale University in April 1995, the book includes a roundtable discussion on theory and practice of (contemporary) avant-garde poetry and other current concerns among poets and critics in this field. All critical materials are published here for the first time.

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18. Harry Polkinhorn (comp.). "A Mini-Anthology on the State of Contemporary Poetry (With Special Reference to the USA)."
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Jake Berry: "Articulating Freedom: Three Brief Notes Regarding the Contemporary Underground/Otherstream"
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- 35. "Concrete Poets of the 1950s/1960s and Poetics Today."
- 36. "Concretism: A Poetics or Formal Device?"
- 37. "Avant-Garde Trends: Is Concretism a New Reading of Tradition?"

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CORRESPONDENCE ADDRESSES

Eric Vos [REDACTED]
Haagwinde 12
3755 TA Eemnes phone: [REDACTED]
Netherlands

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14. **Joel Felix**

Re: Dead Man

Sun 1 Dec 1996

Dear Pam Brown Yes, it was. Jarmusch may have been sending up the "hysterical" roles of women in Westerns, and if so I'm guilty of a bad read of that aspect.

best,
Joel Felix
Chicago PC Sheriff

*I really liked "Dead Man" - a wonderful allegorical parody of the American Wild West AND Westerns...
as for misogyny - it was of the times wasn't it ?*

*Cheers,
Pam Brown
Sydney Poet*

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15. **Pam Brown**

Dead Man

Sun 1 Dec 1996

Dear Joel Felix - You wrote " But I saw this film with abt 15 friends 7 of them female and only one woman cared for it much, and she with a shrugging off of the fact that all this damnation in the movie stems from (1) capital (trade,

industry, land) and (2) the poor judgement of women. I won't rehash the plot here, but i'm curious if anyone else read the film as damn near misogynist."

I really liked "Dead Man" - a wonderful allegorical parody of the American Wild West AND Westerns...

as for misogyny - it was of the times wasn't it ?

Cheers,

Pam Brown

Sydney Poet

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16. **maria damon**

Re: teaching good/bad writing: good/bad?

Sun 1 Dec 1996

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

> >on this topic. i'd be curious to know what people think of awarding a
> >ph.d. in creative writing. to my mind, there is something scammish
> >about it, but i
> >'m ready to be convinced otherwise.
> >
> >burt kimmelman
>
>
> Okay, I don't live in an Eng. dept so I've kept my mouth shut, but hey,
> scam or not, it gets money to folks who write; some of them even write
> (forgive me Maria) well.

actually judy i tend to agree w/ you. what are they spozed to do, wait tables or marry rich? fine, but not everyone can. every option's an option.--md ps i dont know that there's *more* mediocre writing out there as a result of formal programs; they're a scam like any other. as someone who's benefited from hackademia, what can i say?--md

>
> It's like back in the glory days of NSF when research grants were easy to
> get and my mother (of all people) complained out that it was her tax
> dollars paying people like me to do what I would do anyway. A scam?
> Maybe, but it kept people in the business.

>

> -----

> 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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17. **Burt Kimmelman**

Re: teaching good/bad writing: good/bad?

Sun 1 Dec 1996

Joe,

I am glad for your wife, and for my anonymous friend who was at SUNY Binghamton who took the same option as she did--and I suppose that the combination of scholarly training up to but not including the doctoral thesis, and to some extent a demonstrated ability in creative writing (yes, i hate this phrase too), would be attractive for a certain niche in academe; still, perhaps she would have used her time more wisely by dealing with the "real" publishing world instead of with some dusty old doctoral committee. But anyway most jobs will be filled by people who have completed a "scholarly" dissertation--which is, ultimately, a quite different kind of creature.

I guess what I am really getting at, now in hindsight, is that scholarship and criticism, on the one hand, and poetry and fiction (and creative non-fiction, etc.) on the other hand, are quite different and should be acknowledged differently. When I say here "should" i mean that advisedly; but it's just that one is playing for keeps while the other is workaday. I say this having published some scholarship I am proud of and believing in the beauty of a sort and elegance and brilliance of some scholarship that has been published by others (some on this list). But I am also proud and more importantly happy about some poetry I've published, and in the end it is the writing of poetry that keeps me alive, not the scholarship no matter how noble, how profound, how elegant it might be.

Very, very few critics or scholars are read beyond their own time, whereas there are scores, hundreds of what we call great "writers"--Shakespeare fi for instance--whom we read and I dare say always will (at least, I hope we will).

But hey, there's room for all, right?

burt

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18. **Pam Brown**

Re: Western music

Sun 1 Dec 1996

Ande another thing...

Neil Young's soundtrack for Jim Jarmusch's "Dead Man" was as stunning as the film...

Cheers

Pam

At 09:24 AM 1/12/96 -0600, you wrote:

>in addition to gene pitney, what about frankie laine?...

>

>for that matter, i've always liked the way tex ritter's "do not forsake me"

>rumbles around in the background of *high noon*...

>

>and then there's the 'sons of the pioneers' too (as in *the searchers*)...

>

>what about the soundtrack to *urban cowboy*... which puts us smack dab in

>the middle of c & w, and with somebody like charlie daniels (whose more

>recent stuff is really problematic) we fall over into 'southern rock' and

>such...

>

>anyway, that singin cowboy stuff goes back a looong way---and it's still a

>vital aspect of u.s. americana... i don't mean grand ole opry

>either---all's you have to do is attend a

>c & w performance at one of the major rodeos to see how passionate the

>following is (this is probably not news to anybody here)... and that

>brings us back to cowboy poetry...

>

>almost typed 'cowbody' poetry---now THERE'S somethin new...

>

>hey, anybody seen that off-broadway show *cowgirls*?... i'm wondering if

>it's pulling in the direction of *oklahoma* or *guys and dolls*?...

>

>joe

>

>

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19. **Aldon L. Nielsen**

Re: some perish by degrees

Sun 1 Dec 1996

I'd like a world in which there was a distinction between a doctorate OF arts and a PhD, with the distinction based upon the type of work done for the degree (and thus, perhaps, the type of work for which one is training) -- As it is, though there are so few PhDs in Creative Writing that one must inspect individual work closely to see what it is the person you're hiring might be ready to do (as I would damn well hope all application materials are inspected anyway, but know they aren't) -- I wouldn't ordinarily want to hire a PhD in Medieval Studies to teach a grad. creative writing seminar -- and wouldn't ordinarily want to hire a PhD in creative writing to teach Beowulf -- BUT would indeed do so if that person had published work that demonstrated their qualification to teach that field --

The few people I know of with PhDs in Creative Writing are able, talented, and well-trained far beyond creative writing seminars

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20. **dbkk**

Re: Dead Man

Sun 1 Dec 1996

This is Dodie.

There were four of us who went to see Dead Man: one female with a Ph.D. in poetics, one male with a Ph.D. in poetics, one male with an ABD in English, and one female with a lowly masters in comp lit. All of us loved it--though I must say that the review of the movie I read in People in my acupuncturist's waiting room was scathing. I don't remember thinking about misogyny when I saw Dead Man. I do remember thinking how wonderfully de-romanticizing it was of the western myth (the disturbingness of the brutality), even though in hindsight the film was very romanticized--how could it not be with Johnny Depp's puppy-dog eyes and that gorgeous cinematography.

Speaking of Jarmusch--the other day KK and I were watching Howard the Duck (which I strongly recommend if you are, like me, into the perverse) on TV--and during a scene where Howard the Duck gets in a fight in a bar I started squawking and gesturing towards one of the badguys in the bar, "That's the actor I saw on the street in L.A. a year ago!" I'd been waiting all this time to point him out to KK. KK informed me he was the star of Stranger than Paradise.

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21. **wystan**

Re: taste, judgment, etc...

Sun 1 Dec 1996

Date: Fri, 29 Nov 1996 13:56:45 -0500
Reply-to: UB Poetics discussion group
<[REDACTED]>
From: [REDACTED]
Subject: Re: taste, judgment, etc...
To: [REDACTED]

I've encountered recently, from more than one friend of mine, the statement "I hate jazz." This seems to me a very problematic exercise of "taste." To cordon off entire cultural areas like this. & seems a fairly regular occurrence in this culture actually which may have replaced other sorts of prejudice among those with some degree of education-- prejudice moved into genres of culture rather than more crass expressions of prejudice. "I hate reggae" "I hate opera" "I hate Bob Dylan"(he's his own genre ya know, or more appropriate to say in dismissing him you're dismissing an entire tradition) "I hate ____." It seems to me one has to _try_ & withhold value judgments when first encountering a work of art, music, whatever. Again, to see what it's _doing_, yet people's reactions at times seem so _visceral_ -- they're not willing to grant an artwork a valid context at all. They're wrong about this.

--Rod

Rod,

I know what you're saying cos when teaching I'm always having to say it. But, and this thread has been left dangling because of it, I want to put in a couple of good words for taste. As who it was who started this said, taste judgements are about not explaining yourself. There are contexts in which this is the better (the 'cooler') option. Taste is more about being than knowing, its more performative. A person who thinks all sorts of thing are good of their kind, and if they're not good at least they're interesting in a cultural studies kinda way,

runs the risk of sounding dumb, disengaged, or patronizing depending on the circumstances... Whereas the person with violent narrow tastes means business. Such persons are very clear about what their interests are, and not only don't they care if that puts you on the spot, they hope it does. I don't know about you, but I still find the modernist dismissals of vast tracts of past art, literature, engaging, as I find my children's sometime boredom, dislike, hatred even, of music I hold dear impressive, and in a sense beyond dispute. Taste judgements are proper to an aesthetic economy which shouldn't necessarily be explained away. Wystan

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22. **Kali Tal**

Re: taste, judgment, etc...

Sun 1 Dec 1996

Wystan writes:

*A person who
thinks all sorts of thing are good of their kind, and if they're not
good at least they're interesting in a cultural studies kinda way, runs
the risk of sounding dumb, disengaged, or patronizing depending on the
circumstances...*

I'll take the risk of sounding "dumb, disengaged, or patronizing" to folks with "violent narrow tastes" any time. "Taste judgments are about not explaining yourself" sounds to this reader a lot like "Love means never having to say you're sorry," or, better yet, "What do you want? Good grammar or good taste?" In short--meaningless pabulum, mouthed as if there was a there there.

Yeah, I think all sorts of things are good of their kind, and it's my task to figure out what *kind* of thing I'm looking at, and what standards might be most useful to use in judgement. That seems to me both smart, and engaged. It's a whole lot less patronizing to attempt to understand something on its own terms than it is to dismiss it entire, without explanation or attention beyond the knee-jerk, "I don't like this." Mostly I find that, when applied to entire genres, "I don't like this" translates into, "I can't be bothered to spend the time learning to read this stuff, and if I don't already understand it, it's probably not worth anything anyway."

What's with the Law & Order approach to aesthetics, the slap of the truncheon against the hand, "meaning business"? I can just see the Culture Thugs, guys in turtlenecks with attitudes and berets, supervising the bulldozing of "vast tracts of past art,literature" into trenches, as they chant, "I don't care, I don't like it; I don't care; I don't like it. I don't like it; it isn't good. I don't like it; it isn't good."

Taste is fine, as far as it goes. It's sort of like opinions. Everybody's got opinions, but not everyone's opinions are equally supportable. You can stop with "I like it" or "I hate it," just as you can say, "Well, that's my opinion." But to leave it at that is to refuse to interrogate the cultural structures which contain and shape your tastes, and to refuse to hold yourself to rigorous standards of analysis and argument. Wystan, *your* tastes may be indefensible. Mine are not.

Kali

Kali Tal

Sixties Project & Viet Nam Generation, Inc.

PO Box 13746, Tucson, AZ 85732-3746



Sixties Project: <http://jefferson.village.virginia.edu/sixties/>

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23. **nuyopoman**

Re: POETICS Digest - 29 Nov 1996 to 30 Nov 1996

Sun 1 Dec 1996

Barb Barg submits:

> X-within-URL: <http://www.globeandmail.ca/web/cgi-bin/>

DisplayPage?

SITE=web&KEY=961130.GlobeFront.UARTTM&TRACKID=PP_TRACKID

>

> November 30, 1996

>

> Front Page News

>

> Student can't stomach certain famous paintings

>

> DESIGN SCHOOL DEBATES FATE OF ARTIST WHO THREW UP

> ON MONDRIAN, DUFY WORKS IN EFFORT TO

> "LIBERATE INDIVIDUALS AND LIVING CREATURES"

>

> By Elizabeth Renzetti

> The Globe and Mail 3-->

>

>

> TORONTO - Jubal Brown, a student at the Ontario College of Art and

> Design, is working on an unusual project that might get him kicked

> out of school or worse. He is deliberately vomiting the brightly

- > coloured contents of his stomach on famous paintings.
- >
- > So far, he has thrown up on two, a Mondrian at New York's Museum of
- > Modern Art earlier this month and a Dufy at the Art Gallery of
- > Ontario in May, in a protest against art that he terms "stale,
- > obedient, lifeless crusts." Neither painting suffered permanent
- > damage.
- >
- > The OCAD is holding a series of meetings with Mr. Brown, 22, to see
- > whether his actions contravene the school's code of conduct.
- >
- > Both galleries have kept the matter as quiet as possible, and neither
- > has launched a legal action against Mr. Brown. The AGO realized only
- > yesterday that the Dufy incident was a deliberate act, and a
- > spokesperson said the gallery would now be seeking legal advice.
- >
- > Mr. Brown, who also does "nice, happy Sunday paintings" and draws on
- > objects he finds, said in an interview that his intent is "to destroy
- > art, to liberate individuals and living creatures from its banal,
- > oppressive representation."
- >
- > To achieve this, he plans to vomit one of the three primary
- > colours--red, blue and yellow--on a work of art that he feels is so
- > bourgeois that it makes him physically ill. He is two-thirds of the
- > way through his project.
- >
- > On Nov. 2, Mr. Brown and two friends visited the Museum of Modern Art
- > in New York. He had fortified himself with a feast of blue food--blue
- > Jello, blue cake icing--when he spotted his target, a typically
- > geometrical canvas by the Dutch artist Piet Mondrian.
- >
- > Actually, he was having trouble deciding between a Picasso and the
- > Mondrian, but Composition in Red, White and Blue won "by the sheer
- > force of its banality," he said.
- >
- > He said he did not induce the vomiting by, for example, sticking his
- > finger down his throat. "I found its [the painting's] lifelessness
- > threatening and it made me sick."
- >
- > Mr. Brown, who sports shaved eyebrows and a pierced lower lip,
- > provided a photograph of himself standing in front of the
- > blue-spattered Mondrian.

>
> When he vomited red matter on French painter Raoul Dufy's Harbour at
> le Havre at the AGO in May (an incident the gallery did not
> publicize), he invited a group of 15 friends to witness the
> performance. There was no audience at the MOMA, apart from startled
> gallery patrons and security staff.
>
> Mr. Brown said he was "interrogated" for several hours in the
> basement of the MOMA by the gallery's security and New York police.
> He said he explained to them the intent of his project.
>
> However, the incident was characterized as an accident in a New York
> Times story on Nov. 9. The story raises the possibility that the
> incident was vandalism, but it quotes the museum's director of
> communication, John Wolfe, as saying, "It was an unfortunate
> incident, a fluke."
>
> No one could be reached yesterday at the MOMA, which was closed for
> the U.S. Thanksgiving holidays.
>
> The galleries are eager to keep this matter as quiet as possible to
> avoid copycat actions. "I have no comment--I don't want to give
> anyone like that undue publicity," said Sandra Lawrence, the AGO
> conservator who cleaned the Dufy canvas.
>
> The AGO issued a statement late yesterday that read in part, "Now
> that a person has come forward to claim responsibility for this as a
> deliberate act, we are taking this very seriously. As the custodians
> of the AGO's collection for all the people of Ontario, we will be
> seeking legal advice in order to determine appropriate actions."
>
> MOMA director Glenn Lowry, who joined the museum after leaving the
> AGO in 1994, wrote a letter to OCAD officials early this month, and
> they began an investigation. The school will not reveal the contents
> of that letter, but it says Mr. Lowry did not ask for Mr. Brown's
> expulsion.
>
> Expulsion is "a worst-case scenario," said Jack Kado, the school's
> manager of public relations, "but this is premature to talk about.
> We're conducting some interviews with Jubal, trying to find out what
> happened."
>

- > Mr. Brown said he has been asked to write a letter of apology to the
- > MOMA, an option he is considering.
- >
- > Mr. Brown, whose future show at Toronto's A Space gallery also
- > promises unspecified acts of vandalism, is aware that there is
- > something perverse about paying to study art while seeking to destroy
- > it. "Life is full of contradictions. That's what makes it beautiful,"
- > he said.
- >
- > Despite the threats of legal action, Mr. Brown still intends to
- > implement Phase III, a spew of yellow, on an unspecified target. He
- > considers his vomit project to be art, but he said it is short-lived
- > and therefore saved from the decrepitude of all other art. "It
- > doesn't get stale like the rest of the art in the gallery. It only
- > lasts for a few minutes before they bring out the Kleenex and take it
- > away."

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24. **Pam Brown**

Taste

Mon 2 Dec 1996

TORONTO - Jubal Brown, a student at the Ontario College of Art and

- > Design, is working on an unusual project that might get him kicked
- > out of school or worse. He is deliberately vomiting the brightly
- > coloured contents of his stomach on famous paintings.
- >
- > So far, he has thrown up on two, a Mondrian at New York's Museum of
- > Modern Art earlier this month and a Dufy at the Art Gallery of
- > Ontario in May, in a protest against art that he terms "stale,
- > obedient, lifeless crusts." Neither painting suffered permanent
- > damage.
- >

I know it's puerile, corny, ridiculous....but does anyone think this might have something to do with Jubal Brown's "taste"

(ha)

Pam Brown

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25. **George Bowering**

Re: westerns

Mon 2 Dec 1996

I have seen "My Darling Clementine" more often than any other western, I guess, but my favourite is still "The Tall T". I confessed that to an Australian woman at a baseball game in Melbourne, and a few months later she sent me two of those little posters they had for the movie. Remember those things outside the theatre? Phew!

George Bowering.

2499 West 37th Ave.,
Vancouver, B.C.,
Canada V6M 1P4

fax: [REDACTED]

e-mail: [REDACTED]

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26. **steph4848**

Wyatt Earp

Mon 2 Dec 1996

Recently there was a mention of a Wyatt Earp biography unpublished by someone in L.A. (Cook?). Unfortunately I both copied and dissolved the post. Appreciate it if the poster could be the name, and maybe how to contact the writer. Thank you. Stephen Vincent

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27. **Bil Brown**

Re: the good, the bad, and the ugly

Mon 2 Dec 1996

The WORST rejection I have ever heard of was Clayton Eshelman (sp?), editor of Sulfur:

CE tore up my friend Brenda Coultas' poem and sent it back to her in a coffee stained envelope. Something about not taking submissions outside of his control... etc...

But, then CE is a shit isn't he.

Bil Brown

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28. **Bil Brown**

Re: teaching good/bad writing: good/bad?

Mon 2 Dec 1996

Um... if I'm not mistaken: aren't a lot of the postees of this list at a certain skool called the UNIVERSITY of Buffalo. Wd that make it ascertainable that you are academic (maybe not as "officiating" and boring... but...).

What is the current arguement for the New Academi (I take that after Co-Director Andrew Scelling of the JKDP @ Naropa: he gave a vry erudite discussion in the back of the Diembodied Poetics Anthology abt it).

I ask CURRENT arguement 'cause I been out of it for a cpl of years... living and working white collar in Loserville Kentucky and I just want to know.

Cheers,

Bil Brown

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29. **Bil Brown**

Re: teaching good/bad writing: good/bad?

Mon 2 Dec 1996

Tom Bell wrote:

<< The idea of courses raises for me the spectres of "good"/"bad" and a single correct upper middle class media culture. <><>shiver><><

As an addendum to that. Andrew Schelling sd a few years back to a lovely Poetries and Cultures of India Class that EVERYONE in his class was of Middle Class Origin. This was at NAROPA...

As a Loserville Kentucky poor white Prole-Trailer Trash - I took fucking offense. I didn't/don't have the same ideals as alot of the middle class ideals - which (even in thier literary/intellectual state) are based in something completely different than what I am/was/have been brought to be.

In writing, this idea(l) creates DIS... that is DIScourse, DISdain, DISlocation, and DIS-ease... ppl don't want to write after hearing that the only ppl that shd be able to are white or white bred or middle fucking class.

Maria, Tom, everyone...

Take yr crits with a little bit of salt.

Bil Brown.

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30. **Ron Silliman**
Scammish

Mon 2 Dec 1996

The idea that there might be something "scammish" about a PhD in creative writing or in a d.a. suggests that there is something "legit" about a critical dissertation. That I think is exactly the point that the New Critics were trying to drive home as "specialized readers" only to be cornered by Frye et al later who noted (to the embarrassment of all) that so many of gnu critics were compromised because they were poets. Which is of course precisely the stand-off that was in place when so many of the creative writing programs came into being during the post-WW2 explosion of higher (hire) ed, a "safe" place for the poets far far from theory, etc.

Whatever legitimacy the critical dissertation had, however, really depended on there being a significant number of jobs that candidates were being honed to compete for. When the percentage of PhDs who could get jobs dropped below 50 percent (and it seems to be well under 25 percent today for most of the English & Lit categories, down to 11 percent for linguistics last year), grad school became something else. Without those graduate students, a lot of faculty would not be needed. So in fact it became a "buyers" market, much in the way that the vanity press is a buyers market for publication.

It would seem that the major difference between the critical and creative PhDs is that one doesn't pretend to be the grand job tool that the other wishes it still were. If your primary motivation for doing this isn't because you want both the education AND the process as a thing in itself (and there is no doubt that they **can** have enormous value in their own right), then you're just fodder in a rather large Ponzi scheme, there to keep your professors employed.

Seems to me that all humanities/arts students should presume that no job will await them for this effort. Then whatever follows will be legit no matter what the acronym for it might be.

Ron Silliman

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31. **Chris Stroffolino**
TOMORROW PEOPLE

Mon 2 Dec 1996

For of those of you who (like Chris Funkhouser) are doing dissertations on TECHNO-POETRY, etc., this may be of interest
(and for others too)--

In this week's VOICE, an article by David Gallagher called

Cyber--the subject of which is "MacProse" which is a POETRY program (making me wonder if "francine poetry" is really a prose-writer)--subtitled ROLL OVER, KEATS...

the most interesting part of the article is this:

"Avoiding the typical lilt and cadence of the lecturn,

I read this sample of MacProse to the poet John Ashbery:

"Towns--where have they hastened? What has vengeance molded? Spring moves. Vinyards sleep. The listening street has killed it."

"I'm afraid I may get put out of business for saying this," Ashbery quips, "but I like all of these lines." Explaining that he "would never rule out any way of doing anything, including poetry," he stresses that poetry is "always result rather than process." (VOICE 12-3-96)

Well, aside from Ashbery's last quote--which seems weird and perhaps taken out of context (what is "result" vs. "process" here and how does that not contradict official avant garde pieties, etc.)

I am interested in the lines of MacProse themselves.... Insofar as there can be "meaning" in them, it seems that the meaning is somewhat VESTIGIAL and actually ANTI-technological, or one could say the "airy nothing" of this computer program has a wry sense of irony...

IT is wreaking VENGEANCE--and KNOWS It is--on the TOWNS and IT is the listening street....any others?

yours (in MC 900 ft. exo-jesus), cs

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32. **Michael Boughn**

Re: taste, judgment, etc...

Mon 2 Dec 1996

[T]aste judgements are about not explaining yourself. There are contexts in which this is the better (the 'cooler') option. Taste is more about being than knowing, its more performative. A person who thinks all sorts of thing are good of their kind, and if they're not good at least they're interesting in a cultural studies kinda way, runs the risk of sounding dumb, disengaged, or patronizing depending on the circumstances... Whereas the person with violent narrow tastes means business.

Wystan

Sometimes this distinction signals the difference between the academic "sovereign" of the material and the person finding a way through to their own

art. Is that what you mean by "meaning business", Wystan? Reading Olson is like that. He read not to "master" material or to "explain" to others, but to hew his own path, and you either stay on for the ride or not. That's why all the academics (at Buffalo, etc.--though not Al Cook) tend to get so upset when confronted with Olson's "scholarship".

Ooops, gotta run, the baby just woke up.

Mike



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33. **DEAN F. TACIUCH** **Re: TOMORROW PEOPLE**

Mon 2 Dec 1996

On Mon, 2 Dec 1996, Chris Stroffolino wrote:

For of those of you who (like Chris Funkhouser) are doing dissertations on TECHNO-POETRY, etc., this may be of interest (and for others too)--

In this week's VOICE, an article by David Gallagher called Cyber--the subject of which is "MacProse" which is a POETRY program (making me wonder if "francine poetry" is really a prose-writer)--subtitled ROLL OVER, KEATS...

You can download MacProse from

<http://www.conncoll.edu/ccother/cohar/programs/index.html>

It's a Charles O Hartman program, and he bills it as a prose program (hence the name, which also tells you that its a Macintosh program). It generates sentences based on the grammatical structures you specify (tho you can just let it generate them without your input, in which case it follows grammatical rules programmed in.

Dean Taciuch

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34. **tmandel** **more on westerns**

Mon 2 Dec 1996

As I remarked to Pierre in a back-channel communique last week, Rio Bravo saved my life many a time.

Yes, Eldorado is a wonderful film. Mitchum is spectacular as described. And the lighting of the film is very special. Lots of interiors, and Hawks had his folks looking at Dutch painting and Chardin, etc. as modeling material. Also, the

lovely tacked-on ending with Wayne and Mitchum both on crutches explaining to each other their mutual irrelevance.

Rio Bravo and Eldorado were, btw, the first two of a trilogy. The third was Rio Lobo, and I believe this was Hawks' last film. It's a very strange film, divided in two and with a lot of weird effect-ideas (trains sliding backwards on greased rails... that kind of thing).

Few have mentioned seeing The Shootist, and if you haven't I strongly recommend it. Wayne, dying of cancer at the time, plays an old gunfighter at the turn of the century. Like the actor, the character is dying of cancer. The film narrates his last week, during the whole of which J.B. Books (the protagonist) slowly reads a newspaper story of the death of Queen Victoria while battling inside to a conclusion of active thought which is utterly wonderful.

Don Siegel directed The Shootist. Again, I don't think I'm wrong in saying it was his last film. You will know him from The Killers, Dirty Harry and many other tremendous works.

One day in February 1975, Don Siegel asked me to be his dialogue director. His previous dialogue directors had included Sam Peckinpah and John Cassavetes. I said no. He didn't have a project on the table; it would have meant moving from SF to LA; I was working on a first book of poems. I sometimes wonder...

Another time, I'll tell the story of how I came to meet him. From that story I do remember landing at the Burbank airport and as I stepped outside seeing a Navy plane go nose down into the runway. I was so freaked out I then walked the entire way from the airport to Universal. In cowboy boots. The afternoon I spent with Don Siegel began with lunch in the Universal cafeterias (movie stars in line with trays). Blisters were swelling in my boots. By 2pm I was dragging myself along in intense pain (feet) and pleasure (everything else).

Tom

Tom Mandel * 2927 Tilden St. NW
Washington DC 20008 * [REDACTED]
vox: [REDACTED] * fax [REDACTED]

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35. **pollet**

Re: POETICS Digest - 30 Nov 1996 to 1 Dec 1996

Mon 2 Dec 1996

Jubal Brown's project(ile) seems more predictable than the art he's rejecting. OK, yellow's next (yawn). I thought the menu was the most interesting part of the story. Sylvester

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36. **tmandel**

Johny Guitar

Mon 2 Dec 1996

Johny Guitar was a Nicholas Ray film, and yes it's amazing.

Someone remember the name of hte Lang western with Marlene Dietrich? A ranch that's a hideout for bandits.... Destry Rides Again (is that right?)

Anyway, another incredible film.

Ron -- like the good/bad writing issue, not liking John Wayne is a measure essentially of inattention to the work itself. Watch The Searchers, and tell me you are not seeing an incredible performance artist at work. Subtlety, not grossness, is the measure of his work -- on the other hand yes he did some bad work late (and early) in life. Rooster Cogburn kind of stuff. And his directorial skills (viz. The Alamo and his Vietnam film whose name I forget) were right up there with his political thinking.

My mom, btw, had a date with John Wayne (why do I always descend to these personal stories?).

Tom

Tom Mandel * 2927 Tilden St. NW
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vox: [REDACTED] * fax [REDACTED]

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37. **Mark Wallace**
Some MLA poetry events

Mon 2 Dec 1996

For those of you who will be in Washington D.C. during the MLA conference, please note that the following poetry events will be taking place in and around the conference.

Friday, December 27

Bridge Street Books

2814 Pennsylvania Ave. in Georgetown

7:30 p.m. Book party for Marjorie Perloff and her new book WITTGENSTEIN'S LADDER: POETIC LANGUAGE AND THE STRANGENESS OF THE ORDINARY, published by University of Chicago Press

8:30

MLA Group Reading

Current reading list includes Charles Bernstein, Peter Gizzi, Carla Harryman, Hank Lazer, Bill Luoma, Douglas Messerli, Jennifer Moxley, A.L. Nielsen, Bob Perelman, Juliana Spahr, Barrett Watten, Elizabeth Willis

Saturday, December 28

5:15-6:30 p.m. Joan Retallack and Carolyn Forché will read from their poetry at the MLA conference. THIS READING IS OPEN AND FREE TO NON-CONFERENCE PARTICIPANTS. Location: Room Delaware A at the Sheraton Hotel, corner of Connecticut and Calvert Streets NW.

8:30 p.m.

Ruthless Grip Art Project

U Street NW near the corner of 15th, under the Big Black Sign!

A Gathering of D.C. Avant Garde Poets Current reading list includes Tina Darragh, P. Inman, Rod Smith, Joe Ross, Heather Fuller, Doug Lang, Graham Foust, Mark Wallace and there will be more!

Sunday, December 29

3:00 p.m.

DC Arts Center

2438 18th St. NW (near Columbia and 18th in the heart of Adams Morgan)

PRIMARY TROUBLE anthology reading Hosted by Ed Foster, editor of TALISMAN, this group reading will include a number of writers appearing in the recent PRIMARY TROUBLE anthology edited by Ed and Leonard Schwarz.

Lastly, for anyone still in D.C. on New Year's Day, there will be a poetry reading and party (details to be announced).

Mark Wallace

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38. **Rachel Blau DuPlessis**

Re: George Oppen

Mon 2 Dec 1996

Dear Kevin--please send me a copy of Mirage with the 4 unpublished letters from Oppen. I always worry--waddya mean unpublished! did I miss some great letters when I did my edition (Duke UP 1990)? And dear everyone--I would like to announce a new book from Potes & Poets, my Drafts 15-XXX, The Fold with a special deal from Potes & Poets on prior DuPlessis books, if you order all of those that have this on-going series Drafts in them. When the flyer comes from Peter Ganick, don't throw it away.

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39. **Pritchett, Pat**

Re: Johny Guitar

Mon 2 Dec 1996

I agree with you Tom about John Wayne. In his mature years he developed an amazing style and remains way underrated as a performer. Garry Wills recently did a nice piece on him in The New Yorker called "John Wayne's Body" all about the Duke's incredible physical grace (walking on tiptoe, etc.). Great photo of him lounging in a casual suit, looking pensive, one hand on his daschund (!) and wearing really cool socks. A writer I knew once saw him in the commissary at Paramount in the 70's: the Duke had his own private helicopter, from which he entered the lower spheres deus ex machina and then sat, as at a throne, while every major star and studio boss lined up to pay him homage, like watching a papal audience complete with ring kissing. Great story about Don Siegel!

TheLang/ Dietrich film is "Rancho Notorious." I always thought of "Eldorado" as a burlesque remake of "Rio Bravo" which itself is rather burlesque. Haven't seen "Rio Lobo" yet.

Patrick Pritchett

From: tmandel

To: POETICS

Subject: Johny Guitar

Date: Monday, December 02, 1996 7:43AM

Johny Guitar was a Nicholas Ray film, and yes it's amazing.

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My mom, btw, had a date with John Wayne (why do I always descend to these personal stories?).

Tom

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*****
Tom Mandel * 2927 Tilden St. NW
Washington DC 20008 * [REDACTED]
vox: [REDACTED] * fax [REDACTED]
*****
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40. **amato**
Johnny Guitar
Mon 2 Dec 1996

tom, hey, keep them personal stories coming!...

yeah, wayne in **the searchers** is incredibly nuanced... while i wasn't near as crazy about **the shootist** (and although i've always liked don siegel's work), it's still a solid film with solid performances... i find wayne utterly believable in his last role... might mention here one of my favorite cowboy villains, richard boone (hero of tv's **have gun will travel**), who played one of the bad guys to wayne in **the shootist** and **big jake** (this latter pretty bad), but really showed-off his villainous side best in **hombre**... and was quite good with stuart whitman in **rio conchos** too (this latter is jim brown's first film---boone plays a guy who hates native americans for having killed his family, as i recall)...

speaking of siegel, i esp. like **the beguiled**, with eastwood... and speaking of eastwood, i think **unforgiven** is good but overrated, and find his **the outlaw---josey wales** an interesting flick, finally... and in fact howard hughes' **the outlaw** is worth catching---pretty bizarre in its way...

there's always the 'mountain man' genre, and here i think *jeremiah johnson* (redford/pollack) is best (will geer is great in it)...

re anthony mann westerns, just saw *the far country* again yesterday... really, the location shooting alone is enough reason to watch (for me anyway)...

and i might mention a film that makes somewhat different use of the territory around tucson, *white of the eye*... though not a western (it's about a present-day psychopath), it threads c & w music throughout, and appears at times to be making a statement about contemporary survivalism... violent, disturbing, and stunningly shot and edited... but most def. not for all tastes, and the victims are, as has become par for this sorta flick, all women...

joe

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41. **aerialedge**

Re: Some MLA poetry events

Mon 2 Dec 1996

re Perloff Book Party & MLA Group Reading at Bridge Street

PLEASE NOTE this event is B.F.S.I.L.

(Be Forewarned: Space is Limited)

Bridge Street is not a large store, it can only comfortably accomodate a crowd of 50, possibly 60 people.

Also, Mark implies the list for the group reading to be "current" -- i.e. that it is still open. That's not actually the case. There may be additional readers after this group has read. That will be determined by time constraints the night of the reading.

Friday, December 27

Bridge Street Books

2814 Pennsylvania Ave. in Georgetown

7:30 p.m. Book party for Marjorie Perloff and her new book WITTGENSTEIN'S LADDER: POETIC LANGUAGE AND THE STRANGENESS OF THE ORDINARY, published by University of Chicago Press

8:30

MLA Group Reading

Current reading list includes Charles Bernstein, Peter Gizzi, Carla

Harryman, Hank Lazer, Bill Luoma, Douglas Messerli, Jennifer Moxley, A.L.

Nielsen, Bob Perelman, Juliana Spahr, Barrett Watten, Elizabeth Willis

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42. **amato**

Re: Scammish

Mon 2 Dec 1996

i think ron's post summarizes for me the problem wrt 'creative' vs. 'critical' diss. (nevermind how fraught these distinctions are in actuality)... though as a poet i recognize immediately that my concerns as a writer are in many ways different than my more 'scholarly' colleagues, i don't believe that this is intrinsic to our pursuits... rather, i think it emerges from the way we've been educated (which in turn results, for example, in different writing conventions)... we've been educated, formally or informally, to come to "creative writing" or to "criticism" in specific ways---and markets have developed to shape publishing or job realities accordingly... i'm trying to say alla this, mind you, w/o indicating what my values are specifically---though of course emphasizing "education" as such is one indication of where i place value...

it's precisely in such terms that i found rasula's book so remarkable---i wish to hell i could get my colleagues (ALL of 'em) to read it, b/c i've little doubt they'd see themselves to varying degrees participating in the 'new critical' machinery he unveils...

i suppose one could just accept the way the markets operate, and use this logic as a feedback mechanism to guide and/or justify educational objectives... such in many ways is where the logic of some cultural studies approaches the logic of the corporation (that book i mentioned by bill readings is in my head here, _the university in ruins_)---by which i don't mean to slam cultural studies, only to indicate that in describing the apparatus of culture, it **can** result in a closed-loop, circulatory system wherein everything is convertible according to various (cultural) exchange values... on the other hand, exposing the mechanisms of culture as such can help us to see more clearly how these mechanisms operate, and why... and mebbe with this info., we can more constructively try to change things, perhaps by attending less to the marketplace as such and by attending more to forging, say, new (network) collectives...

anyway...

joe

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43. **Judy Roitman**

Re: Scammish

Mon 2 Dec 1996

| *then you're just fodder in a rather large*

Ponzi scheme, there to keep your professors employed..

Ron Silliman

The undergraduates will keep professors employed, although not entirely to the professors' liking. Teaching assistantships give graduate students a few years in a day job which has, built into it, time to write. The pay stinks and the benefits are lousy, but it's less tiring for most folks than working at McD's.

From the standpoint of the universities, graduate programs are necessary to provide graduate students to teach undergraduates cheaply. They'd love to fire all the profs and hire only grad students and other temps.

11% employment in linguistics. That really stinks.

----- 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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44. **daniel_bouchard**
new from Pavement Saw Press
Mon 2 Dec 1996

this post is pressed into the list at request of friend Baratier who post'd by stamp from sunny Columbus, Ohio

—
PAVEMENT SAW PRESS

CHAPBOOK CONTEST

\$500 and 25 copies of the winning chapbook will be awarded for the finest collection of poetry received. Len Roberts will be the judge. Submit up to 32 pages of poetry. Include cover letter with your name, address, phone number, poem titles, publication credits, and a brief biography. Entry fee: \$7.00. Make all checks payable to PAVEMENT SAW PRESS. All entries must be postmarked by 12/20/96, for consideration in this year's contest. Each entrant will receive a copy of the winning chapbook provided a 8 1/2 X 11 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

12 from
r h y m m s

Robert Grenier

Hand written pages reproduced in 4-color process on 24 pound, watermarked, acid-free, recycled paper, with a 25% cotton mixture to ensure color durability. This version is printed in a limited edition of 110 copies, 10 of which are signed and numbered by the author.

The book is \$20 unsigned, or \$30 signed, including postage and handling, checks payable to (see address above).

OOPS.

Chris Stroffolino

Available now, 64 pages, perfect bound, color cover with smiling picture of author on back.

The poems in this collection have appeared in such national publications as New American Writing, Caliban, Sulfur, Talisman, Lingo, TO, Longshot, American Letters & Commentary and others.

The book is \$6.95, including postage and handling, checks payable to (see above address).

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45. **daniel_bouchard**

Boston reading

Mon 2 Dec 1996

Paul Metcalf is reading at Waterstone's tomorrow (12/3) night at 7:30.

Don't miss it for the world.



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46. **Christina Fairbank Chirot**

Re: more on westerns

Mon 2 Dec 1996

The Fritz Lang film Tom Mandel asked about--with Marlene Dietrich--is Rancho Notorious.

It's interesting how many directors of good film noirs--made good

westerns: Don Siegal, Sam Fuller, Robert Aldrich, Fritz Lang, Nicholas Ray, Dennis Hopper, Hawks, Huston. (a bizarre twist on this being Joseph Lewis' Gun Crazy . . .).

A western triple feature: the dying John Wayne in The Shootist, the dying Steve McQueen in Tom Horn and Marilyn, Monty and Gable near death in The Misfits . . .

(For late night die hards--andy Warhol's Lonesome Cowboys . . .)

Though--aren't Westerns really documents and dreams--of Colonialists . . .

(Are Atala and Rene and Moll Flanders "proto-westerns" . . .) (There was period in the sixties when spaghetti westerns were the most popular films in a good part of the "Third World" . . .and in europe--breaking the spell of the Winnetou series . . .)

A good book on the subject: Spaghetti Westerns by Christopher Frayling (London; Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1981).

And a very enjoyable one on the subject: Les bons. les sales, les mechants et les propres de Sergio Leone by Gilles Lambert (Paris: Solar, 1976). Some good interview material and background on Leone's early work in the "classical/biblical" epic genre--his own last Days of Pompeii and Collussus of Rhodes--work on Ben Hur, Quo Vadis, Helen of Troy (Leone claims he lobbied hard to get Brigitte Bardot her first role in this--as a slave) and as well his appearance as a priest in Bicycle Thief by de Sica . . .

"You see, in this world there are two kinds of people, my friend. Those with loaded guns, and those who dig. You dig."

--The Good the Bad and the Ugly
you dig . . . ?

dbchirot

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47. **UbuEditor**

Philip Guston's Poem-Pictures Webified

Mon 2 Dec 1996

UbuWeb Visual & Concrete Poetry

<http://www.ubuweb.com/vp>

Announcing the webification of 24 images of Philip Guston's Poem-Pictures from the 1970's, housed in our "Historical" section. Collaborators include: Clark Coolidge, Stanley Kunitz, William Corbett, and Musa McKim. All images load

quickly and are in living color and come from the exhibition of the same name curated by Debra Bricker-Balken.

Also, new this month in the "Contemporary" section: Felix Bernstein (Letters, 1996) , Jake Berry (from "Brambu Drezi"), Alison Knowles (from "Bread & Water), and Komninos Zervos (VR Quicktime Poem).

*We are looking to give papers housing on the subject of Visual, Concrete, & Sound Poetry

Submissions encouraged on all fronts.

Visit frequently as we're always growing.

UbuWeb Visual & Concrete Poetry
<http://www.ubuweb.com/vp>

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48. **tmandel**

Rancho Notorious

Mon 2 Dec 1996

Pat Pritchett reminds me that the Fritz Lang western with Marlene Dietrich is "Rancho Notorious" -- and a wonderful film it is.

Destry Rides Again... I can't remember what this name fits however.

Kali Tal chides me writely for the phrase "film as poetic act" which in her view (I assume gender from the name) threatens the specificity of the poetic. Really, it is the specificity of the filmic act which is under siege in my words, which were obviously just another imperial invasion of film by an ethereal caucasian from rhyme.

The Searchers as a Vietnam war film, however, I don't know. My copy of Leonard Maltin is out of reach (and I can't see through its cover any more) but if memory serves that film was made in the late fifties.

Now. Who has seen Taza, Son of Cochise? Or, for that matter, Sign of the Pagan -- about Rome not the West. (There is a connection. See below). Both by Douglas Sirk, high on my list of the ten greatest directors ever. Introduced to me by the sorely missed Warren Sonbert.

The connection: when Hawks was making the Egyptians (or is that Land of the Pharoahs? -- damn but the force is weak and I can't draw that Maltin volume with a glance) he had William Faulkner doing dialogue and Faulkner complained that he was having a hard time getting a voice going for the

Pharoah. "I can't help you, Bill" Hawks replied "I don't know what a Pharoah sounds like any more than you." "Can I make him sound like a Kentucky Colonel," Faulkner asked, "I know how they talk." "Why not?" returned Hawks -- and that's enough of a connection for me.

Remind me, one of these days, to tell this list about my date with Jessica Lang, and my attempt to pick up Faye Dunaway at a party. Good stories both, tho rather weak in the denouement department.

Tom

Tom Mandel * 2927 Tilden St. NW
Washington DC 20008 * [REDACTED]
vox: [REDACTED] * fax [REDACTED]

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49. **Eliza McGrand- CVA Guest**

Re: Boston reading

Mon 2 Dec 1996

ok, i'll get my teeth together and go. i will. i really will but i don/t dare say anything about meeting becasue i have such an abyssmal record... e

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50. **Michael Boughn**

Coach House lives!

Mon 2 Dec 1996

Having previously announced the demise of Coach House Press, I am now pleased to announce the (re)birth of Coach House Books. CHB is associated with some of the founders of CHP who, in its last years, were no longer associated with it.

According to their newsletter, they'll be publishing two titles a month in two distinct formats: "limited edition, made-to-order printed books, and electronic books, on-line, World Wide". If you want one of the on-line books, you can order it, and they'll print it, bind it and mail it to you.

The first two books they've listed are *_Nicholodeon_* by Darren Wershler-Henry and *_Kiyooka, December-February '87 '88_* with text by Roy Kiyooka and and monochrome drawings by David Bolduc.

For more information you can subscribe to the newsletter by emailing CHB at [REDACTED]. You can also see the books at their web site: <http://www.chbooks.com>.

Mike
[REDACTED]

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51. **Tom Beard**
Re: TOMORROW PEOPLE
Mon 2 Dec 1996

Chris Stroffolino wrote:

- > Ashbery quips, "but I like all of these lines." Explaining that
- > he "would never rule out any way of doing anything, includ-
- > ing poetry," he stresses that poetry is "always result rather
- > than process." (VOICE 12-3-96)
- > Well, aside from Ashbery's last quote--which seems
- > weird and perhaps taken out of context (what is "result"
- > vs. "process" here and how does that not contradict official
- > avant garde pieties, etc.)

Yes, I'm intrigued by the contradictions in the result/process opposition, too.

There is an emphasis (in post-modern/avant garde/querzblatz poetics) upon the process of writing, and a distaste (that 't' word again) for language as a product to be consumed.

On the other hand, this poetics emphasises the reader's role in creating meaning, when the reader can (should?) not have access to the writing process. Is their a contradiction here, or a division between practitioners & theorists (even when contained in the same bod)?

I've tended on the 'result' side when defending my 'tastes' in music. "How can you listen to that," my friends say, "it's all made by computers!". I usually reply that it doesn't matter to me whether the sounds are created by a vituoso musician, programmed by an engineer or conjured from empty space - it all ends up encoded as 0's and 1's anyway, and the listening experience is what makes it human.

Similarly, I don't think one should care whether a bunch of words arose from the heartfelt expression of human emotion, the product of chance operations, a calculated fiction or a error in translation. Poetry arises in the reading process.

(Of course, as a writer and musician, I'm intrigued by composition processes - knowing about certain unusual production techniques, such as the melody played by Casio calculator on Kraftwerk's 'Pocket Calculator', makes a piece more interesting to me, although that knowledge is often extrinsic to the music. We all live with such contradictions.)

Tom Beard.

BTW, I liked that MacProse excerpt, but I'm not sure whether I'd have liked it more or less if I'd thought that a human had written it.

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52. **amato**

Re: more on westerns

Mon 2 Dec 1996

db chirot, i dig!... and i like the noir/western connection... going back the other way, tourneur's *out of the past* feels different than most noir in part b/c he's worked in those western-outdoorsy locales...

let's see---i like the *misfits/tom horn/shootist* trilogy idea, but i think i'd replace *tom horn* with peckinpah's (presumably butchered in the editing room) *ride the high country*, seeing as how it was randolph scott's last film... and an excellent flick, butchered or no...

anyway, as to mcqueen: much as i enjoy him, *tom horn* is just awful, no?--- and it's his next-to-last flick, i think... *the hunter* was his last i believe, and this was bad too... as far as westerns, *nevada smith* with mcqueen was enjoyable, though for me mcqueen = bullit, magnificent seven, thomas crown, 'doc' in *the getaway* (near-western), and esp. 'the cooler king' in *the great escape* whose motorcycle stunts put an indelible imprint on my and my bro's young minds (and hooked us on bikes in general---so we're back to *easy rider* as a western)...

as to taza: i always get the 'broken' flicks messed up, *broken arrow* and *broken lance*... but according to maltin here, *taza, son of cochise* is a sort of sequel to *broken arrow* (*broken lance* is the one where widmark gets the knife in his hand---very violent for its time)... still, much as i like jeff chandler, putting him in native garb doesn't quite work these days, no?... no doubt didn't work well then, if you were a native... but ok, times change (thankfully)...

what about that odd charlie bronson pic, *the white buffalo*?... and speaking of buffalo, one of robert taylor's best performances was in *the last hunt* (richard brooks)...

i'm thinking, before we go off into 'sons of machiste' and the like (i know), that perhaps it's worth noting in passing kubrick's tendency to bump up against the western genre, his final visual in *strangelove* of slim pickens on that a-bomb, riding it a-rodeo style... and joker's john wayne-isms in *full metal jacket* (which kali can speak to much better than me)... though it seems that kubrick has stayed away from the genre literally...

YEE HAW...

but ok, as to sand & sandal epics: they used to show those italian musclemen flicks every sunday morning, and these, along with abbott & costello, kept me home from sunday school (thank the lord)...

hey, and what about richard brooks' *bite the bullet!!--

but really, when you look over these lists of titles and think of the films, it really does strike you how much the western has been focused on men men men men men men men men//

joe

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53. **Pritchett, Pat** ***Re: Rancho Notorious***

Mon 2 Dec 1996

Tom,

Destry also features Ms. Dietrich, as the euphemistically dubbed "Frenchie," singing "See What The Boys In the Backroom Will Have."

Douglas Sirk is one of the all-time greats! (But I love Max Ophuls more...). I've only seen Sirk's classic bourgeois weepies - "All That Heaven Will Allow," and the remake of "Imitation of Life." Can't remember - did he also do "Magnificent Obsession?"

Now, as for Jessica Lange & Cheekbone Dunaway - do tell, do tell!

Patrick

From: tmandel

To: POETICS

Subject: Rancho Notorious

Date: Monday, December 02, 1996 5:56PM

Pat Pritchett reminds me that the Fritz Lang western with Marlene Dietrich is "Rancho Notorious" -- and a wonderful film it is.

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Remind me, one of these days, to tell this list about my date with Jessica Lang, and my attempt to pick up Faye Dunaway at a party. Good stories both, tho rather weak in the denouement department.

Tom

Tom Mandel * 2927 Tilden St. NW
Washington DC 20008 * [REDACTED]
vox: [REDACTED] * fax [REDACTED]

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54. **DS**

jetskis

Mon 2 Dec 1996

Maria,

having just learned that Jet was a longterm Afro-american mag - i can see now how you could have thought it a racial slur - until then i was wracking my brain for eastern-european possibilities. Thankyou for bringing this possible misunderstanding to my attention. I will ensure my violent dislikes are kept in their maritime context in future. I hope i have not caused you offness.

Kind regards

Dan

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55. **Pierre Joris**
Re: Rancho Notorious
Mon 2 Dec 1996

██████ wrote:

>

> Pat Pritchett reminds me that the Fritz Lang western with Marlene

> Dietrich is "Rancho Notorious" -- and a wonderful film it is.

>

> Destry Rides Again... I can't remember what this name fits however.

Because, if memory serves, la Dietrich played in that one too, with, was it, Jimmy Stewart?.

Remind me, one of these days, to tell this list about my date with Jessica Lang, and my attempt to pick up Faye Dunaway at a party. Good stories both, tho rather weak in the denouement department.

Tom

& if you do, I'll tell what happened when Sam Fuller introduced me to Fanny Ardant.

re Johny Guitar -- Francois Truffaut quipped that it was another retelling of Beauty and the Beast with what's his name (the lead actor's name, damn it, escapes me now) in the role of beauty.

Pierre

=====

pierre joris 6 madison place albany ny 12202

tel/fax ████████ email: ████████

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

<http://www.albany.edu/~tm0900/nomad.html>

"A book has to be the axe for the frozen sea inside us.

This I believe."

(Kafka, Letter to Oskar Pollack 27 Jan 1904)

=====

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56. **DS**

Re: Johnny Guitar

Mon 2 Dec 1996

Dislike of John Wayne is made rather easy with the benefit hindsight: 'Green Berets' the fact that he named his son after his 'Indian hating' character in the searchers & John Ford's confessions that he hid the searchers script from wayne because he thought wayne would not have coped with its leftist politics. His all-round jingoism made him a pretty unpopular figure at a time of strong anti-war protest & revisionist history. However he is an important figure for both film & cultural studies - not just as a reflection of his and his characters politics - but the roles he played in a multitude of films many of which (green berets - excluded) use his persona to address complex issues that using a less strong character/personality would not have adressed.

The love/hate thing ties in quite nicely here, his Ethan was a man who 'hated indians' obviously this is a reflection on him rather than a reflection on 'the indians' & is a feature by which we judge him - and by which we know where we stand. It is a locator for his character. (In the green berets he hates another kind of indian).

Any judgements of Wayne (hate/love - violent (or passive) dislike) have to be tempered by a certain ambivalence: the usefulness of his character in 19th & 20th century american attitudes makes it difficult to write-off many of the films he starred in.

Dan

Ron -- like the good/bad writing issue, not liking John Wayne is a measure essentially of inattention to the work itself. Watch The Searchers, and tell me you are not seeing an incredible performance artist at work. Subtlety, not grossness, is the measure of his work -- on the other hand yes he did some bad work late (and early) in life. Rooster Cogburn kind of stuff. And his directorial skills (viz. The Alamo and his Vietnam film whose name I forget) were right up there with his political thinking.

My mom, btw, had a date with John Wayne (why do I always descend to these personal stories?).

Tom

Tom Mandel * 2927 Tilden St. NW
Washington DC 20008 * [REDACTED]
vox: [REDACTED] * fax [REDACTED]

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57. **wkl888**

More MLA Readings

Mon 2 Dec 1996

In addition to the MLA readings mentioned in Mark Wallace's post earlier today, I wanted to add that Kimiko Hahn, myself, and Heinz Insu Fenkl will be reading on Sunday, December 29, 5:15-6:30, as session 530 (Holmes Room, Sheraton Washington). Although the session is blandly titled "Three Asian American Writers: A Reading" (we barely got the proposal and our membership fees in!), I promise you this will be very different from the type of mainstream multiculturalist Asian American writing (Garrett Hongo, Amy Tan, etc.) usually offered or discussed at the MLA. My partner Juliana Chang will also be speaking on "Jessica Hagedorn's Poetics of Danger and Desire" in session 587 (Sunday, 9-10:15 pm, Holmes Room, Sheraton Washington). Kimiko's 4 collections include, most notably, *Earshot* and *Unbearable Heart* and her work has appeared in numerous anthologies. She won the Theodore Roethke Award last year and an American Book Award this year. I will be reading selections from the vast anthology *Premonitions: An Anthology of New Asian North American Poetry* (I will soon be posting a Poetics-list discount offer for this book), and Heinz, who has written everything from HBO animation scripts to ribofunk sci-fi novels (wetware-based post-cyberpunk writing) will be reading from his new autobiographical novel (and first with a large corporate publisher), *Memories of My Ghost Brother* (Dutton, just released), based on his growing up around a U.S. Army base in South Korea that served as support for the American forces in Vietnam. John Yau may also read, depending on whether he can make it down to DC (John's new collection of prose and poetry, *Forbidden Entries*, has just been published by Black Sparrow, and his book on Jasper Johns, *The United States of Jasper Johns* (Abrams), is due out in a few weeks.)

Would love to meet any Poetics list members after the reading.

Walter K. Lew
c/o Prof. J. Chang
English Dept.
Boston College
Chestnut Hill, MA 02167

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58. **tmandel**

Re: Rancho Notorious

Mon 2 Dec 1996

Remind me...

Jessica Lang, and ...Faye Dunaway

*& if you do, I'll tell what happened when Sam Fuller introduced me to
Fanny Ardant.*

tempting, Pierre. ...I'm going to think about it.

>

>re Johny Guitar .. with what's his name (the lead

>actor's name, damn it, escapes me now)

It was Sterling Hayden I believe.

tom

Tom Mandel * 2927 Tilden St. NW
Washington DC 20008 * [REDACTED]
vox: [REDACTED] * fax [REDACTED]

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59. **maria damon**

Re: jetskis

Mon 2 Dec 1996

hey listen. i was kidding around. goofing around. horsing around. pulling
your leg. i didn't think it was really an ethnic slur. okay? --your pal, maria d

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

> Maria,

>

> having just learned that Jet was a longterm Afro-american mag - i can see
> now how you could have thought it a racial slur - until then i was wracking
> my brain for eastern-european possibilities. Thankyou for bringing this
> possible misunderstanding to my attention. I will ensure my violent dislikes
> are kept in their maritime context in future. I hope i have not caused you
> offness.

>

> Kind regards

>

> Dan

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60. **wystan**

Re: taste, judgment, etc...

Mon 2 Dec 1996

Date: Sun, 1 Dec 1996 21:12:12 MST
Reply-to: UB Poetics discussion group
<[REDACTED]>
From: Kali Tal <[REDACTED]>
Subject: Re: taste, judgment, etc...
To: [REDACTED]

Kali writes in response:

>

>Taste is fine, as far as it goes. It's sort of like opinions.

>Everybody's

>got opinions, but not everyone's opinions are equally supportable. You

>can

>stop with "I like it" or "I hate it," just as you can say, "Well,

>that's my

>opinion." But to leave it at that is to refuse to interrogate the

>cultural

>structures which contain and shape your tastes, and to refuse to hold

>yourself to rigorous standards of analysis and argument. Wystan, *your*

>tastes may be indefensible. Mine are not.

>

Well, yes and no. Taste is more complex than opinion. And I think it supports judgements about art works--whether they are westerns, video installations, tevaevae, or texts by Jackson MacLow--rather more effectively than 'rigorous standards of analysis and argument.' Given a choice between 'holding myself'--in an iron like grip--to such standards and interrogating myself--'confess, confess, collaborator, pig, we know there are dark structures shaping your tastes, we want NAMES!'--and exercising my taste, i know what I prefer to be doing.

The problem we have with 'taste' is that it is judgment supported by class, upper middle usually. Its what snobs have. Its effete. 'Good' taste is like good manners, and we want to hit on it with our 'bad' taste and tear down the class structure. It is we think the aesthetics of modernists (hiss, boo) and formalists too (boo, hiss) and so it has a bad name. My question was: might we steal it back?

For you don't come out of a movie itching to interrogate the structures which shaped your response, you HAVE a response. When I like something a lot, its

happens fast and that is neither a sign I'm a dumb shit who makes knee jerk reactions or that I have applied rigorous standards of analysis and argument to what I have read. Equally, as a practitioner I cannot afford to consider that all modes of practice, all poetics, have an equal claim on me; on the contrary. There are practices out there, , whose claims I have dismissed, there are practices and tastes for them which would not only deny the claims of my own but which threaten its existence. Taste observes an economy in which value judgements play a vital part, saving time and energy for reading what has to be read and writing what has to be written.

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61. **wystan**

Re: taste, judgment, etc...

Mon 2 Dec 1996

>Date: Sun, 1 Dec 1996 21:12:12 MST
>Reply-to: UB Poetics discussion group
><[REDACTED]>
>From: Kali Tal <[REDACTED]>
>Subject: Re: taste, judgment, etc...
>To: [REDACTED]
>

Oops. That reply to Kali, if nobody guessed, was from me,
Wystan

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62. **wystan**

Re: taste, judgment, etc...

Mon 2 Dec 1996

*Date: Mon, 2 Dec 1996 08:00:58 -0500
Reply-to: UB Poetics discussion group
<[REDACTED]>
From: Michael Boughn <[REDACTED]>
Subject: Re: taste, judgment, etc...
To: [REDACTED]*

Yes, thank you, Michael, that is an example of what I meant. And my regards to the baby.

Wystan.

>

>> [T]aste judgements are about not explaining yourself. There are
>> contexts in which this is the better (the 'cooler') option. Taste is

>> more about being than knowing, its more performative. A person who
>> thinks all sorts of thing are good of their kind, and if they're not
>> good at least they're interesting in a cultural studies kinda way,
>runs
>> the risk of sounding dumb, disengaged, or patronizing depending on
>the
>> circumstances... Whereas the person with violent narrow tastes means
>> business.
>> Wystan
>
>Sometimes this distinction signals the difference between the
>academic "sovereign" of the material and the person finding a way
>through to their own art. Is that what you mean by "meaning business",
>Wystan? Reading Olson is like that. He read not to "master" material
>or to "explain" to others, but to hew his own path, and you either
>stay on for the ride or not. That's why all the academics (at Buffalo,
>etc.--though not Al Cook) tend to get so upset when confronted with
>Olson's "scholarship".
>
>Ooops, gotta run, the baby just woke up.
>
>Mike
> [REDACTED]
>

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63. **Matt Kirschenbaum**
dialectics of coolness (fwd)

Mon 2 Dec 1996

Not strictly poetics, but I think there's lots of meat here; it also opens questions similar to those I've tried to raise on the interface of poetry/poetics and new media/consumer/aesthetics.

--Matt

[Forwarded with the author's permission.]

=

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=====

Date: Mon, 2 Dec 1996 08:47:38 -0500

From: [REDACTED] (Gary Chapman)

Subject: L.A. Times column, 12/2/96

The following is my column which appears in The Los Angeles Times today, December 2, 1996. This should appear in other newspapers around the country in coming weeks.

Please feel free to pass this around, but please retain the copyright notice.

-- Gary

Gary Chapman
Director
The 21st Century Project
LBJ School of Public Affairs
Drawer Y
University Station
University of Texas
Austin, TX 78713

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] (fax)

[REDACTED]

<http://www.utexas.edu/lbj/21cp>

INNOVATION

What Is Cool? Certainly Not a Campaign for It

Trends: Although many companies would like to appear 'with it,' the true cutting edge emanates from the streets.

By Gary Chapman

Copyright 1996, The Los Angeles Times

Microsoft Corporation has launched a new advertising and public relations campaign, and the mission, according to some people who work at the company's ad agency, Wieden & Kennedy, is a seemingly impossible one: to make Microsoft cool.

"Cool" is the holy grail of the cyber-elite. It's the only word that conveys success, that draws crowds in virtual space and that indicates a company "gets it," in the cultural vernacular of the times. Cool is

completely binary -- a company or a Web site is either cool or it's dead, cold. In cyberspace, "cool" and "hot" are the same thing.

What is cool? Where does it come from?

It comes from the streets. And more often than not, it comes from the streets of the working poor, especially from the vibrant culture of poor African American and Latino kids. It comes from the opposite pole of our society than the one Microsoft Chairman Bill Gates and his peers inhabit. Increasingly, immense multinational corporations are dependent, for their marketing, on the culture of young people who are the losers in the Information Age.

At the recent Conference on Technology, Jobs and Community held at Cal State L.A., I spent some time talking with some young hip-hop artists, black, white and Latino. Carlos "MARE 139" Rodriguez, a former graffiti artist who grew up in the South Bronx, put it rather succinctly: "The 'soul' of this country has always been rooted in poverty."

This is an old phenomenon. European bourgeois discovered the vitality of urban bohemian culture in the late 19th century, resulting in Puccini's great opera, "La Boheme." Harlem's renaissance in the 1920s was due to wealthy white patrons spending their time and money in black nightclubs. All the forms of that global cultural juggernaut, rock 'n' roll, were born in black juke houses in the South or in the ghettos of factory cities in the North.

The predominant cultural expression of the inner city for the last 15 years, hip-hop, has been a brilliant marriage of street slang and technology. Hip-hop got its start in the 1970s when street DJs started manipulating records on turntables to produce rhythms and surprising collages of sounds and words.

Hip-hop musicians have absorbed computers and turned them into bold music machines with sampling, synthesized bass and dense layers of sound and expression. Hip-hop swept the suburban world of white youth as much as it did the mean streets of the ghetto.

Just as corporations swallowed up the music of the '60s to sell products to baby boomers, companies have sanitized hip-hop, punk and surfer culture to appeal to the young computer generation. Coca-Cola, perhaps the ultimate brand-name standard, has a home page (<http://www.cocacola.com>) that features text of surfer "valley talk" in a jagged punk font. One page describes "a guy with a full-body tattoo covered with links" -- cyberpunk meets the soft drink business.

Brett Webb runs a Web site called Art Crimes (<http://www.graffiti.org>), an international database of graffiti art. Webb says he got an offer from Levi

Strauss to buy the entire site.

It's long been an axiom of cool that whenever something cool shows up in commercial use it's no longer cool.

What is obvious is that the great factories of style and coolness that are constantly churning out ideas in places like East L.A., Watts, Harlem, the South Bronx and elsewhere are always "pushing the envelope" of what mainstream white society will accept. When someone like Dennis Rodman starts showing up in TV commercials and People magazine, it's time to move on to something new.

But the deepest irony is that the global information economy is pushing the working poor of all races to the wall. In previous eras, it was possible to have a vital working-class culture that survived on factory and service wages. That's no longer true. Despite the recent boost in the minimum wage, most of the working poor, tens of millions of people, are barely making ends meet.

The fact that billionaires and millionaires are stealing or faking the culture and imagery of the ghetto is not lost on the people who live there. What was once a mostly happy and carefree hip-hop culture has already turned into something angry and dangerous -- gangsta rap, for example -- and now that's devolving into something even angrier and more confrontational.

There are edgy fault lines between the artists of the ghetto and high-tech imitators of cool that could eventually register on the Richter scale. Advertising firms may want to make their clients cool, but they're playing with fire.

Gary Chapman Is Director of the 21st Century Project at the University of Texas at Austin. He can be reached at [REDACTED].

=====
===== Matthew G. Kirschenbaum University
of Virginia [REDACTED] Department of English
<http://faraday.clas.virginia.edu/~mgk3k/> Electronic Text Center

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64. **Kali Tal**

Re: taste, judgment, etc...

Mon 2 Dec 1996

wystan writes:

Well, yes and no. Taste is more complex than opinion. And I think it supports judgements about art works--whether they are westerns, video installations, tevaevae, or texts by Jackson MacLow--rather more effectively than 'rigorous standards of analysis and argument.' Given a choice between 'holding myself--in an iron like grip--to such standards and interrogating myself--'confess, confess, collaborator, pig, we know there are dark structures shaping your tastes, we want NAMES!'--and exercising my taste, i know what I prefer to be doing.

Why is taste "more complex than opinion"? As far as I can see, this is just something you're saying. Where's the there? *Why* is "taste" more effective than "rigorous standards of analysis and argument"?

That's a nice rhetorical device you're using, insisting that my prose is as thuggish as your own, but to pull it off you need to quote me out of context. I suggest that refusing to interrogate the *cultural structures* which contain and shape your taste is a problem; *not* that you should interrogate yourself (take yourself hostage, force yourself to talk). At which point you are left with only the term "rigorous" (since "hold" could as easily be gentle as rough) to point to, and "rigor," while it lends itself to some amusing images, is hardly on the level of "violence."

| *My question was: might we steal it back?*

I don't *think* so. I mean, there would have to be a back to steal it from, wouldn't there? Seems to me that your notion of taste is a wee bit... nostalgic. And nostalgia, as we all know, is a longing for an age which never existed.

| *For you don't come out of a movie itching to interrogate the structures which shaped your response, you HAVE a response.*

Part of my experience of the movie is the interrogation of those structures; the interrogation and the response are not separable. I, too, know what I like, almost immediately. The difference seems to be that I know *why* I like it, and I think it is important to know why I like it. I also know when I *don't* like something. If I know *why* I don't like something, I'm satisfied. It's when I don't like something and I *don't* know why that the more lengthy interrogation begins. What I hear you saying is that "taste is." Again, I don't *think* so. Taste is a product of what we're raised to accept as "good" (or "bad" if you're feeling rebellious).

| *When I like something a lot, it happens fast and that is neither a sign I'm a dumb shit who*

makes knee jerk reactions or that I have applied rigorous standards of analysis and argument to what I have read.

Ummm, so what is it you **are** doing when you like something a lot?

Equally, as a practitioner I cannot afford to consider that all modes of practice, all poetics, have an equal claim on me; on the contrary. There are practices out there, , whose claims I have dismissed, there are practices and tastes for them which would not only deny the claims of my own but which threaten its existence. Taste observes an economy in which value judgements play a vital part, saving time and energy for reading what has to be read and writing what has to be written.

The Lester Thurow of poetics--a zero-sum aesthetic economy. Or Social Darwinism--survival of the most fit aesthetic. A poet's gotta do what a poet's gotta do... not to mention he's gotta preserve his vital textual fluids, which could be sapped--sapped I tell you!--by the weaker aesthetes. Who said that all poetics have an equal claim on you? Not me; that's a straw person. All I've said is that there are different aesthetics, different modes of practice, and that it's useful to take the time to understand them, and to judge a work in the context in which it was created. It always amazes me how much this claim annoys some people. Right/wrong good/bad like it/don't like it... go right ahead and choose your dichotomy. Take two, they're small. One size fits all. Me, I'm gonna listen to Trane and Ice T, Callas and Cab Calloway, Pauline Oliveras and Sonny Terry, Ian Dury, Aster Awake, **and** Laurie Anderson. No problem. I'm flexible. And I know what I like.

Kali

Kali Tal

Sixties Project & Viet Nam Generation, Inc.

PO Box 13746, Tucson, AZ 85732-3746



Sixties Project: <http://jefferson.village.virginia.edu/sixties/>

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65. **Matt Kirschenbaum**

Re: TOMORROW PEOPLE

Tue 3 Dec 1996

*Yes, I'm intrigued by the contradictions in the result/process opposition, too.
There is an emphasis (in post-modern/avant garde/querzblatz poetics) upon the
process of writing, and a distaste (that 't' word again) for language as a product*

to be consumed.

On the other hand, this poetics emphasises the reader's role in creating meaning, when the reader can (should?) not have access to the writing process. Is their a contradiction here, or a division between practitioners & theorists (even when contained in the same bod)?

[snip]

Tom Beard.

Take a look at Darick Chamberlain's "mock machine mock epic" *_Cigarette Boy_*, which is not a machine generated text but is designed to appear so; processes are on display, codes are revealed. It's interesting work and deserves to be better known.

There's an online version at <http://www.qinet.com/zaius/Cig1.htm> but it was originally a print text; I'm waiting on a copy from Darick and if others are interested will post more when it arrives.

--Matt

=====
===== Matthew G. Kirschenbaum University
of Virginia Department of English
<http://faraday.clas.virginia.edu/~mgk3k/> Electronic Text Center

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66. **tmandel**

the Duke

Tue 3 Dec 1996

Dan Salmon refers to "dislike of John Wayne" which was pretty general and makes political sense given his Green Berets (truly a terrible movie) and "his all-round jingoism."

Dan then goes on to concede that he is "an important figure for both film and cultural studies - not just as a reflection of his and his characters politics - but the roles he played in a multitude of films ... use his persona to address complex issues that using a less strong character/personality would not have addressed."

That's an acute distinction between Wayne as a carrier of cultural significance (writing bad or good, to borrow from another thread) and the significance of his ability to carry these meanings. He was an extraordinary artist. I don't admire his politics, but they should not be confounded with someone like Ronald

Reagan either. That is, they were not a stage for carrying anything out beyond forcing out a couple of really poor films.

In particular, Dan cites his naming a son Ethan -- the name of the Indian-hating character Wayne played in *The Searchers*. Surely this confounds the role and the real a little too directly. Or, rather, assumes that the actor did confound them.

Yet, I think perhaps Ford's 'leftism' may be as good a model as any for Wayne's 'rightism.' Unless and until seen through the work, it really didn't amount to much. Seen through the work, it is mostly interesting for its relation to that work. In that relation, it is not an unconscious fact but it is one which is being played in and against the roles with great power and shape.

Tom

```
*****
      Tom Mandel * 2927 Tilden St. NW
Washington DC 20008 * [REDACTED]
      vox: [REDACTED] * fax [REDACTED]
*****
```

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67. **George Bowering**
Re: M/M & westerns, deah
Tue 3 Dec 1996

| *Lash LaRue (who just died two or so
| months ago)*

Ron. Do you remember that when one studio haD Lash LaRue (sounds like a stripper, doesnt it?), the other studio had Whip Wilson?

>

>One of my favorite elements to those shows was how Roy & Dale would
>shift time continuums from show to show. Sometimes they were back in
>the 1880s in the "old west," other shows they had Pat Brady & his jeep
>along for the ride. It may have been my earliest exposure to a
>Brechtian device (unless one considers watching Pinky Lee's heart
>attack on the air).

>

>Ron Silliman

Yeah, but didnt Bugs Bunny do that kind of thing?

George Bowering.

2499 West 37th Ave.,

Vancouver, B.C.,
Canada V6M 1P4

fax: [REDACTED]
e-mail: [REDACTED]

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68. **George Bowering**
Re: "The Man Who Shot the Other Man"

Tue 3 Dec 1996

*When I moved West, at age 36, I had the shock of visiting the backlots
where many Westerns were filmed -- finding that those disparate locales
were all the same locale --*

If you ever visit Old Tucson, the movie town west of Tucson, you then recognize it's little conical hill in a lot of old westerns. I hear that Old Tucson burnt down last year but that it is being rebuilt. You can also go there and see guys having (I think) mock gunfights, falling off roofs, etc. For a Canadian, very exciting, all those guns and all.

George Bowering.

2499 West 37th Ave.,
Vancouver, B.C.,
Canada V6M 1P4

fax: [REDACTED]
e-mail: [REDACTED]

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69. **George Bowering**
Re: western style danish please

Tue 3 Dec 1996

*you can pretty much figure out what it means. in danish, the word for blue
jeans translates as "cowboy pants." even now, my cousins think most americans
die by gunshot and own guns. they've turned down professional opportunities cuz
they think the states is too violent a place to move to with their kids.*

Hey Maria, some of my relatives used to be USAmericans, and I still feel that way. Whenever I am in the US I always feel as if I could get shot any time. I mean, when US tourists cross into Canada they get bewildered and angry when told they have to leave their ordinance at the border. How will we protect ourselves, they demand to know.

George Bowering.

2499 West 37th Ave.,
Vancouver, B.C.,
Canada V6M 1P4

fax: [REDACTED]

e-mail: [REDACTED]

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70. **George Bowering**

Re: Marlatt

Tue 3 Dec 1996

Who is the publisher of Daphne's new book? Is it widely available?

charles alexander

It was going to be published this Fall by Coach House. When CHP failed, it was picked up fast by House of Anansi, and it is gorgeous.

It's called *_Taken_*, and is kind of a prequel to *_Ana Historic_*.

Distributed in the US by

General Distribution Services, Inc.,
85 River Rock Drive, Suite 202,
Buffalo, N.Y.
14207

George Bowering.

2499 West 37th Ave.,
Vancouver, B.C.,
Canada V6M 1P4

fax: [REDACTED]

e-mail: [REDACTED]

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71. **George Bowering**

Re: M/M & westerns, deah

Tue 3 Dec 1996

i think M/M is Marilyn Munroe...

e

I thought it was Michael McLoor

George Bowering.

2499 West 37th Ave.,
Vancouver, B.C.,
Canada V6M 1P4

fax: [REDACTED]

e-mail: [REDACTED]

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72. **George Bowering**
Re: taste, judgment, etc...

Tue 3 Dec 1996

| *what are jetskis?*

People who work for LOT

George Bowering.

2499 West 37th Ave.,
Vancouver, B.C.,
Canada V6M 1P4

fax: [REDACTED]

e-mail: [REDACTED]

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73. **George Bowering**
Re: M/M & westerns, deah

Tue 3 Dec 1996

Peckinpah, Schmeckinpaw. Ford? Pooh!

My favourite western movie director has always been Budd Boettiger or
however the hell you spell his name.

George Bowering.

2499 West 37th Ave.,
Vancouver, B.C.,
Canada V6M 1P4

fax: [REDACTED]

e-mail: [REDACTED]

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74. **Patrick Foley**

Re: taste, judgment, etc...

Tue 3 Dec 1996

Kali,

In your latest reply to Wystan, you write:

*I suggest that refusing to interrogate the *cultural structures* which contain and shape your taste is a problem [...]*

Why? A problem for whom, or for what?

And further:

*Part of my experience of the movie is the interrogation of those structures; the interrogation and the response are not separable. I, too, know what I like, almost immediately. The difference seems to be that I know *why* I like it, and I think it is important to know why I like it. I also know when I *don't* like something. If I know *why* I don't like something, I'm satisfied. It's when I don't like something and I *don't* know why that the more lengthy interrogation begins. What I hear you saying is that "taste is." Again, I don't *think* so. Taste is a product of what we're raised to accept as "good" (or "bad" if you're feeling rebellious).*

Mike Boughn gave Olson as an example; no doubt Wystan had in mind the sort of tastes Pound expressed in his programmatic prose, "violent narrow tastes" maybe, maybe not. Do either of these idiosyncratic aesthetics strike you as products of what Olson or Pound were raised to accept as good? Or even as simple rebellions against same?

When you write

All I've said is that there are different aesthetics, different modes of practice, and that it's useful to take the time to understand them, and to judge a work in the context in which it was created.

some of this should go without saying, of course, but a lot will depend on what kind of spin "context" is given. Is it determinative? Sentences like "Taste is a product of what we're raised to accept ..." make me a little suspicious that context is being treated as if it were something it isn't. A lot of people these days have read enough Derrida to be real interested in a work's context, but not enough to know how problematic the whole idea is and how little it explains. Does Olson's upbringing explain his "taste"? Does Wystan's?

I think we have a serious problem here. I've been thinking on & off for days about what Maria Damon says, that she's interested in the "cultural work" (just a quote, not a scare-quote) done by a work. That made me a little nervous, because I would hate to see a poem treated more as a source in a project for writing the history of the present than as, well, a poem. You can do that; you

can read Dickens in a history class too, and that's one way to approach a work, mining it for information -- but I'd hate to see that confused with something else (which goes nameless here since I can't think how to characterize it).

But I'm sure I can live with Maria's idea, construed any number of ways. Olson damn sure thought he was doing cultural work, Pound too. There's a number of ways to look at this. What I'm not sure I can accept is the version you present here, Kali, the impersonal machinery of history molding our tastes -- and probably our art too? All we can do is interrogate the structures -- within which we are constrained? Prisoners mapping the panopticon?

That's a bit over-the-top perhaps. But of all things, art is always going to have an irreducible residuum of individuality that should give the lie to this sort of simplification. Aren't you really hypostatizing these cultural structures? What happens when you get down to cases? Is it writer against cultural structure or writer against editor? (Maria? Which was it?) I know what Foucault said -- "People know what they do, most people even know why they do what they do, but what they don't know is what what they do does." But it is still the individual actor, and treating the aggregate patterns of people's behaviours as real things in themselves will always miss the trees for the forest. It's like a gambler's fallacy -- you think the odds must be in your favour after rolling the dice for three days straight, when the odds for the individual throw are the same every time, no matter what probability says. Confusion of levels.

Which brings me back to the question at the top: who cares what Wystan (ours or history's) thinks? or Olson? or Pound? As Mike said, and as Wystan has indicated, the thinking is tied up with finding a way to create something -- these guys aren't legislating anything. They're not laying down any laws for society. You seem to see them all, Kali, as would-be Secretaries of the Interior, deciding who gets what forests where, with what trees, and what use to be made of them, etc. But they're not manipulating cultural structures per se -- nobody can, that's the whole point. (The emergence of confinement as the principal form of punishment just happened -- nobody did it, says Michel.) Pound & Olson & Wystan & Mike & you & I participate in whatever will one day turn out to have happened. Enough of that -- the point is thinking only in terms of the aggregates, the cultural structures, has this sort of twin danger of treating individuals as powerless (the usual complaint against Foucault) or as somehow all-powerful, as if Wystan's taste and how he got it was a problem, a danger. And that's a confusion of levels, trees and forests, gamblers and odds.

Sorry if in chopping up your post I have misrepresented you -- or if I've done so in some other fashion. I've put some words in your mouth, certainly, but only to hash this out a little. Feel free to restore whatever subtlety I have shorn away from your position.

Pat

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75. **DS**

Re: jetskis

Tue 3 Dec 1996

I wasn't sure, but hoped the tone of my 'apology' was suitably pompous to allow a modicum of humour. I wasn't really taking it seriously anyway. Damn funny though, thanks for keeping me amused as i log 15 hours of crowded bloody house video footage.

dan

At 09:17 PM 12/2/96 -0600, you wrote:

>hey listen. i was kidding around. goofing around. horsing around. pulling
>your leg. i didn't think it was really an ethnic slur. okay? --your pal,
maria
>d
>
>I

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76. **DS**

Re: taste, judgment, etc...

Tue 3 Dec 1996

what is LOT?

At 12:45 AM 12/3/96 -0800, you wrote:

>>what are jetskis?
>
>People who work for LOT
>
>
>
>
>
>George Bowering.
>
>2499 West 37th Ave.,
>Vancouver, B.C.,
>Canada V6M 1P4
>
>fax: [REDACTED]

>e-mail: [REDACTED]

>

>

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77. **Carnography**

Val Demar's Pear - New Chapbook Available

Tue 3 Dec 1996

Listserv people:

I wanted you to know that my chapbook, which is dirt-cheap, and exquisitely designed by Brian Clark, is available from the following sources:

The Publisher:

Brian Clark
Permeable Press

[REDACTED]

<http://www.armory.com/~jay/permeable.html>
2336 Market St #14 * San Francisco CA 94114

The Author:

[REDACTED]

<http://www.interport.net/~scrypt>
P.O. Box 2214
New York, NY 10009

(I have to pay P+H, so it's cheaper to get the book from Brian.)

Val Demar's Pear, by Rob Hardin
Price: 3.00. ISBN 1-882633-22-9

The prose is unapologetically ornate. The cover features an etching by David Ouimet of Firewater and Jim Fetus.

Inside, there is a color-printed chart of Poe's rooms from "Masque of the Red Death interpreted as pitches, and written music showing the pitch classes of the rooms (as interpreted by Pythagoras and by the author).

All the best,

Rob Hardin

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

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78. **Carnography**

The Pataphysical Pranks of Jacques Servin

Tue 3 Dec 1996

I've always enjoyed Jacques Servin's delicate, elegant word play. Do any of the rest of you know his writing?

In addition to being a witty stylist, Jacques is also an expert C ++ programmer. Last month, Jacques made CD-ROM history by programming homoerotic acts into SIMCOPTER, a mass-market game that shipped before the company (which also makes SIMCITY) managed to notice. *_Wired_* and a few other mags will be doing articles on this. If you're going to quit your job, J. told me, you might as well mutate society in the process.

Jacques Servin's URL (where you can read excerpts from his collection, *_Aviary Slag_* [Fiction Collective]):

<http://www.quake.net:80/~jacq/>

All the best,

Rob Hardin

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

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79. **Michael Boughn**

Costner's Earp

Tue 3 Dec 1996

I just wanted quickly to disagree with Kevin over Costner's Earp, which I thought much more interesting than Tombstone, precisely because of the overload of details which added to it's epic qualities. Maybe that's the difference--Tomstone went for the "mythic" (archetypal narrative) whereas Wyatt Earp went for the "epic" (if you think the details in the movie were bad, I guess you don't much care for the catalog of ships in the Iliad).

I don't know of any other treatment of the story that so emphasizes the Earp's as businessmen for whom the policing was just a way to bring in some cash till their family enterprises got going. My Darling Clementine, for all it's visual beauty, was laughable in terms of it's treatment of the narrative details of the legend.

Anyway, Dennis Quaid was much better as Doc Holliday than Val Kimer.

Mike



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80. **John Cayley**

Ink Bamboo - New Publication

Tue 3 Dec 1996

*** Apologies for cross-posting and self-promotion ***

Take a break from (uncompromising) linguistic innovation and indulge in a little 'engaged orientalism'.

Available now:

Ink Bamboo (Mozhu)

poems, translations, adaptations (from Chinese)

by John Cayley

London: Agenda and Bellew, Dec. 1996

107 pp. 22x14 cm, paperback, ISBN 0 902400 57 6

Publisher's price: British Pounds 8.95.

Order it from me direct and you can have it for British Pounds 6.00 (or US Dollars 10.00).

If you order from outside the United Kingdom, please add British Pound 2.00 (or US Dollars 3.00) to cover postage.

(Book swaps may also be negotiable, by email.)

For convenience, please make cheques (checks) out to 'Wellsweep' (I can take US Dollar checks.) and send them to:

Wellsweep, 1 Grove End House, 150 Highgate Road, London NW5 1PD, UK

The book's inscriptions (are supposed to be indicative):

Yizhong always appreciates my ink sketches of bamboo. But I paint bamboo simply for the love of it, no other reason. Why should I trouble myself with whether what I do is true to the form of a real plant ... Often I've daubed and smeared for a time, and when someone sees the results they take it for hemp or rushes. If I can't convince myself that it's bamboo I've painted, how am I going to convince anyone else? I just don't know what it is that Yizhong sees.

- Ni Zan (1301-74)

... so I broke into the Palace
with a sponge and a rusty spanner.

- Stephen Morrissey

Zhuangzi and Hui Shi were strolling along a bridge over the Hao River.

'See how happy and carefree the fish are,' said Zhuangzi, 'as they swim about.'

'You're not a fish. How do you know that they're happy?'

'You're not me. How do you know that I don't.'

'OK, I don't. And if you concede that you're not a fish, then you'll admit that you have no idea about their happiness.'

'Wait a minute. When you asked me how I knew, you already implied that, somehow, I did know,' said Zhuangzi. 'I know what I know from above the Hao.'

- Translated and construed from
Zhuangzi, 17 ('The Autumn Floods').

[Translator's note: When he recalled this conversation later in life, Zhuangzi was unable to tell whether the pleasure it gave him arose from his memory of the fishes' happiness or from the free and easy pleasure he always felt when walking and talking with his more language-orientated companions.]

And a sample adaptation (from about p. 30), after Wang Wei:

Am I alone?

I seem to hear your voice ...

- or echo?

I point out, as if to you,

the ancient light

which makes the mosses glow.

So we return

each evening

to this hillside

through the deep wood.

- - - - - >

John Cayley Wellsweep Press [in Chinese HZ: ~{?-U\02~} ~{=[i@3v0flg~}]

^ innovative literary translation from Chinese ^

1 Grove End House 150 Highgate Road London NW5 1PD UK

Tel & Fax: 0 [REDACTED] Email: [REDACTED]

<http://www.demon.co.uk/eastfield/>

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81. **Robert Archambeau**

Re: after this

Tue 3 Dec 1996

The usual translation of Adorno's line is "No poetry after Auschwitz". You might also be interested to know about Jerome Rothenberg's response to Adorno: "_Only_ poetry after Auschwitz".

Robert Archambeau

Dept of English
Lake Forest College

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82. **tmandel**
The Beguiled
Tue 3 Dec 1996

I also recommend The Black Tower among Siegel's late films (or is it the Black Windmill -- it's almost never on the movie channels and I hadn't thought of it in years)

Also Telefon -- if I'd taken the job with Siegel, I believe this would have been the first film I'd have worked on.

The Beguiled is scarily delightful. Other than to say it's a Civil War film, I think it'd be best not to compromise the experience with pre-description.

Tom

...and then there's the treatment I sent Siegel a month or so later... doubtful I could lay my hands on it, however. Vague recollection of it being like Andre Schwarz-bart meets Tom Tryon -- final scene taking place in a burning house in Jerusalem.

Tom Mandel * 2927 Tilden St. NW
Washington DC 20008 * [REDACTED]
vox: [REDACTED] * fax [REDACTED]

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83. **tmandel**
Absence Sensorium
Tue 3 Dec 1996

Rachel's post reminds me to announce that I have just received first copies of...

Absence Sensorium

by

Tom Mandel & Daniel Davidson

it is now available from Potes & Poets Press and also from SPD. Probably Rod will extend his usual list-deal from Bridge Street Books.

In the same breath, don't forget:

Prospect of Release
by Tom Mandel

from Chax Press. Order direct from the press at P.O. Box 848, Tucson AZ
85701-0848 or the other sources listed above.

Tom

Tom Mandel * 2927 Tilden St. NW
Washington DC 20008 * [REDACTED]
vox: [REDACTED] * fax [REDACTED]

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84. **maria damon**

Re: dialectics of coolness (fwd)

Tue 3 Dec 1996

matt thanks for the gary chapman post, which was certainly true but not especially original nor profound analytically; the Birmingham school folks like Paul Willis, Stuart Hall, Angela McRobbie et al have been saying this for over twenty years. And WEB Du Bois before them, etc. i've been wrestling with some of these issues in the poetry realm, hence my favorite trope the dark end of the street and its many suggestive layerings. i did back channel "the poem" that had been the subject of such a crisis to one person last week and he responded by saying, "it's amazing that the cultural critics haven't gotten hold of this kind of material." it was very, excuse the jargon, validating (thank you victor) but also ironic, because i *am* one of those cultural critics and i *have* gotten hold of this material and don't wanna let go, it's my lifeblood, and i have a great deal of trouble getting people to take seriously what i do. cultural studies people think poetry is elitist (cuz it was used on them as an instrument of torture in elementary school?) and poetry people think cultural studies is cold opportunistic sociology whose sole function is to "reduce" the poem to secondary evidence for some sociological banality. these sound like caricatures, but i encounter these roadblocks constantly in responses to manuscripts, talks, paper proposals etc. by the way things have worked out pretty well w/ that article. the poem and my analysis of it, with an explanatory note, will appear as a footnote. so, forward ever backward never etc. --maria d

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85. **Bil Brown**

Re: A Poem to Share;

Tue 3 Dec 1996

Umm... Kiss me Lynda.

Bil Brown

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86. **Field of Roses**

Re: Coach House lives!

Tue 3 Dec 1996

*For more information you can subscribe to the newsletter by emailing
CHB at [REDACTED].*

I think that should be: [REDACTED]

Linda

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87. **Matt Kirschenbaum**

Re: dialectics of coolness (fwd)

Tue 3 Dec 1996

*matt thanks for the gary chapman post, which was certainly true but not
especially original nor profound analytically; the Birmingham school folks like
Paul Willis, Stuart Hall, Angela McRobbie et al have been saying this for over
twenty years. And WEB Du Bois before them,etc.*

Well sure, Maria, but not in the context of electronic media. In fact, the sort of
work suggested by the names you invoke above is all but non-existent in that
field. As for "coolness" have a look at Alan Liu's taxonomy on his "Laws of the
Cool" page (off of humanitas.ucsb.edu); it's convincing on the point that the
word has evolved (or accumulated) significantly from its earlier uses.

--Matt

=====
===== Matthew G. Kirschenbaum University
of Virginia [REDACTED] Department of English
http://faraday.clas.virginia.edu/~mgk3k/ Electronic Text Center

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88. **Pierre Joris**

cyber-cowboys

Tue 3 Dec 1996

Last night, after enjoying the thread on cowboy flicks while gnawing on the last of the left-over turkey, I came across the following in an interview with Michel Butor (anyone still read him? Some of the last books are in fact quite extraordinary!) that appeared in **Liberation** (Nov. 14 96):

Q: Could one read **Gyroscope** (Butor's latest book, with rather interesting/wild decentered layout -- texts trying to immitate the concept sof the gyroscope) on the Internet:

Michel Butor: Internet is a labyrinthian figure full of dangers where one can get lost and be devoured. It is a region without law, a place of pillage, the country of "outlaws." (in English in the text) It is very exciting but it can't last very long. International legislation is urgently needed. It will take a long time because liberalism is very powerful at the end of this century. For the time being it is the domain of various mafias, just as in the beginning the "Far West" (in Englsih in the text) belonged to the gangsters. Fortunately, there are also pioneers who are setting up inhabitable areas

Pierre

--

=====

pierre joris 6 madison place albany ny 12202
tel/fax [REDACTED] email: [REDACTED]
<http://writing.upenn.edu/epc/authors/joris/>
<http://www.albany.edu/~tm0900/nomad.html>

"A book has to be the axe for the frozen sea inside us.
This I believe."

(Kafka, Letter to Oskar Pollack 27 Jan 1904)

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89. **Douglas Barbour**

Re: westerns / & taste

Tue 3 Dec 1996

Well, I was happy to see, finally, that someone remembered that Clint Eastwood had directed so fine westerns (I really like *_The Outlaw Josie Wales_*), but was especially intrigued by the comments on Steve McQueen:

"Date: Mon, 2 Dec 1996 17:06:41 -0600

From: [REDACTED]

Subject: Re: more on westerns

anyway, as to mcqueen: much as i enjoy him, *tom horn* is just awful, no?--- and it's his next-to-last flick, i think... *the hunter* was his last i believe, and this was bad too... as far as westerns, *nevada smith* with mcqueen was enjoyable, though for me mcqueen = bullit, magnificent seven, thomas crown, 'doc' in *the getaway* (near-western), and esp. 'the cooler king' in *the great escape* whose motorcycle stunts put an indelible imprint on my and my bro's young minds (and hooked us on bikes in general---so we're back to *easy rider* as a western)..."

I have to confess that it was McQueen in b&w, for half an hour each week that left 'an indelible imprint' on my young mind. There were a couple of those shows that were truly surreal.

I do think it kinda intriguing that these two threads havent quite joined up yet, as from the outside, all the commentary on westerns does seem to demonstrate the ways in which 'taste' signs personal response, & also suggests how that can happen in a variety of sites. I think it's terrific to see so many poets etc really getting involved in remembering not just the well-known films but the hidden treasures like Johnny Guitar, a truly wild film. Although I found Wzystan's posting provocative & entertaining, I do tend to think that it's possible to make choices about 'good' & 'bad' within a variety of forms, types, kinds, but very dangerous to dismiss a 'kind' out of hand, although for each of us there are probably certain kinds that simply dont connect. But I like to think I can tell who really makes it in jazz as well as c&w, not to mention certain other kinds of music or writing or... (& I suspect a lot on here like to think the same of themselves...)

=====
===== Douglas Barbour Department
of English "The universe opens. I close. University of Alberta
And open, just to surprise you.' Edmonton Alberta T6G 2E5 [REDACTED] FAX:
[REDACTED] - Phyllis Webb H: [REDACTED]

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90. **daniel_bouchard**

Re: Boston reading

Tue 3 Dec 1996

E wrote:

> ok, i'll get my teeth together and go. i will. i really will but i don/t
dare say anything about meeting becasue i have such an abyssmal record...
e

Elliza, be sure to go at 7:00. That's the official time.

I posted 7:30 yesterday but was wrong.

Waterstone's Books is at Newbury and Exeter in the Back Bay if anyone is
coming to town and unsure of the location. Newbury runs parallel to
Commonwealth Ave. Back Bay is in Boston. Boston, MA.

see ya,

██████████

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91. **Pritchett, Pat**

Re: M/M & westerns, deah

Tue 3 Dec 1996

Good for you George! It's Budd Boetticher and he's a very underrated Western
auteur. Haven't seen "The Tall T" yet but I hear it's one of the best. Didn't he
also do "Ride Lonesome" with Randolph Scott?

Patrick Pritchett

From: George Bowering

To: POETICS

Subject: Re: M/M & westerns, deah

Date: Tuesday, December 03, 1996 2:56AM

Peckinpah, Schmeckinpaw. Ford? Pooh!

My favourite western movie director has always been Budd Boettiger or
however the hell you spell his name.

George Bowering.

2499 West 37th Ave.,

Vancouver, B.C.,

Canada V6M 1P4

fax: ██████████

e-mail: ██████████

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92. **amato**

Re: dialectics of coolness (fwd)

Tue 3 Dec 1996

well, speaking of stuart hall and pop-culture cultural studies:

just rec'd in the mail the other day (any of you receive same?) a fold-out full-color flyer with a large pic of stuart hall's HEAD as backdrop and with the following across the front:

Stuart Hall

On

Representation

two VIDEO presentations

Representation

and the Media

Race, the

Floating Signifier

open it up and you get a high-pitched sales pitch pitched presumably to teachers---

"Hall clarifies many of cultural studies' central ideas such as: the centrality of culture and meaning in human society, the role of language and communication in meaning, and the relationship between reality and discourse."

this in the "introductory lecture" from the first video (above)... whereas the second video is

"Pitched [no shit] at an advanced level -- suitable for upper-level classes as well as graduates and faculty -- *Race, the Floating Signifier* advances a theoretically radical argument about how racism depends upon its *discursive* construction to accomplish its destructive function of classification, exclusion and repression."

there are little snapshots in the flyer, with hall's gloss (e.g., a still of vivien leigh and hattie mcdaniel from *gone with the wind* with the gloss, "It is the body which became the totemic object, the very visibility of the evident articulation or linkage between nature and culture.")...

and there are little blurbs, offset in little multicolored rectangular boxes, writ by those enthusiastic about the video... i excerpt:

"Everyone, everywhere in the world, needs to hear Stuart Hall's words. His understanding of race, class and gender is broad, complex and illuminating. In

this insightful video he brings together theory and practice, offering new political visions and insights on race that challenge and transform."

bell hooks, Distinguish Prof. of English, CUNY

"This is a marvelous opportunity to see Stuart Hall in action -- he is a major force in the fields of communication and cultural studies. He is more than engaging, he is *spellbinding*."

Ellen Wartella, Dean, College of Communication, UT/Austin

the videos ain't cheap---they're \$195 for one, with discounts for more than one...

ok: now clearly i'm engaged here in *representing*, and just as clearly i'm having problems with this entire SHOW... for one, to claim that hall is "spellbinding" is to somewhat miss the point --- or is it? --- of interrogating representation... there would seem to be little in the way of reflexiveness on the part of those who put together this representation of hall representing, or am i simply to assume that we're all, hall as well, stuck in the marketplace and should therefore wallow in it?---which, as i've said in an earlier post, is one of the liabilities of certain tendencies in cultural studies...

but even more: this is being "pitched" to instructors, by way of instruction, and here i'd say that we're in the domain of distance education/learning, and how video technologies can usurp the site of instruction... it's not that such videos can't be useful, it's just that it's easy to see how they might NOT be---esp. in light of the representational blindness of the promotional flyer... i wonder who owns/runs "the foundation for media education" (our of northampton, ma)?... "video resources for the 21st century"?... presumably watching such videos will instill in us (YUCK) the idea (to excerpt from the paraphrase they provide of hall's thinking) "that cultural studies can contest the stereotypes (gender, racial, sexual) offered up by the media by getting 'inside' the image, and subjecting the process of representation to a fierce *analytical interrogation* with the aim of making the stereotypes 'uninhabitable'"...

whether my "interrogation" has been fierce or not, i'm not in a position to say... but i *can* say that subjecting the flyer itself to such logic rather unravels the further stereotypes of teaching and of video marketing, respectively... i'll leave it to others to decode the flyer in terms of its representation of hall himself--- who hails from jamaica, no?...

joe

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93. **ms**
after this
Tue 3 Dec 1996

i've been lurking, learning, looking for a week or so now without responding to anything whatsoever due to my newbiw status to the world of the poetical-academic.

now that's done with:

can anyone please tell me as to who first said that there could be no writing in the aftermath of the Holocaust?

i know there's a direct (and quite possibly a very famous) quote as such, that i've read somewhewre, but i can't for the life of me figure out where.

thanx again and sorry if i've bungled ny of you up with this itty-nitty-bitty query.

laytahs,

manny savopoulos

"The more things resist me the more rabid I get."

-Samuel Beckett

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94. **amato**
Re: taste, judgment, etc...
Tue 3 Dec 1996

i think there **is** a conceptual (and fully affective) intersection, so to speak, twixt individual agency and sociocultural constraint... i think this is what patrick is getting at...

kali seems to me to be trying to hold out against more connoisseur-driven notions of taste... wylan seems to me to be holding out against reduction of writerly (or readerly, i suppose) impulses to deterministic sociocultural machinery... surely we can speak across this divide?...

or perhaps NOT speak... that is, there would seem to be some value here in understanding how silence plays a role in these distinctions...

i might put it another way...

i might not!...

but ok: not to turn this into a religious controversy, but after reading parts of rorty's and bloom's and lentricchia's latest diatribes on literature's inspirational values, i'm willing to concede this much: that there are corresponding acts of faith associated with coming to the alphabet, to any meaning-making enterprise... i don't mean blind faith, or (necessarily---and certainly not for me)

faith in some transcendental reality... but i do believe that there is a faith situated just behind or beneath or above or beyond or on the side of [gasp] our beliefs... seems to me that this, too, is as much sociocultural as individual... but that it works at a meta-level, is often so tacit in what we say, or don't say, that it forms a sort of invisible glue that holds our thoughts and words together---for ourselves, anyway... i trust i'm not waxing too post-romantic here...

anyway, don't know if this helps, mebbe it only confuses matters more... but for me, there is the necessity at times to invoke, as much as a collective state of affairs, a place of solitude... ergo my refusal to let go of a sense of place, however...

best,

joe

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95. **Pierre Joris**
Cendrars lives!

Tue 3 Dec 1996

Good news on the day they discovered ice on the moon: a copy of a longish (16 pages) poem by Blaise Cendrars called "The legend of Novgorod" & published in an edition of 14 copies in Moscow in 1907 under his real name (Frederic Sauser) has just been found in a secondhand bookstore in Sofia. It will be published in France by Fata Morgana with a preface by Cendrars daughter, Miriam Cendrars. Ron Padgett, to work!

Pierre

--

=====

pierre joris 6 madison place albany ny 12202
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<http://www.albany.edu/~tm0900/nomad.html>

"A book has to be the axe for the frozen sea inside us.
This I believe."

(Kafka, Letter to Oskar Pollack 27 Jan 1904)

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96. **Judy Roitman**

Re: Johnny Guitar

Tue 3 Dec 1996

| *Dislike of John Wayne is made rather easy with the benefit hindsight:*

But he looked so cute in shorts and a purse! (famous photo, where did I see 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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97. **Judy Roitman**

Re: taste, judgment, etc...

Tue 3 Dec 1996

| *what is LOT?*

| *At 12:45 AM 12/3/96 -0800, you wrote:
what are jetskis?*

| *People who work for LOT*

Polish national airline.

----- 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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98. **Pritchett, Pat**

Re: after this

Tue 3 Dec 1996

Hi Manny,

It was Theodor Adorno who said "After Auschwitz, all poetry is barbaric." But that's a paraphrase (I think). I, too, would like the source of this quote, if anybody knows it.

Patrick Pritchett

From: ms

To: POETICS

Subject: after this

Date: Tuesday, December 03, 1996 12:16PM

i've been lurking, learning, looking for a week or so now without responding to anything whatsoever due to my newbiw status to the world of the poetical-academic.

now that's done with:

can anyone please tell me as to who first said that there could be no writing in the aftermath of the Holocaust?

i know there's a direct (and quite possibly a very famous) quote as such, that i've read somewhewre, but i can't for the life of me figure out where.

thanx again and sorry if i've bungled ny of you up with this itty-nitty-bitty query.

laytahs,

manny savopoulos

"The more things resist me the more rabid I get."

-Samuel Beckett

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99. **wkl888**

John Yau's New Book

Tue 3 Dec 1996

John Yau has asked me to forward the following announcement to appropriate e-lists, which I am glad to do. Fans of John's most recent books of poetry will be happy to know that this new volume also includes continuations of his Angel Atrapado, Genghis Chan, and Peter Lorre series.

--Walter K. Lew

Announcing a new book of poems and prose

Title: Forbidden Entries

Author: John Yau

Publisher: Black Sparrow

Address: Black Sparrow Press
24 Tenth Street
Santa Rosa, CA 95401

Tel: [REDACTED]
Fax: [REDACTED]

"The most important Chinese-American poet of our time."
Multicultural Review

"Yau twists and tweaks the language."
Booklist

With Arthur Sze, John Yau recently coedited the fall/winter issue of The Asian Pacific American Journal (Volume 5, Number 2). Poems in Forbidden Entries have previously been published in American Poetry Review, Hambone, New American Writing, Shantih, Talisman, and Tea Leaves. They received received a Jerome Shestack Prize from APR and the Richard Hugo Memorial Award from CutBank (University of Montana).

The author's email: [REDACTED]

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100. **Karl Richter**

PHDS

Tue 3 Dec 1996

Hi,

I've enjoyed the discussion concerning the CW PhD, and I thought I'd try to provide some small insight as a poet pursuing such a degree; I'm currently working on a PhD with a creative dissertation in the English Dept at Texas Tech University, after earning an MFA from Sarah Lawrence.

First, I'd like to challenge the academy/"real world" dichotomy that Burt asserts. The assumption seems to be that those of us in the academy are trying to avoid the difficulties of life, when in actuality we're throat-deep in them. As Ron pointed out, being a graduate teaching assistant ain't exactly easy. And being involved in a university setting does not (necessarily) insulate one from the struggle to publish. I know of no writer enrolled in a graduate program who is not actively pursuing publication (shameless self-promotion: check out two of my poems in the forthcoming issue of Faultline, for instance). Also, perhaps ironically, my work in the university setting puts me in contact with many more non-"professional" writers (my students) than I suspect would be the case if my

community were, say, the Nuyorican crowd. Working with farm kids, first-generation Chicano students, etc., puts me closer in touch with "the real world" than I would be otherwise. So the idea that the academy is some kind of golden bubble is just wrong. At least here in West Texas, the University is the only place where the most diverse elements of the real world all come together.

A scam? Maybe. I'm here doing this because it's a living, I'm close to what I love (literature and writing), I'm getting some teaching experience (which is valuable in itself, whether I go on to a teaching career or not), and I have the time and support I need to put together my first collection. Also, and I think this is quite important, I just want a PhD. It's a goal, like publishing that first collection by the time I turn 30, that I want to achieve, just because it's as far as I can go academically. It's a challenge, like running a marathon. And I make no apologies for wanting to tackle it.

The pitfalls, of course, are those involved in CW instruction generally: prescriptive pedagogy, emphasis on the conventional, etc. But for the grad student/writer who is aware of these pitfalls, and who is plugged-in to the wider poetic community, they are not so difficult to avoid. A little personal integrity goes a long way.

Anyway, those are my two cents....

Karl Richter



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101. **Aldon L. Nielsen**

Re: one seize tastes all

Tue 3 Dec 1996

Kali -- Do you have a tape of the Oliveros -- Terry concert?

hope you listen to Brownie too!

but seriously folks -- what could be more exemplary of the solipsistic nature of most "taste" arguments than the argument we've been having here? If "one" cares not to examine the development of one's taste, then all one can say to some other one about it is some variation of "your poets suck -- mine are the greatest" the old hot stuff / diddley squat dichotomy -- must be very comforting to the taster, but doesn't do much for the tastees, or the tasted --

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102. **Eryque Gleason**

Re: after this

Tue 3 Dec 1996

i think you're referring to theodore adorno's line that went something like "writing after auschwitz is barbaric". i'll look it up when i get home tonight. and actually, i think i read it at the top of an essay, maybe by ron s?

eryque

> now that's done with: > > can anyone please tell me as to who first said that there could be no > writing in the aftermath of the Holocaust? > > i know there's a direct (and quite possibly a very famous) quote as such, > that i've read somewhewre, but i can't for the life of me figure out where. > > thanx again and sorry if i've bungled ny of you up with this > itty-nitty-bitty query. > > laytahs, > manny savopoulos > "The more things resist me the more rabid I get." > -Samuel Beckett

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103. **Pierre Joris**

Re: after this

Tue 3 Dec 1996

ms wrote:

can anyone please tell me as to who first said that there could be no writing in the aftermath of the Holocaust?

i know there's a direct (and quite possibly a very famous) quote as such, that i've read somewhewre, but i can't for the life of me figure out where.

laytahs,

manny savopoulos

"The more things resist me the more rabid I get."

-Samuel Beckett

That, manny, was Theodor Adorno who claimed that after Auschwitz it was no longer possible to write poetry (in fact, lets not be lazy & go to the shelves & locate the excat quote -- yes, here it is on the final page of the essay "Cultural Criticism and Society"(p. 34 of _Prisms_ MIT press 1988): "To write poetry after Auschwitz is barbaric. And this corrodes even the knowledge of why it has become impossible to write poetry today." Of course, by that time Celan had already written the TODESFUGE, and in the camps themselves, people wrote poetry -- H.G. Adler comes to mind, off hand.

Pierre

--

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pierre joris 6 madison place albany ny 12202
tel/fax [REDACTED] email: [REDACTED]
<http://writing.upenn.edu/epc/authors/joris/>
<http://www.albany.edu/~tm0900/nomad.html>

"A book has to be the axe for the frozen sea inside us.
This I believe."

(Kafka, Letter to Oskar Pollack 27 Jan 1904)

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104. **Eryque Gleason**
Re: dialectics of coolness (fwd)

Tue 3 Dec 1996

chapman's article is kinda nifty and all, but like (i think it was maria?) said, it ain't particularly new, not even in light of computers & whotnot. i know thirteen year olds who have been bitching about the same phenomena since they were eleven.

e

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105. **Pritchett, Pat**
Re: Costner's Earp

Tue 3 Dec 1996

Dennis Quaid better as Doc Holiday than Val Kilmer? To quote a phrase of Kevin's: "you are tragically wrong." But hey, it's just a Western, ain't it?

I understand what you're saying about Costner's "Urp," but I think the filmmaker's intentions must be taken into account when weighing Costner contra Ford. Ford is really only concerned with myth, with sacred history, and reality for him finishes a distant second place. I always had a problem with the OK Corral shootout, for instance, in Ford's pic - it seems sloppy, not very tight in terms of spatial coordinates of the combatants, etc. Yet the last time I saw it (a few weeks ago) I found my old complaint withering. The tension of the scene and its satisfactions derive more from the ritual of the fight than with the usual chase/suspense theatrics. In this sense, it has more in common with something

like classical Japanese drama (though admittedly that's a stretch since I don't know beans about Noh or Kabuki).

I find Nietzsche's categories useful (from *_Use & Abuse of History_*): the monumental, or mythic (Ford), the antiquarian, and the critical or ironic (the last two being Costner's Earp). Costner & Kasdan (the director) were deliberately trying to debunk/revise the Earp myth, which all started with a 1931 book called "Wyatt Earp: Frontier Marshall." I can't remember if they showed this in the film, but the real Earp eventually moved to LA and was arrested for a variety of bunco schemes c.1909. None of them were nice guys and evidently were in the law & order biz only as way of protecting their gambling interests. But Ford was aware of this mythologizing process, too, as he showed in "Liberty Valance."

Best,
Patrick Pritchett

PS - I actually like that Homeric list of ships a great deal.

From: Michael Boughn
To: POETICS
Subject: Costner's Earp
Date: Tuesday, December 03, 1996 8:01AM

I just wanted quickly to disagree with Kevin over Costner's Earp, which I thought much more interesting than Tombstone, precisely because of the overload of details which added to its epic qualities. Maybe that's the difference--Tombstone went for the "mythic" (archetypal narrative) whereas Wyatt Earp went for the "epic" (if you think the details in the movie were bad, I guess you don't much care for the catalog of ships in the Iliad).

I don't know of any other treatment of the story that so emphasizes the Earp's as businessmen for whom the policing was just a way to bring in some cash till their family enterprises got going. My Darling Clementine, for all its visual beauty, was laughable in terms of its treatment of the narrative details of the legend.

Anyway, Dennis Quaid was much better as Doc Holliday than Val Kilmer.

Mike



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106. **Christina Fairbank Chirot**
Re: Cendrars lives! and European Westerns
Tue 3 Dec 1996

There should be many more such manuscripts. Cendrars frequently alluded to mysterious trunks and bundles of his writing hidden the world over. (Isn't it in Brazil where there are supposedly concealed twelve volumes of a certain work . . .) UCal P has a good book out of Cendrars' Hollywood writings--although as another well known rapsallion might warn those quick to doubt the words of M. Blaise: "honi soit qui mal y pense" from l'Or--made into Sutter's Gold--directed by James Cruze--who also did the classic Covered Wagon: "The trail stretches for thousands of miles. Strung along it at intervals of a hundred miles are wooden forts . . . Their garrisons are continually on the alert. War with the Redskins is a war of atrocities. No quarter! Woe to the hapless party that falls into an ambush of the scalp hunters. Suter has no hesitation. Mounted on his mustang, Wild Bill, he gallops in the van of his concho, whistling an air from The Carnival of Basle between his teeth. His memory goes back to the little urchin at Runenberg to whom he had given his last thaler. He reins in his horse. 'Heads or tails'. The doubloon spins towards heaven like a mounting lark. Heads to win. Tails to lose. It falls flat upon his open palm. Heads! He spurs his horse forwards, full of a new confidence. This was his first hesitation. It will be his last. From now on--forward to the goal . . . "All that Suter has gained in four years of American life is this half-breed circus dog who walks on his hind legs and smokes a pipe with the sailors." A good double feature: Sutter's Gold with von Stroheim's GREED

On Tue, 3 Dec 1996, Pierre Joris wrote:

Good news on the day they discovered ice on the moon: a copy of a longish (16 pages) poem by Blaise Cendrars called "The legend of Novgorod" & published in an edition of 14 copies in Moscow in 1907 under his real name (Frederic Sauser) has just been found in a secondhand bookstore in Sofia. It will be published in France by Fata Morgana with a preface by Cendrars daughter, Miriam Cendrars. Ron Padgett, to work!

Pierre

--

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pierre joris 6 madison place albany ny 12202

tel/fax [REDACTED] email: [REDACTED]

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

<http://www.albany.edu/~tm0900/nomad.html>

*"A book has to be the axe for the frozen sea inside us.
This I believe."*

(Kafka, Letter to Oskar Pollack 27 Jan 1904)

=====

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107. **DS**

Re: taste, judgment, etc...

Tue 3 Dec 1996

There you go Maria...

At 11:22 AM 12/3/96 -0600, you wrote:

>>what is LOT?

>>

>>At 12:45 AM 12/3/96 -0800, you wrote:

>>>>what are jetskis?

>>>

>>>People who work for LOT

>>>

>>>

>>>

>

>

>Polish national airline.

>

>-----

>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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108. **Jeremy F Green**

Re: after this

Tue 3 Dec 1996

On Tue, 3 Dec 1996, ms wrote:

>

> can anyone please tell me as to who first said that there could be no

> writing in the aftermath of the Holocaust?

>

> i know there's a direct (and quite possibly a very famous) quote as such,
> that i've read somewhewre, but i can't for the life of me figure out where.

>

Adorno said this--or similar versions--in a number of places. To hand, 'Cultural Criticism and Society' in *_Prisms_* trans. by Samuel and Shierry Weber (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1990; first publd. 1967), page 34: 'Cultural criticism finds itself faced with the final stage of the dialectic of culture and barbarism. To write poetry after Auschwitz is barbaric. And this corrodes even the knowledge of why it has become impossible to write poetry today. Absolute reification which presupposed intellectual progress as one of its elements, is now preparing to absorb the mind entirely. Critical intelligence cannot be equal to this challenge as long as it confines itself to self-satisfied contemplation.'

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109. **Steve Evans**

Re: after this

Tue 3 Dec 1996

Adorno did reconsider his famous statement in "Cultural Criticism and Society," most strikingly in the following passage from the section of *_Negative Dialectics_* called "After Auschwitz":

Perennial suffering has as much right to expression as a tortured man has to scream; hence it may have been wrong to say that after Auschwitz you could no longer write poems. But it is not wrong to raise the less cultural question whether after Auschwitz you can go on living--especially whether one who escaped by accident, one who by rights should have been killed, may go on living. His mere survival calls for the coldness, the basic principle of bourgeois subjectivity, without which there could have been no Auschwitz; this is the drastic guilt of him who was spared. (362-63)

And a few pages later:

All post-Auschwitz culture, including its urgent critique, is garbage. In restoring itself after the things that happened without resistance in its own countryside, culture has turned entirely into the ideology it had been potentially-- had been ever since it presumed, in opposition to material existence, to inspire that existence with the light denied it by the separation of mind from manual labor. Whoever pleads for the maintenance of this radically

culpable and shabby culture becomes its accomplice, while the man who says no to culture is directly furthering the barbarism which our culture showed itself to be. (367)

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110. **Michael Boughn**

Re: one seize tastes all

Tue 3 Dec 1996

but seriously folks -- what could be more exemplary of the solipsistic nature of most "taste" arguments than the argument we've been having here? If "one" cares not to examine the development of one's taste, then all one can say to some other one about it is some variation of "your poets suck -- mine are the greatest" the old hot stuff / diddley squat dichotomy -- must be very comforting to the taster, but doesn't do much for the tastees, or the tasted --

This is a bit reductive, Aldon, tho Wystan's introduction of the word "taste" certainly leaves his argument open to your criticism. My own sense is that beneath the diction is a proposal along the lines of what Olson argues in *_Special View of History_* and elsewhere (I think in the piece on history in *_Muthologos_*) as the difference between Thucydides and Herodotus--the "objective" reporting of "events" or what Olson loved to translate from 'istorin--to find out for oneself.

Mike



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111. **Judy Roitman**

Re: taste, judgment, etc...

Tue 3 Dec 1996

there are corresponding acts of faith associated with coming to the alphabet, to any meaning-making enterprise...

joe amato

Ah, the alphabet. As the mom of dyslexic -- faith, you bet. Also, out there in philosophy-of-language-land, theories about alphabet as alienating, intrinsically. See, e.g., David Abram's *The Spell of the Sensuous*. (There was a short thread on this a while back.)

----- 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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112. **Eliza McGrand- CVA Guest**
taste, everyday, and the tools of the master
Tue 3 Dec 1996

i've been following the taste thread with great interest for a pretty obvious reason, but i'll state it anyway: at 35 yrs old, i've had an absolute, unshakeable opinion of the awfulness of something in fact, shaken, enough times that i do, as kali states, want very much to know WHY i like, or don't like something.

one thing i've found true disconcertingly often is that when i don't like something, and don't know quite why, it is because the work sounds like something i myself wrote a while back, or even, horrors, recently. and now i'm hearing it from the outside, it is WRONG WRONG WRONG and if i admit that explicitly, why it is wrong, etc., then i have to admit i wrote something dopey and god help us all, i might even have published it.

admit it. you ALL know EXACTLY what i am talking about, the 2 a.m horrors when you say "oh my god, every single poem in that magazine was thoroughly dreadful for X reason, and my poem fit RIGHT IN!

ACKKHHHGHGHGHGHGHHHHH!!!!

ok, that skeleton is out of closet.

here comes the next. sometimes, i read a poem or short story and get restless and bored and irritated because i can't follow it. this has happened with enough certified "greats" (all right, you want names oh interrogator, here: faulkner. yes, i am one of those people who can't stand reading faulkner. nabokov. mailer (oh, he is SUCH a chauvanist turd i take that back. it is PERFECTLY understandable not to be able to stand his writing. the executioners song was a fluke). finnegan's wake) that i just accept that my "taste," i.e. "what i like," is not infallible.

also, sometimes if i am trying hard, and ask around, i'll find something someone says that can help me open up to what i am having trouble reading. as with crime and punishment, joyce's ulysses, poems of richard hugo and Elizabeth Bishop.

but to the meat of this too-long post, my most prominent day-to-day struggle with "taste" occurs in my work as editor and reader-of-poetry- for-friends. i work with a journal. the current issue has, for me, seven YES! 's (one a YES

YES!), three UCK's, and four OK's. now, we've had issues where every single thing in it is a YES from my standpoint. only, i'm an assistant editor here, my editor has a standpoint that is close to, but not always, my own. and our readers have standpoints. and the poetics list has standpoints, as do my "writer/literature" friends (friends who write, or anyway, read), all of whom stand in a chorus behind me interrogating MY TASTE as well they should because on occasion they've made me open \ my tribe of "in-my-taste" up. (ps. kali, re choice of examples, i chose opera and classical music (mostly) because it helped make the example clearer, not because i think classical practitioners (be it of music, dance, etc) are the only only possible "virtuosos." after all, the chieftans, whom i mention to illustrate that within the class of "virtuoso" there are other than classical practioners, are an irish folk/instrumental, blazingly good band. clearly the mixup was, however, a flaw in my example-giving process).

in my everyday, there are some works we get submitted to the magazine that i just plain hate (the works, not necessarily (though sometimes) the authors) because they are amateurish, clumsily manipulative, arrogant in their cramming in of big latinate words and literary references while at the same time making really foolish, give-away mistakes (i think of these as the school of "if i use enough big, intimidating words and references, no one will actually parse out the poem well enough to realize that i can't string together a thought or phrase, much less an original thought or phrase" writers. boy they piss me off.), and/or hallmark-y sentimental. and, nods to kali, i KNOW just why i don't like them. i don't like things that are claiming, by being sent out to publication (often accompanied by letters demanding recognition) to be something they are not (skillful, thoughtful, worked at, crafted (sorry joe, if there was a better word i'd use it -- well made sounds too like the urn), dense, knowledge-based -- knowledge which can come from university, academic, life, and a wide and possibly idiosyncratic course of reading).

sometimes, though, even when i know why i hate something (X author is a chauvinist, macho pig or Y author keeps using the word "[word]" in all their poems), the actual writing is good, perhaps the writer has done alot of interesting things even if i hate their viewpoint, or if i make myself take each poem on its individual, not-connected-to anything-i-know-about-author-or-author's-work, reading, it is ok. and so on.

point is, a magazine with some works in i'm not crazy about might not be a bad thing. i suspect i might well have "violent narrow taste" and that something i hate now, i might be able to like in a few months, or years. i also like the sense of community, where not every voice is saying things the i want said the way i want them said. i DO draw a line at rotten poems (hallmark-y; poems that use phrases and images from a million other bad poems without any idea that they

aren't original; god help us the poems that will, by any means necessary, rhyme -- if i NEVER AGAIN read the two words "dew" and "you" coupled with stumbling meter in a poem it will be too soon!!!).

i still argue with myself over WHY i didn't -- or DID -- like various movies or poems or short stories. i stumble hardest and write from the smallest, least productive hole, when i dismiss works and don't try to make sure i know what and why i'm dismissing.

which brings me to a long-ago expressed opinion, again valid here. there exists such a rich cumulative load of literature, at the same time as a typically patriarchal emphasis on "mastering" text -- all text, every single last quivering paragraph and semicolon. the two combine into a lethal critical approach i call the criticism of dismissal. if texts can be dismissed ("oh, X author is one of the Z's, too obsessed with result at the expense of process/with the continuity of history as opposed to the dialogue of the historical/blah blah blah") then the dismitter, the MASTER, does not have to read them, or know them. in other words, since no loud-talking MASTER of text can possibly have read every single work of literature since the beginning of preservation of texts (nor can anyone else, master or not), if one wants to adopt the pose of MASTER of the text universe, one must come up with some ground clearing expedient. the criticism of dismissal is just such an expedient.

of course, both bring into question "taste" -- but i'm questioning not so much the criteria used for "taste" as the motivation.

e

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113. **IMBURGIA** *A Poem to Share;*

Tue 3 Dec 1996

EARTH SONG

BLESSED EARTH, ALL MY SENSES ARE AROUSED BY YOUR FRAGRANT BREATH-- i LIE UPON YOU AND YOU EMBRACE ME WITH YOUR VIBRANCY-- I FEEL YOUR CLOSENESS AND REVEL IN YOUR BEAUTY--YOUR FOREST CREATURES DANCE AND SING WITH ABANDON ALL AROUND ME AND I ABSORB THEIR FREEDOM AND THEIR JOY. MY SPIRIT SOARS THE VAST BLUE HEAVENS WITH THE WINGED ONES AND THE SPARKLING SUNLIGHT WARMS MY HEART. I ARISE, MY BAREFEET CARESS YOUR MOSSY PATHWAYS AND I WALK QUIETLY TO YOUR TREE LINED SHORE. I EAGERLY RUN AND JUMP INTO YOUR CRYSTAL WATERS AND MY SOUL IS REFRESHED. THE CHILD IN ME LAUGHS AND PLAYS WITH GENTLE WAVES

AND SUNKISSED RIPPLES. I AM ALIVE AND HAPPY AND FREE. THE WOMAN IN ME SENSES YOUR PRESENCE--I AM NOT ALONE. YOU CREATED ALL OF THIS FOR ME, FOR ALL YOUR CHILDREN AND THE CREATURES THAT DELIGHT THEM. YOU LOVE US SO MUCH AND SHARE IN OUR JOY AT EACH FRESH DISCOVERY. THANK-YOU MY CREATOR FOR THE FULNESS OF BLESSINGS YOU'VE GIVEN ME. LET ME LIVE TO SHARE THE DEPTH OF YOUR LOVE WITH EVERYONE I MEET. GRANT THAT OTHERS MIGHT TRULY KNOW YOU AS I DO THRU YOUR CREATION. LET THEM SEE IT AS A MAGNIFICENT REFLECTION OF THE ONE WHO MADE IT ALL.

BY , SPIRITDOVE

(LYNDA IMBURGIA)

3/20/87

@

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114. **Eliza McGrand- CVA Guest**
taste, writing, and the tools of the master

Tue 3 Dec 1996

i've been following the taste thread with great interest for a pretty obvious reason, but i'll state it anyway: at 35 yrs old, i've had an absolute, unshakeable opinion of the awfulness of something in fact, shaken, enough times that i do, as kali states, want very much to know WHY i like, or don't like something.

one thing i've found true disconcertingly often is that when i don't like something, and don't know quite why, it is because the work sounds like something i myself wrote a while back, or even, horrors, recently. and now i'm hearing it from the outside, it is WRONG WRONG WRONG and if i admit that explicitly, why it is wrong, etc., then i have to admit i wrote something dopey and god help us all, i might even have published it.

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ACKKHHHGHGHGHGHHHHH!!!!

ok, that skeleton is out of closet.

here comes the next. sometimes, i read a poem or short story and get restless and bored and irritated because i can't follow it. this has happened with enough certified "greats" (all right, you want names oh interrogator, here: faulkner. yes, i am one of those people who can't stand reading faulkner. nabokov. mailer (oh, he is SUCH a chauvanist turd i take that back. it is

PERFECTLY understandable not to be able to stand his writing. the executioners song was a fluke). finnegan's wake) that i just accept that my "taste," i.e. "what i like," is not infallible.

also, sometimes if i am trying hard, and ask around, i'll find something someone says that can help me open up to what i am having trouble reading. as with crime and punishment, joyce's ulysses, poems of richard hugo and Elizabeth Bishop.

but to the meat of this too-long post, my most prominent day-to-day struggle with "taste" occurs in my work as editor and reader-of-poetry- for-friends. i work with a journal. the current issue has, for me, seven YES! 's (one a YES YES!), three UCK's, and four OK's. now, we've had issues where every single thing in it is a YES from my standpoint. only, i'm an assistant editor here; my editor has a standpoint that is close to, but not always, my own. and our readers have standpoints. and the poetics list has standpoints, as do my "writer/literature" friends (friends who write, or anyway, read), all of whom stand in a chorus behind me interrogating MY TASTE as well they should because on occasion they've made me open my tribe of "in-my-taste" up. (ps. kali, re choice of examples, i chose opera and classical music (mostly) because it helped make the example clearer, not because i think classical practitioners (be it of music, dance, etc) are the only only possible "virtuosos." after all, the chieftans, whom i mention to illustrate that within the class of "virtuoso" there are other than classical practioners, are an irish folk/instrumental band and as blazingly good, i.e. virtuosos, as a BSO musician. clearly the mixup was, however, a flaw in my example-giving process).

in my everyday, there are some works we get submitted to the magazine that i just plain hate (the works, not necessarily (though sometimes) the authors) because they are amateurish, clumsily manipulative, arrogant in their cramming in of big latinate words and literary references while at the same time making really foolish, give-away mistakes (i think of these as the school of "if i use enough big, intimidating words and references, no one will actually parse out the poem well enough to realize that i can't string together a thought or phrase, much less an original thought or phrase" writers. boy they piss me off.), and/or hallmark-y sentimental. and, nods to kali, i KNOW just why i don't like them. i don't like things that are claiming, by being sent out for publication (often accompanied by letters demanding recognition) to be something they are not (skillful, thoughtful, worked at, crafted (sorry joe, if there was a better word i'd use it -- well made sounds too like the urn), dense, knowledge-based -- knowledge which can come from academia, normal life, and a wide and possibly idiosyncratic course of reading).

sometimes, though, even when i know why i hate something (X author is a chauvinist, macho pig or Y author keeps using the word "[word]" in all their poems), the actual writing is good -- the writer has done alot of interesting things even if i hate their viewpoint, or if i make myself take each poem on its individual, not-connected-to anything-i-know-about-author-or-author's-work, reading, it is well-written. and so on.

point is, a magazine with some works in i'm not crazy about might not be a bad thing. i suspect i might well have "violent narrow taste" and that something i hate now, i might be able to like in a few months, or years. i also like the sense of community, where not every voice is saying the things i want said the way i want them said. i DO draw a line at rotten writing in the magazine (hallmark-y; poems that use phrases and images from a million other bad poems without any idea that they aren't original; god help us the poems that will, by any means necessary, rhyme -- if i NEVER AGAIN read the two words "dew" and "you" coupled with stumbling meter in a poem it will be too soon!!!). i help produce a magazine, a finite space, thus there must be some narrowing out.

i still argue with myself over WHY i didn't -- or DID -- like various movies or poems or short stories. as a writer, i know i stumble hardest and write from the smallest, least productive hole, when i dismiss works and don't try to make sure i know what and why i'm dismissing.

which brings me to a long-ago expressed opinion, again valid here. there exists such a rich cumulative load of literature, at the same time as a typically patriarchal emphasis on "mastering" text -- all text, every single last quivering paragraph and semicolon. the two combine into a lethal critical approach i call the criticism of dismissal. if texts can be dismissed ("oh, X author is one of the Z's, too obsessed with result at the expense of process/with the continuity of history as opposed to the dialogue of the historical/blah blah blah") then the dismitter, the MASTER, does not have to read them, or know them. in other words, since no loud-talking MASTER of text can possibly have read every single work of literature since the beginning of preservation of texts (nor can anyone else, master or not), if one wants to adopt the pose of MASTER of the text universe, one must come up with some ground clearing expedient. the criticism of dismissal is just such an expedient.

of course, both bring into question "taste" -- but i'm questioning not so much the criteria used for "taste" as the motivation.

e

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115. **Kali Tal**
Re: after this

Tue 3 Dec 1996

On Tue, 3 Dec 1996, ms wrote:

can anyone please tell me as to who first said that there could be no writing in the aftermath of the Holocaust?

wish i could remember exactly (though i know that the irony is that it's one of the holocaust *writers*), but you can find the reference in Alvin H. Rosenfeld, ed., *Confronting the Holocaust: The Impact of Elie Wiesel*. It *wasn't* Wiesel...

Kali Tal
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116. **Aldon L. Nielsen**
Re: one seize tastes all

Tue 3 Dec 1996

it was precisely the reductiveness that I was responding to --

Nothing wrong at all with "finding out for oneself" -- MUCH wrong, to my view, with the refusal, on grounds of "taste" or otherwise, to come to grips with aesthetic differences -- The refuge of "taste" is, I think, most often a refusal indeed to find out for oneself -- It's certainly a refusal to put one's findings to the test of contact with the findings of others -- Pound and Olson, no matter how narrow there focus could at time be, didn't seem to me to be reluctant to spell out the supposed grounds of their judgements (Though they were sometimes prone not to attend closely to those who dispute their grounds)

"Their" above, up there

I do not have the particular sets of aesthetic judgements I have in my head simply because I inhaled them, helplessly (and that doesn't at all seem to be what Kali was saying either) -- but they're certainly the result of interactions with some specifiable social structures -- and my reactions against those structures are as discussable as what I gathered from them --

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117. **Kali Tal**
Re: after this

Tue 3 Dec 1996

On Tue, 3 Dec 1996, Pierre Joris wrote:

ms wrote:

That, manny, was Theodor Adorno who claimed that after Auschwitz it was no longer possible to write poetry (in fact, lets not be lazy & go to the shelves & locate the excat quote -- yes, here it is on the final page of the essay "Cultural Criticism and Society"(p. 34 of _Prisms_ MIT press 1988): "To write poetry after Auschwitz is barbaric. And this corrodes even the knowledge of why it has become impossible to write poetry today." Of course, by that time Celan had already written the TODESFUGE, and in the camps themselves, people wrote poetry -- H.G.

Yah, Primo Levi wrote Holocaust poetry too. And I'd forgotten it was Adorno who said that it was impossible to write poetry after the Holocaust. When I was researching the section of my book which deals with Holocaust literature/criticism, though, I was amazed at how many of the Holocaust writers alternated between feeling compelled to write about their experiences and feeling that it was absolutely impossible to write about their experiences. The Rosenfeld volume I mentioned contains a number of references to this dilemma.

Kali

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118. **Kali Tal**
Re: taste, judgment, etc...

Tue 3 Dec 1996

Patrick Foley asks for whom or for what is it a problem when people refuse to interrogate the cultural structures which contain and shape their tastes.

It's traditionally a problem for oppressed minorities when the members of the majority culture refuse to interrogate those cultural structures. It's also a problem for working class cultures when elites refuse to do it. It's a problem for women when men refuse to do it. In other words, "taste" is usually determined and enforced by people with the power to determine and enforce it. The "taste economy"--as wylan puts it--is controlled by the taste capitalists, those who have control of the means of taste production (publishing industries, film industries, art industries). One can either have tastes which conform to the defined norms of "good" and "bad," or one can rebel against those norms, but it's impossible to imagine taste which is not influenced by those norms one way

or another (unless one postulates some "essential" or "inherent" standards of judgement which people are born with).

And, if Wystan had in mind the sort of tastes Pound expressed--"violent narrow tastes," well, that doesn't seem to me a good example of the sort of taste that is **not** related to a distinct set of cultural values. Can you count Pound's politics as unrelated to his poetry? I can't.

I don't use Derrida (and so I don't think I count as one of the folks who misconstrues his idea of context). Context, to me, is the location of a work on a variety of axes. I draw my ideas of context from the feminist and African Americanist theorists--Joan Cocks, Barbara Johnson, Mary Helen Washington, and so on. They argue that nothing is ever "one thing at a time," but is always "many things at once." This means that when I read a poem, I care about the form of the poem, the content of the poem, the manner in which the poem refers to or signifies upon other texts, the background of the author, the voiced intent of the author, the way the author is read by others, the historical context in which the poem is written, the manner in which it is packaged and produced, and on and on. This is hardly an insistence on the "impersonal machinery of history molding our tastes." Instead it's an attempt to locate our tastes within a complex cultural space. But, yes, "all we can do is interrogate these structures" if we are not going to be inextricably bound by them. I see interrogation as the gateway to freedom, whereas you seem to see it as confinement.

Every consciously "avant-garde" movement I can think of theorized itself simultaneously with (or even previous to) the production of its art. It's only the writers whose tradition is so well-understood as to be invisible who believe that their work should go without saying, that taste is somehow "natural" or "innate." And of course poets are "manipulating cultural structures per se." What **else** could they be/would they be doing? (Unless, of course, you care to divorce art from culture entirely.) The whole content of the other ongoing thread about creative writing Ph.D. programs is exactly about the ways in which poets working within cultural contexts manipulate cultural structures.

I think that the way I approach poetry specifically does **not** confuse forests with trees, but locates specific trees within specific forests and allows comparisons between kinds of trees and kinds of forests. If you want an example of exactly how I do this, with one poet in particular, you can take a look at my chapter, "The Farmer of Dreams: W.D. Ehrhart" in my book, *_Worlds of Hurt: Reading the Literatures of Trauma_*. If you think, after reading it, that I somehow short Ehrhart as an "artist," I'd be interested in hearing about it.

Kali Tal

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119. **Pritchett, Pat**

Re: one seize tastes all

Tue 3 Dec 1996

It was the other WYSTAN (Auden) who made the distinction between taste and judgment and allowed as how the former should not impede the latter. I may not be enthralled with say, *_Naked Lunch_*, but if I'm not, I ought not to let my distaste for it affect my judgment of its accomplishments (or lack thereof). Similarly, my affection for a work shouldn't blind me to its aesthetic/political/cultural faults, as for instance with the recently stated liking by some, myself included, for John Wayne. Inversely, my wife can't abide Frank Sinatra b/c he was (is) such a nasty little shit to people. I understand, but I still say it's her loss.

Patrick Pritchett

From: Aldon L. Nielsen

To: POETICS

Subject: Re: one seize tastes all

Date: Tuesday, December 03, 1996 6:11PM

it was precisely the reductiveness that I was responding to --

Nothing wrong at all with "finding out for oneself" -- MUCH wrong, to my view, with the refusal, on grounds of "taste" or otherwise, to come to grips with aesthetic differences -- The refuge of "taste" is, I think, most often a refusal indeed to find out for oneself -- It's certainly a refusal to put one's findings to the test of contact with the findings of others -- Pound and Olson, no matter how narrow their focus could at times be, didn't seem to me to be reluctant to spell out the supposed grounds of their judgements (Though they were sometimes prone not to attend closely to those who dispute their grounds)

"Their" above, up there

I do not have the particular sets of aesthetic judgements I have in my head simply because I inhaled them, helplessly (and that doesn't at all seem to be what Kali was saying either) -- but they're certainly the result of interactions with some specifiable social structures -- and my reactions against those structures are as discussable as what I gathered from them --

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120. **Jeffrey W. Timmons**

A Poem/Scare...

Tue 3 Dec 1996

(apologies before hand: hope this dont offend--sometimes i just cant help my self.... been reading too much baudelaire and rimbaud lately i guess. mea culpa.)

A Poem/Scare

godforsaken EARTH
MY SENSES denuded
BY polluted BREATH--
i LIE
UPON YOU in sin
EMBRACEd WITH sickness--
YOUR wretched CLOSENESS
YOUR obscene BEAUTY--
YOUR naked FOREST
skeletal CREATURES
ABANDONed ALL:
I ABSORB THEIR FREEDOM AND JOY.

MY captive SPIRIT
blasts THE VAST BLUE
WITH deWINGED angels
darkLING nIGHT blinds
MY miserable HEART.

obedient FEET
tramel YOUR glass-strewn PATHWAYS
I run madly
TO YOUR barren TREE-LINED SHORE.

I suicidally RUN AND JUMP
IN CRYSTAL-razor WATERS--
MY SOUL IS oppressed.

THE abused CHILD IN ME
cries WITH GENTLE WAVES--
bruised RIPPLES.

I AM dead AND FREE.

THE WO/MAN IN ME SENSES
YOUR intruding PRESENCE--
I AM NOT ALONE.

YOU deCREATED ALL THIS
FOR ME--selfish me--
FOR ALL YOUR CHILDREN
AND CREATURES debased herein.

YOU despise US SO MUCH
refuse OUR JOY
AT EACH FRESH DISCOVERY.

f**K-YOU MY deCREATOR
FOR THE aberration
OF BLESSINGS
YOU'VE GIVEN ME.

LET ME die
TO abhor THE DEPTH
OF YOUR horror
WITH EVERYONE I MEET.

deny THAT OTHERS
MIGHT TRULY KNOW
YOU AS I DO. . . .

LET THEM SEE IT
AS A MAGNIFICENT REFLECTION O
F THE ONE
WHO MADE IT ALL.

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121. **Patrick Foley**
Re: taste, judgment, etc...
Tue 3 Dec 1996

Joe,

One candidate for the faith you talk about might be the belief that language does hook onto the world, that, mysterious as it may be, there is something like "representation"; and another, related, that it is possible for one person to communicate with another through language. Scrutinized closely, it can seem as if communication and representation must be impossible -- and yet we go on naming and talking despite our philosophical skepticism, as if we had some animal faith in language. That for poets anyway -- dunno what sustains painters! Belief in light?

stray thots ...

I've been thinking lately about revisionism and the formation of alternative & idiosyncratic canons. Olson has his Mayans & Sumerians, Herodotus, etc. It was hardly scandalous for Pound to treat Homer & Dante as important, but Arnaut Daniel, Cavalcanti, Villon -- these guys still aren't taught as the monuments in history Pound thought they were, are they? (And what abt the presence Chinese poetry has in English after Pound -- that's a thorny issue I suppose, but seems related to me.)

Some of this has to do with art and some (esp w/ Pound) with craft.

It's easy to imagine a poet with a different background attaching considerable importance to Henry Rollins and Jim Carroll. It's pretty easy to imagine his best friend, with a similar background, always talking about Villon, carrying around the little paperback with a preface by someone named Williams.

First place I remember seeing John Ashbery's name was in Foucault's book about Raymond Roussel (sp?), an interview, and there's this funny moment where Foucault indicates that he finds Roussel interesting but not nearly as important as Ashbery does -- "Proust he ain't", or words to that effect. Roussel is in Ashbery's idiocanon.

Influential teachers, Blackmur say, have often left an imprint of their idiocanon upon that of their students. Wystan has indicated, I think, that he tries not to do this. The classroom is tricky. But in many contexts, the expression of taste, the poet's enunciation of his idiocanon, is not so much authoritative as an invitation to construct your own.

Having just finished reading The Pound Era, I'm reminded of something Kenner says, that wide-eyed visitors to St Elizabeth's might come away thinking Roman poetry consists of Catullus and Propertius. And the point, says Kenner, is that Pound always presumed an excellent classical education, and that his comments were offered as a corrective, a shift in emphasis or a filling in of gaps. (Catullus is not in Basil Bunting's idiocanon: he breaks off an "overdraft"/translation in mid-sentence, saying "--and why Catullus bothered to write pages and pages of this drivel mystifies me.")

Good place to stop.

Pat

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122. **Jeffrey W. Timmons**

Re: taste, writing, and the tools of the master

Tue 3 Dec 1996

*yes, i am one of those people who can't
stand reading faulkner.*

blasphemer!! kidding. really. but seriously: how can you not enjoy the poetics of absalom abasalom!?

jeffrey timmons

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123. **Tom Beard**

Re: after this

Tue 3 Dec 1996

Steve Evans wrote (quoting Adorno):

But it is not wrong to raise the less cultural question whether after Auschwitz you can go on living-- especially whether one who escaped by accident, one who by rights should have been killed, may go on living. His mere survival calls for the coldness, the basic principle of bourgeois subjectivity, without which there could have been no Auschwitz; this is the drastic guilt of him who was spared. (362-63)

As soon as this thread was raised I thought of Primo Levi, and this last sentence reminds me of the bewilderment (no, not strong enough: try 'despair') I felt upon hearing of Levi's suicide. He had given me hope that writing can sometimes heal without forgetting, that his understated style (which heightened the horror without resorting to sensationalism) helped him to cope and understand.

Was it the 'drastic guilt' that Adorno mentioned that killed him? I haven't read anything that 'explains' why he ended his life - does anyone have any insights?

Thanks,

Tom Beard.

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124. **IMBURGIA**

Apology.....

Tue 3 Dec 1996

I am the Wife of Listserve addressee, Dan. I thought this was a place to share poetry from the heart! I see from one persons response, that I was wrong! I am sorry! I will never send anything to you again. Please, do not let my sharing reflect on my Husband...who is a serious student and respectful reader of your List. Sincerely, Lynda Imburgia.(Indian name "Spiritdove.")

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125. **amato**

discussable, craft...

Tue 3 Dec 1996

I do not have the particular sets of aesthetic judgements I have in my head simply because I inhaled them, helplessly (and that doesn't at all seem to be what Kali was saying either) -- but they're certainly the result of interactions with some specifiable social structures -- and my reactions against those structures are as discussable as what I gathered from them --

i like this aldon... and i would agree that kali was certainly not suggesting that we're entirely at the mercy of 'the outside'... it's rather a matter of emphasis--- how we *discuss* the way we make value is what's at stake here, which is, again, the meta-level of the "discussable" you note... it's the matter of taste at that level that becomes the basis for hard-to-resolve conflict... but i won't beat a dead horse, IF it's dead!...

and e---given that i'm interested in rehabbing the term "professional" for leftist consumption, perhaps i should be so interested in "craft"... but wrt this latter, the problem is that it cuts so many ways, which is what i meant by "crafty" (not to mention the problems in german, and no---i don't know german!---but i'm pretty familiar with the difficulties of translating the latter)...

which craft?... ha!... but you get my drift?---i don't know a word mself that quite captures the sense of "craft"... but i'm just as certain that there's no need to build an entire aesthetic reality solely on same---which has been the legacy of so much that has been paraded around under the banner of "creative writing"...

mebbe we need a new space-craft, new handi-craft?...

rather than "craft," let's say i substitute "careful" wherever i can... and at the same time, let's say i argue that we need both careful & careless in order to produce art (perhaps this goes back to victor's "craft is long, art is short" post?)... at least i wouldn't feel so hemmed in by folks who insist on evaluating my work in terms of "craft" (which folks include ME)... i mean, some of my work speaks to aesthetics based on craft, and some DON'T, yknow?...

best,

joe

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126. **Tom Beard**

Re: tasty

Tue 3 Dec 1996

All of this heated discussion on "taste" brings me back to the gustatory use of the word, and reminds me of the nearest thing to a "flame war" that I've ever been involved in. It was on the list FOODWINE, after I'd been hasty enough to respond instinctively with my (almost literally) gut reaction to someone's suggestion of making broccoli pesto.

In taste (the tongue variety), genetic factors may play as large a part as cultural - while tastes can definitely change (I used to loathe olives, now I can't get enough), it seems that many people describe very different flavours when tasting the same foods. Most leaf vegetables taste bitter and almost sulphuric to me, whereas others describe them as sweet.

Anyway, people get very passionate about their tastes, and regard them as almost a badge of individuality - this may explain why we are so loath to view our tastes as the product of cultural forces. I know I feel a funny kind of kinship with anyone who hates coriander (cilantro) or late Eliot, and sense a strange gulf between me and anyone who dislikes Pinot Noir or Wallace Stevens.

If I'd venture a tentative opinion, I'd say that the elements that shape our tastes are more complex and on a finer scale than what we usually regard as cultural forces. Perhaps the subcultures within which we move are more important than capital-C Cultures - I'd feel more at home with a Maori or Asian writer than with a Pakeha accountant.

The number of memes with which we come into contact in our lives is enormous: why is it that some find fertile ground in our brains whereas others have no effect? Some 'infections' can be explained culturally (my taste for electronic music over guitar music fits in with my mathematical background and my love of abstraction), but how can we explain these original predilections? I tend towards the view that there is (and I know that this is a dirty word in these circles) a genetic influence - maybe I was born with a predisposition towards what we call Western Logic. I don't know.

tastefully yours,

Tom Beard.

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127. **Patrick Foley**

Re: one seize tastes all

Tue 3 Dec 1996

My own sense is that beneath the diction is a proposal along the lines of what Olson argues in _Special View of History_ and elsewhere (I think in the piece on history in _Muthologos_) as the difference between Thucydides and Herodotus--the "objective" reporting of "events" or what Olson loved to translate from 'istorin--to find out for oneself.

Exactly. What I should've said.

Pat

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128. **Shaunanne Tangney**

Re: after this

Tue 3 Dec 1996

On Tue, 3 Dec 1996, Jeremy F Green wrote:

Adorno said this--or similar versions--in a number of places. To hand, 'Cultural Criticism and Society' in _Prisms_ trans. by Samuel and Shierry Weber (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1990; first publd. 1967), page 34: 'Cultural criticism finds itself faced with the final stage of the dialectic of culture and barbarism. To write poetry after Auschwitz is barbaric. And this corrodes even the knowledge of why it has become impossible to write poetry today. Absolute reification which presupposed intellectual progress as one of its elements, is now preparing to absorb the mind entirely. Critical intelligence cannot be equal to this challenge as long as it confines itself to self-satisfied contemplation.'

an interesting tack can be taken from this infamous stmt in that a. says not that poetry is impossible, but barbaric. to decadents, barbaric was a good thing, or at least a thing of possibility. to the (to mix mediums as well as eras, although it would be intriguing to suggest barth as barbaric. . .)--but i digress: to the "used-upness" (that's barth's term) of any certain genre or form, barbarism is a kind of antidote. the barbarian becomes history's child (Poggioli's phrase), and a "creativity" is possible. neo-greek poet constantin cavafis wrote, in "waiting for the barbarians" --What will happen to us with no barbarians? Those people, after all, were a solution. holocausts may be more decadent than barbaric (remember: decadant is from the latin _cadre_ : to fall; it's roots are in decay, not in that luscious piece of chocolate cake you really shouldn't have), and the barbarians the welcome forces at the gate, the new world after such an apocalypse. . .

--or am i too deep into this frigging dissertation?!
best,
shaunanne tangney

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129. **Marjorie Perloff**

Re: Serbia

Wed 4 Dec 1996

Many of you know Dubravka Durcik and her husband Misko: they have spent time at Buffalo and Dubravka is both poet and critic and has translated many of our essays. I hear from Dubravka quite regularly but lately nothing and meanwhile we have the specter of the student rebellions in Belgrade (where D lives and works) on the nightly news and as usual Clinton is doing absolutely nothing.

My question to the List is: is there something we can specifically do to add to the protest against Milosevic? Would a group letter to the NY Times be in order? I'd love some feedback.

Marjorie Perloff

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130. **George Bowering**

Re: Johnny Guitar

Wed 4 Dec 1996

All this talk on westerns has been about movies, I note. As the author of 2 westerns (novels), I have to wonder whether any of you people grew up reading western novels, or whether that had stopped after I was a kid.

George Bowering.

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131. **George Bowering**
Re: M/M & westerns, deah

Wed 4 Dec 1996

Good for you George! It's Budd Boetticher and he's a very underrated Western auteur. Haven't seen "The Tall T" yet but I hear it's one of the best. Didn't he also do "Ride Lonesome" with Randolph Scott?

He made more films with Randolph Scott (my all time favourite Hollywood actor) than with anyone else. But at the moment I can't remember them. He also made a bullfight picture, and, of course "Legs Diamond". But his westerns: I wish there were a festival of them. I'd subscribe. Trouble is, several of his films are for some reason unavailable to midnight movie TV use. I am so mad at myself, because on my last trip to NY, the day Beckett died, I saw some pirated ones on lower 5th Ave., and didn't get them (I mean for like \$5), and instead just got the early "Night of the Living Dead."

George Bowering.

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132. **Elizabeth Mathews Losh**
Adorno's Greatest Hits

Wed 4 Dec 1996

MS:

Adorno also comes back to it in the essay "Commitment" (trans. Frank McDonagh, page 312 of Arato's _Essential Frankfurt School Reader_) in which he writes "I have no wish to soften the saying that to write lyric poetry after Auschwitz is barbaric" and then goes on to allow that "literature must resist this verdict." His comments in _Negative Dialectics_ (page 362) can also be read as a modification of his original position.

I like the Rothenberg line better.

Liz

On Tue, 3 Dec 1996, Pierre Joris wrote:

ms wrote:

can anyone please tell me as to who first said that there could be no writing in the aftermath of the Holocaust?

i know there's a direct (and quite possibly a very famous) quote as such, that i've read somewhere, but i can't for the life of me figure out where.

laytahs,

manny savopoulos

"The more things resist me the more rabid I get."

-Samuel Beckett

That, manny, was Theodor Adorno who claimed that after Auschwitz it was no longer possible to write poetry (in fact, lets not be lazy & go to the shelves & locate the exact quote -- yes, here it is on the final page of the essay "Cultural Criticism and Society" (p. 34 of _Prisms_ MIT press 1988): "To write poetry after Auschwitz is barbaric. And this corrodes even the knowledge of why it has become impossible to write poetry today." Of course, by that time Celan had already written the TODESFUGE, and in the camps themselves, people wrote poetry -- H.G. Adler comes to mind, off hand.

Pierre

--

=====

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http://writing.upenn.edu/epc/authors/joris/

http://www.albany.edu/~tm0900/nomad.html

*"A book has to be the axe for the frozen sea inside us.
This I believe."*

(Kafka, Letter to Oskar Pollack 27 Jan 1904)

=====

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133. **Bil Brown**

Re: Apology.....

Wed 4 Dec 1996

SpiritDove,

Stay on the list. Why not?

Bil

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[illegible]

But the guy who should truly become the subject of a modern western is none other than Bass Reeves, the undisputed fastest gun in the west, who happened to be black. Reeves is said to have outshot even more gunslingers than we know about, because he was never taught how to write and therefore could not keep any record of his shootouts. When he was a sheriff, Reeves once had to arrest his own son. And unlike most gunfighters of the Old West, he didn't have blue eyes.

(John Wesley would have hated Reeves, but he wouldn't have outshot him.)

All the best,

Rob Hardin

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

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135. **Pierre Joris**

Re: after this

Wed 4 Dec 1996

Steve Evans wrote:

>

> Adorno did reconsider his famous statement in "Cultural Criticism
> and Society," most strikingly in the following passage from the
> section of *Negative Dialectics* called "After Auschwitz":

Steve -- I wonder how much of a "reconsidering" this is; it feels much more like a buttressing of the early position. Let me quote Jeremy Adler from a TLS piece on his father, the poet/writer HG Adler who, as noted in my previous post, did write poetry in & after Auschwitz: "When the celebrated 'After Auschwitz' chapter in *Negative Dialectik* (1966) elaborated his original dictum into an aesthetic, and reformulated his position as a new categorical imperative, namely that we must think and act in such a way that Auschwitz cannot be repeated, this chapter also included a thinly veiled but bitter attack on HG Adler: 'All culture after Auschwitz is garbage' Adorno provocatively maintains, and scorns HG Adler as 'the one who got away' (*'der Entronnene'*) for wishing to maintain 'hope' in this hopeless situation. Adorno holds that the only valid response to Auschwitz can be found in Beckett, for whom 'what exists is like a concentration camp. The only hope is, that nothing exists...' Through its dialectical sniping against the religious beliefs which sustained HG Adler in the camps, which Adorno ridicules as *Schützengrabenreligion* ('trench religion'), his critique turns into an unintended attack on Judaism too." (TLA October 4, 1996)

Perennial suffering has as much right to expression as a tortured man has to scream; hence it may have been wrong to say that after Auschwitz you could no longer write poems. But it is not wrong to raise the less cultural question whether after Auschwitz you can go on living-- especially whether one who escaped by accident, one who by rights should have been killed, may go on living. His mere survival calls for the coldness, the basic principle of bourgeois subjectivity, without which there could have been

no Auschwitz; this is the drastic guilt of him who was spared. (362-63)

And a few pages later:

All post-Auschwitz culture, including its urgent critique, is garbage. In restoring itself after the things that happened without resistance in its own countryside, culture has turned entirely into the ideology it had been potentially--had been ever since it presumed, in opposition to material existence, to inspire that existence with the light denied it by the separation of mind from manual labor. Whoever pleads for the maintenance of this radically culpable and shabby culture becomes its accomplice, while the man who says no to culture is directly furthering the barbarism which our culture showed itself to be. (367)

--

=====

pierre joris 6 madison place albany ny 12202

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<http://www.albany.edu/~tm0900/nomad.html>

"A book has to be the axe for the frozen sea inside us.

This I believe."

(Kafka, Letter to Oskar Pollack 27 Jan 1904)

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136. **Jordan Davis**

John Ashbery / Lisa Jarnot

Wed 4 Dec 1996

Non-readers of the TLS may be interested in John Ashbery's list of international books of the year -- one of the three books he chose to mention (and quote quite a bit from) was *_Some Other Kind of Mission_* by Lisa Jarnot. Get your copy now before the tracers of Ashbery's idiocanon scarf up the supply! -- J Davis

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137. **Mark Wallace**

what graduate studies do

Wed 4 Dec 1996

I'd like to agree with Ron Silliman's comments the other day about the role that graduate students play in keeping employed professors employed, so to speak, and also in the need for English departments to engage in the honest telling of the tale about the job prospects ahead for those who pursue graduate degrees.

The situation is made more complex, of course, by the way the economic/social investment of English department professors has profound links to their psychological reactions to this problem. Many English department professors got their jobs at a time when there were many jobs; such professors often find it difficult actually to BELIEVE, in my experience, how different the experience of their graduate students is from their own. Academic jobs are often not great jobs by any means; nonetheless the difference between having a stable academic position, and a part-time poorly paid adjunct position or some variation thereof, can be intense. I recall a professor I know, actually quite sympathetic to the cause of part-timers and graduate students, telling me about his plans for a summer European vacation and asking me what I was doing in the summer; when I said "looking for some kind of temp job so I can make it through to the fall," he was greatly sympathetic, but also SHOCKED--oddly enough, it simply hadn't occurred to him that part-time professors and graduate students don't often go on vacations or spend the summer working on their writing, but spend a lot of time scrambling for other part-time work of various kinds.

Sometimes, of course, full-time professors can be actively complicit in hiding economic realities from their graduate students; in many other cases, it's not so much an active complicity as rather a collective institutional delusion. In a situation where the very possibility of tenure in general is now coming under intense attack (such as the case at Minnesota), many professors (who were not, it must be admitted, ever all that attuned to the social realities of their country) simply can't DEAL with the fact that, indeed, that there literally may be no such thing as permanent tenured positions in English AT ALL in the United States in, say, 20-30 years from now. By no means am I defending those professors who can't accept this reality, but I am suggesting how their own desires/investments in their own professional life make certain realities pass them by.

The main reaction of professors, at the university where I was in graduate school, was that there was still a "proper" way to get a university job, and anyone who didn't follow that "proper" method would be themselves personally responsible for the failure to get a job. "Proper" method meant, of course,

choosing an academic field, reading thoroughly ALL academic scholars/critics who write in that field, reading the particular small portion of the academic literary canon that such a field covered, and then preparing yourself to present your "expertise" when job interviews rolled around, assuming they ever did.

Then, of course, there are the collective institutional delusions of students, both graduates and undergraduates. These delusions seem to me far more tragic. Quite often among my students, graduate and undergraduate, the love of literature is incredibly intense, all consuming. They love books so much, and they want to devote their lives to passing that love on to others. They want to do something interesting with their lives--who can blame them? One can tell such students about "social reality" and one SHOULD tell them. But 20 year olds, even 25 year olds, have such intense belief in the POWER OF WHAT THEY LOVE that it can be easy for them not to deal with economic consequences that in many ways will only emerge later. You can tell them that there are no jobs, no future in this, you'll have to make a living some other way. But how to make someone who desperately wants to believe that they can make a living doing what they love that they live in a country where, increasingly, that is an impossibility?

I had a 21-year old student in my office the other day. She LOVES Modernist poetry; Stein is amazing, Williams is amazing, she wants more of it. She wants to go to graduate school. I tell her about these economic realities, and she understands them--I mean this seriously, she really does. And then I ask her "Why do you want to go to graduate school?" And she says, "Because literature is what MATTERS to me. It may be ALL that matters to me." And I wonder to myself what to say to her. That we live in a society where feeling the way she does may lead her to future serious problems? That maybe she's better off not going to graduate school? Well, she knows that, and she doesn't care. And I think to myself, you know, that's the way I felt too--in fact, it's the way I still feel. I know that, and I don't care. And I end up telling her that I've devoted my own life to writing, despite the fact of what was going to happen to me, that since I've spent years doing the things I think I should do, despite what anyone otherwise tells me, the only thing I can tell her to do is to devote her life to what she wants to devote it to, and to what she loves. But pay attention to practical reality, I tell her, you MORE THAN ANYONE have got to pay attention to practical reality. And she hears me, she does, and she walks out of my office, and I have no idea what is going to happen to either one of us.

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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138. **Pritchett, Pat**

Re: after this

Wed 4 Dec 1996

You can add to what is prob. a very long list Anja Spiegelman, mother of _Maus_ cartoonist Art Spiegelman. I'm reading _Maus_ for the first time, for a class called "Narrative & the Arts," and am completely caught up in it; I find it just amazing. I think the late Terrence Des Pres addresses the issue of "survivor suicide" in his book _The Survivor_ but it's been awhile and I can't remember now for sure. Robert Jay Lifton may also address it in some of his work, though he has written more about the survivors of Hiroshima.

Patrick Pritchett

From: maria damon

To: POETICS

Subject: Re: after this

Date: Wednesday, December 04, 1996 8:46AM

many survivors of the camps committed suicide. one of them, thaddeus borowski

said, the whole world is a concentration camp. celan was another.--maria d

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139. **maria damon**

Re: after this

Wed 4 Dec 1996

many survivors of the camps committed suicide. one of them, thaddeus borowski said, the whole world is a concentration camp. celan was another.--maria d

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

> Steve Evans wrote (quoting Adorno):

>

> > But it is not wrong to raise the less cultural

> > question whether after Auschwitz you can go on living--

> > especially whether one who escaped by accident, one who by

> > rights should have been killed, may go on living. His mere

> > survival calls for the coldness, the basic principle of
> > bourgeois subjectivity, without which there could have been
> > no Auschwitz; this is the drastic guilt of him who was
> > spared. (362-63)
>
> As soon as this thread was raised I thought of Primo Levi, and this last
> sentence reminds me of the bewilderment (no, not strong enough: try
> 'despair') I felt upon hearing of Levi's suicide. He had given me hope
> that writing can sometimes heal without forgetting, that his understated
> style (which heightened the horror without resorting to sensationalism)
> helped him to cope and understand.
>
> Was it the 'drastic guilt' that Adorno mentioned that killed him? I
> haven't read anything that 'explains' why he ended his life - does
> anyone have any insights?
>
>
>
> Thanks,
> Tom Beard.

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140. **Christopher Alexander**

Re: taste, judgment, etc...

Wed 4 Dec 1996

kali writes:

> And, if Wystan had in mind the sort of tastes Pound expressed--"violent
> narrow tastes," well, that doesn't seem to me a good example of the sort
> of taste that is **not** related to a distinct set of cultural values. Can
> you count Pound's politics as unrelated to his poetry? I can't.

and of course Pound's modernism can be read, esp with relation to Mauberley, as in part a (complicated) rxn to/against the inheritance of the aesthetic mvmt--specifically its implication in the cause of WWI: for two gross of broken statues, etc. so even the "violent narrow tastes" of the later Pound have ultimately to be situated in EZ's interrogation of the relation between 'taste' and larger cultural structures--whatever disturbing, disgusting errors that interrogation was to lead him into. .. Christopher Alexander, etc. [REDACTED]

"The second edition of this book consists largely of a reproduction of the first edition, with additional theorems and examples."

--t.m. macrobert,
an introduction to the theory of infinite series

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141. **Pierre Joris**

Re: Johnny Guitar

Wed 4 Dec 1996

George Bowering wrote:

>
> All this talk on westerns has been about movies, I note. As the author of 2
> westerns (novels), I have to wonder whether any of you people grew up
> reading western novels, or whether that had stopped after I was a kid.
>
> George Bowering.
>
> 2499 West 37th Ave.,
> Vancouver, B.C.,
> Canada V6M 1P4
>
> fax: [REDACTED]
> e-mail: [REDACTED]

At 8 I read a wonderful German translation (it cut all the religio-pompous naturo-romance verbiage down to size) of James Fenimore Cooper's PRAIRIE -- with the early eastern-westerns right after that -- my love for upstate New York, the Hudson & lake areas I always ascribe to leatherstocking country being the psychotopography of my early imagination of the foreign -- just as discovering the djott el-djerid, the salt marsh/desert between the Algerian oasis of the Souf and the Tunisian city of Gafsa was an instant recognition of the much beloved topography of the open chapter of volume 1 of Karl May's 72 volumes of "Reise-erzählungen" -- which of course include the many volumes set in the "Wild West" with Old Shatterhand and Winnetou as heroes.

After that it was on to Ernest Haycox, Zane Gray, Louis L'Amour & hundreds of German comics-type western tales -- then Lucky Luke, the great French comic strip.

Only later the "serious" writings dealing with the modern west by the likes of Douglas Woolf, William Eastlake, Ed Dorn (the fiction, not only *Slinger* and *Gran Apacheria*), etc.

guess I better hunker down & read them bow'ring novellas too now...

Pierre

=====

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<http://www.albany.edu/~tm0900/nomad.html>

"A book has to be the axe for the frozen sea inside us.

This I believe."

(Kafka, Letter to Oskar Pollack 27 Jan 1904)

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142. **amato**

westerns, odds & ends...

Wed 4 Dec 1996

yeah, ok, i'll throw in with the boetticher fans here too, what with the seven or so randolph scott westerns he made (and burt kennedy scripted)... *the tall t* (with, again, richard boone) and *buchanan rides alone* are my favorites... boetticher's *the bullfighter and the lady* is pretty much *the* bullfighting flick, though his life itself was in some ways more amazing than his films... he wrote an autobiography, as i recall...

but i like anthony mann's stuff better!...

and hey: i think van kilmer's doc pretty much makes *tombstone*, is the centerpiece of that film... i savor every moment he's onscreen---really quite something, how he plays that homoerotic angle, and even more reason why i didn't like his batman... but nothin' against dennis quaid either, or for that matter victor matrone's elegant handling...

and george: i must admit, i've read only a few westerns (strictly speaking)... didn't even care much for western comic books when i was into comics, go figure... sorry man!... don't quite know why this is (talk about not thinking through my tastes!), though it may perhaps be in the more conventional prose that comprises so much of this writing (i haven't read your stuff, so please don't take offense!)... i've tried one louis l'amour, and it didn't do nothin' for me... though cormac mccarthy is another story...

& three cheers for primo levi, using his *the periodic table* next semester in my, uhm, tech. writing class...

best,

joe

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143. **amato**

Re: Unorthodox Westerns

Wed 4 Dec 1996

haven't seen **ride in the whirlwind**, rob, but this and **the shooting** were (according to maltin here, again) filmed simultaneously... and the latter is worth checking out (esp. jack nicholson's perf.), as is lang's pic you mention...

i do understand the reservations you express wrt **the searchers**... these just can't be wished away, and whether one can 'forgive' (forgive me this word) any work its age or flaws (let's say) is probably going to be a matter of that complex kali refers to... personally, i find great solace in **the searchers** just in terms of the way the film moves, its use of landscape, its more quiet, less assuming features (as opposed, say, to the more subliminal aspects of wayne's character)... but i'd say you'd have to be so forgiving to appreciate most of ford, in fact---even a flick which i adore mightily, **the grapes of wrath** (though perhaps less so here)...

as to wood's "homecoming," it's no more problematic, on the surface of it, than her having been abducted in the first place, no?... though perhaps weak as a form of racial closure in today's terms, what's at least being hinted at (and again, i agree---at the expense of natives) is that racial otherness can be accommodated... i mean, it would hardly be realistic, so to speak, if ethan (or anybody else in that flick---and let's keep in mind the "half-breed" status of jeffrey hunter) did a complete about-face... but that the film places so much dramatic emphasis on reunion clearly assuages white anxieties, yes...

best,

joe

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144. **Kali Tal**

Re: after this

Wed 4 Dec 1996

maria damon wrote:

many survivors of the camps committed suicide. one of them, thaddeus borowski said, the whole world is a concentration camp. celan was another.--maria d

suicide among trauma survivors of all kinds is quite common. suicides of american viet nam war combat veterans are very high, as are suicides of rape

and/or incest survivors. lots of theories about this. my own is that the burden of dual vision is sometimes too difficult to bear. if you read tadeusz borowski (whose this way to the gas, ladies and gentleman is one of the few holocaust texts to make strong use of dark humor) it seems to me pretty understandable that life inside his head would be intolerable.

i tend to think of trauma as a "plot violation." we've all got these stories we live our lives by--get up, go to work, catch the bus home, etc. of course, there **is** no plot, but the pretense that there is one works for most of us, unless (to lean on Eco for a moment), trauma forces us to discover its absence by mistake. trauma is that moment in life when all our stories fail and we find ourselves thinking "but this isn't supposed to be happening to me!"

those who spend a significant period of time in a traumatic environment (a concentration camp, a combat zone, a home where violent sexual abuse becomes the norm) are forced to generate new stories to explain what is happening to them. usually these stories have little to do with the stories which shaped their expectations in their "previous lives."

at the conclusion of the traumatic experience (the release from the camp, the DEROS date, the escape from the violent home), the survivor is returned to a world where everyone else's stories are essentially intact. survivor authors are alternately compelled to tell their tales of trauma (under the banner of "never again," or other similar calls) and in hopeless despair about the impossibility of conveying their experience with mere words. i think it is at the moment when the gap seems completely unbridgeable, and the efforts the author (or storyteller) have made seem to have been to no avail, that hopelessness sets in, and suicide seems like a viable option. guilt may have something to do with it, but i think only because the telling of the tale doesn't seem to pay the debt to the dead.

i always think of two stories when this subject comes up. one is of a woman who we interviewed when i was working for the u.s. holocaust memorial museum. this woman was in her sixties, healthy and successful, with several grandchildren of whom she was very proud. she told her story of survival at auschwitz and then looked at the interviewer in a puzzled fashion. i don't have the transcript here, but she said something like, "it's so strange." and she gestured to her rather plump form. "right now, i'm on a diet. but part of me is always in the camps, and always hungry. i've never gotten out of the habit of carrying biscuits in my pocket." dual vision. survivors always see the world through two sets of eyes--one caught forever in the traumatic environment; one which operates in the everyday of the untraumatized world.

the other story concerns a viet vet friend of mine who was asked, one time too many, if platoon was a "realistic" viet nam war movie. he heaved a sigh of

great exasperation and said that _no_ war movie could be realistic. "a realistic war movie would be one in which, suddenly, in the midst of the picture, someone came out and sprayed the audience with machine gun fire while every third seat exploded." survivors know that trauma can never be conveyed or related by storytelling--words don't rupture people's personal plots, though they may be able to impress people's conscious minds. survivors know that in the case of trauma, only being is believing.

kali

Kali Tal

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145. **Mark W Scroggins**

Re: what graduate studies do

Wed 4 Dec 1996

As a former colleague of Mark's in adjunct thralldom (hi Mark), I read his post with nothing but sad assent. I suppose I am one of the very few lucky ones of our generation who've actually gotten a tenure-track job, at a place where tenure is under the same creeping attack it is in so many places--but it looks like it'll last until I get _mine_, so perhaps I speak out of some unconscious comfort.

This isn't the world's greatest job--but the teaching load (3/2) and the pay are far better, I know, than I could expect from many fulltime positions; and it's lightyears better than adjuncting. (And I know as well about temping summers, and how fulltime faculty too often seem quite oblivious to the extremities to which adjuncts resort to pay the rent.)

I know about the consuming love for poetry that Mark talks about--and I know as well that I can't imagine doing anything else, at least given the way I've spent the last ten years. His advice to his graduate student strikes me as the only thing one can say. Writers and scholars of Mark's and my generation were led down a primrose path in a way--our mentors saw our devotion and love of writing, and encouraged us to do what they thought we could do well and what they thought would be rewarded in the real world. But those rewards simply aren't there anymore--perhaps the most honest thing to do would simply be to close down or radically curtail the PhD programs for the foreseeable future, to make it clear that if one wants to make a life out of writing that one will have to do outside of the academy. I'm glad to be teaching in a department that has no

PhD program--there's no lying involved here: our MA students know that the only real career prospects for them lie in teaching in the public schools or the community college system here in Florida (and happily enough, there seems to be lots of demand for those people); most of them have no illusions about what their futures hold.

And perhaps I've been a bit naive, but watching the actual hiring process from the inside, rather than as an anxious interviewee, has rid me of many illusions. Watching sausage being made doesn't hold a candle to seeing universities make decisions on new faculty. The entire business is so sordid and interested--given the highminded rhetoric in which it's couched--that I'm tempted to advise potential PhD candidates to go and take the foreign service exam or apply for the CIA--those organizations at least don't pretend to be pursuing some sort of disinterested goals.

Thanks, Mark, for a thoughtful and rather moving post. See you later this month at the meat market.

Mark Scroggins

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146. **amato**

Re: what graduate studies do

Wed 4 Dec 1996

mark, nice post!...

i excerpt from something i posted to another list:

and as a way of concretizing said question, i'd like to be certain that we observe at the outset the probable vast range of salary/material differences represented by participants... undergrads, grads, profs---even these educational distinctions, and places of work, don't do justice to our individualized access to material means...

*further, we have some public basis for considering just how disparate the educational context per se can be... i note in the 18 october issue of the chronicle the listing of "best paid employees at 479 private colleges"... and i note the six highest salaries at my institution (iit) to range from a low of \$146,630 (plus \$10,230 benefits) for our dean to a high of \$195,780 (plus \$17,280) for our president... both of which are well in excess of the highest paid tenured humanities prof---around \$40,000 (plus maybe \$8,000 in benefits)... which is itself *below* the avg. assistant prof. salary on our campus (from an earlier chronicle piece) of approx. \$43,000...*

compare this with the salary range of the highest paid institution, cornell (based on my quick scan)... a low of \$129,000 for the president (plus an amazing \$165,269 in benefits---must be a parachute, no?) to a high of (get

this) \$1,729,709 for the chair of cardiothoracic surgery (plus \$46,371 in benefits!)... in fact, med. school profs. and admins. seem to be absurdly high all the way 'round...

can any of you make these numbers speak to your own life and work situations?... or better, how on earth to do this?

anyway, my point in the above was to ground out a discussion of pay for *virtual* courses and the like in terms of postsecondary material disparities... i've found that it's just not possible to talk about wage or opportunity w/o some fine distinctions, which reveal some crude inequities... and that we had all better tune in to precisely what those inequities are...

on the one hand, i'm a proponent of collective bargaining... at the same time, i have to reiterate what so many have already said: that one should pursue a phd b/c one loves the pursuit, and plan on making money doing something other than teaching...

i understand this is spoken from the subject position of one who holds a mighty 3/3.... but LO---at the amazing wage of \$34,500 (in chicago) after five years on my campus (plus two years visiting elsewhere, and one adjunct), and at the ripe old age of 41... and ysee---unless i'm willing to throw in some customarily personal factors (such as my wife's income, or family support, or credit card debt, or whatever) then who can really understand where i'm coming from?... i have one colleague who drives a taxi at night to make ends meet, and another who sports either a sporty new car or a new-ish four-wheel drive blazer...

so i think the challenge here is to be as honest as we can be about our individual situations, and about our local situations, while pushing at the same time to ensure that the institution---nationally, say---moves in equitable directions... and i fully understand why my colleague who drives a taxi by night pushes a bit harder than most...

best,

joe

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147. **Kali Tal**

Re: tasty

Wed 4 Dec 1996

The number of memes with which we come into contact in our lives is enormous: why is it that some find fertile ground in our brains whereas others have no effect? Some 'infections' can be explained culturally (my taste for electronic music over guitar music fits in with my mathematical background and my love of abstraction), but how can we

explain these original predilections? I tend towards the view that there is (and I know that this is a dirty word in these circles) a genetic influence - maybe I was born with a predisposition towards what we call Western Logic. I don't know.

Tom,

Maybe some of our predilections **are** innate. The problem for me, though, is how we sort out innate predilections from culturally inculcated predilections. And of course, innate predilections are influenced by culture as well. (I train my dogs, and I'm thinking now of how you can ruin a "good" dog with "bad" training, and you can turn a "bad" dog into at least an acceptable dog with "good" training. And also how you can start with a dog who has a "natural taste" for fetching, and you can easily turn that innate attribute into an interest in a variety of kinds of "work"... none of which may involve fetching but which turn out to fulfill the same needs in the dog that fetching fulfills, or [through "bad" training] completely destroy her interest in fetching. The influences on people are much more complicated than the influences on dogs--partly because childhood is so long for people--and we have a hard time figuring **dogs** out.)

I figure that as long as these innate qualities can't be sorted out, we might as well concentrate on the cultural influences we **can** sort out. If we do a really complete job of this (which doesn't yet seem possible--and may never be), I suppose we can assume that whatever is "left over" is innate.

Kali

Kali Tal

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148. **aerialedge**

Re: after this

Wed 4 Dec 1996

A few quotes from Adorno's *_Minima Moralia_*:

"The cause of immediacy is now espoused only by the most circumspect reflection."

"Terror before the abyss of the self is removed by the consciousness of being concerned with nothing so very different from arthritis or sinus trouble."

"micrological moral myopia"

"Every work of art is an uncommitted crime."

"True thoughts are those alone which do not understand themselves."

"The ruse of the dazed rabbits redeems, with them, even the hunter, whose guilt they purloin."

no poetry?

--Rod

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149. **Judy Roitman**

Re: one seize tastes all

Wed 4 Dec 1996

Taste taste taste.

We had a little Rorschach test here recently -- Nova convention II, in honor of Burroughs, bringing a motley crew to our little town -- John Giorno, Phillip Glass, Laurie Anderson, Debbie Harry, Ed Sanders, Patti Smith. In my own little crowd no two people seemed to like the same stuff, and what any particular person liked was pretty unpredictable. Somehow I find this interesting.

----- 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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150. **Burt Kimmelman**

Re: PHDS

Wed 4 Dec 1996

Karl et al.,

My initial objection to CW PhD programs is simply that they may delude people into thinking that if they get the PhD then they are necessarily bona fide writers; in other words, I can imagine someone whose career as a writer ends with the degree, not because the once student now graduate wants the career to end there, but because the person has no talent and can't get published and so on. And I hasten to say here that I realize that in saying the above I am inviting commentary on what it means to be a writer; so let me say now that you should please not construe from my remarks here any particular philosophy about the vocation of writing.

burt

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151. **Burt Kimmelman**

Re: after this

Wed 4 Dec 1996

not to add to what may be a growing confusion. but wasn't it hannah arendt who said that after the auschwitz poetry is an impossibility (a paraphrase). of course i am aware of her comment about eichman: the banality of evil.

try primo levi?

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152. **Burt Kimmelman**

Re: Serbia

Wed 4 Dec 1996

Marjorie,

the letter to the times sounds like a great idea to me.

burt

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153. **Jordan Davis**

didentite

Wed 4 Dec 1996

"Well, why not? Has he any bent suggestive of the stage? Apart from his love of flowers, of course."

"He takes readily to poetry, sir. Anything with a beat and no exact meaning excites him."

--Nigel Dennis, *_Cards of Identity_*

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154. **Charles Alexander**

Re: Johnny Guitar

Wed 4 Dec 1996

At 11:54 PM 12/3/96 -0800, you wrote:

>All this talk on westerns has been about movies, I note. As the author of 2
>westerns (novels), I have to wonder whether any of you people grew up
>reading western novels, or whether that had stopped after I was a kid.

George Bowering.

George, although I grew up in the West, I didn't grow up on those novels. But later I certainly came to admire such novels of the west as Willa Cather's *Death Comes to the Archbishop*, and even some of Edward Abbey, although he can be entirely sentimental at times. I certainly knew people who grew up reading Louis L'Amour and Zane Gray twenty years ago -- whether there are some who still do, I don't know. Which ones did you grow up reading?

charles

----- get off my back. the future fields into which I write are unimaginable. I do not know, any more than you do, what is around me, nor how far to go, nor precisely what I leave behind.

--Beverly Dahlen
from A Reading 8 - 10
published by Chax Press

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155. **Christina Fairbank Chirot**

Re: *Unorthodox Westerns*

Wed 4 Dec 1996

On NBC morning news show today an official was excitedly discussing the exploration of Mars in terms of Westerns--that before the Colonists could be settled--the mountain men and Lewis and Clark had to precede them--

This followed by shots of a reporter walking on a set built by NASA--to resemble the surface of Mars--

no doubt to be the set for some Martian Westerns . . . coming soon to a theatre near you--

Re reading Westerns--would recommend the works of Leslie Marmon Silko--and MANKILLER--

Did Budd Boeticher ever get to finish his dream film--about bullfighting?

Taste--another connotation--a "taste" of heroin--"smack" some having thought to come from "schmeck"--Yiddish/German for "taste"--

"There are two kinds of spurs, my friend. Those that come in by the door and those that come in by the window. Take off that pistol belt."

--The Good, the Bad and the Ugly

"For writing is burning up alive, but it is also a rebirth from

its own ashes."

--Cendrars, The Detonated Man

-dbc

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156. **amato**

Re: cyber-cowboys

Wed 4 Dec 1996

finally getting around to chewing through pierre's post from SO long ago (around 48 hrs!) about cspace as the frontier etc...

and yknow, the popularity of the western in these spaces (self-fulfilling prophecy for my part, i know) speaks precisely to the sense that these spaces seem a sort of west, a sort of opening out (though due east of my location---IF i'm willing to locate "this" post someplace in the heart of a suny/b mainframe, and if i'm willing to locate "mself" as in chicago)...

there's so much hype (incl. my own at times) about cspace that saying so may be mere platitude, but it strikes me that so many of us around here are such cowboy or cowgirl junkies...

joe

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157. **Eliza McGrand- CVA Guest**

craft ... the mouse in the snake

Wed 4 Dec 1996

joe i think i know what you mean about craft -- the tie-in to writing programs. i have some problems with those, the main one being that they seem arranged to admit people with connections, the "good" recommendation letters, but the people who most could use what they offer are the people WITHOUT connections, who HAVE no one to write recommendation letters... that is, ... THE BEGINNERS! it all seems to work into a Certify In Something Or Other factory. but on the other hand, a little time to write, someone to pay attention and give you focused response, is that not a paradise of sorts? anyway, by craft, no, i would not, repeat, would NOT say it was that which is embued by apprenticeship with Famous Writer.

you know, so many of the great, original writers came to their writing as a solitary process (although with immense, hungry, chaotic reading) that there is a lot to be said for the "individual finding their own way" method. though since one (i should HOPE) is reading other poets, it isn't quite so alone, as it is self-guided.

what i have in mind by craft was captured beautifully by someone in the descriptive "attentive" -- a sort of deep, intense, committed attention to what is happening in the arrangement of the words, in the shaping of the idea, in the tracing out of where the idea goes. i suppose i emphasize craft because i really am tired of screaming of cocktail napkin school of poetry (you know, person gets drunk, writes their Beautiful Thoughts -- usually in terrible rhymes -- on a cocktail napkin, then shows this napkin, because they can't even be bothered to recopy it, much less rewrite and re-edit, whenever they want to prove how Lofty and Intelligent and Philosophical they are. GRRRHHHHHHHHH!!!) and a notion of "craft," as in workmanship, deep attention, lifetime course of learning more, tools, flexibility, respect, is such an antidote. e

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158. **Eliza McGrand- CVA Guest**

Re: Apology.....

Wed 4 Dec 1996

dear lynda (and dan) honestly, i wouldn't worry about it. there are always sour people on any list who live for an excuse to blast other people. once and a while poems go out on list, though usually only if connected to a topic under discussion. it sounds more, lynda, as if you are hoping for a poetry mailing list or workshop group. i can think of a few on the web, if you have access to the internet (a site i'm involved in, Creative Coalition of Artists, has one), where people post poems and others respond. i don't do much with the CCA site, and right now we're having problems getting the cgi scripts up at our new provider. but it is there. articulata also runs a site, and gives contributors an opportunity to post a selection of their own work (all for free). i would guess there are others...

e

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159. **william marsh**

Re: what graduate studies do

Wed 4 Dec 1996

Mark--

the emergence of the "contingent" work force has so many of us, i guess, in the bind that you speak of -- the one that makes us consider (reconsider) our career choices and inspires us as well to issue the kinds of warnings you exemplify so well in the story about your student. Quite clearly the prospect of acquiring that full-time, tenure-track professorial position i might have once dreamed about (dream modeled, no doubt, on what were probably the deluded ideas you

spoke of) seems less likely now, and although it remains a possibility down the road, i've adopted my "contingent" role for the most part with the same resolve and perhaps even fortitude that i'd think a lot of workers have (since the contingent work force is hardly an entity exclusive to the current academic environment but rather seems the order of the day).

Almost all of the instructors i know make their living "drifting" from school to school, accruing a salary piecemeal, but accruing it nonetheless (the slang in CA i think is "freeway flyer" -- is this common elsewhere?). Writers on the subject of contingent workforce often point out the advantages of such a life--flexibility, freedom, variety, etc.--and perhaps there's some wisdom in that, although, depending on the particular situation, the disadvantages (instability, etc.) could outweigh.

One reason for hope, i believe, might be what i perceive to be a re-emergence of interest in liberal studies, particularly in the guise of that new academic rubric "Writing and Communications." I currently work for a university (part-time, "associate" faculty) that caters primarily to adult professionals returning to complete or acquire degrees in everything from Business and Management to, well, Liberal Studies. I'm constantly being reminded, by students and faculty alike, and even across disciplines, that there's a real need out there in all fields for people who know how to write/communicate effectively, a notion which has some lasting resonance, for me at least, given the fact that i'm working with people who have been "out there" and who, having recognized the need, come back to do something about it.

My feeling is that there is, in fact, a solid market for teachers of writing--and that the specific situation i'm speaking of here may herald a new "professional" interest in fundamental thinking/writing/communicating skills that could, in turn, create jobs (albeit contingent) for the dedicated. Of course this may be unique to my local environment and my perception, but as a teacher of writing myself i do feel for the most part "in demand" -- the market may be shifting to a different group (i.e., from undergratuage state university to private professional university), but it's there nonetheless.

The trick, i guess, is to empower ourselves through our new role as "contingent" teacher / and i'd be curious to know how you or anyone else might envision the process by which one could do that. Given a few select memories of certain "full professors" i had, as both grad and undergraduate, and also given the unique series of contortions you point out as being necessary to the "proper method" of getting a job, i'm not so sure i'm interested anymore in aspiring to that goal, delusion or not.

Take care.

Bill

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160. **Karl Richter**

Re: PHDS

Wed 4 Dec 1996

On Wed, 4 Dec 1996, Burt Kimmelman -@NJIT wrote:

My initial objection to CW PhD programs is simply that they may delude people into thinking that if they get the PhD then they are necessarily bona fide writers; in other words, I can imagine someone whose career as a writer ends with the degree, not because the once student now graduate wants the career to end there, but because the person has no talent and can't get published and so on. And I hasten to say here that I realize that in saying the above I am inviting commentary on what it means to be a writer; so let me say now that you should please not construe from my remarks here any particular philosophy about the vocation of writing.

I understand your point. I went through that delusion upon getting an MFA: I imagined that suddenly I would begin to be published everywhere, that writing would become easy somehow just because I'd earned my credential. It took me a while to get over it, to realize that any fully engaged writer must constantly re-embrace her/his apprenticeship, that there's NEVER a point at which she/he stops learning and begins writing. (You were right. It's difficult to avoid philosophizing about the nature of the artistic enterprise when you begin to examine the artist's expectations and societal role.) However, I think that the feeling that one is 'done' as a writer, that one finally knows what she/he is doing, is a stage most young writers, whether in the academy or not, go through. Maybe I'm wrong about that. Anyway, my point is that no one who is talented and active will be limited by a creative-emphasis PhD, not any more than someone who is talentless and lazy will be enhanced by one. Writing and publishing are hard no matter the context of one's life/living.

Karl Richter



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161. **Joseph Lease**

Re: taste, judgment, etc...

Wed 4 Dec 1996

it's possible that taste has never been experienced or looked at outside an investigation however selfconscious of its relation to power structures race class gender: however one problem we postmodern folk who know Pound for example knowing this (we could do likewise with Stein or Williams or Eliot)

is how do we experience agency . . . our perceived and experienced subject position to make decisions and commitments with very real consequences.
so it's not either the aesthetic or the political but both and

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162. **Joseph Lease**

Re: after this

Wed 4 Dec 1996

Rod,

Do you know David Shapiro's powerful response to Adorno: an essay called "After"?

In a book called Testimony, ed. David Rosenberg.

A hugely powerful piece with everything to do with Celan and Rothenberg.

It inspired my poem Slivovitz (in Talisman 15).

I think history is a kind of litmus test for politics. Adorno's perception is the crux of that: if we can't speak we can't speak.

All best,

Joseph

On Wed, 4 Dec 1996 [REDACTED] wrote:

A few quotes from Adorno's _Minima Moralia_ :

"The cause of immediacy is now espoused only by the most circumspect reflection."

"Terror before the abyss of the self is removed by the consciousness of being concerned with nothing so very different from arthritis or sinus trouble."

"micrological moral myopia"

"Every work of art is an uncommitted crime."

"True thoughts are those alone which do not understand themselves."

"The ruse of the dazed rabbits redeems, with them, even the hunter, whose guilt they purloin."

no poetry?

--Rod

163. **DS**

Re: one seize tastes all

Wed 4 Dec 1996

I think Pound is a good example here.

At 06:26 PM 12/3/96 -0500, you wrote:

>It was the other Wystan (Auden) who made the distinction between taste and
>judgment and allowed as how the former should not impede the latter. I may
>not be enthralled with say, *_Naked Lunch_*, but if I'm not, I ought not to
>let my distaste for it affect my judgment of its accomplishments (or lack
>thereof). Similarly, my affection for a work shouldn't blind me to its
>aesthetic/political/cultural faults, as for instance with the recently
>stated liking by some, myself included, for John Wayne. Inversely, my wife
>can't abide Frank Sinatra b/c he was (is) such a nasty little shit to
>people. I understand, but I still say it's her loss.

>

>Patrick Pritchett

> -----

>From: Aldon L. Nielsen

>To: POETICS

>Subject: Re: one seize tastes all

>Date: Tuesday, December 03, 1996 6:11PM

>

>

>it was precisely the reductiveness that I was responding to --

>

>Nothing wrong at all with "finding out for oneself" -- MUCH wrong, to my
>view, with the refusal, on grounds of "taste" or otherwise, to come to
>grips with aesthetic differences -- The refuge of "taste" is, I think,
>most often a refusal indeed to find out for oneself -- It's certainly a
>refusal to put one's findings to the test of contact with the findings of
>others -- Pound and Olson, no matter how narrow their focus could at time
>be, didn't seem to me to be reluctant to spell out the supposed grounds of
>their judgements (Though they were sometimes prone not to attend closely
>to those who dispute their grounds)

>

>"Their" above, up there

>

>I do not have the particular sets of aesthetic judgements I have in my
>head simply because I inhaled them, helplessly (and that doesn't at all

>seem to be what Kali was saying either) -- but they're certainly the
>result of interactions with some specifiable social structures -- and my
>reactions against those structures are as discussable as what I gathered
>from them --

>
>

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164. **Joseph Lease**

Re: after this

Wed 4 Dec 1996

Avrom Sutzkever is probably less read by avant-garde poets than he should be: he was in the Vilna ghetto and resistance: a remarkable poet, gorgeous and haunted in a way almost completely unlike the way Celan is.

All best,
Joseph

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165. **tomandel**

"The Man Who Shot the Other Man"

Wed 4 Dec 1996

For those who don't recognize the phrase

"The Man Who Shot the Other Man"

it is the title of a poem of mine in Letters of the Law (Sun & Moon 1994 -- available from SPD, Rod, etc.), the first poem in the book in fact.

A friend of mine is the source: "Oh, you always want to watch some movie about 'the man who shot the other man'" she said.

Obviously the phrase is a turn on "The Man Who Shot Liberty Valance" by Ford, Tom

Tom Mandel * 2927 Tilden St. NW
Washington DC 20008 * [REDACTED]
vox: [REDACTED] * fax [REDACTED]

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166. **robert zamsky**

Re: after this

Wed 4 Dec 1996

a coupl of thoughts on this line of writing after Aushwitz. first, arendt did say that, as well as Adorno, though I can't remember where (big help, i know). Also, all of her talk about the alternatives to violence (as her example, that of the late sixties) demonstrates the difficulty of negotiating between the horror of totalitarianism and the desire for retribution -- a crux that pushes her to find "reason" as the answer (though I'm bothered by her lack of grappling with the question of whose "reason" this might be).

Also, what about Maurice Blanchot's book, *_Writing the Disaster_*, a newly revised edition came out last year, though I've not yet had a chance to look at it. Anyone?

Just some thoughts.

>

> not to add to what may be a growing confusion. but wasn't it hannah

> arendt who said that after the auschwitz poetry is an impossibility

> (a paraphrase). of course i am aware of her comment about eichman:

> the banality of evil.

>

> try primo levi?

>

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167. **Jordan Davis**

Coultas / Mlinko @ POETRY CITY

Wed 4 Dec 1996

It's not too late to get your tickets for the Brenda Coultas / Ange Mlinko reading at Poetry City (5 Union Sq W, NYC) tomorrow night at 7 p.m. Actually, there are no tickets. It's free. We just ask that you buy a book. Incidentally, you'd like the books of these two writers a lot. J Davis

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168. **Andrew D Epstein**

Alice Notley & Vincent Katz (NYC)

Wed 4 Dec 1996

Hi! I wanted to announce another reading in the FW Dupee Poetry Reading Series at Columbia Univeristy, and to invite any of you in the area to attend:

ALICE NOTLEY and VINCENT KATZ

Introduced by Kenneth Koch

Monday, December 9

8 PM

Maison Francaise

Columbia University

116 & Broadway (take the 1 or 9 subway to 116th and go through the gates)

Admission is free

Wine and Cheese reception will follow

Alice Notley is the author of numerous books of poetry, including *How Spring Comes* (1981), *The Selected Poems of Alice Notley* (1993), and *The Descent of Alette* (1996). Her work is the subject of several essays (some by list members!) in the most recent issue of *_Poetics Briefs_*, ed. Jefferson Hansen.

Vincent Katz, poet and translator, is the author of *Cabal of Zealots* (1988), *New York Hello!* (1990, photos by Rudy Burkhardt), and most recently, *Charm*, translations of poems by Sextus Propertius (1995, *Sun & Moon*).

I hope you can make it!

Andrew Epstein

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169. **Joel Felix**

The Western Moon/Another Stone

Wed 4 Dec 1996

Poem for the Discovery of Ice on the Moon
after NBC

Not to scale, my
Clementine your red and
widening waves probe
nether craters sad to say not
hung with bat-women and men
but it's good work after the C.I.A., don't
you think? When little I would
have gone to Space even if
never to return void being such draw
but now I'm too much people.
The moon is a long shot away, and
I miss it already.

12-04

joel felix

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170. **Jeffrey W. Timmons**

Re: Apology.....

Wed 4 Dec 1996

On Tue, 3 Dec 1996, IMBURGIA wrote:

> I am the Wife of Listserve addressee, Dan. I thought this was a place to share poetry from the heart! I see from one persons response, that I was wrong! I am sorry! I will never send anything to you again. Please, do not let my sharing reflect on my Husband...who is a serious student and respectful reader of your List.

no you should continue to post when/what ever youd like. i apologize if i offended you. please dont let this keep you from doing what you like. its just that texts get recycled here in cyberspace. dont let what i did keep you from speaking. in all sincerity: write what you want. please.

Jeffrey Timmons

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171. **amato**

Re: Serbia

Wed 4 Dec 1996

yeah, i like the letter to the times idea too, esp. after hearing that the u.s. is beginning to back the protesters... so how do we proceed?... OR, anybody feel up to writing such a thing?...

joe

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172. **amato**

paul carroll...

Wed 4 Dec 1996

just read a poignant tribute in the chicago trib. magazine, "for paul: appreciating a fallen poet who led a brief revival of the art," by barry silesky, about the poet paul carroll, who evidently died last summer... it mentions that paul hoover (hi paul and maxine! if you're out there) was a student of carroll's, and i'm just wondering if anybody is familiar with his work... the article mentions that in 1968, carroll wrote _the poem in its skin_, and "edited a major

anthology, _the young american poets_, which came to be the first major publication for many of its since-famous contributors"... anyway, just trying to get a grip on paul carroll's poetry...

joe

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173. **Jeffrey W. Timmons**

Re: after this

Wed 4 Dec 1996

after this

immediacy espoused
by the circumspect

Terror abyss of self
removed by consciousness
concerned with nothing:
art is an uncommitted crime

thoughts do not
understand themselves

ruse:
dazed rabbits redeem
even the hunter

guilt

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174. **Jeffrey W. Timmons**

Re: Apology.....

Wed 4 Dec 1996

On Wed, 4 Dec 1996, Eliza McGrand- CVA Guest wrote:

*dear lynda (and dan)
honestly, i wouldn't worry about it. there are always sour people on any
list who live for an excuse to blast other people.*

just a clarification: i am not a sour person and i did not "blast" anyone. again: i apologize if i offended. i was just playing with the text.

Jeffrey W. Timmons

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175. **Aldon L. Nielsen**

Re: what graduate studies do

Wed 4 Dec 1996

There are, and always have been, cheaper and perhaps better ways to study and discuss literature than attending graduate school -- some get PhDs because teaching is one of the only ways to make any kind of living at all working directly with literature -- but I've always believed that the only compelling reason to go through what one goes through in a PhD program is a desire to work with literature specifically as an educator -- now, I agree with much in the recent posts on this subject, but there is an odd acceptance hovering around some of the discussion -- If one looks at the demographics (the same figures that caused people in the mid-eighties to predict a coming teacher shortage) it is clear that the numbers probably would be there (at least on a national scale) to employ a considerably larger percentage of the PhDs in English than we are currently employing -- There are few schools at which grad. students are their to give employment to the professors -- the majority of universities and colleges in the U.S. would have no trouble at all finding plenty of work for their current professors to do working only with undergrads (let us hastily admit that many of our colleagues don't want to be so employed) --

At San Jose State, we were ordered to make cuts at a time when our number of English majors was increasing -- and we were not alone in this --

There is a reason that universities want to shrink the number of tenured, tenure-track and full-time instructors -- They call it flexibility -- what would you call it?

One of two things is going to happen if we do not succeed in making significant political changes with regard to education issues soon -- either the right will succeed in privatizing higher education and rationing the goods (and you can guess who will get the goodies under that scenario) -- or "liberals" will reach a compromise under which higher education will be offered to larger numbers of students using a labor force of MOSTLY part-time and untenured faculty --

Jobs didn't just disappear because of a recession, and they didn't disappear because of a real drop in the numbers of college age youth with at least a modicum of desire for humanities and arts education --

On the up-side -- school measures finally started to win again on the ballot in Colorado this time around (where I read in the morning paper about a charter school that has been violating all the laws with regard to education for the "disabled")

unchartered and uncharted,
aldon

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176. **Jeffrey W. Timmons**

Re: craft ... the mouse in the snake

Wed 4 Dec 1996

On Wed, 4 Dec 1996, Eliza McGrand- CVA Guest wrote:

- > what i have in mind by craft was captured beautifully by someone in the
- > descriptive "attentive" -- a sort of deep, intense, committed attention
- > to what is happening in the arrangement of the words, in the shaping of
- > the idea, in the tracing out of where the idea goes.
- > and a notion of "craft," as
- > in workmanship, deep attention, lifetime course of learning more, tools,
- > flexibility, respect, is such an antidote.

i wont argue about the rhyming napkin bit but i think that something should be said for other methods of composition/construction. the version of craft here is only one means only one sort of process that can be used to create writing effects--anyone whos read kathy acker can attest to the strangeness of what happens there and while it does not fit this description of craft it nevertheless produces readerly responses. frank ohara is another case: many poems are occasional in just the sense of the napkins here mentioned--yet they are brilliant moments. perhaps i am just not much of a romantic humanist but the notion of an isolated individual toiling away at his (!) craft does not account for all the methods of aesthetic production in this technological age. benjamin not wordsworth. reproduction not authenticity.

jeffrey timmons

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177. **main**

Re: after this

Wed 4 Dec 1996

adorno's _prisms_ (p. 34): "The more total society becomes, the greater the reification of the mind and the more paradoxical its effort to escape reification on its own. Even the most extreme consciousness of doom threatens to degenerate into idle chatter. Cultural criticism finds itself faced with the final stage of the dialectic with culture and barbarism. To write poetry after Auschwitz is barbaric." also see adorno's _negative dialectics_, and rothenberg's _khurbn_: "an answer . . . to the proposition." dan featherston

On Tue, 3 Dec 1996, ms wrote:

i've been lurking, learning, looking for a week or so now without responding to anything whatsoever due to my newbiw status to the world of the poetical-academic.

now that's done with:

can anyone please tell me as to who first said that there could be no writing in the aftermath of the Holocaust?

i know there's a direct (and quite possibly a very famous) quote as such, that i've read somewhewre, but i can't for the life of me figure out where.

thanx again and sorry if i've bungled ny of you up with this itty-nitty-bitty query.

laytahs,

manny savopoulos

"The more things resist me the more rabid I get."

-Samuel Beckett

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178. **Aldon L. Nielsen**

Re: "The Man Who Shot the Other Man"

Wed 4 Dec 1996

and the friend of Tom's from whom I first heard this phrase is Norma Cole, whose books you really should always already have read

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179. **Matt Kirschenbaum**

what grad students (and others) can do -- for a start

Wed 4 Dec 1996

The Graduate Student Caucus of the MLA will be submitting the following motions, as well as the following resolution, to the MLA Delegate Assembly at the upcoming convention. If you're an MLA member and would like to support them, please consider attending the Delegate Assembly's meetings: sessions 178 and 432.

Feel free to forward as appropriate. Those who'd like more information about the GSC may contact me or its current President, Marc Bousquet <[REDACTED]>.

--Matt (VP for Policy, GSC)

October 15, 1996. The Graduate Student Caucus respectfully submits the following motions to the Delegate Assembly:

1) Staffing patterns--Standards

Whereas the proportion of part-time teachers in the academy has accelerated to unacceptable levels over the past two decades, and

Whereas language and literature departments have been particularly vulnerable in this regard, and

Whereas this trend threatens academic freedom, faculty self-governance, democratic access to the profession, reduces opportunity for student-faculty interaction, and disables the production of new knowledge in the discipline,

We move that the Committee on Professional Employment determine minimum standards of acceptable full time/part time ratios by various institutional circumstances, and report those standards by the next convention.

Motion 2 Staffing Patterns--Accreditation

We move that MLA direct substantial efforts to convincing accreditation agencies that educationally sound full-time/part-time faculty ratios (measured on a department-by-department basis) should be a determining factor in the accreditation process.

Motion 3. Public Relations.

Whereas working conditions in the academy are directly affected by social policy, and

Whereas MLA already devotes resources to public relations,

We move that MLA direct substantial public relations resources toward the immediate task of making the public aware of the educational advantages of reconverting part-time work to full-time jobs.

Motion 4. Representation.

Whereas MLA has recently acted to provide proportional representation for graduate students in the Delegate Assembly (MLA Constitution X.3),

Whereas the principle of "fair representation" in the Executive Council is already established with respect to the variety of modern languages represented by the membership (MLA Constitution VII.7 and VIII.5), and

Whereas graduate students and adjunct faculty do more than forty percent of all higher education teaching,

We move that MLA extend the principles of fair and proportional representation to the Executive Council and standing committees of the association to include graduate students and adjunct faculty in proportion to their membership in the association.

[motions revised November 19th] MORE-Resolution revisions follow below

October 15, 1996. The Graduate Student Caucus respectfully submits the following resolution to the Delegate Assembly:

RESOLUTION:

Whereas the increasing exploitation of graduate student and adjunct labor threatens the academic employment futures of at least one third of the Association's present membership (and all of its future membership), and

Whereas the law represents an important instrument in shaping staffing patterns in higher education, both through funding initiatives (such as California's 1988 act AB 1725, which provides incentives for community colleges to move toward a staffing pattern of 75% full-time instructors), and labor-equity decisions (such as recent decisions at the state and federal level determining the right of graduate employees at both public and private universities to collective bargaining),

Be it resolved that MLA take the lead in working with other disciplinary and higher-education groups in encouraging legislative and policy bodies at the national or state level to adopt and fund initiatives which would provide for labor equity in graduate-employee and adjunct work, and provide incentives for higher-education institutions to begin reductions in their reliance upon such labor.

[revised November 19th]

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180. **Jeffrey W. Timmons**

Re: taste, judgment, etc...

Wed 4 Dec 1996

From A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of Our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful

(Second edition, 1759)

"ON TASTE"

On a superficial view, we may seem to differ very widely from each other in our reasonings, and no less in our pleasures: but notwithstanding this difference, which I think to be rather apparent than real, it is probable that the standard both of reason and Taste is the same in all human creatures. For if there were not some principles of Judgment as well as of sentiment common to all mankind, no hold could possibly be taken either on their reason or their passions, sufficient to maintain the ordinary correspondence of life. It appears indeed to be generally acknowledged, that with regard to truth and falsehood there is something fixed. We find people in their disputes continually appealing to certain tests and standards which are allowed on all sides, and are supposed to be established in our common nature. But there is not the same obvious concurrence in any uniform or settled principles which relate to Taste. It is even commonly supposed that this delicate and aerial faculty, which seems too volatile to endure even the chains of a definition, cannot be properly tried by any test, nor regulated by any standard. There is so continual a call for the exercise of the reasoning faculty, and it is so much strengthened by perpetual contention, that certain maxims of right reason seem to be tacitly settled amongst the most ignorant. The learned have improved on this rude science, and reduced those maxims into a system. If Taste has not been so happily cultivated, it was not that the subject was barren, but that the labourers were few or negligent; for to say the truth, there are not the same interesting motives to impel us to fix the one, which urge us to ascertain the other. And after all, if men differ in their opinion concerning such matters, their difference is not attended with the same important consequences, else I make no doubt but that the logic of Taste, if I may be allowed the expression, might very possibly be as well digested, and we might come to discuss matters of this nature with as much certainty, as those which seem more immediately within the province of mere reason. And indeed it is very necessary at the entrance into such an enquiry, as our present, to make this point as clear as possible; for if Taste has no fixed principles, if the imagination is not affected according to some invariable and certain laws, our labour is like to be employed to very little purpose; as it must be judged an useless, if not an absurd undertaking, to lay down rules for caprice, and to set up for a legislator of whims and fancies....

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181. **Tom Beard**

Re: after this

Wed 4 Dec 1996

after this,
none but lyric

day
& other breakages
end as soft
mouths no more
believe
in light

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182. **wystan**

Forwarded: Sackler Archive

Wed 4 Dec 1996

From: "Tony Green" <[REDACTED]>

Dear Loss or Charles,

Can you help Tony out with this address--he's off
the List at the moment?

Thanks.

Wystan

Hello Wystan Cd you find out for me on the Poetics list the addresss of the
Marvin Sackler Archive (of concrete and visual poetry I think it is) Florida.
They used to subscribe to Splash.

Reason is Tara McLeod phoned last night to say he's printing a poem I sent him
for his project of a foldout book (15 pages) and the Sackler shd be a buyer, I
guess.

I think this counts as a book he's publishing, so I will be able to
shave
off my beard.

best

Tony Green,

e-mail: [REDACTED]

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183. **tmandel**

...the other man

Thu 5 Dec 1996

Yes, Aldon is correct: it was Norma's remark. Not knowing whether she'd want
to be quoted I made no identification.

tom

Tom Mandel * 2927 Tilden St. NW
Washington DC 20008 * [REDACTED]
vox: [REDACTED] * fax [REDACTED]

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184. **George Bowering**

Re: Johnny Guitar

Thu 5 Dec 1996

>George, although I grew up in the West, I didn't grow up on those novels.
>But later I certainly came to admire such novels of the west as Willa
>Cather's Death Comes to the Archbishop, and even some of Edward Abbey,
>although he can be entirely sentimental at times. I certainly knew people
>who grew up reading Louis L'Amour and Zane Gray twenty years ago --
whether

>there are some who still do, I don't know. Which ones did you grow up
reading?

>

>charles

>

Well, not the literary ones, Charles, that's for sure. I learned early,
though I didnt know the terminology, that there were in the genre of
westerns, all the range of writing-strategies elsewhere. I liked, or said I
did, Max Brand the best, and know that he was a representative of the
Romantic impulse, especially in the Silvertip series, and I pity any man
who didnt read those as a boy. I knew about 2 women in my life who liked
westerns, by the way. The hardboiled realist angle was fronted by Luke
Short, and I liked him, too. Also Evan Evans, who was also Peter Dawson,
etc. Ernest Haycox. E.E. Halleran. Walt Coburn. Bliss Lomax. Wayne D.
Overholser. Frank O'Rourke.

George Bowering.

2499 West 37th Ave.,
Vancouver, B.C.,
Canada V6M 1P4

fax: [REDACTED]

e-mail: [REDACTED]

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185. **George Bowering**

Re: -cowboys

Thu 5 Dec 1996

I think the western was going strong in the 60s. I mean in the Viet Nam war, as it is called. The US guys didn't take scalps but they took ears. They called the enemy-filled place Apache country, etc etc.

Of course Whitman called it passage to more than India.

George Bowering.

2499 West 37th Ave.,
Vancouver, B.C.,
Canada V6M 1P4

fax: [REDACTED]

e-mail: [REDACTED]

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186. **Gabrielle Welford**

(no subject)

Thu 5 Dec 1996

Dear everyone and all. I am to the MLA going to give a paper and cannot afford to pay for a hotel room. Is there anyone there already who has a floor I can occupy about 5' 4" worth of? Or anyone going who'd be willing to let me sleep on their hotel room floor? I don't snore. Backchannel me please with your huge replies. Hopeful... gab.

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187. **Gabrielle Welford**

(E) ZAPATISTA HOMEPAGE (fwd)

Thu 5 Dec 1996

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

Date: Wed, 4 Dec 1996 01:12:10 -1000

From: "Ronald Creagh, Moderator, Research on Anarchism List"

<[REDACTED]>

Date: Tue, 3 Dec 1996 11:20:29 -0500 (EST)

>From: Grrrl <[REDACTED]>

Greetings, The Reseau de solidarite avec le Mexique-(Montreal) {Mexico Solidarity Network} is an organisation that has been working consistently for the last two years to educate about and support, principally, the Zapatista

movement in Chiapas, Mexico, and well as the broader social movement. We have a homepage with lots of information about Mexico, outdated stuff about our group, EZLN communiques, and lots of links to other solidarity groups. Check it out.

Homepage: <http://www.physics.mcgill.ca/WWW/oscarh/RSM>

VIVA LA REVOLUCION!

TO SEND A MESSAGE TO EVERYONE write to [REDACTED] with the text SIGnoff RA-L (no subject nor signature).

Moderator/Moderador/Moderateur : Ronald Creagh

Co-Moderator : John P. Clark

e-mail : [REDACTED]

snail mail/correo ordinario/courrier ordinaire : Ronald Creagh, Universite Paul Valery, B.P. 5043, 34032, Montpellier-Cedex, France.

fax : (33) 67 64 77 23

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188. **Ron Silliman**
After Kampuchea....

Thu 5 Dec 1996

>-----

>

>Date: Tue, 3 Dec 1996 21:16:21 -0800

>From: Marjorie Perloff <[REDACTED]>

>Subject: Re: Serbia

>

>Many of you know Dubravka Durcik and her husband Misko: they have spent

>time at Buffalo and Dubravka is both poet and critic and has translated

>many of our essays. I hear from Dubravka quite regularly but lately

>nothing and meanwhile we have the specter of the student rebellions in

>Belgrade (where D lives and works) on the nightly news and as usual

>Clinton is doing absolutely nothing.

>

>My question to the List is: is there something we can specifically do to

>add to the protest against Milosevic? Would a group letter to the NY

>Times be in order? I'd love some feedback.

>

>Marjorie Perloff

>

>-----

Marjorie,

What precisely would you say?

I'm certainly up for doing something. But it feels profoundly frustrating. Without the UN as a truly international force with legitimacy to go in and simply sweep out the war criminals and hold apart factions who've been at odds for so many centuries that nobody really remembers why they are doing this to one another (which, in a way, is exactly what the Stalinist regimes did both in Yugoslavia and the old USSR), what moves would you recommend?

One of the great tragedies of the post-soviet period has been the unmasking of the impotence and disfunctionality of the UN, due in no small part to the very negative role that the US has played for many years. Clinton kowtowing to Jesse Helms by putting the kibosh on Boutros-Ghali makes me cringe.

This of course being the same administration that puts everything on the line with China over software piracy but looks the other way at human rights and child labor abuses.

Suggest what we would/should say.

It's only a slightly different thread here to wonder how Adorno's line must sound now in Serbia? Bosnia? Chechnya? Zaire?

Right at the end of the time when I worked in the Tenderloin in San Francisco (1977-81), there were many Kampuchean people moving into the neighborhood. In addition to Pol Pot and his practices, those who made it out went through horrific experiences getting away. Eighty-five percent of the women had been raped by pirates.

What makes us think we live in anything other than the dark ages?

On a lighter note, I want to thank Mark and Mark and William Marsh for their remarkably thoughtful posts on the relationship of teaching to their lives as writers. Those pieces illuminated just what this list can do at its finest. Thanks,
Ron Silliman

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189. **Michael Boughn**

Blaser readings

Thu 5 Dec 1996

Robin Blaser will be reading twice in Southern Ontario in January, 1997.

On Sunday, January 12, he will be reading for the Modern Fuel Series in Kinston, Ontario. Reading with him will be Michael Boughn.

On Wednesday, January 15, he will be reading for the Art Bar Series at the Imperial Pub in Toronto. Reading with him will be Erin Moure. The reading is at 7:30 PM.

This is a rare opportunity, not to be missed.

Mike
[REDACTED]

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190. **Michael Boughn**

Canlit query

Thu 5 Dec 1996

Would someone who knows it please backchannel me the listserv address of the Canlit list? I'd appreciate it.

Thanks,
Mike
[REDACTED]

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191. **Jordan Davis**

hubris

Thu 5 Dec 1996

"The highest sacrilege is understood as hubris, which, attainable only by a god, transforms him into a dead form. To give oneself form--that is the definition of 'hubris.'" --Walter Benjamin, "Two Poems by Friedrich Holderlin"

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192. **Jordan Davis**

Basho notebook

Thu 5 Dec 1996

Speaking of what graduate studies do... anybody else hear this phantom report on BBC World Service that Matsuo Basho's working notebook had been found in

a used bookstore in Japan? That it includes any number of revisions, and several unpublished haiku? Kind of hard to appreciate the magnitude, huh?
Jordan Davis

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193. **Burt Kimmelman**

Re: PHDS

Thu 5 Dec 1996

Karl,

One more after-point: I would like to imagine that the PhD in whatever discipline really means something. So, let us suppose that some school, some dept, some group of professors, views the exploding writing industry (how many graduate writing programs are there these days? Answer: A whole lot.) as an opportunity for them to create a real cash cow that will please their provost and upper administration in general; indeed, the cash cow can'

even pay for other programs, worthy programs though ones that may not be paying for themselves (the financial bottom line is NOT the criterion for deciding moral, scholarly, artistic worth, despite what many university presses, for instance, seem to have come round to believing these days). So they set up a PhD program in creative writing; after all, think of all those MFAs who, having now earned their writer's accreditation, need something to do, somewhere to go to meet with other writers and so on. But a PhD program has to justify itself by having students, right. The problem here is, what is the guarantee that this program will accept students with talent only? I ask this question because, unlike the world of scholarship, there is no other system in our society for scholars to operated in except the university system--whereas the "creative writer" can possibly thrive in the world of publishing (either small or big press, small or big magazine, through well known or obscure writing competitions).

burt

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194. **tmandel**

The Academic Career?

Thu 5 Dec 1996

This list is on its 3d or greater way around the list of topics, alas, one of its problems (for me, I mean). In particular the question of the academy as a career for poets was shaken like a dirty carpet for a month or more at least two years ago, with extensive and strongly felt contributions by me and by Ron.

Someone might want to go back and take a look.

I taught at the University of Chicago and the University of Illinois in the sixties -- when I was a fledgeling grad student. I was on my way to an academic career and quite clear on the attractions and advantages. Attractions included above all that there are few careers which pay you to read books. I like to read books. And fewer still that offer the hours offered to teachers. Teaching, while you do it, is hard work-- performance work. But, from experience, not as hard as waiting tables, and you wait tables longer hours.

If you actually have something to teach -- that is, you are a master and have something to pass along (please remember that this was the original model for the relationship upon which these institutions have been erected) -- and you are drawn to pass it along, i.e. if teaching is a calling, why then it is a noble one to be sure.

The academy has **nothing whatever** to do with poetry -- zero. If anything it seems to have a pretty generally negative effect on poets. I don't mean teaching does, teaching is a job, I mean committing to the academic career.

Small ponds breed vicious competitive frogs -- any doubts of this axiom?

There are really many interesting things to do in the world. Most of them, in my experience, take more intelligence and imagination than the academic career, are more rewarding both in the experience and effect of accomplishing something and more rewarding financially than a career in the academy.

With notable exceptions -- including Perloff, Nielsen and other friends on this list, and many others too, I don't mean to be a pig -- I have not found that the academy attracts a particularly high brand of intelligence; it's not, in other words, a place to go because you like to be around smart people.

Hence, if it's hard to get an academic job, and above all if you intend to write a poetry that occupies the largest world you can identify -- why not quit grad school, all of you who are grad students. Young professors among you, look for something else to do.

The reason fly paper works, it attracts flies. Next subject.

Tom

Tom Mandel * 2927 Tilden St. NW
Washington DC 20008 * [REDACTED]
vox: [REDACTED] * fax [REDACTED]

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195. **amato**

Re: what graduate studies do

Thu 5 Dec 1996

bill marsh, how to say this w/o somehow alienating you and others?...

when i read yr post, much as i'm in sympathy with what you say, and much as i sense your conflictedness, i also feel that somehow you've managed (though it may just be me, and my hypersensitivity to certain issues) to sidestep an important aspect of the changes underway throughout academe...

for example: when you suggest that you're really not quite sure you **want** to be part of the professoriate, what i hear is both a critique of the current state of the professoriate (which is fine) AND an endorsement of the "contingent" workforce that, as i see it, is symptomatic of broader economic realities (which is, well, not so fine)...

another example: when you suggest that teaching returning students is an increasingly important aspect of academe, what i hear is both recognition of these returning students as worthy of our attention as faculty (which is fine) AND endorsement of the administrative zeal with which so many postsecondary institutions are busy colonizing these (and this is right out of some local promo lit) "serious educational consumers"...

bill: what happens to teaching---in the classroom---when educational administrators know they've got a contingent faculty workforce that they can effectively push around to meet "consumer" needs?... what, exactly, does it mean to teach returning students who are returning less b/c they want an education and more b/c they want a **credential**?... and what does it mean when such returning students are 'empowered' **as consumers**?... what does it mean, for that matter, when **any** student is so empowered?...

even more: what's **wrong** with a full-time faculty position, with a reasonable course load (3/3, say), a reasonable wage (let's say \$40,000 a year to start, in a mid-size city), good institutional support and benefits, and some academic freedom to teach students (or if you like, "promote learning"), a position that isn't keyed to vocationalizing or credentializing objectives?... what's wrong with an approach to writing, specifically, that isn't, again, functionalized in terms of "effective communication" and the like?... or to put it another way: what could possibly be RIGHT with teaching alphabetic technologies strictly in such terms?... even seymour papert, with whom i find myself consistently disagreeing, at least values the alphabet as a means of control---which would require a rather sophisticated notion of same in order to achieve various sorts of literacies...

and wrt writing in particular: nothing against the entire wac/wpa movement in itself, but fact is (just read the mla jil) these positions are more and more customarily being described as *administrative* positions... wpa---writing program administrator---is in fact just that, but the way this latter is being conceived is more and more in admin. terms... the opening on my campus, at this moment, is in fact *half-time admin*... and this is a tenure-track position, which leads me to ask how tenure will be construed for such an individual... but in any case: much as with attempts to unionize engineers in the 20s and 30s in this country, by opening up tenure-track lines that are primarily administrative, the "company" effectively encourages a different sort of loyalty---one to the institution, not to the profession (in the case of engineering, it was a shift out of engineering and into management that helped to compromise unionizing efforts)... one can perhaps understand why i'm eager to hold on to the category of the professional, but in any case it should be clear that writing is in fact the academic rubric under which this administrative push is taking place... no, it doesn't have to be this way---but if it *is* this way, it's b/c writing has generally found itself on the bottom of the disciplinary totem pole wrt english studies... anyway, breaking writing off from literature, though it may be a wise thing to do on some campuses, opens it up for admin. colonizing...

in an age of soi-disant excellence in education (and this is clearly our age), the goals of the institution are likely to be extremely exclusive... this has happened before (in this century, in the u.s.), but perhaps never with such overwhelming corporate influence... what i'm saying, bill, is that while i want very much to support *you* in your work and teaching, as a colleague, i'd also like to be able to get you over into the full-time faculty workforce with, say, me! (and i've already talked about how un-utopian my position is, so please don't hear this as a condescension)... but in order to do so, it's gonna take some attention to the realities that are being forced down our collective throats---we're gonna have to be willing to change these realities...

please excuse any residual harshness or one-sidedness here, i'm trying to flesh out more a feeling i get in reading over your post...

all best,

joe

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196. **R I Caddel**
Bunting Centre Web Site
Thu 5 Dec 1996

The Basil Bunting Poetry Centre's web pages are now available at:

<http://www.dur.ac.uk/dul0www1>

They're still under development, but I hope you enjoy them and link them to your own sites where you can.

Richard Caddel

Durham University Library, Stockton Rd., Durham DH1 3LY, UK

E-mail: [R.I.Caddel @ durham.ac.uk](mailto:R.I.Caddel@durham.ac.uk)

Phone: [REDACTED]

Fax: [REDACTED]

WWW: <http://www.dur.ac.uk/~dul0ric>

"Words! Pens are too light. Take a chisel to write."

- Basil Bunting

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197. **R I Caddel**

Re: Bunting Centre Web Site

Thu 5 Dec 1996

This message no has the CORRECT URL in it!

On Thu, 5 Dec 1996, R I Caddel wrote:

The Basil Bunting Poetry Centre's web pages are now available at:

<http://www.dur.ac.uk/~dul0www1>

They're still under development, but I hope you enjoy them and link them to your own sites where you can.

Richard Caddel

Durham University Library, Stockton Rd., Durham DH1 3LY, UK

E-mail: [R.I.Caddel @ durham.ac.uk](mailto:R.I.Caddel@durham.ac.uk)

Phone: [REDACTED]

Fax: [REDACTED]

WWW: <http://www.dur.ac.uk/~dul0ric>

"Words! Pens are too light. Take a chisel to write."

- Basil Bunting

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198. **Ira-Lightman**

Re: PHDS

Thu 5 Dec 1996

My own feeling at having completed a creative writing Ph.D using models from Antin to LangPo (which was not welcomed!) at an English university: is, I used the time to experiment, and I'm really glad that the resulting experiment is "in the public domain" ie available on the shelves of my university library, but I don't want to see it in print more widely; I prefer to be represented more widely by the few pamphlets I've been asked to do. It seems odd to me that creative writing postgrad courses are not advertised or framed as a place to experiment, and to think about writing, and how amateur writing might be good for people, and how we discourage anyone from doing writing if we go on about "who's a writer, who isn't" - sometimes by thinking we're doing big, publishable, fame-making, critically acclaimed, writing, we do our best personal work, using writing in a process of personal growth. I believe history will judge who had the right to call themselves writers just from doing a course or whatever.

Ira Lightman

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199. **Christopher Alexander**

Re: taste, judgment, etc...

Thu 5 Dec 1996

Joseph said:

> it's possible that taste has never been experienced or looked at outside
> an investigation however selforunselfconscious of its relation to power
> structures race class gender:
yes without a doubt--whatever needs to be said about the consequences of a 'disinterested' (this is how we read "orunselfconscious") aesthetics for groups excluded from power and representation, we allow that aesthetic its complexity; there was more than "...but I know what I like"

before radical sociology and cultural studies. Im thinking bourdieu vs the critique of judgement --anybody have the odds on this?

>however one problem we postmodern folk who
> know Pound for example knowing this (we could do likewise with Stein or
> Williams or Eliot) is how do we experience agency . . . our perceived and
> experienced subject position to make decisions and commitments with very
> real consequences. so it's not either the aesthetic or the political but both and
--neither, yes, the line betwn them being indefinite and so the
categories, etc. [wants to say the difference is that we 'realize'
the consequences, but] so did the moderns. Eliots agenda for example
wasnt less directed or 'realized', ie. less understood & of less
consequence, than, say, Bruce Andrews--only more conservative
[says understatement]. 'our' frame of reference has changed, the tools
of interrogation have changed and changed us but--

..

christopher alexander, etc.



"The second edition of this book consists largely of
a reproduction of the first edition, with additional
theorms and examples."

--t.m. macrobert, preface to t.j.i'a. bromwich's
an introduction to the theory of infinite series

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200. **Pierre Joris**

cowmusic

Thu 5 Dec 1996

Some sock-fillers for all ya cowboys'n'girls:

COWBOY SONGS ON FOLKWAYS

This thoroughly entertaining anthology features 15 performers from
different backgrounds and a wide variety of musical styles (among them
Harry Jackson, Woody Guthrie, and Ray Reed) and they all sing, boast,
and

recite poetry in homage to the life and times of honest and hardworking
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=====

pierre joris 6 madison place albany ny 12202

tel/fax [REDACTED] email: [REDACTED]

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

<http://www.albany.edu/~tm0900/nomad.html>

"A book has to be the axe for the frozen sea inside us.

This I believe."

(Kafka, Letter to Oskar Pollack 27 Jan 1904)

=====

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201. **JNORTON.US.ORACLE.COM**

Another killer poet

Thu 5 Dec 1996

[The San Francisco Examiner]

Tuesday, Dec. 3, 1996 7 Page A 1

) 1996 San Francisco Examiner

S.F. poet arrested in fatal shooting

Suspect Janice Duff a North Beach fixture since 1960s

Jim Herron Zamora
OF THE EXAMINER STAFF

A North Beach poet and longtime member of The City's coffeehouse beat scene has been arrested for allegedly shooting a man to death at the home where she was staying, police said.

Janice Duff, whose poetry is published under the name Janice Blue, was arrested on suspicion of murdering William Dyble, 58, on Sunday morning in the home on Water Street off Columbus Avenue, homicide Lt. David Robinson said.

Police said the killing apparently stemmed from a drunken fit of anger on the part of Duff.

"She had been drinking heavily," he said. "For some reason, she became upset with him. She got a gun and shot him."

Police say Duff also threatened Judy Smith, a female companion of Dyble's who ran out of the home and called 911.

Duff, 54, was arrested outside without resistance. Although she gave a statement to police, "what she said was unintelligible," Robinson said.

Dyble, a retired longshoreman, died at 6:30 p.m. at San Francisco General Hospital. Investigators found what they believe was the gun used to kill him.

Duff was being held without bail at San Francisco County Jail. She may be arraigned Tuesday or Wednesday.

Duff is well-known among local poets and has been active in North Beach for many years. But several people interviewed Monday said they had lost touch with her in recent years.

"I can't believe this," said Duff's former publisher, Kay McDonough of Connecticut. "She's a gentle, loving person. It just seems beyond all for her to harm anyone." McDonough's company, Greenlight Press, published a book of Duff's poems in 1978 titled "Good Old No-Man's Land." McDonough, who was then based in San Francisco, knew Duff from the North Beach poetry scene and frequently shared the stage with her during coffeehouse readings.

In a short autobiographical section of her book, Duff said she was born Janice Faye Adams, the daughter of a tobacco farmer in the "extreme western edge of Kentucky." The family moved to St. Louis when she was 15.

She dropped out of high school after two years and gave birth to a daughter, she said. Then she "dropped into" the beatnik scene in St. Louis for a few years before moving to San Francisco in 1962.

In the early 1960s she took up poetry and decided to wear blue exclusively. She began using the name "Blue" or "Janice Blue."

"I wear only that color," she wrote in the 1970s. "It is my aspect and my slant in life as in poetry."

Although she's made The City her home for some 30 years, Duff has spent several stints in New Orleans and has described herself as a veteran cross-country traveler.

"She's a very old-style Bohemian kind of lady," McDonough said. "She used to travel around with her guitar. She really has a gift. She writes in kind of a magical vein."

Her work contains both fanciful and gritty paeans to The City, especially North Beach and its cafe culture. She also wrote of birds talking to St. Francis about the strangeness of humans.

"She's a great folk poet," said Jack Mueller, an Oakland poet active in the North Beach scene. "This is really unbelievable. She's a very sweet woman."

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202. **Gabrielle Welford**

place to stay?

Thu 5 Dec 1996

Hope this doesn't get posted twice. Poetics wasn't receiving last night. I feel as though there ought to be a squeak, a gradstudently squeak at the end of the subject line. :-) g.

Dear everyone and all. I am to the MLA going to give a paper and cannot afford to pay for a hotel room. Is there anyone there already who has a floor I can occupy about 5' 4" worth of? Or anyone going who'd be willing to let me sleep on their hotel room floor? I don't snore. Backchannel me please with your huge replies. Hopeful... gab.

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203. **Patrick Foley**
taste again, and a long story, and more
Thu 5 Dec 1996

I'm still having trouble here, and can't help but feel this argument about the "taste economy" is a distraction. There's something I want to get at, in the grey area between what Wystan says about the necessity of making aesthetic choices and what Eliza says about speaking as a Master of the Textual Universe. I can't focus on it. On the one hand, I love the way Sam Spade says, "I don't anything about that" when asked about something he knows nothing about. Good. Don't pretend to knowledge you don't have. Don't speak as a Master if you aren't, and as Eliza says, who can be nowadays? But artists seem always to be doing something that looks like this. Frost & Yeats were famously dismissive of free verse. Frost & Stevens were famously dismissive of each other. ("The trouble with you, Robert, is that you write about things." "The trouble with you, Wallace, is that you write about bric-a-brac.") Now what counts as knowledge? How much did Yeats need to know about free verse to know he hated it, as he hated the look of modern Dublin? Is he wrong? His ideas are not the same as mine. (Eliot thought that was the wonderful thing about Yeats, that young people had in their midst a demonstrably great poet whose ideas they could not share.) Are Frost's and Stevens's remarks about each other meaningless? I tend to think not. Neither one was an idiot. There's something to these dismissals.

George & Mary Oppen printed Spring & All by hand, more or less, in France. Charles Reznikoff published himself. I don't remember if he set some of his own type, as Whitman had. Robt. Creeley published Olson's Mayan Letters himself, and a lot more besides. It was DIY. Are these issues of a "majority culture" and "repressed minorities"? Apparently not. They might be issues of taste & its economy, I dunno.

I don't want to argue about the nature of culture. I don't want to see another Pound war on this list, I was here for the last one.

There's a story someone tells about sitting around in a bar maybe with a bunch of poets (and maybe this was a poem, I don't remember) and our storyteller says something approving of a poem by Whitman, and everyone roars -- except James Schuyler, who says, "I think that is a beautiful poem." What's the received view of Whitman? Here's a don at Oxford who says Milton is the finest poet ever to grace the English language with his beneficent invention; here's a don at Cambridge says he's the next thing to a fraud. What's the received view of Milton? Why do American philosophy departments teach Kant but not Emerson? Why don't they teach Bradley anymore? Are these questions of taste or fashion?

So you decide to find out for yourself. What happens? If you read Amira Baraka all on your own for the first time, and you think, "Jesus! This guy can write!" -- that is, if you respond immediately, without any effort to rethink your own tastes, and if you've had classes where the writings of his white friends were taught (now this is hypothetical), then maybe you have an explanation for why no one had put the book in your hands before. And it might change the way you look at your professors.

Sometimes you don't respond immediately, and no simple explanation for a writer's exclusion comes to hand. Creeley tells this story about his learning to appreciate Whitman and many of us could probably tell a similar story. Whitman, these days, for many of us, seems to take a while. It's a nice story; here's the whole thing (fair use?):

"I remember a course I took with F. O. Matthiessen, surely a man of deep commitment and care for his students [and gay, which might be relevant *infra* -- PF], from which [Hart] Crane had been absented. I asked for permission to give a paper on Crane, which he gave me, but I had overlooked what I should have realized would be the response of the class itself, understandably intent upon its own sophistications. How would they accept these lines, for example?

yes, Walt,
Afoot again, and onward without halt,--
Not soon, nor suddenly,--no, never let go
My hand
in yours,
Walt Whitman--
so--

If they did not laugh outright at what must have seemed to them the awkwardly stressed rhymes and sentimental camaraderie, then they tittered at Crane's will to be one with his fellow *_homosexual_*. But didn't they hear, I wanted to insist, the pacing of the rhythms of those lines, the syntax, the intently human tone, or simply the punctuation? Couldn't they read? Was Crane to be simply another 'crudity' they could do glibly be rid of?"

Pause. What's the explanation for Creeley's ability to read Hart Crane, when his classmates couldn't? Continuing:

"But still I myself didn't read Whitman, more than the few poems of his that were 'dealt with' in classes or that some friend asked me to. No doubt I was embarrassed by my aunt's and my grandmother's ability to recite that terrible poem, "O Captain! My Captain!" banal as I felt it to be, and yet what was that specious taste which could so distract my attention and could righteously dismiss so much possibility, just because it didn't 'like' it? Sadly, it was too much my own. "So I didn't really read Whitman for some years

although from time to time I realized that the dispositions toward his work must be changing. Increasing numbers of articles began to appear as, for one example, Randall Jarrell's "Whitman Revisited". But the import of this writing had primarily to do with Whitman's work as instance of social history or else with its philosophical basis or, in short, with all that did not attempt to respect the technical aspects of his writing, his prosody and the characteristic method of his organization within the specific poems. "It was, finally, the respect accorded to Whitman by three of my fellow poets that began to impress me as not only significant to their various concepts of poetry but as unmistakable evidence of his basic use to any estimation of the nature of poetry itself."

I was going to stop sooner, but I want to talk a bit about this part so here it is:

"I had grown up, so to speak, habituated to the use of poetry as compact, epiphanal instance of emotion or insight. I valued its intensive compression, its ability to 'get through' a maze of conflict and confusion to some center clear 'point'. But what did one do if the emotion or terms of thought could not be so focused upon or isolated in such singularity?"

Alright, I'll stop finally. The three poets were Ginsberg, Duncan & Zukofsky. This is all from RC's introduction to the Penguin *_Selected Whitman_*. (I get it from an o.p. collection, *_Was That a Real Poem & other essays_*, Four Seasons. It may be around elsewhere.)

An interesting story, to me, interesting at least in how typical it must be of all such stories, and interesting in that Creeley finally reads Whitman in an act of reconsidering poetry itself. (And that fellow poets play a crucial role.) He does not indicate that he had done this with Hart Crane, but maybe he had, and had done it earlier, before his ideas about poetry were so fixed as to exclude Whitman so decisively. Maybe there's always a re-evaluation of poetry in reading each poet you really connect with. And maybe Crane's and Whitman's homosexuality had something to do with their status in academia. It doesn't seem to have had much to do with Creeley's different routes to their poetry.

Does Creeley have a similar story about Edgar Guest? No. And the reasons he can dismiss Edgar Guest are the same as the reasons he could hear Hart Crane, I would think, and maybe why he was prepared for Whitman once the scales were lifted from his eyes. Not all exclusions are the same. But it's worth going over what happens with Whitman. It wasn't just some skittishness about homosexuality or sentimentality or anything so simple as that he had to overcome: it was a conviction about the nature of poetry, and one that he was in some sense "bred" to. One would think this was exactly the sort of thing we were talking about here. It's certainly what I've been wanting to talk about.

I'm not sure I can see what cultural structure that idea Creeley had about poetry was part of. And I'm not sure he analysed its context in order to free

himself of it. He found his way within poetry & ideas about poetry. Maybe that's just characteristic of him; he professes that Whitman as history or philosophy didn't swing the balance, and that it took poets reading Whitman as a poet, and a good craftsman in some sense.

That's a long story about taste, and coming to accept, more than accept but be changed by, a poet that taste had excluded. And what happens to that taste, to the old ideal of the compact, focused, epiphany poem? I wonder. Creeley's poems seem somehow to draw on both ideas. It's almost eerie to read his descriptions of these ideas in turn, and see how they both "fit" what he himself came to do. What does he think of poems that are cut to fit the old pattern? I don't know. Maybe he still appreciates them within their given aesthetic. He has remarked, apropos of poetry slams, that not all poetry has to go in the same box, that poetry is various. I hope I've given no indication of thinking otherwise.

But this is an important moment -- what happens to the old ideal? I'm struggling with it myself, having been thrust into contact lately with some poetry of Robert Lowell and Seamus Heaney, and finding I don't like it. I used to. And I like some poets now I used to not, and many more that used to just puzzle me. I've been feeling a strong urge to canonize my lately come to heritage -- not for everybody, but as where I belong. And that means not exactly dismissing but missing the appeal of a lot of other poetries. Or at least, I've been trying to keep from investigating everything as I used to. It's tempting to go back and reread and try to fix my changing aesthetic by comparative methods. Tempting to study Jorie Graham's latest and situate myself in opposition. What is it here I don't like? Very tempting but I have this feeling I could learn more by focusing on what does appeal to me, and simply staying away from what doesn't.

(The university library where I used to go to school had what may have been a complete set of Robert Peters's volumes of criticism, The Great American Poetry Bake-off series. I used to pore over those even though I liked a lot that he skewered and didn't get a lot that he praised to the skies. But I liked his freshness. (Anybody read any of this stuff? I haven't read any of his poems.) I liked his resistance to reputation, the way he seemed to read each book, even or especially by poets he had praised in the past, as if it had arrived anonymously on his desk. Not that he could, but he seemed to be able to calibrate his filters to screen out the reputation. I still remember those books. That's a critic.)

Now with Creeley -- what do you suppose he read after Whitman? Maybe he could still "appreciate" poems that approximated that sort of New Critical lyric ideal he alludes to, but do you suppose he sought out such poems? Isn't there

often a sort of "effective dismissal" in what you spend your time doing? That is, in what you commit your limited life's energy to. Those commitments have a lot to do with change. Pound is always desperately trying to correct his own education. A sort of "lies my teacher told me" phenomenon. I understand that this is exactly where the motivation of cultural studies comes from. Reading Gaudier Brzeska (quoted by Pound) this afternoon on my lunch break, it reminded me of nothing so much as A Thousand Plateaus. It's curious, that similarity, as is the similarity to say Marshall McLuhan.

Digression 31: Something I love in Wittgenstein, and why I am so drawn to him sometimes, is the way he says what's needed -- maybe not that, but at any rate, what we lack -- is what one pair of translators call happily a "bird's eye view" or our language, an uebersichtliche Darstellung of it. Wittgenstein is a good read on the necessity and impossibility of the ideal, the description of behaviour in terms of rules, thought in terms of logic, etc. These things are not quite what they claim to be, what they are claimed to be by philosophers, but they are not simply delusions or ideology of some kind either. They are in some way intrinsic to language. And I'm thinking that the overreaching judgments of poets & critics, the seeming pretense of being Master of the Textual Universe, is something similar. An attempt at a bird's eye view. Maybe what Pound was after. I read just today, EP saying, "That many scholars write under a terror. They are forced to maintain a pretence of omniscience. This leads to restricting their field of reference." Slightly different emphasis, but very close to what Eliza McGrand was saying, but from here he heads at the demon specialization. And yesterday he said, "About thirty years ago, seated on one of the very hard, very slippery, thoroughly uncomfortable chairs of the British Museum main reading room, with a pile of large books at my right hand and a pile of somewhat smaller ones at my left hand, I lifted my eyes to the tiers of volumes and false doors covered with imitation bookbacks which surround that focus of learning. Calculating the eye-strain and the number of pages per day that a man could read, with deduction for say at least 5% of one man's time for reflection, I decided against it. There must be some other way for a human being to make use of that vast cultural heritage." Indeed, what are we to do?

Two days rambling. My way of asking for enlightenment.

Pat

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204. **Bil Brown**

Re: Coultas / Mlinko @ POETRY CITY

Thu 5 Dec 1996

Someone say HELLO to Brenda for ME.'

I'm an old Naropa buddy -- Bil Brown.

Thanks,

BB

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205. **Dorulet D Ana**
(no subject)

Fri 6 Dec 1996

according to earlier

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206. **Chris Stroffolino**
jeff mcdaniel

Fri 6 Dec 1996

I am told that Jeff McDaniel--author of ALIBI SCHOOL--formerly of Washington DC, and NYC area (sarah larry)--is now in the LA AREA---does anybody have an address or phone number for him.....please backchannel me..... thanks, chris stroffolino

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207. **Poetics List**
NY Saturday Afternoon

Fri 6 Dec 1996

Just a word:

Ron Silliman

reading with

Abigail Child

at the Ear Inn

300 block of Spring Street

NYC

Saturday, Dec. 7th

2:30 PM

You're all invited

(you especially, Alfred)

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208. **Poetics List**
Sutkever/Serbia/posting
Fri 6 Dec 1996

1) to Marjorie Perloff:

Marjorie, you have my support too for some kind of group expression about the situation in Serbia.

2) to Joseph Lease:

Where can I read Avrom Sutkever?

3) This is a general plea against automatic inclusion in replies of whole previous postings, sometimes including the postings to which they themselves are replies, sometimes etc. Sometimes the system doesn't even designate what is previous and what is current. This added to the Net's own supplementary verbiage can put us digest-readers off reading the postings at all.

Thanks.

Fiona

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209. **Poetics List**
New and Improved Welcome Message
Fri 6 Dec 1996

Note that this new version of the welcome message includes the new listserv address. The new address is in effect now, so send messages to

████████

There has been some confusion: the address ██████ is the listowner account. Please direct all questions, problems, complaints, etc., to this address. All messages to the Poetics List should be sent to ██████.

Rev. 11-15-96

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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1. About the Poetics List
2. Subscriptions
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5. Temporarily turning off Poetics mail
6. Who's Subscribed
7. The Electronic Poetry Center (EPC)
8. Poetics Archives at EPC
9. Publishers & Editors Read This!

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

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.

individual posts of participants are sent directly to all subscribers, we continue to work to promote the editorial function of this project. The definition of that project, while provisional, and while open to continual redefinition by list participants, is nonetheless aversive to a generalized discussion of poetry. Rather, our aim is to support, inform, and extend those directions in poetry that are committed to innovations, renovations, and investigations of form and/or/as content, to the questioning of received forms and styles, and to the creation of the otherwise unimagined, untried, unexpected, improbable, and impossible.

The "list owner" of Poetics is Charles Bernstein: contact him for further information. Joel Kuszai is currently working on the administration of the list. For subscription information contact us at ██████.

2. Subscriptions

line, to:

████████

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 shareware 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. Cautions

Please do not send attachments or include extremely long documents in a post, since this may make it difficult for those who get the list via "digest" or who cannot decode attached or specially formatted files.

In addition to being archived at the EPC, some posts to Poetics (especially reviews, obituary notices, announcements, etc.) may also become part of specific EPC subject areas. (See section 7.)

Please do not send inquiries to the list to get an individual subscribers address. To get this information, see section 6.

If you want someone to send out information to the list as a whole, or supply information missing from an post, please send the request or comment to the individual backchannel, not to the whole list.

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. Temporarily turning off Poetics mail

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 to "listserv."

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 8 below.)

6. 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.

Please do not send a message to the list asking for the address of a specific subscriber.

7. 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.

8. 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>

9. 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 ill 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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210. **Burt Kimmelman**
Re: what graduate studies do
Fri 6 Dec 1996

Aldon,

Your comments about the changes in hiring and firing practices at our universities could not be more timely.

Burt

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211. **Pierre Joris**
Re: Basho notebook
Fri 6 Dec 1996

Jordan Davis wrote:

>

> Speaking of what graduate studies do... anybody else hear this phantom
> report on BBC World Service that Matsuo Basho's working notebook had
been
> found in a used bookstore in Japan? That it includes any number of
> revisions, and several unpublished haiku? Kind of hard to appreciate the
> magnitude, huh? Jordan Davis

Yes indeed, Jordan, I heard that (& was going to mention it in my post re the new-found poem of Blaise Cendrars, but then forgot) & thanks for bringing it up -- the news in fact made me take down & reread that gorgeous late sixties Mushinsha/Grossman edition of Basho's OKU-NO-HOSOMICHI as translated by Cid Corman & Kamaike Susumu. The find does correspondent culturally to something like discovering the hand-written diaries of Shakespeare with first sketches of his plays...

Pierre

--

=====

pierre joris 6 madison place albany ny 12202
tel/fax [REDACTED] email: [REDACTED]
<http://writing.upenn.edu/epc/authors/joris/>
<http://www.albany.edu/~tm0900/nomad.html>

"A book has to be the axe for the frozen sea inside us.
This I believe."

(Kafka, Letter to Oskar Pollack 27 Jan 1904)

=====

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212. **Pierre Joris**

Query

Fri 6 Dec 1996

Does anyone have an address for an outfit called *Bilingual Press*? They published a book by Rosario Castellanos called *_Meditation on the Threshold_*. Backchannel or as you saee fit.

--

=====

pierre joris 6 madison place albany ny 12202
tel/fax [REDACTED] email: [REDACTED]
<http://writing.upenn.edu/epc/authors/joris/>
<http://www.albany.edu/~tm0900/nomad.html>

"A book has to be the axe for the frozen sea inside us.
This I believe."

(Kafka, Letter to Oskar Pollack 27 Jan 1904)

=====

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213. **David Zauhar**

Re: After Kampuchea....

Fri 6 Dec 1996

Ron Silliman wrote. . .

| *What makes us think we live in anything other than the dark ages?*

the glow of computer screens, TVs, malls. Not to mention TV news anchors and other seemingly eternal and non-biodegradable plastic products. our heads are up our asses, but it's artificially bright and doesn't smell too bad.

Dave Zauhar

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214. **Field of Roses**

Re: Canlit query

Fri 6 Dec 1996

Would someone who knows it please backchannel me the listserv address of the Canlit list? I'd appreciate it.

Just in case others may also be interested:

Canadian Literature Discussion List

██████████

In the body of the message:

SUBSCRIBE CANLIT-L Firstname Lastname

Linda Charyk Rosenfeld

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215. **cupslit**

Re: jeff mcdaniel

Fri 6 Dec 1996

I do have Jeff McDaniel's phone number and he does live in the LA Area.....

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216. **Charles Alexander**

Re: craft ... the mouse in the snake

Fri 6 Dec 1996

At 04:10 PM 12/4/96 -0700, you wrote:

>On Wed, 4 Dec 1996, Eliza McGrand- CVA Guest wrote:

>> what i have in mind by craft was captured beautifully by someone in the

>> descriptive "attentive" -- a sort of deep, intense, committed attention

>> to what is happening in the arrangement of the words, in the shaping of

>> the idea, in the tracing out of where the idea goes.

>> and a notion of "craft," as

>> in workmanship, deep attention, lifetime course of learning more, tools,

>> flexibility, respect, is such an antidote.

>

>i wont argue about the rhyming napkin bit but i think that something
>should be said for other methods of composition/construction. the
>version of craft here is only one means only one sort of process that can
>be used to create writing effects--anyone whos read kathy acker can
>attest to the strangeness of what happens there and while it does not fit
>this description of craft it nevertheless produces readerly responses.
>frank ohara is another case: many poems are occasional in just the sense
>of the napkins here mentioned--yet they are brilliant moments. perhaps i
>am just not much of a romantic humanist but the notion of an isolated
>individual toiling away at his (!) craft does not account for all the
>methods of aesthetic production in this technological age. benjamin not
>wordsworth. reproduction not authenticity.
>
>jeffrey timmons

I find nothing in Eliza's definition which would discount writers like acker or ohara. In fact, I think "attention" is a very good word to characterize much of ohara. Attention does not require isolation to be deep. In Ohara's case it often seems to be immediate, but no less stunning, as craft, in being so. I don't see anything in the definition about isolation, just about attention, commitment, care. I find such qualities absolutely present in acker & ohara.

charles alexander

----- get off my back. the future fields into
which I write are unimaginable. I do not know, any more than you do, what is
around me, nor how far to go, nor precisely what I leave behind.

--Beverly Dahlen
from A Reading 8 - 10
published by Chax Press

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217. **Charles Alexander**
Re: Forwarded: Sackler Archive
Fri 6 Dec 1996

At 04:08 PM 12/5/96 GMT+1200, you wrote:

>From: "Tony Green" <[REDACTED]>
>
>Dear Loss or Charles,
> Can you help Tony out with this address--he's off
>the List at the moment?
> Thanks.

> Wystan

>

>Hello Wystan Cd you find out for me on the Poetics list the
>addrsss of the Marvin Sackler Archive (of concrete and visual poetry
>I think it is) Florida. They used to subscribe to Splash.

Glad to help.

Note that it's Sackner, not Sackler

Ruth & Marvin Sackner Archive of Concrete and Visual Poetry

300 W. Rivo Alto Drive

Miami Beach, Florida 33139

charles alexander

----- get off my back. the future fields into
which I write are unimaginable. I do not know, any more than you do, what is
around me, nor how far to go, nor precisely what I leave behind.

--Beverly Dahlen

from A Reading 8 - 10

published by Chax Press

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218. **Charles Alexander**

Re: PHDS

Fri 6 Dec 1996

At 04:55 PM 12/5/96 BST, you wrote:

>It seems odd to me

>that creative writing postgard courses are not

>advertised ot framed as a place to experiment

I just like the typo here, I imagine intended as "postgrad"

but leading to

postcard courses

post-guard courses

post-garde courses

I like to think of a university with a course teaching/encouraging the writing of
poems (or anything else in a creative vein) on postcards. That would be an
academy worth supporting. And everyone should receive such postcards.

charles

----- get off my back. the future fields into which I write are unimaginable. I do not know, any more than you do, what is around me, nor how far to go, nor precisely what I leave behind.

--Beverly Dahlen
from A Reading 8 - 10
published by Chax Press

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219. **amato**

Re: The Academic Career?

Fri 6 Dec 1996

tom, i think these ideas *must* be recycled, simply b/c this is the sort of conversational space that hasn't been available to discuss postsecondary ed (and so many other things)... so i'll recycle here a bit, incl. your post:

though i understand your *sentiment* re academe (being a latecomer mself), i just don't think the whole kit & caboodle should be blown-off so casually (and your remarks strike me as a bit casual), not even wrt poetry and poets... there's just too much at stake in the educational system, and i'd like to think that, even were i to leave, i would see the importance of it, whatever its problems...

i don't think the "brand of intelligence" in academe constitutes its problem... its problems, as i see them, have much more to do with structural issues, not individual personality types...

but it's in *coming to* the educational system that i think i may differ from you most significantly: i don't know your personal story, but mine has a lot to do with trying to find *somegoddamnplace* to go after years of working in industry, supporting my father, etc---a place that would provide me with a little space, is all, in which i could perhaps do something that *does* have (flypaper or no) all sorts of social significance...

learning, i mean, and helping others learn... is this not, on the surface of it anyway, a [gulp] noble profession?... while i don't (think i) endorse your ideas about "masters" or "callings" or such like, surely we can agree that learning institutions are important social institutions?...

(and btw, on a related note, academic sop here: in the past year, there's been yet another compendium of essays published on the status of academics from the working class---this is an emerging and evolving discourse... see c. l. barney dewes & carolyn leste law, eds., *this fine place so far from home: voices of academics from the working class* (temple up, 1995))...

now i don't think learning, whatever it is, is without its conflictedness (on my part, and others around here) but at the same time, i don't think that airing and confronting these difficulties, all bound up as they are with late-20th-century intellectual engagement in general, necessarily means that they're somehow less important... i really did get this feeling reading over your post, tom... i mean, just 'cause us academics, aspiring profs. or whatever, got all sorta problems with our institutions and are willing to discuss same is no reason (WHATEVER one's personal history) to suggest we're necessarily better off seeking gainful employment elsewhere...

i mean, if you're talking survival, well then sure... but if you're talking social value, well then i'm not so sure... if you're lucky enough to get a decent teaching job, why then why not? (and to reiterate what aldon sd---there's a real need for more profs in english---if only we could do away with the logic of writing courses capped at 35 students)...

in any case, i've spent some real time elsewhere, in another part of the real world, which was no more real than academe---in some ways it was better, in some worse... it was different, and from day 1 through day 2600 or so, not for me (though i did my best)... this is part of "my story"... and this elsewhere -- i often found it none too pleasant or redeeming---albeit i'll grant, again, that academe is no model community...

best,

joe

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220. **Aldon L. Nielsen**

Re: bad news all over

Fri 6 Dec 1996

Just read a ref. to Howard Winant being in a coma -- this was in a just-published book -- so , knowing how long it takes to get out a book -- I'm hoping that he is back in good health now -- Does anyone on this list know anything about this????

Marjorie -- would be pleased to add my name to any message of the sort you contemplate -- Maybe we should circulate something during MLA -- latest news makes it look as if Serb. govt. & Clinton will come to an agreement about just how oppressive they can be --

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221. **Ward Tietz**
Re: Sackner Archive
Fri 6 Dec 1996

Here's the address I have for the Sackner archive:

Ruth and Marvin Sackner Archive of Concrete and Visual Poetry
300 West Rivo Alto Drive
Miami Beach, Florida 33139

Ward Tietz

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222. **Michael Boughn**
query
Fri 6 Dec 1996

Is everybody on the list now subject to this holding-the-message business? Does this mean that we now get our mail doled out to us once a day after Charles has released it? Or is it just me?

Quizically,
Mike



PS: maybe we should change the list name from Poetics to
Disgruntled Grouchy Professors.

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223. **dbkk**
Re: Another killer poet
Fri 6 Dec 1996

At 11:40 AM 12/5/96, JNORTON.US.ORACLE.COM wrote:

In the early 1960s she took up poetry and decided to wear blue exclusively. She began using the name "Blue" or "Janice Blue."

"I wear only that color," she wrote in the 1970s. "It is my aspect and my slant in life as in poetry."

This is an understatement. I moved to San Francisco during the height of JB's celebrity. My boyfriend at the time was a street artist at Fisherman's Wharf, an occupation I found very romantic (but he didn't, he never said the word "tourist" without prefacing it with the word "fucking". I remember one day when he and I were hanging out in North Beach, this woman walked by, tall in

my memory, with large white-blond hair, and this day-glo royal blue knee-length cape and hat to match. Bruce said to me in a very un-Bruce-like, awelike manner, "That's Janice Blue."

I never knew anything about her poetry. I'd just occasionally see her on the streets and stop in my tracks, dazed.

Dodie Bellamy

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224. **groberts**
poetry in transit
Fri 6 Dec 1996

Does anyone know much about the origins of the poetry-placards which occasionally appear in subways and buses, a la Poetry in Motion, that has made its way to Boston via NYC? I remember that a similar public-display venture appeared in Chicago buses in the mid-80s, and have heard that the practice began in San Francisco sometime in the 70s. I first was glad to see them, now I am less so, probably because their intentions seem disingenuous. Do they grease the wheels of commerce? Yes. Do they work for the well-being of commuters? I don't know.

Interesting how these short poems, and more often fragments of poems, accompanied by their pseudo-funky visual layout, work in terms of the textual rhetoric of mass transportation space. "Space" can be a product of actions, as opposed to an already given environmental situation, and the act of reading is one of the primary ways to create it. The poems define a space inside the moving compartment, one in which fantasy is licensed. They seem to want to provide a meditative focus for passengers: it's poetry to stare at, which validates the official administration of privacy. My inclination is to think that the poems, sandwiched between ads, are intended to be considered in light of their context. What are those ads usually? Around here, many for vocational schools, and public-interest reminders. The poems then are a kind of counterpoint to the utter usefulness of the adjacent texts; the poems are supposedly ends in themselves. Of course the trip is not. But the supposed mystery of the mass-trans. poems, even when they themselves ostensibly deny aesthetic autonomy and suggest collaborative action, requires passengers to read into their compartment a textual space that is predicated on uselessness. This uselessness does not seem related to graffiti, but in contradiction to it. And that contradiction seems to me to be a wearying struggle over inscribed space in which commuters are unwitting agents. But then again, maybe the little poems relieve stress and keep one going forward...

Gary R

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225. **dbkk**

Re: taste again, and a long story, and more

Fri 6 Dec 1996

At 9:11 PM 12/5/96, Patrick Foley wrote:

(The university library where I used to go to school had what may have been a complete set of Robert Peters's volumes of criticism, The Great American Poetry Bake-off series. I used to pore over those even though I liked a lot that he skewered and didn't get a lot that he praised to the skies. But I liked his freshness. (Anybody read any of this stuff? I haven't read any of his poems.) I liked his resistance to reputation, the way he seemed to read each book, even or especially by poets he had praised in the past, as if it had arrived anonymously on his desk. Not that he could, but he seemed to be able to calibrate his filters to screen out the reputation. I still remember those books. That's a critic.)

Robert Peters has shown his blind spots as well. I remember him causing quite a fury among the editors of *_How(ever)_* when he wrote of them somewhere (this is such old gossip I can't remember the specifics) something like:

"What do these ladies talk about as they sit around sipping tea."

I once went to a performance of his Countess Bathory piece (the great female vampire prototype) and he picked me out of the audience to be the young virgin and proceeded to direct much of his overtop campy performance directly at me. Though I felt this was an honor of sorts, I wanted to crawl under my chair.

Dodie Bellamy

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226. **Jeffrey W. Timmons**

Re: craft ... the mouse in the snake

Fri 6 Dec 1996

On Fri, 6 Dec 1996, Charles Alexander wrote:

I find nothing in Eliza's definition which would discount writers like acker or ohara. In fact, I think "attention" is a very good word to characterize much of ohara. Attention does not require isolation to be deep. In Ohara's case it often seems to be immediate, but no less stunning, as craft, in being so. I don't see anything in the definition about isolation, just about attention, commitment, care. I find such qualities absolutely present in acker & ohara.

well we read it differently. ill agree that there is nothing to discount the writers mentioned--only there is a qualitative difference not only implied but stated in her post about the ontological difference of aleatory/other writing and "craft" it seemed to me. no attention does not require isolation to be deep--but there was a residual romanticism in her account of the poet/writer that just seems incompatible with postmodern technologies of writing. i dont think we disagree--just a matter of attending to subtle shadings of meaning in her post. perhaps i should/could have excerpted her comments to more effect. nevertheless....

in nullius verba

jeffrey timmons

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227. **Rachel Blau DuPlessis**

Re: after this

Fri 6 Dec 1996

no it was Adorno.

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228. **robert zamsky**

Re: PHDS

Fri 6 Dec 1996

I read it 'post-garde' too, and loved it all the more for it.

>

> At 04:55 PM 12/5/96 BST, you wrote:

> >It seems odd to me

> >that creative writing postgard courses are not

> >advertised ot framed as a place to experiment

>

> I just like the typo here, I imagine intended as "postgrad"

>

> but leading to

>

> postcard courses

>

> post-guard courses

>

> post-garde courses

>

> I like to think of a university with a course teaching/encouraging the

> writing of poems (or anything else in a creative vein) on postcards. That
> would be an academy worth supporting. And everyone should receive such
> postcards.

>

> charles

>

>

> -----

> get off my back. the future fields into which I write are
> unimaginable. I do not know, any more than you do, what is
> around me, nor how far to go, nor precisely what I leave behind.

>

> --Beverly Dahlen

> from A Reading 8 - 10

> published by Chax Press

> -----

>

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229. **Kali Tal**

Re: -cowboys

Fri 6 Dec 1996

I think the western was going strong in the 60s. I mean in the Viet Nam war, as it is called. The US guys didn't take scalps but they took ears. They called the enemy-filled place Apache country, etc etc.

George is quite right about everything except the term "Apache Country," which was actually "Indian Country." For an amazing rundown of how many American soldiers died playing "Shootout at the OK Corral" with real pistols, check out Bill Gibson's *The Perfect War: Technowar in Vietnam*. (This is **not** the William Gibson of *Neuromancer* fame.) I've read about eight hundred Viet Nam war novels and personal narratives and I can't think of a single one that **doesn't** mention John Wayne.

Kali

Kali Tal

Sixties Project & Viet Nam Generation, Inc.

PO Box 13746, Tucson, AZ 85732-3746



Sixties Project: <http://jefferson.village.virginia.edu/sixties/>

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230. **William Slaughter**

Re: paul carroll...

Fri 6 Dec 1996

I don't have Paul Carroll's poems at hand as I write this, but I do have both books that Joe mentions below: *_the poem in its skin_* and *_the young american poets_*.

*_the poem in its skin_* is still one of my favorite books about poetry. I could wish somebody would bring it back into print. I'd see to it that my students knew it. It was a Big Table book, as was *_the young american poets_*. Big Table: from Carroll's student days at the University of Chicago when he took the material he had collected, as editor, for an issue of the *_Chicago Review_* (including some early Ginsberg & co,) off campus under that name when the administration moved to censor it.

What Carroll does, in *_the poem in its skin_*, is read in a quite wonderful way one poem by each of several poets: Ashbery? Leaving the Atocha Station, Creeley/ A Wicker Basket, Dickey (James)/The Heaven of Animals, Gardner (Isabella)/The Widow's Yard, Ginsberg/Wichita Vortex Sutra, Logan (John, who was my teacher at the University of Washington in the middle 60s, before Buffalo)/A Century Piece for Poor Heine, Merwin/Lemuel's Blessing, O'Hara/The Day Lady Died, Snodgrass/April Inventory, and Wright (James)/As I Step Over a Puddle at the End of Winter, I Think of an Ancient Chinese Governor...and a long general essay called "Faire, Foul and Full of Variations: The Generation of 1962." -*the poem in its skin_* was published in 1968.

*_the young american poets_* includes: Vito Hannibal Acconci, George Amabile, Jon Anderson, Roger Apon, James Applewhite, Gerald William Barrax, Marvin Bell, Michael Benedikt, Bill Berkson, Ted Berrigan, Randy Blasing, Harold Bond, Michael Brownstein, Tom Clark, Clark Coolidge, Jonathan Cott, Kenward Elmslie, Kathleen Fraser, Louise Gluck, Robert Hass, Philip Hey, William Hunt, Ronald Johnson, Robert Kelly, Richard Kostelanetz, John L'Heureux, Lou Lipsitz, Lewis Mac Adams, Gerald Malanga, Morton Marcus, Jack Marshall, Howard McCord, John Morgan, David Mus, Ron Padgett, John Perreault, Saint Geraud, Aram Saroyan, Peter Schjeldahl, Dennis Schmitz, Charles Simic, Kathleen Spivac, Mark Strand, James Tate, Sotere Torregian, Tony Towle, Alden Van Buskirk, Allen Van Newkirk, Julia Vinograd, Diane Wakoski, Anne Waldman, Lewis Warsh, James Welch, and Tyner White. *_the young american poets_* was published in 1968 too.

I have a poem of his in mind: "Father." Which I really like. I don't have my copy of Donald Allen's Grove Press NAP Anthology, 1945-60, at hand (either) as I write this, but I seem to remember that "Father" was in it.

Author: Carroll, Paul
Title: New and Selected Poems
Publisher: Yellow Press
Year: 1978
ISBN/Price: 0-916328-11-2 Trade Cloth \$7.95
0-916328-10-4 Trade Paper \$3.50
Subj (Forth): POETRY-POETIC-WORKS-BY-ONE-AUTHOR
Subj (Pbk): LITERATURE-POETRY-GENERAL

Is apparently still in print and available, although I haven't seen it. I never met Carroll, only admired his work as critic, poet, and anthologist from a distance. I didn't read the piece in the Chicago Trib Magazine that Joe refers to. If Paul Hoover is out there, reading this, or others who knew Carroll, perhaps he/they'd be willing to add to this. I'd like to know more, too, about his life and work.

Bill

William Slaughter



On Wed, 4 Dec 1996  wrote:

just read a poignant tribute in the chicago trib. magazine, "for paul: appreciating a fallen poet who led a brief revival of the art," by barry silesky, about the poet paul carroll, who evidently died last summer... it mentions that paul hoover (hi paul and maxine! if you're out there) was a student of carroll's, and i'm just wondering if anybody is familiar with his work... the article mentions that in 1968, carroll wrote _the poem in its skin_, and "edited a major anthology, _the young american poets_, which came to be the first major publication for many of its since-famous contributors"... anyway, just trying to get a grip on paul carroll's poetry...

joe

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231. **Eliza McGrand- CVA Guest**

Re: craft ... the mouse in the snake

Fri 6 Dec 1996

hi jeffrey and charles. am not sure why it would be presumed that i discount acker and o'hara ("The Day Lady Died" makes me weep). any writer has what maxine kumin has called "donnees" (french -- accent on 2nd "e"), the "given" poems that blaze out suddenly. but they come from ATTENTION. from

working, keeping muscles limber. cocktail napkin poetry comes from profound inattention, disinterest. it arises from need of its author to prove how Brilliant/Witty/ Profound/(etc...) he/she is; fixed attention on posturing only. that is not "craft," serious and engaged work, where some idea or thing being giving focused attention and analysis through shaped phrases, images, and lines. good lord, acker is one of the most "attentive" writers i know -- she writes from such an extraordinary focus -- seems both to hold a massive amount of information/text/ social exchange, on idea in her head (gently, firmly both) and to focus inward on her own unique path of thought and technique. dazzling.

by "isolation," am sketching a counterpoint to the great Creative Writing Program debate. on the one hand, i can see a solid use to creative writing programs, but on the other, many many fine writers came to their craft WITHOUT such programs, without living "mentors" (god i hate that word. entrepreneur. inappropriate. accompany this with sounds of cats retching out hairballs.).

when i see a wretched, meter-stumbling, ill-spelled (like i should talk...) patchwork of cliches with a few glistening images, i think of the good a decent creative writing program could do the writer. but when i see a homogenized, politically/old-boys Certified offering produced by a CWP grad that takes no risks, hasn't much of anything to say but "oh look at me and my dreadfully sensitive delicacy" noise, i wish that writer had spent more time trying to please their ability and preoccupations, and less time trying to please a writing class and Famous Poet(s). i've also read good work written from both approaches.

in other words, am sitting on the fence on this, but tipped, at present, more towards writing from one's own impulses/energy with some input from a few friends than toward writing programs and workshops. the writer in isolation, by themselves, notion gets overused and badly interpreted in a melodramatic, self-indulgent way. but at certain points (and maybe for some writers it is necessary for the whole of their writing life), separation from popular literary opinion and direction can be fertile ground.

i am going to disneyworld for four days (trip is a gift - could never buy such a thing) and it is snowing like anything here -- there is something surreal, possibly decadent, about packing swimsuits in a blizzard... perhaps i will write some "post gardes," perhaps sulk alone at poolside and read byron (disgruntledly) ...

e

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232. **Nada Gordon**
teacher/laborers +basho
Sat 7 Dec 1996

Aldon Nielsen wrote

One of two things is going to happen if we do not succeed in making significant political changes with regard to education issues soon -- either the right will succeed in privatizing higher education and rationing the goods (and you can guess who will get the goodies under that scenario) -- or "liberals" will reach a compromise under which higher education will be offered to larger numbers of students using a labor force of MOSTLY part-time and untenured faculty --

The latter trend is now occurring here in Japan -- not as a compromise but rather an imposed condition. Over the past several years, the vocational school at which I am a full-time teacher has been offering hefty "resignation incentive packages" to get full-time teachers to leave, while at the same time hiring new teachers on 3-month temporary contracts (at almost a third of the salary of some of the senior teachers). Our school is now threatening massive layoffs, a move which would decimate our union. We are on the brink of serious confrontation with the administration. As a union composed mostly of "foreigners", we are considered eminently expendable.

This is clearly an international rhyme to the situation in American universities and in labor trends in general.

I have found my life here an interesting option to both the vicious small pond of academia and the thrilling life of an entrepreneur that Tom describes. I get to *nobly* create the conditions for learning to take place while staying away from the pinata scramble that I guess y'all will see at the MLA. But Japan is no longer the safe haven/gold mine it once was. The bubble has burst and ruthless Simon Legree capitalism now holds sway.

So Tom, does that job offer still hold?

nada

p.s. Basho's notebook has been on TV a lot lately, lovingly fondled by scholars turning the pages of spidery writing...an inspiring reminder that sometimes you just have to wrap the things you need in a small piece of cloth, put on your straw sandals, and walk the narrow road into the interior

p.p.s. any political advice gladly welcomed

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233. **Aldon L. Nielsen**

Re: The Academic Career?

Sat 7 Dec 1996

Taking a direction opposite to much of what I saw in the 80s, I moved FROM working with computers TO teaching English -- Can't say that I saw a demonstrably higher level of morality and/or intellect among the off-campus professional with whom I worked --

(But then, a goodly number of the people I met at Wand in the early 80s were former history grad. students -- fleeing a field that had it, even, worse than English -- Wang proved not to be the best first choice for a second career)

Can't see that there is an appreciably higher level of venality among the professoriat of the beaneries than among the bean counters of business --

In fact, I had already moved from being a campus cop to working with computers -- even with a cop's view of campus it didn't seem to me that academia was any worse a place to work than elsewhere --

BTW -- anybody for the theory that the author of *_Aerial* and the *Police_* really wanted to BE the police all along?

"Wand" -- "Wang" about as useful either way --

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234. **Jordan Davis**

expectation / attention

Sat 7 Dec 1996

This attention to "attention" is giving me serious pangs of echo, wow, sunrise! Mike Boughn's essays on Williams' prosody (thanks for sending them, Mike) contrast the variable foot (which he appreciates precisely as something like an 'elastic inch' -- comparing Williams to Einstein -- nice trope Mike) with earlier metrics .. he says the old way was a "poetics of expectation" and the new way is a "poetics of attention" -- just to bring some terms in ... J Davis

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235. **tmandel**

life on the aka deme

Sat 7 Dec 1996

Joe Amato's take and my own differ structurally. I came to the academy early and easily, just moved along into it. I had no trouble getting a job and no trouble seeing that I would continue having no trouble getting such jobs (that "seeing" was done by a very young fellow and would doubtless have been

proved inaccurate and callow as most such is, but it was also clear. There were no barriers to entry, as we say in business, into this market).

Fortunately for the future, I'm essentially uninstitutionalizable -- not a boast, it's just my character. Perhaps just social genes (all my forebears were poets and peddlers) or from the Holocaust which claimed the greater part of my family -- those who survived did not communicate an impulse to trust institutions.

Hence, when I find myself working in an institutional context, I usually kick at the pricks and either quit or get fired. When I am identified as part of a group, I usually do something to undercut that identification. Right now, my friends in the academy are about to land in Washington DC where I live. Hence, no doubt, my animadversions on their career -- sorry, no hard feelings? I still love you.

Now, that **was** glib, the last two sentences I mean. But my previous suggestions were not. No institution takes itself with quite the overdose of seriousness of the academy.

Joe mistakes my position if he thinks me critical of either "learning" or "teaching." Only I think less of it goes on in academic institutions than (apparently) he does, and more of it goes on at the gas station and in the check-out counter than (apparently) he does. How many on this list understand how fuel injection works? What the structure is of an upholstered piece of furniture? What's under the street you are walking on? How a shoulder is set into a sportcoat? Oh yes, how much learning went on in the Mathiesson class Pat Foley narrates? What became of those narrow grad students who couldn't hear Crane? They are teaching you today or taught your teachers.

Terms like "master" and "calling" I use **precisely because** they are unfashionable (taste-less in another thread) -- this means they will have some communicative force. Unlike, for example (and forgive me in advance, Joe) "late-20th-century intellectual engagement" and "social value."

Let me teach: if you don't have a model of the world you don't have an intellectual position. Your job is not a matter of survival. I didn't suggest that you "should seek gainful employment elsewhere." When you castle, leave an escape for the king.

(You know who the king is? What escape means?)

amicalement,

Tom

Tom Mandel * 2927 Tilden St. NW
Washington DC 20008 * 

vox: [REDACTED] * fax [REDACTED]

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236. **Michael Boughn**

Wild taste

Sat 7 Dec 1996

A last word on that totally frustrating taste thread.

I read Wystan's post as being concerned with the relation of reading to poetics, as trying to locate the dynamic that characterizes the transformation of reading into a poetics. The unfortunate word he chose to name that dynamic was taste--it could just as easily have been Castaneda's word, "heart", or Freud's word, "cathexis". All of them indicate a dynamic in which the text grabs your attention and leads you beyond yourself into a world charged with orders of meanings out of which poetry arises.

The response to Wystan's position was to beat him over the head with Academic Master Narratives which explain all literature in a single jargon laden paragraph, as if "taste" had some essential, unchanging meaning, so you could just put the boots to it whenever you saw it without having to ask what it meant, how it was being used (Wittgenstein 101).

Personally, I could care less about explaining literature. Having a poetics, however, as Jack Clarke used to point out, is a matter of life and death. And this is a list purportedly dedicated to discussions of poetics.

Mike

[REDACTED]

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237. **Pete Landers**

Awesome Site

Sat 7 Dec 1996

Hi all,

Look what Karl Young's been up to! Wonderful!
<http://www.thing.net/~grist/l&d/lighthom.htm>

Pete Landers

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238. **amato**

Re: paul carroll...

Sat 7 Dec 1996

thanx bill for that information, very useful!... yes, part of "father" is excerpted in the trib. piece (and mention is made of carroll's last volume, _the beaver dam road poems_)... i wasn't aware that "father" was in the allen anthology (the sole carroll poem there), and am typing this post after having just read it... pretty tough piece, with a great sense of place (here, where i type---chicago)... anyway, i'll be spending some time in the library shortly to try to locate more of carroll's work...

best,

joe

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239. **william marsh**

contingent faculty, etc.

Sat 7 Dec 1996

Joe,

Thanks for your remarks, which do, in fact, reflect many of my recent concerns about teaching in general, concerns amounting to something of a crisis that has lead me to consider, quite seriously some days, finding "something else to do", to use Tom Mandel's words in a parallel post.

Specifically:

>

>for example: when you suggest that you're really not quite sure you *want*
>to be part of the professoriate, what i hear is both a critique of the
>current state of the professoriate (which is fine) AND an endorsement of
>the "contingent" workforce that, as i see it, is symptomatic of broader
>economic realities (which is, well, not so fine)...

not intended so much as an endorsement, although i see your point -- i certainly don't endorse the "broader economic realities" of which "contingent" work is a symptom, and agree that efforts should be made to change those realities so that the academic interests you mention don't find it so easy to "push us around". My primary intention, though, in posting my response to Mark Wallace was not so much to sidestep those realities or endorse the contingent workforce, but rather to suggest that there is work available for graduates who want to teach English at the college level. You're correct to challenge me on the issue of "what happens to teaching--in the classroom" when educational administrators know they have this contingent faculty to manipulate. The other

version of this question would be "what happens to teachers" when trying to negotiate this current reality, and how do they sustain any instructional zeal they may have entered the field with when faced with the often debilitating influence of administrative manipulation. These are questions i'm currently asking myself as well.

I can say that in my classroom the problem is paramount, for me as a teacher who loves teaching, loves writing, and i have multiple solutions that remain, no pun intended, contingent--ie, i take care to maintain, and articulate to the students, a certain honesty about (1) my interests and motivations as an educator and (2) the student's own motivations--both in terms specific to the nature of the situation we *all* find ourselves in in any given class, since generally, we're all being administered, not just the teacher. I'm not so sure the students i've met are "returning less b/c they want an education and more b/c they want a *credential*," as you put it (perhaps i gave the wrong impression), but in any event i try to make it clear that the latter is not really an option anyway. In other words, it becomes a matter sometimes of "teaching what it means to learn," and this usually creates a foundation on which learning becomes possible. Could this be one of the ways in which we (students and instructor alike) resist the "colonizing" mechanism you speak of--by saying/doing something to re-orient motivations in such a way that classroom experiences are not just economic exchanges between an exploited fringe worker and a colonized student sub-set, but genuine group involvements, in the way i've traditionally wanted the experience to be? I would certainly agree that a teaching position "keyed to vocationalizing or credentializing objectives" is not a favorable position, for the part- or full-timer, and it's this characterization that i resist in both your post and the academic environment i currently inhabit.

what's wrong with an approach to writing,
>specifically, that isn't, again, functionalized in terms of "effective
>communication" and the like?...

Nothing, of course, and i don't think i suggested there was -- it's an approach i work hard to take, but since i work for an institution which does functionalize it in these terms, the teaching is problematized in the way i speak of generally above. Hence, the crisis.

Again, i appreciate your taking me to task on these deeper issues, which i decided not to bring up not because i was sidestepping, but rather because, as i think i intimated at the conclusion of my first post, i'm not really sure how to measure them. Of course intellectual life as a "contingent faculty" instructor is not all that appealing, in the end, but perhaps the way to initiate the changes

you call for is first to make it work for the worker, the exact process for which, again, has not been discussed all that much, at least not from my point of view.

I could say more, but have said enough. Others?

Bill Marsh

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240. **Joel Kuszai**

Re: query

Sat 7 Dec 1996

Mike and all out there on the Listserver Prarie,

in answer to your question:

Is everybody on the list now subject to this holding-the-message business? Does this mean that we now get our mail doled out to us once a day after Charles has released it? Or is it just me?

As Buffalo University State at New York converts everything from teh old vax servers to the old unix servers, there has been some difficulty on our end. Do not adjust your computer! For some reason many messages get held up (and aren't being processed)--I have sent the "free poetics" message many times and was not heard by the mainframe. Lost in cyberspatial suspension, my message floated, like many of yours, in an etherial world of magic blips.

PS: maybe we should change the list name from Poetics to Disgruntled Grouchy Professors.

someone should do a parady of the poetics list 2026!

all best,

Joel Kuszai

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241. **robert majzels**

Adorno and Serbia

Sat 7 Dec 1996

Rachel Blau Duplessis is right, it was Adorno: "After Auschwitz, it is no longer possible to write poems." He wrote this in 1949, in "After Auschwitz" in Negative Dialectics, trans. E.B. Ashton. New York, Continuum Publishing Co., 1973.

Shoshana Felman, speaking of the necessity for art to de-esthetize itself, points out in her article on "Education and Crisis," in Imago vol. 48 Sring 1991, that

Adorno later wrote (see "Commitment," in *The Essential Frankfurt School Reader*, 1962): "The esthetic principle of stylization...make(s) an unthinkable fate appear to have had some meaning; it is transfigured, something of its horror is removed. This alone does an injustice to the victims... [Some] works...are even willingly absorbed as contributions to clearing up the past."

But more to the point here, he revisits his earlier statement: "I have no wish to soften the saying that to write lyric poetry after Auschwitz is barbaric... But Enzensberger's retort also remains true, that literature must resist this verdict..."

Also Charles Bernstein's "The Second War and Postmodern Memory," in *Apoetics*: "For to understand how Heidegger could be complicit in the Second War is to understand how the Second War is not an aberration but an extension of the Logos of Western Civilization. Jack Spicer's dying words -- "My vocabulary did this to me" -- could be the epitaph of the Second War as well: Our vocabulary did this to us."

In his 1949 text, Adorno also said, "If thinking is to be true -- if it is to be true today, in any case -- it must be thinking against itself. If thought is not measured by the extremity that eludes the concept, it is from the outset in the nature of the musical accompaniment with which the SS liked to drown out the screams of its victims."

Which brings me back to the Serbian initiative being proposed here. By all means, let's have declarations in support of the democratic movement in Serbia, but I would be uncomfortable with calling on the US government to intervene in Serbia or elsewhere (again), even if only to threaten or bully a government into behaving democratically. Why not, when addressing foreign conflicts, stick to civil society: people to people gestures of support? To call on Clinton et al to straighten out the mess in Europe is problematic, to say the least. After all, the American state, in the name of its people, is responsible for a great deal more oppression, propping up and funding of dictatorships, military invasions and massacres than any other force in the world today, not to mention all of history. Perhaps US citizens could do some thinking against themselves, and propose that their government pay up its dues to the UN, or support UNESCO's naming Hiroshima as a world heritage site.... or stop international arms sales by US weapons manufacturers. Just a thought from the Quebec side of the border.

Robert Majzels

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242. **amato**

Re: life on the aka deme

Sat 7 Dec 1996

tom, ok, so you wanna talk turkey, we'll talk turkey...

I

"fuck that, i don't wanna go back THERE"

i didn't come *here* (to paraphrase michael boughn's recent post) as anything BUT a matter of life & death... now you can take "here" anyway you want to--- use your imagination... but "life & death" to me means---among other things--- how you earn a living... a question, as anybody who knows me knows, i generally manage to ask folks within my first five minutes of meeting them (not the best way to make a first impression, but there it is)...

i came here with all sorts of (doubtless) petit bourgeois ideas intact... e.g., tv for me is not primarily a matter of simulation a la baudrillard---first & foremost it's the *place* 'in front of which' my father, brother and i sat and argued, and shouted, and got along, while my father smoke, drank and worried himself to death... with a little help from his profession, too---working with furniture finishes, with the various solvents of his *craft*, had all to do with carcinogens---which is why i'm suspicious as hell of "craft" as i am of "institutions"... was my father a "master"---well hell, yeah, sure... i actually saw an old-timer, a guy who used to teach furniture finishing during the 30s, literally *weep* at the work my father had done... so what?---i mean, if you asked *my father* whether he was a "master," he probably woulda thought you were some kinda NUT...

we didn't have any curtains on our windows, in that upper flat, for the 13 years we lived there (and when i type "windows," i sure as hell HOPE somebody out there is thinking gui's)... and we left, finally, when they finally condemned the place... btw, i have an affinity for "they," which i use, as my folks did, to connote any group that has me by the short hairs...

now my dad---well, hell, he was a shop steward at general electric in the 50s--- high school equiv. after the war, ETC... what do you figure he spent most of his time talking about?---"intellectual engagement"?... he was a first generation american born of sicilian immigrants who could barely read or write... if you catch me using the language of academe, it's b/c i've had to learn how to use it... so what?... though my mom was a formally educated woman (which latter was interrupted when the nazis walked into france), she too spent much of the 50s doing crimp & solder work, piece work... i assume we all know what this means... and later went on to spend her final years as a receptionist...

[cut to insert]

the academic in me wants to ask you folks whether any of you have read in the age of the smart machine (shoshana zuboff), a book that goes a long way toward unpacking the customary values attributed to different sorts of knowledges and different sorts of workplaces... and how we're currently in an age when knowledge is increasingly textualized... it's not w/o its problems, but hell---tom, when you mention how many of us know how to _____, i want to say, why yeah, sure, so again, SO WHAT?... that's what *i* want to say, tom---the "me" that's typing this stuff... i want to say, hey, i'm not a butcherbakerorcandlestickmaker... i have other things i *do*, but i don't quite see how my insight into, say, tomato sauce, or into jogging, or whatever, precludes my discussion hereabouts about academe...

[tape together here]

learning a new language (recall "intellectual engagement," above) was not all a bad thing... i imagine my vocabulary these days includes quite a few words and expressions (mixed with fuck and shit and the like) that my friends from twenty years ago would not immediately grasp (shades of richard rodriguez here, i know---but please don't mistake my take on my past for his)... but i didn't learn that new language W/O being suspicious of this institution... while i would be more than willing to concede that my folks (note the class-based recourse i have to them, no?) would likely regard academe and its intellectual set with more outright respect than perhaps it/they deserve, i would nonetheless assure *anybody* around here (as should have been painfully clear when i talked about my "doctor of arts" degree, my non-phd phd) that i'm a far cry more suspicious about institutions than just about anybody i've met... you wanna see me cranked up?---just ask me what i think about academic politics... but be sure to do it *in person*---i'm not half as reasonable-sounding when i have the added advantage of my MOUTH, present and future, to back me up... and my more mouthy side wants to take you on, tom, mano-a-mano---that's my contentious "me," the 50% sicilian in me, the kneejerk jerk in me, the guy who wants to call *you* out for calling out me on my use of terms, while at the same time using yourself a word like "animadversions," a word that would probably never occur to me to use around here, anymore than using archaic expressions simply b/c they're likely to have more "communicative force"...

but ok...

the point here: you say you got into this racket easily... i had to work my nuts off for it... and when i finally got "here," i found mself (as don byrd so wisely put it, a decade ago) beyond where most of academe would be able to tolerate... which, ontologically speaking tom, is fine by me... but i just don't see what i do *for a living*---with its flaws intact---as any less valuable, intrinsically, than what my bro is currently doing... who, like me, is a former engineer, but in his

case an engineer-turned-successful entrepreneur... and when i write "successful," i mean beyond the wildest dreams of my folks...

II

[cut to insert]

taste, sez michael b., has been for him a "totally frustrating" thread... why is it that i've found it so valuable, and that you, michael---have found it so frustrating?... is it the tenor of the discussion itself?... or is it something else?...

[tape together here]

this list has been invaluable to me in establishing a network sense of community... heck, i've even used my experiences *here* to help flesh-out several web publications---not b/c i'm an opportunist (at least, not as i see it), but b/c i see something important going on in these parts... primarily, i'm permitted to 'talk' with all sorta folks i would otherwise not 'talk' with... tom---you say you're always getting yourself in trouble in institutions... but hey---you think that i'm NOT?... you think teaching tech. writing and using, say, johanna drucker's work is not a problem?... you think i WANT to teach tech. writing?... you wanna know what happened in april of 1984 when i left the engineering profession (bristol-myers co.), and it left me?... why do you suppose that your experience with institutions has been any more problematic than mine... b/c i'm still an academic?... but hey---i'm 41, for chrissakes, and i'm not so utopian as to believe i can continue to do this job jig forever... i mean, even though there's other work for me, if i want it, i've already been elsewhere, like i say... i don't see why i shouldn't try to stick with this academic path... and hey, another thing---i'm posting alla this in public WHILE I'M APPLYING FOR JOBS---some folks on this list are no doubt on search committees, and have my vita in their hands... so mebbe I'M SELF-DESTRUCTING again, no?---in even *trying* to be forthcoming... or is my mentioning this latter reality simply the paranoid in me?... let ME answer that: i'm NOT paranoid, but i'm not stupid, either (another expression from my past)...

[cut to insert]

it occurs to me (and i say this having been a member of this list way back when it had mebbe two dozen people on it) that one problem here has been the assumption of community relationships where perhaps there are none... it occurs to me, though of course i may be wrong, that this somewhat 'explains' michael b's sense of frustration... i don't *know* so many of you folks, except as you come to these spaces, and in terms of your various publications... i have a sense, though only a sense, that though tom is less institutionally-centered (academically speaking) than me, the marker <tom mandel> means much more for many of you, poetically speaking, than the marker <joe amato>... so the way

i see it, <tom mandel> carries more institutional weight---in terms poetic...
whereas <joe amato> may carry more, in terms loquacious... perhaps we really
oughtta try harder to introduce ourselves to one another, to open up some of
this personal SHIT, albeit i understand that many of you may not want to hear
who all we all are... still, many e-lists i've been on encourage this sorta thing...

III

[tape together here]

[tape together here]

[tape together here]

i guess i have to ask all of you, directly and indirectly, how much honesty can
you take?...

and give?...

joe

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243. **aerialedge**

Re: The Academic Career?

Sat 7 Dec 1996

Big Al writ:

>BTW -- anybody for the theory that the author of _Aerial and the Police_
>really wanted to BE the police all along?

BCN (be careful now)-- I believe it's _Ariel and the Police_
please.

pretty please.

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244. **Gwyn McVay**

Re: benjamin

Sat 7 Dec 1996

Rod,

I'd like one'a them Benjamins you mentioned.

How you?

Gwyn

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245. **Gwyn McVay**

blush & hide

Sat 7 Dec 1996

Every so often I achieve true transcendent stupidity and screw up the "reply" function.

utterly socially mortified

Gwyn

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246. **Aldon L. Nielsen**

Re: blush & hide

Sat 7 Dec 1996

sitting here with the guys at the gas station and we on impulse plucked up a piece of street to see what the hell was causing all that rumble -- anyway -- me & the guys pass along the following:

along with the forthcoming *_Diacritics_* of which we so lately spoke, some amongst y'all may wish to look at the *CURRENT _Diacritics_*, which is a special issue on *Bataille* --

--during a somewhat touchy few days on last Summer's list, several were heard to mutter, "What's this CLA?" Current issue of *_CLA Journal_* contains summary essay by Dolan Hubbard titled "Slipping into Darkness: CLA and Black Intellectual Formation" -- Dolan will also chair an MLA panel on anthologies, a subject of frequent discussion in these parts --

-- Yes, Rod, the first edition of the book was *_Ariel and the Police_*, but they suddenly changed the spelling around the third printing! Go figure --

--Tom knows more about fuel injection than anyone I know, and with good reason, judging from what I hear from his mechanic -- On the other hand, he still hasn't explained why there's no "J" street --

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247. **wkl888**

Re: Johnny Guitar

Sat 7 Dec 1996

Cf. Garry Wills' attempt in *_The New Yorker_* to re-ideologize Wayne's jingoism ("In Rome, military rule was the highest virtue, and the most debilitating accusation was one of effeminacy... The Roman Empire dreamed constantly of John Wayne.") and link it to the hopes of the then-upcoming Republican convention in San Diego in "American Chronicle: John Wayne's Body", August

19, 1996, pp. 38-49. The particular charms of the photo on p. 42, however, say something very different.

Walter K. Lew

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248. **wkl888**

Replied-to Text

Sun 8 Dec 1996

Poetics List-- Have received request to indicate which message I was replying to a few hours ago when citing the New Yorker article on John Wayne. It was Dan Salmon's of December 2, 9:33 pm:

>Dislike of John Wayne is made rather easy with the benefit hindsight: 'Green Berets' the fact that he named his son after his 'Indian hating' character in the searchers & John Ford's confessions that he hid the searchers script from wayne because he thought wayne would not have coped with its leftist politics.

His all-round jingoism made him a pretty unpopular figure at a time of strong anti-war protest & revisionist history. However he is an important figure for both film & cultural studies - not just as a reflection of his and his characters politics - but the roles he played in a multitude of films many of which (green berets - excluded) use his persona to address complex issues that using a less strong character/personality would not have adressed.

The love/hate thing ties in quite nicely here, his Ethan was a man who 'hated indians' obviously this is a reflection on him rather than a reflection on 'the indians' & is a feature by which we judge him - and by which we know where we stand. It is a locator for his character. (In the green berets he hates another kind of indian).

Any judgements of Wayne (hate/love - violent (or passive) dislike) have to be tempered by a certain ambivalence: the usefulness of his character in 19th & 20th century american attitudes makes it difficult to write-off many of the films he starred in.

Dan<

--Walter K. Lew

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249. **Kali Tal**
Re: Wild taste
Sun 8 Dec 1996

The response to Wystan's position was to beat him over the head with Academic Master Narratives which explain all literature in a single jargon laden paragraph, as if "taste" had some essential, unchanging meaning, so you could just put the boots to it whenever you saw it without having to ask what it meant, how it was being used (Wittgenstein 101).

Hmmm. Wystan seemed to be doing a bit of head-beating himself. And I didn't see anyone "explain all literature in a single jargon laden paragraph." I heard people (including me) question the word "taste," but didn't hear Wystan (or anyone *not* interested in "explaining literature") venture a definition of the word in the particular contest in which it was used and then suggest that there might be other meanings for the word in other contexts. As for "jargon-laden," well, I'm wondering what sort of jargon you might mean, and whether "Academic Master Narrative" might qualify. Most of what I've read of this thread has been pretty comprehensible and apparently straightforward.

Personally, I could care less about explaining literature. Having a poetics, however, as Jack Clarke used to point out, is a matter of life and death.

What is the difference between "having a poetics" and "explaining literature"? Seems like "a poetics" *is* an "explanation" of a kind. Certainly I didn't hear anyone try to explain *away* literature, which is what you seem to be implying by your comment. If you've "got" a poetics, you've also got a story about it, which either does or does not go without saying. Even the claim that "having a poetics... is a matter of life and death" is based on some narrative you've bought into. It isn't just a simple "fact."

And this is a list purportedly dedicated to discussions of poetics.

People talk about poetry and poetics in different ways, and there are at least as many definitions of "poetics" as there are of "taste." My exploration of poetics may not cover the same territory as yours, but if you can't stand it, that's what the "delete" key is for, isn't it?

Joe and I are quite definitely on the same wavelength here. I greatly appreciate his last, long post written in typical Joe Tomato fashion--hard hits, some painful honesty, and some artfully placed jump-cuts. Joe is talking about class issues--and of course I like that, too. But then, I *publish* Joe's poetry, and I like it because it's structurally beautiful *and* ideologically sound, and it uses a lot of literary conventions which are often employed to *avoid* talking about matters

of substance in order to better express those matters of substance. (Joe probably likes his own poetry for reasons which have little or nothing to do with my own.) In short, he subverts what I've come to think of as the "literary order." I don't give a damn if the notion of "ideology" is out of fashion; frankly, I think anyone without an ideology is either lazy, a fool, or too privileged to be forced to articulate one. The notion that "art" is somehow beyond or outside of ideology makes me gag. There's art in the service of fascism, and art in the service of freedom, and art in the service of [insert your favorite cause here]. No art is value-neutral. If I could imitate Dylan (the recent Nobel *poetry* nominee), I'd say in my best drawl, you gotta seeerve somebody.

I publish up to six full-length poetry manuscripts a year. Mostly I publish poets whose work wouldn't ever get picked up by the more established literary poetry presses. (Joe is an exception to this rule, and so are Maggie Jaffe, Leroy Quintana, and Philip K. Jason.) I publish fine writers, but they don't play the literary poetry game. Frankly, I don't give a fuck. I like their work; I think it's good, so I put it into print. David Connolly's *_Lost in America_* sold 1700 copies since I published it in 1995... *without* a commercial distribution network. Dale Ritterbusch's *_Lessons Learned_* just won the Wisconsin Poetry Prize. Connolly's worked as a lineman for the phone company for 25 years; Ritterbusch has been paid shit on a year-to-year contract in the English Dept. of podunk U of Wisconsin-Whitewater for two decades, where they actually *hassle* him about the time he spends writing. Unlike many of the folks on this list, I don't make a dime off poetry, either as a writer *or* an academic. In fact, my interest in poetry sometimes costs me thousands of dollars out of pocket in a bad year--poetry has definitely lowered my material standard of living. So it's always amusing to me when I'm jumped for my theorizing and my tendency to "explain literature" at the expense of "art." My "tastes" are as clear as day--just look at the Burning Cities Press/VG book list and you can't miss them. As a publisher I'm forced to declare my partisan affiliation with each book I release. I am hardly a mere theorist.

I hang out "here" on POETICS because what you-all do and talk about interests me, even though I doubt I'll ever feel a part of whatever community might exist on this list. I consider a few of the individuals who inhabit the place to be friends. Mostly, I just lurk, though lately I've been motivated to contribute to the discussion. I'm always astonished at how different my world seems to be from the world that most posts on this list represent.

Kali

Kali Tal

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PO Box 13746, Tucson, AZ 85732-3746

Sixties Project: <http://jefferson.village.virginia.edu/sixties/>

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250. **Dan Raphael Dlugonski**

Re: life on the aka deme

Sun 8 Dec 1996

2 threads i see in this discussion: a) the incursion of capitalisms current de-evaluation of labor, rampant throughout the rest of the world, getting more apparent in universities; and b) the connection between teaching and writing. a tad of background: after a ba and mfa i tried to go into teaching, didnt succeed, and ten years later tried again (with a second ma). still i stayed a poet, developed as a poet, though lacked the support and networking that an academic position can give. i also developed a family and regional networks that the transient life of a 'beginning' (first 10-15 years?, with certain exceptions) teaching career does not allow. perhaps the current economic developments (and this ties in with several past discussions on academic living conditions, including creative vs 'standard' dissertations) are helping to wake up and shake up many writers to a clearer idea of the role of writer-- the teaching, the creating of more writers, is at best secondary to the function of sreading vision, spreading hte power of language, as its expressed in the history of literature, in language's insight into current human conditions via vernacular and pop culture, and in the rich psychological well of language itself. while teaching and the academic milieu has many demands on the body and the spirit, and non-academic career survival has its own pitfalls (like isolation from other artists and audiences), maybe these current changes in economics will serve to bring the power of language to bear more directly on economic and political realities, to enregize a wider variety of hearts and environments.

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251. **aerialedge**

new Benjamin, Spahr, &&& @ Bridge Street

Sun 8 Dec 1996

look it's books:

1. *_Eulogies_* by Amiri Baraka, Marsilio, \$22.95. Farewells in poetry & prose to Malcolm X, John Coltrane, Larry Neal, Kimako Baraka, Bob Kaufman, Miles Davis, Sun Ra, Toni Cade Bambara, & many others, 43 in all.

2. *_Walter Benjamin: Selected Writings Volume 1, 1913-1926_* edited by Marcus Bullock and Michael W. Jennings, Harvard, \$35. The first of a projected three

volume Selected. The final volume will be The Arcades Project. Five-sixths of this material has never appeared in English. As reported here the volume contains all of "One-Way Street," as well as many other essays, treatises, reviews, fragments, letters, & privately circulated pronouncements. Titles include: "The Life of Students," "A Child's View of Color," "The Ground of Intentional Immediacy," "The Object: Triangle," "Perception is Reading," "The Paradox of the Cretan," "The Meaning of Time in the Moral Universe," & "Capitalism as Religion."

3. The Visible Word: Experimental Typography and Modern Art, 1909 - 1923 by Johanna Drucker, U. Chicago, \$15.95. "Drucker's passionate presentation of work too often overlooked and her brilliant critique of the critical domestication of modernist practice make The Visible Word crucial not just for our understanding of the historical avant-garde but also for understanding what poetry is and how it means." --Charles Bernstein, *Modernism/Modernity*.

4. Barnesbook by Jackson Mac Low, Sun & Moon, \$9.95. "One's returned arms demand lament." Mac Low's unadjectivable methods applied to the work of Djuna Barnes.

5. Some Other Frequency: Interviews with Innovative American Authors edited by Larry McCaffery, U Penn, \$19.95. Interviews with Kathy Acker, David Antin, Lydia Davis, Kenneth Gangemi, Marianne Hauser, Lyn Hejinian, Harold Jaffe, Richard Kostelanetz, Robert Kelly, Mark Leyner, Clarence Major, Derek Pell, & William Vollman.

6. Deconstruction and Pragmatism edited, with an introduction by Chantal Mouffe. Essays by Simon Critchley, Jacques Derrida, Ernesto Laclau, and Richard Rorty. Routledge, \$12.95. Rorty charges Derrideans with "an unfortunate over-philosophication of leftist political debate" which has led to "a self-involved academic left which has become increasingly irrelevant to substantive political discussion." Hmmm.

7. Response by Juliana Spahr, Sun & Moon, \$10.95. "the condition of unbearableness is the constant state of mind for all occupants" Winner of the National Poetry Series 1995, selected by Lyn Hejinian. "turn on the lights"

8. 707 Scott Street by John Weiners, Sun & Moon, \$12.95. The famed circa '58 ms circulated journals of Wieners. "Who can say/ I should not walk in glory/ when I do."

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 must charge some shipping for orders out of the US.

Bridge Street Books, 2814 Pennsylvania Ave NW, Wahsington, DC 20007.

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252. **Patrick Foley**

Re: Wild taste

Sun 8 Dec 1996

Personally, I could care less about explaining literature. Having a poetics, however, as Jack Clarke used to point out, is a matter of life and death.

*What is the difference between "having a poetics" and "explaining literature"? Seems like "a poetics" *is* an "explanation" of a kind. Certainly I didn't hear anyone try to explain *away* literature, which is what you seem to be implying by your comment. If you've "got" a poetics, you've also got a story about it, which either does or does not go without saying. Even the claim that "having a poetics... is a matter of life and death" is based on some narrative you've bought into. It isn't just a simple "fact."*

You see, Kali, this is the sort of thing that bugs the shit out of me. Why would it have to be a "narrative" (and btw this use of "narrative" and the more colloquial "story" is the kind of jargon he's talking about) Mike has _bought into_ rather than one he wrote his own goddamnn self? How long did it take you to write this paragraph? 15 seconds? Man says he's interested in X not Y, and you shoot back X is Y. Did you stop to think? Don't you think it might have occured to Mike? So he had something in mind, which you have given no consideration to at all in your rush to handle him, make him into a _consumer_ of something you know all about rather than a _producer_ of something you don't.

That said, thanks for the post and the insight on what you do. Don't assume you're the only non-academic here. Me, I work at the local Barnes & Noble.

Pat

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253. **Gwyn McVay**

Re: Wild taste

Sun 8 Dec 1996

Kali and Pat,

Is having a "story" (or narrative, whichever term you like) really a necessary forerunner to, or consequence of, having a poetics?

When Mike says that "having a poetics is a matter of life and death," I take it to mean rather that "a poetics" is a collection of deeply felt beliefs, ideas, and hunches that shape both initial impulse and revision--a belief system that is necessary to one's idea of how the cosmos works. Creating a story out of these beliefs, whether it be a poetic manifesto or a creation myth, is, I think, a different act--closely related, to be sure, but still different.

"It's just a hunch," said Quasimodo to the bishop--

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254. **dbkk**

Re: poetry in transit

Sun 8 Dec 1996

Gary Roberts wrote:

Does anyone know much about the origins of the poetry-placards which occassionally appear in subways and buses, a la Poetry in Motion, that has made its way to Boston via NYC? I remember that a similar public-display venture appeared in Chicago buses in the mid-80s, and have heard that the practice began in San Francisco sometime in the 70s. I first was glad to see them, now I am less so, probably because their intentions seem disingenuous. Do they grease the wheels of commerce? Yes. Do they work for the well-being of commuters? I don't know.

I take the bus all the time here in San Francisco, and I'm always delighted twice a year when the new poems appear on the bus system. Usually 6 poems appear all at once, in different parts of the bus. I spot one, then I run to the middle of the bus, then to the back, then back to the right hand side, murmuring, "Excuse me please" to all other commuters whose feet I'm stepping on, etc. In San Francisco these poems appear under the title "Streetfare Journal" and are edited by the poet George Evans. Usually he prints a lot of poems by the Objectivists. Dunno, maybe they wrote a lot of short poems. One time about six years ago I was racing through the 14 Mission and stumbled in my excitement and wound up lying across the laps of 5 of the meanest looking muscle boys in the back row in wool caps huge radios and glass pipes. I felt like Marilyn Monroe in "Diamonds are a Girl's Best Friend," except less, I don't know, elegant. These boys started to growl and curse and I was reduced to swallowing hard and explaining how I just had to see what was new from Miss Lorine Niedecker. But I am still alive and looking forward to next edition. -- Kevin Killian.

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255. **amato**

Re: Wild taste

Sun 8 Dec 1996

just wanted to throw in here, or throw up, or whatever the hell it is i think i'm doing, that "story" is clearly a problematic way of understanding poetics... it's not so much that stories as such are a problem, but the incredible popularity of the term suggests what the problem is: even in light of more unconventional stories, and multilinear stories, and such, recourse to story often ends up reducing a complex of experience to a "naturalized" datum (news weather sports)... hence the popular experience = story... i'm certain kali can better flesh out her sense of how she meant "story"---it seemed to me she was using the term to connote the necessity of critical engagement with same... i.e., that our metanarratives often play a tacit role in shaping our judgment... but if our judgment is not esp. a function of narrative, or not esp. seen that way, why then perhaps we do need a better term...

anyway, seems to me part of the problem implicit in this taste thread is as follows (and i wasn't gonna post this to the list, but what the hell):

i like MACARONI

I like macaroni

the uppcase here to reveal the relative emphasis... now taste inflects the above two declarations differently depending upon where the emphasis falls... when i say, i like MACARONI, taste becomes a matter of that complex kali described so well, wrt macaroni... when i say I like macaroni, the complex shifts emphasis back over to the i...

now i tend mself to write about stuff using either emphasis... for most critics i know, i like MACARONI is probably the more typical emphasis... for many poets, i'll hazard it's I like macaroni (in fact, i think the poet/scholar tends toward the latter esp.--and here i'm talking, for one, about mself)... when someone sez, 'I like macaroni so what?,' that someone is more in the i... when someone sez, 'i like MACARONI b/c it ____' it's more macaroni that's being emphasized...

only relative, mind you... i think kali has, until her last post, been emphasizing the MACARONI, and i think pat foley has been emphasizing the I, esp. in that great long post of his... which is why kali and pat are really not so opposed---as i see it, anyway...

it should probably all be treated as

I LIKE MACARONI

i mean, both subject I and object ____ are at all times very much at stake in any such assertion/judgment... but thinking about it this way highlights a potential problem:

i like macaroni

it's the apparent deemphasis of both sides of the 'equation' that's the cause, methinks, of some real frustration...

best,

joe I LIKE MACARONI & i prefer lowercase

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256. **Brian McHale**

Re: paul carroll...

Sun 8 Dec 1996

Let me second (third, fourth) what has been said here about the late Paul Carroll, & especially about his "Young American Poets" anthology. This was for me a first window opening on innovative poetry, the first time I'd read Clark Coolidge, Kathleen Fraser, the 2nd-generation New Yorkers, etc. etc., in short a whole batch of poets I'd never even heard of before & whom I've stuck with to this day. My parents gave me the book on my 17th or 18th birthday, or whatever -- I have that copy on my shelf today. It's a mystery to me why, when people discuss famous "world-changing" anthologies (Donald Allen et al.) Paul Carroll's never gets mentioned. I have to assume that I'm not the only person to whom it came as a revelation.

Brian

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257. **aerialedge**

Re: Wild taste

Sun 8 Dec 1996

seems to me narrative is a structure of language-- you can do what you want to deny it-- it will be back. the problem is when taste becomes authority. both kali & pat are taking the position that they are resisting authority-- pat "academic master narratives" -- kali arguing for an understanding of the social constructedness of much behavior. seems to me both positions can be right. but i think you have to look at these things contextually-- i.e. look for authority, see if it can be justified. in matters of taste i can see no justification. one most times will end up denying the validity of another's perception. this tends to be boring &/or argument for argument's sake. tho when one knows another person well something like antin's "tuning" can take place-- you can get a feel for, begin to see the place(s) that taste comes from even while not being in agreement. or

being in agreement when you're with that person, you can see it with them, & it might change you. John Cage had this effect on many many people.

--Rod

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258. **Brian Carpenter**

Re: poetry in transit

Sun 8 Dec 1996

Seattle also adopted a similar poetry-on-the-bus program a few years back. The city usually does a fairly decent job with public arts projects, but this particular program has been frustrating because it seems to have been a one-time effort. Initially there were a number of buses fully decked-out with poems (and some artwork) end-to-end. Today most of the buses will have at least a few poems up, but its the same poems that were up in the beginning. There are a few decent poems among the lot (even a Russian poem w/ both the cyrillic and eng. translation) but that does not make up for the horror of seeing "I am the wind! Hear me sing!" among the ads for three years straight. Furthermore, there is no indication given as to how these poems got there, nor where to send new poems to be put up on future buses.

These are pretty much my own aesthetic grumblings, sure, but there has been no indication that this program was anything but a one-time shot and thus I would be inclined to call the program somewhat disingenuous. It seems to me that the impetus behind such a program would be to artsify the masses so to speak--that is, to decompartmentalize poetry from the ivory tower, black-beretville, or wherever Joe Public might imagine poetry to be. If afraid, however, that in creating such a textual space and then letting it sit static they have created an entirely new compartment, at least as far as the commuting public is concerned. And, sheesh, if Citizen N disliked poetry before, theyre going to dislike it maybe even a little bit more after seeing the same tired poems over and over again.

So, unless such a program is run on an active basis (such as the SF buses seem to be) it seems to me that transit-poetry is pretty useless, maybe even counterproductive. Seattle's program seems to be so, at least, and seeing as how it is utterly unregenerative and presented as little more than a new way to redirect one's on-bus privatized boredom, the lethargic program rather encourages the notion that poetry is something one does outside of real life--useless texts, as Gary Roberts put it.

I didnt know of other such programs in other cities, and am encouraged to hear that at least some of them are doing well. If the idea is to get poetry to the commuting public, perhaps we could take this farther and put poetry on the

outside of the bus as well so that pedestrians and folks in cars could take part as well. (Given that such a driving distraction might cause a few accidents, perhaps Creeley's "drive, he sd, for / christ's sake, look / out where yr going" would be an initial candidate). Anyhow, its difficult to be encouraged by bus-poetry when you read tepid poems inside the KZOK-radio bus or one painted intentionally like an Adidas shoe. Here's hoping for improvement.

=Brian

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259. **Aldon L. Nielsen**

Re: you say "Amato"

Sun 8 Dec 1996

My God! Kali says "Toe-mah-toe" -- Shatters all my allusions --

Kali, turns out most of my Oliveros is in California -- so I'll mail "I of IV" along with some now old new music of the sixties in a similar vein -- and will then get more Oliveros to you late January --

"Oliveros" is I belive the recto to "Oliveros" --

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260. **Tom Beard**

Re: Wild taste

Sun 8 Dec 1996

Well, *_de gustibus_* sure has caused a bit of *_disputandum_*. I'm kind of ambivalent myself - I tend towards Wystan's view that having *_tastes_* (lower case, plural) is vital and human. To say of a piece of jazz (or opera or rap or pastrami) "oh it's a good example of it's kind" sounds pale, un-involved, even patronising. But to say "oh that's shite! now X (insert favourite other example of jazzoperarappastrami) - that's the real stuff", while risking being thought of as a "violent taste", sounds passionate and involved. It means that one considers jazzoperarappastrami worth caring about.

On the other hand (& there's always an other hand...), when *_tastes_* solidify into Taste (capitalised, singular), I agree with Kali. *_This_* is authoritarianism, or at the very least arrogance. Interestingly, it was Lyotard who sniffed "this 'taste' is not Taste" when confronted with what he saw as the eclectic excesses of some postmodern artists.

It's intriguing that "tasteless" is the antonym of both "tasteful" and "tasty". In the first sense, a tasteless act is sometimes welcome as a rebellion against received Taste. In the second tense, it just signifies blandness.

Cheers &c,

Tom Beard.

(P.S. Thanks Matt for the URL of 'cigarette boy'. I'd heard about this, but only been able to find reviews on the net, not the actual text. The animated GIFs actually work well with the text in its context.)

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261. **Kali Tal**
Re: Wild taste

Sun 8 Dec 1996

You see, Kali, this is the sort of thing that bugs the shit out of me. Why would it have to be a "narrative" (and btw this use of "narrative" and the more colloquial "story" is the kind of jargon he's talking about) Mike has _bought into_ rather than one he wrote his own goddamnn self?

It's my opinion (and yours could differ) that no one writes meta-narratives their own damn self. (Sorry you don't like the term "narrative"--or "story" either, apparently--but I fail to see how they qualify as "jargon." Their meanings seem pretty clear and accessible to just about anyone who reads and writes in English.) Gwyn argues that:

"a poetics" is a collection of deeply felt beliefs, ideas, and hunches that shape both initial impulse and revision--a belief system that is necessary to one's idea of how the cosmos works. Creating a story out of these beliefs, whether it be a poetic manifesto or a creation myth, is, I think, a different act--closely related, to be sure, but still different.

I don't think these are different at all; I think that the creation of the "story" is simultaneous with the assembly of the "collection" and that you can't have a poetics (or at least a poetics you can express) without also having a story about it. In fact, I don't think human critters can make a move or think a thought that isn't somehow connected to a story they've got about the way the world works. Our stories shape our perceptions; they are what enables us to distinguish between "important" features of a landscape (any landscape--internal or external) and "insignificant" features. And our stories are always formed through our interactions with that stuff which operates outside us, beyond our control--the environment, other people. Stories are produced in the exchange between the "I" and the universe. No input; no output. What makes human art so fascinating is the seemingly endless array of permutations which are possible from similar (but not the same) input, and the refinement of the various forms this output takes. I don't, of course, advocate any sort of simple mechanistic model of cultural production, since it seems to me that the nuances

and complexities and subtleties of environmental/social/cultural influence on individuals are so far from being quantifiable that such efforts are laughable. But it **does** seem useful to me to try and understand the stories people are capable of, or willing to tell about themselves and their art, and to analyze those stories as texts in an attempt to understand what **kinds** of stories might be useful for what purposes.

| *How long did it take you to write this paragraph? 15 seconds?*

Nice rhetorical trap. If I say it took me 15 seconds, then I'm guilty of being glib and shallow. But if I say I spent an hour on it, then I stand accused of having shallow thoughts despite my attention to the paragraph. Rhetorical devices are swell; I use them myself, particularly when I'm sure that I've already won an argument and just want to tapdance on my opponent's head.

| *Man says he's interested in X not Y, and you shoot back X is Y. Did you stop to think? Don't you think it might have occurred to Mike? So he had something in mind, which you have given no consideration to at all in your rush to handle him, make him into a _consumer_ of something you know all about rather than a _producer_ of something you don't.*

Your logic is off. Man says he's interested in considering W+X (having a poetics) rather than Y+Z (explaining literature). I say that that I don't think anyone was interested in Y+Z (explaining literature), and propose that we focus on Y (explaining), which I claim is equivalent to S (a narrative or story). Then I make the argument that if and only if S+X is true (there exists a narrative of a poetics), then W+X is true (one can have a poetics). This is a different... ummm, **story** entirely, so the rest of the comments in your paragraph are not at all relevant to the argument I was actually making.

| *Don't assume you're the only non-academic here.*

I don't. That's why I said "most."

Kali

Kali Tal

Sixties Project & Viet Nam Generation, Inc.

PO Box 13746, Tucson, AZ 85732-3746



Sixties Project: <http://jefferson.village.virginia.edu/sixties/>

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262. **Chris Stroffolino**
sublimation (sex, etc)

Mon 9 Dec 1996

----thinking about the relation of poetry to sex.....

two theoretical terms....

sometimes poetry is sex?

sex is "not all" (stevens, ashbery, etc)--

a substitute for sex?

or sex is a substitute for poetry?

(those who have sex to write sex poetry, assuming they exist)--the life of theory is the sex of theory, and romanticism....

or are certain poetic practices or assumptions more prone to, or grounded in, the necessity of sexual frustration? "IMAGISTS are certainly better lovers than symbolists and romantics, but not as good as amygists?" or does poetry ever LEAD to sex?

or do they, should they, occupy two opposite universes?

life and art should be kept apart....

if one agrees that the most "social" of poetries can be seen as a kind of "onanism", does macho bravado (or macha bravada)

signify the gentleness that revolutionaries

lack until collaboration is revealed to be the nudity one can

only write about while clothed in textual frustration that is

an honest anger for green privilegings of the impersonal that

could be confused with writing the body as long as it's spiritual as a

personal letter written by a rich person who isn't concerned with "poetic

economy" which in such a forum can be said to be the trouble with minimalism?

or do you prefer sex in the head to a hex in the shed?

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263. **Patrick Foley**
Re: Wild taste

Mon 9 Dec 1996

Kali,

I'll offer a draw on the rhetoric. As for the logic, you need to change "if and only if" to "only if" if you want to disagree with me. It might take even more sorting out, but who cares? The point is you think stories are required for everything, and you have a distressing habit of using passive verbs and vague pronouns around them, "are formed", "are produced", "we" simply have them,

and they shape "our" perceptions, etc. Toward the end of your explanations, people do tell them about themselves and their art, even though at the beginning they're disqualified from telling metanarratives. I don't know what to make of it all.

This is turning into a philosophical argument I can do without at the moment. I could critique your use of "story" -- it's something like the general form of a proposition, and I'm similarly suspicious. But this is not a philosophy list, so that's all I have to say about it.

Pat

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264. **MAXINE CHERNOFF**

Re: paul carroll.

Mon 9 Dec 1996

Dear Folks,

Paul Hoover's away from home and not on the internet for a few more weeks and I've been away this weekend as the notices about Paul Carroll began to come in. Paul and I knew Paul Carroll for about 20 years in Chicago. The relationship began when Paul was Paul C's student at the U of I Chicago and became a very personal one over the years. In fact, Paul H did the wedding ceremony when Paul C married his second wife, the sculptor Maryrose Carroll (with his Universal Life Church mail order ministry certificate), and there were many nights when Paul C would show up at our place either in a broadly gracious, poetry-reciting (he loved Neruda and knew zillions of poets by heart) mood or in a more troubled state of mind, often provoked by alcohol. In his good times, Paul was a great raconteur, a generous promotor of young writers' work (hence the anthology) and a fine poet (some of his work is listy and reminiscent of Corso and the Beats; other pieces of his are influenced by Catullus and all of the poets he read at the U of Chicago). Paul suffered from living in Chicago in terms of being overlooked for most of his poetic career. He helped popularize the Beats and brought Ginsberg to Chicago for an eraly reading but never was really one of them. He had many friends among poets but his being off the beaten track and his recurrent problems with drinking and depression made him hard to love at times. Still he was a generous spirit, a fine poet, and an astute critic. His reading was broad, his taste was generous, and no one could tell funny Irish neighborhood stories like him.

Maxine Chernoff

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265. **Bil Brown**

Re: sublimation (sex, etc)

Mon 9 Dec 1996

CHRIS,

Maybe I'm odd to this list, but I think I prefer sex AS sex and not SEX as poetry
As sex as poetic orgasim... whatever.

Again, maybe I'm odd -- but I keep my dick out of my poetics and in my pants.

Bil Brown

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266. **Michael Boughn**

Re: Wild taste

Mon 9 Dec 1996

Something else Jack Clarke used to insist on: never use what you know to
explain what you don't know.

Mike



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267. **Gwyn McVay**

Re: Wild taste

Mon 9 Dec 1996

Kali,

(Yipe! Watch where your browser points them thar attributions, okay?)

I think, then, that what you're arguing, while far from mechanistic, is actually
an assertion about human cognition. If you don't mind my veering off on a
tangent, I'd like to ask, quite seriously: do you think that nonhuman species also
use "story" to distinguish threatening vs. nonthreatening features of a
landscape, edible vs. nonedible things, etc., or do you see "story" as an
emergent property peculiar to humans? (I know, I know, this sounds like "Does
a dog have Buddha-nature?")

I do see what you mean about the necessity of a "story" to explain a poetics; I
think that "story," in this instance, can still operate at a very basic level--in
other words, the "story" may have a narrative no more developed than "This is
like A but not like B."

Gwyn

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268. **robert drake**

Re: Wild taste

Mon 9 Dec 1996

kali wrote...

*What is the difference between "having a poetics" and "explaining literature"? Seems like "a poetics" *is* an "explanation" of a kind. Certainly I didn't hear anyone try to explain *away* literature, which is what you seem to be implying by your comment. If you've "got" a poetics, you've also got a story about it, which either does or does not go without saying. Even the claim that "having a poetics... is a matter of life and death" is based on some narrative you've bought into. It isn't just a simple "fact."*

several folks seem to have objections to the notion of narrative as a face of one's poetics... but i rather like the idea (& praps that's me misunderstanding some "jargon")... it suggests an ongoing tale, a process in which we meet new texts, test them against our world view (our poetics) and either alter that view &/or explain the text in terms of it... and that allows for a development across time that has explanation value for my own experience; also suggests the shared mythology that, for me, is the defining feature of a community... & finally, as this thread itself points out, that the collection of individuals here gathered on the poetics list have a variety of such mythologies; hopefully all narrating those stories together and contradicting the hell out of one another...

feeling optimistic for a change

luigi

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269. **tmandel**

a (cut here) cada (paste here) me

Mon 9 Dec 1996

If I were able to spend more of my time reading words spoken/written with the significance and force of Joe Amato's last post I would be a happier human on all fronts.

My favorite manufacturer of suits is Oxxford. An Oxxford suit is stitched by hand -- only the inside seams of the trousers are done on a machine. The shoulder, as on any quality garment, is set in and stitched in place by hand. No suit can fit if made otherwise.

Turning up the collar of the jacket of an Oxxford suit will reveal that the neck has been stitched and shaped by an individual. A few stitches, then a hand iron

and hand shaping, then a few more stitches until the job is done. The job is done by someone not paid very much money for his (usually) work.

Look at the waistband of the trousers on an Oxxford suit; the waistband is stitched together by a individual with a needle between thumb and index finger. It's a superior way to create a garment.

I might mention that Oxxford suits have no style, that is they are never in any relation to fashion, tho over the years the lapels have been wider or narrower as the industry has changed these specifications.

Naturally, a company making a product of this kind -- anonymous and of exceptional quality -- finds it hard to survive in the megaconomy of our time. Oxxford was on the edge, threatening to go under, about a decade ago. Fortunately, William Haas -- president of, owner of Levi Strauss -- noticed this. Haas liked wearing Oxxford suits. So he bought the company.

An Oxxford suit costs about \$2,500 off the rack these days. You can find them at Neiman Marcus I'm told. Just a second, I'm going to count how many I have in my closet.....

I have seven of them. Now, it goes without saying that I can't afford to buy them at Neiman Marcus. Instead, I buy them at thrift stores. The most expensive one I have cost \$17. About 3 weeks ago, I found a medium weight blue cashmere Oxxford blazer in perfect condition in a thrift store on P street in Georgetown here in DC. Fit like a glove and cost \$12.

Dana, the offer is always open.

Tom

```
*****
      Tom Mandel * 2927 Tilden St. NW
Washington DC 20008 * [REDACTED]
      vox: [REDACTED] * fax [REDACTED]
*****
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270. **amato**

Re: narrative vs. story

Mon 9 Dec 1996

again, i have to chip in here to say that if "story" is used interchangeably with "narrative" (and there's a significant loss in doing so) why then i'll second the motion for its ubiquitousness... but i wouldn't want to argue it at the cognitive level--not w/o a whole lotta critical interference...

i'm afraid of story... it's everywhere these days, in our media---there seems to be no damned place you can go where it *isn't*... and i've seen the results of more simplistic applications of the concept of storytelling to history... the old grand metanarrative hypothetically gets replaced with subjective experience, experience that implicitly questions its truth value---but nature often comes in the back door (or technology, once it's sufficiently 'naturalized') simply b/c we all tend to believe individual experience in such terms... and lo---what you get is the standard metanarrative of progress, say... so it's not always a good thing, in all... story converts into beginnings middles ends what is a highly (thanx rod for the backchannel!) contingent, and in my view often highly complacent, motion toward the "real"...

there are narrative elements in language (as rod suggests), and metanarrative, as kali argues, is not something *we* purposively make (necessarily!---the cia is real good at covert such ploys/plots)... but in order to counter metanarrative, and in addition to some wild stories, i would argue that you need to attend to that which is not narrative on the face of it---which may ultimately be per/received as story, which will surely have narrative elements, but i'll say it again---is not intrinsically story... you can make a story out of just about anything, sure, but what is it intervenes and sez, "hey, hi, i'm ONLY a story"?... i mean, instead of "hey, hi, i'm a TRUE story"... in fact (and kali, you're more aware of this than most folks i've met), it's exactly on the axis of truth/fabrication that so much so-named minority/ethnic lit has turned... if it hasn't been 'normal' enough as a narrative structure, if it hasn't been 'true' enough as a story, if it's been too postmodern, say, or too disruptive, why then the 'truth' of it has fallen short of what certain readers (or critics) have desired... which isn't a criticism of story per se---i raise this issue to give some idea of the normalizing effects of story... in short, i prefer to allow both for story and for a more disjunctive approach to form, which i just won't call story...

but hey---i'm a poet, for chrissakes!... i mean, only some of my work is really narrative poetry per se---in which the focus IS narrative... do i tell stories?... hell yes!... is storytelling my focus as a poet?... hell no! (at least, not in my opine)... so again, it's a matter of how you emphasize things...

a long time ago, stein wrote "narrative is what anybody has to say in any way about anything that can happen has happened will happen in any way"... true enough... i've always thought that pretty much everything that can 'happen' is part of stein's 'definition'... but recourse to happenings, to beginnings middles & ends, while it'll probably always be just at our fingertips, can be just too damned easy...

best,

joe

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271. **dbkk**

Food for Life

Mon 9 Dec 1996

This is Kevin Killian. I hope all of you can go to your bookstore and buy a copy of "Food for Life" ed. Lawrence Schimel (Cleis Press). This is a book of recipes by dozens of gay and lesbian etc., writers, poets, artists, athletes, film stars etc, all with cute pictures of the contributors making the recipes, and all of the profits go to various AIDS charities--the food service groups in many cities that go around and deliver meals to those too ill or weak from AIDS or other catastrophic illness to go out and get it themselves. (Alternately, you could just give the money directly to these groups, which are listed in an appendix to this book.) They are providing a great service, and this book is really cute. Me and my white cat Blanche appear on page 140 for all of you Poetics List people who have always wondered, what does Kevin Killian actually look like and what kind of thing does he eat? I never thought I'd appear in the same book as Martina or Ru-Paul. This has got to be seen to be believed! Thanks.

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272. **Charles Alexander**

Re: Wild taste

Mon 9 Dec 1996

*it suggests an ongoing tale, a process
in which we meet new texts, test them against our world view (our poetics)
and either alter that view &/or explain th text in terms of it... and
that allows for a development across time that has explanation value
for my own experience; also suggests th shared mythology that, fr me,
is th defining feature of a community... & finally, as this thread itself
points out, that the collection of individs here gathered on the poetics
list have a variety ov such mythologies; hopefully all narrating those
stories together and contradicting th hell out ov one another...*

& such narratives/mythologies/explanations/stories are not necessarily consistent, and are (necessarily?) always changing.

charles

----- get off my back. the future fields into which I write are unimaginable. I do not know, any more than you do, what is around me, nor how far to go, nor precisely what I leave behind.

--Beverly Dahlen
from A Reading 8 - 10

published by Chax Press

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273. **dbkk**

Oppen lecture, December 5

Mon 9 Dec 1996

This is Kevin Killian. I missed the very first sentence of the 11th Oppen lecture at the Poetry Center of San Francisco State, so I missed Peter Quartermain's announcement of his methodology.... Afterwards I ran around asking people what he had said. Apparently he had written to quite a number of women writers asking them a) if they had ever known Oppen and b) what they made of his work. A large number replied and he was able, quite skillfully, to weave their responses into his talk, which seemed centered on a few closely related themes. What were Oppen's own thoughts about the position of women in the socialist revolution? What did he make of the new (1960s/1970s) wave of female poets who followed some of his trails, and why did he seek so many of them out? What "news" had they for him, and vice versa? A large crowd of interested people listened intently as PQ captured some of Oppen's ambivalence and contradictory thought on these questions. Oppen, he told us, advised Denise Levertov to go lightly on writing on political and social issues, while out of the other side of the mouth he berated Kathleen Fraser for not delving into them deeply enough. PQ teased some sense out of this apparent paradox, but stopped short of actually coming out and saying Oppen was a misogynist, I wonder why? Perhaps this wasn't the time or place. After the lecture, PQ and Jewelle Gomez, the formidable director of the Poetry Center, fielded a number of spirited questions from the audience. I hope this talk is published in its entirety, somewhere, sometime soon because I think I have failed to give a sense of how interesting it was and how multi-dimensional. All week long in San Francisco we have been having a whole year's worth of poetry events so I guess I was wired! More later.... Sighted at this event was the novelist Dorothy Allison, who asked afterwards, "Who is that stunning woman with the copper colored hair over there? She is my dream girl," and it turned out to be Kathleen Fraser.

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274. **don_cheney**

If I give Bill \$2,000 can I say I wrote SWOON ROCKET?

Mon 9 Dec 1996

"The Post also reported that Jay Leno paid \$1,000 to comedian Jeff Altman for permission to attribute to himself an experience that actually happened to Altman (it involved getting cutting off by the band during a segment on the Dinah Shore show). In the past, Leno had also used the incident, also with Altman's blessing. Sounds like a slow news day over at the Post ..."

from a listserve type thing called LATE SHOW NEWS by Aaron Barnhart

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275. **Kali Tal**

Re: Wild taste

Mon 9 Dec 1996

several folks seem to have objections to the notion ov narrative as a face of one's poetics... but i rather like th idea (& praps that's me misunderstanding some "jargon")... it suggests an ongoing tale, a process in which we meet new texts, test them against our world view (our poetics) and either alter that view &/or explain th text in terms of it... and that allows for a development across time that has explanation value for my own experience; also suggests th shared mythology that, fr me, is th defining feature of a community... & finally, as this thread itself points out, that the collection of individs here gathered on the poetics list have a variety ov such mythologies; hopefully all narrating those stories together and contradicting th hell out ov one another...

yes, yes, yes, that's *exactly* how i see the process. i'd add, though, that we don't meet new texts without expectations created by earlier texts, by the explanations we've already devised, and by the mythologies we share. and some shared narratives (for a variety of reasons) become dominant in particular cultures, and some don't.

Gwyn writes:

veering off on a tangent, I'd like to ask, quite seriously: do you think that nonhuman species also use "story" to distinguish threatening vs. nonthreatening features of a landscape, edible vs. nonedible things, etc., or do you see "story" as an emergent property peculiar to humans?

funny you should ask this. the answer is that, yes, i think that nonhuman species use stories to explain their world. i live with and train wolves and wolf-hybrids. i've been doing it for over fifteen years, and i'm completely convinced

that canines and other social mammals couldn't function as they do unless they had the capacity to tell stories about the world. i know it really bothers some people when i claim that animals have quite sophisticated intelligence and possess some of the abilities we tend to associate only with human beings (a kind of language; an imagination), but that's just how i see it. i had one wolf pup--a year or so ago--who had a terrific imagination. she'd lay her toys out in the yard and battle over them, playing tag with imaginary playmates. her games were quite complex and had discernable rules. i've got a pup now who is made tremendously happy when i am training him. if i miss a day, he sulks. when i take him out to work him he swells with pride every time he does something right. i watch the wolves interact with each other and i can see that establishing social hierarchies and dominance ranking is all about storytelling. frequently, the alpha wolf (who is as often female as male) is physically less strong than the rest of the group (particularly as he or she ages). all the other wolves know that, but dominance is awarded for reasons other than sheer strength. establishing the dominance hierarchy is all about wolves telling other wolves stories. their stories are different from human stories, but i wouldn't argue that they are less interesting or less sophisticated. it's amazing how many people get really upset when i make this claim. i wonder how poets will react... if you're interested in a text that describes a lot of my thinking about animals (and how human stories interact with animal stories) check out philosopher and animal trainer Vicki Hearne's wonderful book *_Adam's Task_*.

kali

Kali Tal

Sixties Project & Viet Nam Generation, Inc.

PO Box 13746, Tucson, AZ 85732-3746



Sixties Project: <http://jefferson.village.virginia.edu/sixties/>

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276. **Aldon L. Nielsen**

Re: DAMNNNNN!

Mon 9 Dec 1996

Been readin along in all this (in between pumping gas) with some mental pain --

You don't have to be an academic to be aware of the fact that "narrative" has been a crucial concern in "poetics" for millenia -- And even we former campus cops can read the difference between a claim that individuals don't make up metanarratives by their own selves and a claim that individuals can't "tell" or "write" metanarratives --

If only we could sing "If it weren't for misprision I wouldn't have no prision at all!"

[and waaayyyy back in second grade (in an early fir of poetics perhaps) I got in trouble with my teacher for asking how she knew that verbs could be "weak" -- He seemed to think it a tasteless question]

if the "fir" fits, wear it --

(If you REALLY want to witness a fit of misprision, read J. Rosen's article in the current *New Republic*, wehre in he not only dismisses Critical Race Theory's penchant for narrative, but holds these legal theorists responsible for the movie *Set It Off* --)

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277. **aerialedge** **Price/Smith reading**

Mon 9 Dec 1996

Saturday Dec. 14th @ 7:30

Larry Price
& Rod Smith

Ruthless Grip Art Project
U Street NW
near the corner of 15th
Washington, DC

B.Y.O.E.
(Bring Your Own Ears)

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278. **shoemakers** **Re: Oppen lecture, December 5**

Mon 9 Dec 1996

Kevin--I don't see why the "apparent paradox" you describe below wld make Oppen a "misogynist," i.e. "one who hates women." Steve

On Mon, 9 Dec 1996 [REDACTED] wrote:

This is Kevin Killian. I missed the very first sentence of the 11th Oppen lecture at the Poetry Center of San Francisco State, so I missed Peter Quartermain's announcement of his methodology.... Afterwards I ran around asking people what he had said. Apparently he had written to quite a number of women writers asking them a) if they had ever known Oppen and b) what they made of his work. A large number replied and he was able, quite

skillfully, to weave their responses into his talk, which seemed centered on a few closely related themes. What were Oppen's own thoughts about the position of women in the socialist revolution? What did he make of the new (1960s/1970s) wave of female poets who followed some of his trails, and why did he seek so many of them out? What "news" had they for him, and vice versa? A large crowd of interested people listened intently as PQ captured some of Oppen's ambivalence and contradictory thought on these questions. Oppen, he told us, advised Denise Levertov to go lightly on writing on political and social issues, while out of the other side of the mouth he berated Kathleen Fraser for not delving into them deeply enough. PQ teased some sense out of this apparent paradox, but stopped short of actually coming out and saying Oppen was a misogynist, I wonder why? Perhaps this wasn't the time or place. After the lecture, PQ and Jewelle Gomez, the formidable director of the Poetry Center, fielded a number of spirited questions from the audience. I hope this talk is published in its entirety, somewhere, sometime soon because I think I have failed to give a sense of how interesting it was and how multi-dimensional. All week long in San Francisco we have been having a whole year's worth of poetry events so I guess I was wired! More later.... Sighted at this event was the novelist Dorothy Allison, who asked afterwards, "Who is that stunning woman with the copper colored hair over there? She is my dream girl," and it turned out to be Kathleen Fraser.

Steve Shoemaker

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279. **amato**

Re: Wild taste

Mon 9 Dec 1996

yknow, i really like the idea of animal narratives, kali!...

the turn to narrative (as in haraway's "core narratives," wrt science, new historicism, etc.) has been extremely important, sure, it still is... but is there any way to discuss duration w/o reducing it to episode?...

i'd like to see history more as a matter of assemblage, compilation---which can of course include stories, but doesn't necessarily reduce to same... even in terms of community, i often (always) have one foot in, and one out---b/c of specific idiosyncracies i'm not willing to give up---to somebody's idea of a coherent 'life' story, say...

anyway, personal stories, dog stories, fish stories---i'm interested in hearing any and all!...

best,

joe

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280. **Dan Machlin**
Erica Hunt, Peter Gizzi Reading
Mon 9 Dec 1996

Please join us at our last reading of the season:

ERICA HUNT
PETER GIZZI

Thursday, December 12, 1996, 7:30 p.m., Suggested \$3 or \$5 (as you can)
S e g u e P e r f o r m a n c e S p a c e
303 East 8th Street, NY, NY
(Betw. Aves B&C) buzz 1R

Refreshments available

and look out for our Spring series starting up again in early Feb.

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281. **charssmith**
Oliveros
Mon 9 Dec 1996

In a message dated 96-12-08 17:53:17 EST, you write:

<< Kali, turns out most of my Oliveros is in California -- so I'll mail "I of IV"
along with some now old new music of the sixties in a similar vein -- and will
then get more Oliveros to you late January -- >>

Aldon, hmmm... am curious. Pauline's teaching at Mills this semester & just did
some wonderful concerts & lectures at the New American Music Festival here
in Sacramento, including one of her deeplisting site pieces in the rotunda of
the state capitol. Last weekend, in Nevada City, she & Terry Riley did a
concert.. each presenting a piece, then after the break, they did a joint
electronic improv.

I've had a hard time in the past getting interested in this stuff, but find that I'm
much more receptive now. Anyway, what is this piece you are referring to?
Where's it available?

hope you're enjoying Boulder!

all best,
charles

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282. **Poetics List**

Various

Mon 9 Dec 1996

I forget who asked this (just back from NYC to find 3 Poetics Digests in my mail, comprising 95 individual messages), but yes Howie Winant is on the road to a full recovery, though it may take a year or even longer. He was in a horrific bike accident in the Santa Cruz mountains last summer and was indeed in a coma for awhile. Also broke and bruised pretty much everything that can be either broken or bruised. Bob Perelman's been in much closer touch than I and can give a more detailed update.

Tom,

There are lots of smart people in colleges, but most often they're students and relatively unread. One of the problems it raises is the hierarchical nature of the interchanges, which leads so many teachers into seeming (or becoming) pompous rather than more knowledgeable.

I tend to agree with Aldon that the computer industry isn't any more full of smart people than anyplace else (Wall Street, the military, prisons, etc.). In general, tho, the work relationships between people are much less tortured than in the academy (here you will find a differential betwixt those work environments in the last parenthetical phrase). Outside of prison, sweatshops & the military, the academy is (one of) the worst work environments invented by mankind.

I, for one, tend to think that tenure is one of the things that makes it worse. (Treating slavery as privilege is an old trick, but it still works pretty well.)

Ron Silliman

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283. **Gwyn McVay**

Re: Wild taste

Mon 9 Dec 1996

OK Joe--I might as well admit--my two cats (poetic black of course) are my first readers. I swear. Girl Scout's honor. If what is being printed out on my laser printer is pretty good, one of the cats will immediately sit on it. If it's REALLY good, they try to dig it out as it's coming out of the printer. If it still needs work, they won't even be in the room.

Cross my heart,
Gwyn

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284. **Elizabeth Mathews Losh**
Quantitative Metrics: Coleridge, etc

Mon 9 Dec 1996

Dear Poetics Group:

I have a rather specialized query that only tangentially relates to the twentieth century, but I'd appreciate any responses. I am looking for versification theory about quantitative metrics from the 18th and 19th centuries. I'm trying to work up quantitative metrics as a survey subject and I find myself with lots of material from the Elizabethan period and, obviously, lots from the twentieth century (Bridges, Williams, etc. and on into Olson and company), but very little in between. I am sort of following a thread about quantitative metrics and questions of nationalism, but that isn't a necessary ingredient.

I understand that Coleridge saw "Khubla Khan" as a quantitatively metrical poem (In XANaDU did KHUbla KHAN a STATEly PLEASure DOME deCREE - I suppose you can hear it in terms of duration rather than accent). If anyone knows WHERE Coleridge writes about quantitative metrics I would be grateful.

Thanks

Liz Losh

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285. **Rachel Loden**
Re: sublimation (sex, etc)

Mon 9 Dec 1996

Bil Brown wrote:

Again, maybe I'm odd -- but I keep my dick out of my poetics and in my pants.

Is that what they mean by the school of DISEMBODIED poetics?

Rachel Loden

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286. **Jeffrey W. Timmons**
Re: Wild taste

Mon 9 Dec 1996

On Sun, 8 Dec 1996 [REDACTED] wrote:

one most times will end up denying the validity of another's perception. this tends to be boring &/or argument for argument's sake. tho when one knows another person well something like antin's "tuning" can take place-- you can get a feel for, begin to see the place(s) that taste comes from even while not being in agreement. or being in agreement when you're with that person, you can see it _with_ them, & it might change you. John Cage had this effect on many many people.

are you saying taste--rather than a space of division--can be one of consensus?
rather habermasian dont you think?

jeffrey timmons

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287. **Jeffrey W. Timmons**

Re: sublimation (sex, etc)

Mon 9 Dec 1996

On Mon, 9 Dec 1996, Chris Stroffolino wrote:

> or does poetry ever LEAD to sex?

yes.

but not

always.

jeffrey timmons

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288. **wkl888**

Fwd: Call for papers (fwd)

Mon 9 Dec 1996

Forwarding this Call for Papers since it is directly relevant to recent discussions on the Poetics list re: Writers' relation to Academe, Theory, etc.

Walter K. Lew

Forwarded message:

From: [REDACTED] (SHARMILA MUKHERJEE)

Sender: [REDACTED]

Reply-to: [REDACTED]

To: [REDACTED]

Date: 96-12-09 20:23:36 EST

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

Date: Tue, 3 Dec 1996 11:05:32 -0700

From: Richard Caccavale <[REDACTED]>

To: [REDACTED]

Subject: Call for papers

Please reply to [REDACTED] for more information on this post.

Reconcilable (In)Differences: The Marriage of Writers and Critics

In honor of the 50th anniversary of the Writing Program at the University of Denver, the Creative Writing Program, in conjunction with the Academic Literature Program, is sponsoring a conference to explore the growing schism between writers and critics.

Mission Statement

Pressures of professionalization for writers have led to an increase in the number of degree-granting institutions for poets, essayists, dramatists, and fiction writers hoping to work in the Academy. As a result, writers in the Academy are engaging, often for the first time, with literary and philosophical theoretics sometimes at odds with their own position as would-be craftspeople. Likewise, professional critics, theorists, and academics find themselves in the position of being surrounded in the university setting by individuals who challenge much of contemporary critical perspective in favor of a return to a craft-oriented reading of a work. What does all this mean, then, for the writer, the critical theorists, and the process of hermeneutics in particular? The re-emergence of the writer/critic and the critic/writer highlights the late twentieth-century schism that seems to have widened steadily between the two disciplines. As graduate writers increasingly mix with graduate theorists, academia must turn its attention back to the roots of critical inquiry in an effort to reverse, somehow, the resulting fragmentation of its departments into scattered and often highly specialized camps. This conference will allow a continuation of recent attempts to reconcile both halves of contemporary literary thinking--affording both academics and writers an opportunity to speak to the future of textual concerns in this thickening climate of professional and pre-professional integration.

The current academy, in that it plays host to both critical and creative endeavors--often originating from the same individual(s)--has become a hotbed of this type of theoretical debate. Yet as visiting writer Amitav Ghosh noted recently, "creative writers and literary critics have never been farther apart than they are today." The purpose of this conference will be to provide a forum for both critical and "creative" theoretics. The new millennium promises sweeping changes in the Academy with concomitant changes in literary theory and practice. What we are looking for are ideas which engage and further this debate, and which will illuminate, perhaps, a common ground upon which the problems of textual studies can be collectively identified and discussed.

Topics for Investigation

- * The Role of the Writer / The Role of the Theorist in Textual Studies
- * Limiting or Delimiting Interpretation: Hermeneutics, Philosophy, and the Elusive Text
- * Narratology in the Post-Colonial and New Historical Climate
- * New-Formalism, Re-Formalism, and Contemporary Theoretical Investigation
- * Professionalization in Writing and Critical Theory
- * Hypertext and the Authority of the Author / Critic
- * Creative Works for Open Reading
- * Undergraduate Submissions are Encouraged

Plenary Speakers and Associate Writers

Confirmed Plenary Speakers:

- * Gerald Graff: the George M. Pullman Professor of English and Education at The University of Chicago and author of *Literature Against Itself*, *Beyond Culture Wars*, *Professing Literature*, and *The Myth of Cultural Decline*
- * Marjorie Perloff: the Sadie Dernham Patek Professor of Humanities at Stanford University and author of *Wittgenstein's Ladder: Poetic Language and the Strangeness of the Ordinary*, *Radical Artifice: Writing Poetry in the Age of Media*, and *The Poetics of Indeterminacy* among others.

University of Denver Associated Writers:

- * Brian Kiteley: Director of DU Writing Program and author of: *I Know Many Songs, but I Can't Sing*, and *Still Life with Insects*
- * Rikki Ducornet: author of *Phosphor*, *Dreamland*, *Jade Cabinet*, *Fountains of Neptune*, *Entering Fire: The Stain*, and *Complete Butcher's Tales*
- * Beth Nugent: author of *Live Girls!*, and *City of Boys*
- * Bin Ramke: editor of *Denver Quarterly* and author of, *Difference Between Night and Day*, *Erotic Light of Gardens*, *Language Student*, *Massacre of Innocents*, and *White Monkey*
- * Cole Swensen: *It's Alive She Says*, *Park*, and translator of *Allures Naturelles* by Pierre Alferi

Conference Logistics

The conference will be held at the University of Denver from Friday, April 4th until Sunday, April 6th, 1997. There will be cocktail party and a banquet dinner.

Registration Information

Registration Fees: Thru 3/1/97, \$50 faculty; \$35 grad/undergrad. After 3/1/97, \$75 faculty; \$50 grad/undergrad.

Please visit our web site at: <http://www.du.edu/~rcaccava/conference.html> for registration information.

Call For Papers

Panels will consist of a series of twenty minute papers. The Denver Quarterly has agreed to publish selected papers and creative works. Please submit one-page abstracts by January 20, 1997. Submissions should be mailed to:

Department. of English
Attn: Reconcilable (In)differences
Pioneer Hall, Room 414
2140 S. Race, Denver CO 80208

or emailed to: [REDACTED]

Organizers and Advisors

Faculty Sponsor: Brian Kiteley

Faculty Advisory Committee:

- *Elenor McNees
- *Diana Wilson
- *Jan Gorak
- *Elizabeth Wolf
- *Eric Gould
- *Bin Ramke

Contact Information

For more information email: [REDACTED] or write to the address above

+-----+

Richard Caccavale

[REDACTED]

www.interealm.com/p/darkstar/

+-----+

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289. **wystan**

Re: taste, judgment, etc...

Mon 9 Dec 1996

Dear Kali, I think 'taste' is different from and more complex than 'opinion' because it presumes a pattern of responses, a pattern that more effectively

supports judgements about works than your 'rigorous standards of analysis and argument' because it has a broader base, one which recognizes we make judgements, discriminations all the time, in contexts far more varied than your intellectual court of law.

You and others misunderstand me when you equate 'not explaining yourself' with 'not knowing'; maybe the case for taste is the stronger for that particular complexity not being readily grasped.

We are also at cross-purposes on the matter of the range and variety of our likes and dislikes, taste is not necessarily narrow.

I think you have no taste and I don't have an ideology.*

Best,
Wystan

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290. **Jeffrey W. Timmons**

Re: Quantitative Metrics: Coleridge, etc

Mon 9 Dec 1996

On Mon, 9 Dec 1996, Elizabeth Mathews Losh wrote:

> I have a rather specialized query that only tangentially relates to the
> twentieth century, but I'd appreciate any responses. I am looking for
> versification theory about quantitative metrics from the 18th and 19th
> centuries. I'm trying to work up quantitative metrics as a survey
> subject and I find myself with lots of material from the Elizabethan
> period and, obviously, lots from the twentieth century (Bridges,
> Williams, etc. and on into Olson and company), but very little in between.
> I am sort of following a thread about quantitative metrics and questions
> of nationalism, but that isn't a necessary ingredient.

liz: i dont know about coleridge and im not sure i quite understand whether youre looking for primary or secondary sources here but in the 18th C there is a great deal of writing on metrics. this is not an area i am well-versed (ha) in but i would be glad to pass on your request to the 18th C listserv--or provide the address for you--where im sure someone would be able to provide you with sources on this subject. as for the nationalism aspect: im curious. could you elaborate? im actually working on nationalism and consensus in the 18th C--and ive run across discussions of parallels between certain political affiliations and poetic forms. if this is something youre interested in please let me know and ill pass on the sources for this. im not sure this is much help.

jeffrey timmons
arizona state university

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291. **Patrick Foley**

Re: DAMNNNNNN!

Tue 10 Dec 1996

You don't have to be an academic to be aware of the fact that "narrative" has been a crucial concern in "poetics" for millenia -- And even we former campus cops can read the difference between a claim that individuals don't make up metanarratives by their own selves and a claim that individuals can't "tell" or "write" metanarratives --

Look, Aldon, this particular subthread was started by Mike, who said he was not interested in "explaining" literature, but that having a "poetics" (taste, cathexis) was a matter of life & death. Kali said your poetics indicates you've bought into some "narrative", allows later that she was indeed claiming explaining is "equivalent" to having a "story", and sometimes she says "metanarrative", sometimes "narrative", sometimes "story". Don't blame me for the confusion of terminology or of what exactly is being claimed here. We've gotten way too far for my tastes from Mike's original point. --- Btw, your own post here indicates a possible circularity (presumably virtuous & hermeneutic for Kali) in relying on the idea of "narrative" when talking about the field whose subjects include "narrative". The talk around here has been about the narrative of poetics, Aldon, not the poetics of narrative. Whether that makes any sense is not my problem.

Pat

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292. **Kali Tal**

Re: taste, judgment, etc...

Tue 10 Dec 1996

Dear Wystan,

Thanks for the interesting observation that taste is more complex than opinion because it presumes a pattern of responses. I think that you may be right about this. I'm not arguing *against* "taste"--merely against the notion that it doesn't need to be examined. I want taste *plus* rigorous standards of analysis and argument. Just like we make judgements and discriminations all the time, we all also have "tastes." The question is, "so what?" I'm interested in the question of what individual and social functions the possession of particular tastes serves, and if certain patterns of responses can be mapped to certain belief systems (about race, gender, or class, etc.). Seems to me that only a certain class of people is excused from having to explain or justify their tastes,

and that those who aren't privileged are always having to say why they like what they like--justify their (outsider) positions to whatever establishment exists.

| *I think you have no taste and I don't have an ideology.**

Hmmmm. I think I've got taste(s), and you've got an ideology. Certainly, I've got very specific tastes in poetry (which is why I publish some poets and not others), and in music and art. And I'd wager you've got a set of relatively coherent beliefs about power structures and politics. Amusing that "ideology" is apparently as bad a word for you as "Taste" (with a capital T) is for me.

Cheers,
Kali

Kali Tal
Sixties Project & Viet Nam Generation, Inc.
PO Box 13746, Tucson, AZ 85732-3746
[REDACTED]

Sixties Project: <http://jefferson.village.virginia.edu/sixties/>

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293. **aerialedge**
Berrigan/McNally/Schultz reading
Tue 10 Dec 1996

Sunday December 15th @ 3:00 p.m.

Anselm Berrigan
John McNally
Susan Schultz

DC Arts Center (2438 18th Street in
Adams Morgan, near the corner of 18th and Columbia)

only 3 bucks, just a buck a poet

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294. **Bil Brown**
Re: Juliana Spahr, Susan Gevirtz reading Dec. 6
Tue 10 Dec 1996

Please give more information on Juliana Spahr. She sounds & resounds in my memory but, I don't know for sure who/where she is from. 'kay.

Thanks,
Bil

295. **Carnography**

Re: Quantitative Metrics: Coleridge, etc

Tue 10 Dec 1996

I have a rather specialized query that only tangentially relates to the twentieth century, but I'd appreciate any responses. I am looking for versification theory about quantitative metrics from the 18th and 19th centuries. I'm trying to work up quantitative metrics as a survey subject and I find myself with lots of material from the Elizabethan period and, obviously, lots from the twentieth century (Bridges, Williams, etc. and on into Olson and company), but very little in between. I am sort of following a thread about quantitative metrics and questions of nationalism, but that isn't a necessary ingredient.

Liz:

Coleridge also composed hendecasyllabic verse. I'm trying to recall whether or not they could be construed as quantitative:

"High, and embosomed in congregated laurels," etc.

Obviously, the best work on quantitative metrics is not to be found in the 18th and 19th centuries but rather in the treatises of Thomas Campion. Even so, one suspects Tennyson might have written about this, at least in letters, since he wrote poetry in alcaics (supposedly "impossible in English," according to Saintsbury). Also: during a break from composing his heartlessly soporific dactyls, Swinburne attempted quantitative alcaics in his ode to Milton:

Whose Titan angels, Gabriel, Abdiel...

Rings to the roar of an angel onset

I would also scrutinize the writings of Darley and Beddoes who, having been obsessed with Elizabethan verse, might have picked up the Elizabethan obsession with classical meter. All I can recall of _Death's Jestbook_ were a number of extraordinary lyrics and irregular odes.

Generally, I would suggest George Saintsbury's _Historical Manual of English Prosody_, since GS believed that Victorian verse was the crowning achievement of English poetry. But it might also be wise to look up "Classical Meters in Modern Languages" in _The Princeton Encyclopedia of Poetics_.

*I understand that Coleridge saw "Khubla Khan" as a quantitatively metrical poem (In XANaDU did KHUbla KHAN a STATEly PLEAsure DOME deCREE -
I suppose you can hear it in terms of duration rather than accent). If anyone knows WHERE Coleridge writes about quantitative metrics I would be grateful.*

Are you certain you're not thinking of Coleridge's *Christabel*?

Coleridge:

"The meter of *Christabel* is not, properly speaking, irregular, though it may seem so from being founded on a new principle, namely in counting, in each line, the accents, not the syllables."--Coleridge, "Preface to *Christabel*"

RE "Kubla Khan": I saw some of Coleridge's metrical theory regarding "Kubla Khan" either in the *Biographia Literaria*, vol. 2, ed. by Johnathan Shawcross, or in Coleridge's *Notebooks*. I wish I could tell you more, but it's been a while.

Slightly off the subject:

Here is an attempt on my part to write in feminine alcaics:

When Barber sings Italian, a rougher language
conforms to his cantabile line: the English.

Suspensions lifted from Corelli
Softens its oddity, not its beauty.

And in adonics (This is from a neo-renaissance aria, which I wrote, with music,
for singer John Kelly, in memory of Huck Snyder):

When I am taken,
He will awaken
Never to perish.
Adonis, be cherished:
Seraphim, hold him,
Bright wings, enfold him...

All the best,

Rob Hardin

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

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296. **dbkk**

Re: Oppen lecture, December 5

Tue 10 Dec 1996

At 2:26 PM 12/9/96, [REDACTED] wrote:

>Kevin--I don't see why the "apparent paradox" you describe below wld make

>Oppen a "misogynist," i.e. "one who hates women." Steve

Dear Steve, I must have been overstating (and skipping). Of course, as I said, Quartermain himself never made any such generalization (in his lecture at the Poetry Center). Wait till you see his paper for yourself; in cold print the effect

may be very different. In situ, the total effect of the testimony of so many different women writers (and of such different kinds), responding to Oppen, was very forcible, shock wave making. PQ did in fact say that Oppen, born in 1909, could not be judged by the standards of today, or even of the period in question. I couldn't recall many exact quotes from Oppen, but I do recall one passage in which he chides Fraser for dwelling on "feminine" subjects, commanding her to bring her writing "up into the world," -- such an odd turn of phrase, redolent of the stock criticism of women's writing--in which what men write about is universal, and what women write about is fluff. In this trope ("up into the world"), sub-terranean fluff like the Orcs. --Kevin Killian.

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297. **aerialedge**

Re: Wild taste

Tue 10 Dec 1996

J. Timmons-- I don't know if what I sd re taste was Habermassian. I think clearly one can pick up a taste for something from another person. Again, Antin's "tuning" concept seems to me a useful description of what happens. I wouldn't want taste to be too much of a space of consensus-- if everybody liked the same things life wld be hell. Because we don't like the same things there's opportunity for discovery as much as for dissent.

I've recently been in a few cities that have Only corporate restaurants, Wendy's, McDs, Roy Rogers, they're so different aren't they?-- no local restaurants left. Talk about leaving a bad taste.

--R

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298. **aerialedge**

Re: Oppen lecture, December 5

Tue 10 Dec 1996

yes, maybe Oppen thought Kathleen F. cld/should go "deeper" whereas Levertov was abt where she wld/cld get. Cld it not be more clearly seen as simply insightful advice from someone who'd been at it longer?

not to bring my own "tastes" in too much

∴

--R

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299. **maz881**

cook book

Tue 10 Dec 1996

Kevin, Congrats on book and picture. I will go to buy. on another note pictures are the reason i like the paul carroll anthology. I remember stephen rodefer saying That's the book we all wanted to be in!

Bill

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300. **Gabrielle Welford**

Fw: Goldman Brigade to Chiapas (fwd)

Tue 10 Dec 1996

>From the Anarchist List:

From: Elliott Madison <[REDACTED]>

Subject: Goldman Brigade to Chiapas

Date: 05 December 1996 05:20

We are a group of non-affiliated anarchists out of New York who are planning supply trip to Chiapas. We are raising money to purchase a vehicle and fill it with supplies that are much needed by the resistance in Chiapas.

The plan is to drive a car full of cargo to Chiapas and donate the vehicle and it's contents to the EZLN and it's many supporters to show the growing concern of Americans for their struggle. We hope to utilize the publicity value of this trip in order to raise awareness of the continuing struggle in Mexico.

We are looking for donations, volunteers, cheap lodgings, supplies, etc. We welcome all comments/questions/comments about us and the trip. We look forward to working with you in the upcoming months.

Elliott Madison

Erik Solomonson

Elena Pelovska

?

F r o m (o o) M i k e
~~~~~oOOo~(\_)~oOOo~~~~~  
a D i g i t a l p o s t m o d e r n i s t

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301. **amato**

***Re: Wild taste***

*Tue 10 Dec 1996*

---

gwyn, so like, that's what i call cat-egORIZATION!...

ok folks, gotta sign off for what i hope will be only a day or two---system problems on this end... so if anybody tries to reach me and i don't respond immediamento, be patient

I'LL BE BACK

gently, gently//

joe

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302. **dbkk**

***Juliana Spahr, Susan Gevirtz reading Dec. 6***

*Tue 10 Dec 1996*

---

This is Kevin Killian. A record crowd showed up on Friday night at Small Press Traffic in San Francisco. They had come to hear homegirl Susan Gevirtz and to give a rousing welcome to Juliana Spahr, making her first appearance in our city. Spahr spoke briefly first about her pleasure in coming to San Francisco then launched into a ferocious, biting rendition of "Thrashing Seems Crazy" from her new book "Response." Bob Holman, capture this woman on tape at once! Later, she led the audience through a work in progress tentatively called "Lie," which combines quotations from Gertrude Stein, standard psychological evaluation forms, question after question, interrupted anecdote, faith and charity. The crowd went wild. It took another fifteen minutes to calm everyone down, then Gevirtz took the stage and read from "Without Event," the "essay" which leads off "A Poetics of Criticism." A few minutes later we heard the complete version of her long-in-the-works "Black Box Cutaway," a work meant to be read with the accompaniment of slides. Knowing the technical limitations of Small Press Traffic's tiny staff, canny Gevirtz brought her own machines and staff to set this up. All worked splendidly. The readers seemed ideally paired for once, with a mutual interest in, for example, false memory, for "Thrashing Seems Crazy" is based, Spahr told us, on an episode of Oprah Winfrey which presented a woman convinced she is being stalked by her own male alter ego, a part of her own personality cut off, therefore made real, by a splitting of the mind; while in "Black Box Cutaway" Gevirtz uses the materials from "Remembering Satan," the controversial case from the Pacific Northwest in which a man confessed, under the most rudimentary of interrogations, to molesting his family for the glory of Satan, apparently without recourse to

actual event. Am I remembering this reading correctly, or did it all happen in my dream? Were others of you there, too?

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303. **main**

**Re: sublimation (sex, etc)**

Tue 10 Dec 1996

---

then writing is strictly a head job? language certainly has a material/physical dimension, and stroffolino's post touches on this. jeff hansen's essay in latest pb ("raggedness as poetic sensibility") might be interesting to look at here: how heads and tails figure into language (and departure points, examples: artaud, notley, cortez, vallejo, et al.) best, dan featherston

On Mon, 9 Dec 1996, Bil Brown wrote:

CHRIS,

*Maybe I'm odd to this list, but I think I prefer sex AS sex and not SEX as poetry As sex as poetic orgasim... whatever.*

*Again, maybe I'm odd -- but I keep my dick out of my poetics and in my pants.*

*Bil Brown*

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304. **main**

**Re: Quantitative Metrics: Coleridge, etc**

Tue 10 Dec 1996

---

what about coleridge's \_biographia literaria\_, letter-responses to wordsworth's configurations of metrics in preface to \_lyrical ballads\_?

best, dan

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305. **oren.izenberg**

**Re: Quantitative Metrics: Coleridge, etc**

Tue 10 Dec 1996

---

Re Coleridge and meters quantitative and otherwise:

The best place to begin all inquiries metrical is \_English Versification, 1570-1980: A Reference Guide with a Global Appendix\_ by T.V.F. Brogan (also of

Princeton Encyclopedia fame), JHU Press, 1981. This is a massive (700 page), well-annotated bibliography of writing on versification by poets and critics from, well, 1570-1980. It would no doubt be useful for the larger project as well as your local inquiry.

On the very specific question of Coleridgian metrics and nationalism see Jerome Christensen's essay "Ecce Homo: Biographical Acknowledgement, the End of the French Revolution, and the Romantic Reinvention of English Verse" in *Contesting the Subject: Essays in the Postmodern Theory and Practice of Biography and Biographical Criticism* ed. William Epstein (Purdue UP).

Hope this is helpful.

O.

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306. **Aldon L. Nielsen**

***Re: Oliveros***

*Tue 10 Dec 1996*

---

Charles (or any other interested parties)

Oliveros's "I of IV" was first heard by me on the recording *New Sounds in Electronic Music* (odyssey no date on record jacket/sleeve, but probably around '67) -- This collection also includes Reich's now famous "Come Out" and Richard Maxfield's "Night Music" --

I first heard all this stuff as a kid who plucked such albums out of the cheap music bins (and they WERE cheap even when new -- but that was a day in which records such as this were sold at the equivalent of Walmart [I got mine at E.J. Korvettes])

Have not looked to see if there's been a CD reissue, but I'm sure you can find this music still in the catalogue --

"I of IV" dates to the time Oliveros became Director of the Tape Music Center at Mills -- It was created in July '66 at the University of Toronto Electronic Music Studio -- uses sine tone generators, tape and Hammond reverb -- lasts about twenty minutes --

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307. **Aldon L. Nielsen**

***Re: Double Damn***

*Tue 10 Dec 1996*

---

Accused of Circularity --

This is not quite the tautology implied -- It is not particularly circular to rely upon the idea of poetics when discussing poetics, or to rely upon the idea of narrative when discussing narrative -- What I responded to was not simply an insistence that narrative is not included in discussions of poetics, but was in fact a sharper wedge drawn between them -- I'm perfectly aware of the difference between discussing the narrative of poetics and the poetics of narrative, and it appears to me reading back over our archive that both subjects were discussed -- In varied ways, Kali insisted that one who has a poetics is involved in a narrative -- That narrative in its turn would itself be susceptible to an analysis of its poetics -- No?

It would be circular (in the bad, logician's sense) to begin with a definition of narrative presupposed which then reappears as the conclusion of the investigation -- I took Kali to be saying that any of us who make aesthetic judgements do in fact operate upon the basis of some form of poetics and that such a poetics places us within a narratable set of presuppositions -- Kali might go farther (I'll wait to hear from her on this) and argue that those presuppositions are not only "narratable" (in the sense of already relating to one another in discernable sequences in time) but already form a narrative --

To me, having grown up with ears open, it did not seem earth-shattering news when novelists, poets and scholars started talking about "narrative" knowledge -- I've never worked through all the epistemology of this, but I have yet to encounter any act of language that could truly be defined as "plotless" -- Though I think I have a general idea of what people mean when they describe some novel I enjoy as plotless -- (I do not, let me hasten to add, hold "narrative" and "plot" to be synonyms.)

A poetics does not exist in a timeless space -- It relates in varied ways to earlier statements and events -- It certainly can be seen as an event in a narrative without causing too much ontological pain to anybody --

There is even a story of how my poetics got to be that way -- I can tell it -- I think this is true of most people --

I can't see anywhere that Kali said poetics and narrative are synonymous (though I may have missed it in those algebraic equations that suddenly erupted a few posts ago) --

It was hardly the case that the statement didn't make sense -- but I've been condescended to before -- If something here doesn't make sense, it may very well be my problem -- and I'd be happy to try it again --

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308. **Aldon L. Nielsen**

**Re: " . . . "**

*Tue 10 Dec 1996*

---

before I truple damn myself -- let me add that I don't see it particularly circular to rely upon the idea of narrative while discussing something (poetics) that includes narrative -- I rely upon the idea of Colorado while discussing the United States (BAD analogy -- but here I am) -- The novel includes narrative -- I can have a narrative about the poetics of the novel -- in fact, I just read one last week --

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309. **Herb Levy**

**Re: Oliveros**

*Tue 10 Dec 1996*

---

I was going to wait until the CD was actually in hand to mention it here, but since there's some interest in Pauline Oliveros now, let me mention that Suspended Music, the first CD for my label, goes to press in, I hope, less than a week.

It's a collaboration between Pauline Oliveros' Deep Listening Band (with Stu Dempster & David Gamper) & Ellen Fullman's Long String Instrument. It includes two long recent compositions, Epigraphs in a Time of AIDS by Oliveros and TexasTravelTextures by Fullman. I don't want to get into any convoluted discussion of matters of taste here, but, of course, I think the music is great.

When the disc is back from the plant, I'll be offering it to list members for less than it'll sell for in stores.

Bests

Herb

Herb Levy



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310. **groberts**

**Re: Quantitative Metrics: Coleridge, etc**

*Tue 10 Dec 1996*

---

Liz, I think Cowper's sapphics might also be relevant to Romantic quantitative verse.

Gary R

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311. **Gabrielle Welford**

**[asia-apec 269] PRD/Pakpahan Trial Appeal (fwd)**

*Tue 10 Dec 1996*

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#### EMERGENCY APPEAL

PRD LEADERS AND ACTIVISTS, MOCHTAR PAKPAHAN TRIALS TO START.

On December 12 the Soeharto dictatorship will begin the trials of leaders and activists of the Peoples Democratic Party (PRD) and its affiliated mass organisations as well as against Mochtar Pakpahan, head of the Indonesian Prosperous Labour Union. The primary, secondary, and sub-secondary charges against them are all "subversion" which carries a maximum penalty of death.

Among the PRD leaders charged are Budiman Sujatmiko, President of the PRD and Petrus Haryanto, PRD Secretary-General. Charges have also been filed against ms Dita Sari, President of the Indonesian Centre for Labour Struggles (PPBI) and Ignatius Pranowo, PPBI Secretary General. Also charged is Wilson, coordinator of the Indonesian People in Solidarity with the Maubere People and a member of the PRD Executiv and Astika Anom, head of the PRD education department. Garda Sembiring, head of one of the largest branches of Students in Solidarity with Democracy in Indonesia (SMID) is also among those charged.

The arrests of the PRD leaders and activists were originally defended by the dictatorship by accusing the PRD of being behind rioting that occurred on July 27, following an attack by government military and police on the offices of the opposition Indonesian Democratic Party. Lawyers for the PRD prisoners now say the indictments hardly mention the July 27 riots at all but concentrate on attacking the political documents of the PRD and its programme of protest actions during 1995.

The dictatorship has singled out the PRD for total supression and has issued orders for detention of all PRD personnel.

The subversion charges were filed two weeks after Indonesia's Supreme Court reimposed a four-year jail term on one other of the accused, namely, Muchtar Pakpahan. Pakpahan was jailed in 1994 on charges of inciting mass labour unrest after riots broke out when soldiers attacked a workers demonstration in the Sumatran city of Medan. He was freed last December after the Supreme Court found that there was insufficient evidence for his conviction. Pakpahan had been arrested again in August following the July riots in Jakarta.

On November 28 Indonesian judges released all 124 Indonesian Democratic Party (PDI) supporters of Megawati Sukarnoputri who spent four months in jail on lesser charges of refusing to obey orders by the security forces to disperse.

#### URGENT APPEAL

ASIET calls on all supporters of democracy and human rights to protest the filing of these subversion charges against the PRD leaders and activists as well as Mochtar Pakpahan. We urge you to send letters to the Indonesian Embassy in your country and to your foreign ministers calling on them to raise the matter publicly with the Indonesian government.

We urge all groups and individuals to follow ASIET reports over the coming weeks. Further protest activities will be necessary.

We also urge all supporters to help the defence campaign by making a donation. Donations will be sent to Jakarta for the PRD defence campaign and to produce publicity materials. Please send cheques or money orders to the address below.

ACTION IN SOLIDARITY WITH INDONESIA AND EAST TIMOR (ASIET)

P.O. BOX 458, BROADWAY 2007, AUSTRALIA

Tel: 61-02-6901032 Fax: 61-02-6901381

subscribe to asietnews-l

Web Page: <http://www.peg.apc.org/~asiet/>

Free East Timor! Free Xanana Gusmao!

Freedom in Indonesia! Free all political prisoners!

Defend the PRD!

Suharto regime out of the internal affairs of political parties!

No military ties with Suharto dictatorship!

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312. **Burt Kimmelman**

***Re: Quantitative Metrics: Coleridge, etc***

*Tue 10 Dec 1996*

---

Liz,

You might try Alan Holder's new book which does a historical survey,  
Rethinking Meter.

Burt Kimmelman

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313. **wkl888**

***PREMONITIONS Anthology Sale***

*Tue 10 Dec 1996*

---

PREMONITIONS 20-25% Discount Sale

Dear Poetics List, With the gift-giving season here, I thought it was a good time to make \*PREMONITIONS: An Anthology of New Asian North American Poetry\*-praised by list members Aldon Nielsen, Maria Damon, Fred Muratori, Small Press Traffic, David Kellogg, Susan Schultz and others-available at special discount prices. Shipping is free within the U.S.A. (Canadian and other international orders should add \$4.00 for the first copy and \$2.00 for each additional copy.)

For 1 to 2 copies, the discount price is \$18.36, or 20% off the retail price. Larger orders (the anthology has been taught at universities ranging from UC Irvine and UCLA to Brooklyn Polytechnic Inst. and the University of Pennsylvania) receive a discount of 25%, for a price of \$17.21 per copy. If you back-channel me an order (to "██████"), copies will be shipped out within two days by UPS or 1st-class mail with an invoice. Alternatively, orders accompanied by payment in the form of a check or money order made out

to "Walter K. Lew" can be sent to the following address:

Premonitions  
c/o Prof. J. Chang  
English Dept.  
Boston College  
Chestnut Hill, MA 02167

Upon request, copies will be autographed by the editor.

The prices above apply to the paperback edition only. For the elegant clothbound edition, the discounted prices are \$35.96 per copy (1 to 2 copies) and \$33.71 (3 or more copies).

If you have questions, please back-channel me at ██████. A description of PREMONITIONS is given below.

Thank you  
Walter K. Lew

\* \* \* \* \*

PREMONITIONS: An Anthology of New Asian North American Poetry Edited by Walter K. Lew

Published in November 1995 by Kaya Production.  
Paperback and Clothbound editions: 6 x 9 in., 595 pp., 36 b&w plates.

The most comprehensive anthology of Asian North American poetry to date, PREMONITIONS gathers work ranging from cyberpunk meditations and Buddhist odes to video and multimedia texts, L=A=N=G=U=A=G=E-influenced writing and neo-Orientalist recuperations and juxtaposes them in ways that

both echo and subvert categories of theme, poetics, and identity. Pidgin poetry, queer writing, multi-lingual texts and Canadian open-field compositions further broaden the scope of this ground-breaking collection. The 73 contributors include veteran authors like Jessica Hagedorn, Lawson Fusao Inada, Trinh T. Minh-ha, Fred Wah, Kimiko Hahn, and John Yau, as well as such "premonitory" new poets as R. Zamora Linmark, Barry Masuda, Evelyn Lau, Amitava Kumar, and an emerging generation of poetry-expanding multimedia artists like Gloria Park. Also featured are previously unpublished poems by the late Frances Chung, Roy Kiyooka, and Theresa Hak Kyung Cha.

PRAISE FOR PREMONITIONS:

"An exquisite artifact of activist experimentalism, theoretically smart and so beautiful it hurts, Premonitions promises to be a landmark in American letters for many years to come."

-Maria Damon, University of Minnesota

"An impressive collection distinguished by its variety and sweep. By turns entertaining, exciting, troubling, it is always provocative. A major contribution." -David Palumbo-Liu, Stanford University

"Demonstrating the infinite range of possibilities overlooked by the too easily applied label of 'multicultural'...this collection steeps the reader in alternative histories and approaches to language and tells stories seldom-if ever-heard. Recommended for most poetry collections." -Fred Muratori, in LIBRARY JOURNAL

"When you turn this smokin' tome aloose, you may not be able to get the poetic license plate number, but you will definitely know it was felony hit-and-run." - Wanda Coleman, Author of HAND DANCE

CONTRIBUTORS TO PREMONITIONS:

Maria Luisa B. Aguilar-Carino

Meena Alexander

Agha Shahid Ali

Shirley Ancheta

Theresa Hak Kyung Cha

Juliette Chen

Justin Chin

Marilyn Chin

Eric Chock

Ann Choi

Janet M. Choi

Jean Hyung Yul Chu

Frances Chung

Josephine Foo

Sesshu Foster  
Vince Gotera  
Jessica Hagedorn  
Kimiko Hahn  
Patricia Y. Ikeda  
Lawson Fusao Inada  
Michael Ishii  
Jaime Jacinto  
Myung Mi Kim  
Willyce Kim  
Roy Kiyooka  
Joy Kogawa  
Ann M. Kong  
Juliet Kono  
Amitava Kumar  
Mina Kumar  
Robert S. Kuwada  
Christian Langworthy  
Evelyn Lau  
Carolyn Lei-lanilau  
Russell Leong  
Ho Hon Leung  
Walter K. Lew, with Lewis Klahr (film)  
Shirley Geok-lin Lim  
Tan Lin  
R. Zamora Linmark  
Stephen Shu-ning Liu  
Timothy Liu  
Martin F. Manalansan, IV  
Barry Masuda  
Roy Miki  
David Mura  
Dwight Okita  
Richard Oyama  
Gloria Toyun Park  
Celine Salazar-Parrenas  
Sung Rno  
Al Robles  
Thelma Seto  
Gerry Shikatani  
Luis Syquia  
Arthur Sze

Ronald Phillip Tanaka  
Andrew Tang  
Barbara Tran  
Trinh T. Minh-ha  
Fred Wah  
Wang Ping  
Yun Wang  
Koon Woon  
Traise Yamamoto  
Lois-Ann Yamanaka  
Karen Tei Yamashita  
John Yau  
Jean Yoon  
Wahn Yoon  
cyn. zarco  
Ali Zarrin  
END of Announcement

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314. **Matthias Regan**  
***Re: Quantitative Metrics: Watts***  
*Tue 10 Dec 1996*

---

*Liz, I think Cowper's sapphics might also be relevant to Romantic quantitative verse.*  
Gary R

Yes! & I think it was the hymnodist Isaac Watts (forgive my memory, hard to think at work) who also wrote Sapphics: I have heard it suggested that both Cowper and Watts might be said to have used this form because the strain upon their language that it caused was similar to the difficulty of getting into an appropriate language the quality of God's mercy they wanted to express. The long and short of it (bad pun) was: by using Sapphics there were able to control their words in a methodical manner similar to that strict application will over passions that Methodism entailed. A question this brings up: are quantitative metrics (you could apply it to all metrics, but it would get messy) generally understood (by writers) as a form or as a method? For Cowper I think part of the attraction of the form was the method necessary to make it work.

--Matthias, who is new to the list as of today (please forgive me if I'm barging in on topics long-since hashed out, etc.)

\*\*\*\*\*

Matthias Regan

Phone: 847/ [REDACTED]

Email: [REDACTED]

\*\*\*\*\*

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315. **tmandel**  
***the profession(s)***

*Tue 10 Dec 1996*

---

Ron -- I didn't say or at least didn't mean to say that people in the computer industry are smarter than those in the academy. Only that the academy, which might be imagined as a gathering of specially high intelligences, is not particularly: and this I wanted to say not to critique the academy but only as a kind of encouragement to those (students) who might fear falling from the academy into a dumber world of commerce or whatever.

By the way, I have had a number of backchannel communications from people who want advice on how/where to locate Oxxford suits. I find this very cheering, and I would like to help (those who are not my size and live in a different town). But, I'm not sure I can. It may be a gift, like unto the ability to rhyme.

\*\*\*\*\*

Tom Mandel \* 2927 Tilden St. NW  
Washington DC 20008 \* [REDACTED]  
vox: [REDACTED] \* fax [REDACTED]

\*\*\*\*\*

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316. **Bennett McClure Simpson**  
***Art + Language***

*Tue 10 Dec 1996*

---

Hi,

Can anyone tell me anything about the "Art and Language" group that was around in the 70s and 80s in England? Do they still exist as such? What might they have to do with the rock band Red Krayola? I know this is far from any recent thread, but I figured someone out here could help. Backchannel if desired.

Bennett



\*\*\*\*\*

Bennett Simpson  
Department of English

University of Virginia [REDACTED]

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317. **klobucar**

**Re: Barrett Watten**

Tue 10 Dec 1996

---

Could somebody backchannel to me Barrett Watten's e-mail address,  
much obliged.

\*\*\*\*\*

andrew klobucar  
201-101 East Seventh Ave.  
Vancouver, BC  
V5T 1M5  
[REDACTED]

\*\*\*\*\*

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318. **shoemakers**

**Re: Oppen lecture, December 5**

Tue 10 Dec 1996

---

Kevin--The paper does sound fascinating, and I hope I get to see it one of these days. I've never made a real study of the subject, but my own sense from working with the Oppen papers at UCSD, and w/ Rachel's fine edition of the letters, is that George's relations with women were quite interesting and complex. And btw, I'm sure Rachel herself wld have much to say on the subject. Undoubtedly, he was subject to some of the gender prejudices of his day, but I also remember some remarkable cross-gender insights as well. There's one passage in the papers, i think, where he's quite conscious of his masculine self as a kind of fragile "phallus" being protected by the women in his life. Which brings us to Mary. There are, as I recall, some remarkable documents at UCSD from her own feminist "awakening" in the sixties and seventies. Some odd stuff too. If I remember correctly, in the manuscript notebook of *Meaning A Life* the script was pasted over with recipes. steve

On Tue, 10 Dec 1996 [REDACTED] wrote:

At 2:26 PM 12/9/96, [REDACTED] wrote:

Kevin--I don't see why the "apparent paradox" you describe below wld make Oppen a "misogynist," i.e. "one who hates women." Steve

*Dear Steve, I must have been overstating (and skipping). Of course, as I said, Quartermain himself never made any such generalization (in his lecture at the Poetry Center). Wait till you see his paper for yourself; in cold print the effect may be very different. In situ, the total effect of the testimony of so many different women writers (and of such different kinds), responding to Oppen, was very forcible, shock wave making. PQ did in fact say that Oppen, born in 1909, could not be judged by the standards of today, or even of the period in question. I couldn't recall many exact quotes from Oppen, but I do recall one passage in which he chides Fraser for dwelling on "feminine" subjects, commanding her to bring her writing "up into the world," -- such an odd turn of phrase, redolent of the stock criticism of women's writing--in which what men write about is universal, and what women write about is fluff. In this trope ("up into the world"), sub-terranean fluff like the Orcs. --Kevin Killian.*

Steve Shoemaker

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319. **Aldon L. Nielsen**

***Re: trying to be that 50th message***

*Tue 10 Dec 1996*

If you can't locate that Oxford suit, I can help you with a Cal State three piece for less than a third of the price -- looks pretty good on most folk -- besides, everybody's wearing their clothes too big these days --

Suge Knight says to tell everybody there's plenty good poetry on the inside -- He's signed three new acts already --

if you can't come, call

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320. **Tosh**

***Re: Art + Language***

*Tue 10 Dec 1996*

Hi,

*Can anyone tell me anything about the "Art and Language" group that was around in the 70s and 80s in England? Do they still exist as such? What might they have to do with the rock band Red Krayola? I know this is far from any recent thread, but I figured someone out here could help. Backchannel if desired.*

Bennett

DON'T BACKCHANNEL I WANT TO KNOW ALSO

>

Tosh

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321. **Jeffrey W. Timmons**

***Re: Wild taste***

*Tue 10 Dec 1996*

---

On Tue, 10 Dec 1996 [REDACTED] wrote:

I wouldn't want

> taste to be too much of a space of consensus-- if everybody liked the same

> things life wld be hell. Because we don't like the same things there's

> opportunity for discovery as much as for dissent.

yes. of course. i agree. that to me is precisely a space of "consensus": that is space for dis/agreements....

*I've recently been in a few cities that have Only corporate restaurants, Wendy's, McDs, Roy Rogers, they're so different aren't they?-- no local restaurants left. Talk about leaving a bad taste.*

yes but there are differences even there: some better some worse. variations on a theme. kidding.

jeffrey timmons

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322. **Steve Carll**

***The Week in Poetry (S.F.)***

*Tue 10 Dec 1996*

---

Thursday night was the Eleventh Annual George Oppen Memorial Lecture sponsored by the Poetry Center at San Francisco State. This year's lecturer was Peter Quartermain. I wasn't informed of this event and thus did not attend. Damn.

Friday at New College, upwards of a hundred people packed the Cultural Center to see Juliana Spahr and Susan Gevirtz. Juliana, whose triumphant FIRST reading in San Francisco this was, read FIRST, introduced by intrepid Dodie Bellamy. She started with "Thrashing Seems Crazy", a piece based on an Oprah episode, and "Live", based on the apparently rollicking Ichor Gallery series of yore. Many people noted the rapid delivery of the East Coast poet. Catchy lines included:

"leave molotov cocktail in own yard"  
"a woman calls her stalker 'the poet'"  
"when a fish is hooked, other fish don't see the hook" (title line follows)  
"I am lost in the center called nothing  
and this makes my relation to the periphery troubling"  
"it is more common to not want to do this thing"  
"turn some man or woman head  
turn head some thought"  
"men can count, and they do"  
"is it communication or manslaughter?"  
"it is a threat wrapped in a caress"  
"is that a term from Stein?"

There was a break to allow everyone to get in touch. Tactiles that night included Jay Schwartz, Lauren Hudath, Pam Lu, Avery E.D. Burns, Lyn Hejinian, Jean Day, Mary Burger, Rodrigo Toscano, Hung Tu, Margie Sloan, Peter Gizzi, Liz Willis, Stephen Ratcliffe, Spencer Selby, Travis Ortiz, Steve Dickison, Tina Rotenberg, Michael Palmer, Colleen Lookingbill, Kathleen Fraser, Pat Reed, Bob Hale, Shauna Hannibal, Aaron Shurin, Laura Moriarty, Giovanni Singleton, Renee Gladman, Kevin Killian, Dorian Harding-Morick, Myung Mi Kim (who showed up after a long battle to find a parking space, only to have Juliana finish her portion of the event), and Stephanie Baker.

Susan Gevirtz continued with excerpts from "Without Event--The Reign [or Rain--I'm not clear which] of Commotion", which included lines like the following:

"he is present at his own absence" [from Beckett]  
"how the film frame is a window of tempo"  
"Dear Possible:"  
[someone's stomach near me is gurgling.]  
"forget the possibility of future experience"  
"the perils of the fixed idea"  
"all the stories were at war with each other"  
"animal bites littered the sky. Immigration"

Then Susan read from Black Box Cutaway, a work inspired by the collision of some Lumiere Brothers films with a lecture on brain neurophysiology. Susan projected slides on the wall behind her while she read. There were windows opening onto impossible landscapes, cutout shapes and pantyhose. lines included:

"carve her cunt into the sky"  
"all around me reports of/the/sky"  
"dictatorship of the present"

"he thought 'sewing machine'"  
"the soccer ball never appears, only trousers running on white"  
"police stations will melt into the population"  
"the giving of gifts is a display of writing"  
"is an airplane a flying border?"  
"death isn't dead--it's a movement, again"  
"if we've lost Cronkite, then we've lost the whole country" [LBJ on media reaction to the Tet Offensive]

There was a party at Susan's, and after much frustration parking, many people arrived to eat animal cookies, grapes, crackers and cheese, and to drink wine and water. I got to look out the windows which appeared in the slides. The landscapes I saw through them were possible, but just barely. There were New York tales exchanged for California ones (of both the San Francisco and San Diego variety) as Juliana, Rodrigo, Robert Hale, and I talked. This is how I know of the Eye-Corps Gallery fiasco and how everyone thinks Rodrigo only goes to male poets' readings, when the opposite is true. There are copies of Antenym 11 bandied about.

Saturday there's a party at Leslie's house, but I was not in attendance so I can't say what went on there.

Sunday at Canessa Park Gallery several of the people from Friday and several others come to see Meredith Quartermain (who's married to Peter Quartermain of the Vancouver Quartermaines, who in turn is married to her) and David Bromige.

Avery intros Meredith, who reads from her Meow book Terms of Sale, from a work in progress called The Resurrection of Sherstin Constantine, and from her erasures of the Philosophical Investigations, which she calls "Wittera" and which were instigated by Norma Cole. Meredith also sometimes writes by taking 2 words at random from a box she's filled with words and building poems around them. Lines included:

"legumed in coconut"  
"in the hold you guard her fire building zinc fields of wrens"  
"don't buy linted pistachios at the bakery"  
"as cannot will when will not may"  
"words, it seems, idea"  
"and this not why knows used"  
"wander ice tracking lunatics tracking air"  
"thought drift/clouds cemented"  
"sentence funnel/Tertiary house/the of ship"  
"Europe webs away geography"  
"so I can't talk at dinner when it's supposed to be your birthday"

"he raven me jane"

"you see, cretin, a Grecian vase/ode on a crusted barnacle"

"beware of telephone gunk"

"the feuding balcony of his stomach protruding between t-shirt and belt"

The lights at Canessa Park are blinking their approval. After her reading Meredith announces she's retiring the word "vomit" (which she used four separate times in her reading) from her box of words. It was fun while it lasted.

David Bromige reads from *\_Dream Book\_*, which stems from a workshop he participated in at the Quartermain's'. The Dream Book integrates dream material with interpretation and the sustained use of latinate roots to intriguing and comic effect:

"as she steps forward, her kinesiology intervenes"

"she brings her face close to mine and says, 'Gladys'."

"There was a buoyancy among us all--revenues were up."

"I was a candidate for candidate"

"I was licked. It was in a tongue I didn't know."

"He says, 'Laughter is betting.'"

"Come on, Dad, grow up, we're late."

"people like strolling dicta"

"It's like my system's jammed, and I blurt out the one word, 'Cleave!'"

"your Kierkegaard is nothing to my welfare"

David then reads a poem in 5 parts called "T as in 'Tethered'". One of the parts goes like this:

T as in "tethered."

E as in "tethered."

T as in "tethered."

H as in "tethered."

E as in "tethered."

R as in "tethered."

We all (including Kathleen Fraser, Kevin Killian, Dodie Bellamy, Norma Cole, Bob Grenier, Stephen Ratcliffe, Susan Gevirtz, Doug Powell, Cole Swenson, Margie Sloan, Etel Adnan, Margaret Butterfield, Dale Going, Steve Tills, and Patricia whose last name I didn't get) give forth thundering applause for both poets, and reconvene at Kathleen Fraser's house for spiced apple cider, more wine, delicious cornbread, bean soup, brownies and cookies. On her balcony you can peep through her neighbors' windows as they make dinner and lie on their beds watching TV; David says it's like the 50's. Meredith and I swap books and methods of stealing other people's works and manipulating them. Some of us talk about how weird our families think we are; when Norma finds out I have two younger sisters she says, "I always wished I had an older

brother." I have tremendous affection for Norma Cole and am tempted to say, "Heck, I'll be your older brother, Norma," but I don't actually know her THAT well and I'm not quite sure how to say it so it doesn't sound salacious. In another room, 12 of Bob Grenier's 4-color beach scrawl poems that Pavement Saw's publishing are spread on the floor and we all try to decipher the words. I'm impressed when Kathleen gets "Aeolian." More copies of *\_Antenym\_ 11* are bartered, sold, and made gifts. Jack and Adelle Foley give me a ride down to the BART station. Their car's crowded because of me; I almost get to sit on Joyce Jenkins' lap but we find another way to fit four people in the back seat (darn). Jack and I trade banter all the way there; samples probably better off lost in the mists of memory.

\*\*\*\*\*

 Steve Carll  
<http://writing.upenn.edu/epc/mags/antenym>  
<http://writing.upenn.edu/epc/ezines/antenym>

In seed-  
sense  
the sea stars you out, innermost, forever.

--Paul Celan

\*\*\*\*\*

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### 323. **Erich Metting van Rijn**

#### ***Irony Query***

*Tue 10 Dec 1996*

This is more a request for suggestions than an actual question. I'm researching a paper on irony in lyric poetry, and I'm trying to chase down examples of verbal irony in lyric poetry. By verbal irony, let me just say that I mean this in the loosest sense of saying one thing and meaning another (e.g. saying it's a nice day for a picnic when there's a blizzard going on outside). The aforementioned example is a little extreme, but it illustrates my point in everyday conversation. I realize that there are a million sub-species of irony in literature and in everyday speech, but I'm not really looking for situational irony (e.g. a poem that points us to a situation as if to say, "isn't it ironic that...?").

If any of you out there can think of examples off the top of your heads where verbal irony might seem to obviously be a powerful feature of the poem, or indeed the controlling feature (Nemerov springs to mind as a poet who might be thought of as deploying verbal irony frequently) of the poem, please let me know about them (off-list is fine, so as not to clog up people's mailboxes). I'm

really looking for English or American anthologized poems that could be easily found in one of the Nortons (sorry, I don't mean to open the whole canonicity can of worms, and I apologize in advance for being picky). Thanks for any and all suggestions. -Erich

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324. **Patrick Foley**

***Re: Double Damn***

*Tue 10 Dec 1996*

---

Re: "accused of circularity".

First: I didn't say the circularity is there. Second: I didn't say it was vicious rather than virtuous. If everyone around here is going to insist on playing at logic, believe me I'm prepared to do that, I'd just rather be doing something else.

Let me pose a question: Kali says having a poetics indicates you've bought into some narrative; suppose I argue that she holds this view because *she* has bought into some narrative; could she say, proving her point, "Yes! Exactly!"? No. This narrative talk explicitly does not take into account the truth or falsehood of the narratives in question. In fact it's probably meant to go with some subjectivizing treatment of truth and reality, a sort of epistemological Rashomon. I'm not arguing against that, I'm only pointing out that we're not considering whether a given narrative is true. So Kali might hold her position because she has bought into a *false* narrative about poetics & narratives. The fact that she has done so, if she has, shows nothing whatsoever about whether she's right. She might be right for the wrong reasons; she might be wrong in a self-supporting, question-begging, unfalsifiable way; she might be right and her views a poetics she holds, as she says, because of the narrative she has bought into.

Circularity, vicious or virtuous, is not the same as tautology. A tautology, under one neo-Leibnizian model-theoretic definition, is a proposition that is true in all possible worlds.

How much more of this do we have to go through? There is description and there is explanation. The latter will be narrative, in some sense, and involve notions of causality. To describe someone's mental state is different from giving its etiology. To describe a tree is different from saying how it got to be that way. These descriptions can probably always be taken up into narratives, and mere sequence glued together as cause and effect. But it is not required, and it is obvious that people sometimes resist doing just this. One reason they do so, is to avoid forcing the description in a particular direction because of ideas they already have about the causal chain. A physician can miss certain



symptoms, and hence make a misdiagnosis, if he thinks he already knows what's wrong with the patient. \_Of course\_ he could tell a story about the patient's symptoms: he could tell the wrong story. It proves nothing. On the other hand, a hunch about the cause gives you a way of forming falsifiable hypotheses, in the form of effects to seek out. "If the killer left through the garden, he should have left some trace of his passing, footprints, blood, etc." You must rely on some law as the major premise here: killers who pass through gardens leave traces. When you find no traces, you can either conclude that the major premise is false (sometimes killers leave leaving no trace) or, if you are very confident in the major premise, then you conclude the minor premise is false (the killer did not pass through the garden). Making up a story can help you find what you want to describe as part of the real story. It can make you find things that aren't really there. Evidence always underdetermines the theory it supports; there's always more than one theory to fit the facts. You choose for other reasons, allowing some premises to be wildly underdetermined (the universe is regular and predictable in its workings), but standing as fixed in order to evaluate your hypotheses.

Shall we continue in this fashion, here on the poetics list? I vote, nay. If y'all continue to prod me about this, I will continue to respond -- probably. I may just get too bored. We're talking philosophy now, and we shouldn't be, and whose fault is that? Not Wylan's. Not Mike's. Not mine. We didn't make these grand claims about the nature of things. I've posted some longish rambles that have few claims at all and nothing much like a conclusion, but they had a lot of stuff in them I'm interested in. I have now been drawn into arguing about things I'd rather not argue about, but still I am making very few claims. You don't see me saying that people do or don't have stories that shape their perceptions and their poetics. All I've done is object to the sweeping nature of some of the claims put forward here, and my point all along has been to go in fear of generalities and get down to cases. The problem with big theories is never that they don't work, but that they work all too easily. As Hegel said of the unmediated absolute: "It is the night in which all cows are black."

Now can we get back to poetics?! Pound makes a lot of points for Chaucer against Shakespeare -- now how about that? Is it just what Eliot says was his blind spot when it comes to drama? EP's procedure is not quite to say Chaucer is "better" than Shaks, he judges each thing according to its perfections. (He makes some points for Douglas's metric against Chaucer's.) He seems to feel that Chaucer's thought was superior to Shakespeare's, and even notes that his culture was "wider" than Dante's. He sees Chaucer as a European and Shakespeare as an Englishman. This is all very "narrative" you might say. You might then ask whether this narrative is true, or you might just consider the

decriptions themselves for accuracy. And the point is to get to the stage of deciding what it means to you, and whether in the particular case it adds up to some judgment or not. Pound is careful: "Can you be interested in the work of a man who is blind to 80 percent of the spectrum? to 30 percent of the spectrum? Here the answer is, curiously enough, yes IF . . . if his perceptions are hypernormal in any part of the spectrum he can be of very great use as a writer --- though perhaps of not very great 'weight'." That is not said in the Chaucer/Shaks context, but would seem to go along with what he says there. Etc. etc.

Pat

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325. **wystan**

***Re: taste, judgment, etc...***

*Tue 10 Dec 1996*

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Dear Kali,        Well, all right, you do have taste(s) and I have an ideology. On second thoughts shouldn't that be: ideology has me? Rest assured I have values. I have political views, too. And it has occurred to me that you equate both with having an ideology. Is that so? You see I don't think I do. You say, the notion that art is somehow beyond or outside of ideology makes you throw up, so a lot hinges on what you take ideology to be. For another way to pose this question of taste is to ask: what is the relation of ideology to poetics. Is there a poetics of ideology?

I was interested in your thought that groups without privilege were required to justify their tastes and those with it did not--that's what I meant when I spoke of judgement supported by class. And its a context in which NOT EXPLAINING is political. There's the story about jazz, which involves Duke Ellington as a rule, and a white middle class woman as a rule asking what is the meaning of 'swing', and getting the answer that if you have to ask you'll never know, or something like. So that requirement to explain can be refused. The 'interrogation' can't start unless you know the right questions. Maybe class is always involved one way or another. I'm not sure. Taste in my book would always be 'acquired taste', which is to say there's always knowledge there gained from wherever it is concentrated, 'on the street', or in the library, and the refusal to explain is a way of insisting on the importance of knowing. Taste statements draw lines (I HATE SPEECH--Robert Grenier) which surprise those who don't know enough.

I write a lot of art criticism. I am aware that my tastes as a critic differ from those of the artists I write about in ways that reflect our different activities. Generally speaking mine are broader. As a critic I am drawn towards

your position, postponing value judgements, accepting this work may be good of its kind, explaining the work, translating it into the language of ( even the poetics of, discourse of, ideology of) the audience for the work, standing in the middle. It is the same with the teacher. As a poet, however, my focus is sharper and different (although my tastes can be as eclectic as hell), I'm not a bystander, my governing interest in other people's work is in its relation to my own activity as a poet, to my poetics, my path. It is worth arguing that there's something wrong with this being in two minds. And that criticism is as answerable to poetics as poetry is, and answerable to it before it is to other kinds of discourse such as literary criticism or cultural studies.

From one Cab Calloway fan to another...

Wystan

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326. **wystan**

**Re: DAMNNNNN!**

Tue 10 Dec 1996

---

Dear Pat,

Thanks for your teasing out of the taste thread.

What explanations, what stories!

Wystan

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327. **David Zauhar**

**Re: the profession(s)**

Tue 10 Dec 1996

---

Tom Mandel wrote:

*Ron -- I didn't say or at least didn't mean to say that people in the computer industry are smarter than those in the academy. Only that the academy, which might be imagined as a gathering of specially high intelligences, is not particularly: and this I wanted to say not to critique the academy but only as a kind of encouragement to those (students) who might fear falling from the academy into a dumber world of commerce or whatever.*

This thread wouldn't attract much of my attention IF NOT for one fact: some of the most deluded people I know in graduate schools are folks who have worked in in other fields for a few years and then come to the academy expecting it to be a utopia in which the men are witty, the women are feminist, and all the students are above average. I stick around because teaching strikes me as one

way of fulfilling the buddhist (w/ marxian inflections) call to pursue "right livelihood," but when i was doing other jobs, my intellectual life wasn't much different than it is when I'm grading papers and making syllabi for a living. But what to make of the folks who think the academy is the place to escape corporate domination? On the one hand, their hearts are in the right places (and how I wish they were correct in their assumptions). But I don't know about the brains of these folks: Maybe I need a new cliché: the old one about the corporate world being dog eat dog while in the academy, it's the other way around, just doesn't seem to be cutting it.

DAVE Zauhar

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328. **George Bowering**

**Re: Irony Query**

Wed 11 Dec 1996

---

If I were going to look for irony in lyric poetry I would head straight for Margaret Atwood, wouldn't you?

George Bowering.

2499 West 37th Ave.,  
Vancouver, B.C.,  
Canada V6M 1P4

fax: [REDACTED]

e-mail: [REDACTED]

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329. **Dean Taciuch**

**Re: Art + Language**

Wed 11 Dec 1996

---

Hi,

*Can anyone tell me anything about the "Art and Language" group that was around in the 70s and 80s in England? Do they still exist as such? What might they have to do with the rock band Red Krayola? I know this is far from any recent thread, but I figured someone out here could help. Backchannel if desired.*

Bennett

Don't know much about this, but you might want to check out:  
<http://www.studorg.nwu.edu/artperf//back-issues/1-27-95/redkrayola.html>

Dean Taciuch

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330. **Aldon L. Nielsen**

***Re: verbal irony***

*Wed 11 Dec 1996*

---

I've never teased out of a thread, but here's a good irony for us all --

that would be getting philosophical, and we shouldn't do that here --

The Duke Ellington story (are there any witnesses?) involves a stranger pressing for an explanation -- which the pressee refuses --

Seems to me a different order of exchange from a refusal to explain an opinion that has been publically opined --

Someone may come up to me and ask, "what does Pat mean when he says that your remarks may be circular" -- I may reply, "I refuse to explain"

Another thing entirely for me to say, "Donne can't lick Milton's shoes" and refuse to explain myself --

Pound being careful around 1935 -- "Muss. is having a war. All right. We got Louisians [sic] and a war in Africa is better than one in Europe which ALL the bugging gun makes [sic] wanted."--

Well, I'll be leaving town and this borrowed keyboard in a few days to go read stuff at Moorland-Spingarn, so my bumbling around in the regions of sense will subside, if bumbling can be said to subside --

I just haven't the taste for it

and DAMN this suit Tom sold me itches -- but it sure looks good on me

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331. **Peter Quartermain**

***Re: Oppen the misogynist?***

*Wed 11 Dec 1996*

---

A five day absence on a wonderful trip to San Francisco gives me some 160-odd (some of them distinctly odd) messages to get through. A quick note on my Oppen lecture: I did not argue -- and did not wish to imply -- that Oppen was a misogynist. I'm certainly not going to inflict on you 55 minutes-worth of talk on you here -- around 30 pages of double-spaced typescript which I hope and guess

might one of these years get published -- but I think I'd better say something. In my talk I tried to open up possible answers to two interrelated questions: 1. Why in the 60s did Oppen notice, pay attention to, (some) young women writers at a time when very few other men (except a few gay poets) were doing so? 2. What sort of news did he have, for those for whom he had news? (There were and still are quite a few such.) [I don't, incidentally, think he got much news from \*them\*, but to say so thus baldly is probably to malign him. It's complicated.] I wrote to a number of women writers asking them to talk about their relations with Oppen, hoped to build my paper around their replies (I got about a dozen replies), and found that I simply had to deal in some detail with Oppen's deeply ambiguous attitude towards women, his sense that they are an alien species, his bafflement. A strong feminist, also a patriarch. A really interesting mix. And yes, he did chide Kathleen Fraser for dwelling on feminine subjects, as Kevin says, in almost the same breath praising Diane Wakoski for her pursuit of same. And attacking Levertov's political poetry too. It's all fascinating, actually (and a HUGE topic), and has to be pursued. Whether I do so myself or not is another matter, since I've rather a lot on my plate right now. I'd sure like to.

As soon as I can get all the permissions sorted out, I'll try to publish this paper, and will let everyone know where to find it.

Peter

+

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

+

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### 332. Peter Quartermain

**Re: Quantitative Metrics:**

Wed 11 Dec 1996

I was going to say I've always thought this, but no, not always. It just feels like that.

It's seemed to me for a long time that quantitative verse (I absolutely do NOT mean verse modelled specifically on Greek and Latin metres, but durational rather than accentual verse) was almost completely out of fashion from around say 1620 (give or take 20 years) until about 1920 (give or take ditto). From

Donne, if you like, to Hopkins (both have really interesting quantitative measures -- e.g. Donne's first holy sonnet), and Swinburne has some wonderful and complex effects, as in "Itylus" [in Poems\_and\_Ballads\_1866]. Spenser's correspondence with Harvey is a wonderful discussion of quantity -- Spenser closing (at least I think it's in the last letter) the series of letters with a quantitative sonnet which Basil Bunting thought was the most perfect piece of quantitative writing in the language. The difficulty of course is that (to put it crudely) in English, stress lengthens the syllable, and most verse is a mix of accentual/quantitative. Some ears simply don't hear the quantity, since they're not used to it -- and anthologies like the Norton and pretty well all others, by modernising the spelling, breed tin ears in all of us.. If you start thinking in terms of consonant clusters and juncture, though, then Whitman for example suddenly begins at times to be quantitative -- the opening lines of "Out of the Cradle" for instance -- I discuss this in Disjunctive\_Poetics\_ -- and so do passages of Wordsworth. I've NEVER been able to read Tennyson, so cannot say whether he does it or not. Basil Bunting is a great quantitative writer. So too Creeley, Zukofsky. In this century, a long ling list. But discussions of it in the 18th and 19th centuries? I doubt there's any, save among prosodists who think quantity is Greek or Latin ONLY, and must therefore be in Sapphics etc etc when moved to English. So there may be a terminological problem in older discussions.

And -- an aside -- there's a great discussion of stress and its relation to pitch and syllable-length in English poet Douglas Oliver's 1989 book Poetry And Narrative in Performance .

Peter

At 04:54 PM 12/9/96 -0800, Liz Losh wrote:

> I am looking for

>versification theory about quantitative metrics from the 18th and 19th

>centuries.

I'm

+ + + + +

Peter Quartermain

128 East 23rd Avenue

## Vancouver

B.C.

Canada V5V 1X2

Voice and fax:

[illegible]

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333. **dbkk**

**Re: The Week in Poetry (S.F.)**

*Wed 11 Dec 1996*

---

At 6:27 PM -0800 12/10/96, Steve Carll wrote:

>Jack and Adelle

>Foley give me a ride down to the BART station. Their car's crowded because  
>of me; I almost get to sit on Joyce Jenkins' lap but we find another way to  
>fit four people in the back seat (darn). Jack and I trade banter all the  
>way there; samples probably better off lost in the mists of memory.

But, Steve, aren't you leaving something/one out here? Wasn't Eileen Kaufman!!!! (the one bedecked in turquoise ruffles) in the car too? When she walked in with Adelle Foley, I ran up to Eileen and told her how much I loved seeing her on the Beat Women panel. Eileen was very gracious. She's had lots of practice assuaging her fans. I helped her re-pin up the poster she knocked off Kathleen's hallway wall and then she fluttered into the kitchen like a moth, like a lovely turquoise moth. Meanly, Kevin attributed her high spirits to the arrest and incarceration of Janice Blue, one of her rivals for Bob Kaufman's affections.

Dodie

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334. **Ward Tietz**

**Re: Art and Language**

*Wed 11 Dec 1996*

---

On Wednesday, December 11, Bennett Simpson wrote, "Can anyone tell me anything about the "Art and Language" group that was around in the 70s and 80s in England? Do they still exist as such?..."

Critical Inquiry, Spring 1995, contains a fairly lengthy article on Art and Language by Charles Harrison entitled "Art and Language Paints a Landscape." The article discusses a range of works by Art and Language, including a few from the early 1990s.

Ward Tietz

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335. **Blair Seagram**

**test**

*Wed 11 Dec 1996*

---

Just checking to see if my messages are getting through to this list.



Blair Seagram



<http://bway.net/~blairsea/>

Blair Seagram



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336. **tmandel**

***an xxtra X?***

*Wed 11 Dec 1996*

---

Dave Zauhar supports my point only -- only! I say -- because he hopes I'll tell him where to find the suits :-)

Reading his post I remembered a day about a decade ago when I was installing a network in a law office in San Francisco. I was connecting one digital lego to another having seen through their protective coloring to the obvious (to the person who designed it and no one else) connection between these two outposts of bit, when the legal secretary standing near me, a wry man evidently gay and evidently amused at my mutterings and ejaculations, asked "Have you ever read Harry Mathews?" I'd never been asked about Harry's work in a business context before, so I stood straight up and wrenched my back.

I think about Gerald (his name: we became friends and went to many a Giants game together) too, because he's dead. Rich, the attorney he worked for, he's dead too.

I started writing about Oxxford suits in response to Ron Silliman's post about the bloodbath that is our time.

Perhaps, too, we can turn George Oppen into a human relations problem and suggest that he "can't be judged by the standards of our time." Why should a discussion forum putatively comprising thoughtful folks repeatedly express itself in such conventional self-praise as to imagine this a time of greater understanding than some other on any ethical subject whatever. By the standards of our time Lucifer looks like a big donor.

I knew George and Mary Oppen pretty well over about 3 years in the late seventies. We went out to dinner often with my then wife Gaelyn Godwin. George was mostly gone intellectually; mostly he would repeat a small repertoire of stories and thoughts, though he was able to be responsive if you reached him with a question, and he was physically just fine and still doing some writing too.

It's hard to park in SF, and we often found ourselves walking several blocks from the car to dinner. George liked very much to walk with Gaelyn, and I would walk with Mary willingly as she was a radiantly beautiful and alluringly cogent woman. Gaelyn told me that George would begin by conversing with her but would soon fall silent and begin to hum to their rhythm, their pace. In her description it seemed an experience both peaceful and sensual.

But that was a long time ago.

Tom

\*\*\*\*\*  
Tom Mandel \* 2927 Tilden St. NW  
Washington DC 20008 \* [REDACTED]  
vox: [REDACTED] \* fax [REDACTED]  
\*\*\*\*\*

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337. **tmandel**

**Paul Carroll**

*Wed 11 Dec 1996*

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Getting to be nearly forty years since I first saw Paul Carroll in some poetry context or other that I tiptoe-teenaged myself into. I remember his florid smiling face and that it must have been summer, as he was wearing a straw hat -- the stiff-brimmed style that men used to don as soon as Memorial Day passed back in the days when nearly every man you saw on the street wore a hat, and the difference between a hat and a cap was a class difference -- and a seersucker suit from Brooks Brothers.

(I know I'm getting myself into trouble with all this stuff about clothes)

I'm trying to remember whether Paul was involved in the flap around the Chicago Review in 1958 ('59?) which led to the creation of Big Table magazine and a legendary benefit reading in a Folk Music club on the near north side where Corso read "Made in Italy" and Allen G. read his incredible Chitchen Itza poem (name escapes me). I was a little highschool mole at that event, sitting in a world that seemed the only one I'd ever want to inhabit and as near and far as could be.

This was a young Paul Carroll and the impression he gave was jaunty in the extreme, both bohemian and bon vivant. A figure.

tom

\*\*\*\*\*  
Tom Mandel \* 2927 Tilden St. NW

Washington DC 20008 \* [REDACTED]

vox: [REDACTED] \* fax [REDACTED]

\*\*\*\*\*

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338. **MAXINE CHERNOFF**

**Re: Paul Carroll**

Wed 11 Dec 1996

Yes, it was Paul Carroll involved in the flap about censorship (and Burroughs, I believe) that led to him forming Big Table Books and magazine, which went 5 issues. His straw hat stayed but after his divorce from first wife, summer gear became tee-shirts and shorts and a 10-speed bicycle that he used to ride in Lincoln Park until he got inspired to write a poem. One more Paul Carroll anecdote: needing \$\$ after his divorce, he began driving a cab at night (in addition to being a professor), and on the day Neruda died, he threw a party of businessmen out of his cab for not knowing who Neruda was.

Maxine Chernoff

On Wed, 11 Dec 1996 [REDACTED] wrote:

*Getting to be nearly forty years since I first saw Paul Carroll in some poetry context or other that I tiptoe-teenaged myself into. I remember his florid smiling face and that it must have been summer, as he was wearing a straw hat -- the stiff-brimmed style that men used to don as soon as Memorial Day passed back in the days when nearly every man you saw on the street wore a hat, and the difference between a hat and a cap was a class difference -- and a seersucker suit from Brooks Brothers.*

*(I know I'm getting myself into trouble with all this stuff about clothes)*

*I'm trying to remember whether Paul was involved in the flap around the Chicago Review in 1958 ('59?) which led to the creation of Big Table magazine and a legendary benefit reading in a Folk Music club on the near north side where Corso read "Made in Italy" and Allen G. read his incredible Chitchen Itza poem (name escapes me). I was a little highschool mole at that event, sitting in a world that seemed the only one I'd ever want to inhabit and as near and far as could be.*

*This was a young Paul Carroll and the impression he gave was jaunty in the extreme, both bohemian and bon vivant. A figure.*

tom

\*\*\*\*\*  
Tom Mandel \* 2927 Tilden St. NW  
Washington DC 20008 \* [REDACTED]  
vox: [REDACTED] \* fax [REDACTED]  
\*\*\*\*\*

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339. **Aldon L. Nielsen**

**Re: Notes & Queries**

Wed 11 Dec 1996

-- New issue of \_William Carlos Review\_ is a special number on Williams and Surrealism -- lots of good stuff -- Marjorie Perloff reviews Parker Tyler reprint at end of journal --

Paul Carroll was indeed involved in varied flaps mentioned -- I've read a letter he sent to Baraka asking advice at time of \_Big Table\_ legal trouble, as Baraka/Di Prima had been through similar problems with \_Floating Bear\_ (including night in the pokey for issue containing excerpts from \_Naked Lunch\_ and \_Dante's Hell\_)

More male poets in early sixties interested in the works of women than we might think (though not always for purest of reasons) -- Baraka edited \_Four Young Lady Poets\_, or whatever that annoying title was --

But, the males certainly did dominate publishing & reading scenes -- For a project I'm working on, I've been trying to locate black women who were working in avant garde poetry scene from WWII through 1970 or so -- Helpful folk here on the list have put me in touch with Gloria Tropp -- If anybody else knows of some little known work -- please let me hear about it --

--I wrenched my back READING Harry Matthews, but I bought season tickets to the Odradek Stadium and have been enjoying the season greatly --

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340. **Peter Larkin**

**(Fwd) Art & Language**

Wed 11 Dec 1996

Forwarded message:

From: Self <LIBRIS/LYAAZ>

To: [REDACTED]

Subject: Art & Language

Date: Wed, 11 Dec 1996 09:48:52

This is off the top of my head - but as far as I ever knew the Art & Language thing came out of the Coventry School of Art & Design (now part of the University of Coventry) in the early 70's - or at least one very important thread did. A few years ago a lecturer from the above place had an exhibition at Warwick's Mead Gallery and he was certainly still working in that tradition. I don't know whether he is still there or not, and I can't discover his name as our catalogue is down at present, but unless much fuller info has already come from somewhere else I will try and find out.

Peter

Peter Larkin

Philosophy & Literature Librarian

University of Warwick Library, Coventry CV4 7AL UK

Tel: 01203 528151 Fax: 01203 524211

Email: [REDACTED]

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341. **Karl Richter**

***Re: Irony Query***

*Wed 11 Dec 1996*

---

Erich,

I've always been impressed by Berryman's uses of irony in the *\_Dream Songs\_*. Many of them are colored by humorous irony, and others by a melancholy irony. For instance, the bitter "ha"s at the end of "Dream Song 384," which is one of the most moving elegies I know of. I'll keep thinking about it. The topic is interesting to me as well. I often notice that contemporary poets use irony to undercut what it seems they really want to say, which, given the workshop aesthetic's tenet against taking too strong ("preachy" is often the word used) of a stand in a poem, is not surprising. Does anyone else think that irony may be a bit overused these days? I'll try to think of some specific examples.

Karl Richter

[REDACTED]

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342. **Gabrielle Welford**

***CNI Action: Protest School of Assassins (fwd)***

*Wed 11 Dec 1996*

---

I've attached the following short article for anyone not familiar with this shameful and disgusting episode of US foreign policy. A call to Congress would not be out of the question.

Call Congress for FREE by dialing [REDACTED]. For information on how to send your representatives email, as well as details of our bloated military budget, visit our links to the Center for Defense Information located at <http://www.cnnotes.com/telecom/action.html>

Peace,

Mike Corso  
CNI Telecom  
autoreply@cnitelecom  
<http://www.cnitelecom.com>

---

*School for Assassins*

*Tuesday, October 8 1996; Page A18  
The Washington Post*

*Shouldn't the Sept. 21 front-page article "Army Instructed Latins on Executions, Torture" give reason enough for Congress to close the U.S. Army School of the Americas (SOA)?*

*I am a Catholic priest with the Maryknoll Order writing from the federal prison in Atlanta, where I'm serving a six-month sentence for a nonviolent protest against the SOA. I was among 13 arrested, including a 74-year-old nun, a Jesuit priest, a lawyer, World War II veterans and a mother of eight. The SOA, located at Fort Benning, Ga., trains hundreds of soldiers from Latin America each year in combat skills at U.S. taxpayers' expense.*

*The school, established in 1946, quietly has trained more than 60,000 troops from Latin America. Consistently, those nations with the worst human rights records sent the most soldiers to the school. Bolivia under Gen. Hugo Banzer, Nicaragua under the Somozas, El Salvador during the bloodiest years of civil war -- all were top clients at the SOA in the heydays of their military abuse.*

*We now are told by the Pentagon that SOA manuals taught Latin America's military how to torture, execute and blackmail. What we are not told is that the targets were the poor and*

*those who dared to speak out on behalf of the poor. In El Salvador, SOA graduates were responsible for the massacre of six Jesuit priests, their housekeeper and her daughter; the assassination of Archbishop Oscar Romero; the rape and murder of four U.S. church women; the massacre of El Mozote, where more than 800 men, women and children were killed; and many other atrocities.*

*With the Cold War behind us, there have been many changes in Latin America, but it is business as usual at the Pentagon and at the School of the Americas. At a time when budgets for schools for our children are being cut, the SOA is costing us millions of dollars. This is shameful!*

*The fact that the Army continues to train Latin America's military at the SOA, even with changes in the curriculum, is an embarrassment to our country's commitment to the rule of law and a horrible waste of taxpayer funds. It is time to close this school of assassins.*

*THE REV. ROY BOURGEOIS*

*Atlanta*

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----- (If you wish to be removed from  
the CNI Action Alert mailing list, simply send a blank message to [REDACTED]  
and type "remove action" (without the quote marks) in the Subject field)

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343. **Gabrielle Welford**  
**VOICE YOUR SUPPORT (fwd)**

*Wed 11 Dec 1996*

---

Subject: VOICE YOUR SUPPORT TO THE PEOPLE OF SERBIA

Please spread the appeal to the world intellectuals.

Molimo da prosledite sledeci poziv intelektualcima sveta.

VOICE YOUR SUPPORT TO THE PEOPLE OF SERBIA

Appeal of Democratic coalition ZAJEDNO (Together) to the world  
humanists and intellectuals

Belgrade, December 9, 1996.

Dear Sir/Madam,

We are writing to you in hope that you will voice your support  
for our  
efforts.

As you have probably seen or read in the news, for the past 20 days, the people in Serbia have been holding peaceful demonstrations against the regime of the infamous Slobodan Milosevic. The protests started when he and his government, unsatisfied with the fact that they lost the local elections in all major cities, simply annulled the election results. This means that they simply canceled the democratically expressed will of over 2/3 of this country's population which voted for our coalition ZAJEDNO ("TOGETHER"). In addition to that, there is a total embargo on the freedom of information and no freedom of the media.

When the citizens of Serbia realized that their voice means nothing when expressed through legal institutions, they took to the streets in peaceful demonstrations for their basic human rights. More and more people are joining in the demonstrations every day and they are drawing the attention and support of the entire democratic international community.

At the same time, the Milosevic government is showing no sign of giving up in its attempt to yet again take this country on the road to disaster. Again, he arrogantly refuses to listen to reason. Instead, through the media which are completely under his control, he constantly keeps on spreading lies about the protests and denying the people of this country simple information, thus worsening the situation daily. He must be stopped before this situation reaches the boiling point with unforeseen consequences.

Many international analysts have already compared these events to those in Prague in 1989, when the people of Czechoslovakia succeeded in peacefully bringing democracy to their country. However, there are also those who



foresee Bucharest as our future. We do not want violence and bloodshed and we do not want Bucharest.

Our only goal is to succeed, by peaceful means, in getting what rightfully belongs to us -- democracy.

On the other hand, Slobodan Milosevic seems intent to cause bloodshed and destruction just so that he can maintain his power. This is what he has been doing for the past five years, stopping at nothing and sacrificing thousands and thousands of lives for that purpose. To stop him, we need the support of all democratic governments and institutions. We need the support of all of you who believe that dictators and dictatorships should not exist in Europe at the end of the 20th century -- all of you who believe that laws exist to be obeyed and that those who break them must answer for their actions.

This is why, on the behalf of hundreds of thousands of people who are demonstrating in the streets of Belgrade, Nis, Novi Sad, Kraljevo, and other cities of Serbia (the numbers are growing every day!), we ask you to voice your support for our efforts.

Respectfully yours,

the ZAJEDNO coalition,

Serbia

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344. **Laura Moriarty**

***Quatermain tapes***

*Wed 11 Dec 1996*

---

Hi Steve -

Backchannel me your address and I'll put you on the Poetry Center mailing list for future events -

Peter Quatermain's excellent George Oppen Memorial lecture, "Conversation With One's Peers," is available from us on video or audiotape.

Laura Moriarty

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345. **Jordan Davis**

***Light in the Corners***

*Wed 11 Dec 1996*

---

Sha la la la la wrote:

[↑ Contents](#)

346. **Jeffrey W. Timmons**

***Re: Double Damn***

Wed 11 Dec 1996

*Now can we get back to poetics?!*

but we were having such fun!

jeffrey timmons

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### 347. **Jordan Davis**

## As Far As We Know Ben Friedlander & Samuel R. Delany

Wed 11 Dec 1996

Will Be Reading At Poetry City Tomorrow Night! Please Come And Enjoy Their Company 7 P.M. At 5 Union Sq W NYC In The Offices Of Teachers & Writers Collaborative! Afterwards There Will Be A Party At A Location To Be Disclosed At The Reading. Thank You. J Davis

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### 348. Peter Quartermain

## Re: Notes & Queries

Wed 11 Dec 1996

Aldon:

You wrote:

--I wrenched my back **READING** Harry Matthews, but I bought season tickets to the Odradek Stadium and have been enjoying the season greatly --

1. HOW did you wrench your back?
2. WHERE did you get hold of it? I wanna teach it, thought it was out of print.

Peter

[illegible]

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

+++++

[↑ Contents](#)

349. **Peter Quartermain**

**Re: Paul Carroll/Big Table**

Wed 11 Dec 1996

---

As I recollect, the \_Chicago\_Review\_ refused (on Faculty advice; hi, guys!) -- to print the materials which later appeared in \_Big\_Table\_ #1, which is why \*he\* founded the magazine. And yes, it went five issues. Hard to find, nowadays. Or is my memory -- like everyone else's -- up the, hmmm, creek?

Peter

At 07:15 AM 12/11/96 -0800, Maxine Chernoff wrote:

>Yes, it was Paul Carroll involved in the flap about censorship (and  
>Burroughs, I believe) that led to him forming Big Table Books and  
>magazine, which went 5 issues.

+++++

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

+++++

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350. **nuyopoman**

**Free Book Scheme**

Wed 11 Dec 1996

---

>The Houghton-Mifflin publishing co. is giving books to children's  
>hospitals; how many books they give depends on how many emails they  
receive >from people around the world. for every 25 emails they  
receive, they give >one book.

>

>all you have to do is email [REDACTED]. >

*>hope you can spare the seconds...and let your friends know. \*\*\*\*so far they >only have 3, 400 messages...last year they reached 23,000.*

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351. **tmandel**

## ***Adorno and the Nazis***

*Wed 11 Dec 1996*

---

No poetry after Auschwitz?

In a letter to Karl Jaspers, Hannah Arendt referred to Adorno as "one of the most repulsive human beings I know."

There would be many reasons to hold this opinion, and anyone familiar with the relations between Walter Benjamin and Adorno from the time in the late 30's when Adorno got to America to B's death would be able to arrive at it independently, observing in the correspondence for example a genius of Benjamin's magnitude forced to grovel for a few pennies before a toad like Adorno, forced to hear and treat as significant Adorno's trivial and pettifogging critiques of his work.

This is not why Arendt detested Adorno, however, although she was certainly familiar with the relations between the two men (Benjamin and Arendt were friends).

No, Arendt detested Adorno for his attempt to ingratiate himself with the Nazis when they first came to power, his attempt to use the fact that he was half Jewish - not a real Jew (I should say not!) - to slide onto the slip-thru side of the newly-empowered National Socialists. Even moreso, Arendt hated him for his as she called it "indescribably pathetic" attempt to excuse himself when his activities were discovered thirty years later.

(I should say, btw, that although I am familiar with the Adorno/Benjamin correspondence and with some of Adorno's own writings, none of which I have ever liked, all of which seemed monumentally self-aggrandizing, the affair I am about to narrate I know only second-hand. I rely entirely on a written report in a pair of footnotes to the Arendt/Jaspers correspondence. Fans of Adorno's work, especially those who feel they'd like to complete their acquaintance with his texts, will surely want to read in their original positions the documents referred to below.)

(I should say further that I was a student of Hannah Arendt's for most of my grad-student career.)

In a periodical called *Die Musik* in June 1934 Theodor Wiesengrund-Adorno wrote a music review in which he praised a song cycle written to poems by Baldur von Schirach - an obscure person today thankfully but extremely well-

known at the time as a Nazi poet and an adorer of Hitler, to whom the book of poetry was dedicated (to "Adolph Hitler, the Fuhrer")! from which come the texts of the songs. The song cycle bears the same name as the book. The editors of the Arendt-Jaspers correspondence describe it as containing "phrases which even today can be regarded only as obsequious gestures to the Nazis. Adorno apparently was not bothered by the fact that some of the poems advocated mass murder." The review also uses a phrase of Goebbels - approvingly.

It goes without saying that Adorno took no opportunity after the war to mention having written this document, that it played no part in any of the judgments he made of German intellectuals' relations to the Nazis, and that he did not footnote his *Minima Moralia* axiom about poetry after Auschwitz with any reference to the poetry he had praised only a few years before Auschwitz was built.

The January 1964 issue of *Diskus*, a Frankfurt student newspaper, contains an open letter to Adorno, written by a student and asking whether he was the author of the review in question. Adorno replies in the same issue: "I deeply regret having written that review," says he (and I don't doubt it!), especially because "it deals with poems by Schirach" and made use of "a phrase of Goebbels."

I find it hard to credit this "regret" that did not lead to repudiation; Adorno had kept his authorship of these words secret for thirty years.

After expressing regret, according to the editors, he goes on to make a series of excuses and concludes that it will be left to the reader "to decide whether those incriminating sentences should be given any weight in assessing my work and my life.... No one... could possibly compare me to Heidegger...."

In discussing what had so angered Arendt, the editors to refer to "Adorno's tactic of insincerity: choosing to ingratiate himself with the Nazis in parenthetical phrases and then asserting in full sentences that his words had not been meant that way; and pointing to someone guiltier to make himself look better. Throughout the letter he uses a logic of evasion that makes it an 'indescribably pathetic' document indeed."

Hard as it is to tell where one patch of mud ends and the next begins, I can't say I feel much difference between the writer of the '34 review and the '64 letter, but like Adorno, I leave it to the reader to decide.

It is instructive to compare the situation of Adorno and that of Paul deMan who was vilified for his collaborationist writings in Belgium. I'm not a fan of Paul deMan and would not wish to explain his situation, far less to explain away his actions, but it is useful to note the differences in the two situations. For one

thing deMan was in a country under military occupation which he was unable to leave.

One could go on comparing the two. Certainly it would be interesting to trace the pressures in their respective works of these episodes in their past. Interesting to someone who has no other flowers to arrange.

I've known about this episode for a few years but haven't had the heart to expose it to others. Only being once again confronted with praise for this disreputable creep, and knowing I would be again, has made me sigh and set down what I've read.

Interestingly, the German students to whom Adorno replied in the '60s seem to have been more or less satisfied with his reply. Perhaps it was enough to see him (indeed, to see a Jew) painted in their own merde. Perhaps his evasions spoke to theirs. That was the sixties; these are the nineties. That was Germany; this is a different place. It will be instructive to see whether/how any of you respond, indeed whether there is any reaction outside this small circle. If so, it will be up to someone else to take the matter any further.

Tom Mandel

\*\*\*\*\*  
Tom Mandel \* 2927 Tilden St. NW  
Washington DC 20008 \* [REDACTED]  
vox: [REDACTED] \* fax [REDACTED]  
\*\*\*\*\*

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352. **George Bowering**  
**Re: Paul Carroll/Big Table**

Thu 12 Dec 1996

---

*As I recollect, the \_Chicago\_Review\_ refused (on Faculty advice; hi, guys!)  
-- to print the materials which later appeared in \_Big\_Table\_ #1, which is  
why \*he\* founded the magazine. And yes, it went five issues. Hard to find,  
nowadays. Or is my memory -- like everyone else's -- up the, hmmm, creek?*

Nope, that sounds right, PQ. I, of course, have a run, incl. 2 copies of #5.

George Bowering.

2499 West 37th Ave.,  
Vancouver, B.C.,  
Canada V6M 1P4

353. **George Bowering**  
**Re: Notes & Queries**  
*Thu 12 Dec 1996*

fax: [REDACTED]  
e-mail: [REDACTED]

354. **Thomas Lecky**  
*Re: Paul Carroll/Big Table*  
Thu 12 Dec 1996

295

> why \*he\* founded the magazine. And yes, it went five issues. Hard to find,  
> nowadays. Or is my memory -- like everyone else's -- up the, hmmm, creek?  
>  
> Peter  
>  
> At 07:15 AM 12/11/96 -0800, Maxine Chernoff wrote:  
> >Yes, it was Paul Carroll involved in the flap about censorship (and  
> >Burroughs, I believe) that led to him forming Big Table Books and  
> >magazine, which went 5 issues.

To all regarding the Big Table issue:

Actually, Irving Rosenthal, then editor of the Chicago Review, founded Big Table with Paul Carroll after his Winter '58 issue was suppressed. A newspaper columnist had read the first appearance of Naked Lunch in the Autumn '58 issue and wrote an article on the front page of the Saturday Chicago Daily News called "FILTHY MAGAZINE ON MIDWAY." (Rosenthal was instrumental in collating and editing the Naked Lunch manuscript Burroughs had sent him; while Burroughs was in England, Rosenthal and Ginsberg formed the manuscript that Burroughs was ultimately to revise once more (in three weeks) and give to Olympia). Chancellor Kimpton of U. of C. suppressed the issue and Rosenthal refused to put out an "innocuous" issue as the faculty and administration asked. Rosenthal then tried to decide what to do with the material he had collected--some of it was offered to Ginsberg who was editing an anthology for City Lights. The idea to form Big Table was a collaborative one: Paul Carroll, who had been involved with the Chicago Review while a graduate student, helped acquire funds to start a literary mag. The material for the suppressed Winter '58 CR issue became Big Table 1. Included were Burroughs, Edward Dahlberg and Jack Kerouac and the issue was edited and introduced by Rosenthal. The later Big Tables also used material Rosenthal had collected: works by Kenneth Koch, John Ashbery, Alan Ansen, Robert Creeley, John Wieners, etc. The Chicago Review continued under the direction of a student who was willing to put out a few innocuous issues for the school's sake; the remaining staff left with Rosenthal.

Rosenthal went on to write one of the greatest beat novels, *Sheeper*, in the 60s. Gilbert Sorrentino edited *Sheeper* while at Grove and Grove published the novel in 1967. *Sheeper* remains Rosenthal's only novel. Anyway, this might clarify some of these details.

Thomas Lecky

-----  
[REDACTED]



<http://www.qwertyarts.com>

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355. **tmandel**

### ***Re-post of Adorno and the Nazis***

*Thu 12 Dec 1996*

---

(I repost this because, having cut/paste it from Word, it came thru as a hash the first time)

No poetry after Auschwitz?

In a letter to Karl Jaspers, Hannah Arendt referred to Adorno as "one of the most repulsive human beings I know."

There would be many reasons to hold this opinion, and anyone familiar with the relations between Walter Benjamin and Adorno from the time in the late 30's when Adorno got to America to B's death would be able to arrive at it independently, observing in the correspondence for example a genius of Benjamin's magnitude as he is forced to grovel for a few pennies before a toad like Adorno, forced to hear and treat as significant Adorno's trivial and pettifogging critiques of his work.

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No, Arendt detested Adorno for his attempt to ingratiate himself with the Nazis when they first came to power, his attempt to use the fact that he was half Jewish - not a real Jew (I should say not!) - to slide onto the slip-thru side of the newly-empowered National Socialists. Even moreso, Arendt hated him for his as she called it "indescribably pathetic" attempt to excuse himself when his activities were discovered thirty years later.

(I should say, btw, that although I am familiar with the Adorno/Benjamin correspondence and with some of Adorno's own writings, none of which I have ever liked, all of which seemed monumentally self-aggrandizing, the affair I am about to narrate I know only second-hand. I rely entirely on a written report in a pair of footnotes to the Arendt/Jaspers correspondence. Fans of Adorno's work, especially those who feel they'd like to complete their acquaintance with his texts, will surely want to read in their original positions the documents referred to below.)

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Baldur von Schirach - an obscure person today thankfully but extremely well-known at the time as a Nazi poet and an adorer of Hitler, to whom the book of poetry was dedicated (to "Adolph Hitler, the Fuhrer")! from which come the texts of the songs. The song cycle bears the same name as the book. The editors of the Arendt-Jaspers correspondence describe it as containing "phrases which even today can be regarded only as obsequious gestures to the Nazis. Adorno apparently was not bothered by the fact that some of the poems advocated mass murder." The review also uses a phrase of Goebbels - approvingly.

It goes without saying that Adorno took no opportunity after the war to mention having written this document, that it played no part in any of the judgments he made of German intellectuals' relations to the Nazis, and that he did not footnote his *Minima Moralia* axiom about poetry after Auschwitz with any reference to the poetry he had praised only a few years before Auschwitz was built.

The January 1964 issue of *Diskus*, a Frankfurt student newspaper, contains an open letter to Adorno, written by a student and asking whether he was the author of the review in question. Adorno replies in the same issue (which as I say I have not read). "I deeply regret having written that review," especially because "it deals with poems by Schirach" and made use of "a phrase of Goebbels." Obviously, it is hard to credit "regret" that does not lead to repudiation, and Adorno had kept his authorship of these words secret for thirty years. After expressing this regret, according to the editors, he goes on to make a series of excuses and concludes that it will be left to the reader "to decide whether those incriminating sentences should be given any weight in assessing my work and my life.... No one... could possibly compare me to Heidegger..."

In discussing what had so angered Arendt, the editors go on to refer to "Adorno's tactic of insincerity: choosing to ingratiate himself with the Nazis in parenthetical phrases and then asserting in full sentences that his words had not been meant that way; and pointing to someone guiltier to make himself look better. Throughout the letter he uses a logic of evasion that makes it an 'indescribably pathetic' document indeed."

Hard as it is to tell where one patch of mud ends and the next begins, I can't say I feel much difference between the writer of the '34 review and the '64 letter, but like Adorno, I leave it to the reader to decide.

It is instructive to compare the situation of Adorno and that of Paul deMan who was vilified for his collaborationist writings in Belgium. I'm not a fan of Paul deMan, but it is useful to note the differences in the two situations. For one thing deMan was in a country under military occupation which he was unable to leave. One could go on comparing the two. Certainly it would be interesting to

trace the pressures in their respective works of these episodes in their past. Interesting to someone who has no other flowers to arrange.

I've known about the Adorno episode for a few years but haven't had the heart to expose it to others. Only being once again confronted with praise for a disreputable creep, and knowing I would be again, has made me sigh and set down what I've read.

Interestingly, the German students to whom Adorno replied in the '60s seem to have been more or less satisfied with his reply. Perhaps it was enough to see him (indeed, to see a Jew) painted in their own merde. Perhaps his evasions spoke to theirs. That was the sixties; these are the nineties. That was Germany; this is a different place. It will be interesting to see whether/how any of you respond, and whether there is any reaction outside this small circle. If so, it will be up to someone else to take the matter any further.

Tom Mandel

\*\*\*\*\*

Tom Mandel \* 2927 Tilden St. NW  
Washington DC 20008 \* [REDACTED]  
vox: [REDACTED] \* fax [REDACTED]

\*\*\*\*\*

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356. **Douglas Barbour**

**Re: Tom Mandel on Adorno**

Thu 12 Dec 1996

In response to:

*Date: Wed, 11 Dec 1996 22:22:33 CST*

*From: [REDACTED]*

*Subject: Adorno and the Nazis*

*No poetry after Auschwitz?*

*That was Germany; this is a different place. It will be =*

*instructive to see whether/how any of you respond, indeed whether there =*

*is any reaction outside this small circle. If so, it will be up to =*

*someone else to take the matter any further.*

*Tom Mandel*

The whole piece was fascinating, & I for one thank you for it. But maybe that's because I haven't read much Adorno, although I found parts of \_Minima

Moralia\_ interesting (I was sent to that by a quote in a Jed Rasula piece). On the other hand, I have always found those remarks on jazz (& other aspects of popular culture) so stupid (must be my 'taste'), I could not be sure there would be much of anything I could trust in his work. Benjamin, what I've read, on the other hand, is always brilliant, even when I don't agree.

At any rate, that's a striking tale (a narration of a poetics, to boot?)

=====

===== Douglas Barbour Department  
of English 'The universe opens. I close. University of Alberta  
And open, just to surprise you.' Edmonton Alberta T6G 2E5 [REDACTED] FAX:  
[REDACTED] - Phyllis Webb H: [REDACTED]

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357. **Aldon L. Nielsen**

***Re: Notes & Queries***

Thu 12 Dec 1996

---

1) it was a monkey wrench

2) many years ago, \_Odradek\_ was in a trilogy volume from, I believe it was, Random House -- Now long out of print -- The volume was remaindered everywhere and for months I snapped up copies (at 1.00 a piece) and gave them to people -- That volume was, in fact, my intro. to Matthews -- who I have treasured ever since -- Keep hoping Dalkey Archive or somebody might reissue it --

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358. **Aldon L. Nielsen**

***Re: To have knocked an Adorno, this is not vanity***

Thu 12 Dec 1996

---

Adorno's "jazz" commentary a good example for our recent discussion, which I will not here rehash -- It's clear that whatever else Adorno knew, and he knew quite a bit about quite a lot I still believe, he had little technical knowledge of jazz and the playing thereof --

AND, there is a substantial collection of Arendt-related material in the ms. division of the Library of Congress in D.C., for any on this list interested in following up on some of the issues Tom raises here -- I had quite a good lunch-time conversation with a grad. student who was working with those papers at the same table I was at working on Tolson one Summer --

Gwyn, and others in DC area -- You going to be at either of these readings Rod tells me about Saturday & Sunday?

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359. **Rachel Blau DuPlessis**

**(no subject)**

*Thu 12 Dec 1996*

---

Peter's piece on Oppen and women is a topic that could be expanded multiple times, since many poets (m) have had interesting relations with poets and others of the female persuasion. Indeed, given that there are probably 4 genders easily (male, female, boy, girl), and that they are going to be all mixed up---proof that there are 4 genders: see Freud on girls. Any of the essays on sexuality, the oedipus complex. Anyway, my opinion is that George was a man and a girl both. I won't myself flirt and ask if "anyone is intereste d" in my comments, nor do I want to lurk. Oppen was rather more egalitarian and accepting of women as artistic producers than many males I ran into, or up against, in approx. 1965. He seemed curious as to what would emerge from women, and seemed to recognize that that "sector" was under-represented and poorly treated in culture at that moment. This curiosity had a number of sources in his life and politics (I won't go thru them all); One might have been the political culture of the left, including the CP "line" on (i.e. sort of against) male chauvinism. (Their term.) He saw women, as he saw men, as comrades in poetry. He demanded a great deal of both groups; he pursued a real committment to poetry and to the ethics and seriousness of the word. Anyone raised a female (and others, possibly) know well that some of that up-raising is debilitating, makes you want others to treat you just a little more nicely, kid gloves, all that. Almost 100% (in my view, this is my opinion only) George did not; he didn't play that game. It was bracing. AND YET, he loved women--a deep, fantasy-laden love for women as vulnerable, as strong, as desirable, as independent, as a very special kind of companion. So he put his intensity and grasp of things in your way and didn't soft-pedal. He would say things like "put your intelligence into your poems" which just about no one was saying to young women in approx 1967. It is hard to reconstruct how drenched in a gut wrenching disregard for women and girls our culture was just a few decades back, how difficult it was to be a promising young women artist, how blasting it was to navigate the hypocricies and barriers that many men, old and young, threw down for you. And how internalized complaisance and minority were for young women. [para. break] Despite his ethos of sincerity and his horror of the un-won (which shriveled 99% of poetry for him), he could be played false--and it is often in his writing on women. Aldon Nielsen was the first to point to the weird voyeurism of race and gender in "The Zulu girl" and I am not fond of the

slight sentimentalizing of women at the end of *Of Being Numerous* ("my daughter my daughter"). There's a lot more to be said. Those interested in pursuing it might check the Letters. I tried very hard to identify, isolate, and propose the places where Oppen opined on women, and these are set forth in the index I prepared to the letters (p. 434). The thing that he didn't like--he would go (as he did on Levertov) ballistic, was any time he felt a women poet was being "a good girl." That was very bracing, indeed, given everything, and I have tried hard to stay un-good forever after. (The "good girl" are my words, not his.) OK girlfriends (and possibly boyfriends)--that's my post. Rachel

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360. **Jeremy F Green**

***Re: Adorno and the Nazis***

*Thu 12 Dec 1996*

---

A very hasty (because pressed for time) response to Tom Mandel's post (perhaps just to get the ball rolling...)--

Thanks for the reference to the review in *Die Musik*. I would be very interested to hear what anyone who knows the Adorno bibliography better than I do has to say about this.

Treating the attack not simply as *ad hominem* (which it was), a couple of quick points:

--Arendt's record on denunciation is far from spotless--witness her silence *vis-a-vis* Heidegger's silence.

--Adorno's response to Benjamin's Baudelaire piece (letter of 10 Nov.1938) might well be described as bullying (and may indeed have had a very serious effect on Benjamin's work on the Arcades project and his relation to the Institute), but his objections are far from trivial. They raise very important questions about the relationship between Benjamin's critical procedure and his Marxism. See, for starters, the brief piece (called 'The Frog and the Prince', I think) in Giorgio Agamben's *\_Infancy and History\_*.

--Yes, Benjamin was "a genius of [whatever] magnitude" and Adorno, in his later work, is deeply indebted to him (and acknowledges it: see the essay on WB in *\_Prisms\_* and sundry comments in *\_Aesthetic Theory\_*; and indeed, the famous remark that got this thread going should surely be read in the context of WB's great thesis about culture and barbarism in 'Theses on the Philosophy of History').

--Likening Adorno to Paul de Man seems hazardous indeed, not least because the burden of Adorno's work from *\_Dialectic of Enlightenment\_* on (and earlier too, I dare say) was the most sustained and serious attempt to grapple with the

implications of the Nazi (and Stalinist) era. (to dismiss all this as 'self-aggrandizing' is simply a refusal to read--which is not to say that Adorno is not also often a pain in the neck to read)

And let me toss out this question (probably rhetorical): doesn't the gesture of removing Adorno from the constellation in which Benjamin's work was written (and should surely be read) constitute a refusal to face the political questions Benjamin raises?

Well, that's my scuffle with the gauntlet Tom Mandel threw down ... who's next?  
jfg

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361. **Mark Wallace**  
***computers, academics, slavery***

*Thu 12 Dec 1996*

---

I've noticed that with all this recent discussion of poets who work in the academy analyzing the academy, and poets who work in the computer field analyzing the academy, that these same poets haven't been discussing the computer industry.

So--Tom, Ron (Bill Luoma maybe too, right?), a question for you. While in many instances I agree with your critique of the academy (I know a slave when I am one), there's seems to be in your posts the suggestion that your own choices regarding economic matters and survival have been better ones. So, tell us about the computer industry. You're not slaves there, I take it? Or at least not slaves to the same degree? I'd be curious to know how your own industry affects your creative life. Why is that choice working for you, if it is? We're NOT talking about the difference between slaves and slave owners, right? Is opportunity there, where you are? For whom?

Please excuse the inability of this modem to "correct" "errors."

Mark Wallace

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362. **jdhollo**  
***Adorno***

*Thu 12 Dec 1996*

---

(Anselm Hollo)

Lost whatever sympathy I ever had for Herr Adorno after coming across his views on jazz (in some issue of October magazine, I think)

Then wrote the following otherwise so far unpublished (and, in view of what Tom Mandel has just told us, excessively kind) petit poeme:

FROM THE JAZZ ARCANA

I'm sorry  
I guess I never listened to the stuff  
past ca. 1925

Please convey  
my particular apologies  
to Mr. Ornette Coleman

Yours from the beyond,  
Theodor W. Adorno

---

But to dig Lieder composed to text by Herr von Schirach (who got his comeuppance from some smart Czech partisans, I believe)... The merde gets pretty deep.

Anselm Hollo

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### 363. **Jeremy F Green** **Re: Adorno and the Nazis**

Thu 12 Dec 1996

---

Apologies to all if this shows up twice--think I dabbled the wrong key last time

*A very hasty (because pressed for time) response to Tom Mandel's post (perhaps just to get the ball rolling...)--*

*Thanks for the reference to the review in Die Musik. I would be very interested to hear what anyone who knows the Adorno bibliography better than I do has to say about this.*

*Treating the attack not simply as ad hominem (which it was), a couple of quick points:*

*--Arendt's record on denunciation is far from spotless--witness her silence vis-a-vis Heidegger's silence.*

*--Adorno's response to Benjamin's Baudelaire piece (letter of 10 Nov.1938) might well be described as bullying (and may indeed have had a very serious effect on Benjamin's work on the Arcades project and his relation to the Institute), but his objections are far from trivial. They raise*



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--Yes, Benjamin was "a genius of [whatever] magnitude" and Adorno, in his later work, is deeply indebted to him (and acknowledges it: see the essay on WB in *Prisms* and sundry comments in *Aesthetic Theory*; and indeed, the famous remark that got this thread going should surely be read in the context of WB's great thesis about culture and barbarism in 'Theses on the Philosophy of History').

--Likening Adorno to Paul de Man seems hazardous indeed, not least because the burden of Adorno's work from *Dialectic of Enlightenment* on (and earlier too, I dare say) was the most sustained and serious attempt to grapple with the implications of the Nazi (and Stalinist) era. (to dismiss all this as 'self-aggrandizing' is simply a refusal to read--which is not to say that Adorno is not also often a pain in the neck to read)

And let me toss out this question (probably rhetorical): doesn't the gesture of removing Adorno from the constellation in which Benjamin's work was written (and should surely be read) constitute a refusal to face the political questions Benjamin raises?

Well, that's my scuffle with the gauntlet Tom Mandel threw down ... who's next?

jfg

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364. **Jeremy F Green**  
**Re: Tom Mandel on Adorno**

Thu 12 Dec 1996

(my messages apparently keep getting etherized rather than tabled, so one more try...)

A very hasty (because pressed for time) response to Tom Mandel's post (perhaps just to get the ball rolling...)--

Thanks for the reference to the review in *Die Musik*. I would be very interested to hear what anyone who knows the Adorno bibliography well has to say about this.

Treating the attack not simply as ad hominem (which it was), a couple of quick points:

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--Yes, Benjamin was "a genius of [whatever] magnitude" and Adorno, in his later work, is deeply indebted to him (and acknowledges it: see the essay on WB in *Prisms* and sundry comments in *Aesthetic Theory*; and indeed, the famous remark that got this thread going should surely be read in the context of WB's great thesis about culture and barbarism in "Theses on the Philosophy of History").

--Likening Adorno to Paul de Man seems hazardous indeed, not least because the burden of Adorno's work from *Dialectic of Enlightenment* on (and earlier too, I dare say) was the most sustained and serious attempt to grapple with the implications of the Nazi (and Stalin) era (to dismiss all this as 'self-aggrandizing' is simply a refusal to read--which is not to say that Adorno is not often a pain in the neck to read)

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Well, that's my scuffle with the gauntlet Tom Mandel threw down ... who's next?

jfg

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365. **steph4848**

**Quartermain/Oppen**

*Thu 12 Dec 1996*

---

Dear Peter Quartermain, Unfortunately I had to miss your talk at the Poetry Center - but, indeed congratulations on the swelling of attention the subject it has caused! I was drawn to your post in which you suggest something to the effect that George was unique - with the exception of some gay men - in his

interest in work by young women - feminists - in the early seventies. (Your post disappeared but I think that's a fair approximation of what you suggested?)

I think that remark really mis-reads the condition of poetry in the Bay Area in the late sixties and early seventies. I want to assume you are familiar with Momo's Press(??) of which I - who am not gay - was the publisher. It was a very robust period - especially in terms of the writing that emerged with the quite wild emergence of various and often angry liberations (feminist, gay men, lesbians, Latino, Black, Asian, etc.) It was a prolific period in terms of large public readings, magazines and books. My magazine Shocks was partly so named on account of all the friction in the air and sought to critically make some sense of it. Momo's as you might know published first books of Beverly Dahlen and Jessica Hagedorn. Across the Bay, Shameless Hussy and The Women's Press collective were publishing first books of Alta, Ntozake and Judy Grahn among others. The new writers made no bones about centering a new politics within the practice of the poem. For women poets who had been shaped by a male dominated anarchist or apolitical poetics, or those who had been involved with a male-dominated-with-queen-attached matrix (New York school?) - the cross over into an activist poetry that directly challenged a variety of social constructs was a dangerous thing to do. Oppen - who in my awareness of him made it part of his life to attend to the young and what was going on - was highly attentive and naturally responsive to the unrest. I think it would have been quite unlike him to have remained oblivious. (He once complimented me in letter of thanks for sending him an issue of Shocks as indeed "shocking"). Indeed I believe he was challenged - and perhaps to a degree threatened by the vigor of what was taking place. Intellectually - as a secular and progressive pluralist - I suspect he was all for it. Emotionally I suspect it probably felt dangerous to him and the world of male centered modernism of which he was still in the weave. But as a responsible elder, one who had partly been put back on the map by the young, I think he didn't shy, "rightly or wrongly", from the paternal role of taking part.

I don't know if you ever read the final "Poetry Reading" issue of Shocks #7-8-9 - about 350 pages long - it includes my own account of readings in the Bay Area from the early sixties into the mid-seventies, as well as accounts by Frances Jaffer, Jessica Hagedorn and Thulani Davis. If you haven't, I think it would help fill out the context of this period of Oppen's life. SPD still has a copies of The Poetry Reading - I'm personally down to a couple. If you are further interested in other issues of Shocks and the history of Momo's Press, the Bancroft Library possesses the entire archive. I look forward to going out to the Poetry Center to see you on tape. & I hope anything I have said here is - out of not being at your talk - not said wrongly, or in ignornace Cheers, Stephen Vincent [REDACTED]

P.S. I would also like to add that in addition to George's interest, there were poets, of which I would include myself, who were neither gay, women, or persons of color who were actively responding to and shaped by the events at hand (Ron Silliman, for one).

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366. **Sarah Hreha**  
**Re: Paul Carroll/Big Table**  
*Thu 12 Dec 1996*

---

There is a copy of Big Table #1 at my local, expensive rare books shop here in Mpls, or at least it was there last time I looked. Anyone interested?

Sarah

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367. **Aldon L. Nielsen**  
**Re: mouth breather**  
*Thu 12 Dec 1996*

---

Heading for D.C, and signing off poetics for a bit -- Will check in with archives upon return to see where this Adorno conversation has gone --

Hope everybody has a good break over New Year's, though I know some have to work even that day --

Will see bunches of y'all at MLA -- and hope to be able to read afterwards the papers of those I miss because of listening to even more papers at same time --

blessings, unambiguously, to all, and to all a good night

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368. **tmandel**  
**ad hominem ad nauseam**  
*Thu 12 Dec 1996*

---

I'm responding to Jeremy Green's post which he cc'd to me back o' the channel.

To take a few particulars first. I didn't liken Adorno to de Man or even liken the two situations to each other. I said I thought it was "instructive to compare" the situations of the two men. The difference between their works is an entirely other matter, and one is entitled to whatever opinion/position one wishes on either body of writing as a whole.

Likening Arendt's silence on Heidegger to Adorno's behavior, on the other hand, really won't do. For one thing, it's irrelevant to Adorno's behavior; for

another, it's not altogether accurate (tho certainly partly so), as anyone reading Arendt's correspondence will understand. I had several conversations with Arendt about Heidegger, by the way, and honesty compels me to say that she did not face the issues very clearly in her relations with me (let it be said that I was a lowly grad student and she may not have felt I'd be able to keep up my side of the discourse, yet.... In any case, her spotlessness is not an issue. Unless Jeremy can find in her history a hint of collaboration at any level whatever. Don't think so.

I don't think either that one can or I did "remove Adorno from the constellation in which Benjamin's work was written...." That would require extra-historical powers beyond my possession during this lifetime, maybe next time around. I don't think as highly of Adorno as Jeremy seems to; I don't think highly of him at all.

In case you hadn't guessed. Which brings me to the most important point I want to make. Yes, as Jeremy remarks, my post on Theodor Wiesengrund-Adorno and his attempt to ingratiate himself with the Nazis by praising Baldur von Shirach's fascist poetry, and his smarmy attempt 30 years later to excuse himself was an ad hominem attack.

It was so for two reasons. These are my beliefs; that's the first reason. And since I received tenure long ago and on another planet I am unmotivated to suppress my beliefs.

That's obvious. Second reason is the more important one. I am not an "expert" on Adorno; it's not my profession. I am not an "expert" on the Holocaust, though I have a substantial connection historically with that phenomenon. And, I am not an expert either on the history of Nazism and the endlessly variable relations to it of individuals alive during its sway. I don't, either, want to be drawn into a debate on the subject or related subjects or on Adorno's work. I don't have anything useful to say about it. It seemed best to me to foreground the revulsion his behavior causes in me, as this is the only authentic relation I have to the subject. It is not a relation that requires any corrective.

A post which presented facts and references and combined them with my personal point of view seemed the mostly likely tactic to get the material out while getting me out of the picture.

December 25 will be the anniversary of the death of Emmanuel Levinas should we wish to mention the name of a philosopher in the context of these exchanges.

Tom Mandel

\*\*\*\*\*

Tom Mandel \* 2927 Tilden St. NW

Washington DC 20008 \* [REDACTED]

vox: [REDACTED] \* fax [REDACTED]

\*\*\*\*\*

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369. **David Dowker**

***The Alterran Poetry Assemblage***

Thu 12 Dec 1996

---

ANNOUNCING new electronic poetry journal:

(((((((((THE ALTERRAN POETRY ASSEMBLAGE))))))))))

1.0

Adeena Karasick, Andrew Joron, Lisa Samuels, Robert Mitterthal, Sheila Murphy, John Noto, Hank Lazer, Charles Alexander, William Fuller, Laura Moriarty, David Dowker, Christine Stewart, Caroline Bergvall.

Editor: David Dowker

[REDACTED]

<http://www.io.org/~djd/alterran.html>

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370. **George Bowering**

***Re: Unorthodox Westerns***

Thu 12 Dec 1996

---

Leoni's Clint E. trilogy were the first  
>westerns I ever saw;

That's not possible. If you didnt see the classics and duds that predated the spaghettis, then you didnt see the spaghettis, because they were contingent on one's being familiar with the genre.

By the way, I was talking with Charles Watts today, mentionmed that in the oater thread no one m,entioned, as I recall, "Ride the High Country," which is usually mentioned by oater fans really soon. Besides having old Randolph Scott, Hollywood's greatest-ever star, it had Joel McRea. Charles wondered why no one had mentioned hgim, a truly great star, and a nose at least as good as Malden's or W.C. Fields's.

George Bowering.

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Vancouver, B.C.,  
Canada V6M 1P4

fax: [REDACTED]  
e-mail: [REDACTED]

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371. **Doruleť D Ana**

**Re: Wild taste**

*Fri 13 Dec 1996*

---

Kali, would you please explain a bit more about narrative/story in the context you are using? do you see it like an individual prism through which the world is viewed, and than recreated IT into a narrative/poetic? Is story=narrative=poetic? I think this is a fascinating subject and would like to understand your pov better.

And Gwyn (hi Gwyn;), NO I don't think animals can have a story, but than I have to understand what it is meant by story in this context and after, do a study on animals to verify the hypothesis:-)

Ana Doina

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372. **Thomas Bell**

**Re: Wild taste**

*Fri 13 Dec 1996*

---

Even though this thread is about to fade and manu are departing or going on vacation, the broad concepts here of story/narrative/poetics with the injection of animals does raise some problems I think. From an evolutionary/adaptive perspective an animal's (including human qua animal) story/prism is a way of quickly and nonconsciously taking a reading for possible threat and to make meaning of what might or might not have meaning. Premature closure (in a Gestalt sense) can easily lead to problematic errors in cognition (e.g. self-attribution of blame for inexplicable disaster or trauma). This is quite a distance from my hope for a poetics? tom bell

*At 10:04 PM 12/12/96 PST, Doruleť D Ana wrote:*

*Kali,*

*would you please explain a bit more about narrative/story in the context you are using?*

*do you see it like an individual prism through which the world is viewed, and than recreated IT into a narrative/poetic? Is story=narrative=poetic?*

*I think this is a fascinating subject and would like to understand your pov better.*

*And Gwyn (hi Gwyn;), NO I don't think animals can have a story, but than I have to understand what it is meant by story in this context and after, do a study on animals to verify the hypothesis:-)*

*Ana Doina*

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373. **Peter Quartermain**

***Re: Odradek as tort***

*Fri 13 Dec 1996*

---

George, that's a great idea. But will they find out what \_I\_ find out on the last two pages?

>

>Yeah, PQ, it seems hard to believe that the Carcanet edition was publisht 1985!

>

>Hey, if you DO teach it, I am going to tell all your students what you find out in the last 2 pages!

>

>

>

>

>George Bowering.

>

>2499 West 37th Ave.,

>Vancouver, B.C.,

>Canada V6M 1P4

>

>fax: [REDACTED]

>e-mail: [REDACTED]

>

>

+++++

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Voice and fax: [REDACTED]



Fri 13 Dec 1996

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on the subject: if a little girl watches Clueless before reading Jane Austen, has she actually seen Clueless, or will she be forced to watch that cutesy-wootsy film again in college? If one reads Hart Crane before the metaphysicals, will one be compelled to reread The Bridge, lest the Crane experience be wiped from the mind?

Ah, well. Perhaps I had a bit too much opaline back there in the saloon with Sheriff Francis McThompson. But let me say this:

When it comes to westerns, I can appreciate your insistence on a well-rounded education, George. But this "you didnt see the spaghettis" argument is making me feel like some guy in one of those 50's time-travel- what-if scenarios, in which Joe Foont travels back to the stone age, inadvertently steps on a butterfly, and returns to the present to find a trained earwig elected president. (Come to think of it, the earwig part is absolutely true.) So if you'll lend me your Duke Hondo Time- Twister Glasses, perhaps I'll be better able to concede your point.

Thintherely,

Rob Hardin:

Fantoma's Fanboy. Catfight Epicurean. Unseen Legend.

(Intermission)

Act Three

Coucho: I can see your point.

Lepro: Thank you.

Coucho: I like the way you part your hair around it.

Kinko: 'ey, I don't get-a the point, so I can't see-a you head.

Coucho: May I point you in the direction of an optometrist, or perhaps an animal husbandry specialist? Or perhaps you'd prefer to be an animal husband, in which case, let me present Lady Reguthermeyer.

Lady Reguthermeyer (indignantly): \*Well!\*

Kinko: I'm-a not at all well, 'cause now I can't see-a \*neither one-a\* you heads.

Coucho: Four heads are better than three. When you grow a frontal lobe, ring me, Sister, and I'll consider this a quartet.

Kinko: Ah, yer screwy! If-a I can't see-a you head, how'm I supposed to read-a the music?

Coucho: I can see you perfectly well, Birthday Boy, and your pants are by fruit-of the-loon.

(Curtain. Hisses. A massive refund follows.)

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

375. **Patrick Foley**

**Re: Wild taste**

Fri 13 Dec 1996

---

*From an evolutionary/adaptive perspective an animal's (including human qua animal) story/prism is a way of quickly and nonconsciously taking a reading for possible threat and to make meaning of what might or might not have meaning. Premature closure (in a Gestalt sense) can easily lead to problematic errors in cognition (e.g. self-attribution of blame for inexplicable disaster or trauma). This is quite a distance from my hope for a poetics?*

Tom,

Good point -- though I'm not quite sure which way you're slanting it, on account of that question mark at the end. This is what I was getting at with my doctor story -- missing symptoms because you already "know" what's wrong -- and the more general point that sometimes people resist for very good reasons the tendency to create narrative out of experience, those reasons often having to do with accurate cognition. The description/explanation split I referred to, and which I get mainly from Wittgenstein's emphasis on same. (The example of Foucault, from my misspent youth, probably also influences my view of this, the way he used to say that confinement just "happened" and that his work was a description of that "event", without offering anything like an explanation.)

Funny thing of course that the example I've made up I present as a story with causal relations: the doctor made the misdiagnosis because he didn't perceive certain symptoms because he had a preconceived idea of the patient's illness. What can we deduce from my mode of presentation (or Wylan's noting that my long post had lots of stories in it, as this one does)? I don't know. I seem to have some distrust of narrative, some, maybe less than I have trust in it but \_some\_ -- now do I have that distrust because of some narrative I've bought into? a narrative like this one about the doctor? or like yours, Tom?

Here's another story. Interesting episode of "Frontline" something over a year ago I think in which they took on the question of the effects television violence. Some material there already for a discussion of narrative, but what really interested me was the "dangerous world" theory some professor offered, that because of the dynamics of tv news, the coverage of crime, etc., many people come to believe the world is a more dangerous place than it really is. And my corollaries to this theory were that, believing this, people stay home, abandoning public space to the criminals, and thus in fact making the world more dangerous. It seemed to me there may have been a loss of the sort of

street life you see in movies from the fifties and earlier, when good & bad shared the public space.

This has to do with paranoia. Funny thing -- this ties in with your story here -- a friend of mine, Mark Faller, suggested that evolution might actually reward paranoia, a hypersensitivity to threats, etc., and that we may be one of the species in which this occurred. Food for thought.

It would be interesting to consider narrative and causality and the ascription of motives. (I can't resist quoting this, Phil Dick said paranoia is not when you think your boss is out to get you -- he probably is anyway -- it's when you think your boss's phone is out to get you.) The problem of "other minds". The pathetic fallacy. All these things tie together. Aw hell I'm starting to sound nietzschean after all these years again, because in the back of my mind I want to say that belief in causality derives from an ascription of motive or purpose to objects, the universe, whatever -- and that's a lot of crap.

Looping back -- on that other poetry list a while back, there was mention of Forster's distinction (in that little book on the novel) between story (and then ... and then ...), mere sequence, and plot. The boy died and then his mother died -- story. The boy died and then his mother died of grief -- plot. Descriptions in sequence are narrative, but not yet explanation, story but not yet plot. Maybe. And a scientist or a doctor or a poet can try to stop at mere sequence as an attempt at more reliable (or something) cognition. (Another tangent?! Frank O'Hara's "I do this, I do that" poems.)

I'd like to do better than this. Your post raises key questions, Tom, about making meaning of what may or may not have meaning. I used to try to imagine what it was like to live in the Middle Ages, when everything might carry some meaning, when everything could be a sign requiring interpretation. We seem to live with meaning scarcity as people other times and other places have lived with a meaning glut. You have to wonder about language, the brute physicality of signs, bearers for us sometimes of meaning. What a shift from believing language itself is natural because God gave it to us, and believing it natural because it evolved. An emergence of meaning out of meaninglessness, where before there was nothing outside the universe of meaning, the physical universe itself a sort of language. The sort of cognition I've been commending, the scrupulous scientist resisting premature closure, that's a drive toward meaninglessness, or at least a resistance to meaning. Maybe it's wrong to talk about language at all in this way -- something about all this is starting to feel a little screwy. But I always end up here when I think about language, it's just a mystery to me, never really makes sense.

And yet there's faith, as I posted a while ago, and I have some kind of faith in it, and here I am confidently using language. And thinking it's no coincidence that

in my little tract on the philosophy of science I mentioned parenthetically the belief that the universe is orderly and predictable as massively undersupported by the available evidence (by definition really) and yet a tacit premise in all scientific argument. Evolution again, adaptive understanding? Or nietzschean again, the idea that we might be imposing this order on our experience. (Strange, his intersection with and antipathy toward Darwin.) I don't know where to go with this -- why I try not to think about the big stuff too much anymore.

But for poetry -- maybe there is a sort of double vision, to perceive the brute sign, its sound its shape, as well as the meaning it carries, and also the usual contexts of that meaning, and the other meanings that sign can carry, and so on. Multiple, rather than just double, perception. And for the scientist too, who observes carefully in order to find the right explanation eventually. For that, you need only turn to Kafka's maxim that all sins originate in impatience. That one's close to my heart. What I'd like to be thinking about, instead of the unwieldy issues here, are these questions of discipline, attention -- good word, recently discussed a bit here -- care. "No where in man," wrote Charles Olson, "is there room for carelessness." That one's close to my heart too.

Enough for now, too much even,  
Pat

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376. **David Carl**

**Re: POETICS Digest - 11 Dec 1996 to 12 Dec 1996**

Fri 13 Dec 1996

---

*my post on Theodor*

*Wiesengrund-Adorno and his attempt to ingratiate himself with the Nazis by praising Baldur von Shirach's fascist poetry, and his smarmy attempt 30 years later to excuse himself was an ad hominem attack.*

*It was so for two reasons. These are my beliefs; that's the first reason. And since I received tenure long ago and on another planet I am unmotivated to suppress my beliefs.*

does anyone believe that actually considering Adorno's more significant works (besides an isolated review, of which he has written volumes, and a single questionable letter) might also be legitimate criteria to consider in evaluating him; and more importantly, does anybody really care what kind of a person Adorno was? what does that have to do with the significance of Dialectic of Enlightenment or Negative Dialectics. Surely we don't have to rehash the Pound debate that raged on this list 6 months ago or so.

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fax: [REDACTED]  
e-mail: [REDACTED]

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378. **George Bowering**  
**Re: To have knocked an Adorno, this is not vanity**  
*Fri 13 Dec 1996*

---

*Adorno's "jazz" commentary a good example for our recent discussion, which I will not here rehash -- It's clear that whatever else Adorno knew, and he knew quite a bit about quite a lot I still believe, he had little technical knowledge of jazz and the playing thereof --*

Well, those Europeans. I mean, how many times have you heard that a serious composer has introduced jazz inflections (or folk) into his composition, and you listen to it and wonder what he thinks jazz might be?

Or Robert Duncan. Once he told me and someone else that he had been listening to jazz, and was newly interested in incorporating jazz rhythms or something. I was all agog over Charles Tyler and Marion Brown at the time, so I asked him what jazz, for instance. He said, oh you know, Noel Coward!

George Bowering.

2499 West 37th Ave.,  
Vancouver, B.C.,  
Canada V6M 1P4

fax: [REDACTED]  
e-mail: [REDACTED]

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379. **9448721p**  
**art&language**  
*Fri 13 Dec 1996*

---

Re: Bennett's request for information on A&L:

This'll be vague, coming straight off the top of my head but, Charles Harrison, Terry Atkinson and another bloke whose name I forget from A&L around '66 (possibly two years later?) and all work at the art college in Coventry. Can probably be regarded as the first English conceptualists; they begin an eponymous journal which publishes their own articles and articles by overseas artists with whom they establish contact, esp. Joseph Kosuth and Sol Le Witt. Their writings draw on Wittgensteinian theory of language and philosophies of mind, with strong commitment to Marxism, and, among other things, work to

theorise the extension of the art object along all axes. Early seventies, the college appoints a new principal whose first act in office is to sack all the A&L people.

Atkinson breaks with the others in, I think, '74. (I have a strange account by TA himself of the acrimonious split, to do with what he sees as a stultifying hierarchy emerging in the group, with Harrison and acolytes as the managerial class, as they work on their big Indexing project. Atkinson retreats more and more to his own studio and begins to identify secretly with Rimbaud as a rebellious precursor, then starts working on a series of figurative/landscape works set in WW1 - what he sees as the polar opposite of the Indexing...)

Harrison is an author, editor, reviewer (he reviewed Thomas Crow's new book in the latest Art Forum) and has published a book of essays on A&L. Atkinson is still a practising artist and occasionally writes (usually polemical) pieces for British art magazines, criticizing Harrison's "revisionist" account of the A&L thing, or having a go at the neo-conceptualists who are revising A&L's ground-breaking work in the direction of the market.

Can't fill you in on how they linked up with Red Krayola but I do know all the words to Portrait of V.I. Lenin in the Style of Jackson Pollock, Part One (the standout track from the KANGAROO album and named after an actual series of paintings by A&L).

I have some material at home which, when consulted, could settle the dates and allow me to expand on any of this if people are interested.

robin

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380. **Ron Silliman**  
***Response to Mark (et al)***

*Fri 13 Dec 1996*

---

Mark,

I don't think that you should read into my comments (or Tom's, or Bill's, or James Sherry's or Kit Robinson's or Bob Harrison's or Alan Bernheimer's or Colleen Lookingbill's or Barry Cox's or any writer involved in the information industry (nice oxymoron, that)) that the computer industry is in any way "better" than the academy. It is raw capitalism plain and simple. Whenever I am with any of the above, we tend to be as (or more) harsh about it than we are the academy. However, it does have its rewards. The pay, the toys, being able to work in a field that changes rapidly and seldom bores.... Being raw capital, the politics of it tend to be straightforward, though there are exceptions to that.



However, there is a privilege that the academy (I hate that generalization, but can't think of anything better at 7 AM) takes on with respect to poetry (and thus this list) that I think tends to irk at least me. Certainly the evidence of the 20th century has been that cities, not schools, have been the significant sites for literature, and the 19th, 18th, 17th centuries, etc., were no different. Better to be in DC, NY, SF, Boston, San Diego than to attend, say, Stanford, Buffalo, Iowa City or wherever. Not that schools don't have a value, but their importance will never even remotely approach their self importance.

Case in point: there is, in the current issue of the MLA publication, *The Profession*, which is sort of the theoretical journal of the meat market that's about to hit DC, on working in the computer industry by somebody who has been out in the job market for all of one year. There are literally thousands of ex-grad students, PhDs, etc, outside of the academy, many of whom have been that way for 3 or 4 decades (the CEO of my company was an English major who started with a summer job as a secretary, then became a programmer with no experience whatsoever, and just forgot to go back to grad school), but this is who they found. While I'm sure the theory may have been that he was at or near the level of most job-seeking grad students today, his freshness off the reservation really shows. His motivation (better surfing in San Diego than in Iowa) says it all.

-----

Aside on the novels of Harry Matthews. There is a member of this list (whom I shall not reveal, though he may choose to do so himself) who once upon a time was employed editing the *Collected Novels of HM* when at, I believe, MacMillan. However, it was slow going and the folks upstairs did not really think it was going to be a best seller, so got on his case to get some other books out. One little item that he did choose, just to get them off his back, was a "Christmas item" called *\_Jonathon Livingston Seagull\_*. Later, when he left the company, the book was homeless until Random House picked it up.

Here's a question, thinking of Matthews, Calvino, Queneau, Roubaud: what determines who among the Oulipolians (Oulipuddlians?) became "popular," got translated, etc.?

Another question: Can anyone tell me what the origin of the phrase "the ghost in the machine" happens to be?

Thanks,

Ron Silliman

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381. **Michael Boughn**

**Re: Wild taste**

Fri 13 Dec 1996

---

*I'd like to do better than this. Your post raises key questions, Tom, about making meaning of what may or may not have meaning. I used to try to imagine what it was like to live in the Middle Ages, when everything might carry some meaning, when everything could be a sign requiring interpretation. We seem to live with meaning scarcity as people other times and other places have lived with a meaning glut.*

This is particularly interesting here in terms of a recent reaction against Cronenberg's *Crash* in various newspapers. It is now being dismissed in long articles for being *boring*, and whatever excitement and acclaim the movie has generated is now attributed to narratives being generated by reviewers "drunk from the potent cocktail of advertising" blah blah blah.

What becomes rapidly obvious is that "boring" means in violation of Aristotelian narrative structure which assumes not just the telling of an event but a specific organization of the telling, one that generates suspense, rising tensions, catharsis, etc. Cronenberg uses the narrative form of the pornographic movie as the pop culture generic structure he hangs his images on--one sex scene follows another with the focus always on the spectacle of the bodies, not the connection between the scenes.

It's a poetics of the image in which meaning hovers without proceeding. An early image for instance lovingly shows Spader/Ballard's severely wrecked leg encased in a cage of stainless steel and leather with large screws penetrating the flesh. And then there's the car wash scene, which I won't go into here, but involves an intricate and brutal human voyeurism/eroticism encased within a machine that itself is encased within another machine that is "making love" to it. It becomes unclear whether the eroticism of the machines is mirroring the human or whether the human is mirroring the machines it is encased within. It would take a poem to match what Cronenberg does visually, because only a poem could unleash the unresolvable simultaneity, the almost overwhelming and threatening power of meaning hovering around the spectacle.

I think this is where I'd argue with you, Pat. We, too, live in a time where everything carries meaning, where everything is a sign requiring interpretation, but what they have to tell us is so sinister that we compose lives in resistance to reading them. We prefer the narrative that supplies us with the quick social fix. Whereas a sensitivity and alertness to what WYSTAN calls our violent tastes could, at the very least, cut us loose into some pretty scary territory.

Mike



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382. **Fred Muratori**  
***Ghost in the Machine***

*Fri 13 Dec 1996*

---

Re:

*Another question: Can anyone tell me what the origin of the phrase "the ghost in the machine" happens to be?*

*Thanks,*

*Ron Silliman*

Ron (and others who might be interested...)

The phrase "ghost in the machine" comes from Gilbert Ryle's 1949 book *The Concept of Mind*, in which he discusses "the dogma of the Ghost in the Machine" which maintains that "...there are mechanical causes of corporeal movements and mental causes of corporeal movements (p. 22)." Lest anyone think I'm an expert on *nous*, this info comes from the OED, to which I, as a librarian, have quick and easy access. My initial impulse in answering this question was to yell "Sting!"

\*\*\*\*\*

Fred Muratori

"Certain themes are incurable."

(██████)

Reference Services Division

- Lyn Hejinian

Olin \* Kroch \* Uris Libraries

Cornell University

Ithaca, NY 14853

WWW: <http://fmref.library.cornell.edu/spectra.html>

\*\*\*\*\*

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383. **Hank Lazer**

***Re: MLA***

*Fri 13 Dec 1996*

---

Poetics folks going to MLA--

You are invited to drop by The University of Alabama Press booth (#1209 -- open 9-6 12/28 & 12/29; 9-1 on 12/30). Curtis Clark, new Senior Editor, will be there. He's handling the literary criticism area for the press, and he'd be delighted to meet you, talk with you about ongoing projects.

Hank Lazer

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384. **tmandel**  
**Odradek Stadium**

*Fri 13 Dec 1996*

---

The omnibus volume Harper published in I think 72 including all three of Harry's novels to that date (The Conversions, Tlooth, and Sinking of the Odradek Stadium) was \*my\* idea. I suggested it to Harry's then agent and to Macmillan where I was then working (having dropped out of grad school and moved to NY). Naturally, Macmillan didn't get it, and the idea was then proposed to an editor then working at Harpers (McCullough? -- cannot bring her name out of the mist, sorry) and who had been interested in the New York school -- she'd published Great Balls of Fire (Padgett), Space (Coolidge) and Lewis Macadam's first book (again I can't bring it forth).

I had originally called his agent because I was looking for a copy of Tlooth -- having loaned mine into some friendly whirlwind or other.

Altho Macmillan didn't publish the volume, my proposal led to meeting Harry. A good thing.

Tom

\*\*\*\*\*

Tom Mandel \* 2927 Tilden St. NW  
Washington DC 20008 \* [REDACTED]  
vox: [REDACTED] \* fax [REDACTED]

\*\*\*\*\*

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385. **henry gould**  
**Re: Ghost in the Machine**

*Fri 13 Dec 1996*

---

I may have missed earlier comments on this thread, but I've always connected "ghost in the machine" with the dramaturgical technique of deus ex machina. Which maybe also has a prior mythological or religious basis. - H. Gould

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386. **Charles Alexander**  
**Re: Paul Carroll/Big Table**  
*Fri 13 Dec 1996*

---

At 07:03 PM 12/12/96 -0500, you wrote:

>There is a copy of Big Table #1 at my local, expensive rare books shop here in  
>Mpls, or at least it was there last time I looked. Anyone interested?

>

>Sarah

And a nice copy of the very rare Letters by Robert Duncan at my local used/rare book shop here in Tucson. Actually not "my" shop, it's Larry McMurtry's shop. At \$250, too expensive for me. But if anyone is interested, I could reserve it for them.

charles alexander

e-mail back channel to [REDACTED]

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387. **amato**  
**Re: Unorthodox Westerns**  
*Fri 13 Dec 1996*

---

nice to be back alive, with a new floppy drive, to boot...

not to even attempt to steal thunder from rob hardin aka fantoma's fanboy catfight epicurean unseen legend -- but, uhm, george, i did in fact mention \*ride the high country\* (way back on 2 december)... there's been so many posts on this thread that it's just difficult as hell not to miss something... still, i wouldn't want you to think that nobody around here had called attention to this latter... what i like about this flick esp. is the mix of villainy and loyalty represented by scott's character, and good ole joel is excellent as usual... and there are some darker undercurrents in the film that seem to be only hinted at (i suspect the cutting room floor here)...

i think rob's right, though, george, even though i do understand what you're getting at... sure, you miss a valuable dimension of leone, say, w/o having seen the ford stuff (and again, w/o having seen kurosawa---\*a fistful of dollars\* is at times a scene-for-scene remake of \*yojimbo\*, albeit different in technique)... on the other hand, there's something to be said for NOT picking up on those references (if you will), for doing the historical thing in reverse...

this, you might say, is an advantage of the present vis-a-vis the past... though of course one might wanna be wise about such retro-viewings...

best,

joe

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388. **amato**

***Re: Wild taste***

*Fri 13 Dec 1996*

---

along the lines that patrick and tom are moving -- esp. the question of evolution and meaning -- i can't recommend strongly enough richard powers' novel from a few years ago, *\_the gold bug variations\_*... i know of no piece of writing that pushes the language/dna analogy further, and with more emphasis on narrative as a correlative development...

joe

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389. **amato**

***Re: Response to Mark (et al)***

*Fri 13 Dec 1996*

---

like ron, i too read that *\_profession 96\_* piece on surfing and tech. writing with two eyebrows raised... it's not only that the writer comes off as green, it's that related controversies are mooted throughout---such as those having to do with whether doing the work the writer describes really requires a phud in english, finally...

i think not...

and sooner or later, but probably sooner, the number of such tech. writing jobs available for phuds in english will probably taper off... b/c the number of managerial jobs will taper off... in fact, this is what's being proposed in that piece---entry into the managerial ranks, via a phud in english... the phud manages other writers, writing, etc... which is, again, to ignore what the tech. writing field constitutes, esp. post wwii, in the way of corporate-academic collusion (it's one thing to *\*do\** tech. writing, whatever it is, it's another to permit corporations to dictate how tech. writing will be taught)...

in any case, reading through this issue of *\_profession\_* constitutes a good introduction to just how at odds with ourselves we academics can be... the mag. begins with "literary study in the transnational university," j. hillis miller's gloss on that book i mentioned some time ago, bill readings' *\_the university in ruins\_* (in which miller skillfully underwrites and understates readings' notion that the university is becoming a transnational *\*corporation\**); continues through some nice if somewhat obvious ideas by leroy searle on educating students about education; offers up some real polemic from cary nelson re how to recast the

mla (a refreshing, if a bit insular view of the profession); provides us with john guillory's critique of "preprofessionalism" in grad. studies (which would be ok were it not for the fact that what guillory describes as, finally, a "phantasmic deformation of professional desire" is ALSO a very real, very programmatic trend in academe, as indicated by the growing number of \*preprofessional\* degrees on, uhm, my campus)...

there is some value, perhaps, in discussing self-loathing in this context... academics and intellectuals can be damned good at it (as can certain ethnicities)... engineers, the crowd with which i used to hang, have a peculiarly self-aggrandizing self-conception... this is largely owing, as i see it, to their relative inability or unwillingness to contend with the broader social/cultural context of their work... robert pinsky has a nice piece in the recent *\_doubletake\_* on precisely this phenomenon, "nerds, technocrats, and enlightened spirits" (there's also a piece on poetry i found incredibly retro, by the poetry editorial adviser, edward hirsch, "how to read these poems"... UGH)...

anyway, *\_profession 96\_* would make an excellent stocking stuffer for those of you with academic friends...

hurry while the supply lasts!...

etc...

joe

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390. **Steven Clay**  
***Granary Books open hours***

*Fri 13 Dec 1996*

---

Those in the New York City area might be interested to know that Granary Books will be open to the public for several days in December, specifically:

Friday Dec 13

Saturday Dec 14

Thursday Dec 19

Friday Dec 20

Saturday Dec 21

Noon till 7:00 pm

Along with recent Granary publications (Robert Creeley & Alex Katz, Kurt Schwitters [translated by Jerome Rothenberg] & Barbara Fahrner, Ligorano/Reese, Johanna Drucker, Kim Lyons & Ed Epping, J. Rothenberg & David Guss' anthology 'The Book, Spiritual Instrument' and more) we have a substantial stock of hard-to-find related materials: art, artists' books,

poetry, book art (documentation & catalogs.) (Wide price range.)  
Definitely worth a look.  
Granary is located at  
568 Broadway #403 (at the corner of Prince St. in Soho, directly across the  
street from the Downtown Guggenheim)  
New York 10012  
[REDACTED]

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391. **aerialedge**

***More on Group Reading at MLA***

*Fri 13 Dec 1996*

---

We've got a larger space for the Bridge Street/Aerial group reading at MLA.  
Following the book party for Madame Perloff we will be going around the  
corner (3 doors away) to a conference room for 100 at the Four Seasons. Yes,  
there will be a bar, also a microphone. So, all ya'll come to Bridge Street  
between 7:30 & 8:30. If you're late come by the store for directions for where to  
go in the Four Seasons. Readers should expect seven minutes each. It's

Friday Dec 27th @ 7:30

Publication celebration for *\_Wittgenstein's Ladder\_* by Marjorie Perloff.

& then at 8:30

Group Reading

Charles Bernstein, Lee Ann Brown, Norma Cole, Peter Gizzi, Loss Glazier, Carla  
Harryman, Hank Lazer, Andrew Levy, Bill Luoma, Douglas Messerli, Jennifer  
Moxley, A.L. Nielsen, Ted Pearson, Bob Perelman, Juliana Spahr, Barrett  
Watten, & Elizabeth Willis.

Bridge Street Books, 2814 Pennsylvania Ave NW, Washington, DC ph  
[REDACTED]

Bridge Street Books is in the first block of Georgetown as you're coming from  
the direction of the White House, between 28th & 29th streets NW. The closest  
metro stop is Foggy Bottom, about a 5 minute walk.

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392. **Pierre Joris**

***[Fwd: Re: Return of the Real: Exposing the Global Surveillance  
System (fwd)]***

*Fri 13 Dec 1996*

---

This is a multi-part message in MIME format.



--

=====

pierre joris 6 madison place albany ny 12202  
tel/fax [REDACTED] email: [REDACTED]  
<http://writing.upenn.edu/epc/authors/joris/>  
<http://www.albany.edu/~tm0900/nomad.html>

-----

"A book has to be the axe for the frozen sea inside us.  
This I believe."

(Kafka, Letter to Oskar Pollack 27 Jan 1904)

=====

id JAA27360; Fri, 13 Dec 1996 09:46:50 -0800  
Date: Fri, 13 Dec 1996 09:46:49 -0800 (PST)  
From: { brad brace } <[REDACTED]>  
Subject: Re: Return of the Real: Exposing the Global Surveillance System (fwd)  
To: [REDACTED]  
Sender: [REDACTED]  
Reply-To: [REDACTED]

[snip]...

Designed and coordinated by NSA, the ECHELON system is used to intercept ordinary e-mail, fax, telex, and telephone communications carried over the world's telecommunications networks. Unlike many of the electronic spy systems developed during the Cold War, ECHELON is designed primarily for non-military targets: governments, organizations, businesses, and individuals in virtually every country. It potentially affects every person communicating between (and sometimes within) countries anywhere in the world.

The ECHELON system is not designed to eavesdrop on a particular individual's e-mail or fax link. Rather, the system works by indiscriminately intercepting very large quantities of communications and using computers to identify and extract messages of interest from the mass of unwanted ones. A chain of secret interception facilities has been established around the world to tap into

all the major components of the international telecommunications networks. Some monitor communications satellites, others land-based communications networks, and others radio communications. ECHELON links together all these facilities, providing the US and its allies with the ability to intercept a large proportion of the communications on the planet.

<http://mediafilter.org/caq>

<http://www.worldmedia.com/caq>

\*\* End of text from cdp:covertaction \*\*

-----26805A695346--

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393. **robert drake**

***Re: Granary Books open hours--forwarded msg***

*Fri 13 Dec 1996*

---

*Those in the New York City area might be interested to know that Granary Books will be open to the public for several days in December, specifically:*

*Friday Dec 13*

*Saturday Dec 14*

*Thursday Dec 19*

*Friday Dec 20*

*Saturday Dec 21*

*Noon till 7:00 pm*

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*Granary is located at*

*568 Broadway #403 (at the corner of Prince St. in Soho, directly across the street from the Downtown Guggenheim)*

*New York 10012*



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394. **acgold01**

**UK events**

Fri 13 Dec 1996

---

Alan Golding  
Prof. of English, Univ. of Louisville  
[REDACTED]; [REDACTED]

To my UK friends and listmates:

Anything (readings, gatherings, talks) happening over there in the Dec. 31-Jan. 10 period? I know this is pretty much \*the\* deadest time of the year, along with August, but I thought I'd ask; I'll be over for a visit between those dates.

Alan

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395. **Tosh**

**Re: Granary Books open hours--forwarded msg**

Fri 13 Dec 1996

---

*Along with recent Granary publications (Robert Creeley & Alex Katz, Kurt Schwitters [translated by Jerome Rothenberg] & Barbara Fahrner,*

Is there a new Kurt Schwitters book out?

tosh

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396. **Jeremy F Green**

**Re: ad hominem ad nauseam**

Fri 13 Dec 1996

---

Rushed and random as ever, I'm afraid, but here goes:

-- apologies to all for the repetition of my response to Tom Mandel's post on Adorno--lurker's ineptitude

-- there was absolutely no suggestion intended that Arendt's record was marked by collaboration; as to what she says about Adorno in the correspondence with Jaspers, I've yet to make it to the library, but am indebted to Tom for the reference and for the information about the review in question

-- I was not intending to be "corrective" of Tom's revulsion, nor was I trying to draw him into a debate in which he does not wish to participate (the backchanneling was, again, a matter of having fumbs for thingers). I took it that he posted the information and his opinion to prompt serious debate--at

least among those who are interested in Adorno and the issues of aesthetics and politics (which are often rehearsed on this list). For this reason, I was concerned that the ad hominem attack would simply result in a complete refusal to read Adorno and engage in such debate. The key question, it seems to me, is how these revelations--and I'd be very interested to have more info. (on the list or backchannel)--should affect the understanding of Adorno's work. Does the work itself, in the thirties and later, have a collaborationist agenda? This would be very tough to prove, I think, but the question remains to be argued out. And even if it were to be demonstrated, would this mean that the significant post-War work is no longer of interest? As a result, the comparison with de Man does not seem instructive to me (ok, "likening" was careless, but instructive comparisons are not formed on the basis of unlike things). Again, this remains to be argued (no, Tom, I'm not trying to draw you into the whole unwelcome business again); at present, it is no more than innuendo.

-- no argument, though, about the dogmatism (and racism) of the jazz writing (which others have mentioned). It's curious that some of his rabid opinions on jazz were published under the pseudonym "Hektor Rottweiler"--one almost suspects (contrary to all evidence) that the guy had a sense of humor. (As several critics have pointed out, however, his writings on the dialectics of Schoenberg's work in fact apply remarkably well to the development of jazz).

Anyway, that's more than enough from me

jfg

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397. **Gabrielle Welford**  
**Re: VOICE YOUR SUPPORT (fwd)**  
*Fri 13 Dec 1996*

---

Another view on Serbia. gab. (Tell me if this is inundating & too annoying)

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

Date: Thu, 12 Dec 1996 03:55:11 -1000

From: Kim Elliott <[REDACTED]>

I thought this might be of interest to people following the demonstrations in Serbia.

writes:

> > From [REDACTED] Tue Dec 10 20:46:34 1996

> > Reply-To: Tribunal Watch List <[REDACTED]>

> > From: Vanja Filipovic <[REDACTED]>

> > Subject: Re: The Third Option in Serbia

> > To: [REDACTED]  
> >  
> > Dear Tribunal Watchers,  
> >  
> > this is my first posting in this group. I would like to say that I've been  
> > closely following the media reports on demonstrations first in Zagren and  
> > then in Belgrade. I think people here, in the United States, and perhaps in  
> > the Western Europe, are getting too carried away with demonstrations in  
> > Serbia, and looking at them as "democratic." There is nothing democratic  
> > about these demonstrations. As much as I would like to see Milosevic  
> > stepping down, I am fearful that some hard line, ultra-nationalist Serb  
> > will take his place. These demonstrations are turning more and more  
toward  
> > "Serb student demonstrations," as the following article from today's New  
> > York Times shows..  
> >  
> > I am sorry to say this, but I do not believe that there is a developed  
> > democratic political culture anywhere in Serbia, except for a handful of  
> > intellectuals and students which should be distancing themselves away  
from  
> > the nationalist crowd, perhaps making demonstrations on their own. And  
> > there is no doubt in my mind, after seeing scenes from demonstrations on  
> > the TV (seeing nationalist Serb flags, raised hands with three-fingered  
> > symbols and reading the comments that Belgrade students give to the  
foreign  
> > press) that this crowd is overwhelmingly nationalistic-spirited. Besides,  
> > in none of their demands do they ask for better human rights in the Kosova  
> > and Sanjak, much less do they call for the arrest of the indicted war  
> > criminals. On the contrary, some of these students blame Milosevic for  
> > failing to win the war in Croatia and Bosnia...  
> >  
> > Regards,  
> >  
> > Vanja Filipovic  
> > The New York Times  
> > December 10, 1996  
> >  
> > Fierce Serb Nationalism Pervades Student Foes of  
> > Belgrade Leader  
> >  
> > By CHRIS HEDGES  
> >

> > [B] ELGRADE, Serbia -- The front door of the Philosophy  
> > Department at Belgrade University is guarded by  
> > several curt young men with tags on their jackets  
> > identifying them as "security." The students frequently  
> > turn away visitors and at times verbally abuse them as  
> > "liars" or "American scum." Students who attempt to  
> > speak to outsiders are told by the security detail that  
> > only "the committee" has the right to make statements.

> >  
> > On Sunday night, Jack Lang, former minister of culture  
> > in France, arrived to express his support for the  
> > student protesters. He was escorted by young men in  
> > green fatigue jackets to a room where he was declared  
> > "an enemy of the Serbs" and ordered to leave.

> >  
> > Lang stumbled unwittingly on the virulent Serbian  
> > nationalism that has increasingly colored the  
> > anti-government protests by students here. The incident,  
> > intellectual dissidents in Belgrade say, illustrates  
> > that the challenges for those who want to change Serbia  
> > do not lie in overturning the rule of one man, but in  
> > transforming a society that considers racist remarks to  
> > be acceptable and has learned to express itself in the  
> > language of hate.

> >  
> > "Students, professors, and many Serbs have simply  
> > switched their ideological iconography," said Obrad  
> > Savic, the head of the Belgrade Circle, a dissident  
> > group. "They have shifted from a Marxist paradigm to  
> > Serbian nationalism. We have failed to build an  
> > intellectual tradition where people think for  
> > themselves. We operate only in the collective. We speak  
> > in the plural as the Serbian people. It's frightening,  
> > especially in the young. It will take years for us to  
> > rid ourselves of this virus."

> >  
> > The demonstrations, which pull some 25,000 students into  
> > the streets each day at noon, are separate from the ones  
> > later in the day that involve the political opposition  
> > coalition. In fact, the students, who say their movement  
> > is outside politics, refuse to even meet with the  
> > coalition.

> >

> > Tens of thousands of students occupied university  
> > buildings two weeks ago to protest the government's  
> > nullification of local elections that would have given  
> > the political opposition coalition control of 14 of  
> > Serbia's 19 largest cities.

> >

> > On Monday afternoon, student leaders gave a variety of  
> > reasons for Lang's expulsion, saying that he had  
> > supported a call by French intellectuals to bomb  
> > Belgrade during the war in Bosnia, although Lang, at the  
> > time, denounced the suggestion. Others said they wanted  
> > to protect him from hostile students, that he had come  
> > unannounced and that he had "violated the rules" by  
> > arriving with reporters who wanted to "manipulate" the  
> > visit for Western propaganda. They also said that since  
> > Lang had addressed a gathering by the opposition  
> > coalition he had no right to address student protesters.

> >

> > "Lang, like everyone who comes into this building, must  
> > respect our rules," said Viktor Farcic, a gaunt  
> > 22-year-old in a long black overcoat. "He violated our  
> > rules and he was asked to leave. We run things here."

> >

> > The students say their movement, unlike protests by the  
> > opposition coalition known as Zajedno, is apolitical,  
> > although their demands certainly have a political cast.  
> > They include the government's acceptance of the original  
> > vote count and the resignation of Dragutin Velickovic,  
> > the pro-government rector of the university. But student  
> > leaders also attack President Slobodan Milosevic, not  
> > for starting the war in Croatia and Bosnia, but for  
> > failing to win it.

> >

> > "Milosevic betrayed the Serbian people," said Goran  
> > Kovacevic, a 19-year-old student. "We go to class with  
> > Serbs from Croatia and Bosnia who lost their homes  
> > because Milosevic sold us out to the West."

> >

> > Student organizers are calling on women to march in  
> > traditional Serbian costumes. There are a growing number  
> > of Serbian flags in the crowd and the central student

> > committee is considering starting rallies with "God Give  
> > Us Justice," the anthem of the old Kingdom of  
> > Yugoslavia.

> >  
> > Although the students have shunned the opposition  
> > politicians, they have requested an audience with  
> > Patriarch Pavle, the head of the Serbian Orthodox  
> > Church, the institution that gave birth to the modern  
> > Serbian nationalist movement.

> >  
> > The students rejected a suggestion that they also see  
> > Belgrade's Catholic cardinal and the mufti, who is the  
> > leader of the tiny Islamic community.

> >  
> > "This is no longer a student movement, but a Serbian  
> > student movement, and those who are not nationalists are  
> > not welcome," said Kristina Horjak, whose father is from  
> > Slovenia.

> >  
> > The destruction of the country's educational system  
> > began under Tito's communist rule. Departments were  
> > purged of professors who refused to teach subjects like  
> > "Marx and Biology" and adhere to party doctrine. Many of  
> > the best academics were blacklisted or left the country.

> >  
> > There was a brief span of two or three years following  
> > Tito's death in 1980 when university faculties, freed  
> > from party dogma, reached out to Western intellectual  
> > traditions. But this was swiftly terminated with the  
> > rise of Serbian nationalism.

> >  
> > By the mid-1980s the History Department, giddy with the  
> > new orthodoxy, was exalting Byzantine culture and using  
> > it as a tool to bash Western ideas. The works of Serbian  
> > nationalist writers were taught in literature classes  
> > and Serbian philosophers, who espoused theories of  
> > racial superiority, including the idea that the Serbs  
> > were the oldest human race, dominated university  
> > classrooms.

> >  
> > The war only accelerated the decline in the educational  
> > system. Over 400,000 Serbs, many of them young and



> > talented, left the country in the last five years. And  
> > academic standards fell as Milosevic put party hacks in  
> > charge of schools and departments and sliced government  
> > spending for education.

> >  
> > Miladin Zivotic, a white-haired former professor of  
> > philosophy and one of the country's leading academics,  
> > was blacklisted in 1968 after he expressed open support  
> > for students protesting against the party's control over  
> > the university. He was not permitted to teach again  
> > until 1987. But he was soon embroiled in another war  
> > with rigid ideologues.

> >  
> > "I could not stand to go to work," he said. "I had to  
> > listen to professors and students voice support and  
> > solidarity for these Bosnian fascists, Radovan Karadzic  
> > and Ratko Mladic, in the so-called Republic of Srpska.  
> > It is worse now than it was under communism. The  
> > intellectual corruption is more pervasive and profound."

> >  
> >  
> >

> > Copyright 1996 The New York Times Company

> >  
> > -----

> >  
> > Haverford College

> >   
> > <http://www.students.haverford.edu/vfilipov>  
> > <http://www.he.net/~adamar/vanja>

> >  
>  
>  
> --

> \*\*\*\*\*

> \* "Home is a moral boundary, not a physical space." \*

> \* \*

> \* Chris Giannou \*

> \* \*

> \*\*\*\*\*

>

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398. **George Bowering**  
**duncan**

Sat 14 Dec 1996

---

*And a nice copy of the very rare Letters by Robert Duncan at my local used/rare book shop here in Tucson. Actually not "my" shop, it's Larry McMurtry's shop. At \$250, too expensive for me. But if anyone is interested, I could reserve it for them.*

Damn. You just reminded me of a day long ago in Vancouver, when Duncan held up a copy of *Letters* and said it was the last one for sale (I don't know, \$2.50 maybe) and I leapt forward but was bodychecked by Pauline Butling, who snaffled it! I have never forgiven her.

George Bowering.

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399. **George Bowering**  
**Re: Johnny Guitar**

Sat 14 Dec 1996

---

*At 8 I read a wonderful German translation (it cut all the religio-pompous naturo-romance verbiage down to size) of James Fenimore Cooper's PRAIRIE --*

*After that it was on to Ernest Haycox, Zane Gray, Louis L'Amour & hundreds of German comics-type western tales -- then Lucky Luke, the great French comic strip.*

*Only later the "serious" writings dealing with the modern west by the likes of Douglas Woolf, William Eastlake, Ed Dorn (the fiction, not only \*Slinger\* and \*Gran Apacheria\*), etc.*

Oh yeah, Pierre. Jesus, I forgot to mention Ernest Haycocks. Hmm. He was a truly great writer, I thought and still suspect it. He seemed somehow serious, as if there could be such a thing as a genre epic or something. Then he invented Destry, and they did weird things with him, musicals and all;

I have sometimes heard from people in Germany, etc., who grew up on US westerns, and always thought that normal; when I was teaching in Berlin, all

the students were interested in Black people in the US and Native people in Canada.

You know, about 10 years ago or 15 or something, I taught a graduate course on the "western". First we looked at two movies, the Robert Taylor Billy the Kid, and a Randolph Scott Botticher, then read *Hondo* and then did all those literary takes you mention.

The students in this course were really good, all turned out to be writers, and still remember that semester well. There's something there; it made me write my western novels, too. A strange year.

You must know David Markson's western that was made silly in a movie starring Frank Sinatra.

George Bowering.

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400. **shemurph**  
**Marshall Creek Press**  
*Sat 14 Dec 1996*

---

Matt Hill, Publisher of Marshall Creek Press has just issued this release:

New to the avant-garde, alternative poetry scene, we are endeavoring to publish authors who are in pursuit of the oblique: writing that depicts the "original fire" in the study of causes, and imagery that introduces textual impurities into the posturing and malaise which predominate in the contemporary poetry scene today.

We are committed to underwriting the experimental synthesis of poetic visions where obscure language achieves the climactic event of congealed process.

The following chapbooks are currently available with several more to follow in 1997. We are in serious need of benefactors and sponsors for future offerings and welcome any support in the form of contributions and grants.

sonnet what      Peter Ganick 1996      \$5.00

Shellgame Labyrinth Choire      John Noto 1996      \$5.00

Revolution for the Heaven of It      David Hoefer 1996      \$5.00

A Little Syncopy     Sheila E. Murphy     \$5.00

Roxis     Matt Hill     \$3.00

Expect 2-3 weeks for delivery. Please make checks/money orders payable to  
Matt Hill : Marshall Creek Press     Box 305     Ben Lomond, CA 95005

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401. **David Zauhar**

***Re: adorno and the nazis***

*Sat 14 Dec 1996*

---

I wrote this last night before reading Tom Mandel's current posting. I'm not sure if it takes us where the discussion could go. I'll let others judge that. Anyway...

Since Tom Mandel's original posting, I've been bothered by one problem: can reprehensible thinkers provide non-reprehenisble ways of thinking beyond our present crises (Bloch: "Thinking means venturing beyond."). The events in Adorno's life which Tom relates do not show us Adorno at his best, to say the least, but as others have asked, are there parts of his work which retain some value?

I have had some Adornoids attempt to explain to me some of TAs work in a more favorable light. For instance, it is not uncommon to maintain that his much-maligned writings on jazz, for instance, much be contextualized. He is criticizing, I'm often told, not the sort of jazz Anselm Hollo and the rest of us assumes he is criticizing, but rather a mass-produced, tin-pan-alley-type of german import that was sort of a forerunner to muzak which is a pale imitation of American jazz (i.e., the equivalent of the late and unlamented {in terms of career} Vanilla Ice in rap). Whatever, it's an attempt to salvage Adorno, and it makes some sense

Though it still doesn't let TA of the hook for his complete ignorance of jazz, so I don't by it. And Adorno on mass culture is barely distinguishable from Allen Bloom, as we all have noted. And Tom Mandel makes a good case for his toad-like nature. Are there other merits in his work?

A couple of years ago, I came across this line in Murray Bookchin's *The Philosophy of Social Ecology*. In the introduction, Bookchin writes about the big difference between this edition (published by Black Rose Books) and the 1990 edition: "I have excised favorable references to the Frankfurt School and Theodor Adorno. Like Leszek Kolakowski, I have come to regard much of Adorno's work as intellectually irresponsible, wayward, and poorly theorized, despite the brilliance of his style (at times) and his often insightful epigrams. This is not to reject his defense of speculative reason against positivism-- which was what originally attracted me to his work and to the Frankfurt school-- even has his writings exude enormous pessimism about reason and its destiny." Now, at that time I had been reading Adorno, largely based on a reading of earlier versions of some of the same essays Bookchin

reprinted in *\_Philosophy of Social Ecology\_*, so I wrote him c/o his publisher to ask him about this irresponsible, wayward theorizing. When Bookchin (or an associate) wrote back, he mentioned the same events Tom Mandel related, as well as an elaboration on Adorno's complete inability to avoid thinking hierarchically. MB was much more articulate than I am right now, and I can't find the letter for a direct quote, but some footnotes in *\_TPSE\_* are worth looking at (but not right now). Recently, I'm more inclined toward the "heretical marxism" of some figures tangentially affiliated w/ the Frankfurt school (I'm stealing the idea of "heretical marxism" from an article by Ramsey Eric Ramsey (not a typo) from *\_Rethinking Marxism\_* (vol 8 #2, summer 1995), so I'm thinking of the work of Ernst Bloch mostly, but also parts of Wilhelm Reich (when he's not reifying --if not deifying-- the orgasm) and Erich Fromm (in the rare moments when he's not turning Buddha into a dialectical materialist and/or Karl Marx into a roshi). And I hope I'm nodding off because it's late and not because I'm boring myself. Anyway, to quote Bloch again, "Thinking means venturing beyond." Can anything in Adorno's work be made fruitful enough for us to bother venturing beyond his toad nature?

Dave Zauhar

and let me add the same postscript others have added: if an answer to these questions will lead to a replay of the Pound argument, either delete this message or backchannel responses.

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402. **tmandel**

***Adorno und kein ende***

*Sat 14 Dec 1996*

---

Re: Jeremy's new post:

Adorno did not collaborate, he attempted to ingratiate himself and the indication is - perhaps is - that he'd have been happy if his only-half-Jewishness allowed for this.

Many people collaborated, most passively, during the Nazi regime. Many people had very, very little choice (other than martyrdom). Some of them did horrid things. Some of them killed Jews (or gypsies, or...), and some even got used to doing it. Some just ran railroad switches on tracks that led to camps. Some were soldiers, some worked in factories replacing soldiers.

One or more of them killed many of my relatives.

That's not what we are talking about. It's not for me to condemn or forgive someone in whose shoes I haven't walked and who is a hypothetical figure

conjured out of an abstract noun. "He" may have rolled my aunt Kiki into the grave at age 18 after she was multiply raped (or not who knows?). I don't know. I'm not in front of a collaborationist. I don't know if I'd kill him or pity him or what I'd do. It's not really relevant.

Any more than it's relevant to say as another posteur did that this one review (among so many volumes of them) and one letter have no weight against the volumes of Adorno's work.

There are no "works" that are not also "persons." It is what Adorno did that we or someone should discuss -- not some 2d-order abstraction like what it "means" or its "place" in his work, but What He Did. And we should remember that this refers to 1934 and to 1964, to both.

It is in this sense that my original remarks were "ad hominem." It should be obvious to anyone who has ever related to or relied on another's words -- written or spoken -- that they are deeds; it should be obvious to poets, and I hope to those interested in poetry too, that word and world are one.

Adorno wrote himself into a room out of which you will not retrieve him. It is in that room that we must describe him. As in all other bodies of mind, each of his texts is inside all the others, and each englobes all the others. His review of Baldur von Shirach and his letter attempting to explain it away is inside every other word he wrote and every word he wrote is inside the review and the letter. I didn't make it that way, sorry. He did.

Now maybe we can talk about the subject. I'd be especially interested to hear what Marjorie Perloff thinks, as there are few people I've read who have as astute a sense of the relation among the forces of social intention and context in a writer's work as Marjorie.

Tom Mandel

\*\*\*\*\*

Tom Mandel \* 2927 Tilden St. NW  
Washington DC 20008 \* [REDACTED]  
vox: [REDACTED] \* fax [REDACTED]

\*\*\*\*\*

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403. **Loss Glazier**  
**"MLA 1996 Some Poetry Events"**  
*Sat 14 Dec 1996*

---

--- Announcing ---

A page describing some MLA 1996 poetry events is available from the EPC home page <http://writing.upenn.edu/epc>

You'll see the link right under the "E" in "Electronic"

Any additions or especially corrections if there are any errors, please let me know!

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404. **Pierre Joris**

***Re: Wild taste***

*Sat 14 Dec 1996*

---

████ wrote:

>

> along the lines that patrick and tom are moving -- esp. the question of  
> evolution and meaning -- i can't recommend strongly enough richard powers'  
> novel from a few years ago, *\_the gold bug variations\_*... i know of no piece  
> of writing that pushes the language/dna analogy further, and with more  
> emphasis on narrative as a correlative development...

>

> joe

yes,yes,yes, I have little patience/time for novels these days, but *The Goldbug Variations* held me -- it is brilliant, brilliant!

--

=====

pierre joris 6 madison place albany ny 12202

tel/fax █████ email:████

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

<http://www.albany.edu/~tm0900/nomad.html>

-----

"A book has to be the axe for the frozen sea inside us.

This I believe."

(Kafka, Letter to Oskar Pollack 27 Jan 1904)

=====

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405. **David Zauhar**

***Re: Response to Mark (et al)***

*Sat 14 Dec 1996*

---

| *in any case, reading through this issue of \_profession\_ constitutes a good*  
| *introduction to just how at odds with ourselves we academics can be...*

*anyway, \_profession 96\_ would make an excellent stocking stuffer for those of you with academic friends...*

*hurry while the supply lasts!...*

*etc...*

*joe*

Well, I just got back from the local Waldenbooks at my nearby mall, where I discovered that they were all out of *\_Profession 96\_*. However, a helpful clerk directed me to the Association of Departments of English Bulletin (shelved, coincidentally, next to *Soldier of Fortune*). It's not as interesting as the previously-described *Profession 96*, but it contains an article by Reed Way Dasenbrock called "The Crisis in the Job Market: Beyond Scapegoating." This article, in turn, contains a passage unlike any other I've seen written by a chair of a phud-granting English Dept: "The real change I propose is this: that we break the habit of relying solely on graduate assistants to staff the courses that we haven't wanted to teach. We need to teach them ourselves as well. In turn, we should propse to the administration that we replace many GA's with tenure-track positions and that the tenure-track faculty (in it's entirety; not just the new lines) teach those lower division courses that would no longer be taught by graduate assistants." After checking to make sure that I wasn't reading a special April Fools Day edition of the ADE Bulletin, I put the magazine back on the shelf, fairly confident that the institutional changes Dasenbrock calls for won't happen in too many places, but somewhat encouraged to see someone in "the profession" fess up to the material conditions of "knowledge production" in engdepts.

DZ

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406. **amato**

***Re: Response to Mark (et al)***

*Sat 14 Dec 1996*

---

yet what i find so troubling about that article you cite, david, is that its author seems not to notice that his comments apply specifically to sop at "major research institutions" with phud programs... where i teach, and where for that matter so many of my friends teach, there's no provision for grad. students to teach lower-level courses... i mean, it's probably a safe bet that \*most\* "lower-level" teaching in \*most\* english depts. around the country is not done by ta's, but by full-fledged profs...



it's just that i wouldn't want non-academics around here to think that we profs. are all leaving the "dirty work" or some such to others (and no, it's not dirty work to teach engl. 101!)... for my part, i've never had a ta teach 'for' me, and i don't look forward to having one do so...

best,

joe

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407. **Judy Roitman**  
***patr-iarchy/onization***  
*Sat 14 Dec 1996*

---

So I finally got myself The Granite Pail, Cid Corman's 1985 selection of Lorine Neidecker's work. Here are two blurbs on the back cover.

"One of the finest American poets of all, besides being easily the finest female American poet..."

"We are in the presence of a poet whose peers are the Lady Ono Komachi and Sappho. Few others come to mind."

This is kind of shocking, yes? How do things like this happen?

----- 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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408. **Joshua N Schuster**  
***Re: POETICS Digest - 11 Dec 1996 to 12 Dec 1996 (fwd)***  
*Sat 14 Dec 1996*

---

To Poetics: I'm forwarding this response from a friend who concentrates his thinking mostly on Adorno and Benjamin. 2 problems here: he doesn't have the advantage of reading the other posts, so he repeats some commentary; and he chose to copy the entire message, so I apologize in advance for the digesters.

A way of spreading discussion...

-js

Vance Bell wrote:

> From [REDACTED] Sat Dec 14 03:03 EST 1996  
>

> Josh,  
>  
> Here is my reply. If you'd like you can forward it to the list it came  
> from.  
>  
> Vance  
>  
> -----  
>  
> First thing I might say is that this indictment has not a single citation  
> to any original text. Not to say that they could not be produced, but  
> their lack casts a negative light on the content.  
>  
> According to Joshua N Schuster:  
> >  
> >  
> > >  
> > > -----  
> > >  
> > > Date: Thu, 12 Dec 1996 08:48:21 CST  
> > > From: [REDACTED]  
> > > Subject: Re-post of Adorno and the Nazis  
> > >  
> > > No poetry after Auschwitz?  
> > >  
> > > In a letter to Karl Jaspers, Hannah Arendt referred to Adorno as "one  
> > > of the most repulsive human beings I know."  
> > >  
>  
> Is this the same Arendt that was intimately involved with Heidegger and  
> who was treated rather badly by the same?  
>  
> > > There would be many reasons to hold this opinion, and anyone familiar  
> > > with the relations between Walter Benjamin and Adorno from the time in  
> > > the late 30's when Adorno got to America to B's death would be able to  
> > > arrive at it independently, observing in the correspondence for example  
> > > a genius of Benjamin's magnitude as he is forced to grovel for a few  
> > > pennies before a toad like Adorno, forced to hear and treat as  
> > > significant Adorno's trivial and pettifogging critiques of his work.  
>  
> Are to very few published letters between the two and with Felizitas  
> Adorno adequate grounds to say one knows anything about their

> relationship. Although Benjamin's death was tragic for certain, I doubt  
> that the essays he submitted to the Zeitschrift f:ur Sozialforschung were  
> any more heavily critiqued than any other submission from the core group  
> who published there. Adorno's critique of B.'s Baudelaire essay were  
> accepted in part by B.'s on intellectual grounds although it is clear that  
> the two version are substantially different in character and content.  
> Adorno's essays of the same period often underwent equally stringent  
> revisions.  
>  
> > >  
> > > This is not why Arendt detested Adorno, however, although she was  
> > > certainly familiar with the relations between the two men (Benjamin and  
> > > Arendt were friends).  
>  
> Yes, were in fact, but B. and A. met almost ten years before B. met H.  
> H.'s importance was greatest in the late thirties especially in the  
> occupied France.  
>  
>  
> > > No, Arendt detested Adorno for his attempt to ingratiate himself with  
> > > the Nazis when they first came to power, his attempt to use the fact  
> > > that he was half Jewish - not a real Jew (I should say not!) - to slide  
> > > onto the slip-thru side of the newly-empowered National Socialists.  
>  
> I think that I would have done the same thing in A.'s place. It is all  
> too easy to view the situation in '33-4 with the benefit of hindsight.  
> Adorno never thought the bourgeoisie would stand for Hitler and would  
> eliminate him from power. This might be an example of Adorno's political  
> naivete, but little else. Adorno, was in fact, born to a Catholic mother  
> and was therefore, technically, not a Jew by Jewish standards (Nazi  
> standards being obviously quite different)  
>  
> > > Even moreso, Arendt hated him for his as she called it "indescribably  
> > > pathetic" attempt to excuse himself when his activities were discovered  
> > > thirty years later.  
>  
> Again I would like to know more of H.'s relationship to Heidegger when the  
> latter took over the rectorship of Freiburg Univ.  
>  
> > > (I should say, btw, that although I am familiar with the  
> > > Adorno/Benjamin correspondence and with some of Adorno's own  
writings,

> > > none of which I have ever liked, all of which seemed monumentally  
> > > self-aggrandizing, the affair I am about to narrate I know only  
> > > second-hand. I rely entirely on a written report in a pair of footnotes  
> > > to the Arendt/Jaspers correspondence. Fans of Adorno's work, especially  
> > > those who feel they'd like to complete their acquaintance with his  
> > > texts, will surely want to read in their original positions the  
> > > documents referred to below.)

>

> So what we have here is a clearly unbiased report...

>

> > >

> > > In a periodical called Die Musik in June 1934 Theodor  
> > > Wiesengrund-Adorno wrote a music review in which he praised a song  
> > > cycle written to poems by Baldur von Schirach - an obscure person today  
> > > thankfully but extremely well-known at the time as a Nazi poet and an  
> > > adorer of Hitler, to whom the book of poetry was dedicated (to "Adolph  
> > > Hitler, the Fuhrer")! from which come the texts of the songs. The song  
> > > cycle bears the same name as the book. The editors of the  
> > > Arendt-Jaspers correspondence describe it as containing "phrases which  
> > > even today can be regarded only as obsequious gestures to  
> > > the Nazis. Adorno apparently was not bothered by the fact that some of  
> > > the poems advocated mass murder." The review also uses a phrase of  
> > > Goebbels - approvingly.

> > >

>

> The editors of the Arendt-Jaspers correspondence describe it? Has this  
> person read the original text? I bet it is not that long. Certainly  
> sounds bad, but the original is necessary for any further conclusions.

>

> > > It goes without saying that Adorno took no opportunity after the war to  
> > > mention having written this document, that it played no part in any of  
> > > the judgments he made of German intellectuals' relations to the Nazis,  
> > > and that he did not footnote his Minima Moralia axiom about poetry  
> > > after Auschwitz with any reference to the poetry he had praised only a  
> > > few years before Auschwitz was built.

>

> How can one say that it did not play a part in the judgments made of  
> German intellectuals? Certainly Adorno did not forget what he wrote.  
> Is the axiom from MM or from Cultural Criticism and Society in Prisms?  
> What would be the relation of Adorno's text in Die Musik to the axiom.  
> Wouldn't the axiom itself speak against all of A.'s poetry criticism prior  
> to MM or Prisms equally to condemn lyric poetry in general. It might also

> be important to note that the German version of MM has no footnotes,  
> period.  
>  
>  
> > > The January 1964 issue of Diskus, a Frankfurt student newspaper,  
> > > contains an open letter to Adorno, written by a student and asking  
> > > whether he was the author of the review in question. Adorno replies in  
> > > the same issue (which as I say I have not read). "I deeply regret  
> > > having written that review," especially because "it deals with poems by  
> > > Schirach" and made use of "a phrase of Goebbels." Obviously, it is hard  
> > > to credit "regret" that does not lead to repudiation, and Adorno had  
> > > kept his authorship of these words secret for thirty years. After  
> > > expressing this regret, according to the editors, he goes on to make a  
> > > series of excuses and concludes that it will be left to the reader "to  
> > > decide whether those incriminating sentences should be given any  
weight  
> > > in assessing my work and my life.... No one... could possibly compare  
> > > me to Heidegger..."  
>  
> Again I would like to see the original text. If A. would only express  
> "regret" at the article's content in the '60s, I have a feeling that  
> something else is going on in the article that is not coming out here.  
> The later reference to parentheticals seems to say that phrases where  
> included in the text in a marginalized manner. Not to excuse him that -  
> but if this is Adorno's only infraction it is small compared to both  
> deMan and Heidegger. I am curious if this author would have fared so  
> well.?  
>  
> > >  
> > > It is instructive to compare the situation of Adorno and that of Paul  
> > > deMan who was vilified for his collaborationist writings in Belgium.  
> > > I'm not a fan of Paul deMan, but it is useful to note the differences  
> > > in the two situations. For one thing deMan was in a country under  
> > > military occupation which he was unable to leave. One could go on  
> > > comparing the two. Certainly it would be interesting to trace the  
> > > pressures in their respective works of these episodes in their past.  
> > > Interesting to someone who has no other flowers to arrange.  
>  
> Not sure what the last bit means exactly, but I think paragraph's idea  
> here \*is\* interesting.  
>  
> > >

> > > I've known about the Adorno episode for a few years but haven't had the  
> > > heart to expose it to others. Only being once again confronted with  
> > > praise for a disreputable creep, and knowing I would be again, has made  
> > > me sigh and set down what I've read.  
> > >  
>  
> Praise for Adorno's works are based in those works - which apparently are  
> opaque when read by this author. I am curious if he has read any of A.'s  
> work on Anti-Semitism or The Authoritarian Personality.  
>  
> > > Interestingly, the German students to whom Adorno replied in the '60s  
> > > seem to have been more or less satisfied with his reply. Perhaps it was  
> > > enough to see him (indeed, to see a Jew) painted in their own merde.  
> > > Perhaps his evasions spoke to theirs.  
>  
> Firstly, are not we recapitulating this very gesture?  
>  
> Secondly, the student of the sixties would have been born at the War's  
> close. Are we saying that they themselves were also anti-semities, or  
> Nazis in disguise (gee Tom, aren't \*all\* Germans)?  
>  
> Vance Bell  
> [REDACTED]  
>

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409. **simon**

***Re: patr-iarchy/onization***

*Sat 14 Dec 1996*

---

Judy,

When I recommended Neidecker's work, I didn't think about the blurbs,  
and when I read the book, I hate to turn it over to see them.

How it happens? That's not a question, right?

beth simon

assistant professor, linguistics and english

indiana university - purdue university

[REDACTED]

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410. **Burt Kimmelman**  
**Re: patr-iarchy/onization**  
*Sat 14 Dec 1996*

---

judy,

i may have been deleting-before-reading a thread that your comments on Cod Cid Corman's edition of Lorine Niedecker's poems THE GRANITE PAIL with its backcover blurbs have to do with, but in the event that I am just downright obtuse, why are you exercised over the blurbs, precisely?

burt

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411. **Burt Kimmelman**  
**Re: patr-iarchy/onization**  
*Sat 14 Dec 1996*

---

judy,

i guess that you are taking issue with corman's and others' 1985 ghetto-ization of LN?

burt

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412. **Jay Schwartz**  
**Re: patr-iarchy/onization**  
*Sat 14 Dec 1996*

---

In regards to Cid Corman's remarks about Niedecker:

I was at the Naropa Institute for "Cid Corman" week in '95, and Corman made many, many comments regarding white male poets from the 40's to the present, yet had to be prodded to even mention women poets of any ethnicity. When he did, he only mentioned Levertov and Niedecker, and then with a degree of condescension and ghettoization.

Can't we recognize his contributions to publishing at the same time we acknowledge his uncomfortable (at least) views regarding gender and race?

-Jay Schwartz

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413. **Jordan Davis**

***Return of the Real: Global Surveillance***

Sat 14 Dec 1996

The hallucination of information? a machine that can detect which are the interesting messages? cool, I'll take two .. here interesting would have to mean incriminating.. and the impermissible is what, exactly? It seems likely (to my particular version of paranoia) that this kind of supervision will lead not to coercive repression but to diffusive tolerance.. to increasing the anomie .. what is the response to Gab's question whether we're clogged with the news? Again, I would insist that the strategy has changed.. go ahead, \_let off some steam\_ ... J Davis

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414. **Judy Roitman**

***Re: patr-iarchy/onization***

Sat 14 Dec 1996

judy,

*i may have been deleting-before-reading a thread that your comments on Cod*

*Cid Corman's edition of Lorine Niedecker's poems THE GRANITE PAIL with its backcover blurbs have to do with, but in the event that I am just downright obtuse, why are you exercised over the blurbs, precisely?*

burt

Because the Woman Poet category is trivalizing.

----- 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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415. **Judy Roitman**

***Re: patr-iarchy/onization***

Sat 14 Dec 1996

judy,

*i guess that you are taking issue with corman's and others' 1985*



*ghetto-ization of LN?*

*burt*

Yes.

----- 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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416. **David Columbia**  
***Re: Response to Mark (et al)***  
*Sat 14 Dec 1996*

Joe wrote:

> grad. students to teach lower-level courses... i mean, it's probably a safe  
> bet that \*most\* "lower-level" teaching in \*most\* english depts. around the  
> country is not done by ta's, but by full-fledged profs...

Joe, I'm confused here as to whether, by "full-fledgd profs," you simply mean folks with PhDs, or folks who are tenure-track. it's the latter I think of as "full-fledged," but I think it's clear that the former, along with grad students, teach the bulk of lower-level courses at colleges & universities throughout the US (e.g., classes not for majors, frosh classes, & some intro-level "study of lit" or survey-type courses). Is this untrue at your school?

I say this because, in my view, the problems for grad students are more than anything else a consequence of the revolution in academic conduct toward the use (i.e., abuse) of part-time, adjunct, & temporary faculty -- & if \*these\* problems could be solved (most radically, by demanding that \*only\* tenure-track, "professional" adjuncts [e.g., G. Stephanapolous, people with professions outside the academy], or grad students could teach) & with proper & fiscally-unavoidable controls on size of grad programs, schools would have to even out the supply/demand problems that cause such hardships today...

Does your experience differ from this?

--

[REDACTED]  
David Columbia

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417. **DS**

**Re: patr-iarchy/onization**

Sat 14 Dec 1996

---

At 01:19 PM 12/14/96 -0600, you wrote:

>>judy,

>>

>>i may have been deleting-before-reading a thread that your comments on

>>Cod

>>

>>

>>Cid Corman's edition of Lorine Niedecker's poems THE GRANITE PAIL with

>>its backcover blurbs have to do with, but in the event that I am just

>>downright obtuse, why are you exercised over the blurbs, precisely?

>>

>>burt

>

>

>Because the Woman Poet category is trivalizing.]

& somewhat stupid when you look at who she is compared to - are there no other twentieth century (women) poets?

---

|                            |  |                         |
|----------------------------|--|-------------------------|
| 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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418. **amato**

**Re: Response to Mark (et al)**

Sat 14 Dec 1996

---

david, by "full-fledged profs" (confusing term, that) i \*was\* thinking tenure-track profs---i was thinking that it's misleading to characterize english profs. in terms of their presumed access to t.a. labor... but in light of how this term can itself be exclusive, i'd be happy to modify it to include anybody BUT grad students teaching on their \*home\* campus---whether tenure-track, part-time,

adjunct, etc. (of course i don't mean to wish away differences between these various prof. categories)... seems to me, given the sheer number of colleges and universities (and i mean to include community colleges) that most english depts. don't \*have\* graduate students upon whom they can rely to teach so-called basic writing and the like for absurdly low wages (and no benefits)... and on some campuses, like u of michigan (i'm thinking of their english composition board), there's an entire staff for teaching such courses (no comment here as to how that works out)...

anybody have any numbers on this handy?... i suppose i can go rummage around for same...

but anyway, on my campus: we've been known to hire grad. students from local institutions (u of chicago, depaul, loyola, uic) to pick up our intro-level writing courses... but we don't have any grad. students ourselves to teach such courses... so i see the people we hire, again, as 'full fledged profs.' relative to my campus (some have been around for years teaching german and french)... now we hire such folks only when the number of required intro courses (based on enrollment) exceeds what we who are full-time tenure-track can do (and all full-time tenure-track english profs. teach one or two intro writing courses in the fall, depending on other course demands)...

i was thinking that the excerpt dave z. posted here from dasenbrock's article would make very little sense, or carry very little urgency, on many campuses with which i'm familiar, incl. my own... i mean, what does it mean to me when somebody sez, you shouldn't use your t.a.'s to teach thus & so courses?... very little---i don't have any t.a.'s, and iit will \*still\* go out and hire t.a.'s from other campuses as adjunct labor... how many colleges (not universities) have their own grad. students to teach their freshman/sophomore writing requirements?... the problem of course has to do with disparities across the english profession---we're not all inhabiting the same world... but in any case, david, i think pointing as you do to the hiring of adjunct faculty is precisely to the point...

anyway, maybe i'm being clearer than i was... hope so!... let me know, pleez...

best,

joe

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419. **Jeremy F Green**

***Re: Adorno und kein ende***

*Sat 14 Dec 1996*

---

I entirely agree with Tom about words and deeds. But to establish words and deeds in this instance is going to require more information (the review and

letter in question and the context of their publication). My sense, after doing a little digging, is that these pieces are not easy to come by (not in translation, anyway, and I have to confess that my German wouldn't be up to the task even if the journals in question were available in the library here). Reading the originals is important because without doing so it is difficult to establish whether Adorno was foolish and naive or downright despicable (and, by the same token, whether his letter of 1966 is evasive or not).

At present, we have Hannah Arendt's comments in her letters to Jaspers (and Kohler and Saner's notes to those letters). Arendt revulsion for Adorno seems to go back to 1929 when A. rejected her husband's Habilitationsschrift. In her biography of Arendt, Elisabeth Young-Bruehl writes: "Hannah Arendt's opinions about people, both positive and negative, were always forceful--even if not always consistent--and she clearly meant it when she announced to Gunther Stern [her husband] after having made Adorno's acquaintance, 'Der kommt uns nicht ins Haus!' (That one's not coming into our house)" (*Hannah Arendt: For Love of the World*, p.80). In mentioning this I'm not trying to extricate A. from the room he put himself in (as Tom put it); I'm simply trying to give a context for Arendt's dramatic expression of her hatred for Adorno ("one of the most repulsive human beings I know"--oddly, the context for that remark is her expressed wish that attacks on Heidegger--which she claims, without proof, are being orchestrated by "the Wiesengrund-Adorno crowd"--(and specifically attacks on his anti-semitism) would cease).

The question of the name-changing (this is Tom's 'perhaps'): as I understand it, the claim is that A. dropped the Wiesengrund part of his name in order to ingratiate himself with the Nazis. Martin Jay describes this as 'highly implausible', noting that A. only dropped Wiesengrund in 1938 (by which time he was in America) on the instigation of Friedrich Pollock (a Frankfurt Institute colleague). This is not to say that A. might not have dropped the Wiesengrund for the review in question; I simply don't know.

In his monumental history of the Frankfurt School, Rolf Wiggershaus has this to say about the review: "Adorno still [summer 1934] believed in the possibility of hibernating through everything that was going on, and in one of his music reviews, which were published increasingly rarely, he produced an example of political opportunism. He wrote a review of Herbert Muntzel's *The Banner of the Persecuted: A Cycle for Male Choir* after the *Volume of Poems of the Same Title* by Baldur von Schirach\_ which was published in the respected music journal *Die Musik*\_. At that point the journal had not been fully forced into line. Adorno emphasized - approvingly - the fact that this cycle was 'marked out as consciously National Socialist by its choice of Schirach's poems' and that it called for 'the image of a new Romanticism', 'perhaps of the type which Goebbels has defined as "Romantic Realism"'. He added this praise to the

observation that it could very well happen that, 'with increasing compositional rigour, Romantic harmony, but rather to a new one, which incorporates contrapuntal energies within itself.'" I find this frustratingly oblique and it is remarkable that Wiggershaus doesn't have more to say about this episode (not being very familiar with A.'s writing on music I find it hard to say whether those last remarks are intended to be a piece of smuggled critique or not). I can't find any reference in this huge book to the later letter. What adjective would one wish to place before Wiggershaus's "political opportunism"? Dangerously naive? Despicable? It is certainly easy \*with hindsight\* to settle for the latter.

All this brings me to the interesting question Tom raises: 'every word is englobed in every other' (he says, or thereabouts). Well, this is still a question of reading. Tom's earlier messages seemed to me to indicate that the review and letter made the whole of Adorno's work trivial, toadish and self-aggrandizing. I would still maintain that this is a refusal to read; surely what we need to do is to look at A.'s work in the context of the review and letter (accepting the Arendt line, for the present). How then does such 'englobing' play its part in the more interesting questions we might ask about Adorno's work (his position on reason and enlightenment, on mass culture and modernism, on capitalism and identity AND on fascism and poetry after Auschwitz)?

(btw. I don't agree that A. on mass culture is almost indistinguishable from Allan Bloom...but I've already written much more than I intended).

Jeremy

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#### 420. **Jeremy F Green**

##### ***Re: Wild taste***

*Sat 14 Dec 1996*

---

Check out \_Galatea 2.2.\_ (the latest by Powers) too--it has some fascinating stuff on language and learning in the context of Artificial Intelligence.

On Sat, 14 Dec 1996, Pierre Joris wrote:

>

> yes,yes,yes, I have little patience/time for novels these days, but The

> Goldbug Variations held me -- it is brilliant, brilliant!

> --

> =====

> pierre joris 6 madison place albany ny 12202

> tel/fax [REDACTED] email: [REDACTED]

> http://writing.upenn.edu/epc/authors/joris/

> http://www.albany.edu/~tm0900/nomad.html

> -----

> "A book has to be the axe for the frozen sea inside us.  
> This I believe."  
>  
> (Kafka, Letter to Oskar Pollack 27 Jan 1904)  
> =====  
>

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421. **Burt Kimmelman**  
**Re: patr-iarchy/onization**

Sat 14 Dec 1996

---

yes judy i see what you mean about no 20th century comparisons for niedecker--but then again corman lives in japan and may not see any worthy comparisons in terms of style or point of view or whatever except from other times and places?

burt

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422. **Burt Kimmelman**  
**Re: patr-iarchy/onization**

Sat 14 Dec 1996

---

"Because the Woman Poet category is trivializing": Okay, but maybe in the early 80s. . . . no, never mind that. . . . i guess my point is that LN can be usefully read, especially in her "domestic" poems, as putting forth a distinctly woman's view of the world, of men, of women . . . .

I see your point and agree with you, but isn't also true that Corman placed her among all poets first and only then among women poets second.

Am I just "not getting it"?

burt

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423. **dbkk**  
**Re: patr-iarchy/onization**

Sun 15 Dec 1996

---

At 6:38 PM +0000 12/14/96, Jay Schwartz wrote:

*I was at the Naropa Institute for "Cid Corman" week in '95, and Corman made many, many comments regarding white male poets from the 40's to the present, yet had to be prodded to even mention women poets of any*

*ethnicity. When he did, he only mentioned Levertov and Niedecker, and then with a degree of condescension and ghettoization.*

This is Kevin Killian. I interviewed Corman several years back about his meetings with Jack Spicer, and I must say he went out of his way to talk about his (contemporaneous) encounters with the poets Joanne Kyger and Lenore Kandel. He was talking about 1960, fairly early date to begin an appreciation of these two (still terribly underrated) writers. But I agree with Judy, those comments on the "Granite Pail" book are true space oddities!! Thanks--KK.

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424. **George Bowering**  
***Re: patr-iarchy/onization***

Sun 15 Dec 1996

---

Would it have been better if Corman had just edited some guy's book of poems rather than LN's?

While we are talking about how much of a dork he was for the blurbs, why dont we also suggest that it was a better world after the publication of the book than it was before it?

George Bowering.

2499 West 37th Ave.,  
Vancouver, B.C.,  
Canada V6M 1P4

fax: [REDACTED]  
e-mail: [REDACTED]

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425. **Pete Landers**  
***Re: patr-iarchy/onization***

Sun 15 Dec 1996

---

Judy Roitman wrote:

- > So I finally got myself The Granite Pail, Cid Corman's 1985 selection of
- > Lorine Neidecker's work. Here are two blurbs on the back cover.
- >
- > "One of the finest American poets of all, besides being easily the finest
- > female American poet..."
- >
- > "We are in the presence of a poet whose peers are the Lady Ono Komachi and
- > Sappho. Few others come to mind."

>

> This is kind of shocking, yes? How do things like this happen?

>

My edition doesn't have this text. It's a North Point book. There's a picture of her standing in snow. On the inside flap we do have a few men, notably Basil Bunting, using the "p" word. I suppose there's only one way to respond to gender being raised when "rating her status" among twentieth century poets; with a poem!

Anyone who thinks this is gender-specific writing isn't reading the words:

=====

=+= Lake Superior =+=

by Lorine Neidecker

In every part of every living thing  
is stuff that once was rock

In blood the minerals  
of the rock

Iron the common element of earth  
in rocks and freighters

Sault Sainte Marie -- big boats  
coal-black and iron-ore-red  
topped with what white castlework

The waters working together  
internationally  
Gulls playing both sides

Radisson:  
'a laborinth of pleasure'  
this world of the Lake

Long hair, long gun

Fingernails pulled out  
by Mohawks

\_(The long  
canoes)\_

'Birch Bark  
and white Seder  
for the ribs'



Through all this granite land  
the sign of the cross

Beauty: impurities in the rock

And at the blue ice superior spot  
priest-robed Marquette grazed  
azoic rock, hornblende granite  
basalt the common dark  
in all the Earth

And his bones of such is coral  
raised up out of his grave  
were sunned and birch bark-floated  
to the straits

\_Joliet\_

Entered the Mississippi  
Found there the paddlebill catfish  
come down from The Age of Fishes

At Hudson Bay he conversed in latin  
with an Englishman

To Labrador and back to vanish  
His funeral gratis -- he'd played  
Quebec's Cathedral organ  
so many winters

Ruby of corundum  
lapis lazuli  
from changing limestone  
glow-apricot red-brown  
carnelian sand

Greek named  
Exodus-antique  
kicked up in America's  
Northwest  
you have been in my mind  
between my toes  
agate

\_Wild Pigeon\_

Did not man  
maimed by no  
stone-fall

mash the cobalt  
and carnelian  
of that bird

Schoolcraft left the Soo -- canoes  
US pennants, masts, sails  
chanting canoeman, barge  
soldiers -- for Minnesota

Their South Shore journey  
as if Life's --

The Chocolate River  
The Laughing Fish  
and The River of the Dead

Passed peaks of volcanic thrust  
Hornblende in massed granite  
Wave-cut Cambrian rock  
painted by soluble mineral oxides  
wave-washed and the rains  
did their work and a green  
running as from copper

Sea-roaring caverns --  
Chippewas threw deermeat  
to the savage maws  
'\_Voyageurs\_' crossed themselves  
tossed a twist of tobacco in'

Inland then  
beside the great granite  
gneiss and schists  
to the redolent pondy lakes'  
lilies, flag and Indian reed  
'through which we successfully  
passed'

The smooth black stone  
I picked up in true source park  
the leaf beside it  
once was a stone

Why should we hurry  
home

I'm sorry to have missed  
Sand Lake  
My dear one tells me  
we did not  
We watched a gopher there

[↑ Contents](#)

426. **amato**  
***Re: Wild taste***  
*Sun 15 Dec 1996*

---

yep, with jeremy on powers' \_galatea 2.2\_... in fact let me just say that anything the guy writes is worth having a look at, he's really quite remarkable... word has it he has a new novel (his sixth) coming out in the next year...

joe

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427. **Gabrielle Welford**  
***[asia-apec 270] IWCA declaration (fwd)***  
*Sun 15 Dec 1996*

---

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

Date: Tue, 10 Dec 1996 17:34:48 +0800 (HKT)

From: kakammpi <[REDACTED]>

Reply-To: [REDACTED]

To: [REDACTED]

Subject: [asia-apec 270] IWCA declaration

Statement of the International Women's Conference on APEC  
Shalom Center, Manila, Philippines, 15-16 November 1996

ASIA-PACIFIC WOMEN REJECT APEC AND CALL FOR A PEOPLE-TO-PEOPLE  
COOPERATION

We, the women of Asia and the Pacific Rim, reject APEC because the free trade policies it promotes blatantly lead to the violation of people's human rights, loss of democracy and social justice, environmental degradation and increased impoverishment of peoples.

In the name of trade liberalization, our governments have put the interests of transnational corporations (TNCs) and international financial institutions at the expense of the interests of people. Economic growth has created more inequalities within the countries, and between countries, as a result of profit-oriented and investment-led policies. Corporations have pursued cheap labor

within the region and the use of unfree migrant labor has increased dramatically. This pattern of economic growth is unsustainable and has left environmental devastation in its wake.

APEC will only exacerbate this situation and cause the further marginalization of peoples, particularly women and children.

The indiscriminate opening up of the economy will heighten unfair competition, benefit only those who monopolize capital and technology, marginalize the poor and accelerate the depletion of natural resources.

As a result of trade liberalization, we see large-scale, capital intensive agroculture, monocropping and changing land use patterns. This has tightened monopoly control of transnational corporations and their practices of double standards which in turn have caused the people's loss of control over basic resources such as land, seed and plant varieties, and fuel.

Through these trade policies, developing countries are obligated to allow the unrestricted importation of subsidized and cheap food products and thereby discouraging domestic food production and continue to be subjected to impositions regarding tariff reduction on the small countries.

This has discouraged massive and rapid conversion of agricultural lands devoted or suitable to food production to non-agricultural or non-food production uses.

As a result, we are faced by food insecurity and deleterious changing patterns of food consumption among our peoples.

Contrary to the general notion that trade liberalization and competition will open more factories, and create more jobs, we are now looking at massive unemployment and underemployment especially among women and the increased exploitation in the informal sector.

Massive displacements because of land conversion and development aggression continue to force our people to migrate to urban centers or to other countries. Massive homelessness and migration have destroyed communities and families, destroying the skills and knowledge base of peoples.

In every country, women are the poorest of the poor. Women are carrying the brunt of free trade policies which have had a devastating impact on women's rights. The loss of livelihoods and decreasing control over resources are increasing women's marginalization.

Unemployment and underemployment of women are forcing many of them into prostitution, even as the horrendous poverty of women and their families has led to an explosion in the trafficking in and sexual slavery of women. As migrant workers, women's exploitation has been further intensified as receiving

countries have refused to protect their rights as workers making them vulnerable to sexual harassment and increased exploitation. In the name of so-called free markets, governments have destroyed social programs which protect women.

Not one of the governments that are part of APEC have a mandate from their peoples to negotiate anything.

Free trade is bringing about an erosion of democratic rights and the destruction of democratic institutions as governments are becoming more authoritarian and dictatorial. New forms of human rights violations are emerging, and the women of this region unequivocally condemn this agenda.

We call upon our governments to:

1. Ensure women's full participation in policy formulation and decision-making processes. 2. Regulate and control TNCs and international financial institutions (IFIs). 3. Live up to commitments made in the UN conventions, including the following:

-Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women  
-International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights  
-Beijing Platform for Action  
-International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrants Workers and Members of Their Families  
-International Labor Organization (ILO) Conventions on Labor Standards  
-International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights  
-Convention Against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment  
-International Convention on All Forms of Racial Discrimination  
-International Convention on the Suppression and Punishment of the Crime of Apartheid  
-Convention on the Rights of the Child.

4. Allocate resources for the basic needs of people, such as health care, education, housing and social assistance, especially for women and children and all disadvantaged persons. 5. Promote regional cooperation based on promoting self-sufficiency, capacity building through technology transfer, information flow and special courses. 6. Stop demolitions, ensure proper relocation in cases where it cannot be avoided and generate more jobs for urban poor dwellers. 7. Recognize women's role and contributions in safeguarding the environment, including the conservation of local plant varieties. 8. Provide adequate employment locally with decent living wages to discourage labor outmigration. Governments of receiving countries should provide crisis centers for migrant workers. 9. Make food security a priority, ensuring the food needs of peoples and immediately stop the dumping of cheap food that is detrimental to local food production. 10. Subsidize and support efforts for sustainable agriculture, stop land conversion and enact or implement land use laws, and provide support services to small farmers, particularly women farmers. Furthermore, ensure fair prices for farmers' produce.

Henceforth, we call upon NGOs and people's movements to:

1. Develop people's alternative structures of fair trade. 2. Undertake campaigns to raise awareness, and to mobilize and organize peoples movements against APEC. 3. Initiate and strengthen links between and among women, indigenous and aboriginal peoples, trade unions and migrant workers organizations. 4. Respond to urgent alert actions for migrant women and women workers and victims of human rights violations. 5. Make the struggle for women's equality a priority agenda. 6. Call upon trade unions to include organizations of workers in the informal sector. 7. Hold the TNCs accountable for the social and environmental impact of their operations.

We call on all governments, peoples' organizations, non-government organizations to unite in resisting and rejecting APEC.

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428. **Gabrielle Welford**  
***signing off for now***

Sun 15 Dec 1996

---

Hey all. I'm on my travels till Jan 11 and will be signing off from Poetics for a while. See a bunch of yas in DC I hope. I'mn having a wonderful New Mexico time with old friends right now. It is a blessed rest. Have a wonderful holiday. gab.

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429. **Loss Glazier**  
***Lit OnLion***

Sun 15 Dec 1996

---

LION is Chadwyck-Healey's attempt at a MASSIVE database in literature. (Up to the 20th century that is.) It includes English and American Poetry, African-American Literature, much more. Anyway, you should read about it by visiting their web page. It's potentially an important research/teaching resource for some folks. It's the EPC featured link of the week also available in EPC's Connects page.

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430. **Tosh**  
***Re: Lit OnLion***

Sun 15 Dec 1996

---

*LION is Chadwyck-Healey's attempt at a MASSIVE database in literature. (Up to the 20th century that is.) It includes English and*

*American Poetry, African-American Literature, much more. Anyway, you should read about it by visiting their web page. It's potentially an important research/teaching resource for some folks. It's the EPC featured link of the week also available in EPC's Connects page.*

WHAT IS THE ADDRESS FOR THIS SITE?

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431. **maz881**

***Re: computers, academies, slavery***

*Sun 15 Dec 1996*

---

Hi Mark. thanks for asking about my job. my title is tools manager. I enable sales professionals & proposal writers to sell computer outsourcing services to large corporations. I program & maintain a database of company information. of sorts I am a publisher.

I am a reluctant to use the word slave to describe myself. people do not inspect my teeth at job interviews. what they do inspect however may be just as heinous.

Mark you teach. i imagine my job to be less "free" than yours (but i don't know what your title is). you also have a utopian element that you can claim i.e. blowing up the normative brain.

& i think you are right when you say that artists not in the academe have a tendency to think they have made better economic choices because then they think they can call themselves real artists. we're not academic artists! we do! we do not teach! we generate/demonstrate a body of knowledge "about" the world: physics & biology. (you can define about any way you like.)

real critics are supposed to generate/demonstrate a body of knowledge about canonical texts categorized in certain time periods and/or geographical locations and/or identity plates.

real critics use a different energy/brain wave to generate their work than real artists.

real artists don't need to look at art or writing to generate their work. real critics do. real artists see themselves out ahead of real critics.

then there is the artist critic, like yourself. you must flip back & forth between these modes if you want to get paid. when you are doing art you feel guilty for not doing enough critical work. when you are doing critical work you feel guilty for not doing enough art. this flipping has caused some artist/critics to make bad art. grad school & tenure have been known to kill the creativity of not a few good artists (not to mention good critics). however, this says nothing about what can be done.

i think i used the phrase "clearer, not better" in your presence to describe the econmic reality of real artists. that is, clearer in relation to artist/critics, but not better. I said this in response to your remark about working as a journalist and how you had to lie so much. what i thought was implicit in your statement and what I objected to was that, now that you were no longer a journalist, but a teacher, you didn't have to lie, or at least didn't have to lie as much. I may agree with the last clause and secretly i will tell you that flipping and cloudniess have always been more appealing concepts to me than clarity & I love the opportunies I get at my corporate job to teach writing, even if it is sales rhetoric. actually, sales rhetoric is metaphorically based on seduction, so it has its moments.

the clarity of the real artist causes a loss of dignity if corporate. the real artist must schelp & stay put, doesn't have free time to go to gatherings, doesn't have summers off like most academes.

the real artist may have more flexibility in terms of where to live.

but I belive these things all balance out, you do what you have to do, you either make good art or bad art and it really doesn't depend much on your job. I assume that this little note has excluded those poeple who do not have to work. I wonder how many trust fund babies would like to talk about their experiences? Or put another way: do you make better art if you don't have to work? or are on unemployment, etc. I mean I am annoyed at the present age when compared to the myth of artists in the 60s who could supposedly survive without permanent corporate or academic employment. For example, when you hear people talk about Bolinas. Then also I have left out the working class, for example Robert Kocik, who works in wood.

Bill

-----

Date: Thu, 12 Dec 1996 15:20:09 -0500

From: Mark Wallace <[REDACTED]>

Subject: computers, academies, slavery

I've noticed that with all this recent discussion of poets who work in the academy analyzing the academy, and poets who work in the computer field analyzing the academy, that these same poets haven't been discussing the computer industry.

So--Tom, Ron (Bill Luoma maybe too, right?), a question for you. While in many instances I agree with your critique of the academy (I know a slave when I am one), there's seems to be in your posts the suggestion that your own choices regarding economic matters and survival have been better ones. So, tell us about the computer industry. You're not slaves there, I take it? Or at least not



slaves to the same degree? I'd be curious to know how your own industry affects your creative life. Why is that choice working for you, if it is? We're NOT talking about the difference between slaves and slave owners, right? Is opportunity there, where you are? For whom?

Please excuse the inability of this modem to "correct" "errors."

Mark Wallace

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432. **Judy Roitman**

**Re: patr-iarchy/onization**

Sun 15 Dec 1996

*yes judy i see what you mean about no 20th century comparisons for niedecker--but then again corman lives in japan and may not see any worthy comparisons in terms of style or point of view or whatever except from other times and places?*

*burt*

This is the second time that a possible misunderstanding has arisen. Let me be very clear that the blurbs I quoted were not by Corman. Corman was the editor.

----- 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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433. **Diane Marie Ward**

**Re: Lit OnLion**

Sun 15 Dec 1996

The URL for the amazing Chadwyck Healey site Loss was describing is:  
<http://lion.chadwyck.com/>

On Sun, 15 Dec 1996, Tosh wrote:

*LION is Chadwyck-Healey's attempt at a MASSIVE database in literature. (Up to the 20th century that is.) It includes English and American Poetry, African-American Literature, much more. Anyway, you should read about it by visiting their web page. It's potentially an important research/teaching resource for some folks. It's the EPC featured link of the week also available in EPC's Connects page.*

WHAT IS THE ADDRESS FOR THIS SITE?

Diane Ward



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

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434. **Kathrine Varnes**  
**Re: patr-iarchy/onization**  
*Sun 15 Dec 1996*

Reading this thread, I keep thinking of how angry Elizabeth Bishop would be when reports on her readings would say that she looked just like somebody's grandmother -- and how this just didn't happen to her male contemporaries -- we might compare Whitman to Father Time, but never to gramps.

For me, the issue is, okay, LN is one the finest poets writing. Why not just leave it at that? Surely that's enough praise. But maybe part of the agenda here is that there can only be one "female" at a time. She's one of the finest, of which there's only one gal. So I see and share in what led to Judy Roitman's original post. I've just been reading reviews in the 60s and 70s that do the exact same thing -- complete with ample deployment of the adjective "domestic," which is, let's face it, completely useless and often wrong. Have you ever seen a blurb read: "One of the best male poets writing today"? That's a book I'd love to see.

Kathrine

On Sat, 14 Dec 1996, Burt Kimmelman -@NJIT wrote:

*"Because the Woman Poet category is trivializing": Okay, but maybe in the early 80s. . . . no, never mind that. . . . i guess my point is that LN can be usefully read, especially in her "domestic" poems, as putting forth a distinctly woman's view of the world, of men, of women . . . .*

*I see your point and agree with you, but isn't also true that Corman placed her among all poets first and only then among women poets second.*

*Am I just "not getting it"?*

burt

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435. **amato**

***Re: patr-iarchy/onization***

*Sun 15 Dec 1996*

---

yeah, i too can most def. see judy's beef relative to those neidecker blurbs...

i was wondering: i blurbed a book recently, the first full-length history of computers & writing, and called specific attention to the fact that this book (authored by two women and two men) made it clear that women's roles have been vital to this techno-laced field... my purpose was clearly not to delimit my positive appraisal of the book, but to use the opportunity to point to a particular gendering where i thought it might do some good... i recall trying like hell when i wrote that blurb not to sound condescending, but i suppose somebody might still find my observation so...

joe

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436. **mgk3k**

***Re: Response to Mark (et al)***

*Sun 15 Dec 1996*

---

Graduate Student Caucus Motions and Resolution submitted to MLA

I posted this here about a week ago, and it went without comment. I'm hopeful that that means it was generally read, and perhaps approved of and filed away for future reference. But in case it was overlooked -- and this was also while the listserv was hiccupping -- I'm reposting apropos of recent discussion by Joe, David, and others. These actions by the Graduate Student Caucus account for nearly half of the MLA Delegate Assembly's agenda at the upcoming convention. They're certainly only the beginning of what needs to be done, but the resolution in particular represents an attempt to move MLA in the activist direction also called for by C. Nelson in his *\_Profession\_* piece.

Please consider attending the Delegate Assembly meetings (sessions 178 and 432) and feel free to forward as appropriate. Those who'd like more information about the GSC may contact me or its current President, Marc Bousquet <[REDACTED]>.

Apologies to those here for whom these matters are not especially relevant.

--Matt (GSC VP for Policy)

Drafted by the Steering Committee of the Graduate Student Caucus of the MLA:

*October 15, 1996. The Graduate Student Caucus respectfully submits the following motions to the Delegate Assembly:*

*1) Staffing patterns--Standards*

*Whereas the proportion of part-time teachers in the academy has accelerated to unacceptable levels over the past two decades, and*

*Whereas language and literature departments have been particularly vulnerable in this regard, and*

*Whereas this trend threatens academic freedom, faculty self-governance, democratic access to the profession, reduces opportunity for student-faculty interaction, and disables the production of new knowledge in the discipline,*

*We move that the Committee on Professional Employment determine minimum standards of acceptable full time/part time ratios by various institutional circumstances, and report those standards by the next convention.*

*Motion 2 Staffing Patterns--Accreditation*

*We move that MLA direct substantial efforts to convincing accreditation agencies that educationally sound full-time/part-time faculty ratios (measured on a department-by-department basis) should be a determining factor in the accreditation process.*

*Motion 3. Public Relations.*

*Whereas working conditions in the academy are directly affected by social policy, and*

*Whereas MLA already devotes resources to public relations,*

*We move that MLA direct substantial public relations resources toward the immediate task of making the public aware of the educational advantages of reconverting part-time work to full-time jobs.*

*Motion 4. Representation.*

*Whereas MLA has recently acted to provide proportional representation for graduate students in the Delegate Assembly (MLA Constitution X.3),*

*Whereas the principle of "fair representation" in the Executive Council is already established with respect to the variety of modern languages represented by the membership (MLA Constitution VII.7 and VIII.5), and*

*Whereas graduate students and adjunct faculty do more than forty percent of all higher education teaching,*

*We move that MLA extend the principles of fair and proportional representation to the Executive Council and standing committees of the association to include graduate students and adjunct faculty in proportion to their membership in the association.*

*[motions revised November 19th] MORE-Resolution revisions follow below*

---

*October 15, 1996. The Graduate Student Caucus respectfully submits the following resolution to the Delegate Assembly:*

**RESOLUTION:**

*Whereas the increasing exploitation of graduate student and adjunct labor threatens the academic employment futures of at least one third of the Association's present membership (and all of its future membership), and*

*Whereas the law represents an important instrument in shaping staffing patterns in higher education, both through funding initiatives (such as California's 1988 act AB 1725, which provides incentives for community colleges to move toward a staffing pattern of 75% full-time instructors), and labor-equity decisions (such as recent decisions at the state and federal level determining the right of graduate employees at both public and private universities to collective bargaining),*

*Be it resolved that MLA take the lead in working with other disciplinary and higher-education groups in encouraging legislative and policy bodies at the national or state level to adopt and fund initiatives which would provide for labor equity in graduate-employee and adjunct work, and provide incentives for higher-education institutions to begin reductions in their reliance upon such labor.*

*[revised November 19th]*

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437. **Ron Silliman**

**Granite Blurbs**

Sun 15 Dec 1996

---

I don't own the '85 edition of Granite Pail, but I do own the 1969 Jargon Press edition of T&G (The Collected Poems...) where the second of those blurbs occurs, penned in fact by Jonathon Williams, the publisher. In that edition at least, the paragraph begins "Lorine Niedecker is the most absolute poetess since Emily Dickenson."

Well, there are ways in which the 1960s are remarkably a long time ago, right?

Williams, it's worth noting, was one of the first poets (and especially first southern poets) to be aggressively and politically out of the closet. But there is a certain plantation tone to his anglophilia and it creeps into other discourses, as here.

By the bye, if the younger folks on this list haven't read Williams work, the early books in particular are totally worth reading in their own right. I recall not "getting" the work of Clark Coolidge until Barrett Watten noted the sense of humor in it, which BW saw as the influence jointly of Whalen and Williams. And it's true.

Ron Silliman

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438. **Dorulett D Ana**

**Friday December 20, 1996 at 8 p. m.**

Sun 15 Dec 1996

---

Open Forum For The Arts

Friday December 20, 1996 at 8 p. m.

152 Mercer Street - 4th floor (between Hudson & Prince Street)

Admission by invitation only

call [REDACTED] or [REDACTED]

The Rift literary magazine in conjunction with Midnight Sonata Productions Inc. presents Open Forum For The Arts featuring Theatrical Performances, Music, Painting and Sculpture, Photography and Film, Poetry reading, Storytelling, Fashion Show, Demonstrations, Networking and more. Open to all Scheduling of storytellers, poetry readers and acoustic musicians will take place that evening. All other performers and artists NEED TO CONTACT The Rift at [REDACTED] prior to December 16, for scheduling and set-up details. ----- End forwarded message -----

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439. **duane davis**

***Re: Adorno and Mandel***

*Sun 15 Dec 1996*

---

It would seem difficult to reply effectively (though Jeremy Green had done very well indeed) to Tom Mandel's posts re: T.Adorno, not because there are not useful things to say but because Mandel wants to cut the ground out from beneath any reaction but his own: \*I don't, either, want to be drawn into a debate on the subject or related subjects or on Adorno's work. I don't have anything useful to say about it.\* Nor am I sure that gaining tenure on whatever planet means that a person can opt out of taking responsibility for one's statements and beliefs. One may, as Mandel points out, believe whatever one wishes; once that belief is shared with others in a forum such as this there is an implied expectation that the belief has some relevance and can be backed up.

Mandel takes care to point out that his attack is not directed at the work; it is Adorno himself, his life, that is at issue (though he allows himself the luxury of crossing that line by dismissing what he has read by Adorno as \*monumentally self-aggrandizing\*). This is disingenuous at best. It is very doubtful that anyone would be discussing Adorno, Heidegger or Arendt for that matter were it not for their written works. Whether or not Adorno was a \*toad\* is, as Mandel notes, most likely a matter of personal opinion; Adorno's place in the critical thought of the 20th century is far more complex.

Susan Buck-Morss treated the Adorno character issue in her book, *The Origin of Negative Dialectics* (published in 1977). Her treatment is more circumspect though more adequately documented (perhaps she did not yet have tenure on one of the available planets). She quotes from an Oct 7, 1934 letter where Adorno wrote (he had left Germany in the Spring of the same year) that he \*was trying to stay in Germany at all costs...\* and that if he had been able to stay in Germany he \*would have had no political objection...\* (These are quotes from the letter.)

There is no doubt that Adorno's position here is foolish and wrong. Blinded by his hopes for his own advancement and by an exaggerated sense of his own abilities, accomplishments and self-importance, he minimizes the dangers both he himself and others were facing at the time. Some of this he justifies by a misplaced hope that Hitler would fall from power before more harm was done.

He was wrong.

He was wrong and he went on to write brilliantly of modern culture.

Granted, intelligence on paper is not a guarantee of intelligence in life; I doubt that any of us would care for a detailed chart of correspondence to be drawn up between the two for our own lives. All criticism, as has been said many times

before, may be autobiography; it is seldom, however, intended as autobiography. Adorno may not have addressed in his writing what was most shameful in his own life, but he did, quite consistently, address what he believed to be most important to that life and to ours.

Tom Mandel's pain is evident in his posts and it is clear that he believes it is important to remember who we are and where we have come from. So do I but at the risk of sounding a bit churlish, I feel there is a larger issue here than Tom's pain: if Adorno has written himself into a room I believe that would be a very big room, on the order, perhaps, of a good chunk of the world we inhabit. I, for one, appreciate and am grateful for Adorno's unflinching, admittedly mandarin, descriptions of that world in *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, *Negative Dialectics* and the essays in *Prisms*. I have owned and operated a record store in Denver CO for over eighteen years and feel that Adorno's writing on music, most esp in the *Philosophy of Music*, speaks powerfully and cogently to the complex relations between aesthetics and the social and cultural reproduction of experience (& this would include his remarks on jazz -- but more of that in another post).

This is already too long and may try your patience. I would, in closing, urge people to read Adorno for themselves. What he has to say is vital, living and important. Tom Mandel may believe that while reading someone we should be prepared to pick them out of a line-up and look over their rap sheet but words are not that easy to jail.

Duane Davis

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440. **George Bowering**  
***Re: patr-iarchy/onization***

*Mon 16 Dec 1996*

---

*Have you ever seen a blurb read:  
"One of the best male poets writing today"? That's a book I'd love to  
see.*

*Kathrine*

Once, some years ago, Allen Ginsberg said that Victor Coleman and i were the best two heterosexual poets in Canada. I was pleased. I dont mind being called one of the best of anything.

George Bowering.

2499 West 37th Ave.,



Vancouver, B.C.,  
Canada V6M 1P4

fax: [REDACTED]

e-mail: [REDACTED]

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441. **9448721p**

***Re: Art + Language***

*Mon 16 Dec 1996*

---

Now that I've checked, the founder members of A&L were David Bainbridge, Harold Hurrell, Michael Baldwin and Terry Atkinson in '68. Charles Harrison didn't join 'til '71.

Barrett Watten's TOTAL SYNTAX has an interesting essay on the group.

Their own writings are, defiantly, in the most desiccated tradition of Anglo-Saxon analytic philosophy - out of date even at the time, virtually unreadable now.

robin

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442. **Michael Heller**

***Re: Niedecker***

*Mon 16 Dec 1996*

---

To all on the list, may I recommend LORINE NIEDECKER: WOMAN AND POET, edited by Jenny Penberthy, National Poetry Foundation, University of Maine at Orono. Available in both cloth and paper. Published a few months ago.

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443. **tmandel**

***Jeremy on me on Adorno***

*Mon 16 Dec 1996*

---

The name change: I'm pretty sure the review was published under Wiesengrund (which, btw, I don't identify as a common Jewish name -- any help on this?), under Wiesengrund-Adorno, that is.

The name change coming in 1938 by no means eliminates the possible intention of burying a Jewish past (or, indeed, it may be a German past which the change wishes to obscure!)

"Tom's earlier messages seemed to me to indicate that the review and letter made the whole of Adorno's work trivial, toadish and self-aggrandizing."

Can't argue with "seemed to me" but that was not my intention. Adorno is a problem and not a "trivial" one. The epithet "toad" was meant as the insult it is but not as a reference to any characteristic of the work. "Self-aggrandizing" -- now that is an interesting question, especially given Adorno's pessimism about reason, indeed his general pessimism. It would be interesting to discuss the possible relationship between these two. How can someone deeply pessimistic (and I don't think it is necessary to challenge this in his work: i.e. I don't see it as a guise or ruse or even an embedded sub-textual narrative device) also write in a way that so evidently displays his virtuosity and so evidently drives to a "right" position that is to be identified totally with the author?

To me pessimism becomes interesting in people and their writings where it is poised against a countering optimism. Kafka is an emblematic example of this kind of writer, and one could name others too. Indeed, Benjamin is a wonderful example as well.

(I'm writing quickly here, btw, as I have a full day ahead of me and must leave for a meeting in a few minutes: the terms "pessimism" and "optimism" are markers in this post for a range of qualities of writing and thought -- a Virgilian sadness of things, a musical joy, black humor, and much more I don't have time - and probably don't need - to unpack here.)

As to an unalloyed pessimism, and this is mere hypothesis, at what point does it, or even must it (must it?), blend into cynicism? What replaces the value you find it hard to see in reason or in life?

Adorno and his work, far from trivial, might offer a locus for thinking about these issues.

Above all, I think, it might be fascinating to compare Adorno with a figure like Lukacs, who bent his view and expressions and work to meet the needs and strictures of political history. Yet, when we look at his work in retrospect, there is an integrity to it and a constant obsession with a set of themes that seem deeply central in European history. His adaptability in other words now appears to be a way of cleaving to the essential. Just some thoughts in anticipation of yours.

Tom Mandel

\*\*\*\*\*  
Tom Mandel \* 2927 Tilden St. NW  
Washington DC 20008 \* [REDACTED]  
vox: [REDACTED] \* fax [REDACTED]  
\*\*\*\*\*

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444. **Burt Kimmelman**  
***Re: patr-iarchy/onization***

*Mon 16 Dec 1996*

---

judy,  
who wrote the blurbs?  
burt

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445. **Herb Levy**  
***Burt Bacharach redux***

*Mon 16 Dec 1996*

---

I was going through the West while Western movies were a hot topic here, so I didn't join in on the threads.

I don't want to go over old ground here, but 'cause there was high praise for Burt Bacharach's music for Westerns, I thought some folks might want to know there's a forthcoming 2-CD set on John Zorn's Tzadik label, in the Radical Jewish Culture series called Burt Bacharach: Great Jewish Music.

I don't know more about it now, but I'd guess it'll be out later this winter.

Bests

Herb Levy



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446. **Peter Quartermain**  
***Re: Quartermain/Oppen***

*Mon 16 Dec 1996*

---

Dear Stephen Vincent:

Yours is a very interesting letter indeed (and I'm appending it as a reminder for those who, like me, have e-mail-overload-amnesia). What I had in mind in saying that male writers as a rule ignored the work of younger (feminist?) women's writing, was the simple fact you allude to of various male-dominated poetry groups with their house-woman token member, eg the NY School or the (amorphous, nowadays) Beats for sure but not uniquely. Various male poets were quick to review and/or take under their wing young and more or less unknown men poets, but paid no attention to women writers at all. Rattle off

the names of any and all of the established male writers / poets / critics of the sixties and seventies, and their silence when faced with -- well, with Niedecker, let alone Judy Grahn -- is predictably deafening. My sense is still that Oppen was to all intents and purposes the ONLY white male writer \*of his generation\* to heed writing by younger women. That the Bay Area was extremely active is true, yes, and I'm sorry if my quick shorthand summary (and my talk) is misleading. Oppen's interest dates from his residence in Brooklyn, however, in 1960 or so (this is difficult to establish, since there is (necessarily) not much information for the years 1960-1962 in the Letters (he was, clearly, reading Levertov then; but who else, I wonder). He's reading Naomi Replanski (not, perhaps, to be classed as a younger poet then, but who else is reading her at that time? or even now? and she's a really interesting writer) in 1958; DuPlessis in 1965, and so on. I guess if we want to discuss this further we should go backchannel.

My essential point, I think, still holds, but of course, as for my ignorance, mea culpa..

Which means, yes, I was wrong; and I'm really pleased to be corrected. Guilty of oversimplification and thus injustice (if that's at issue), I do indeed know of Momo's Press, in that I've used one of its publications (Dahlen's A Reading 1-7) in poetry courses, but knew NOTHING about the press, assumed it was and still is run by women -- (but any mail I sent there was returned by the post office as undeliverable. So your letter is useful and fills in a much-to-be-filled-in gap.

This is especially so regarding \_Shocks\_ which I'd never heard of -- I am now trying to get hold of copies -- difficult in Vancouver (NO copies in any library here that I can find), and of course Canadian funds being what they are, no library is likely to buy any copies anyway.

Thanks.

Peter

At 05:43 PM 12/12/96 -0500, Stephen Vincent wrote:

>Dear Peter Quartermain,  
>Unfortunately I had to miss your talk at the Poetry Center - but, indeed  
>congratulations on the swelling of attention the subject it has caused!  
>I was drawn to your post in which you suggest something to the effect that  
>George was unique - with the exception of some gay men - in his interest in  
>work by young women - feminists - in the early seventies. (Your post  
>disappeared but I think that's a fair approximation of what you suggested?)  
>  
>I think that remark really mis-reads the condition of poetry in the Bay Area  
>in the late sixties and early seventies. I want to assume you are familiar  
>with Momo's Press(??) of which I - who am not gay - was the publisher. It was

>a very robust period - especially in terms of the writing that emerged with  
>the quite wild emergence of various and often angry liberations (feminist,  
>gay men, lesbians, Latino, Black, Asian, etc.) It was a prolific period in  
>terms of large public readings, magazines and books. My magazine Shocks  
was  
>partly so named on account of all the friction in the air and sought to  
>critically make some sense of it. Momo's as you might know published first  
>books of Beverly Dahlen and Jessica Hagedorn. Across the Bay, Shameless  
Hussy  
>and The Women's Press collective were publishing first books of Alta, Ntozake  
>and Judy Grahn among others. The new writers made no bones about  
centering a  
>new politics within the practice of the poem. For women poets who had been  
>shaped by a male dominated anarchist or apolitical poetics , or those who had  
>been involved with a male-dominated-with-queen-attached matrix (New York  
>school?) - the cross over into an activist poetry that directly challenged a  
>variety of social constructs was a dangerous thing to do.  
>Oppen - who in I my awareness of him made it part of his life to attend to  
>the young and what was going on - was highly attentive and naturally  
>responsive to the unrest. I think it would have been quite unlike him to have  
>remained oblivious. (He once complimented me in letter of thanks for sending  
>him an issue of Shocks as indeed "shocking"). Indeed I believe he was  
> challenged - and perhaps to a degree threatened by the vigor of what was  
>taking place. Intellectually - as a secular and progressive pluralist - I  
>suspect he was all for it. Emotionally I suspect it probably felt dangerous  
>to him and the world of male centered modernism of which he was still in the  
>weave. But as a responsible elder, one who had partly been put back on the  
>map by the young, I think he didn't shy, "rightly or wrongly", from the  
>paternal role of taking part.  
>  
>I don't know if you ever read the final "Poetry Reading" issue of Shocks  
>#7-8-9 - about 350 pages long - it includes my own account of readings in the  
>Bay Area from the early sixties into the mid-seventies, as well as accounts  
>by Frances Jaffer, Jessica Hagedorn and Thulani Davis. If you haven't, I  
>think it would help fill out the context of this period of Oppen's life.  
>SPD still has a copies of The Poetry Reading - I'm personally down to a  
>couple. If you are further interested in other issues of Shocks and the  
>history of Momo's Press, the Bancroft Library possesses the entire archive.  
>I look forward to going out to the Poetry Center to see you on tape. & I hope  
>anything I have said here is - out of not being at your talk - not said  
>wrongly, or in ignornace  
>Cheers,



448. **Christina Fairbank Chirot**

**Re: patr-iarchy/onization**

Mon 16 Dec 1996

---

Re Cid Corman and Lorine Niedecker:

when Jenny Penberthy was here last June to give the first annual LN lecture at woodland Pattern--Penberthy played the one tape known to exist of LN reading--made by Cid Corman while on a visit with LN. (Penberthy pointed out that after LN's trip to NYC in the Thirties--writers came to Wisconsin to visit LN-- I don't think that Corman's living in Japan--as hinted at by some on this list--affected his judgement re LN--after all--he came from Japan to visit her . . . (Henry Miller used to point out the American fear that expatriates' minds had somehow become obscured or lost the sense of true judgement they'd have had if they'd only stayed at home . . . but blurbs seem to exist, when not bland and empty rhetoric, in a zone of their own and to disturb in some way--i'm still pissed at the blurbist for a record jacket who stated that The Standells were a Boston band! And not only that--but the greatest sixties Punk Band from that city . . . "I Love that dirty water" indeed . . .

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449. **Peter Quartermain**

**Re: Granite Blurbs**

Mon 16 Dec 1996

---

Let me second, vociferously, Ron's comments on Jonathan Williams -- he is (lie zillions of others) one of the most neglected national and even international treasures -- his prose as well as his poetry, his archeological works of retrieval as well as his energetic promotion of folk art. And of course his astonishing record as a publisher over the decades. At times he's too whimsical, at times too curmudgeonly perhaps, but a poet of great wit and amazing range -- a sharp eye and ear. And not just the earliest books.

He's also, like so many others on this list, having difficulties finding a publisher for his work.

Peter

At 02:58 PM 12/15/96 -0800, Ron Silliman wrote:

about Jonathan Williams, it's worth noting, was one of the first poets (and especially

>first southern poets) to be aggressively and politically out of the

>closet. But there is a certain plantation tone to his anglophilia and

>it creeps into other discourses, as here.

>

>By the bye, if the younger folks on this list haven't read Williams  
>work, the early books in particular are totally worth reading in their  
>own right. I recall not "getting" the work of Clark Coolidge until  
>Barrett Watten noted the sense of humor in it, which BW saw as the  
>influence jointly of Whalen and Williams. And it's true.

 $\succ$ 

>Ron Silliman

 $\geq$  $\geq$ 

+

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

+

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450. **Ward Tietz**

## Henri Chopin

Mon 16 Dec 1996

I had the pleasure of hearing Henri Chopin in Geneva today and I was able to get a copy of his recent cd entitled "Le Corpsbis & Co." His work is wonderful, among the very best in sound poetry.

Here are the addresses of the distributors in the U.S. and Italy for anyone interested:

Cortical Foundation  
23715 West Malibu Road #419  
Malibu, CA 90265

Nepless  
Casella Postale 1597  
I-20123 Milano Corduso  
Italy

Ward Tietz

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451. **Burt Kimmelman**  
**Re: patr-iarchy/onization**  
*Mon 16 Dec 1996*

---

Sorry Kathrine (and whoever it was who posted some of LN's poems to demonstrate how universal her work is and not necessarily gender- specific--my apologies for forgetting who it was at this moment), but whatever else LN has done (yes, those poems could have been written by either man or woman, do resonate with either man or woman), she has given us a singular and important view of a woman in a marriage in a particular time and place and socio-economic status. There is, I guess, more than one Niedecker. Now, that is just not true; there was only one Niedecker, but of course we can talk about different strands of her work. I hasten to say that the so-called by me "domestic" strand was not one shared by either Sappho or Lady Murasaki, to my knowledge, but then again the blurbist for Granite Pail had another strand in mind. I don't mean here to dispute you, Kathrine, or Judy; what you have both said is true. On the other hand, I would hope that you both are not precluding other important aspects of LN's work. Who would compare with the "domestic" LN? Dickinson?--No way. Moore, HD, Bishop, Howe, Hejinian? I don't think so.

Burt

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452. **k.a. hehir**  
**Re: Friday December 20, 1996 at 8 p. m.**  
*Mon 16 Dec 1996*

---

On Sun, 15 Dec 1996, Doruleet D Ana wrote:

*Open Forum For The Arts*  
*Admission by invitation only>*  
*Open to all*

doesn't sound very open to me.  
or is that a standing open invitation?

kevin

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453. **Ian Wilson**  
**Poetry Workshop**  
*Mon 16 Dec 1996*

---

Anyone in the Los Angeles area who might be interested in participating in a weekend poetry work, February 1 and 2, 1997 - our workshop leader is a Lannan Award winning poet.

Full details on backchannel.

Ian Wilson



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454. **Eliza McGrand- CVA Guest**  
**Re: Adorno and Mandel**  
*Mon 16 Dec 1996*

---

i hardly think it is fair to paraphrase tom mandel thusly:

"Tom Mandel may believe that while reading someone we should be prepared to pick them out of a line-up and look over their rap sheet but words are not that easy to jail."

his post never implied one ought to "jail" adorno's words, nor that one should pick him out of a line-up, whatever that is meant to say.

adorno wrote SPECIFICALLY ABOUT the holocaust, taking on an "i am a victim" pose, wrote attacking nazis from a righteous, my-hands-are-not-dirty" posture, wrote, again from my-hands-are-not-dirty, self-righteous, victimized posture about corrupt power.

what tom mandel points out, and rightfully so, is a terrible crack in this posture: adorno WAS a victimizer, he WAS a nazi and supported them, he turned against other jews, and he was extremely corrupt in his own use of power, or so mandel's examples (if they are backed up. i am not a great follower of adorno's work) make quite clear. this is horrifying from a personal point of view, interesting from an analytical, de-constructionist/sociological point of view. it is also an insult to the victims.

mandel has NOT said, anywhere, that adorno's works should in any way be banned, hidden away, or otherwise "jailed."

e

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455. **William Slaughter**

**Web Del Sol**

*Mon 16 Dec 1996*

---

Mike Neff, who is the man behind Web Del Sol but who is not a member of this list, has asked me if it would be appropriate to post (through me) the following announcement to the list. I read it and didn't see why not, so here it is.

The URL is <http://www.cais.net/aesir/fiction> but don't be deceived by the "fiction" part of it. Notice what Mike has to say in his announcement about poetry. And there's more on his site than he's telling us here. I really do believe that it's worth checking out, and that the work Mike is doing will reward the time you spend at Web Del Sol.

I must confess that Mike has been kind to my own work. Web Del Sol features links both to Mudlark, the e-journal of poetry & poetics that I edit, and to Pleasure Boat Studio, which has just published my book, *The Politics of My Heart*. But that's not why I spend some of my time there.

Keep in mind that the following announcement is intended for general release. Mike didn't write it specifically for this list. Do give Web Del Sol a look. And let Mike hear from you.

William Slaughter



Web Del Sol

Locus of Literary Art on the Net

Web Del Sol, a growing literary arts complex on the WWW, offers a collaborative effort on the part of dozens of writers, editors, and publications to make contemporary writing not only accessible to the average person, but a provocative alternative to other forms of entertainment and enlightenment.

Web Del Sol showcases the best in American and international contemporary writing. Among the individual author websites hosted at Web Del Sol are those of Pulitzer Prize winner, Robert Olen Butler and renowned poet and Bollingen Prize winner, David Ignatow. Writers included are Erin Belieu, Khaled Mattawa, Michael Martone, Kristy Nielsen, Ben Marcus, Bradford Morrow, and Madison Smartt Bell, among others. Web Del Sol plays host to several literary publications, namely AGNI, The Literary Review, Conjunctions, The Prose Poem, The Dominion Review, and Zyzzyva, creating websites that give them a distinct presence on the WWW in order to promote the writers and poets they have discovered. Web Del Sol also highlights the best in new writing from the world's finest literary publications, among them Mississippi Review, Sycamore

Review, Atlantic Monthly, Cream City Review, Ploughshares, and Missouri Review.

Fiction types at Web Del Sol include literary, experimental, prose poem, historical, ethnic, satire, mainstream, and translations. The reader will find critical and challenging essays, a large collection of superlative poetry, interviews with established and emerging writers, and a literary sourceplex to aid in research. Pages on the website, featuring jazz and java, provide comprehensive links to a range of activities, news, art, hotspots, and literary sites which include the best online ezines such as Blue Moon Review, Eclectica, and In Vivo, as well as those print magazines which have recently gone online.

Web Del Sol, at <http://www.cais.net/aesir/fiction>, has no peer on the WWW when it comes to depth and variety of literary art. Attain a high level of consciousness here, wade head deep into catharsis and self-discovery, or else lose your grip to explore unique points of view on just about everything you can imagine revealed through the vision of some of the finest writers and poets on the planet. A short story or a poem here might provoke you, enlighten you, or even anger you, but don't worry, that's the whole idea. A hefty cache awaits.

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#### 456. **aerialedge**

##### ***Re: Adorno and Mandel***

*Tue 17 Dec 1996*

---

Eliza McGrand wrote:

>what tom mandel points out, and rightfully so, is a terrible crack in  
>this posture: adorno WAS a victimizer, he WAS a nazi >and supported them,  
Tom did not say Adorno was a Nazi.

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#### 457. **Jeremy F Green**

##### ***Adorno marginalia***

*Tue 17 Dec 1996*

---

Tom raises a number of very interesting questions in his post. Constraints of time and (grading-sapped) energy prevent me from taking them on (even if I had useful comments to hand). Instead, a couple of jottings on the question of the works and biography which are tangentially related to the issue of A.'s politics (and so perhaps to the Lukacs comparison).

I once asked a convinced "adornoboy" (Stephen Rodefer's coinage in a recent poem) if there was a biography of Adorno (in German, since there isn't one in English) and met with a strange response: there would be no point writing a

bio. of Adorno. After all, he went on, what would it say? During these years A. worked hard on the critique of phenomenology and the problem of the intellectual division of labor, etc., etc.? This didn't satisfy me at the time and it doesn't now (especially in light of the Muntzel review and 1966 letter). The other--no less unsatisfactory--position would be the one which uses biography to discredit the writings, the kind of approach practised by the British historian Paul Johnson in his book *Intellectuals* (since this book may not have crossed the Atlantic--I hope not!--I should probably gloss the reference: Johnson dug up whatever sleaze he could to discredit any writer whose politics did not coincide with his own [rampant, raging, right-wing, it hardly needs saying]--thus, Brecht conducted multiple affairs and so is not worth reading; the general aim was to discredit the category of intellectual, I suppose).

As far as Adorno goes, one might ask why he was so determined to remain in Germany, even if it meant ingratiating himself with the Nazis. Part of it, no doubt, has to do with biographical contingency (the fact that he couldn't seem to establish himself in Oxford, where he was spending part of the time as one of Gilbert Ryle's 'advanced students' [!], and the fact that his fiancée Gretel Karplus was still living in Berlin--and no doubt more along the same lines); but part of it surely also has to do with his conception of politics and his faith in the overriding importance of European culture. The strategy of 'hibernation' sound uncomfortably like his conception of politics in his later philosophy, where--very roughly--the work of art becomes the repository for the utopian glimmers extinguished from praxis.

Pessimism? Yes, certainly. Does he identify himself with the "right position"? I guess the defence here might be that his texts dialectically refuse the 'philosophical' standpoint (part of the burden of the essay on Beckett's *Endgame*, perhaps), and this is where the modernist artwork steps in, embodying what it is beyond the power of philosophical discourse to state. Those moments where the pessimism seems peculiarly the promise of redemption (like the last section in *Minima Moralia*) do resonate with Benjamin in significant ways.

I'd better stop now--all systems flagging (but not before wierd Adorno fact of the day: A. once wrote an opera based on *Tom Sawyer*....could there be more of a mismatch?)

Good night all

Jeremy

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458. **Tenney Nathanson**

**Jonathan Williams**

Tue 17 Dec 1996

---

check out "Excavations from the Case Histories of Havelock Ellis"!!

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459. **George Bowering**

**Re: patr-iarchy/onization**

Tue 17 Dec 1996

---

Have a look at the blurb on the back of the Sun & Moon edition of Djuna Barnes's *\_Interviews\_*

George Bowering.

2499 West 37th Ave.,  
Vancouver, B.C.,  
Canada V6M 1P4

fax: [REDACTED]

e-mail: [REDACTED]

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460. **Pierre Joris**

**Colonel Williams, Chopin & Ubu**

Tue 17 Dec 1996

---

Let me endorse the two poetas recently mentioned here:

Jonathan Williams whose *\_Blues & Roots/Rue & Bluets\_*, *\_The Loco Logodaedalist in Situ\_*, and *\_Mahler\_* ((& maybe one can still come across his Selected *\_An Ear in Bartrams' Tree\_* in second-hand shops)) taught me -- "by ear/ he said" as Olson has it but though the latter doesn't necessarily do as well as Colonel Williams and Blackburn with that specific organ -- much about American poetry when I first came over here. Just as neglected and invisible is his companion, the poet Thomas Meyer who has one of the finest lyric voices of my generation. BTW, if it hadn't been for those two Americans & their summer hangout in the Yorkshire dales, Basil Bunting's last years would have been much less pleasant & the general stock of singlemalt scotch much higher in that region.

& Henri Chopin is indeed one of the pioneers & masters of sound poetry. His OU magazine & books are wworth snapping up whenever you come across

them. But of course, catch him in performance: nothing human is strange for that man, his body & his mike.

BTW, West Coasters -- & thinking more especially of Kevin & Dodie in SF -- did any of you get to the Centennial of the First Public Performance of UBU ROI held in Justin Herman Plaza, Embarcadero, San Francisco Sunday, 8 December 1996. Some of us Ubuistas would love to hear.

Pierre

--

=====

pierre joris 6 madison place albany ny 12202  
tel/fax [REDACTED] email: [REDACTED]  
<http://writing.upenn.edu/epc/authors/joris/>  
<http://www.albany.edu/~tm0900/nomad.html>

-----

Reality is escape. The rusty junk  
of fervent highways soothe the mind  
into self-consoling slumber. The real  
real is intimate, hard to find,  
locked & released at once in thought,  
beyond the touch of poignant imagery.

Robert Kelly ♦ Ode 16

=====

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461. **pollet**  
***Santa revisited***  
*Tue 17 Dec 1996*

---

Let's say for a moment there were a culture with two major mythical figures representing materialism. Both were easily recognizable because they wore red suits--not a common color for suits in that time and place. Both were associated with fire and fire-sources, and were frequently pictured wreathed in second-hand smoke. Both were described as excessively preoccupied with tallying good and evil deeds. One carried a pitchfork, one a whip, and get this, THE NAME OF EACH WAS AN ANAGRAM OF THE OTHER! I'm thinking of calling for a congressional investigation and the appointment of a special prosecutor. Any seconds? Solstice Greetings, Sylvester Pollet

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462. **Loss Glazier**

**Re: Henri Chopin**

Tue 17 Dec 1996

---

Many thanks to Ward for the info on Chopin. Such info is much appreciated! I've not found it easy to track down such recordings.

Along these lines, I might ask if anyone out there knows where I can get a copy of the CD of Futurist/etc. work. It was an anthology of some sort. Someone told me recently they just got it at a record store but I can't find any trace of it. Any ideas?

Feel free to backchannel me if that's more appropriate...

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463. **Dorulett D Ana**

**Re: Friday December 20, 1996 at 8 p. m.**

Tue 17 Dec 1996

---

Call and you will be invited;)

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464. **eric pape**

**Re: Adorno and Mandel**

Tue 17 Dec 1996

---

I don't think you could write about Adorno and the holocaust without making the point that, for A., the holocaust was, in some sense, the ultimate goal of Western rationalism. Of course, A. certainly considered himself deeply implicated in the traditions of high metaphysics and would thus be deeply implicated in Nazism. A little too nuanced, certainly, for many when confronted with more concrete evidence of culpability, but I don't think that anyone with even a passing familiarity of A. would argue that A. considered himself either victim or victimizer. Thanks, Eric.

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465. **Michael Boughn**

**Re: Santa revisited**

Tue 17 Dec 1996

---

WOW! Tell Ralph Reed. He'll take care of everything.

Mike





*Let's say for a moment there were a culture with two major mythical figures representing materialism. Both were easily recognizable because they wore red suits--not a common color for suits in that time and place. Both were associated with fire and fire-sources, and were frequently pictured wreathed in second-hand smoke. Both were described as excessively preoccupied with tallying good and evil deeds. One carried a pitchfork, one a whip, and get this, THE NAME OF EACH WAS AN ANAGRAM OF THE OTHER!*

*I'm thinking of calling for a congressional investigation and the appointment of a special prosecutor. Any seconds?*

*Solstice Greetings, Sylvester Pollet*

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466. **Peter Landers**

**Re: patr-iarchy/onization**

Tue 17 Dec 1996

It was neither Kathrine nor Judy who posted the LN poem (not "poems") to the list. The poem was Lake Superior. How well do you really know Neidecker? And how well do you know Sappho. She was a mother, too! This so-called "domestic" thread; have you sought it in a male poet? Care to back up your socio-economic statement with an example or two?

I posted the poem, and I doubt there are many better poems written by anyone in this century. Let Lorine speak. Prove your theory with examples.

Pete Landers

>

> Sorry Kathrine (and whoever it was who posted some of LN's poems to  
> demonstrate how universal her work is and not necessarily gender-  
> specific--my apologies for forgetting who it was at this moment),  
> but whatever else LN has done (yes, those poems could have been written  
> by either man or woman, do resonate with either man or woman), she  
> has given us a singular and important view of a woman in a marriage in  
> a particular time and place and socio-economic status. There is, I  
> guess, more than one Niedecker. Now, that is just not true; there was  
> only one Niedecker, but of course we can talk about different strands  
> of her work. I hasten to say that the so-called by me "domestic"  
> strand was not one shared by either Sappho or Lady Murasaki, to my  
knowledge,  
> but then again the blurbist for Granite Pail had another strand in mind.  
> I don't mean here to dispute you, Kathrine, or Judy; what you have both  
> said is true. On the other hand, I would hope that you both are not  
> precluding other important aspects of LN's work.

- > Who would compare with the "domestic" LN? Dickinson?--No way. Moore,
- > HD, Bishop, Howe, Hejinian? I don't think so.
- >
- > Burt
- >

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467. **Patrick Foley**  
**Re: Adorno marginalia**

Tue 17 Dec 1996

---

*The other--no less unsatisfactory--position would be the one which uses biography to discredit the writings, the kind of approach practised by the British historian Paul Johnson in his book *Intellectuals* (since this book may not have crossed the Atlantic--I hope not! [...])*

Widely available here in paperback.

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468. **Patrick Foley**  
**Re: Granite Blurbs**

Tue 17 Dec 1996

---

*Let me second, vociferously, Ron's comments on Jonathan Williams -- he is (lie zillions of others) one of the most neglected national and even international treasures -- his prose as well as his poetry,*

Did Jonathan Williams write a book of prose called "Something Else" or something like that? I recall seeing a copy in my hometown used bookstore -- it looked interesting, but I had other priorities last time I was there -- and could pick it up over Christmas. Recommended?

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469. **Matthias Regan**  
**Re: Adorno (the model so far) (& humanity, O, humanity!)**

Tue 17 Dec 1996

---

At 07:29 PM 12/16/96 -0500, various people's contributions ended up giving us: (Sorry in advance for the considerable length!)

- >i hardly think it is fair to paraphrase tom mandel thusly:
- >
- >"Tom Mandel may believe that while
- >reading someone we should be prepared to pick them out of a line-up and
- >look over their rap sheet but words are not that easy to jail."

...

>adorno wrote SPECIFICALLY ABOUT the holocaust, taking on an "i am a  
>victim" pose, wrote attacking nazis from a righteous, my-hands-are-  
>not-dirty" posture, wrote, again from my-hands-are-not-dirty, self-  
>righteous, victimized posture about corrupt power.

>

>what tom mandel points out, and rightfully so, is a terrible crack in  
>this posture: adorno WAS a victimizer, he WAS a nazi and supported them,  
>he turned against other jews, and he was extremely corrupt in his own  
>use of power, ....

A little later in the discussion the response comes back: Adorno was not a Nazi. (Indeed, not!) I think some of this extremist rhetoric (calling A. a nazi) comes ultimately from the premise of the thread, which assumes that Adorno must be looked at as a sort of fixed entity. As though he were either pro-Nazi or a victim: not both. Not sometimes one, sometimes another. It seems like Tom Mandel is speaking out against such a decisive and unrealistic dichotomy when he writes:

| *There are no "works" that are not also "persons."*

Because this strikes me as remarkably similar to a premise Adorno (though I confess I haven't read much A. besides *\_Minima Moralia\_* and *\_Dialectic o. t. Enlightenment\_*) more or less assumes, and that Benjamin and Brecht hold as integral to their critical work. You could almost say, I think, that one of Benjamin's major contributions to contemporary theory was that he reminds us (me at least) that "persons" rather than words, rather than concepts such as history, such as Marxism, are (or should be) the origin and the end point of "works." Brecht also. And Bakhtin. They offered new "revolutionary" ways of expressing this point. They fought against strict structuralism and formalism, etc. while finding ways to at the same time to also avoid the paradigms those methods avoided.

T.M. goes on to say:

| *It is what Adorno did  
that we or someone should discuss -- not some 2d-order abstraction like  
what it "means" or its "place" in his work, but What He Did. And we  
should remember that this refers to 1934 and to 1964, to both.*

And it still appears that he is insisting that Adorno either be accepted (as a victim - ?) or condemned as "extremely corrupt in his own use of power," (in someone else's words.) How is he not both? How are we doing justice to any of these topics (Adorno, his "works", the holocaust even) if we do not allow ourselves to imagine that Adorno writing in 1934 was perhaps scared and willing to say what was necessary? He didn't know the future. And perhaps the

situation of 1934 informed his response 30 years later. He still didn't know his future. They are two entirely different claims to say a) that Adorno abused the authority of his "adopted" victimization because he was not genuinely a suffering saint or b), as I am suggesting, that he was perhaps terrified on the one hand, perhaps arrogant, ashamed on the other.

As I'm sure the above is dashed off too to make much sense: the dichotomy that has developed appears to be the result of removing unpredictable HUMAN motivation and action from the writings: and a reassertion of the fact that nothing written comes purely from history or from circumstance but also from \_undeterminable\_ humanity is integral to Adorno, Benjamin, Brecht. Because this humanity, unlike history, social circumstances, etc., is not empirically quantifiable, it is, IMO, far too often left out of the equation (exactly \_because\_ the equation model is a desired endpoint). In all the above theorists, as also in the theories of their late contemporary, Bakhtin, the insertion of this ungovernable, unknowable human element is usually swept behind various critical curtains with a shrug of the shoulders and the label "mysticism" or "religious". (I've often heard it say, for example, that Benjamin is great, but "mystical", or that Adorno or Bakhtin were fine Marxist critics but could somehow never shake that "religious edge" they peskily maintained.) I do not, of course, mean to say that such questions as Adorno's lacking recantation are not interesting, important, what have you. But they should not be used as markers of much broader judgements without the essentially unknowable quality of their origins being pointed out every now and again.

Sorry for such ridiculous length.

(Not much doing (for once) at work today.)

best,

Matthias

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470. **Christopher Alexander**

**Re: Henri Chopin**

*Tue 17 Dec 1996*

---

loss glazier written:

> Along these lines, I might ask if anyone out there knows where I can  
> get a copy of the CD of Futurist/etc. work. It was an anthology of  
> some sort. Someone told me recently they just got it at a record store  
> but I can't find any trace of it. Any ideas?  
>  
> Feel free to backchannel me if that's more appropriate...  
pls dont backchannel--d love to get my hands on this as well.

thanks. c.

..

christopher alexander, etc.



"The second edition of this book consists largely of a reproduction of the first edition, with additional theorms and examples."

--T.M. Macrobert, \_an introduction to the theory of infinite series\_

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471. **Chris Stroffolino**  
***lesson plan/ sales pitch***

*Tue 17 Dec 1996*

---

Hey Bill Wallace and Mark Luoma--I like binaries too--especially when someone else sets the terms so I can mix them up (kinda like the normative brain)--- B says, "sales rhetoric is metaphorically based on seduction, so it has its moments"---but too often in this land of money (where i come from feeling is a crime...) it seems that seduction is BASED ON sales rhetoric.... anyway that's not what i am here to say.....

REAL CRITICS VS. REAL CHEESE....

and then those of "us" who are "torn between" the two (like the Thracian singer by the tipsy bachannals) feel guilty when writing one for not writing the other.... well that's like saying i feel guilty when i'm suicidal for not being happy (and i may but that usually doesn't help) or, on a lighter note, feeling guilty when i'm happy for not being suicidal (don't know why i think it's a shame when i get feeling better.). The first option (trying to figure out why you're sad just leads to more sadness until something she has no control over comes to rescue. A BIG IF) is possible. But is the second? (feeling guilty for being happy) I don't think so.....

Anyway, this of course has EVERYTHING to do with the academic vs. "real artist" distinction.

The (I HATE THE WORD HYBRID but what the hell) academic/ artist may--in trying to participate in several dialogues-- be a very weird kind of inbalance. Yet probably no more than any others (it takes a fast car baby to lead a triple life) Like Gender (like realizing you don't like being, say, a male and so you ENVY WOMEN and then you try to undo that envy

by remembering they are human too--or the glass ceiling or something)  
So why do others "BETRAY" the real artist status bill speaks of to join  
the academy. I--as you may know--RESISTED for years. But I ultimately felt  
claustrophobic (isolated, hollow)

by the "poetry world"---

Tried the "avant-garde"--they wouldn't publish what I  
thought was my most ambitious work.

Tried the mainstream--for pretty much the same reason.

IN BOTH A FEELING OF HAVING TO APPEAL TO SOMETHING LIKE  
"MUSIC" as one in another field of specialization (politician)  
might appeal to "MODERATES"--

Wanted to start "my own scene"--like so many others have  
(though they probably won't admit it--for modesty or for  
TQM reasons)--but found no patrons and my friends seemed  
not to feel as strongly claustrophobic, unfulfilled in  
working within the assumptions of any given scene--  
or were able to keep decent paying jobs better than I  
and so could start their own journals, etc.....

So, I went academic....hoping to be funded but Pataki....  
(i digress). The point I really wanted to make was that  
THE SPECIALIZED DIVISION BETWEEN ACADEMIC AND POETRY  
scenes is something I'm very interested in straddling--  
because I feel I FIT in neither as is--but if I can somehow  
play them off each other (in my mind at least) and simply  
not be disappointed by the lack of intensely verbal engage-  
ment and argument and passion and personality in the poetry  
scene because maybe i can find it among the shakespeareans  
or in grading papers--

like one of my STUDENTS writing on STEVENS:

("Perhaps it is of more value to infuriate philosophers  
than to go along with them," is very true because philo-  
sophers love to argue. They just want to prove their  
point to you as best they can)---

and so i go back and forth and can be refreshed enough to  
try once again to bang my head against a brick wall I mean  
ignite or be ignited by the poetry scene. This movement  
may eventually allow something i crave and have not yet  
really found (a "soulmate" for instance, or even a playmate..)  
Yours in cloudiness and flipping, Chris

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472. **Henry Gould**

**Re: Santa revisited**

Tue 17 Dec 1996

And lo, there was seeneth to the hyperborean Northeth a chariot all wroughteth all overeth in wood and iron. & I lifteth up mine eyth & my tongue were stoppereth with awe and wonder, for behold in ye chariot wert a huge fat Giant who laugheth with his mouth & urgeth on hith reindeer with strong oaths. & I saideth unto her that stoodth beside me: Who? & she said unto me, 'Forsooth, what thou seeth is no demon but the verieth jolly Elf or Fellow who doth bringeth gifts unto yoonge people aaaaaaaaaaalllllll oover yon pear-shaped globe.' & I look'd & behold the Figure had vanished over the horizon beyond Buffalo, NY. & then yo ho, it beganeth to snow right heavily.

The Gospel According to Bing, XII.25

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473. **Judy Roitman**

**Re: patr-iarchy/onization**

Tue 17 Dec 1996

judy,

who wrote the blurbs?

burt

And the second was Jonathan Williams, of which I was reminded by some poetics mail.

----- 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. **tmandel**

**Andrew Klobucar's post**

Tue 17 Dec 1996

Andrew Klobucar frames his response to my first post on Adorno's attempt to ingratiate himself with the Nazis in 1934 by writing a positive review of a song cycle to a suite of Fascist poems by Baldur von Shirach and quoting Goebbels approvingly therein as well as his attempt to excuse this behavior thirty years

hence by saying that he regretted it but it surely did not put him in a class with Heidegger (and the reader will notice that every time I post on this subject I repost more or less this same statement -- there's nothing here without it) by calling attention the "more politically liberal attitude" of Arendt versus Adorno's "Marxist aesthetics."

Huh?

He continues by approving (with reservations) Adorno's published critiques of Benjamin, suggesting that the content of these might be used to oppose my characterization of his bedeviling Benjamin in the correspondence as "trivial and pettifogging." You will remember that what I was discussing was the relationship of these two human beings and not Adorno's "more thoughtful, published statements," as Klobucar dubs the unrelated (to the issue at hand, though not in subject matter) writings.

Andrew Klobucar also dubs my mention of the review, etc. as "Mr. Mandel's allegations" -- but there is no allegation involved. No one denies the review or Adorno's authorship of it. No one denies its contents either. Surely (I desperately hope) no one denies the odiousness of these pieces of behavior.

Yet, AK's phrase may represent nothing more than sloppy language; email doesn't lend itself to precision of thought in every case. This may explain as well a statement of this nature: "...it is generally accepted among intellectuals today that many of Adorno's "personal" critiques of Benjamin's more ambitious philosophical interests seem hastily offered and somewhat immature in their reasoning." The thud of Mr. K's mind closing this or any case on such evidence made me laugh out loud reading his post.

Mr. Klobucar "merely stress(es) that one must be cautious before condemning all of Adorno's critique..." and I suppose that makes sense. It would make even more sense had I done any such thing! On the other hand, caution plays a small role in my character, too small a role some would say. Mr. K is not alone in his opinion, and there is no doubt the stricture applies in some manner or other.

Finally, "Adorno's insights into the cultural logic of bourgeois rationalism remain unique in their ability to contextualise some of the most important and influential developments in western modern thought....Perhaps, Mandel is not entirely aware that he is, in some ways, calling into question an entire cultural positioning."

Casting aside the rodomontade and excessive abstraction of the language ("insights [have] ability to contextualise") what seems to be said here is that Adorno "is" interpreting developments in Western thought (in Mr. K's mind, the author, like some machine in eternity, continues his analysis beyond his mortal end); my pointing out that he tried to ingratiate himself with the Nazis, etc.



might conceivably get in the way of this activity. At this point the laughter cited above slides, as laughter so often does, into tears. Andrew Klobucar, whatever are you talking about?

Tom Mandel

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*****
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475. **tmandel**

***Eliza McGrand on Adorno***

*Tue 17 Dec 1996*

---

In what she says about my posts, Eliza McGrand is accurate. In her very well-put (wonderfully mixed, to my stiff back) metaphor of a "crack" in Adorno's "posture" she is again acute.

But, little tho I like the man I think it is inaccurate to call him a Nazi -- and partly I point this out \*because\* of my distaste for him. It would be easy enough to turn away this charge. Nor is it exactly accurate to say that he wrote as a victim; he wrote with a strongly implied (indeed a taken for granted) sense of solidarity with the victims of the holocaust. A solidarity he had \*not\* earned.

What if he had found favor in his attempt to ingratiate himself with the Nazis? What if (somehow) it had not become known that he was half Jewish? Might he then have become what EM calls him? The logic of counterfactual conditionals is notoriously complicated, and it doesn't get easier when you move from logic to social reality.

I wonder whether people want to know just how many people found it possible (and just how possible) to collaborate. Nor is there an inverse relation between this ease and the person's intelligence or even accomplishments. Heidegger is the obvious case. It is really not possible to look back at the history of philosophy without in some measure you are looking straight through his work. He utterly changed, for an obvious example, how we can see Greek philosophy. Moreover, what he has to say is immensely interesting too.

Gottfried Benn. In France, Drieu la Rochelle (strongly recommend, on a different tack, "Le feu follet" -- both the novel and the film by Louis Malle).

I find it very easy to see nihilism in Adorno's pessimism. I find it easy to imagine him embosomed in the German thirties -- but, that's just me, it's just

speculation, arguably idle speculation, possibly empirically disprovable speculation.

What is not speculative is what he did, and how he dealt with it. In this sense, yes, his review totally discredits his "no poetry after Auschwitz" epithet.

Another figure useful to compare with Adorno is Blanchot. How does one deal with that in one's past with which one no longer agrees? That in one's past which one must reject?

Tom Mandel

```
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```

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476. **steph4848**

***Re: Domestic***

*Tue 17 Dec 1996*

---

Isn't this word "domestic" loaded! I suspect - at least within one set of writing conventions - not to write with any focus on the "domestic" is a manly thing. He who does not do the dishes, change diapers, do childcare, clean house, etc. -- let alone finds it either cute or a taboo to mention or take seriously (or even comically) such activity in a poem -- is considered "manly." This writer is a person out in the public realm making/writing serious, publically responsible, perhaps "universal" literature. In this convention, the man, if not tended to at home by a she, views the interior domestic family life as, at best, quaint, and of no extended significance. She, on the other hand, who writes from within this purely domestic landscape makes a writing, no matter how well made, is making gender-specific work, or a poetry of secondary significance when compared to the more universal intentions of work that speaks to and from a public, definitely "non-domestic" realm. Within this convention, to ever have your work (whether you are male or female) identified as "domestic" is to be cast out, or consigned to permanent membership in a lesser cast.

I suspect this why people go up the wall when Lorine Niedecker - in any shape or form (blurbs included) - has her work as identified as "domestic."

I have no problem - as most on this list - saying that she is a great poet, certainly someone I return to frequently. I don't have difficulty - when it's actively there - taking great pleasure in her attention to what is "domestic" - nor do I have that problem with WCW, when he's "at home" as well.

What bothers me -- in terms of either the tone of dread or high mindedness of some of the critical responses to the Granite Pail "domestic" (good housewife?) blurbs -- is a willingness to throw the baby out with the bathwater. I'm not sure why there remains such an aversion to the domestic world as a vital element, if not a crucial component, to the entire picture. Perhaps with the exception of families of religious fundamentalists or families and writers into old domestic parodies, I think the antique writing convention I have described here is obviously bankrupt and on its way out. The contemporary world of domestic space - particularly in ways that it's been newly gendered and transformed by any number of factors is probably one of our best microcosms (sp?) and active receptacles for the most pressing issues in the public realm. Consequently - and I don't think I'm too alone on this - I find the domestic realm (such as that it has become) a lively and significant place from which to make writing.

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477. **Roberto Tejada**

**MANDORLA**

*Tue 17 Dec 1996*

---

Greetings to all from Mexico City. With the fifth issue of MANDORLA now at the printers, I thought I might take this opportunity to offer list members back issues #2, #3 and #4 at seven dollars per issue. MANDORLA 5 should be available at the end of January 1998 (\$10). Please back-channel with your orders, or send checks made out to my name and to the address listed below.

The first issue of \*MANDORLA: New Writing From the Americas\* was published in May 1991 as an attempt to begin a meaningful dialogue that is bilingual♦multilingual, in fact♦but not in the conventional sense of the word. In English and Spanish translated material appears only in its surrogate tongue; previously unpublished work is featured only in its original language; and in the case of poetry in French or Portuguese, the work appears in its original, with translations into both Spanish and English. Other voices reading♦or re-reading♦each other's writing so as to authorize a body coherent with the intellectual and creative vitality of the hemisphere.

MANDORLA is edited and printed in Mexico City: a site where the cultural debate between north and south has begun to occur. In fact, the name of the magazine♦mandorla, describing that space created by two intersecting circles♦alludes to the notion of exchange and the imaginative dialogue that is an obligation now among the Americas. The terrain to be forged is like the American continent itself: virtually boundless.

Mandorla 1 [Out of Print] : Octavio Paz \* William Carlos Williams \* Calvert Casey \* Alberto Ruy Sanchez \* Eliseo Diego \* Charles Olson \* Nathaniel Tarn \* Jack Spicer \* Clayton Eshleman \* Rachel Blau DuPlessis \* Michael Palmer \* Paul Christensen \* Gerardo Deniz \* Roberto Echavarren \* Jose Kozer \* Eliot Weinberger \* Michael Tracy \* Carmen Boullosa \* Nathaniel Mackey \* Alfonso D'Aquino \* Jose Castro Lenero \* Magali Tercero \* Julio Hubbard \* Guillermo Osorno \*

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M A N D O R L A

Nueva Escritura de las Americas \* New Writing From the Americas

Edited by Roberto Tejada

Durango 127, Int. 7 \* Colonia Roma \* 06700 \* ♦ Mexico D.F., Mexico \*

Tel. [REDACTED] \* e-mail: [REDACTED]

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478. **Herb Levy**

**Re: Henri Chopin**

Tue 17 Dec 1996

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They usually have a copy or two of a Dada/Futurist compilation CD at Wall of Sound in Seattle. They've had Henri Chopin discs in the past, as well, though I don't think I've seen the new one mentioned earlier.

Wall of Sound does have e-mail, but they check it so rarely, you'd be better off calling them (206) [REDACTED]. Or write them at

2237 2nd Avenue  
Seattle, WA 98121

You know, catty-corner from the Speakeasy in Belltown.

The disc I'm thinking of is on the Sub Rosa label. & if you want to look around town wherever you are, you'd be better off looking at smaller shops that have a lot of European "industrial"/"ambient" music, cause that's the kind of distribution Sub Rosa gets.

Bests

*loss glazier writen:*

*Along these lines, I might ask if anyone out there knows where I can get a copy of the CD of Futurist/etc. work. It was an anthology of some sort. Someone told me recently they just got it at a record store but I can't find any trace of it. Any ideas?*

*Feel free to backchannel me if that's more appropriate...  
pls dont backchannel--d love to get my hands on this as well.*

*thanks. c.*

..

*christopher alexander, etc.*

*"The second edition of this book consists largely of a reproduction of the first edition, with additional theorms and examples."*

*--T.M. Macrobert, \_an introduction to the theory of infinite series\_*

Herb Levy

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479. **cris cheek**

**Re: Henri Chopin**

Tue 17 Dec 1996

---

'Futurism and Dada Reviewed' is on Sub Rosa (SUBCD012-19)

it's got stuff from the Russolos / Marinetti / Lewis / Apollinaire / Schwitters / Cocteau / Duchamp / Tzara / Janco and Huelsenbeck on it

some murky and some less murky phonographic inscription

read the excellent 'The Wireless Imagination' (MIT) whilst you listen

love and love

cris

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480. **robert drake**

**Re: Henri Chopin**

Tue 17 Dec 1996

---

loss glazier wrote:

- > Along these lines, I might ask if anyone out there knows where I can
- > get a copy of the CD of Futurist/etc. work. It was an anthology of
- > some sort. Someone told me recently they just got it at a record store
- > but I can't find any trace of it. Any ideas?
- >
- > Feel free to backchannel me if that's more appropriate...

I believe the title is \_Futurism & Dada Reviewed\_, produced by james neiss for Sub Rosa... & the address i have is 13330-a white oak circle, tampa fl 33618... thanx to charlotte pressler fr this info, she reviewed it in TRR #4

lbd

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481. **tmandel**  
***Ad Vance Bell***

*Tue 17 Dec 1996*

---

It has taken me a day or so to find the time to reply to Vance Bell's words. For one thing, his riposte to my original Adorno post is lengthy. For another, although it comes with an emblem of authority (Bell "concentrates his thinking mostly on Adorno and Benjamin") and is delivered alternately as absolutes ("not a single citation to an original text") and rhetoricized irrelevancies ("Is this the same Arendt that [sic] was intimately involved with Heidegger..?) it pretty aggressively attempts to render nil my reference to Adorno's attempt to ingratiate himself with the Nazis, his approving quote of Goebbels, his 30 years of silence on his own action, and his attempt to excuse his behavior once he was confronted with it. Hence, there is no avoiding a response on my part.

Bell begins: "First thing I might say is that this indictment has not a single citation to any original text.... their lack casts a negative light on the content."

Hmmm. I believe I cited both the review in die Musik and the exchange of letters in Diskus, and these represent the only "original text" involved here. We are not off to a good start here.

Mr. Bell quotes my original post: 'In a letter to Karl Jaspers, Hannah Arendt referred to Adorno as "one of the most repulsive human beings I know.'" And asks "Is this the same Arendt that was intimately involved with Heidegger and who was treated rather badly by the same?"

Why yes, Vance, the very same. What is the significance of the rhetorical question?

To my "Arendt detested Adorno for his attempt to ingratiate himself with the Nazis," Vance Bell replies: "I think that I would have done the same thing in A.'s place.... Adorno, was in fact, born to a Catholic mother and was therefore, technically, not a Jew by Jewish standards (Nazi standards being obviously quite different)."

I wonder if Mr. Bell is really content to have said that. I wonder whether the rest of you would like to read those words slowly one more time.

If, Vance, you do intend those words, then, yes you are right, people do all kinds of things, and perhaps you would have done the same thing in Adorno's place. Believe it or not, Vance Bell, this does *\*not\** excuse him in the slightest.

Between the two sentences I separate with an ellipsis above, Bell says: "It is all too easy to view the situation in '33-4 with the benefit of hindsight." Perhaps I



missed something Mr. Bell was shown; if not, I'm pretty sure there is no other way to view 1934 than in hindsight.

Lets get serious here.

It might be interesting for Vance Bell to supply the full list of Jewish or part-Jewish Marxist or otherwise left-leaning intellectuals who praised Baldur von Schirach's murderous verse and quoted Goebbels approvingly in the process - or the equivalent, not to be too exact - and whose retrospective analyses of National Socialism we are to take seriously, whose remarks on poetry and Auschwitz, for example, we are to give the slightest credit.

Perhaps completeness is too stringent a request. Why don't you add ONE NAME to the list, Mr. Bell. There's a challenge. Who else is on the list? Add one name to Adorno's.

When I refer to Arendt's distaste for Adorno's in her words "indescribably pathetic" attempt to excuse himself when his activities were discovered thirty years later, Mr. Bell's retorts: "Again I would like to know more of H.'s (i.e. Hannah Arendt's) relationship to Heidegger when the latter took over the rectorship of Freiburg Univ."

Wow, I guess Mr. Bell really does identify with Adorno, just as he said above. As Adorno excused himself with Heidegger (not as bad as Heidegger) so Vance Bell excuses him -- what of Heidegger and Arendt? And yet, how does what Heidegger did excuse Adorno?

>From here, Vance Bell turns to the review itself. He quotes me: "In a periodical called Die Musik in June 1934 Theodor Wiesengrund-Adorno wrote a music review in which he praised a song cycle written to poems by Baldur von Schirach - an obscure person today thankfully but extremely well-known at the time as a Nazi poet and an adorer of Hitler, to whom the book of poetry was dedicated (to "Adolph Hitler, the Fuhrer")! from which come the texts of the songs. The song cycle bears the same name as the book. The editors of the Arendt-Jaspers correspondence describe it as containing "phrases which even today can be regarded only as obsequious gestures to the Nazis. Adorno apparently was not bothered by the fact that some of the poems advocated mass murder." The review also uses a phrase of Goebbels - approvingly."

On all of this, Vance Bell comments, "Has this person read the original text? I bet it is not that long. Certainly sounds bad, but the original is necessary for any further conclusions." Yes, Vance, that is true.

To my "It goes without saying that Adorno took no opportunity after the war to mention having written this document," Bell replies: "Certainly Adorno did not forget what he wrote." Huh?



To my claim that his having written this review and quoted Goebbels approvingly "played no part in any of the judgments he made of German intellectuals' relations to the Nazis," Bell replies "How can one say that it did not play a part in the judgments made of German intellectuals?" Gee, Vance, what I meant was that he didn't out what he had done as he got busy judging others - seems obvious.

To my pointed irony that Adorno "did not footnote his *Minima Moralia* axiom about poetry after Auschwitz with any reference to the poetry he had praised only a few years before Auschwitz was built," Bell replies: "It might also be important to note that the German version of MM has no footnotes, period." Double huh?

"What, he asks, "would be the relation of Adorno's text in *Die Muzik* be to the axiom. Wouldn't the axiom itself speak against all of A.'s poetry criticism prior to MM or *Prisms* equally to condemn lyric poetry in general." I'm not \*sure\* I follow the syntax in Bell's 2d sentence, but I'm quite sure he hasn't the faintest notion of my point, which is simple: Adorno's behavior, his smarmy attempt to get in good with the Nazis by praising the song cycle on Baldur von Schirach's texts, unfits him entirely to take a moral position on poetry after Auschwitz.

Fast forward (I'm sorry, I know how laborious this is; I'm happy to think that some of you are not following this thread at all and can just jettison this post along with the others on the subject, but I have no choice but to reply point by point to this defense-attorney-for-Adorno post by Vance Bell), okay sloooow forward to 1964:

"The January 1964 issue of *Diskus*, a Frankfurt student newspaper, contains an open letter to Adorno," I say, "written by a student and asking whether he was the author of the review in question. Adorno replies in the same issue (which as I say I have not read). "I deeply regret having written that review," especially because "it deals with poems by Schirach" and made use of "a phrase of Goebbels." Obviously, it is hard to credit "regret" that does not lead to repudiation, and Adorno had kept his authorship of these words secret for thirty years. After expressing this regret, according to the editors, he goes on to make a series of excuses and concludes that it will be left to the reader "to decide whether those incriminating sentences should be given any weight in assessing my work and my life.... No one... could possibly compare me to Heidegger..."

To this, Bell replies: " Not to excuse him... but if this is Adorno's only infraction it is small compared to both deMan and Heidegger."

The blindness of this is truly amazing. Adorno could not include de Man of course, but otherwise, Vance Bell simply repeats the excuse Adorno offered in his own defence! The other guy is guiltier. He is much guiltier!

If Bell hadn't continued - "I am curious if this author would have fared so well.?" - I might not have bothered to reply. I must assume these words apply to me, that I am "this author," but even if they aren't so intended, they give one a poor impression of Mr. Bell's sense of ethics. People, for example, steal all the time Mr. Bell. Are you saying that I'm a thief, or are you just saying everybody is?

"The students of the sixties," Vance Bell concludes (meaning the German student who confronted Adorno with his review of thirty years hence), "would have been born at the War's close. Are we saying that they themselves were also anti-semities, or Nazis in disguise (gee Tom, aren't \*all\* Germans)?"

For that last statement, Vance Bell, whose "thinking concentrates on Adorno and Benjamin" you deserve a spanking; any time you want to come around and receive the spanking you deserve, feel free to do so. I'd enjoy delivering it.

Tom Mandel

\*\*\*\*\*

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482. **tmandel**

**Duane Davis**

*Tue 17 Dec 1996*

---

Duane Davis makes the good point that the rhetorical device I used to remove myself from any debate on Adorno's work that might be stimulated by my pointing to evidence of his ill behavior, which was to say simply that I found him a repellent figure and didn't want to waste my time discussing his work, has not worked. He is quite correct.

He goes on to characterize that device as a refusal to take responsibility for one's position. I don't see it that way, but I am willing to accept a corrective that is so intelligently stated and seems so honest. I especially respect the fact that he makes it not personally but by referring to a forum of this kind. That in a society of peers, Duane seems to say, you will not get away with a shirking of such responsibility.

In all, I agree with Duane's post. He compares Susan Buck-Morss's treatment of Adorno's character favorably to my treatment of the subject, and without knowing the book to which he refers I am sure he is correct in calling her more

circumspect and better documented. My treatment was tangentially documented, and it was not circumspect at all.

I have said elsewhere that I consider Adorno a problem. Evidently, Duane Davis does too. But, he seems to consider Adorno's flaws more interesting than I do. Hence he refers to Adorno's "exaggerated sense of his own abilities, accomplishments and self-importance" but does not like my calling him "monumentally self-aggrandizing." Is there any difference other than the level of interest?

Had I known of Buck-Morss's treatment of this subject (on the assumption that is that it covers the review and Diskus exchange), I probably would have referred the list to it and let it go at that. I simply don't find that his work implies as much of the world as Duane does. I find it virtuosic, sometimes penetrating, usually stunted.

All the same, Duane makes a cogent and passionate case for Adorno: "he did... address what he believed to be most important to that life (i.e. his) and ours."

And when I re-read that I think: he praised Baldur von Shirach and quoted Goebbels approvingly.

Ethical thought is difficult thought. Sometimes we make ourselves pay in some occulted way for what we cannot face in ourselves. Perhaps there is a relation between the determined absolutism of reason's defeat as it is brilliantly unrolled in the works of Theodor Adorno and his own willingness to blind himself. On the other hand, perhaps not. I cannot help but feel that pathos fits him better than tragedy.

Unless someone has the time to translate the '34 review and the Diskus article, now might be a good moment to abandon this thread.

Tom Mandel

\*\*\*\*\*

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\*\*\*\*\*

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483. **Tosh**  
***Re: Henri Chopin***  
*Tue 17 Dec 1996*

---

Hi:

I may be jumping on the wrong train here, but if you are talking about the collection of Dada and Futurist music/talk/readings - all from the original guys- it is put out by Sub Rosa, and is distributed by AK Press.

tosh

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484. **Thomas Bell**

***inter\face 12***

*Tue 17 Dec 1996*

---

Benjamin H. Henry  
inter\face magazine

-----  
{begin i\{f 12}

inter\face 12  
Fall/Winter 1996

=====

Featured in this issue of inter\face:

-----  
Allegra Sloman  
Thomas Bell  
Arrange Renga  
David Hunter Sutherland  
David Joseph Dowker  
Benjamin H. Henry

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485. **Stephen Cope**

***Oppen's Daybook***

*Tue 17 Dec 1996*

---

Would anyone here be able to give information about Oppen's \_Daybook\_?  
Specifically what has and hasn't been published, where, and also anything  
written about Daybook material (or making use of it)?

Thanks in advance, (and feel free to backchannel

Stephen Cope



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486. **aerialedge**  
**Re: Henri Chopin**  
*Wed 18 Dec 1996*

---

Loss, I can't locate their address at the moment but you want to contact the audiomagazine Tellus-- they did an excellent audio-anthology of Futurist/Dada soundworks a few years back.

--Rod

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487. **tmandel**  
**Fw: Adorno**  
*Wed 18 Dec 1996*

---

David Kaufman sent me the following email. It contains facts which reflect very positively on Adorno's relations with Benjamin, pretty much undercutting the basis of my negative judgment of those relations. I haven't asked him whether it was ok to forward it to the listserv, but I assume no problem.

>From: [REDACTED]

>Date: Wed, 18 Dec 1996 00:57:47 cst

>To: [REDACTED]

>Cc:

>Subject: Adorno

>

>I just received your posting about Adorno and Arendt. I am not so sure  
>you want to call Adorno a toad--if you read his recently published  
>correspondence with Benjamin (Suhrkamp, 1995) you will see that Adorno  
>was paying Benjamin a stipend out of his own pocket during the early  
>1930's. These letters also show that Adorno did alot for Benjamin  
>in terms of money and other forms of help. Arendt, who was Benjamin's  
>cousin, did not like Adorno for a number of reasons--his pathetic  
>behavior in his review proves an embarrasment to anyone who is  
interested

>in his work. By the same token, Arendt also accused him of chaning his  
>name so as to be published in Germany. This was not the case--he was  
>always Wiesengrund-Adorno. A small point and not convincing  
perhaps.But

>then again Benjamin published under the Nazis under the name of Detlev  
>Holz, a wonderful parody of a fascist name if you know that it is a  
parody.

>

>As for Adorno's identity as a Jew, I think you might want to

reconsider

>your intemperate remarks. From about 1940 Adorno began to identify himself  
>in his work as a Jew and became more interested (but not very  
knowledgeable)

>about Judaism. This cost him when he went back to Germany--perhaps not  
>enough for your liking. For an account of all this, see Wiggershaus,  
>THE FRANKFURT SCHOOL.

>

>I'm sorry you don't like his work: if you like Benjamin, it should be  
>right up your alley.

>

>David Kaufmann

\*\*\*\*\*

Tom Mandel \* 2927 Tilden St. NW  
Washington DC 20008 \* [REDACTED]  
vox: [REDACTED] \* fax [REDACTED]

\*\*\*\*\*

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488. **Michael Boughn**

**Re: Adorno**

*Wed 18 Dec 1996*

---

In my reading last night, I came across a passage which for some strange  
reason I thought a propos to the ongoing discussion of Adorno:

Alice was just beginning to think to herself, "Now, what am I to do  
with this creature when I get it home?" when it grunted again, so  
violently, that she looked down into its face in some alarm. This time  
there could be no mistake about it: it was neither more nor less than a pig,  
and she felt that it would be quite absurd for her to carry it any further.

So she set the little creature down, and felt quite relieved to see it  
trot away quietly into the wood. "If it had grown up," she said to herself, "it  
would have made a dreadfully ugly child: but it makes a rather handsome  
pig, I think."

Mike  
[REDACTED]

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489. **henry gould**

**Re: lesson plan/ sales pitch**

*Wed 18 Dec 1996*

maybe the thirst for truth & reality inhabits a kind of median between the thirst for knowledge (the academy) & the thirst for experience (the "poetry scene"). In the "old days" poetry encompassed storytelling, theater, & lesson plans (before prose, drama, & philosophy). But the resources of language are still there, & strong poetry quenches at least 2 of the thirsts mentioned.

What I'd like to see is a poetry "scene" not artificially divided between "beats"[sic] & academics, nor balkanized in the fashion of society at large, & in which an active poetics feeds off a general audience rather than an academic set of credentials & networks - independent but not alienated from the kind of learning & attention found in schools. Perhaps what this will require (& probably this is not a new idea!!) is a new standard of poetic style - which aims to integrate prose, storytelling, performance in a real (or enhancing) way with "lyric". & something that speeds beyond the stand-up tragicomedy of the current cliques.

An aside: (laugh as you will) I now think Shakespeare was written by somebody else - maybe a group. What kind of model does this provide if true? If Shakey was a stage manager - a front for Anonymous.

Youse sophisticates may laugh as you please & say "this has already been happening for a long time", but I say well, not in my neighborhood it hasn't. Prove me wrong. - Henry Gould, back from London & crazed as ever

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490. **Judy Roitman**

**Adorno/Bunting-J.Williams**

*Wed 18 Dec 1996*

The common question is the relation between moral clumsiness (to use an overly polite expression for one case, and what would have 20 years ago been considered an overly strong expression for the other) and the work, yes? The fact of the common question and the different rhetorics in the separate discussion threads is pretty interesting.

----- 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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491. **cris**

**Re: Fwd: Croatia Radio**

*Wed 18 Dec 1996*

---

w/ apologies for cross-posting

Subj: Re: Internet petition: SAVE RADIO 101 in Zagreb, Croatia

Dear Friends:

Please help save Radio 101 in Zagreb, Croatia from being cancelled!!! Just add your name to the list and send the message to everyone you know. This message is brought to you by the letter "H" (for help) and the number "1,000,000" (for the number of names we want to sign). THANK YOU.

Save RADIO 101 from being cancelled!!!!!! This is a petition to save Radio 101 in Zagreb, Croatia. ALL YOU DO IS ADD YOUR NAME TO THE LIST AT THE

BOTTOM, then forward it to everyone you know.

The only time you send it to the included address is if you are the 50th, 100th, etc. Send it on to everyone you know. Croatian "democracy" government believes that this radio station is dealing against state, while this is the ONLY station left which is dealing with democracy informations in Croatia!

Please add your name to this list if you believe in what we stand for.

This list will be forwarded to the Government of the Republic Croatia! If you happen to be the 50th, 100th, 150th, etc. signer of this petition, please forward to: [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]. This way we can keep track of the lists and organize them. Forward this to everyone you know, and help us to keep this radio station ALIVE!. Thank you.

-----  
SIGNATURES

1. Drago Markovic, Zagreb, Croatia
2. Sanda Petris, Zagreb, Croatia
3. Antun Sunjic, Zagreb, Croatia
4. Maja Dawidowsky, Zagreb, Croatia
5. Maja Vickovic, Zagreb, Croatia
6. Vladimir Vuksan, Albuquerque, USA
7. Ivica Skoric, New York, USA
8. Laure Akai, Moscow, Russia
9. Vadim Damier, Moscow, Russia
10. Mikhail Magid, Moscow, Russia
11. Lena Soloyeva, Moscow, Russia
12. Milan Sudjic, Moscow, Russia
13. Mira Krstic, Moscow, Russia



14. Alexander Shubin, Moscow, Russia
15. Konstantin Orlyov, Moscow, Russia
16. Lena Zorina, Aprelevka, Russia
17. Petr Ryabov, Moscow, Russia
18. Vladimir Platonenko, Moscow, Russia
19. Andrei Sinyavsky, Paris, France
20. Alexander Tarasov, Malakhovka, Russia
21. Alexander Ilyovich, Moscow, Russia
22. Lera Akhmetova, Moscow, Russia
23. Vladlen Tupikin, Moscow, Russia
24. Ivan Basayev, Zelenograd, Russia
25. Alisa Nikulina, Moscow, Russia
26. Heiko Brandt, Moscow, Russia
27. Kiril Prevetsentsev, Moscow, Russia
28. Jaroslav Leontiev, Moscow, Russia
29. Galina Zaitseva, Moscow, Russia
30. Maxim Kuchinski, Moscow, Russia
31. Vladimir Kuznetsov, Moscow, Russia
32. Renfrey Clarke, Moscow, Russia
33. Anna Kuznetsova, Moscow, Russia
34. Alexander Margorin, Moscow, Russia
35. Ilya Romanov, Moscow, Russia
36. Bob Smalls, Moscow, Russia
37. Julia Guseva, Moscow, Russia
38. Vladimir Gusev, Moscow, Russia
39. Sergei Bietz, Moscow, Russia
40. Zoran Grozdic, Moscow, Russia
41. Dmitry Olennikov, Moscow, Russia
42. Bodgan Titomir, Moscow, Russia
43. Andrei Gryaznov, Moscow, Russia
44. Stanislav Chmurny, Moscow, Russia
45. Sasha Nikolic, Moscow, Russia
46. Pavel Sentyabryasky, Moscow, Russia
47. Maxim Krainev, Moscow, Russia
48. Anastasia Drozdeva, Moscow, Russia
49. Pavel Luzakov, Moscow, Russia
50. Peter Rausch, St.Petersburg, Russia
51. Lena Belayeva, St.Petersburg, Russia
52. Mark Andreyev, St.Petersburg, Russia
53. Oleg Beltz, St.Petersburg, Russia
54. Alexander Yermakov, St.Petersburg, Russia
55. Igor Mogazeyev, Tver, Russia

56. Tatiana Sorokina, Tver, Russia
57. Sergei Kuznetsov, Tver, Russia
58. Irina Bondarenko, Petrozavodsk, Russia
59. Vitaly Blazhevich, Kharbarovsk, Russia
60. Pavel Arbatov, Kharbarovsk, Russia
61. Mikhail Petrov, Kharbarovsk, Russia
62. Igor Podshivalov, Irkutsk, Russia
63. Sergei Shevchenko, Donetsk, Ukraine
64. Tatiana Nosatch, Donetsk, Ukraine
65. Maxim Sobakevich, Kiev, Ukraine
66. Andrei Petrenko, Kharkiv, Ukraine
67. Vyacheslav Bondarenko, Lviv, Ukraine
68. Irina Mikhailenko, Kiev, Ukraine
69. Oleg Novikov, Minsk, Belarus
70. Stanislav Pochobut, Grodno, Belarus
71. Amandine Regamey, Minsk, Belarus
72. Yura Glushakov, Gomel, Belarus
73. Vasily Kalganov, Aktjubinsk, Kazakhstan
74. Yevginy Solovyov, Aktjubinsk, Kazakhstan
75. Mikhail Akayev, Alma-Ata, Kazakhstan
76. Mikhail Kisunas, Riga, Latvia
77. Olga Kalinina, Riga, Latvia
78. R@lf G. Landmesser, Berlin, Germany
79. Robert Wogatzke, Krefeld, Germany
80. Martin Veith, Creglingen, Germany
81. Karsten Jagau, Creglingen, Germany
82. Pille Weibel, Luzern, Switzerland
83. Luca De Santis, Pisa, Italy
84. Silvano Chiaradonna, Pisa, Italy
85. Maurizio Persico, Pisa, Italy
86. Donatella Persico, Genova, Italy
87. Francesco Caviglia, Genova, Italy
88. Alberto Ferrari, Reggio Emilia, Italy
89. Maura Mazzoli, Castelfranco Emilia (MO), Italy
90. Paola Scanagatta, Vicenza, Italy
91. Paolo Atzori, K \$BaM (Bn, Germany
92. David d'Heilly, Tokyo, Japan
93. Ryuichi Sakamoto, New York, USA
94. Carl Stone, San Francisco, USA
95. Michele Flannery, San Francisco, USA
96. Sep Ghadishah, San Francisco, USA
97. Sam Lehmer, San Francisco, USA

- 98. Michael Mennies, Elkins Park , PA ,USA
- 99. Jennifer L. Ware, San Francisco, USA
- 100. Mark Jan Wlodarkiewicz, Emeryville, USA
- 101. Phil Benson, San Francisco, USA
- 102. Michael Wertz, San Francisco, USA
- 103. Bill Koeb, San Francisco, USA
- 104. Margaret Tedesco, San Francisco, USA
- 105. Susannne Hetzel, Marseille, France
- 105. Christian Vanderborght, Paris, france
- 106. Nathalie Perreault, Qubec, Qubec, CDN
- 107. Daniel Rochette, Qubec, Canada
- 108. Lise Bourassa, Qubec, Canada
- 109. Thrse Casavant, Qubec, Canada
- 110. Nadia Morin, Qubec, Canada
- 111. Laurence Boudreau, Qubec, Canada
- 112. Richard Martel, Qubec, Canada
- 113. Sonia Pelletier, Qubec, Canada
- 114. Jon Bewley, Newcastle upon Tyne, England
- 115. cris cheek, Lowestoft, Suffolk, England

Les ditions Intervention

T [REDACTED]/F [REDACTED]

Inter art actuel (la revue\*magazine)

[REDACTED]

Locus+ is an arts organisation based Newcastle upon Tyne, England that develops new strategies with visual artists for different contexts and across formats.

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492. **amato**

***Re: Domestic***

*Wed 18 Dec 1996*

---

well i for one am all for "domestic" spaces, provided we're not treating them as somehow "less"... there's a new book out on how women in particular have constructed boundaries (using home technologies) to safeguard such spaces, by my colleague here at iit, christena nippert-eng, entitled *\_home and work\_* (u of chicago)... and a piece in the recent zone collection *\_incorporations\_* bounces all around such spaces: "hygiene, cuisine, and the product world of early twentieth-century america," by ellen lupton and j. abbot miller...

anyway, for me, bernadette mayer's \_midwinter day\_ (much cited around here, and no doubt much read) is at times one of the most moving "domestic" articulations i've read, though surely not domesticated...

best,

joe

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493. **Douglas Barbour**

**Re: Jonathan Williams**

Wed 18 Dec 1996

---

The only book of Jonathan William's prose I have been lucky enough to find is from the late lamented North Point Press, & it is an absolutely wonderful collection: \_The Magpie's Bagpipe\_ (1982). The voice is charming, the perceptions sharp, the whole a delight. Up herre, it's harder to track down the poetry, but I am grateful for his work as a publisher, even when people complain about some of the books' editing, as with Niedecker's \_From This Condensery\_, which I am glad to have alongside the selected (also, gee, from North Point).

We have to be grateful for the generosity of such as Williams, in everything he did & wrote... (does & writes)...

=====

===== Douglas Barbour Department  
of English                      'The universe opens. I close. University of Alberta  
And open, just to surprise you.' Edmonton Alberta T6G 2E5 [REDACTED] FAX:  
[REDACTED]                      - Phyllis Webb H: [REDACTED]

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494. **Victor Grauer**

**Re: Fwd: Croatia Radio**

Wed 18 Dec 1996

---

| Please add your name to this list if you believe in what we stand for.

I imagine that 90% or more of the signers of this list know as little about what this station "stands for" as I do. But, hey, go ahead, sign away. Anything to promote an organisation that favors "democracy", eh?

Victor Grauer

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495. **Michael Boughn**

**Re: Shakespeare**

Wed 18 Dec 1996

---

*An aside: (laugh as you will) I now think Shakespeare was written by somebody else - maybe a group. What kind of model does this provide if true? If Shakey was a stage manager - a front for Anonymous.*

Now where was I reading recently--Mark Twain I think--the proposal that the works of Shakespeare were written by somebody else--with the same name.

I wonder if there's a tie in here to Shakes the Clown?

Mike



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496. **steph4848**

**Re: Domestic**

Wed 18 Dec 1996

---

In answer to Judy Roitman's query as to who wrote re:domestic. C'est moi: Stephen Vincent.

As to Joe Amato's response, I appreciate your references to the recent works on domestic spaces. I'm a long time fan of Bernandette Meyer's Midwinter Day.

I'm curious, however, in the way that the only cited works are ones that evoke and explore the association of women within the home space. In the case of Bernandette Meyer, I wonder, for example, if Lewis Warsh (I believe the father to be?), also kept a journal - and if not, is it reasonable to wonder why not? How might it have been different, added to the occasion, etc.

In other words, I'm suggesting the territory of the home is much more "confused" these days (single fathers & mothers, two career couples, lesbian and gay couples/ parents, etc.) - so I suspect there are more interesting collisions in what for many is a new reality, a much altered concept of "the domestic" - as a consequence to these changes I look for new poetries/writing -- work that will have large resonance and issue with public conventions around the domestic. I certainly find these issue - or an absorption in these issues - deeply affect the process of my own work.

Cheers,  
Stephen Vincent

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497. **James Brook**  
***UBU in San Francisco***  
*Wed 18 Dec 1996*

---

At Pierre Joris' request for more information on the celebration of the centennial celebration of the premiere of Ubu Roi in San Francisco, I'm posting the text of the commemorative poster, of which I, one of the disorganizers of the event, am the author.

The sight at Justin Herman Plaza--named for one of the urban renewal destroyers of the city (see the hideous Yerba Buena Ctr. on your next visit to neo-Frisco)--was awe-inspiring: a well-policed area next to a major hotel and just in front of the Ferry Bldg, the plaza's concrete surface was full of skateboarders ignoring the stern "No Skateboarding" signs, full of teenage sweethearts and moms and dads with their kids in line (trans.: "on line" on the East Coast) for the ice-skating rink, and not at all full of us, a clump of Jarryphiliacs. We ascended the steps of a pseudo- fountain to better survey our bewildered and involuntary audience. And then we delivered: a long speech denouncing and thanking in the same breath our distinguished mayor, Willy Braun, and other local notables (the speaker waved a toilet brush for emphasis; the first scene of Ubu Roi; another couple of incoherent rants; and then threats of more to come, someday, just you wait and see!

You should've been there. (Adorno didn't respond to our invitation. Ezra Pound and T.S. Eliot were fighting in the captain's tower, or so they said.)

The poster, if anyone wants one, is available. It's 11x14, black with white type and a reproduction of Jarry's woodcut of Pere Ubu with the spiral paunch. The word "SHIT" is in red, and really big, a challenge to the conscientious director. We're asking \$5.00 to cover our printing and mailing costs. (You can send your requests to J. Brook, P.O. Box 460431, San Francisco, CA 94146.) But you get the following text for free:

-----

Ubu Rules!

1896-1996

"SHIT!"

Thus begins Alfred Jarry's play, Ubu Roi [Ubu Rex], which had its première one hundred years ago, on December 10, 1896, in Paris, a city that used to thrive on either bank of the river Seine. If the state of the world has remarkably improved since 1896, with undreamed-of innovations in war, mass-murder, exploitation, and destruction of nature astounding us every year, it is because shit, ladies and gentlemen, has raised us to its own level.

Jarry, a brilliant playwright, novelist, poet, sportsman, artist, and alcoholic, was the inventor of Pataphysics, "the science of imaginary solutions" that is concerned with "the laws governing exceptions." But he himself was an ungovernable exception: this pistol-packing midget bicyclist discovered one key to the good life, the spirit of black humor. The spirit of black humor begat Père Ubu, spitting image of middle-class belligerence, insatiable greed, gross appetites, small-mindedness, lust for power, and gratuitous acts of murder and mayhem. And thus began the modern world, the First-Second-Cold-Vietnam-Afghan-Gulf-Yugo-Chechin World War, show trials, concentration camps, the beginning-middle-and-end of so-called Communism, the benevolent reign of global capitalism, and so on without end, amen.

Père Ubu, a Shakespearean irruption from the trailer park of the id, grabbed the throne of Poland, "which is to say Nowhere," and thus prefigured what Guy Debord called "the Walesa dynasty." In fact, it is only by reference to Ubiquitous genealogy that we can begin to understand the trendsetters of the century-the Hitlers and Stalins, the Reagans and Yeltsins, the Kohls and Netanyahos, wholesale and retail-not to mention the pinhead bureaucrats who puff out their chests with surgical implants while fellating restless billionaires. Governments come and go, but the Will to Shit remains a staunch ally of the Will to Power.

On the solemn occasion of the Ubu centennial, then, we celebrate the successes and excesses of Ubu impulses the world over. Wherever Phynance and Murder intersect, there you will find Ubu converted to the coin of the realm and translated into the local idiom.

Today, December 10, 1996, we defecate in remembrance of the century that began in obscenity only to end in the universal expletive.

MÈRE UBU: Now, look, Père Ubu, what kind of king are you? You're slaughtering everyone!

PÈRE UBU: Well, SHIT!

[Ubu Roi, Act III, Scene 2]

Text copyright (c) 1996 by James Brook. Produced by D. S. Black, James Brook, and Small World Productions.

Inquiries to:

P.O. Box 460431, San Francisco, California 94146, USA

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498. **Burt Kimmelman**  
**Re: patr-iarchy/onization**  
*Wed 18 Dec 1996*

---

pete,

i'd like to think that i know niedecker's work well enough to voice my opinion, and know if it were a male within a domestic situation in certain ways the p of v would be quite different--don't you think? and my "domestic" had more to do with living a tough economic life and with being married to a man in a rural setting. i'd be happy to "back up my assertions" with some examples (though there are enough of them that I'd think my point is pretty obvious--but if we are simply sharing our favorite LN poems then yes, sure i'll join in--your contribution was wonderful; it brought me back to LN and I was and am grateful for it--however, I am writing back to you from work and my LN stuff is at home, and also this is finals week for me so I am going crazy, so let me get back to you) when I can get free to pick out some of my favorite "domestic" poems, maybe next week or the week after. Thanks,

Burt

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499. **Burt Kimmelman**  
**Re: Domestic**  
*Wed 18 Dec 1996*

---

S Howe in My Emily Dickinson (God what a book!) mentions that ED probably was agoraphobic; her p of v, then, even when her imagery was of the out of doors, could perhaps be thought of as "domestic." LN was not agoraphobic, but she was perhaps in some poems trapped in her "domicile" ( i believe the Latin is "domum," no?), and in her marriage as well --and surely we can say that traditionally when someone is "trapped" or "walled in" ("Yellow Wallpaper") in a marriage it is the wife and not the husband.

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500. **Burt Kimmelman**  
**Re: Oppen's Daybook**  
*Wed 18 Dec 1996*

---

stephen,

see the man and poet and also the special issue of ironwood. but i am not the one to speak of the daybook, so i guess i will be being redundant here to have said what i have.



burt

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501. **Mark Wallace**

***Some MLA poetry events (fwd)***

*Wed 18 Dec 1996*

---

For those of you who will be in Washington D.C. during the MLA conference, please note that the following poetry events will be taking place in and around the conference.

Friday, December 27

Bridge Street Books

2814 Pennsylvania Ave. in Georgetown

7:30 p.m. Book party for Marjorie Perloff and her new book WITTGENSTEIN'S LADDER: POETIC LANGUAGE AND THE STRANGENESS OF THE ORDINARY, published by University of Chicago Press

At the Four Seasons, next to Bridge Street:

8:30

MLA Group Reading

Reading list includes Charles Bernstein, Peter Gizzi, Carla

Harryman, Hank Lazer, Bill Luoma, Douglas Messerli, Jennifer Moxley, A.L.

Nielsen, Bob Perelman, Juliana Spahr, Barrett Watten, Elizabeth Willis

Saturday, December 28

5:15-6:30 p.m. Joan Retallack and Carolyn Forché will read from their poetry at the MLA conference. THIS READING IS OPEN AND FREE TO NON-CONFERENCE PARTICIPANTS. Location: Room Delaware A at the Sheraton Hotel, corner of Connecticut and Calvert Streets NW.

8:30 p.m.

Ruthless Grip Art Project

U Street NW near the corner of 15th, under the Big Black Sign!

A Gathering of D.C. Poets Reading list includes Tina Darragh, P. Inman, Tom Mandel, Beth Joselow, Rod Smith, Joe Ross, Buck Downs, Heather Fuller, Mary Hilton, Phyllis Rosenzweig, Doug Lang, Dean Taciuch, Graham Foust, Mark Wallace

Sunday, December 29

3:00 p.m.

DC Arts Center

2438 18th St. NW (near Columbia and 18th in the heart of Adams Morgan)

PRIMARY TROUBLE anthology reading Hosted by Ed Foster, editor of TALISMAN, this group reading will include a number of writers appearing in the recent PRIMARY TROUBLE anthology edited by Ed and Leonard Schwarz.

Lastly, for anyone still in D.C. on New Year's Day, there will be a poetry reading and party (details to be announced).

Mark Wallace

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502. **Schuchat Simon**

***Re: Domestic***

*Wed 18 Dec 1996*

---

Someone raised the question as to whether there was a male counterpart to Midwinter Day, and specifically whether Lewis Warsh had kept a parallel journal during that pregnancy. My recollection is that Bernadette and Lewis did in fact write a journal prose work about their "domestic" life in the country not long after leaving NYC, with parallel tracking and alternating chapters. I cannot recall whether the time span covered was a month or a year, and my memory is that the work was written with a view towards reaching a wide audience, but in any case, it was written in 1977 or so and was never published (to my knowledge).

Meanwhile, P. Whalen's SCENES OF LIFE AT THE CAPITAL is a great domestic epic.

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503. **Aldon L. Nielsen**

***Re: belated stats***

*Wed 18 Dec 1996*

---

In partial response to Joe's question of days ago --

approx. 80% of "us" teach at non-PhD-granting institutions -- because some of these are MA-granting (like San Jose State) and have a very small number of TA's teaching comp., it works out to something like 60% of English professors working at schools that DO NOT HAVE ANY grad. students teaching lower-division (or whatever it's called where you live) classes --

Anyway you cut it, the majority of people teaching English do not fit the model raised in that article. STILL, I suspect that the majority of teaching of comp. is still done by people who do not have full-time status -- anybody know for sure --?

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504. **George Bowering**

**Re: Shakespeare**

Wed 18 Dec 1996

---

*An aside: (laugh as you will) I now think Shakespeare was written by somebody else - maybe a group. What kind of model does this provide if true? If Shakey was a stage manager - a front for Anonymous.*

*Now where was I reading recently--Mark Twain I think--the proposal that the works of Shakespeare were written by somebody else--with the same name.*

No, no. I think that Shakespeare's works were written by someone with a DIFFERENT name, but that person wrote under the name Shakespeare.

George Bowering.

2499 West 37th Ave.,  
Vancouver, B.C.,  
Canada V6M 1P4

fax: [REDACTED]  
e-mail: [REDACTED]

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505. **Mark W Scroggins**

**Upper Limit Music: The Writing of Louis Zukofsky**

Wed 18 Dec 1996

---

Here's one for those who will be attending MLA: please visit the University of Alabama Press display (booth 1209) to check out bound proofs or something similar of my edited collection, *Upper Limit Music: The Writing of Louis Zukofsky*, which contains essays by poetics list members Peter Quartermain and Steve Shoemaker, among a plethora of other interesting stuff. The book itself as far as I know is not *yet* available, but if you order at the conference you can get a hefty discount off of the list price.

Backchannel for more info--I'm off the list for the moment.

Mark Scroggins

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506. **Stephen Cope**  
**Re: Oppen's Daybook**  
*Wed 18 Dec 1996*

---

Burt-

Thanks for the info. I'm familiar with both, and have gotten some sources from others: Sulfur 25-27, and the Iowa Review (18/3), where sections of the Daybook have been published. Incidentally, Michael Davidson has a piece in his forthcoming book that deals explicitly with Oppen's archive here, so that should be helpful also...

Hope you're well,

Stephen

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507. **Thomas Bell**  
**Re: patr-iarchy/onization**  
*Wed 18 Dec 1996*

---

An interesting comment on cultural issues forwarded (w/ permission) from another list.

tom bell

From: [REDACTED]

To: [REDACTED]

Subject: Re: cultural positioning (fwd)

Last week I was invited to a restaurant dinner for a Famous Author. As it turned out, he was delayed, and the person who'd invited me was delayed because of his delay, so I met a group of strangers - except for one of them, a grad student in my department - in the restaurant. One of the strangers, a book rep for a Big NY Publisher, introduced himself and his group. I introduced myself, said I'm in the English dept., then introduced my student, saying she's in the dept., too. Attention then focused on her: What's it like teaching here? Had she read X's new book, or Y's? Effusion over her during most of the meal; every time I opened my mouth, the NY people looked at me for a moment, smiling wanly, then returned to ask my student what she thinks of ABCD, and whether she'd be interested in seeing EFGH in an anthology. During dessert, my student asked about my forthcoming book. As we discussed it, the NY publishing people were silent. Then one asked, "Are you on the campus?" They'd clearly assumed, from the time I introduced us, that my student (who is white) was a university professor, and that I (whom am not) was not.

Last night, after going into the city to hear Doty & Graham read, I got to the Metro North train early and took a seat. Two informally but nicely dressed men got on with two boys, about 10 or 11 years old. Standing directly behind my seat, one of the boys announced that he didn't want to ride in a train with niggers. They argued about it for a few minutes, and left. As they did so, one of the men looked back at me and sneered.

This is why we have poetry.

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508. **steph4848**

***Re: Domestic/Meyer/Warsh***

*Wed 18 Dec 1996*

---

Simon Shuchat wrote: Someone raised the question as to whether there was a male counterpart to Midwinter Day, and specifically whether Lewis Warsh had kept a parallel journal during that pregnancy. My recollection is that Bernadette and Lewis did in fact write a journal prose work about their "domestic" life in the country not long after leaving NYC, with parallel tracking and alternating chapters. I cannot recall whether the time span covered was a month or a year, and my memory is that the work was written with a view towards reaching a wide audience, but in any case, it was written in 1977 or so and was never published (to my knowledge).

Meanwhile, P. Whalen's SCENES OF LIFE AT THE CAPITAL is a great domestic epic.

Wouldn't it have changed the whole picture of the way in which Bernandette Meyer's book, Midsummer Day, was received if it had originally been paired with Lewis Warsh's parallel experience. It does raise questions? Why didn't a publisher see the value of both? Was there an assumption that there would not be an interest in the father's experience? (In 1977 I think that would be true - having become a father at that time as well.) Whatever might have been the value system of the publisher (re-affirming the mother-child-home convention), the alternative of pairing the poetry of both expectant father and mother might have led to a radical change in the conventional perception of "domestic" woman centered consciousness. I'm obviously being speculative here. However, I wd hope that Lewis' work might some day emerge so as to compare. (Of course there's the possibility that he didn't feel that confident about the work and dismissed it).

Stephen Vincent

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509. **r. drake**

**Re: St Marks Book Shop**

Thu 19 Dec 1996

---

*Larry Fagin has been saying for some time that he was going to do something about the bookstore situation in New York City, and lo, he has. At his instigation, St Marks Book Shop ordered hundreds of poetry titles from SPD, all of which arrived on the shelves yesterday...*

jordan--

could you post larry's address?

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510. **Carnography**

**Upper Limit Music: The Writing of Louis Zukofsky**

Thu 19 Dec 1996

---

*Please visit the University of Alabama Press display (booth 1209) to check out bound proofs or something similar of my edited collection, \_Upper Limit Music: The Writing of Louis Zukofsky\_, which contains essays by poetics list members Peter Quartermain and Steve Shoemaker, among a plethora of other interesting stuff.*

Mark Scroggins:

Some of us won't be attending MLA. Do you feel like citing or excerpting an essay or two on the poetics list? Some of us would appreciate it--especially the sum of us who care about music and prosody.

For me, not a week goes by without some small consultation of Zukovsky and Virginia Woolf. What \_To the Lighthouse\_ is to Bloomsbury prose, \_A\_ is to the open field: paradigm and playground. When we write of music on UB Poetics, I always feel we write to rival \_A\_.

We've got enough modernist fascists on our bookshelves to besiege the Capital of Grabenstadt. How fortunate for history's heart, when a decent man like Z. lives on as a brilliant poet.

(Just did the last line-inputs on the galleys of \_Distorture\_. I'm off to the post office and the Zip Disk is off to the printers.)

All the best,

Rob Hardin

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

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511. **Pete Landers**

**Re: patr-iarchy/onization**

Thu 19 Dec 1996

---

Burt,

My first objection was to the word "poetess"; the "p" word, as I called it. It is used by Basil Bunting on the sleeve of an (older) copy of The Granite Pail, and by Jonathan Williams on the sleeve of T&G.

Your response was essentially:

*she [Lorine Neidecker]  
has given us a singular and important view of a woman in a marriage in  
a particular time and place and socio-economic status.*

I disagree. The view she continually gives is of the natural world and sometimes, of American history. She is only slightly concerned with her socio-economic status, although I searched and found some references to some jobs she had worked. True, there aren't many midwestern hospital floor-washing women of the 40s through 60s appearing in the pages of cutting edge literary magazines, but there aren't many postmen who become rectors of non-credited colleges either. There aren't many insurance agents or country doctors either. One might note that WCW prescription pads affected the line length in some poems, that CO's knowledge of the citizens on his mail route helped him considerably in transforming a fishing village into an ancient greek seaport, so it stands to reason that LN's occupation affected her poetry. Perhaps it was so boring that she turned shaping words into poems to occupy her active mind, but that isn't "singular and important". And I find almost no reference to her marriage in her work. Above all, LN's contribution to poetry is so much more than an example of the poetry of a person of a particular gender, marital status, or economic class. I do agree that her time and place are essential to her poetry.

I asked if you (or anyone for that matter) seeks domesticity in male poets. It was a rhetorical question. The obvious answer is "no". you replied:

>...if it were a male within a domestic situation in  
> certain ways the p of v would be quite different  
and...  
> my "domestic" had more to do with living a tough economic life  
> and with being married to a man in a rural setting.

The point of view of anyone would be different. A poet like Neidecker only comes along a few times a century. Almost nobody's point of view is comparable to a master artist! But suppose all we did was make one X chromosome into a Y in her, how would her poetry differ? Is there something "female" in her work? Is

there something else that would replace this if she were a he? What? Typically, women are accused of emphasizing emotions over reason, of being "sentimental". Of course, there are many more published male poets whose work is so maudlin it makes us cry to think that it was published.

Again, I agree about the rural setting, but I find almost nothing about her husband in her poetry.

*i'd be happy  
to "back up my assertions" with some examples (though there are enough  
of them that I'd think my point is pretty obvious*

Her husband appears in one poem, her daughters in one poem, her grandfather in one poem Her mother in one poem. Her house appears in several poems.

Above all, the topics of her poetry are not her contribution to the almighty canon, it's the way she writes, her sounds and her juxtapositions that are "singular and important". It is this genius in her poetry that makes me get up on this soapbox everytime I hear people talking about her gender. You want domestic? Look at LZ in the late 40s and early 50s. The birth of his son and the death of his father and his general dissatisfaction with the world made him deliberately shift his focus. There is a case where time, place, and heritage are combined influences, but his gender doesn't play a role. I bet you could grab poems of LZ and LN of that time and give them to people who are unfamiliar with the work and, because of prejudices, the majority will incorrectly identify LZ as female and LN as male.

I'm not saying the conditions of any poet's existence don't affect their work, but remember, this is all because somebody said "poetess".

Women have been shafted by the patriarchy long enough, don't you think? I have no idea why so many men believed women couldn't or shouldn't write. I live in these times and an idea like that just doesn't make sense to me. However, I still hear its repercussions in the word "poetess". I see mostly men in the anthologies (with the exception of the Norton pomo thing). This thread started when someone wondered why Jonathan Williams had to reach back to Dickinson, Lady Ono Komachi, and Sappho to make comparisons, why the gender was important. I don't know that answer. It baffles me. It seems reasonable that, if opportunity is provided to everyone regardless of gender, we double our chances of getting some awesome reading material; if also regardless of race, we quadruple our chances.

Perhaps the error is in seeking a reason for prejudice. It isn't a rational thing. The only result is that it reduces the size of the competition. One possible cause is the christian religion with its injunction against women speaking in church. Or it could be a remnant from the Greek attitudes about women.



Whatever the cause, it is obviously unfounded, but it leads to sad thoughts like "How many geniuses died unknown? How much did this superstition lose us?" Clearly, we can't know the answers to these things. All we can do is put an end to it! When someone says "poetess" we must react. When someone makes an anthology that excludes most women we must condemn it. Silence is complicit.

Pete Landers

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## 512. **Pierre Joris**

### **More Ubu**

Thu 19 Dec 1996

James, Kevin &co. -- thanks for responding re UBU in SF; meanwhile this came through via John Whiting & I thought it may be of interest to the list -- which I think cld use some ubuesque lightning & thunder -- happy days to all, whatever you do or don't -- Pierre

----- Begin Included Message -----

Date: Sun, 15 Dec 1996 09:51:11 -0800

From: [REDACTED] (Dirk H van Nouhuys)

Subject: Ubu in San Francisco

*Remarks on the Centennial of the First Public Performance of UBU ROI.*

*in Justin Herman Plaza, Embarcadero, San Francisco*

*Sunday, 8 December 1996*

*I am pleased to see before me a plaza rife with Palcontents. It is an inspiration to Pataphysicians, Pataphysicists, Alfred Jarry-heads and Ubuists everywhere.*

*Ubu was once described (by translator and critic Cyril Connolly) as the Santa Claus of the atomic age. I daresay, there are naughty Santas in abundance operating out of some obscure Ubuic impulse which we hope to elucidate on this occasion.*

*Today we honor free speech. Before I continue, I hope you'll all give generously to the Phynance bucket on the ground here which will benefit the coffers of one of our holiday season's patron saints, Santa Escape Claus. As a memento, we offer a premium poster celebrating this august occasion which you may hang on your lavatory wall in warm recollection of this day.*

*With your support, and with the help of Ubu-Mayor Willie Braun, the producers and participants in this program can all look forward to wintering in Poland or Petaluma, or some other such place that is simultaneously both here & nowhere, a kind of Inner*

*Mongolia of the soul.*

*Back to free speech. In Berkeley today they honor the life and works of Mario Savio who for many embodied the Free Speech Movement. We here in San Francisco are reaching a little further back in time and space to remember the contribution of one eccentric Frenchman, Alfred Jarry, who gave us the freedom to yell SHIT in a crowded theater. For Tuesday the 10th marks the centennial of the first public performance of his incendiary and inseminating play UBU ROI, which in the course of two performances convulsed old gay Paree.*

*One of the speakers to follow will no doubt have more to say on the Ubu-type as manifested the world over in terms of its leaders, and the good old quotidian middle class arrogance and grotesque, de-brained consumer appetite that makes Ubus--in their obscene belligerence--possible, and tenacious as they are.*

*In this regard, I would suggest that is better ask not what Ubu can do for you. Ask rather what you can do as Ubu. With shitesword at the ready & Hi-Phynance, the answer is \_anything\_, anything at all that you can get away with!*

*It is amusing to recall that the Ubu character was developed collaboratively out of the schoolboy myth surrounding a certain teacher of physics and mathematics at the Lycee of Rennes in France:*

**"UBU ROI" AND THE SCHOOLMASTERS by HENRI HERTZ (EXTRACT)**

*-M. Hebert was celebrated due to the violence with which he was barracked and the pompous manner with which he strove to overcome his torture. He was never a victim to allow himself to be overcome at once, he reduced to trembling abasement, without defending himself with outbursts of rage. At least, hardly ever. What we loved in him, what made him unique, and inspired a thousand ingenious inventions aimed at stirring up his torment, was that we could look forward to beautiful tears, noble sobs, ceremonious supplications. Ah, we were devious!*

*M. Hebert's torture had three phases, accompanied, on his part by three physiognomies:*

*Entrance: The class took place, at this period, in a room in the old school. Teacher and pupils were on the same level. One gained access to it through long, dark corridors. It felt like a prison or a monastery. Wary, Hebert stood at the threshold. His legs were so short and his stomach so large that he appeared to be sitting on his arse. Just catching sight of him was enough to provoke hilarity. He tried to exorcise this demon by directing angelic looks from tiny eyes lost in a mass of pallid flab at the mob which, in a few moments, will be in uproar.*

*The second phase began when M. Hebert, his back to the class, resembled a great insect heaving itself up the blackboard upon which it deposits trails of chalk. Shot riddles the shabby elytra of his old jacket. M. Hebert turns round again. Not immediately, because he is deaf, although we were never certain if his deafness was due to a defect of hearing or of courage. The fact was that he left it to the last possible moment before he took on the miscreants, and when he decided to do so, it was plain to see he did it reluctantly.*

*He turned round all at once. The third phase began, in which he exhibited his truly royal character, in contradiction of his uncertain eyes, and the despairing grin beneath his great moustache, once red, now tobacco stained.*

*First of all, he took a small silver case from his jacket pocket, then he collected himself with a great effort of will, and commenced his harangue: beautifully phrased, carefully formulated, full of solemnity and, of malapropisms. He had a talent for these. His words neither conformed to his features, nor to the circumstances of his predicament. He threatened the innocent, avoided the guilty. This injustice was so obvious and clumsy that the class felt insulted, became lovers of justice themselves.*

*It was during these feats of oratory enunciated through glittering tears, that Jarry appeared. He entered the game at the end, like a matador entering the arena for the coup de grace. Complete silence reigned. Coldly, cutting, he posed insidious and bizarre questions to Pere Heb, who faltered in mid sentence, his pious manner shattered. Jarry encircled him, stunned him with aphorisms. He overwhelmed him, Pere Heb became disconcerted, batted his eyelids, stammered, pretended deafness, lost ground. Finally he gave way, collapsed on the table amidst the retorts and apparatus, put on his spectacles, and with clumsy trembling hands, scribbled a note to the headmaster.*

*The class regarded the victor Jarry with wonder.*

*With fear and a sense of recoil also, because one felt distinctly that his sarcasm went beyond the general unruliness, that something from within him, a powerful impulse was behind the ferocity of his attack. Already, without a doubt, Pere Ubu was coming into being, a vindictive memory of the one he was tormenting . . .*

*Jarry had become the high priest of this cult, and it was to be his task to write its holy book! The meaning of the Ubu myth to its authors, and to its subsequent readers, is necessarily protean. To the pupils of Rennes it presumably concerned the evident stupidity of the adult world they were about to enter, as exemplified by one of its more idiotic and base representatives. Numerous stage productions since have testified to its other possibilities.*

*Jarry, it seems, valued the Homeric nature of the Ubu cycle: when*

*the play was eventually published he adopted a form of literary archeology, leaving in many perplexing references to works which pre-dated it. These traces can only have been allowed to remain in order to indicate the presence of the pre-Ubu tradition.*

*[from: Pertaining to Ubu Gestation, by (ANONYMOUS), Felix-Frederic Hebert, Henri Hertz, "L.B.K.", Charles Morin, Henri Morin & Philipot. Assembled and Presented by Alastair Brotchie. Documents Pertaining to Ubu Gestation, The Printed Head, vol.1, Atlas Press, 1991.]*

*Before I yield the stage to the next speaker, let me make a few needed thank yous to those who made our presence here today possible.*

*Thank you of course to my parents, and my parents parents, and so on up the line.*

*Thank you also to Ubu-Mayor Willie Braun and Ubu-Police Chief Bruce Lau for looking the other way. Thanks to Charlotte Mallard Swine of the Pataphysical Dept of Public Art for her patronage.*

*To Paris, yes, we'll always have Paris...San Francisco's mistress city, our thanks for providing an environment in which the young Alfred Jarry could function, albeit against great adversity, both economic & against his own self-destructive impulses.*

*To the J.C. Decaux company of Paris, purveyors of fine street furniture, advertisting kiosks, and public toilets, which in a burst of corporate largesse, recently announced plans to benefit the San Francisco Public Library.*

*The Library's woes are by now well known. It is commendable to see responsible corporate action to help offset its budgetary shortful and pursant inability to buy more books.*

*Decaux's plan to bind, barcode, and catalog archival ordure and thus create a Community Excreta collection is certainly visionary, and will live on in the anals, her, annals of bibliographic innovation. Let's hear it for Corporate Ubu-ism!*

*Let us also recognize the Ubuversity of California, which is building an Ubu Cyclotron in the hills of Berkeley, and will soon be opening an Institute of Pataphysical Research as part of the UCSF expansion into the Mission District.*

*We salute their far-sightedness in recognizing this little known branch of science--Pataphysics--which is concerned with solutions to imaginary problems.*

*We trust that their findings will be of incalculable benefit to the people of SF and of California.*

*D.S.Black ( [REDACTED] ),*

--

=====

pierre joris 6 madison place albany ny 12202  
tel/fax [REDACTED] email: [REDACTED]  
<http://writing.upenn.edu/epc/authors/joris/>  
<http://www.albany.edu/~tm0900/nomad.html>

-----

Reality is escape. The rusty junk  
of fervent highways soothe the mind  
into self-consoling slumber. The real  
real is intimate, hard to find,  
locked & released at once in thought,  
beyond the touch of poignant imagery.

Robert Kelly ♦ Ode 16

=====

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513. **Burt Kimmelman**  
*Niedecker's domesticity*

Thu 19 Dec 1996

---

Okay Pete,

Here's the first page my finger finds in Granite Pail (p.20):

I knew a clean man  
but he was not for me.  
Now I sew green aprons  
over covered seats. He

wades the muddy water fishing,  
falls in, dries his last pay-check  
in the sun, smooths it out  
in \*Leaves of Grass\*. He's  
the one for me.

Burt

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514. **Burt Kimmelman**  
*Domesticity Niedecker style*  
Thu 19 Dec 1996

---

From: ADMIN::KIMMELMAN "Burt Kimmelman -@NJIT" 19-DEC-1996  
10:39:02.13  
To: MX%"[REDACTED]"  
CC: KIMMELMAN  
Subj: Re: patr-iarchy/onization

Pete,

I do not mean to delimit LN to domesticity--but you can't deny the domesticity either, a female, wifely version of it at that, though not at all cliched. I've already keystroked one "domestic" poem for you in another post a few minutes ago (Granite Pail p. 20); that one I found by chance. Now I find, with deliberation, the following.

I married

in the world's black night  
for warmth

if not repose.

At the close -  
someone.

I hid with him  
from the long range guns.

We lay leg

in the cupboard, head  
in closet.

A slit of light  
at no bird dawn -

Untaught

I thought

he drank

too much.

I say

I married

and lived unburied.

I thought -

(Granite Pail p. 93. Cf. also: 101, 104 etc. etc.).

So?

Burt

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515. **Thomas M. Orange**

**north point**

Thu 19 Dec 1996

---

so what happened to north point and when? it's a real shame, they made some damn fine books; i especially like edward snow's translations of rilke's neue gedichte and the celan last poems.

t.

---

|  |                                             |  |
|--|---------------------------------------------|--|
|  | Rien n'aura eu lieu que le lieu             |  |
|  | Nothing will have taken place but the place |  |
|  | - Mallarme -                                |  |

~~~~~

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516. **Jordan Davis**

St Marks Book Shop

Thu 19 Dec 1996

Larry Fagin has been saying for some time that he was going to do something about the bookstore situation in New York City, and lo, he has. At his instigation, St Marks Book Shop ordered hundreds of poetry titles from SPD, all of which arrived on the shelves yesterday. I bought four books there yesterday: *_Men In Aida_*, *_My Trip to New York City_*, *_5000 Musical Terms_* and *_The World of Leon_*. Odd as it sounds, these are books it would have been unimaginable to find on any bookstore shelf in New York until yesterday. If you're in New York, you should go see. If you buy some poetry books, mention to the store how much you like their poetry section, and how much it's improved.

This is from *_The World of Leon_*--

THE SECRET OF JANE BOWLES

One Sunday, one Monday, every week

Makes two days out of seven.

Three times six is not eleven

Except in heaven.

A dark cloud jogs beside us laughing amiably.

Then we stop and look around.

Numbers come everywhere from the heavens, 1-10.

The saintly six.
The redoubtable three.
The peaceful four.
The sports-car driving five.
The lunatic nine.
The recumbent governor eight.
The wheelchair one.
The pessimistic seven.
The metal two.
The hit-and-run ten.
They join us at the clouded structure
Where angels find their conjunctions and well-wishers
Wave one last long goodbye.
The unnumbered question is our sleep in which these structures hide.
Floating above the footnotes in oblivious fruited fields
Where her touch is like a helping hand
That reaches down to lift you up to where it is--
There is no telling what you might find in it

®Leon, 1974 (Big Sky Number Seven)

Just thought I would mention it--

Jordan Davis

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517. **Jordan Davis**

Last Poetry City

Thu 19 Dec 1996

Anselm Berrigan and Max Winter will read their poetry tonight. The Village Voice refers to them as "up-and-comers". See for yourself at Poetry City, in the lovely offices of Teachers & Writers Collaborative, 5 Union Sq W 7th Fl, NYC at 7 p.m. Free. Go out afterwards with the poets and harangue them. Thanks, J Davis

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518. **Charles Alexander**

Re: north point

Thu 19 Dec 1996

They got into big debt and ran out of money. Great literature doesn't sell so well.

charles alexander

At 10:54 AM 12/19/96 -0500, you wrote:

>so what happened to north point and when? it's a real shame, they made
>some damn fine books; i especially like edward snow's translations of
>rilke's neue gedichte and the celan last poems.

>

>t.

>

>| Rien n'aura eu lieu que le lieu |

>| Nothing will have taken place but the place |

>| - Mallarme - |

>~~~~~

~

>

>

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519. **amato**

Re: Domestic/Meyer/Warsh

Thu 19 Dec 1996

stephen, i hear you on the question of un-conventional domestics...

BUT, when you suggest that it may have 'changed the whole picture' to see warsh's parallel narrative vis-a-vis mayer's, i'm struck somewhat by the implication (if i'm reading you right) that women's/mother's domestic narratives are customarily privileged over and against their male counterparts...

my gut-response is---NO WAY!... i mean, esp. these days, it's men's and father's experiences of domesticity, incl. childbirth, that are fashionable, *not* women's... women have, up to the 20th century, often been forced into masculinist modes of writing/subject choice which precluded their relating *truly intimate* domestic narratives... i'll give you three recent examples of recent male domestic narratives: bob shacochis' cover-story in (october's?) _harper's_ of his wife's infertility; michael berube's recent book on his son's downs syndrome, _; bob green's book _good morning merry sunshine_, about his daughter's first year... shacochis' essay is deeply moving, but maintains a distance from his subject that even he notes, and one can't help but wondering at times why he's the one telling the story; berube's work is also provocative, fascinating -- the point here is not that these stories don't deserve telling, but one has to wonder why women's stories have formerly been discouraged by a publishing system which has now "given birth" to an emergence of Sensitive Male stories -- right around the time when the Sensitive Male became

fashionable (and Sensitive Males have access to a mainstream publishing apparatus which their female counterparts still largely lack)...

anyway, i was raised by a single father after the age of 13 (with one sibling) from the late 60s through the 70s... and i understand how difficult it can be to find a space to talk about such experiences... but wrt publishing, i'd have to suggest that we'll have to pose more searching questions about whose stories get told, and why...

best,

joe

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520. **amato**

Re: belated stats

Thu 19 Dec 1996

thanx aldon... so 60% of english profs. don't have any ta's...

i think nafg (national adjunct faculty guild) reports something like 40% of ALL courses (all disciplines, all schools) are taught by *part-time adjunct* faculty...

so the problem, again, seems to have less to do with ta's and more to do with issues surrounding adjunct faculty...

joe

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521. **Patrick Foley**

Mike on meaning

Thu 19 Dec 1996

I think this is where I'd argue with you, Pat. We, too, live in a time where everything carries meaning, where everything is a sign requiring interpretation, but what they have to tell us is so sinister that we compose lives in resistance to reading them. We prefer the narrative that supplies us with the quick social fix. Whereas a sensitivity and alertness to what Wystan calls our violent tastes could, at the very least, cut us loose into some pretty scary territory.

Almost a week since your notes re: Crash, etc. Time, er, flies. I like what you have to say here, Mike, and I'm not quite sure where I want to disagree. ---

Aside on my hesitance about all this: have decided it was not coincidental that the difference I gestured at concerned the Middle Ages, and with Pound in mind have gone back to reading some Chaucer, not since a dozen years ago. Found a description of the gothic aesthetic in the intro to my paperback that seems

almost to fit EP's practice in say the Cantos, and trying now to hammer all this out as an alternative to the Romantic lyric consciousness (the sort of thing at least Creeley mentions in the Whitman story, the New Critical ideal of epiphany poem, etc.). --- Now maybe you have something here in the way you put it, that it has to do with a refusal of knowledge. Looking out my window this morning I was thinking how a modern poet might carefully describe the sky's grey qualities, the bareness of the trees, et et et cetera, all the while scrupulously avoiding the word "winter", and might feel that this avoidance was the essence of the art.

So here's where I'm in a way arguing against the position I held in the late running battle over "taste", because I begin to wonder now about this purer perception the virtues of which I was more or less extolling, resistance to the narrative impulse and all that. Chomsky somewhere says his work in linguistics and politics has run along twin tracks: "Plato's problem", how we know so much given so little evidence; and "Orwell's problem", how we know so little given so much evidence. The latter maybe what we're talking about here. Now you distinguish here in a rough way between the narratives that come readily to hand (the "quick social fix") and the ones that might require a special sort of alertness and sensitivity. Can't help but feel the problem I'm having has to do in part with the loss of a common frame of reference, the sort of presumption Chaucer & Shakespeare can make upon their audience's knowledge, or if you prefer "knowledge", point of view? whatever. "Whan that April with his shoures soote/ [...] Than longen folk to goon on pilgrimages" --- what is that "then"? Most natural thing in the world, and I'd assume not an idea unique to Chaucer's unique sensibility. A commonplace? Knowledge?

So there're some notes, along lines similar to the ones you were responding to -- something to do with a refusal of meaning, a refusal of knowledge, a refusal of narrative, all of which I'm more & more thinking of as the heritage of the Enlightenment and Romanticism, if you follow the way I've drifted. Maybe the key word in all this was "natural" just there, talking about Chaucer's "then" -- and I probably should have said "ordinary", "everyday", so's I could gesture toward Wittgenstein, whose project consisted largely in a recovery of the ordinary knowledge post-Enlightenment philosophers had pretended to have forgotten. And maybe that's what I need to get at in our difference from pre-Renaissance days, the ordinariness of their knowledge of signs and symbols, the wide currency of it, etc. And maybe that's the difference between what you're saying about Cronenberg (& Ballard) and what I'm saying -- I'm not sure I could tell the difference between seeing them as exceptions in a culture of a denial and seeing them as unique sensibilities along more Romantic lines, men who see what others don't, all that, visionaries. Maybe there's no alternatives anymore, that I don't know. But I'm trying to think about the reverse here,

about not uniquely failing to see what everyone else does. (Not sure I'm ready to conclude I live in far & away the stupidest time in history, tempting though that view is.) Not failing to see, for instance, what so many poets whose works fill important journals each month fail to see, that what they're writing about is perfectly ordinary.

My usual incoherence, just trying to keep the virtual ball rolling, Pat

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522. **dbkk**

SPT's winter newsletter is out!!!!

Thu 19 Dec 1996

Yes, Traffic is in the mail today folks, featuring the following reviews:

HARD PRESS

Jim Brodey, *Heart of the Breath* by Edmund Berrigan

Bernadette Mayer, *The Desires Of Mothers To Please Others In Letters* by Maria Damon

Lynn Crawford, *Solow* by Thomas Bell

Coolidge, Gizzi, Yau, Barrette, and Coolidge, *Lowell Connector: Lines and Shots from Kerouac's Town* by Kit Robinson

KELSEY ST. PRESS

Arcade, *Erica Hunt* by Renee Gladman

The Woman Without Experiences, Patricia Dienstfrey by Pauline Facciano

Stripped Tales, Barbara Guest by Laura Moriarty

The Rosy Medallions: Selected Work, Camille Roy by Juliana Spahr

Distance Without Distance, Barbara Einzig by Joel Felix

Sphericity, Mei-mei Berssenbrugge; *Under Flag*, Myung Mi Kim; *Dreams in Harrison Railroad Park*, Nellie Wong by Fred Wah

Small Salvations, Patricia Dienstfrey by Pauline Facciano

Poem From a Single Pallet, Fanny Howe; *The Quietist*, Fanny Howe (O Books) by David Clippinger

O BOOKS

Mob, Abigail Child by Jocelyn Saidenberg

Phantom Anthems, Robert Grenier; *What I*

Believe--Transpiration/Transpiring--Minnesota, Robert Grenier by Joshua Schuster

The Inveterate Life, Jessica Grim by Catriona Strang

A Memory Play, Carla Harryman by Jena Osman

Close to Me and Closer ... (The Language of Heaven) and *Desamere*, Alice Notle by Laura Moriarty

Catenary Odes, Ted Pearson by Fred Muratori

Any NON-LOCALS who would like a 3-issue subscription to the newsletter, send \$10, payable to Small Press Traffic, to:

Small Press Traffic
at New College
766 Valencia St.
San Francisco, CA 94110

In the Bay Area, the newsletter is available to Small Press Traffic members. Yearly membership dues are \$25 for students, and \$35 (minimum--more is great) for "adults." And big hugs and kisses to those out-of-state folks who paid full memberships to Small Press Traffic: Bob Holman, Ron Silliman, Joel Kuszai, Anthony Schlagel, and Jennifer Moxley.

Thanks to all the reviewers for the excellent job they did. It's a fabulous issue. We will be soliciting new reviews early in 97. At that time we will also begin working on placing the newsletter at the Electronic Poetry Center.

Holiday whatevers.

Dodie Bellamy,
Director, SPT

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523. **Jerry Rothenberg**

Re: north point

Thu 19 Dec 1996

I'm surprised Charles A. didn't mention that following the demise of North Point, Jack Shoemaker moved his operation to D.C., where he now operates as Counterpoint. Under that imprint he's recently published, e.g., Gary Snyder's *Mountains & Rivers Without End*.

Or am I somehow wrong on that, Charles?

Jerry Rothenberg

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524. **dbkk**

SPT's winter newsletter p.s.

Thu 19 Dec 1996

I left out two reviews in my last message:

Norma Cole on William Fuller's *_The Sugar Borders_* (O Books)
and Camille Roy on Barbara Guest's *_Musicality_* (Kelsey St.)

Ooops!

Dodie

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525. **Jordan Davis**

Re: St Marks Penance Handbook

Thu 19 Dec 1996

I said something about finding _The World of Leon_ on a NY bookstore shelf being 'unimaginable until yesterday'. Obviously this is nonsense on the order of 'It literally took 10,000 years to make this baseball card' or 'Hopefully we'll have the problems of anxiety and guilt worked out by tomorrow.' I will go sit in the corner now. J Davis

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526. **Charles Watts**

Robin Blaser & Roy Kiyooka on new cd and mag!

Thu 19 Dec 1996

A quick note to announce the publication of COLLAPSE No. 2, _The Verbal & the Visual_, which contains sections on Emily Carr and Robert Smithson, Roy Miki on Roy Kiyooka with Patsy Longmire's photos of Roy K, Charles Bernstein and Charles Watts on Robin Blaser, Christos Dikeakos' "Double Portrait of Robin Blaser," an interview with Robin Blaser and others on the art of the San Francisco Bay Area, 1945-1965, AND a CD featuring Robin Blaser reading at The Recovery of the Public World Conference & Poetry Festival, June 4, 1996, and Roy Kiyooka reading from "Mother Talk" at the Vancouver Art Gallery, 1991.

Price for one issue is \$22.50. Two issues: \$40.00.

Editors: Judith Mastai, Hanif Jan Mohamed, John O'Brian

Address:

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PLEASE DO NOT REPLY TO THE BUFFALO POETICS LIST OR TO ME FOR SINGLE COPY OR SUBSCRIPTION ORDERS. ORDER ONLY AT THE ABOVE ADDRESS.

Lastly, I'm away to California for 2-3 weeks and will be off the list for a bit. The bests of the season to you all!

Charles Watts

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527. **Charlotte Pressler**

Re: belated stats

Thu 19 Dec 1996

On Wed, 18 Dec 1996, Aldon L. Nielsen wrote:

In partial response to Joe's question of days ago --

approx. 80% of "us" teach at non-PhD-granting institutions -- because some of these are MA-granting (like San Jose State) and have a very small number of TA's teaching comp., it works out to something like 60% of English professors working at schools that DO NOT HAVE ANY grad. students teaching lower-division (or whatever it's called where you live) classes --

Anyway you cut it, the majority of people teaching English do not fit the model raised in that article. STILL, I suspect that the majority of teaching of comp. is still done by people who do not have full-time status -- anybody know for sure --?

That was how it was at Cleveland State University. I took an M.A. in philosophy and taught English comp. there before coming to Buffalo as a Ph.D. student. Cleveland State offers only the M.A. in English. GA-ships are few, and graduate students do not teach classes there, but composition classes are taught for the most part by lecturers, who are local residents, often with M.A.'s from Cleveland State. They teach on a quarter-by-quarter basis; usually they teach one course only, which earns them \$1600 - \$1700 per quarter. They supplement their income by teaching at local community colleges, which offer much lower rates, generally \$600 -700 per class per quarter. With luck they are able to average around \$15,000 a year for this work. They receive no health benefits and are not eligible for unemployment. I knew several who have been teaching for 15 or more years on this basis. They are almost never able to get full-time positions at these colleges.

My sister, Carol Pressler-Lavrisha, is a metal sculptor with an M.F.A. who has been teaching art appreciation and art history classes in local colleges for nine years now. Most of those years have been spent at one community college. Not only has she never been offered a full time position, but when one became available at that college, the part-time faculty were not told about it.

She found out there was a job available and demanded that she be allowed to apply, only to have the permanent faculty sabotage her interview and then refuse to give her further part-time classes. She is now teaching at another local school.

A couple of tales from the front lines -- are there others?

Charlotte Pressler

<[REDACTED]>

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528. **Charles Alexander**

Re: north point

Thu 19 Dec 1996

You're right of course, Jerry. I just don't know a lot about that more recent history. Did Counterpoint follow immediately upon the demise of North Point? And are they selling older North Point books?

charles

At 11:16 AM 12/19/96 PST, you wrote:

>I'm surprised Charles A. didn't mention that following the demise of North
>Point, Jack Shoemaker moved his operation to D.C., where he now operates
>as Counterpoint. Under that imprint he's recently published, e.g., Gary
>Snyder's Mountains & Rivers Without End.

>

>Or am I somehow wrong on that, Charles?

>

>Jerry Rothenberg

>

>

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529. **steph4848**

Re: Domestic/Meyer/Warsh

Fri 20 Dec 1996

Dear Joe,

You wrote:

"stephen, i hear you on the question of un-conventional domestics..."

I'm not sure you hear me! I think I've previously argued that the "conventional" definition of "domestic" - or the definition of what occurs within the home space is either kaput, or a retro concept. The "convention" is in question, and the "unconventional" -- in any number of forms -- is being tested, contested and variously forged.

You continue: "BUT, when you suggest that it may have 'changed the whole picture' to see warsh's parallel narrative vis-a-vis mayer's, i'm struck somewhat by the implication (if i'm reading you right) that women's/mother's domestic narratives are customarily privileged over and against their male counterparts..."

Most likely not "the whole picture" in some grand societal sense, but certainly in the way in which we, as readers, would have engaged the shared circumstance of both Mayer and Warsh. In reviewing the book today, I kept noticing several times in which she notes that Lewis is in another room writing. Since I haven't seen Lewis's writing, I might guess that he's taking care of Sophie, their child, while Bernadette is writing etc. This round robin of each interpreting their consciousness of this shared space might have been a remarkable document. It would not have "privileged" either mother or father or either writer. To the contrary - precluding Lewis' writing was as focused on the situation as Bernadette's - I believe we would have been offered a unique and revelatory view of the consciousness of both figures wrestling with the new arrival. In this way, I think such a book would be revolutionary. It's neither a pull for patriarchy or matriarchy - or men or women centered writing. Done with conviction it's an attempt to explore shared space - and done jointly it offers the possibility of making inclusive rather than exclusive statements in which one writer(gender) has power over the absent other. At least I would like to think that we've gotten to that point - and that's why I was fascinated with Warsh/Mayer's unpublished project

You continue: "my gut-response is---NO WAY!... i mean, esp. these days, it's men's and father's experiences of domesticity, incl. childbirth, that are fashionable, *not* women's... women have, up to the 20th century, often been forced into masculinist modes of writing/subject choice which precluded their relating *truly intimate* domestic narratives..."

No problem - tho I suspect there are some who will argue that Stein and Woolf among others worked the territory.

You continue: "i'll give you three recent examples of recent male domestic narratives: bob shacochis' cover-story in (october's?) _harper's_ of his wife's infertility; michael berube's recent book on his son's downs syndrome, _; bob green's book _good morning merry sunshine_, about his daughter's first year... shacochis' essay is deeply moving, but maintains a distance from his subject that even he notes, and one can't help but wondering at times why he's the one telling the story; berube's work is also provocative, fascinating -- the point here is not that these stories don't deserve telling, but one has to wonder why women's stories have formerly been discouraged by a publishing system which has now "given birth" to an emergence of Sensitive Male stories -- right around the time when the Sensitive Male became fashionable (and Sensitive Males have access to a mainstream publishing apparatus which their female counterparts still largely lack)..." I'm not totally sure of your point. I go a little 'knee jerk' at the expression "Sensitive Males." I think it's good to question the source of the maker of the phrase. I suspect none of the writers of these pieces go around calling themselves "Sensitive Males". I do suspect people who are

threatened by men taking the responsibility for different roles - particularly in the domestic realm - find the expression a suitable term of harassment. To me it comes off as similar to the offensive phrases applied to women in positions of power traditionally held by men. With the exception of the Green book, you seem taken by the work!

You continue:

"anyway, i was raised by a single father after the age of 13 (with one sibling) from the late 60s through the 70s... and i understand how difficult it can be to find a space to talk about such experiences... but wrt publishing, i'd have to suggest that we'll have to pose more searching questions about whose stories get told, and why..."

I wouldn't use the problem with publishers (and why they make the gender etc. oriented marketing choices they do) to not tell your story - (which I hope is not the subtext of your point). However, to back up, my whole original point - when the thread started about the Niedecker blurbs - was that I found it disturbing that some were arguing that in no way was it appropriate to be at all identified with "the domestic." On the contrary I would argue that the domestic is a loaded venue. Obviously not the only one. But a place where many arguments in the current culture take root. (As a single father of two teen-agers I can say the 'cultures' rush through here in giant, not always comfortable, but most often fascinating waves). To cast out the domestic as a vital constituent seems fool hardy to me. To seek a writing that embraces the polarities that occur within the domestic - whether from point of view of child, man or woman - seems to me a valuable project. Equally - I agree with you - it's important to critically expose publishers who privilege and profit by making fashion of one point of view over another, as well as support those publishers with more comprehensive in their view.

best,

joe

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530. **Ron Silliman**

Picky, Picky, Picky

Fri 20 Dec 1996

Rob,

Zukofsky (with an "f") never wrote a poem entitled _A_. He did, however, write a poem entitled _"A"_. You managed to get only one-third of the title into your message.

My question (to the list) is this: what is the most famous instance of this misreading, which has occurred thousands of times? My nomination is Hoover's Postmodern.

Ron Silliman

>For me, not a week goes by without some small consultation of Zukovsky
>and Virginia Woolf. What *_To the Lighthouse_* is to Bloomsbury prose,
>*_A_* is to the open field: paradigm and playground. When we write of
>music on UB Poetics, I always feel we write to rival *_A_*.

>

>We've got enough modernist fascists on our bookshelves to besiege the
>Capital of Grabenstadt. How fortunate for history's heart, when a
decent

>man like Z. lives on as a brilliant poet.

>

>(Just did the last line-inputs on the galleys of *_Distorture_*. I'm off
>to the post office and the Zip Disk is off to the printers.)

>

>All the best,

>

>Rob Hardin

>

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

>

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531. **Henry**

Re: Picky, Picky, Picky

Fri 20 Dec 1996

Well, the most famous instance I know of occurred in late 1977, when Prince Philip was hosting a royal dinner for a congeries of literary luminaries in London. Here's an excerpt from an exchange between Philip and Prof. Murg Szweft of the Univ. of Left Overbie, reported in the London Daily Telegaff:

PP: Well, I say, you know, this Zonkoffski or Zakoversky, I've read into it a bit - not bloody English, that A of his, what?

MS: Pardon, my dear Duke - that's quotation mark A quotation mark.

PP: Eh? Don't quite follow you there, old chap.

MS: the title of the book - "A" - it's in quotation marks.

PP: Not what we learned in public school, old man. Book titles in italics - individual poems in quotes, I daresay!

MS: It IS an individual poem.

PP: Well, yes, but I'm talking about the *_book_*, man!

MS: Have you read it, my dear fellow?

PP: What? Book or poem?

MS: Very good, my lord! Jolly good!

PP: Wait - you haven't heard the Z of it - heh heh!!

Clearly the Daily Telegaff is stepping around Prince Phil rather discreetly these days - this is all a bit tame, considering the explosive subject under discussion.
- Henry Gould

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532. **Aldon L. Nielsen**

Re: lower limit

Fri 20 Dec 1996

After you look at Mark's book, come by the Cambridge booth at MLA and see if mine's shown up yet. Printer told the editor it would be available on the 27th! If copies of *_Black Chant_* are not themselves on the scene, a poster of some sort is to stand in their stead as a trope of some sort --

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533. **Michael Boughn**

Re: Mike on meaning

Fri 20 Dec 1996

More later, Pat, but I wanted quickly to draw attention to a spot on TV last night about an image of the Virgin Mary appearing on the glass windows of an office building in Florida.

It was quite amusing as the reporter went from those identified as "believers" who were worshipping the office building--well, at least the image on it--to those identified as "scientists" who were worshipping reason's ability to "explain" the image in terms of mineral deposits, ground water flows, etc. (except they couldn't explain the continuity of the image across multiple panes of glass--yet), to the owner of the building who, after trying unsuccessfully to scrub the damn spot out, was starting to calculate what this meant in terms of potential profits. Meanwhile the mealy mouthed reporter--this was on Hard Copy, and the blonde bimbo anchor was saying, "Harry, you're a serious news

reporter, what do you make of this"--was desperately trying to cover all bets by acknowledging everyone's meaning as being a true meaning.

Meanwhile I'm thinking, whoa, there's a whole a lot meaning going on!

As they say up here in multicultural Canada--season's greetings to all and to all a goodnight!

Mike
[REDACTED]

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534. **Aldon L. Nielsen**

Re: The Declining Significance of Race?

Fri 20 Dec 1996

I have seen Thomas Bell's experiences repeated all too many times in my life. An odd coincidence -- At some point every semester, one of the students in my ethnic studies course will opine on the "fact" that racism isn't a problem any more. This invariably is followed by news a la Texaco in the papers (always presented as a rare instance of rogue behavior) --

The "service" sector is always revealing. Often when my wife and I are in store -- the clerk who is waiting on me will look up at my wife, standing there beside me and holding my hand, with a puzzled expression and ask, "was there something you wanted help with?"

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535. **Jordan Davis**

Re: north point / John Godfrey, Carol Szamatowicz and I

Fri 20 Dec 1996

Counterpoint and North Point are both publishing.. North Point is distributed by Farrar Straus Giroux, last I saw.. the large square well-received book about the history and use of olives is representative of North Point's new work.. Counterpoint, meanwhile.. who distributes them? I haven't seen anything but the Snyder long poem and essay collection..

/

John Godfrey, Carol Szamatowicz and I will be reading tomorrow (Saturday) evening at 6 p.m. as part of a gallery opening.. It's a group show of recent abstractions at Triangular Gallery at Atelier 14 (142 W 14th St, 7th Fl, bet. 6 & 7 Aves--Tel. [REDACTED]) On acoustic bass will be Paul Aston.. It should be.

Jordan Davis

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536. **GRAHAM W. FOUST**

North Point

Fri 20 Dec 1996

As far as I know (which at this point in the morn ain't far) Counterpoint does not sell old North Point titles. They've done some nice art books for recent shows in the DC area (most notably, the Phillips Collection's "Americans in Paris" exhibit), and some of their recent titles include W.S. Merwin's mini-anthology *Lament for the Makers* and Evan S. Connell's *Collected Stories*. Other than Merwin and Snyder, I don't think they really "do" much poetry, though.

Graham

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537. **amato**

Re: Domestic/Meyer/Warsh

Fri 20 Dec 1996

stephen: quickly ('cause i've got one more day before i split these parts for points east), reading back over you reading back over me, i think we're in basic agreement, but i feel the need to clarify a bit:

(1) i certainly didn't mean to imply that berube et al ARE, ontologically or some such, Sensitive Males, though they may be (like me, like others i hope) sensitive males... yes, i am taken by such work, esp. berube's book, *life as we know it: a father, a family, and an exceptional child*---it's really quite remarkable (consider this a plug for his book)... i was using uppercase, clumsily i guess, to denote what the publishing-marketing apparatus is busy doing... anybody knows me knows i wouldn't 'not tell my story' on the basis of said apparatus... JUST TRY TO GET ME TO SHUT UP!... but anybody knows me knows that the *way* i might tell my stories might be distinctively at odds with storytelling as popularly conceived (might be i say---sometimes i'm orthodox as hell)... i just don't think we can talk about constructing 'domestic' space using our abc's without some view toward who's reading said construction... if there are plenty of readers 'out there' primed for a particular narrative, this will (sometimes unfortunately) result in more such stories... but in any case, we do (as i think you suggest) need to unpack 'sensitive male' (and perhaps think a bit more about how 'iron john' & co. fits into this picture)...

(2) stein and woolf would be exceptions to the rule, *to the extent that they're writing about intimate experience that's often highly coded*... they're not the first writers that come to (my) mind when it comes to childbirth narratives, for

example (and for obvious reasons)... but in any case both are 20th century writers, and my point was about women writers *up to the 20th. century*... by which i meant *prior to*...

(3) you still haven't said anything that persuades me to believe that i DON'T hear you on the question of domestic space, stephen!... my own orientation is rather techno---i'm interested actually in how broader conceptions of hygiene, cooking, even home education figure into the 'home office' [wink]... this is why i cited that zone piece (which is chock-full of other references)... you sound as though you're more interested in the various people, and corresponding roles and perspectives, that populate such spaces... but anyway... i think we're close here, by which i mean close on the primary point of these posts (as i understood it, anyway)... i've written myself (i think!) on my own domestic spaces, albeit i have to acknowledge *this* discussion as having foregrounded for me the way the word itself figures my understanding of such stuff... i think in fact a simple term such as "head of household" could be a rich site from which to begin writing (poetry, scholarship, whatever)...

anyway, thanx for the back & forth!...

best,

joe

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538. **amato**

job description...

Fri 20 Dec 1996

just pulled this job description off the (web) chronicle of higher ed... thought some of you out there might be interested... note esp. the line about "academic freedom"... this is the sort of doubletalk that indicates how screwed-up the employment situation in postsecondary ed. has gotten... i understand that tenure, like seniority, can keep 'dead wood' around (and i hesitate to say this these days in a public forum)... at the same time, if you believe what you're about to read, why then have i got a deal for you---

apologies to those of you who might be on the faculty of unity college---i couldn't help myself...

best,

joe

Unity College seeks faculty at the rank of Assistant Professor or Associate Professor. Candidates must have successful college teaching experience and a terminal degree in an appropriate

field or equivalent experience. The 1997-1998 salary range is approximately \$28,000 - \$36,000. Unity College faculty enjoy academic freedom with multi-year contracts rather than tenure. Responsibilities include: teaching twenty-one credits per academic year; academic advising; teaching independent studies and internships; leading periodic curriculum review and development of new courses; and serving as an advocate for the discipline across campus.

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539. **Jordan Davis**

Re: Domestic/Meyer/Warsh

Fri 20 Dec 1996

I think it's ironic that Lewis Warsh, one of the odder story tellers around, would be accused of some kind of self-aggrandizing centrality.. he's definitely in one of those wavering elliptical orbits as anyone who's read his novels would agree... Joe A if I had an extra copy of *_Agnes & Sally_* I'd mail it to you..

Of course I may be misreading this whole argument, but I agree with Stephen Vincent that the 'parallel text' of Lewis's account of the time would make a picture of that particular domestic arrangement more complex and energetic.. those being the virtues I look for..

Ho ho ho caribou,
Jordan

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540. **Patrick Foley**

Re: north point

Fri 20 Dec 1996

Someone else out there may remember the whole story, but the North Point imprint (and backlist) is now owned by one of the big NY corporate publishers, I forget which one, and that's why the current printings are glued instead of sewn in signatures as North Point used to do them. They did make lovely books. (Still kicking myself for never picking up their edition of *The Maltese Falcon* w/ period photographs of SF.) "North Point" lives on like "FSG/Noonday", like "Knopf" as an "imprint", not a publisher. Did the Scribners ever sell out? Probably, but they held out a long time. If no one else remebers before I get home from work, I'll check BooksInPrint to see who owns "North Point" now.

You're right of course, Jerry. I just don't know a lot about that more recent history. Did Counterpoint follow immediately upon the demise of North Point? And are they selling older North Point books?

charles

At 11:16 AM 12/19/96 PST, you wrote:

I'm surprised Charles A. didn't mention that following the demise of North Point, Jack Shoemaker moved his operation to D.C., where he now operates as Counterpoint. Under that imprint he's recently published, e.g., Gary Snyder's Mountains & Rivers Without End.

Or am I somehow wrong on that, Charles?

Jerry Rothenberg

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541. **aerialedge**

Re: north point / John Godfrey, Carol Szamatowicz and I

Fri 20 Dec 1996

Counterpoint has also brought out two new Davenports, one fiction, one essays. Think they've done three Wendell Berry books. Bunch of other stuff. They've been very busy. The Davenport essays will be on the next Bridge Street list.

--Rod

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542. **amato**

Re: Domestic/Meyer/Warsh

Fri 20 Dec 1996

jordan, i'm---

((hold it a sec, gotta go stir my SAUCE---

ok, back with you... *i'm* certainly not "accusing" lewis warsh of ANYTHING!... SHEESH...

can't tell if you're directing that remark at me... but really---i got nothing against men telling their stories... i'm simply trying to say that there's a reason why men telling their domestic narratives is popular at the moment... and that the history of such narratives reveals that women telling such stories would NOT (IN THE PAST) have been published precisely b/c they were viewed as too "domestic" (pleez note the quotes!)...

anyway, best//

joe

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543. **Michael Coffey**
Re: north point -Reply

Fri 20 Dec 1996

northpoint is now owned by farrar straus & giroux which was lately bought by Holtzbrinck, which also owns henry holt and st. martin's; scribner's was bought by macmillan which was bought by simon and shuster which was bought by, oh, viacom i think.

>>> Patrick Foley <[REDACTED]> 12/20/96 01:10pm >>>

Someone else out there may remember the whole story, but the North Point imprint (and backlist) is now owned by one of the big NY corporate publishers, I forget which one, and that's why the current printings are glued instead of sewn in signatures as North Point used to do them.

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>

> charles

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now

> >operates as Counterpoint. Under that imprint he's recently published,
> >e.g., Gary Snyder's Mountains & Rivers Without End.

> >

> >Or am I somehow wrong on that, Charles?

> >

> >Jerry Rothenberg

> >

> >

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544. **Tristan D. Saldana**
An Obscure Olson Article

Fri 20 Dec 1996

I'm looking for "The Act of Writing in the Context of Post-Modern Man." It is apparently only printed in _Olson: The Journal of the Charles Olson Archives_, volume 2. Unfortunately California State University, Northridge does not carry such a wonderfully esoteric item.

Does anyone know if it might be reprinted in a more accessible source, either another journal or book, etc.?

Thanks for any help!

Tristan

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545. **Michael Boughn**
Re: Domestic/Meyer/Warsh

Fri 20 Dec 1996

*i'm simply trying to say that
there's a reason why men telling their domestic narratives is popular at
the moment... and that the history of such narratives reveals that women
telling such stories would NOT (IN THE PAST) have been published precisely
b/c they were viewed as too "domestic" (pleez note the quotes!)...*

anyway, best//

joe

Exactly. It's exotic. The exotic domestic. I could write about cleaning the toilet, and some people would see that as NEWS. MAN CLEANS TOILET. Up to a point. Precisely because I'm still not expected to clean the toilet. Even by me, and I stay home with the baby and cook every day. However, I _am_ expected to take out the garbage Tuesday night, even when it's 20 below. Is that domestic? Does it stop at the door? Or is it a kind of gesture?

Mike



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546. **George Bowering**

Re: Picky, Picky, Picky

Fri 20 Dec 1996

The Canadian edition is entitled

_ "Eh?" _

George Bowering.

2499 West 37th Ave.,

Vancouver, B.C.,

Canada V6M 1P4

fax: [REDACTED]

e-mail: [REDACTED]

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547. **Thomas Bell**

Re: The Declining Significance of Race?

Fri 20 Dec 1996

I can't take credit for the experience. This was a repost from another list of someone's else's experience. tom bell

At 05:40 AM 12/20/96 -0800, Aldon L. Nielsen wrote:

>I have seen Thomas Bell's experiences repeated all too many times in my life.

>An odd coincidence -- At some point every semester, one of the students

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548. **Wendy Battin**

question (fwd)

Sat 21 Dec 1996

If you're stuck for a gift, look up Seva Foundation, <http://www.seva.org/> or phone [REDACTED]. They'll give gifts in your name of eye surgery, doctor training, translation of surgery texts into Tibetan (my Xmas gift from C, bless him), a buffalo for a tribe, gas to let Chiapas craftsmen get to market, etc, etc. It takes all of \$30 to give 2 people eye surgery in Nepal. \$250 pays for training an eye surgeon & all his/her supplies.

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549. **Carnography**

Re: Picky, Picky, Picky: Upper Limit, Standard Non-Standardization.

Sat 21 Dec 1996

Ron:

Zukofsky (with an "f") never wrote a poem entitled _A_. He did, however, write a poem entitled _"A"_. You managed to get only one-third of the title into your message.

My re-punctuation of the title _A_ was deliberate. Others, including the author himself (or "himself") may refer to _A_ however they like; I'm extremely fond of Z.'s word-music, but not always of his overly- ambitious theories, which strike me as necessary in terms of his own approach to form, but not necessarily as practical theories for interpreting his approach. Nor do I intend to adopt every idiosyncrasy of Z.'s writing in speaking of it simply because--like a homophobe pointing to an inhumane parable in The Bible--I found a precedent.

You can rankle at my ur-standardizations if you like--I'm just having a good time. If it were up to me, people would write E. E. Cummings in caps as well.

(An aside: Z.'s use of Bach's "Allemande" has always reminded me of Glenn Gould's radio plays; Gould, however, thought it important to leave the music out. I'm still not certain why the music has to be there, but reserve judgment until I hear that section of _A_ performed.)

My question (to the list) is this: what is the most famous instance of this misreading, which has occurred thousands of times? My nomination is Hoover's Postmodern.

Actually, I'd say the most common misreading on this list occurs when pomo buffs read formalist ideas as necessarily bourgeois, uneducated, outmoded, or formally stiff. The truth is, I scan Zukofsky (or Thomas Bernhard, for that matter) whenever I read him. And I'm not certain he'd have hated the musician in me for doing so.

BTW: My problem with the boolean division of formalist/pomo is that it leaves a lot of variables out of the equation. It strikes me as a substance (rather than process) division. I'm not even certain that langpo/formalists emphasize different areas of language: in both cases, the emphasis would seem to be on surface tension. Personally, I prefer Bergson, Bennett and Heraclitus to Derrida. But I'm not trying to escalate an unpleasant skirmish. I'm simply pointing out that, for me, the insistence on non-standardization (a la LangPo) proves rather literal-minded in the context of my own theoretical practice. I'm not telling anyone else how to write. I'm just explaining how I myself write and punctuate.

All the best,

Rob Hardin

(who also refuses, for example, to shift gender on the collective pronoun *he* and *himself* until we agree to standardize two neutral third-person singular pronouns (possibly *s/he* and *her/m*)).

PS: If you're truly going to attempt to nail email authors for spelling and punctuation, then you've got your work cut out for you. But more importantly, I think your argument--for Z's punctuation-- gets misplaced in your insistence on mere insistence.

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

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550. **Douglas Barbour**

Re: POETICS Digest - 18 Dec 1996 to 19 Dec 1996

Sat 21 Dec 1996

In his long & proocative response to 'Mike on meaning', Patrick Foley made this point: " Looking out my window this morning I was thinking how a modern poet might carefully describe the sky's grey qualities, the bareness of the trees, et et et cetera, all the while scrupulously avoiding the word "winter", and might feel that this avoidance was the essence of the art." Later, he talked about the 'ordinary' & the 'commonplace', for which terms we still tend to us the culturally charged word 'natural.' And so, I took off in my mind on another track: which was to admit to myself that I have certainly practiced something like that poem without the word 'winter' in it, but also left out such things as the color of the various buildings, probably didn't mention the specks of snow caught on the wires, nor noticed, in the writing, the garbage cans. Not that many writers dont notice some of the 'stuff' of the modern urbs, but that the 'romantic' urge to 'capture' the essence of the moment, supposedly 'in nature' tends to ignore how much of that nature, the commonplaces we live in & among, are also part of what the avoidance is 'about', at least if we still practice 'lyric' as traditionally understood. When I wrote that way (a long time ago of course), I guess I still did buy into lyric in a way (Oh Dave Smith, where are you when we need you? gone, alas, to grass...)...

How does that idea of 'the natural' tie into the way the 'domestic' is also assumed to be a sign of the feminine?

Of course, in Canada, as George has probably made clear back before I got on this list, we have had such a strong representation of powerful woman poets since at least WW2, there has been the interesting situation in which many male poets have admiringly stated that they have been influenced by some of

those woman (bp nichol often mentioned it; I know a few I owe more than a bit to)...

Which reminds me, christianity's insistence on the silence of women still has its power: up here there have been a number of powerful writers emerge from a culture in which that rule holds, the Mennonites: take for example the poetry of Di Brandt, whose first book, *_questions i asked my mother_* is all about breaking that prohibition. a battle she has carried on ever since...

=====

===== Douglas Barbour Department
of English 'The universe opens. I close. University of Alberta
And open, just to surprise you.' Edmonton Alberta T6G 2E5 [REDACTED] FAX:
[REDACTED] - Phyllis Webb H: [REDACTED]

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551. **Michael Boughn**
Winter or not to winter

Sat 21 Dec 1996

In his long & proocative response to 'Mike on meaning', Patrick Foley made this point:

*" Looking out my window
this morning I was thinking how a modern poet might carefully describe
the sky's grey qualities, the bareness of the trees, et et et cetera,
all the while scrupulously avoiding the word "winter", and might feel
that this avoidance was the essence of the art."*

*Later, he talked about the 'ordinary' & the 'commonplace', for which terms
we still tend to us the culturally charged word 'natural.' And so, I took
off in my mind on another track: which was to admit to myself that I have
certainly practiced something like that poem without the word 'winter' in
it, but also left out such things as the color of the various buildings,
probably didn't mention the specks of snow caught on the wires, nor
noticed, in the writing, the garbage cans. Not that many writers dont
notice some of the 'stuff' of the modern urbs, but that the 'romantic' urge
to 'capture' the essence of the moment, supposedly 'in nature' tends to
ignore how much of that nature, the commonplaces we live in & among, are
also part of what the avoidance is 'about', at least if we still practice
'lyric' as traditionally understood.*

There is another way to frame this process in relation to Romanticism, one that places it in a larger, if rather controversial, context than stylistics:

For Novalis, the poet's genesis is at issue, not the poem's, that is, he derives the poem's authenticity from the primacy of moral rather than linguistic autonomy. Not that he would deny linguistic autonomy. . . .

rather he would deny linguistic autonomy could be considered anything but a function of the self's capacity for free moral agency, and that is the crucial difference between Novalis and all those for whom art constitutes a self-sufficient enterprise, be they symbolists or their contemporary heirs. Consequently, his central topic is always the poetic work's own origin depicted as the developmental path by which the self gains consciousness of its inherent freedom.

Geza von Molnar, *Romantic Vision, Ethical Context: Novalis and Artistic Autonomy*. Minneapolis: U of Minnesota P, 1987. 98.

Mike



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552. **Charles Alexander**

Re: Picky, Picky, Picky: Upper Limit, Standard Non-Standardization.

Sat 21 Dec 1996

My re-punctuation of the title _A_ was deliberate. Others, including the author himself (or "himself") may refer to _A_ however they like; I'm extremely fond of Z.'s word-music, but not always of his overly-ambitious theories, which strike me as necessary in terms of his own approach to form, but not necessarily as practical theories for interpreting his approach. Nor do I intend to adopt every idiosyncrasy of Z.'s writing in speaking of it simply because--like a homophobe pointing to an inhumane parable in The Bible--I found a precedent.

I find this argument just a little specious. Rather than seeing a title as an example of idiosyncratic theory, I see it (if it's indeed the author who gave it the title) as every bit as much a part of the work as is any line or word of the text of that work. So, would you equally change/misquote lines of Zukofsky? I tend to think of the quotation marks and the rest of the title as part of the work, and even if I don't like that part of the work (although in this case I do), to intentionally change them seems to be simply a mistake. I would more easily understand the inadvertent dropping of the quotation marks than the intentional mis-quoting of the author.

charles

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553. **amato**

Re: Domestic/Meyer/Warsh

Sat 21 Dec 1996

mike, yeah, *exotic*---which explains in part, too, the popularity of martha stewart's (for me, pretentious) focus on upper-class 'domesticities'...

well folks, heading points east manana, toilet brush in hand... so i guess i'll sign off for now... should be seeing some of you at mla---i hope to attend at least a couple of the readings posted hereabouts, and i'm looking forward to placing some of your thus far virtual faces (and to seeing some of you again)... i'll be staying at the sheraton/washington---i'll have a mouse glued to my forehead, sans jacket/tie costume, looking a bit dislocated (and bearded this time 'round)... if you spot me, pleez DO say hi, pleez DON'T ask me if i got any interviews!...

happy hanukkah, merry christmas, happy merry...

all the best to all,

joe

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554. **Rosemary Ceravolo**

Re: Far More Than Domesticated

Sat 21 Dec 1996

Being that you (Jordan), signed with Joe's (Ceravolo) "Ho Ho Ho Caribou," this gives me the perfect opportunity to respond to this curious thread about the varieties of poetic life experience, which have resulted in many simultaneous accounts of their respective "domestic" lives, kept by those married poets/writers/artists with children from the 1960s to the present.

First of all, let me say, Bernadette and Lewis were good friends of Joe and me during those childbearing and rearing years, which we all documented in our own individual and unique ways. The same deep friendships existed with other 'poetic' couples we knew and entertained so many times here on Spruce Street. They included Kathleen Fraser and Jack Marshall, Ted and Sandy Berrigan, the Padgetts, David and Lindsay Shapiro, the Frank Limas, Sotere Torregian & family, the Charles North and Paul Violi families; the List goes on and on with the fondest of memories....

"Parallel texts" or other art forms that tell and portray the stories of everyday life within these poetically-charged, conjugal unions are most likely available to anyone who is sincerely interested. Let's not forget such worthy records derive from an important era of change dating back only to the late 1960s, when

women as mothers, wives of poets, and creative beings of individual value in their own rights, didn't hesitate to make themselves heard and recognized, either privately or publicly.

This unavoidable acknowledgement of the other's indisputable equality in such marriages began a contemporary phenomenon, which to this day, has little or nothing to do with conventional notions of "domestic" life. Each partner within the intimate levels of these given relationships, despite prevailing societal norms, was always recognized as equal to the other. Whatever problems encountered concerning this matter-of-fact equality by each or both partners, were either worked-out lovingly through mutual integration and acceptance by the couple, or led to irreconcilable differences with predictable results.

The interest expressed in Lewis's side of the Story is rather fascinating to me. Bernadette chose to record every minutiae, including fact or fantasy, of her pregnancies, the after events, and how they affected her. If Lewis kept a simultaneous account during this period of their lives together, there's no guarantee it will supply any missing links to Bernadette's version of their Story together. Art is not merely biographical journalism, after all. Bernadette simply published her work of this period and that again, was her discreet choice as an insightful artist.

I know Joe's poetry is his own take on the myriad ways life was experienced by him. We were married for the full duration of his life as a great poet. Where I actually fit in to his poetry during this 30 year period, remains open-ended and mysterious. Thanks to the Muses, my writings over this same period contain what I chose as worthy of my own sensibilities as an artist. The similarities are as revealing as the differences in how Joe and I lived and loved together.

Rosemary

.....

On Fri, 20 Dec 1996, Jordan Davis wrote:

I think it's ironic that Lewis Warsh, one of the odder story tellers around, would be accused of some kind of self-aggrandizing centrality.. he's definitely in one of those wavering elliptical orbits as anyone who's read his novels would agree... Joe A if I had an extra copy of _Agnes & Sally_ I'd mail it to you..

Of course I may be misreading this whole argument, but I agree with Stephen Vincent that the 'parallel text' of Lewis's account of the time would make a picture of that particular domestic arrangement more complex and energetic.. those being the virtues I look for..

Ho ho ho caribou,

Sat 21 Dec 1996

Sat 21 Dec 1996

The point, as i saw it, wasn't the proper punctuation of the title of LZ's *"A"* (or is that *_A_* ?). The most common, not necessarily most famous, misreading is that the title is the first letter of the alphabet, when it's clearly the indefinite article; longer but not as dense as his earlier poem entitled by the definite article. The quotation marks indicate that it is a spoken word. I don't know why he italicized it ... anyone?

Pete Landers

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557. **Alan Jen Sondheim**

-a-

Sat 21 Dec 1996

What of the broken A, or the object a, "A_ or _A" defeating symmetry, perhaps the K-meson; or the -A- rolled across the bar, --A- erased, hung and monstrous; or in fact the A-of-hordes, _"A or "_A, refusing circumscription, gathering evidence?

The origins shunts before the aleph; cuneiform topples, there's nothing permanent in what you mean to me.

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558. **Tara Pauliny**

Re: Picky, Picky, Picky: Upper Limit, Standard Non-Standardization.

Sat 21 Dec 1996

A few months passes. I figure, hey how bout saying howdy to a few of them folks on that there academic poetry list, in time for a holiday, let them know I'm scantily living in my new digs.

Rob Hardin, still arguing. When we have "A" there is a separation textually of its immediacy and surroundings. The "A" becomes something of an artificial significance, an authoritative ideology to point toward a signifier whose referent has been erased. Whoso art forth in book copped from? From which "A" divine? Let me quote a number of folks to prove my point, to give me a bookish authoritorial: "the "A" when subjectively received, becomes the cup wreathed with ivy" or "even "A" word doubles to move from one meaning to another" or "Ko Niutirenis hauru leish! "A" lala! Ko Niutirenis haururu laleish!" I have altercated the previous quotes according to an antithesis based upon the Hardin theory of the punctual, that quotes surrounding words, in addition to their meaning, are irrelevant. One meritorious poet of the confessional age once said we should liberally sprinkle quotes on the page like sparkles to the glue. I still fail to ingest what is synonymous with glue.

Ron: "My question (to the list) is this: what is the most famous instance of this misreading, which has occurred thousands of times? My nomination is U of Cal Press 1978 printing of "A" 1-24, where it all started. Unlike Cape or Grossman there's no quotes on the cover, so one would have to open the book to find the quotes & we all know how few people actually ever read these books. Who has time in this modernity with the exception of those whose livelihood is not threatened by.

Charles, I don't have yr address in AZ.
CS, DB, JD, & all happy holidays

Be well

David Baratier

"Humanity is a good thing. Perhaps we can arrange the murder of a sizable number of people to save it."

Patchen

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559. **Patrick Foley**
they (was: Picky, Picky ...)

Sat 21 Dec 1996

*(who also refuses, for example, to shift gender on the collective pronoun *he* and *himself* until we agree to standardize two neutral third-person singular pronouns (possibly *s/he* and *her/m*.)*

You can also use the plural form, as many Americans do in everyday speech -- fits some cases anyway. "Nobody in this place knows what they're talking about." Gender neutral. Of course your English Comp instructor will mark off for this -- disagreement in number wrt the antecedent!!!

Missing no opportunity to advance
his plural-as-gender-neutral-pronoun theory,
Pat

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560. **KENT JOHNSON**
Tom Meyer

Sun 22 Dec 1996

I joined the list about two weeks ago-- my first post. I noticed a few days back that Tom Meyer's name came up in a discussion of neglected writers. I think it was Ron Silliman who called in to generously praise his work.

I thought I'd tell folks that the forthcoming issue of The New Orleans Review (Vol.22, #3-4) will have a special section on Meyer, including an introductory essay by Forrest Gander entitled "The Inflorescence of Variety." The magazine has a web site, but I don't have the address.

Good holidays to all.

Kent Johnson

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561. **Maxianne Berger**

Re: _a_

Sun 22 Dec 1996

For every _a_ there is an equal and opposite _minus a_ such that a - a
= 0

I tried sending this before -- the listserv rejected it, claiming there was no text in the body of the message! Talk about the null factor :)

=====

Maxianne Berger * XXXXXXXXXX

=====

<< Qui se sent morveux, qu'il se mouche! >>

=====

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562. **Thomas M. Orange**

picky perpetual misreadings

Sun 22 Dec 1996

possible entries for perpetual misreadings:

finnegan's wake

^

della primavera transportata al morale

^

the debate ensuing herein makes me think of the old textual editing distinction between accidentals and substantives, as in, when is an accidental ever _not_ substantive?

wcw was also infuriated over typos that richard aldington had allowed to slip into the _imagist anthology 1930_, among them, works attribvuted to wcw: "in the american grave" and "four grapes."

t.

| Rien n'aura eu lieu que le lieu |
| Nothing will have taken place but the place |
| - Mallarme - |

~~~~~

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563. **simon**

**Re: \_a\_**

Sun 22 Dec 1996

---

As \_"schwa"\_, it points to and calls to "an" much more than to "B" or "O".

beth simon

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564. **George Bowering**

**Re: picky perpetual misreadings**

Sun 22 Dec 1996

---

I keep seeing

"The Heart of Darkness"

and

"The Four Quartets"

and

"The Wasteland"

George Bowering.

2499 West 37th Ave.,

Vancouver, B.C.,

Canada V6M 1P4

fax: [REDACTED]

e-mail: [REDACTED]

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565. **Carnography**

**Response to the Standardization of JA(: The Variant Variations**

Sun 22 Dec 1996

---

Eight replies on the subject of a single instance of punctuation; on a variant (or fugitive, if you're orthodox) reading of a single title! English teachers on this list

should rejoice at such strenuous attentions. I'll answer as many responses as I can, but won't respond to all, since I have deadlines, and contributing to this list is, of course, a luxury.

Charles Alexander <[REDACTED]> wrote:

*I find [your] argument just a little specious. Rather than seeing a title as an example of idiosyncratic theory, I see it (if it's indeed the author who gave it the title) as every bit as much a part of the work as is any line or word of the text of that work. So, would you equally change/misquote lines of Zukofsky? I tend to think of the quotation marks and the rest of the title as part of the work, and even if I don't like that part of the work (although in this case I do), to intentionally change them seems to be simply a mistake. I would more easily understand the inadvertent dropping of the quotation marks than the intentional mis-quoting of the author.*

1. \*A\*, \_A, "A, "a", "A," \*a\_, ""A, a"", a\*, and so on, are variations on "A" (or \_"A"\_), the provocative title submitted by Louis Zukofsky. The title has always seemed to me to emphasize the microstructures of the poem, and to call attention to the minutiae of numerical and sequential operations of a book that was inspired in part by the various compositional practices of Bach, and by the historical responses (fugues on the name B-A-C-H, etc.) that Bach's work provoked. It seems to me that Z.'s approach to writing invites such playfulness, as do the many symmetries that appear (A-Z) whenever the book is discussed in detail.

2. I responded to the title not as an idiosyncratic theory but as idiosyncratic practice:

*Nor do I intend to adopt every idiosyncrasy of Z.'s writing in speaking of it simply because I--like a homophobe pointing to an inhumane parable in The Bible--found a precedent.*

3. I made no \*serious\* charge regarding Zukofsky's punctuation. As I indicated in my response, I was joking:

*You can rankle at my ur-standardizations if you like--I'm just having a good time. If it were up to me, people would write E. E. Cummings in caps as well.*

If my inference--that writers ought to "correctly" restore capital letters in the work (and name) of E.E. Cummings--struck you as a serious proposal, then I might have to resort to more hideous devices to make my ironic intent known, such as emoticons.

4. I am quite interested in the larger point of your response, which is exactly the one I sought to address:

*So, would you equally change/misquote lines of Zukofsky? I tend to think of the quotation marks and the rest of the*



*title as part of the work, and even if I don't like that part of the work (although in this case I do), to intentionally change them seems to be simply a mistake. I would more easily understand the inadvertent dropping of the quotation marks than the intentional mis-quoting of the author.*

In instances of appropriation, I choose only to change or misquote what I consider to be familiar to the reader. In the case of Zukofsky's writing as it pertains to this particular list, I see no reason to be reverent about a title that everyone here knows. However, in the case of an individual \*line\* of \_A\_, I would choose to cite it correctly in order to play with it (as I would an obscure theme in a set of musical variations), because I can't presume that it has the same level of familiarity.

This is an argument that I've had with Kathy Acker for years. When she chooses to appropriate the titles and themes of, say, Dickens or Cervantes, I see the reason for it. When she decides to rewrite a bestseller by Sidney Sheldon, or lines from a newspaper, I can understand the point as well. But when she rewrites mere passages from Genet or Sade without acknowledging either writer, and when she rewrites the ideas of writers who are more obscure, I do wish that she would give those writers credit, or make some reference to the text she is changing, autonomy of the text notwithstanding, so that readers can seek it out. In the section of \_In Memoriam\_ in which she rewrites Baudelaire and Rimbaud, I feel she is toying with poems that are sufficiently known to the reader. But personally, I would not want to tamper with a text that is insufficiently known in the first place. I say this not in order to dictate a standard to anyone else but rather to clarify my own idiosyncratic views and practice.

Here is another question that provoked me to play with "Z"'s title. It seems to me that the idea of \*not\* privileging an author is a philosophical dead end. It is also an idea that gets discarded whenever the battle over stature gets fought on a smaller scale. Would anyone care if I changed the title of \_Loaves of Gas\_? Would anyone object if I were to refer to a film called \_Trainsprouting\_, or if I were to "correct" (as I am about to do on the Permeable Press page) the colon-riddled prose of \_The Atrocity Exhibition\_ line by line? These works seem sufficiently known and/or exalted by mainstream culture; such work is often manipulated by some of the poets on this list. But what about the work that is dearer to us, the work that is more central to our practice? If we object to the manipulation of these texts, are we not guilty of maintaining a double- standard in our own private literary hierarchy?

Certain nameless quasi-Marxist writers turn vicious over matters of their own micro-reputations, all while maintaining what seems to me to be spurious contempt for the so-called Canon. What good is the contempt of such writers, if humor does not allow them to take a deflating view of what they themselves consider to be important?

\*\*\*\*\*

Peter Quartermain <[REDACTED]> wrote:

*I had always thought, actually, that \_A\_ was called "A" because Zukofsky, in titling his long long poem "A" was parodying or attacking or what-you-will the perhaps pretentious habit of giving long "epic" poems grandiose titles.*

I've always thought so too, hence my reference to Cummings's ostentatious typographical modesty. But at some point, such fail-safes against immodesty (either for author or text) become obsolete: when the work becomes the site of scholarly excavations.

It seems to me that \_A\_ was born and bred for excavation, and that, microstructures notwithstanding, Z's calling \*A\* by the name of "A" invites the telescope as well as the magnifying glass.

*Is it also worth noting that, \_A\_ or "A", the title is pronounced as a schwa, UH?*

I didn't know that. What is the source of your pronunciation info?

*I'm not at all clear how this is "formalist".*

That was an unnecessary ad hominem leap on my part. In the course of being on this list, I've watched non-pomo-praxis poets and critics get trashed in exceptionally impolite and smug-sounding ways. Silliman's punctuation- flame is an instance of classic bad nettiquette: it is not considered polite or useful to flame someone over instances of misspelling or mispunctuation in email. The connection I made--between past instances and this present one--was both unclear and unjustified, and that I must acknowledge.

\*\*\*\*\*

Pete Landers wrote:

*Carnography wrote:*

*PS: If you're truly going to attempt to nail email authors for spelling and punctuation, then you've got your work cut out for you.*

*The point, as i saw it, wasn't the proper punctuation of the title of LZ's \*"A"\* ( or is that \_"A" \_ ?). The most common, not necessarily most famous, misreading is that the title is the first letter of the alphabet, when it's clearly the indefinite article; longer but not as dense as his earlier poem entitled by the definite article. The quotation marks indicate that it is a spoken word. I don't know why he italicized it ... anyone?*

The \*point\* of a punctuation-flame does not change its classification and operation \*as\* a punctuation flame.

This is useful information. Thanks for posting it.

\*\*\*\*\*

As is appropriate, I've saved the least civil response for last.

David Baratier <[REDACTED]> wrote:

*A few months passes. I figure, hey how bout saying howdy to a few of them folks on that there academic poetry list, in time for a holiday, let them know I'm scantilly living in my new digs.*

*Rob Hardin, still arguing.*

Since you haven't been on listserve for awhile, perhaps you require a synopsis. The most heated arguments of late have been over Adorno, arguments in which I did not participate. For months, my posts have been limited to attempts to help posters with information about things like quantitative verse (BTW: On p. 378 of *\_A\_*, there is an interesting citation on the subject of quantity in modern verse.), to shameless self-promotion (I announced two new books of my own), and to expressing my enthusiastic interest in other writers like Jacques Servin. In one such note, concerning Mark Scroggins's (and Peter Quartermain's) *\_Upper Limit Music: The Writing of Louis Zukofsky\_*, I asked Scroggins to post an excerpt from the new book, and expressed affection for Zukofsky's poetry and persona. My non-standard punctuation of the title {A} provoked esteemed poet Ron Silliman to write a punctuation flame. My own response was not a flame but rather an explanation. (How can anyone ever mention A' without toying with the title?)

The more charitable (and logical) view of past controversies involving me is this: the controversy involves my ideas and not my character.

*My nomination is U of Cal Press 1978 printing of "A" 1-24, where it all started. Unlike Cape or Grossman there's no quotes on the cover, so one would have to open the book to find the quotes & we all know how few people actually ever read these books. Who has time in this modernity with the exception of those whose livelihood is not threatened by.*

That edition, of course, is the only edition of *^A-* that I own (or have ever owned): I bought it at the Strand eight years ago. Hence it seemed that the edition itself invited play.

All the best,

Rob Hardin

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

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566. **Burt Kimmelman**  
**Re: Tewwibly tewwibly picky**  
Sun 22 Dec 1996

---

Why couldn't Zuk's title \*"A"\* be viewed as an indefinite article, much in keeping with the later Oppen's \*This In Which\* and Corman's \*Of\*?

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567. **Jordan Davis**  
**Standard Response**  
Sun 22 Dec 1996

---

The Dave Baratier Wrote:  
See, there is  
this outside world that doesn't believe poetry is readable anymore.  
  
And The New York Observer Wrote:  
Charles Simic, a poet who writes poems that are actually readable  
  
And how Charles was smiling in the photograph!  
  
Signed,  
The Jordan Davis

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568. **Tara Pauliny**  
**Re: Response to the Standardization of JA(: The Variant Variations**  
Sun 22 Dec 1996

---

Rob, Thanks for the update. The controversy was not supplied to insinuate harm upon your e-character. But rather the humeric was lost as mentioned below:

*Certain nameless quasi-Marxist writers turn vicious over matters of their own micro-reputations, all while maintaining what seems to me to be spurious contempt for the so-called Canon. What good is the contempt of such writers, if humor does not allow them to take a deflating view of what they themselves consider to be important?*

which suspiciously seems a hidden commentary. So to riff off HG: When the real marxists come you'll be quaking in your white knee highs & tennis shoes.

1st. I uphold the canon, it's kept our journal going. Pound's ethics have reversed intentionality into the false 23rd phase of the moon. See, there is this outside world that doesn't believe poetry is readable anymore. Marginalizations of "marxist," "work poetry," "labor poetry," in reviews hardly bother me, especially when combined with "experimental," "avant-guard," "anti-formal,"

"otherstream" & "formalist." In fact I am grateful for this Laconian naming deal: it's given us an audience, inside & out.

2nd. I understand the inclusion of certain writers in the canon will destroy the term, that there isn't the ideology for them. For their work would involve combining the "canons" of poetry, fiction, painting, music, and anon, & who in their right mind is willing, or has the right, to give that power.

3rd. Be suspicious of any folks who uphold the notion of anti-literature: dollars to doughnuts they have based their careers on it.

Be well

David Baratier

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569. **George Bowering**  
***Re: Impossibilist Westerns***

*Mon 23 Dec 1996*

---

Okay, Hardin'

I am taking back everything I said about you young guns not having seen the spaghetti westerns, if you will concede that us old guys have experienced double latte easy on the foam.

But I hafta warn you, when I was only 15 there were lone riders all over my native Okanagan cactus country looking for fame, which they hoped to get by drawing down on me in front of the Rexall. I turned in my guns and got the postmaster's daughter on his porch swing. She persuaded me that she would give me everything if I could learn to play the saxhorn like Prez. I tried and tried but I could never spell embrasseur. Still cant, as Herb Levy will tell you. But right now I am listening to a CD stuck in my Mac, Pharoah Sanders playing heartbreaking standard ballads like Coltrane once did, an eerie imitation.

I was never going to marry you in June anyway, and here's some news for you: I got that ring off a dead guy in the dust in front of the Rexall. I was just trying to make you feel good, show yr ring finger off to all your co-workers. Us long-jawed types cant be tied down, got riding to do. Today I rode an elegy in 55 lines flat, about a guy died in Rome.

Anyway, I been thinking about yr comments on my comments re the Leone movies, remember the shots from the floor, camera shots that is? And I am saying you were partly righter than I was partly righter and I'm gettin' in my cayuse and rightin' out of this town ride now.

George Bowering.

2499 West 37th Ave.,  
Vancouver, B.C.,  
Canada V6M 1P4

fax: [REDACTED]

e-mail: [REDACTED]

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570. **Mustafa Ziyalan**

**\*\*\* Atomic Piles! by Murat Nemet-Nejat \*\*\***

*Mon 23 Dec 1996*

---

## ATOMIC PILES

by Murat Nemet-Nejat

is now accessible at

<http://maxwell.njit.edu/merhaba/marmara/mr100302.htm>

Contents:

\*FIRST DAY: Historical Perspectives / \*\*SECOND DAY: Early Days / \*\*\*THIRD DAY: The Mendes Heresy / \*\*\*\*FOURTH DAY: Fine Print of GAG and Our Present Political System / Class Exercise: Life Expectancy of a Given Year (LEY), How to Calculate It / \*\*\*\*\*APPENDIX: Other Fragments from Crickshaw Excavations / Giovanelli's Minus Plus Factor / Anaxomic Information-Analysis and its Application to the Problem of Fear Immunization / The Problem of Back Seat Intercourse: Interoffice Memorandum / The Secret Cult of Back Seat Fullers (BAFs) / Mercy Fixers: from the Autostrada Cycles / The Temple of the Eternal Shredder / The Parable of the Copying Machine and the Pneumatic Hammer / The Location of the Department of Core Placers, DCP / Anxiety Charts: Procedure to Collect Data / Inter-office Memorandum

You can e-mail your suggestions and submissions to

[REDACTED]

and forward this message  
to persons who might be interested!

Happy New Year!

Mustafa Ziyalan

[REDACTED]

<http://maxwell.njit.edu/merhaba/marmara/>

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571. **Carnography**

**Re: POETICS Digest - 21 Dec 1996 to 22 Dec 1996**

Mon 23 Dec 1996

---

To David Baratier:

I wrote:

*Certain nameless quasi-Marxist writers turn vicious over matters of their own micro-reputations, all while maintaining what seems to me to be spurious contempt for the so-called Canon. What good is the contempt of such writers, if humor does not allow them to take a deflating view of what they themselves consider to be important?*

To which you replied:

*which suspiciously seems a hidden commentary...1st. I uphold the canon... Marginalizations of "marxist"...in reviews...hardly bother me...[etc.]*

Actually, I wasn't thinking of *\*anyone\** who posts on this list, simply because I don't know any of you personally: I haven't gotten drunk with you and heard you complain. I haven't met you at a conference and seen you turn pale when you imagine another writer is being praised at your expense. When I talk about "certain writers," I mean writers whom I know and disagree with ideologically but don't wish to berate in a public (or for that matter, in any) forum.

So, to recap: No one here need wonder if I'm talking about *\*her/m\**, or (Patrick Foley's) *\*them\**, or possibly (Dan Raphael Dlugonski's) *\*er\**.

*3rd. Be suspicious of any folks who uphold the notion of anti-literature: dollars to doughnuts they have based their careers on it.*

To paraphrase Swift speaking of La Rochefoucauld, I seem to have based my life upon your maxim.

All the best,

Rob Hardin

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

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572. **Ron Silliman**

**Tom Meyer**

Mon 23 Dec 1996

---

Kent,

That wasn't me who was generously praising Tom Meyer, although it certainly could have been. My little zine in the 70s, Tottel's, was publishing Tom even before Jonathon Williams ever met him. In fact, Tottel's was one of the few

publications to print an excerpt from Tom's 800+ page poem called Technographic Typography, written more or less continuously while he was a student at Bard (or was it Tufts?). Anyway, Tom abandoned the project and I think may even have discarded the text, but I've always liked it, both the idea and the act of it, and am wondering if anybody on the list knows of a better source of more of it (I know, for example, that some other little mags ran excerpts, but cannot remember which ones or where).

Ron Silliman

*Date: Sun, 22 Dec 1996 19:42:12 +0600*

*From: KENT JOHNSON <[REDACTED]>*

*Subject: Tom Meyer*

*I joined the list about two weeks ago-- my first post. I noticed a few days back that Tom Meyer's name came up in a discussion of neglected writers. I think it was Ron Silliman who called in to generously praise his work.*

*I thought I'd tell folks that the forthcoming issue of The New Orleans Review (Vol.22, #3-4) will have a special section on Meyer, including an introductory essay by Forrest Gander entitled "The Inflorescence of Variety." The magazine has a web site, but I don't have the address.*

*Good holidays to all.*

*Kent Johnson*

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573. **Ron Silliman**  
***The devil's in the details***

*Mon 23 Dec 1996*

---

"My non-standard punctuation of the title {A} provoked esteemed poet Ron Silliman to write a punctuation flame."

Rob,

I recall George Stanley once (in 1967) arguing that a poet was the only person who ever understood why the difference between an "a" and a "the" in a sentence was "the most important thing" in a poem and I will admit to sharing that bias.

I would hardly characterize my reaction as a flame, punctuation-wise or other. When I flame you, you will know it. Methinks that you're committing what in



some circles these days (post Alan Sokol's Social Text hoax) is referred to as "an Andrew Ross."

All best,

Ron

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574. **Henry**

**Re: -a-**

*Mon 23 Dec 1996*

---

As I always understood it, Zukofsky in his farsighted w"a"y titled his poem \_"A"\_ so he could be number one in the forthcoming \_Long Poem Recorded Messages Yellow Pages\_ (Univ. of Left Overbie Press, 2004). (cd rom)

He"n"ry G"&^\$%ld (please note/observe new name format, thanks)

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575. **henry**

**Re: Winter or not to winter**

*Mon 23 Dec 1996*

---

This is indeed a big issue, the differing centers of gravity of romanticism & modernism respectively. A discussion beyond my capacity, but I tried to get at it tangentially in essay in latest Witz on the Hoboken Russ-American conference. I tried to suggest (provocatively & probably mistakenly, I admit) that Russian postmodernism, as exhibited in current poetry, differs from American - is really a pre-modernism - at the core of which is Mandelstamian or Chaadevian (Chaadev - 19th cent. Russian writer) concept of "moral freedom". The idea is that the Person, in a moral sense, exists as a kind of absolute, in a theological frame (not as "ego") - analogous to the way the icon was considered a real manifestation or extension of a divine being.

The idea is that the Romantic autonomous self & the Modernist autotelic art-form are incomplete. Western postmodernism "proved" this in a negative, deconstructive form; Russian "postmodernism" exhibits a (sublimated, metaphorized) return to a metaphysical or religious conception of the self-art continuum.

I also tried to suggest (again, a provocative reduction) that this conceptual basis is reflected in the differing aesthetics of Russian & American poetry. Russian poetry, as I heard it performed in Hoboken, exhibits a kind of organic "finality" - an expression of the premodern humanist form of an Absolute - a formation not visible in current American poetry (at least not in the same way).

Now I know there's a comic side to these tendentious formulations - so I just throw them out to you listees, knowing there were several of you at the Hoboken wing-ding who may have a very different take on these issues - & also to draw attention to the latest Witz which has some other neat stuff in it... - He"n"ry Gould

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576. **KENT JOHNSON**  
*Russian postmodernism*  
Mon 23 Dec 1996

---

Henry:

Just saw your interesting note on differences between Russian and American postmodernist poetry, though I've missed out on the background discussion you allude to in "winter or not to winter." A key writer to consult on the matter of Russian postmodernism and its poetries is Mikhail Epstein, who published the book, as they say, on the subject: *After the Future: The Paradoxes of Postmodernism & Contemporary Russian Culture*. Epstein also authored an extensive Afterword to *Third Wave: The New Russian Poetry*, an anthology I edited back in 1992, and which I heard was available at the Hoboken conference. Epstein's *After the Future* contains all kinds of fascinating stuff, including three or four essays that focus on the Russian poetic avant-garde. As you possibly already know, Epstein divides the "postmodern" Russian poetry scene into different aesthetic/philosophical tendencies, the two most general of which are "Conceptualism" and "Metarealism." In reading your "provocatively reductive" formulations, it struck me that your sense of a "return to a metaphysical or religious conception of the self-art continuum" would be much more applicable to the second group than the first: proposals of "organic finality" or expressions of "humanist forms of an Absolute" do often appear in Conceptualist writing, but when they do they are intended quite negatively and most usually in the spirit of parody.

But I'm offering this without having read your article, which I'm going to order from Whiz. And I'm taking the liberty of sending your post to Mikhail Epstein, who would, by the way, be very pleased to hear from you and others interested in contemporary Russian culture and poetics. Epstein's e-mail is [REDACTED].

Kent

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577. **Charles Alexander**

**Re: Tom Meyer**

*Mon 23 Dec 1996*

---

Ron

Tottel's was a great magazine. But in this context it also makes me remember that, in the 70's, in Tottel's, in Stations, in Paper Air, and in several other magazines, typographical experiments/concrete poetry/visual poetry/sound poetry/etc. seemed to be very much a part of what was going on, and I originally saw language poetry as part of a context including such work. Yet it didn't seem long before language poetry seemed quite separate from such visual and multimedia experimentation (I know, that word is very problematic). In later magazines like Temblor, o-blek, and many others, one almost never saw visual work, scores of sound work, and the like. Is this a split? Can you think of any reasons for this split?

charles

At 03:34 AM 12/23/96 -0800, you wrote:

>Kent,

>

>That wasn't me who was generously praising Tom Meyer, although it  
>certainly could have been. My little zine in the 70s, Tottel's, was  
>publishing Tom even before Jonathon Williams ever met him. In fact,  
>Tottel's was one of the few publications to print an excerpt from Tom's  
>800+ page poem called Technographic Typography, written more or less  
>continuously while he was a student at Bard (or was it Tufts?). Anyway,  
>Tom abandoned the project and I think may even have discarded the text,  
>but I've always liked it, both the idea and the act of it, and am  
>wondering if anybody on the list knows of a better source of more of it  
>(I know, for example, that some other little mags ran excerpts, but  
>cannot remember which ones or where).

>

>Ron Silliman

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578. **Christopher Reiner**

**Re: Winter or not to winter**

*Mon 23 Dec 1996*

---

Henry Gould wrote:

>& also to draw attention to the latest Witz which  
>has some other neat stuff in it...

Thanks. Hey, this sounds like a good opportunity to put in an announcement for the new Witz. In addition to Henry's piece on the Hoboken conference, there's a Loss Glazier article on the Assembling Alternatives conference. Jefferson Hansen provides an essay on "Anarchism and Culture." Todd Baron's *\_Outside\_* is reviewed by Noah de Lissovoy; Rod Smith's *\_In Memory of My Theories\_* is reviewed by Daniel Barbiero; Don Wellman's *\_Fields\_* is reviewed by Cynthia Hogue; and Harry Polkinhorn's *\_Mount Soledad\_* is reviewed by Stephen Ellis.

Single copies \$4. Subscriptions \$10 (three issues) for individuals, \$30 for institutions.

Address: Witz / PO Box 40012 / Studio City, CA  
Make checks out to: Christopher Reiner

If you e-mail me (not the whole list, please), I'll send you the latest issue and bill you.

Chris Reiner  
[REDACTED]

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579. **Christopher Reiner**  
***Re: Winter or not to winter***  
*Mon 23 Dec 1996*

---

Uh...sorry, I left the ZIP out of the address for Witz.

Witz  
PO Box 40012  
Studio City, California 91614

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580. **Tom Mandel**  
***(no subject)***  
*Mon 23 Dec 1996*

---

I find this whole thread, and especially the following

"Silliman's punctuation-flame is an instance of classic bad nettiquette"

really disconcerting and wonder if I am alone in this. To me Ron Silliman began the thread in a way requiring no emoticon to communicate that while he was using Rob's email misquoting of the title of Z's poem/book to introduce a little (literally) subject, he intended neither insult to Rob nor to be making a big deal intellectually of Rob's part in the subject. He titled his post "Picky, Picky, Picky" -- do we need an emoticon to understand this framing device?

I was shocked by the strength of Rob's response, leading me to ask myself whether there might be some subtext here or else something I missed. If there is a flame here, and I don't think there is, it is I'm afraid on Rob's not Ron's part. Yet Rob's is one of the minds in this listserv I've most enjoyed and he is one of the people whose posts I look for and always read. And Ron is a very close friend; perhaps our friendship causes me to misread what is going on here.

As to the interpretation of the title "\_A\_" (and I sure as hell hope I've got that write) it is obvious that the shorter and/or more fragmentary the item, the more interpretation it both requires and invites. No one has mentioned, for example, that A is the note to which musicians most often tune their instruments (usually 440 cycles/second) or that semanticization of letters is a classic mystic practice (especially - prob. my prejudice - a Jewish mystical practice, viz. Book of Bahir, etc.). Or that A stands well for a beginning. Or whether there's a musical connotation to the key of A, or that A says Not The, or that it points up, or that the quotation marks may indicate a sung note, or a sung word, or the play of a sung word being the name of the note sung, or... I could fill pages with this stuff, and it is *\*all\** relevant: that is, it might be if someone can make it be.

Riffs relate to music; some of you remember the concept of a blowing session from the fifties; I seem to be on music. A critic would say about one of these dates in a Bluenote or Prestige studio that it's "not just another blowing session." The critic meant that there was an inter-process communication (now I'm on programming) among the musicians. Each wasn't just "blowing his horn," taking off from the others, but rather some ensemble "mind" ensued.

That sounds good.

Tom Mandel  
Screen Porch

\*\*\*\*\*

Tom Mandel \* 2927 Tilden St. NW  
Washington DC 20008 \* [REDACTED]  
vox: [REDACTED] \* fax [REDACTED]

\*\*\*\*\*

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581. **steph4848**  
**Re: No Subject**  
*Mon 23 Dec 1996*

---

Hi Tom -

"A' noir..." -n'est-ce pas? Especially "noir" re Rod. Not the first guy to lately go off the deep end! Seasonal disorder?

I do think it's good that you bring up his antagonism in the context of this list. I suspect there are power subtexts. Ron - either by statement or silence - in my limited experience of this list appears to assume and play "the grand arbiter" without much humility -- and that's not to say he's without knowlege, intellegence, sometimes humor etc. However Ron's approach can come off as a policing ploy designed to separate the grown fish from the minnows - proven poets from the new ones, already legitimate or emerging critics - as for example those who might provide public validation for the work of of poets he considers interesting - as different from those "non-professionals" or poets and academics offering casual opinions. This acitivity on the part of Ron is not necessarily a bad function given the diversity and open subscription nature of this list. I think its natural that someone(s) will move into the list to create a hierarchy within the on-going process. At it's best it creates healthy arguments. AT its worst - with dips into cheap shots - I find the process can create episodes where some well meaning person will feel like they're being pigged on for somebody else's advantage.

But the Zukofsky spelling thing -- I remember-- can be provocative. When he died (1977?), the St. Marks's Poetry Project Newsletter misspelled his name in the "in memoriaum" piece, and I recollect that Creeley wrote a very harsh letter to the editors- arguning (as I recall) that the the the St. Marks folks had taken the man and his work in vain - implying (I believe) that editors had neither read or given Zukofsky proper respect while he was alive. In a public respect, it seemed so Un-Creeley. I certainly couldn't figure out why he was so harsh.

Comparitively, Ron, as you point out, with this misspelling of Z's name was quite light fingered: the gentle, ironic school Master (Marm?) - gatekeeper with humor?

Unless it's a personality conflict of another order, I commend you encouraging Rod - especially given your respect for his critical mind - to be more out with a more articulate rendering of the source of his anger re Ron. Maybe there will be something fruitful here.

As you point to the good example of the improvisatory phenomenon that happens among muscians - I find this list most exciting when an ensemble of various users (players) takes a particular thread and gets a Mind going that takes it somewhere Fresh.

Cheers  
Stephen Vincent

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582. **George Bowering**  
***Re: The devil's in the details***

Mon 23 Dec 1996

---

*"My non-standard punctuation of the title {A} provoked esteemed poet Ron Silliman to write a punctuation flame."*

*Rob,*

*I recall George Stanley once (in 1967) arguing that a poet was the only person who ever understood why the difference between an "a" and a "the" in a sentence was "the most important thing" in a poem and I will admit to sharing that bias.*

*I would hardly characterize my reaction as a flame, punctuation-wise or other. When I flame you, you will know it. Methinks that you're committing what in some circles these days (post Alan Sokol's Social Text hoax) is referred to as "an Andrew Ross."*

*All best,*

*Ron*

I cannot see any alternative to agreeing with Ron. The question was never, as far as I could see, a question of punctuation. It was a question of getting a title right. Zuk was not sloppy about titles, as I think should be apparent in the strangeness of nearly all his titles.

I mean, we dont call his late book \_80 Flowers. More or Less\_

George Bowering.

2499 West 37th Ave.,  
Vancouver, B.C.,  
Canada V6M 1P4

fax: [REDACTED]

e-mail: [REDACTED]

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583. **armand schwerner**  
***Finnegans Wake***

Tue 24 Dec 1996

---

Any List people and friends in or around New York City at year's end:

Non-stop reading of Finnegans Wake from 12 noon Tuesday, 12/31, through Wed. afternoon, about 6pm at the Paula Cooper Gallery. New address: 534 W. 21 bet. 10/11th aves. Free. Come lie around and listen.

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584. **Tenney Nathanson**  
***citation! citation! (no Chevies!)***

Tue 24 Dec 1996

---

George Bowering wrote:

*But right now I am listening to a CD stuck in my Mac, Pharoah Sanders playing heartbreaking standard ballads like Coltrane once did, an eerie imitation.*

but who knows where or when? what's the disc?

(I've had my negative reactions to Pharoah Sanders, but still) (I've had my positive ones too!)

thanks

Tenney

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585. **Ron Silliman**  
***"sPliTtInG," Creeley vs. Greeley, etc.***

Tue 24 Dec 1996

---

3 items, as follow:

(1)

>Ron

>

>Tottel's was a great magazine. But in this context it also makes me remember that, in the 70's, in Tottel's, in Stations, in Paper Air, and in several other magazines, typographical experiments/concrete poetry/visual poetry/sound poetry/etc. seemed to be very much a part of what was going on, and I originally saw language poetry as part of a context including such work. Yet it didn't seem long before language poetry seemed quite separate from such visual and multimedia experimentation (I know, that word is very problematic). In later magazines like Temblor, o-blek, and many others, one almost never saw visual work, scores of sound work, and the like. Is this a split? Can you think of any reasons for this split?



>

>charles

My own sense (wholly subjective and biased) is that it came down to a sense of "what is language?" and an abiding interest in that. When I think of larger collections of visual poetry (e.g., Mary Ellen Solt's anthology, say), I was always struck at how *\*static\** the work seemed to me. There were always exceptions, notably among the island poets with that "f" phoneme up front (Furnival, Finlay, Phillips) that Charles Hocking likes to note is one of the "recent" sounds added to the vocabulary (it requires teeth shaped by agriculture), but it was that they seemed exceptions that made it all the more apparent.

Similarly, sound projects had their own problematics (esp. if you are looking to the page for evidence) tho the steves (Benson, McCaffery) did some amazing things in that regard, the latter with all his other horsepeople.

But I recall some performances that Steve McC did in Berkeley many years back (somewhere in the 1981-85 time frame, based on where I was living at the time) that required him to keep a hog's head in my refrigerator for a day or so. The pieces were very effective as theater and thus controversial for that aspect alone. The question was: did that effective theater draw one's attention *\*away\** from (1) "the work" or (2) "the language"? Much discussion on all sides of that one, but you can see the preconceptions about what The Work was.

This would be a good question to pose to Steve or to Johanna Drucker, another person who I think has gotten quite a bit underappreciated by my own generation, precisely because her attention has not been linguistic, as such, but around and beyond. Or Steve Benson.

-----

(2)

"But the Zukofsky spelling thing -- I remember-- can be provocative. When he died (1977?), the St. Marks's Poetry Project Newsletter misspelled his name in the "in memoriaum" piece, and I recollect that Creeley wrote a very harsh letter to the editors- arguing (as I recall) that the the the St. Marks folks had taken the man and his work in vain - implying (I believe) that editors had neither read or given Zukofsky proper respect while he was alive. In a public respect, it seemed so Un-Creeley. I certainly couldn't figure out why he was so harsh."  
Steve Vincent

Bob's on the list and can certainly speak for himself, but possibly it was because of the experience of having his own name misspelled on every damn page of David Ossman's The Sullen Art -- Greeley in the footer. Or perhaps he thought it a sign that they would run a memorial without even looking at the work closely enough to see the name? -----

(3)

"I mean, we dont call his late book \_80 Flowers. More or Less\_

>>

>George Bowering."

When LZ died, he was sketching out the details for a sequence to be called 90 Trees. Rumor had it there was to have been another series beyond that, 101 Dalmatians.

Ron

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586. **robert drake**

**Re: list dynamics**

Tue 24 Dec 1996

stephen writ:

*I do think it's good that you bring up his antagonism in the context of this list. I suspect there are power subtexts. Ron - either by statement or silence - in my limited experience of this list appears to assume and play "the grand arbiter" without much humility -- and that's not to say he's without knowlege, intellegence, sometimes humor etc. However Ron's approach can come off as a policing ploy designed to separate the grown fish from the minnows - proven poets from the new ones, already legitimate or emerging critics - as for example those who might provide public validation for the work of of poets he considers interesting - as different from those "non-professionals" or poets and academics offering casual opinions. This acitivity on the part of Ron is not necessarily a bad function given the diversity and open subscription nature of this list. I think its natural that someone(s) will move into the list to create a hierarchy within the on-going process. At it's best it creates healthy arguments. AT its worst - with dips into cheap shots - I find the process can create episodes where some well meaning person will feel like they're being pigged on for somebody else's advantage.*

while i'd agree with you that there are "power subtexts" at work (there are \*always\* "power subtexts" at work... [oops, that must be leftover frm the politics/poetics thread]), i think it's a mistake to credit or blame Ron for assuming his role, whatever it is--the list as a whole creates its dynamic, by patterns ov response & silence, for all ov it's members, and no individual determines his/her own position in the pecking order without our aid (& pecking order is too linear & 2dimensional than what i mean...).

&, as i mention as often as i can, this is not an "open" list:

*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... [from the Poetics List welcome msg.]*

which fact itself contributes to its dynamic...

luigi

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587. **Michael Boughn**  
***Re: Winter or not to winter***

Tue 24 Dec 1996

---

I guess, Henry, it depends on how you think of--yikes, dare I say it--"postmodernism". Do you consider Olson to have written under this rubric, and those who continue to labour quietly in that vein? I think of Robin Blaser's decription of Jack Clarke's work as stepping around the "pile-up of postisms", of being "just plain after the modern and at work", or words to that effect. Certainly Olson's push was toward what you are calling the "pre-modern" I think, and Clarke's work, as it carries that work "forward" never forgets that for a moment. Clarke's much on my mind because I'm just finishing the production of *\_In the Analogy, Books 1-7\_* which will soon be released.

I don't know about the "Absolute". Isn't that some kind of vodka? Maybe that explains what the Rooskies are up to.

Mike



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588. **Rachel Loden**  
***sweet berries ripen in the wilderness***

Tue 24 Dec 1996

---

Shocked to hear Nadav Savio, Mario's son, quoting from his father's letters on C-SPAN late last night (in a larger tribute to MS). These sweet bits were full of poets and poems--Dante, Stevens, "Sunday Morning," of all things. Proving we know so little of the purpose of poetry, or when it speaks, or to whom. Nadav quoted a few last lines himself, from Hopkins, in saying goodbye to his father, but by then I was really too astonished to note which ones.

Rachel Loden

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589. **Tom Mandel**  
**Grand Arbiter**

*Tue 24 Dec 1996*

---

Stephen Vincent writes:

"Ron - either by statement or silence - in my limited experience of this list appears to assume and play "the grand arbiter" without much humility -- and that's not to say he's without knowledge, intelligence, sometimes humor etc. However Ron's approach can come off as a policing ploy designed to separate the grown fish from the minnows - proven poets from the new ones, already legitimate or emerging critics - as for example those who might provide public validation for the work of poets he considers interesting - as different from those "non-professionals" or poets and academics offering casual opinions."

Oy, I can see a huge brouhaha coming. I could not agree less with this statement by my old friend Steve about my other old friend Ron.

Actually, I thought *\*I\** was the Grand Arbiter. Perhaps I'll tell a story on myself, and it will deflect the future.

A few of you on this list -- not many, lucky you -- are old enough that the subject of "aging" no longer evokes wine or cheese but one's own body or what's left of it. At least those will probably have noticed a recent spate of articles in the mass media on "anti-aging" technologies. In particular, it was the cover story in a recent Newsweek which I browsed at my local Crown Books while sipping my daily 2pm Starbuck's capuccino which gon' carry me to my grave.

According to the article, some men my age are injecting growth hormone, sticking testosterone patches on their skin or ingesting a substance called DHEA which latter is an extract of the adrenal gland (whose I did not notice). All of these increase the angle of your erection (I swear that is what the article said), thicken your hair and in general do all manner of fab stuff... according to the Newsweek cover story.

As I walked to my car, chuckling at this only-in-America confab of vanity, utopianism and puritanism (age is a disease), I passed a "health food" store, and in its window were a biiiig sign: "DHEA -- mother of all hormones: buy it here." Looking both ways, to make sure no contemporary espied me, I dashed in and bought myself a jar of DHEA pills. What the hell, right? I've tried a lot stronger stuff, right? I've *\*lived on\** stronger stuff, right?

I began to give myself a dose in the lower range of what was recommended on the small print on the jar which I was able to read with the aid of my dimestore reading glasses which I have to replace quarterly with the next stronger set.

Subtly, then not so subtly after a few days, I did experience a change. I found it impossible to sit at a red light without cursing it, I found myself repeatedly disagreeing with almost everyone around me, I had a number of blow-out yelling sessions with business associates, I flamed left and right, and I found a reason at least 3 times daily to have a fight with Beth Joselow to whom I'm married. Nearly everything I read seemed stupid. Etc.

It took me about three weeks to connect the DHEA with these experiences. Wiping the foam from my mouth one evening I threw the jar in a waste basket. In about 5 days I was back to my previous state. (Alas, I forgot to measure any angles, so no datapoints on really significant issues emerge from my experiment on myself)

A week or so after this, I was on the phone with another old friend who now lives in L.A., Ethan Feinsod, whom I've known for many decades. In detail, I recounted to Ethan my experiment with DHEA and its effect on me, namely to render me an intolerably arrogant asshole. "Oh my God," Ethan replied, "that stuff is the fountain of youth! I'm going to run out and get some. That's \*exactly\* what you were like in your twenties."

Lets not interpret each other's intentions in ways that render master/slave narratives on this list. It's really not a likely story, and it creates heat not light. Much light, as we know, still needs unveiling. Poetry, to use a parable I've often evoked, is an absolute monarchy in which everyone is king. No subjects.

Tom Mandel

\*\*\*\*\*  
Tom Mandel \* 2927 Tilden St. NW  
Washington DC 20008 \* [REDACTED]  
vox: [REDACTED] \* fax [REDACTED]  
\*\*\*\*\*

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590. **Ward Tietz**

***Re: "sPliTtInG," Creeley vs. Greeley, etc.***

*Tue 24 Dec 1996*

---

Ron,

You make some very stimulating points. It seems to me though that the "what is language?" question as you characterize it is a recipe for exclusion. It's a linguistic question taken up as a literary question, but one that only structural linguistics is allowed to answer. In answering it agrees, more or less, that language, and then literature, is some kind of text, which an aesthetic can then demonstrate. Once characterized in this manner, as you point out, other forms

would seem "away from the work" etc. since they would appear to be formally and materially other, not literary, not of language etc.

So for me, I would say, yes Language poetry does in fact effect a split. Whether we need the split or not, I don't know.

As they say in this part of the world, "Bonnes Fetes."

Ward Tietz

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591. **Chris Stroffolino**

**Re: N/O**

Tue 24 Dec 1996

---

Is it "N/O" or N/O  
Are they NOH plays or NO plays?  
Who is in the know?  
Only those who are in the no.  
(oh N/O, sounds like bad Merwin)...  
I don't know if there'll be snow....  
and what the hell is "goodies"  
as in "toys and goodies"---  
signed, scrooge or stooge

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592. **Charles Alexander**

**Re: Grand Arbiter**

Tue 24 Dec 1996

---

*Lets not interpret each other's intentions in ways that render master/slave narratives on this list. It's really not a likely story, and it creates heat not light. Much light, as we know, still needs unveiling. Poetry, to use a parable I've often evoked, is an absolute monarchy in which everyone is king. No subjects.*

*Tom Mandel*

amen

& I thought i was "a" grand arbiter, too

Everybody has a personality, nobody has a police -- at least not here. I too am a friend of Ron's, and I think he's a very smart guy with strong opinions. But I don't hear him policing anybody. In fact I think he likes a good discussion, even argument, as well as the next list-server.

charles

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593. **mgk3k**

***excursus on Johanna Drucker***

*Tue 24 Dec 1996*

---

As someone who's been immersed in Johanna Drucker's work for a while now, I think I understand what Ron Silliman means when he says that, "her attention has not been linguistic, as such, but around and beyond." Still, I'm not sure that this is accurate even at the level on which intends it, which I take to be something like, "the focus of the work is not the play of language on language but rather language's correspondence with other textual elements (primarily visual and tactile)."

Drucker has, however, written several prose works including *\_Italy\_* and most recently the novella *\_Dark Decade\_*. Both are illustrated, it is true, but here I think the illustrations are largely illustrative, and the text is directed toward language as a written event; this is true of *\_DD\_* especially, which seems to me very much about recuperating language from the dominant cants of media-speak.

I would also argue that Drucker's *\_corpus\_* more generally is less about circumventing the linguistic, navigating "around and beyond" it, then it is about exposing the means, both historical and phenomenological, by which language comes to be separated from its visible and material forms. In *\_The Word Made Flesh\_*, for example, the text generates considerable linguistic energy from the various syntactical arrangements culled from its spatial array of letter-forms; even, I would argue, to the extent of a plot, in some very rudimentary sense. Or to take an example of another sort, in the *\_Visible Word\_*, one of her critical studies, Drucker identifies 19th century academic philology as the most dramatic instance of language's artificial separation from its visual forms, and traces the rise of that discipline to the role of the Rosetta stone in deciphering the Egyptian hieroglyphics, an achievement which rendered the visual and visible forms of the hieroglyphics irrelevant as they were no longer *\_seen\_* as potential keys to linguistic meaning.

I do agree with Ron, however, that Drucker is underappreciated; certainly in mainstream academic circles she's quite unknown, or known only for her several (impeccable) critical studies. I've found only a handful of secondary studies of the book art and other creative productions, including several by Perloff. I'd be grateful to hear from others with an interest in this work.

--Matt

=====  
===== Matthew G. Kirschenbaum

University of Virginia [REDACTED]  
http://faraday.clas.virginia.edu/~mgk3k

Department of English  
Electronic Text Center

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594. **steph4848**

***Fwd: warsh/mayer/domestic***

*Tue 24 Dec 1996*

---

I take the liberty to forward Jarnot's informational post to the list since she's having trouble getting it thru the usual channel.

-----

Forwarded message:

From: [REDACTED]

To: [REDACTED]

Date: 96-12-20 17:54:20 EST

stephen-- i've been posting this to the list, but it's not showing up, so I thought I'd send it to you. best, lisa

re: simon shuchat's and stephen vincent's posts on Midwinter Day-- the journal kept by Lewis Warsh and Bernadette Mayer while they lived in Massachusetts was called "Piece of Cake" and it was never published, partly because of the personal nature of the work (references to friendships, etc.)-- it definitely deals with the domestic, but not specifically with Bernadette's pregnancy-- it's a text where Bernadette and Lewis alternate journal entries. The work that Lewis was doing at that time was not exactly a parallel experience text-- he was writing the novel Agnes and Sally (Fiction Collective publication), parts of which take place in a small New England town. His book of poems Information from the Surface of Venus also addresses that time period (published by United Artists books).

lisa jarnot

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595. **Victor Grauer**

***midnight clear***

*Tue 24 Dec 1996*

---

Thought I'd tender the following as a Xmas "gift" to all on the list. Enjoy.

"It is clear to all -- enjoyment bears witness to this -- that a good poem is one where nothing is left over, where all the phonemic material in use is consumed; and that, on the other hand, a bad poem (or 'not-poetry-at-all') is one where there is a remainder, where not every significant phoneme, diphoneme, syllable or term has been seized by its double, where not every term has been



volatilised and consumed in a rigorous reciprocity (or antagonism), as in primitive gift exchange, where we feel the weight of the remainder that has not found its corresponding term, nor therefore its death and absolution, which has not been successfully exchanged in the very operation of the text: it is in proportion to this residue that we know that a poem is bad, that it is the slag of discourse, something which has not exploded, which has been neither lost nor consumed in the festival of reversible speech."

. . .

" . . . it is clear that the unrestrained freedom to use phonemes in unlimited number for purposes of expression, without the reverse processes of cancellation, expiation, reabsorption or destruction (it does not matter which term), is radically opposed by the simple law announced by Saussure, that in poetry a vowel, a consonant or a syllable cannot be uttered without being doubled, that is to say, somehow exorcised, without fulfilling itself in the repetition that cancels it."

Jean Baudrillard

Happy Holidays,

Victor Grauer

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596. **aerialedge**  
**Re: list dynamics**  
Tue 24 Dec 1996

---

Felice Navidada

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597. **George Bowering**  
**Re: Sanders**  
Tue 24 Dec 1996

---

*But right now I am listening to a CD stuck in my Mac, Pharoah  
Sanders playing heartbreaking standard ballads like Coltrane once did, an  
eerie imitation.*

*but who knows where or when? what's the disc?*

This is "Welcome to Love", from Timeless, which is a Dutch company, recorded in France 1990, produced by some Japanese people. Stafford James on bass, Bill Henderson on piano, Ecclestone Wainwright on drums.

Very smooth; a conscious imitation of Coltrane's album, "Ballads."

*(I've had my negative reactions to Pharoah Sanders, but still)  
(I've had my positive ones too!)*

I have had a few reservations abt Pharoah, but he was a gink I liked right off; there was a bad time when he was playing Krishna-meditation-coriander stuff and getting played on the rock stations around 1970. But I heard him at Slugs' around then and he was great. Earlier he was moonlighting in Jersey as a Latino music player and even as a rock pl;ayer, and I have some of that stuff, only for documentation.

But he is one of the great young ones, with Archie Shepp, etc. of the sixties who got "raised" to a big label, mainly ABC.

George Bowering.

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e-mail: [REDACTED]

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598. **George Bowering**  
**Re: "sPliTtInG," Creeley vs. Greeley, etc.**

Tue 24 Dec 1996

*When LZ died, he was sketching out the details for a sequence to be called 90 Trees. Rumor had it there was to have been another series beyond that, 101 Dalmatians.*

Ron

Louis Fournier, the up and coming Quebec poet, has a piece called "23 Skidoos"  
George Bowering.

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fax: [REDACTED]  
e-mail: [REDACTED]

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599. **George Bowering**

**Re: Grand Arbiter**

Tue 24 Dec 1996

---

*Everybody has a personality, nobody has a police -- at least not here. I too am a friend of Ron's, and I think he's a very smart guy with strong opinions. But I don't hear him policing anybody. In fact I think he likes a good discussion, even argument, as well as the next list-server.*

*charles*

I have to concur. I have never met Ron, as far as I know, unless he was the kid with the yoyo behind Robt Duncan on 20th, I saw one day in 1962.

But I like his not really abrasive wit here. And I loved that flaming gag that was going on abt him last year, and I think he did too.

George Bowering.

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e-mail: [REDACTED]

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600. **George Bowering**

**Re: list dynamics**

Tue 24 Dec 1996

---

*Felice Navidada*

y

Joyeaux Novel

George Bowering.

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e-mail: [REDACTED]

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601. **Alan Jen Sondheim**

***Interlude in Tonides***

*Wed 25 Dec 1996*

---

Christine, I had a dream that we were driving through  
Tonides and in  
Tonides we almost divided against the fast car, that  
Tonides was a why, McCarthy formalism, that if  
Tonides, then \_come\_ else \_go,\_ or that if  
Tonides, everything's beautiful and in this  
Tonides dream, I asked only "whose decision," for  
Tonides' beautiful impunity, where there were spined  
and other plants to wear brown aureoles  
upon the brow, the hair, the shirt, the oracular arm  
for luck of whatever sort Tonides might bring,  
for luck of whatever sort Tonides might bring.

---

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602. **Aldon L. Nielsen**

***Re: An "\_A\_" for the holidays***

*Wed 25 Dec 1996*

---

except in parts of France, where it is \_<<A>>\_  
and in Spain, where --- well, it seems this keyboard can't do that!

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603. **Aldon L. Nielsen**

***Re: Tristan/Olson***

*Wed 25 Dec 1996*

---

Tried to post this days ago but couldn't get through --  
I have the full fun of the \_Olson\_ journal in my office in San Jose, but I'm in DC  
now -- If you haven't gotten the article by mid-January, when I go back to  
California, I'll be happy to xerox it for you -- let me know

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604. **George Bowering**  
**Re: An \_"A"\_ for the holidays**  
*Wed 25 Dec 1996*

---

I iterate.

You mustnt take the A train.

You must take the "A" Train!

George Bowering.

2499 West 37th Ave.,  
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e-mail: [REDACTED]

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605. **main**  
**ed sanders**  
*Wed 25 Dec 1996*

---

anyone know if and where sanders defines the theories and methods of his  
"investigative poetry," outside of the poetry itself?

feel free to back-channel.

thanks,  
dan featherston

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606. **robert drake**  
**Re: ed sanders**  
*Wed 25 Dec 1996*

---

*anyone know if and where sanders defines the theories and methods of his  
"investigative poetry," outside of the poetry itself?*

*feel free to back-channel.*

*thanks,  
dan featherston*

that would be \_investigative poetry\_, published by city lights in 1976 (a 40 pg.  
chapbook, my copy sez \$2.00). the cataloging info includes: "a lecture prepared  
for the Visiting Spontaneous Poetics Academy of the Naropa Institute in

Boulder, Colo., in the summer of 1975"... [quick run to partner's bookshelf downstairs]... a similarly titled essay also appears in Vol. 2 of *\_talking poetics* from naropa institute\_, tho i'm not sure if that version is th same... greetings, dan.

yrs  
luigi

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607. **Ron Silliman**  
***On meeting G Bowering***

*Thu 26 Dec 1996*

---

>I have to concur. I have never met Ron, as far as I know, unless he was the

>kid with the yoyo behind Robt Duncan on 20th, I saw one day in 1962.

>

>George Bowering.

>

We met at the Vancouver Poetry Conference that Colin Browne et al put on in 1985. You were acting a lot like Tom Mandel in his 20s.

Ron

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608. **henry**  
***Re: Russian postmodernism***

*Thu 26 Dec 1996*

---

Kent, I've read "Third Wave" - belated congratulations on a remarkable anthology. I found M. Epstein's essay there very interesting & will take a look at the book you mention. Although I was a little skeptical of the almost too-neat categories he developed for contemporary Russian poetry, the parallels he drew between current movements & the various strands of early 20th-cent writing (Acmeism, Futurism) are intriguing.

As I tried to make clear in the first post, I'm not really qualified to get into these subjects in much depth, not knowing Russian & being only slightly informed about a few poets. I was responding in particular to the poets I heard & met at Hoboken, where I was struck by the variance between US & Russian approaches. But as "Third Wave" demonstrates, there has been a lot of crossover & interaction in the 90s between some "experimental" US poets (some of whom were at Hoboken) & SOME varieties of Russian practice. The "provocative" (tendentious?) aspect of my first post involved not so much my

comments on the variance in practice between the 2 poetries, as in the way I tried to link that with even larger & murkier subjects (romanticism, modernism, postmodernism ...miasmaism...) - Henry Gould

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609. **henry**

***Re: Winter or not to winter***

*Thu 26 Dec 1996*

---

On Tue, 24 Dec 1996 08:28:14 -0500 Michael Boughn said:

>I guess, Henry, it depends on how you think of--yikes, dare I say  
>it--"postmodernism". Do you consider Olson to have written under this  
>rubric, and those who continue to labour quietly in that vein? I think  
>of Robin Blaser's decription of Jack Clarke's work as stepping around  
>the "pile-up of postisms", of being "just plain after the modern and  
>at work", or words to that effect. Certainly Olson's push was toward  
>what you are calling the "pre-modern" I think, and Clarke's work, as  
>it carries that work "forward" never forgets that for a moment.

I can only display my ignorance by responding - I know there are others here that can enlighten. It could be & has been argued that Olson inaugurated "postmodern" US poetry. In my own clumsy sense of these "isms", this is unclear. i.e.: Modernism as a movement in the arts replaced Romanticism (& Victorian post-Romanticism) in the following way: the Romantic Absolute (its version of God) was displaced onto the artwork itself. The artwork became a kind of Janus-faced idol/ideal THROUGH WHICH & by means of which any conclusions could be drawn - the artwork became the scripture of the extra-literary or extra-artistic cosmos. POSTMODERNISM (as the critics have defined it?) debunked this last idolatry. The artwork was only self-referential, has no intrinsic connection to exterior world.

Olson, it seems to me, critiqued the great works of modernist poetry (Pound in particular) as blinkered by aestheticism. The "poem" was a life-process, more a documentary "script" than scripture. In a lot of ways it seems to me he was not opposing modernism as "postmodernist" critics do, but building on it - building on Pound by trying to load MORE self, more history, more of the unprocessed "real" into his epic. & maybe this is, as you say, "pre-modern" too.

On vodka & the Absolute - see F. Dostoevsky's novella "Seeing Double" on the "morning after" and the predicament of the existential hangover. - Henry Gould

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610. **Pritchett, Pat**

**Re: ed sanders**

Thu 26 Dec 1996

---

Ed has a marvelous essay on "method," the title of which escapes me now, in the recent Naropa anthology *\_Disembodied Poetics\_*.

Patrick Pritchett

-----

From: main

To: POETICS

Subject: ed sanders

Date: Wednesday, December 25, 1996 7:47PM

anyone know if and where sanders defines the theories and methods of his "investigative poetry," outside of the poetry itself?

feel free to back-channel.

thanks,

dan featherston

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611. **wheeler**

**Query**

Thu 26 Dec 1996

---

I have been looking at instances of writers' consistent "misusing" specific words -- either deliberately or with the (reader's) sense of a blind spot. Any come to mind? I'd appreciate hearing. Thanks & season's hoopla.

Susan Wheeler

37 Washington Square West #10A

New York, New York 10011

██████████  
██████████

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612. **henry**

**Re: Query**

Thu 26 Dec 1996

---

Susan, this may not be exactly what you're looking for, but Lee Edelman wrote an interesting book on Hart Crane's rhetoric called *\_Transmemberment of Song\_* (Stanford UP, 1987. isbn 0804714134). She analyses his work through the lens of a set of tropes characterized by intentional distortions - links it up to



the engineering theme in *The Bridge* (literally twisting it into shape). Can't recall the name of the major trope.... sheesh... help, anybody? It's a trope of exaggeration, distortion, etc. & while you're onto Crane, Paul Giles's book "*Hart Crane: the Contexts of the Bridge*" (Cambridge UP, 1986) has an incredible run-through on double meanings & puns in *The Bridge*.

"Cheerios", Henry

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613. **George Bowering**  
***Re: On meeting G Bowering***

Thu 26 Dec 1996

---

*I have to concur. I have never met Ron, as far as I know, unless he was the kid with the yoyo behind Robt Duncan on 20th, I saw one day in 1962.*

*George Bowering.*

*We met at the Vancouver Poetry Conference that Colin Browne et al put on in 1985. You were acting a lot like Tom Mandel in his 20s.*

*Ron*

Oh yeah! I remember that time. Town got full of L= poets, and someone gave me hell for PC reasons I think in a dictated poem I read at the time. I think it was probably Bruce Andrews. One of the locals had to be stopped from popping him one at a party at Gladys Hindmarch's.

Hey, you mean Mandel is out of his twenties?

Oh, by the way, Ron, I have been meaning (in a friendly way, absolutely) to point out that in that useful early book *\_The New Sentence\_*, Harry Mathews's name is spelled wrong on p. 14 and in the index.

Glad I got some e-mail this Boxing Day. It is record cold outside, about 10 below or worse (I dont know what that is in US degrees), and if I didnt have e-mail to do (called enamel in French, you'll remember) I would have to go to the store and get cigarettes for most of the women in the house.

Nice to hear from ya. If you see Bromige tell him I will answer his letter when I figure out what he was saying. He answers his e-mail only when he has been in his cups.

George Bowering.

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e-mail: [REDACTED]

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614. **George Bowering**  
**Re: Winter or not to winter**

Thu 26 Dec 1996

---

*Olson, it seems to me, critiqued the great works of modernist poetry (Pound in particular) as blinkered by aestheticism. The "poem" was a life-process, more a documentary "script" than scripture. In a lot of ways it seems to me he was not opposing modernism as "postmodernist" critics do, but building on it - building on Pound by trying to load MORE self, more history, more of the unprocessed "real" into his epic. & maybe this is, as you say, "pre-modern" too.*

- Henry Gould

Also this. The Modernists all seemed to be finding some way to wrap the classical world into our sensibilities. But Olson, no Greek, had not th'advantage, demanded something that went back before that, the famous Pleistocene.

George Bowering.

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e-mail: [REDACTED]

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615. **George Bowering**  
**Re: Query**

Thu 26 Dec 1996

---

*I have been looking at instances of writers' consistent "misusing" specific words -- either deliberately or with the (reader's) sense of a blind spot. Any come to mind? I'd appreciate hearing. Thanks & season's hoopla.*

Susan Wheeler

Yep, I often read (in the most surprising places) the use of "fulsome" to mean large, encompassing, complete, etc.

George Bowering.

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[↑ Contents](#)

616. **Gwyn McVay**

**Re: N/O**

Thu 26 Dec 1996

---

I don't n/o, Chris, but those N2O plays are a gas.

On Tue, 24 Dec 1996, Chris Stroffolino wrote:

*Is it "N/O" or N/O  
Are they NOH plays or NO plays?  
Who is in the know?  
Only those who are in the no.  
(oh N/O, sounds like bad Merwin)...  
I don't know if there'll be snow....  
and what the hell is "goodies"  
as in "toys and goodies"---  
signed, scrooge or stooge*

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617. **Chris Stroffolino**

**FALLING IN LOVE (JUST SAY NOH)**

Fri 27 Dec 1996

---

I NOH this may not be the best place to ask this, but then I NOH not what I Dew (forgive me)---

so, HAROLD BLOOM is running around saying that Rosalind's use of "falling in love" was the first use of that phrase in the english language--or at least english literature.... Does anybody NOH is he's right about this? I used to think the BUZZCOCKS were the first to use it. Now, what did people do B4 Sx (i don't mean sex) coined that phrase, if indeed she did coin that phrase? did they mention your name, twirl round on a chain? did the sky open up for you?---  
c. stroffolino

618. **henry gould**

***Re: Winter or not to winter***

*Fri 27 Dec 1996*

---

On Thu, 26 Dec 1996 14:52:23 -0800 George Bowering said:

>

>Also this. The Modernists all seemed to be finding some way to wrap the  
>classical world into our sensibilities. But Olson, no Greek, had not  
>th'advantage, demanded something that went back before that, the famous  
>Pleistocene.

>

Am reading Russian critic Mikhail Epstein's new book, *\_After the Future\_* & would recommend it highly. Among other things it has a revised version of the essay that appeared in the *\_Third Wave\_* anthology of new Russ poetry Kent Johnson mentioned. In preface he talks about how every interesting "advance" in cultural history is always a step back & forward at same time - that culture is actually a kind of "machine" for transcending clock-time. & in "postmodern times we go further & further back into archaic & further into techno-future, there is actually no "present" - & that this has ALWAYS been a peculiar characteristic of Russia - past & future at loggerheads with no livable "present". Epstein's *\_Third Wave\_* essay, with its analysis of poetic rival networks in Russia & its opposition of "culture" to the social binds of ideology (power) & the ideological binds of society - could be compared interestingly with Jeff Hansen's Witz essay ("Anarchy & Culture"). They both have positive things to say about literary schools & networks as necessary & vitalizing influences - but the word "culture" has opposite positive/negative value. For Epstein, "culture" is the hopeful, transcendent, life-giving force, challenging the lowest common denominators of cliché. For Jeff, "culture" is the opposite - stands for convention. "Anarchy" is closer to Epstein's "culture" (though Jeff makes clear it's all on a continuum between the 2).

Russ & US have always had VERY different responses to "tradition". I have felt for a long time that US poets could learn something specifically about poetics & poetic technique from the Russians. Across the spectrum of their "schools" (as Epstein classifies them), there is a different expression of the concept, the conceptual, the allusion, the traditional. How is it different? In a nutshell: western poetries often seem like a wasp in a bottle - techniques oppose techniques, all within the closed circle of craft. The Russians, acclimatized to over-conceptualization of EVERYTHING, have "naturalized" poetry to the general conversation of culture at large. Concept, tradition, technique, poetry,

culture, & history have a closer organic knit in which everything relates to everything else.

This may be a myth - balderdash - but I believe it's productive balderdash. An infusion of the "Russian" might actually help integrate concept/allusion/tradition/reference/style. I know this is all very artificial - but I'm talking about getting beyond, say, the simple binary oppositions displayed in talk about langpo "opacity" and (apex of the M, for ex.) "transparency" of reference. (I also realize that these are trivial side issues for most "working" poets. Oh well. I'm woikin' too.)

They're all at MLA, so I can blab all I want to... - Henry Gould

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619. **henry gould**

**Re: FALLING IN LOVE (JUST SAY NOH)**

*Fri 27 Dec 1996*

---

NOH, Chris - they began by whispering HON.

- Henry "KingBee" Gould

[↑ Contents](#)

620. **Pierre Joris**

**Re: Tom Meyer**

*Fri 27 Dec 1996*

---

Ron & Kent,

t'was me mentioned Tom Meyer & glad to learn about the New Orleans Review. Will look it up. Ron -- it was Bard College, indeed, though I believe Jonathan came before Tottel's, as Tom met JW at Bard in the late sixties, if memory serves. I remember that when I met Tom, Sept/Oct '67 at Bard, he had already been working on the Technographical Typography in Process for a year or so. When he showed me the black spring binders with that work, I was in total awe: my still-European concept of small/absolute poetic gestures a la Rimbaud & Mallarmé was blown away by this strange american praxis of writing daily for a set number of hours on that era's most awesome machina, the IBM golfball. If later on he abandoned that text, I don't think he discarded it -- I seem to remember that the last time we spoke he was rather fond of that early work. The two little mags in which he published extracts from TT( besides Tottle's) that readily come to mind were The Lampeter Muse & Caterpillar. BTW a good essay (& there are very few anyway) on Meyer's work bic Mottram came out in 1985 from Reality Studios as RS Occasional Paper # 2 . Ken Edwards could tell us if it's still in print. The latest works by Tom I have seen

are "Fourteen Poems" (1989, French Broad Press) & "Tom Writes This For Robert To Read" (n/d St. Lazaire Press -- tho I know it is also from the late eighties).

Pierre

& a Noyeux Joel to everyone in listland

Ron Silliman wrote:

>  
> Kent,  
>  
> That wasn't me who was generously praising Tom Meyer, although it  
> certainly could have been. My little zine in the 70s, Tottel's, was  
> publishing Tom even before Jonathon Williams ever met him. In fact,  
> Tottel's was one of the few publications to print an excerpt from Tom's  
> 800+ page poem called Technographic Typography, written more or less  
> continuously while he was a student at Bard (or was it Tufts?). Anyway,  
> Tom abandoned the project and I think may even have discarded the text,  
> but I've always liked it, both the idea and the act of it, and am  
> wondering if anybody on the list knows of a better source of more of it  
> (I know, for example, that some other little mags ran excerpts, but  
> cannot remember which ones or where).  
>  
> Ron Silliman  
>  
> >Date: Sun, 22 Dec 1996 19:42:12 +0600  
> >From: KENT JOHNSON <[REDACTED]>  
> >Subject: Tom Meyer  
> >  
> >I joined the list about two weeks ago-- my first post. I  
> >noticed a few days back that Tom Meyer's name came up in a discussion  
> >of neglected writers. I think it was Ron Silliman who called in to  
> >generously praise his work.  
> >  
> >I thought I'd tell folks that the forthcoming issue of The New Orleans  
> >Review (Vol.22, #3-4) will have a special section on Meyer, including  
> >an introductory essay by Forrest Gander entitled "The Inflorescence  
> >of Variety." The magazine has a web site, but I don't have the  
> >address.  
> >  
> >Good holidays to all.  
> >

> > Kent Johnson

> >

--

=====

pierre joris 6 madison place albany ny 12202

tel/fax [REDACTED] email: [REDACTED]

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

<http://www.albany.edu/~tm0900/nomad.html>

-----

Reality is escape. The rusty junk  
of fervent highways soothe the mind  
into self-consoling slumber. The real  
real is intimate, hard to find,  
locked & released at once in thought,  
beyond the touch of poignant imagery.

Robert Kelly ♦ Ode 16

=====

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621. **Michael Boughn**

***Re: Winter or not to winter***

*Fri 27 Dec 1996*

---

*This may be a myth - balderdash - but I believe it's productive balderdash.  
An infusion of the "Russian" might actually help integrate concept/  
allusion/tradition/reference/style. I know this is all very artificial -  
but I'm talking about getting beyond, say, the simple binary oppositions  
displayed in talk about langpo "opacity" and (apex of the M, for ex.)  
"transparency" of reference. (I also realize that these are trivial  
side issues for most "working" poets. Oh well. I'm woikin' too.)*

*They're all at MLA, so I can blab all I want to... - Henry Gould*

Yeah, it's fun, eh? Alone in the candy store . . .

I, personally, Henry, would have an easier time with your proposal if it were more specific in terms of the poetries it's addressing. I suspect, from what you've written here, that underneath this is an identification of the "postmodern" with a very narrow range of writing, and so I find myself mentally marshalling counter-examples: Dorn and the mock-epic, Olson and Clarke and the epic, any number of writers and the sonnet sequence, etc. But that's the trouble with this vocabulary and its slippery signifiers (altho I just love slippery signifiers, especially in the bath).

For Olson on the premodern, by the way, reread "The Gate at the Center".

None of this is to argue with your assessment of the Russians, only to complicate the binary you've set up between the Rooskies and the Americans. I'm looking forward to reading your Witz essay for more info.

Mike



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622. **henry**

***Re: Winter or not to winter***

*Fri 27 Dec 1996*

---

On Fri, 27 Dec 1996 11:09:38 -0500 Michael Boughn said:

>

>I, personally, Henry, would have an easier time with your proposal if  
>it were more specific in terms of the poetries it's addressing. I  
>suspect, from what you've written here, that underneath this is an  
>identification of the "postmodern" with a very narrow range of  
>writing, and so I find myself mentally marshalling counter-examples:  
>Dorn and the mock-epic, Olson and Clarke and the epic, any number of  
>writers and the sonnet sequence, etc. But that's the trouble with this  
>vocabulary and its slippery signifiers (altho I just love slippery  
>signifiers, especially in the bath).

Yes, I'm being intellectually irresponsible as well as obtuse (you didn't say that, but I'm saying it). One, by trying to project a set of private & personal predilections as if it were reasonably thought-out (i.e. my overly narrow & boundless admiration for a few Russ. poets, not even contemporary, is translated into a "program"). One might as well say, how about an infusion of "French"? "Malaysian"?

Confession is the best defense. But I will persist in my folly. The current, productive state of Russian poetry can act like a mirror. Distance simplifies. (Why simplify? I'm always oversimplifying. Because I'm looking for a metapoetics - an alternative to the metapoetics of Language Poetry, and that of the NY "school", and that of the loosely so-called Olson-Oppen-Creeley-BlckMtn et al. "school", and all the other schools. I'm starting my own school.)

& the closest poetics to what I'm looking for - in my own work & any affinities thereby - is found among the Russ. poets categorized by Mikhail Epstein as "metarealists" (or somewhere between them & his neo-Acmeists (my own term).

I don't have the energy to replay all that Epstein says about them, or their counterparts the Conceptual poets & the neo-Acmeists. Suffice it to say they do



not deny East-Western spiritual/cultural tradition, but look for its re-embodiment & re-integration in the interstices of the ordinary present-day - which is actually NOT ordinary, ie. "reality" is multidimensional - much as in CS Peirce, the unseen, the general, the abstract, the spiritual, are also real & integrated with the material. They discover the re-embodiment of the mythical & eternal. Epstein relates the rhetorical trope of "metabole" to them - what he calls a third mediating trope after metaphor & metonymy. It's not similarity by likeness or contiguity - it's unity - oneness - commonality. The forest is not LIKE a production factory: in the poetry they are REALLY one. Metabole : metabolism. (but shd check the original.)

What attracts me to this group of poets? Conceptual art, either Russian or western - which is GREAT & which subsumes a lot of what's going on in experimental writing - intellectually demystifies & cleanses & activates & ironizes & defamiliarizes - & this is the right role, as Epstein points out, for self-conscious cultural work. But it does not INTEGRATE. I want a NEW poetry which finds the roots of world & perennial poetry - which integrates the objective, the symbolic, the lyrical, the spiritual, the mystical, the literary, the traditional, the mythical, the critical, the ironic, the historical, the etc. What allows a poetics like that of the Russ. "metapoets" to integrate experience is the fact that it is grounded in a foundation of philosophical realism - ie. the conceptual is the real - which is not materialist but closer to the transcendental. It is this grounding which allows the old to be re-lived, anew. (Shd mention, though, that Epstein does argue for an "integral" element in purely conceptual work - a kind of "negative theology" - as in the chance operations with cliches & slogans of a Lev Rubinshtein, the repetitive recital of which approaches a kind of humble/Buddhist emptying of verbal deadness.)

- Henry Gould

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623. **Jordan Davis**

***Five times forever and you'll never get lost***

*Fri 27 Dec 1996*

---

Why is aestheticism a blinker?

Do you all ride horses or something?

Wastin' your time,

Jordan

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624. **Henry Gould**  
***Re: intentional misuse***  
*Fri 27 Dec 1996*

---

Susan - Dan Featherston was kind enough to let me know - the rhetorical trope in the Crane book by Edelman is "catachresis". - Henry

[↑ Contents](#)

625. **Henry gould**  
***Re: metarealism***  
*Fri 27 Dec 1996*

---

Afterthought about the Mikhail Epstein book - it would be a misrepresentation of his thinking to say he values the "metarealists" over the "conceptualists". Far from it. For one thing, Epstein closes with remarks about the continuum of approaches - the "acmeists" of today - running between these 2 poles. More importantly, he makes a strong case for avant-garde & conceptual art as a truly "religious" expression - as opposed to worldly & conservative traditionalism - in an apocalyptic, millennial age which dissolves tradition along with the rest of the whole physical world. He points to an affinity between avant-garde anti-art & the tradition of the iconoclastic, anti-establishment holy fool - a "poor art".

Any "new metapoetics" would have to show a more complete absorption & reflection of these opposing tendencies (art & anti-art; beauty & "truth"). - Henry Gould

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626. **Susan Wheeler**  
***query followup***  
*Fri 27 Dec 1996*

---

Many thanks, Henry and George -- I did mean the sense of misuse in which Pound mis-translated, and the Crane is very helpful. I've been trying to land something in Stevens (it's sometimes clearer in the prose, natch) but he seems meticulous -- any Olson? Contemporaries?

I learn so much from this list -- and it's appreciated. Regards.

Susan Wheeler  
37 Washington Square West Apt. 10A  
NY NY 10011  
phone/fax [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

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627. **Ron Silliman**  
***Russians, Americans***  
*Sat 28 Dec 1996*

---

Henry,

Parallels between Russia and "America" (or, more particularly, white America) have to do with the fact that both states' cultures have important European influences about which each feels uneasy (to say the least), that their land base is vast, their history in this century largely imperial, and that "state" each contains many national minorities for whom there has been much bad history and bad consciousness. The sheer size of those land masses means, for example, that SF is closer to Vladivostok than it is to NYC, so that any idea of a cultural "center" for either nation is ultimately an impossibility (an irony that appears lost on all cultural centralists, such as Bill Bennett, not just on New Yorkers and Muscovites).

I agree with you on the need (even desperate need) for a "theory" (to call it that) for writing that is, as you suggest, post-Language. What would it entail? What would it need to address? I would think that the functioning of society in an epoch in which capital has clearly not just seized the state (it always did that) but has more or less now transcended it as well. What does it mean to write in a post-state capitalism?

All best,

Ron

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628. **steph4848**  
***Re: Falling in love***  
*Sat 28 Dec 1996*

---

The OED, which I recommend to all, and especially to Harold Bloom, has two pre-Rosalind examples of falling in love (one of which is from Shakespeare), to wit:

"1530 Palsgr. 544/2, I shall fall in love with her. 1591 Shaks. Two Gent. I. ii. 2 Would'st thou then counsaile me to fall in loue?"

I suspect that the phrase derives from the French, but I don't have a good enough French dictionary at hand to know for sure.

It's Bloom's MO to make extravagant and questionable statements. What does he build on this one? And does anyone know who or what "Palsgr." stands for?

By the by, this is my first communication with the list, so welcome to me!

Mark Weiss

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629. **Jerry Rothenberg**

***Re: Falling in love***

*Sat 28 Dec 1996*

---

for Mark Weiss, by way of greeting, etc.

The Palsgr in question must be John Palsgrave, who wrote an early instructional book on French grammar (dated in fact as 1530), so that the "falling in love" bit is likely from that. The work is apparently of some interest for what it tells about English during that time -- as much, say, as the French side of it. So your French conjecture may have some connection.

Okay & best wishes to Margaret -- tho that kind of greeting I can give you by phone.

Jerry Rothenberg



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630. **Eliza McGrand- CVA Guest**

***Re: Falling in love***

*Sun 29 Dec 1996*

---

welcome oh clever mark!

your acuity has spurred me -- i wonder if there are any chaucerian usages? my bet would be wife of bath for love... don't have concordance here. e

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631. **Peter Quartermain**

***EH or Uh***

*Sun 29 Dec 1996*

---

Sorry to come in so late flogging this by now utterly dead horse yet again, but I have a mea culpa, yes, to fess up.

At 04:52 PM 12/22/96 -0500, Rob Hardin wrote, in response to my own intuitive leap that

>>Is it also worth noting that, \_A\_ or "A", the title is pronounced as a  
>>schwa, UH?

as follows

>I didn't know that. What is the source of your pronunciation info?

well now. I have no authority, I must confess, save tapes of LZ reading the opening line of "A" and my own pronunciation of it. But the opening line is not, as you say (imply), the title. Mea culpa. LZ himself, when referring to individual sections of the poem, always indeed pronounced it EH not UH. And I think the same goes for his mentions of the poem's title.

But I like the point that schwa points to An rather than the rest of the alphabet (but LZ also played with the notion that the poem runs A to Z [just as Zinnia in *\_80\_Flowers\_runs* Z to A] and included an alphabet in "A"-23 [or was it 22? I can't remember, and am too lazy to go look]).

It's the isolate A what gets the stressed length. Somewhat along the lines of Duncan's The as in Tree the as in nut?

I like LZ's ambiguous duplicitous or bipolar play of pronunciation here, actually.

But I can't resist adding that in LZ's correspondence with Cid Corman, and I seem to recall in his notebooks as well, he made extensive if not heavy weather of the value of those quotes around the A as images of the horns on the ox's head.

He too, of course, played extensively with the title, and indeed why not. But it was for him (so far as I can tell) and certainly for me, "A". It's a pretty good label for the poem.

Peter

+

Peter Quartermain

128 East 23rd Avenue

## Vancouver

B.C.

Canada V5V 1X2

Voice and fax:

+

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632. **Chris Stroffolino**

***Re: POETICS Digest - 27 Dec 1996 to 28 Dec 1996***

Sun 29 Dec 1996

dear mark weiss and jerry rothenberg--  
thank you for your informational responses to the 'falling  
in love' question---a phrase that no doubt means something different in  
post-state capitalism.....  
i wonder if the stock market will ever

fall  
in love.....

C

[↑ Contents](#)

633. **Pierre Joris**  
**Re: *Falling in love***  
*Sun 29 Dec 1996*

---

The French connection via Palsgrave seems most likely, especially as "to fall in love" is the literal translation of "tomber amoureux."

& welcome to Mark,

Pierre

=====

pierre joris 6 madison place albany ny 12202  
tel/fax [REDACTED] email: [REDACTED]  
<http://writing.upenn.edu/epc/authors/joris/>  
<http://www.albany.edu/~tm0900/nomad.html>

-----

Reality is escape. The rusty junk  
of fervent highways soothe the mind  
into self-consoling slumber. The real  
real is intimate, hard to find,  
locked & released at once in thought,  
beyond the touch of poignant imagery.

Robert Kelly ♦ Ode 16

=====

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634. **Ken Edwards**  
**Re: *Tom Meyer***  
*Sun 29 Dec 1996*

---

Pierre sd: "BTW a good essay (& there are very few anyway) on Meyer's work  
bic Mottram came out in 1985 from Reality Studios as RS Occasional Paper #  
2 . Ken Edwards could tell us if it's still in print."

No, not in print, but if anyone's seriously interested I could snail-mail a  
photocopy.

A happy new year to all listers,

Ken

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635. **Rachel Loden**

***falling in love***

Sun 29 Dec 1996

---

Chris Stroffolino wrote:

| *i wonder if the stock market will ever*  
| *fall*  
| *in love.....*

I don't know about that, but it "swoons" a lot on NPR.

And they constantly say that gold had "its morning fix" and "its afternoon fix."

Rachel Loden

[↑ Contents](#)

636. **Kurt Nimmo**

***Story Problems: Poems by Kurt Nimmo***

Sun 29 Dec 1996

---

I have published a new collection of poems. If you are interested in looking at them, the URL is:

<http://www.cruzio.com/~png/problems.htm>

Please keep in mind that this site needs a JavaScript enabled browser in order to work correctly. If you are using Netscape 2.0 or above, you should not experience any problems. The pages will not be viewable by AOL's online browser.

have a happy new year,

Kurt

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637. **George Bowering**

***Re: EH or Uh or Ah***

Sun 29 Dec 1996

---

I sometimes have thought that Zuk put the quotation marks around the A in order to screw up those pros and others who are trying to keep track of the idea that you refer to short works with " " and to longer works with italics. This being a longer work (!), pros etc will be curling their toes.

I once title a book with a word you are supposed to put into italics, just to see how people would indicate it in their reviews, etc. I cant remember what happened.

George Bowering.

2499 West 37th Ave.,  
Vancouver, B.C.,  
Canada V6M 1P4

fax: [REDACTED]

e-mail: [REDACTED]

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638. **manny savopoulos**

***Fw: DIASPORA LITERARY JOURNAL***

*Sun 29 Dec 1996*

---

-----

> From: [REDACTED]  
> To: ted <[REDACTED]>; artemisvallianatos <[REDACTED]>;  
andrew <[REDACTED]>; rafaelsalinas <[REDACTED]>; mannys.  
<[REDACTED]>; janetdeleon <[REDACTED]>; vasilikisereti  
<[REDACTED]>; rebeccaneedler <[REDACTED]>;  
[REDACTED]; [REDACTED]

> Subject: DIASPORA LITERARY JOURNAL

> Date: Saturday, December 28, 1996 9:43 PM

>

> This is a partial email list I have compiled. Eventually, the list will  
grow

> to include others as well.

>

> If you know of anyone else who would appreciate their name on this type  
of

> list, please email me their address.

>

> In the meantime, please forward the following trailer to everyone who  
would

> remotely consider the DIASPORA LITERARY JOURNAL.

>

>

>

> The Diaspora Art and Literature Foundation is a not-for profit



organization

> which puts out a quarterly literary journal. Our next issue is due out in

> March.

>

> The submissions and the paper they are written on remain property of the  
> diaspora literary journal. however, you do maintain the right to submit  
your

> work elsewhere. This is a fundamental right you maintain as a writer;  
Unless

> you sign a contract, I nor anyone else can restrict you from submitting  
the

> sme piece of work to 1000 other magazines like ours. However we still  
> maintain the right to print it if you've sent it, even if you don't want  
it

> printed.

>

> We recieve a large amount of submissions and I guess that on, average, we  
> accept about 40%-55% of the submissions we recieve. Our print date for  
the

> third issue is end of March and we are looking for submissions no later  
than

> January 20th. The only guideline we have is that we want you to send us

> whatever you think is good. we accept poetry, short shorts and short

> stories. We accept work in other languages, provided that they are

> accompnied with a suitable English translation. Submissions can be  
emailed

> to me at [REDACTED] or [REDACTED] or can be snail mailed to  
the

> PO Box address listed further down.

>

> Payment is in copies. We just became not-for profit, at a tremendous  
expense

> to us (I have a partner as well), and we can't afford anything except  
payment

> in copies.

>

> a one year membership to the diaspora literary foundation entitles you to

4

> quarterly issues of the diaspora literary journal.

>

> Membership is \$10.00 for the year.

>  
> A check can be made payable to: Diaspora Art and Literature Foundation,  
Inc.  
>  
> mail to:  
> Diaspora Literary Journal  
> Suite 182  
> 35-17 Ditmars Blvd.  
> Astoria, NY 11105  
>  
>  
> Below is a copy of our mission statement for you look over:  
>  
>  
> The word "diaspora" is derived from two Greek words which when placed  
> together roughly translate to mean "the sowing of seeds in a far-off  
place".  
> Until recently, the term "diaspora" was used simultaneously by many  
> nationalities to represent their dispersed relatives who had migrated  
> throughout the world. However, as the century progresses to its end,  
many  
> people find it difficult to trace their ancestry to a single place.  
Today,  
> it is not uncommon to hear a statement such as "My mother is Jewish and  
my  
> father is Colombian. My stepfather was German. I was born in Greece,  
and I  
> moved to Dallas when I was three. I completed high school in Canada and  
> university in Ireland. I now live in the Village and I..."  
> Today's society is based on the concept of global nomadism. People  
shift  
> from city to city, through countries and traverse continents. The  
concept of  
> nationality becomes blurred - the situation causes people to take one of  
two  
> roads. People either firmly or fervently identify themselves with one  
> nationality or, they eschew the whole concept of nationality.  
Oftentimes,  
> however, people become too wrapped up in denying or espousing this  
> nationality that they shut themselves off to others' ideas. On the eve  
of  
> the 21st century the word "diaspora" must come to take a different

meaning.

- > "Diaspora" is no longer a people or a place. "Diaspora" is the attempt of
- > modern persons to try to relate to others and the world around them.
- > "Diaspora" is the sowing of one person's ideas in the rockiest of terrains:
- > other people's minds.
- > It is in this light that we the editors present this publication in an
- > attempt to further others' art. What we try to present transcends all
- > nationality, religion, race, creed and language. The Diaspora Literary
- > Journal presents the hope, experiences and angst of artists of different ages
- > and nationalities in several languages. This journal, is, in other words,
- > our diaspora...
- >
- > We, the editors would appreciate any comments you may have.
- >
- > Thank you for your time and effort.

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639. **jarnot**

***jim gustafson***

*Sun 29 Dec 1996*

---

I'm writing an article/obituary about Detroit poet Jim Gustafson for the Poetry Project Newsletter and would appreciate it if anyone on this list could give me information about him. Please backchannel me at [REDACTED]. Thanks, Lisa Jarnot

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640. **henry gould**

***Re: Five times forever and you'll never get lost***

*Mon 30 Dec 1996*

---

On Fri, 27 Dec 1996 16:27:46 -0400 Jordan Davis said:

- >Why is aestheticism a blinker?
- >Do you all ride horses or something?

I don't think I said it was a blinker - I was trying to characterize (in my usual crude simple way) ONE aspect of Chas. Olson's view of Pound: that his perspective was narrowed by a dependence on classical/Greek aesthetics - that Olson himself was aiming for something more "primordial". - HG

[↑ Contents](#)

641. **henry**

***Re: Russians, Americans***

*Mon 30 Dec 1996*

---

On Sat, 28 Dec 1996 05:05:54 -0800 Ron Silliman said:

>

>I agree with you on the need (even desperate need) for a "theory" (to  
>call it that) for writing that is, as you suggest, post-Language. What  
>would it entail? What would it need to address? I would think that the  
>functioning of society in an epoch in which capital has clearly not  
>just seized the state (it always did that) but has more or less now  
>transcended it as well. What does it mean to write in a post-state  
>capitalism?

These are big questions, & I'd like the whole list to jump in here this Monday morning & help answer them. I am still reading Epstein's AFTER THE FUTURE - he's got a chapter on what he calls "transculture" which he compares with multiculturalism in the west - also what he calls "culturology" (which seems to be a subcategory of sociology or anthropology focusing on "culture" as a unitary phenomenon). I'm just beginning to glance into these sections of the book - but he seems to have an optimism directly counter to that new book by historian Samuel Huntington which is getting a lot of play right now - can't think of the title - which warns of coming wars between "civilizations" & cultures rather than states...

These issues are most certainly pertinent to poetics. I'm not so sure we desperately need another global theory of writing, however. Well, it would probably be interesting - but MORE interesting to me is a narrower focus on poetry. I'd like to help promote a new "school" of poetry. What makes Black Mountain & the objectivists & the Language "school" & the NY "school" interesting is that it's a messy combination of theory (more or less) with real distinctive practice. The practice preceded & underwrote the PR (& theory).

The Providence School of poetry would be clustered not so much in a place as in a worldview - metaphysics prior to language. Cosmic order as a hypothesis underlying human freedom/disorder. Would differentiate itself from other poetries, not devalue them (would draw from them). Would draw from philosophical sources in CS Peirce & David Bohm to propose an "integral" poetry & a "human" poetry. Would draw from both Russian metarealism & acmeism (as NY school, in an antithetical way, draws from surrealism & French poetry) the same philosophical grounding found in Peirce & Bohm - that reality is complex, real, & human/metaphysical - a metalanguage of signs, not a reductive relativistic "text". In this sense the Providence School is "serious" where NY School is "surreal"; the Providence School is "realist" (there are "real

general intellectual phenomena") where the Language School is "nominalist". The Providence School is responsive to tradition in both poetry & philosophy where other schools are oppositional. This is because the Prov School accepts new interpretations of humanism which are rejected by postmodernism. The world of medieval, renaissance & baroque poetry is not rejected on behalf of archaic or futuristic enthusiasms - it is absorbed. The serious complexity underwriting the Providence School is, however, a thousand times closer to Objectivists, Black Mountain, Language, NY School, than it is to the bland prose-as-poetry lyrical meditations of "mainstream" US poetry. Carl Rakosi's interview in the latest APR would be a good intro to a ground base of agreements with the Prov school & a jumping-off place. Rakosi rejects both mainstream lyricism & surrealism; he criticizes (while honoring) language poetry as a "dehumanization" of speech. He characterizes Objectivism in a negative way - as a cleaning out of sentimentality & phony lyricism & dead cliché. For the Prov School this is a good start - but its philosophical leanings aim for wider correspondences between concepts, traditions, & forms. Rakosi also describes the poems of his own he likes as successful integrations of idea, thought, feeling, style. This is also a very good approach to what I mentioned above as "integral poetry". The Prov School draws from David Bohm the concept of "wholeness" - that the universe exhibits a marvelous infolding & unfolding of covalent & interwoven "wholenesses" & that the integral work of art displays both wholeness & interconnection. This may sound like a harking back to "organicism" but anyone who sets up to form an aesthetic "school" must reckon with the issue of the art work as an entity.

Finally - the Providence School might address some of the political issues you raise, Ron, by way of its "universalism". It's a humanism which is inherently transcultural. & I happen to believe that the world domination of capital over state which you describe is temporary. There is always the potential, in the next century, for the rule of law to transform social relations - both to establish a "level playing field" and to set ground rules for livable & free communities. This will take good will, persistence, & vision - but I don't put it past the human race - that is, it's achievable.

Has anybody written anything on this list so pretentious & outrageous? I deserve a medal & a Bronx cheer! - Henry Gould

ps I know people will jump all over these valuations of both NY School & language school. It will be argued, & with good reason, that the efforts of language poets were a quintessential human & political act - by restricting poetry to text-language they revealed the "silence" or silencing at the core of mainstream rhetoric. Also there is nothing more humorously human & surrealistically expansive & lovely than the NY school. As I said above, the Prov

School is based on a metaphysics, not a language theory - & it differentiates from, rather than devalues, these other schools.

ha ha ha !!! holy godawful spumoni - Happy New Year, dear titanic listers!!

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642. **Jordan Davis**  
***where they go to make sense***

*Mon 30 Dec 1996*

---

Henry == I admit I get nervous when anybody says 'aestheticism' == which rings like a broken pot when it is struck == haven't the connotations of 'love of the pretty' overruled the denotation of 'study of the beautiful'? == or as Ron Silliman once wrote 'What is a positive definition.' == if these works are whole objects they are broken objects == or are about to be ==

Ron == We've got your theory \_right here\_ == J

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643. **henry**  
***Re: where they go to make sense***

*Mon 30 Dec 1996*

---

As I understand it (in a very beginner way), toward the end of his life CS Peirce was shaping his philosophy in a way that made ethics dependent on aesthetics. (Though this kind of bald statement is inherently confusing. Within the "architectonic" of his philosophy it was so; in the ordinary conduct of life, of course, it was the reverse.)

How? In the end, for Peirce, behavior & morality came to be based not on human standards; human standards or ideals were themselves transformed in their foundation by what Peirce (he was an inveterate word-coiner) called "musement": he felt that persistent contemplation could lead the mind naturally - by way of beauty (aesthetics) - to a kind of "hypothetical", future-oriented faith in cosmic love, or a benign divinity transcending human representations.

These speculations (unprovable or absurd to the "positivist" skeptic) were so to speak tentative conclusions Peirce drew from his prior perspectives on "realism" (the real existence of general classes of things in a real physical/metaphysical cosmos - a coherence); his belief that mind and nature were co-extensive, on a continuum (he call it "synechism" - a kind of synthesis-through-a-continuum); & his explorations (discoveries) in semiotics - his sense that reality is a sign system, a metalanguage. - Henry Gould

(p.s. stay tune to channel 99.2456 WHEW for my program "Transcendental Floss for Today's Busy Shopper", Sundays at 4 am. & beware the leaven of the fair-haired seers.)

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644. **Jordan Davis**

***where the flood waters soak their belongings***

*Mon 30 Dec 1996*

---

At 12:56 PM 12/30/96, henry wrote:

"musement": he felt that persistent contemplation could lead

>the mind naturally - by way of beauty (aesthetics) - to a kind of

>"hypothetical", future-oriented faith in cosmic love, or a benign

>divinity transcending human representations.

>

>...his belief that mind and nature were co-extensive, on a continuum (he

>call it "synechism" - a kind of synthesis-through-a-continuum); &

>his explorations (discoveries) in semiotics - his sense that reality

>is a sign system, a metalanguage. - Henry Gould

All right, then: what exactly is this 'divinity' but some part of nature that is not co-extensive with 'mind'? Some way of acknowledging that although human life is part of nature, it is not all of nature. Great. But why assume this divinity is messianic? Or == why presume that the signs are always/ever legible? (Hint: beauty ((meaning)).) I think this 'forest of symbols' you're proposing is no more than another nominalism that wants to see people where people are not. The kitsch of names. Or == we can offer you Growth or Value, you just have to participate.

Mutual fund economy,

Jordan

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645. **Henry**

***Re: where the flood waters soak their belongings***

*Mon 30 Dec 1996*

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On Mon, 30 Dec 1996 14:10:15 -0400 Jordan Davis said:

>

>All right, then: what exactly is this 'divinity' but some part of nature

>that is not co-extensive with 'mind'? Some way of acknowledging that

>although human life is part of nature, it is not all of nature. Great.

>But why assume this divinity is messianic? Or == why presume that the signs

>are always/ever legible? (Hint: beauty ((meaning)).) I think this 'forest

>of symbols' you're proposing is no more than another nominalism that wants  
>to see people where people are not. The kitsch of names. Or == we can  
>offer you Growth \_or\_ Value, you just have to participate.

Not sure I follow you all the way here, Jordan - but I think another word (maybe) coined by Peirce was "panentheism". In pantheism, Nature = Mind. In panentheism, Mind suffuses nature, but is not contained by it. It is what he calls a "Third" - the mediating, organizing, synthesizing aspect of reality. In other words, for Peirce it was just the reverse of what you outline above in 1st 2 sentences.

On yr question "why assume this divinity is messianic" - I don't know what "Peirce would say". But maybe he would say that human self-consciousness is also an aspect of this "thirdness" - that Mind is our share of the divine image - & that the "just" mind also displays "heart", an equability or equanimity or justice which is the essence of (moral) beauty (& "on a continuum" with the physical order).

But though Peirce could be considered the ultimate New England "village explainer", in NO WAY was he an expositor of certainties or final truths. Peirce was the founder of both pragmatism & his own offshoot "pragmaticism", a scientific practice based on notions of human fallibility, skepticism, the need for experiment, & the search for common ground in results. Divinity was a hypothetical beyond our representations.

Moo-cow economy,  
Henry

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646. **Jordan Davis**  
***where they sell antique food***

*Mon 30 Dec 1996*

---

Well I guess what I'm wondering then Henry is what the triumvirate of mind - divinity - representation is up to these days. And whether we oughtn't think of each of them as 'co-extensive' with each other.. to the point of equivalence.. to the end of the world..

1096,  
J

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647. **daniel\_bouchard**

***Re: falling in love***

*Mon 30 Dec 1996*

---

Chris Stroffolino wrote:

> i wonder if the stock market will ever

>           fall

>           in love.....

I don't know about that, but it "swoons" a lot on NPR.

And they constantly say that gold had "its morning fix" and "its afternoon fix."

Rachel Loden

---

Not to mention those reports are sometimes sponsored by Archer Midland Daniels which has its own armorous ideas of the market and a "fix"

██████████

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648. **henry gould**

***Re: where they sell antique food***

*Mon 30 Dec 1996*

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On Mon, 30 Dec 1996 15:24:12 -0400 Jordan Davis said:

>Well I guess what I'm wondering then Henry is what the triumvirate of mind

>- divinity - representation is up to these days. And whether we oughtn't

>think of each of them as 'co-extensive' with each other.. to the point of

>equivalence.. to the end of the world..

Peirce organized everything in triads. The logic of the mind by point, line and plane.

What can we say about the triumvirate? We can philosophize about divine love, for the same reason the scholastics wrote theology & metaphysics, because it can be fun, & soothing to reason about the order of things, but that's not why I'm a poet or been a poet doggedly for a long time. I was a 98-lb. garden-variety agnostic (like we all are most of the time) until I experienced the uncanny stroke of divine/human justice about 21 yrs ago. I've written about it more fully (but not completely) in GLASS OF GREEN TEA, the book for Edwin Honig, so you'll have to go there for the story. Let's just say I was once a young proto-NY school poet-ephebe-as-Dr.-Faustus who found himself shaking on his knees alone at midnight, when there came (literally) a knock on the door. I've spent most of my life trying to understand that knock, and it doesn't reduce either to a mechanistic universe or the free play of signifiers. - Henry Gould

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649. **William Slaughter**

***Mudlark No. 4***

*Mon 30 Dec 1996*

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Announcing Mudlark No. 4

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A CONVERSATION WITH MARTIN HEIDEGGER

An original poem in English by Van K. Brock  
with a translation into German by Josef Pesch

Brock is founding editor of INTERNATIONAL QUARTERLY  
and author of UNSPEAKABLE STRANGERS (Anhinga 1995),  
Holocaust poems. Pesch is doing his "Habilitation"  
project on Post-Apocalyptic North American Writing  
at Albert-Ludwigs-Universitat Freiburg.

An early review of the Brock/Pesch/Heidegger issue:

"I just finished reading Van Brock's 'A Conversation with Martin Heidegger,'  
and indeed, it made me 'blush down to my scars, / those old concealments....'  
Reconciling my fondness for Heidegger's philosophical works with my distaste  
for his personal politics has been a source of anxiety for me, and the grim  
beauty and quasi-elegiac sadness of Brock's poem touched the nerve of that  
long distress. Yet the emotion of the poem centers not so much on mixed  
feelings about a particular philosopher, but more on the broader and subtler  
hypocrisies of our own lives and work. Perhaps this reorienting constitutes a  
step forward in the debates over Heidegger. I don't know. I do know that only  
poetry -- in these times, at least -- could so affect my philosophy. Thanks for  
putting good words on the wires. -- Richard Carr

William Slaughter

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650. **George Bowering**  
**Re: westerns, odds & ends...**

Tue 31 Dec 1996

---

*and hey: i think van kilmer's doc pretty much makes \*tombstone\*, is the  
centerpiece of that film... i savor every moment he's onscreen---really  
quite something, how he plays that homoerotic angle,*

Yeah, I didnt know who that was that played Doc H., but I liked that movie a lot,  
better than the other one with whatsisname, the guy who played in Water  
World. I loved that scene in which Doc H. and the scary bad guy are in the bar,  
dissing each other in Latin, and some galoot thinks they are speaking Spanish.  
(I guess your es-vice president would have thought so, too).

George Bowering.

2499 West 37th Ave.,  
Vancouver, B.C.,  
Canada V6M 1P4

fax: [REDACTED]  
e-mail: [REDACTED]

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651. **Patrick Foley**  
**Re: westerns, odds & ends...**

Tue 31 Dec 1996

---

*and hey: i think van kilmer's doc pretty much makes \*tombstone\*, is the  
centerpiece of that film... i savor every moment he's onscreen---really  
quite something, how he plays that homoerotic angle,*

*Yeah, I didnt know who that was that played Doc H., but I liked that movie  
a lot, better than the other one with whatsisname, the guy who played in  
Water World. I loved that scene in which Doc H. and the scary bad guy are  
in the bar, dissing each other in Latin, and some galoot thinks they are  
speaking Spanish. (I guess your es-vice president would have thought so,  
too).*

Now that it's coming down to voting, I'll add mine. I loved the whole approach,  
Baudelaire with a six-shooter. Another great line in the bar is when some drunk  
asks him to play "Swanee River" or anything at all by Stephen fuckin' Foster,  
which Doc refuses to do. Asked a moment later what he's playing, he responds:  
"It's a noctuhn ... you know ... Frederic fucking Chopin."

While we're back on this subject, there's something special about this story and  
"Tombstone" handles it really well. When they're all out chasing down the

Clantons & get caught in a crossfire, one of the deputies asks Doc why he's involved at all. "Wyatt Earp is my friend," comes the response. And the guy makes a joke -- "I have lots of friends", but Doc replies, "I don't." That's what I find interesting about this story, an American legend, the sort of stories that went into Williams's *In the American Grain*, the history you learn as a child, a great legend on that order, and at the center of it a friendship.

Pat

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652. **Chris Stroffolino**

**MLA GROUPIE QUERY**

*Tue 31 Dec 1996*

---

Dear Poetics List People---

For those of us who didn't get to go the MLA,  
I am VERY curious in particular about what happened  
at the LAURA RIDING panel that allegedly Lisa Samuels,  
Barrett Watten and even the founder of this list were on.  
What was said? By whom? How's the "canonization" going?  
What sides of Riding are being emphasized?  
Is she being "l=a=n=g=i=f=i=e=d?" or if not what?  
Maybe somebody would like to say something here  
(for those of us who didn't get to the MLA)  
and when is that DICTIONARY OF RATIONAL MEANING  
(well, the part that's finished, coming out?)  
Chris Stroffolino

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653. **Chris Stroffolino**

**WCW QUOTE---**

*Tue 31 Dec 1996*

---

So, when William Carlos Williams writes---

"For if the poem set out to punish the wicked and  
reward the virtuous, it had better be on the basis of  
fulfilled love rather than unfulfilled" (SE 207)--  
do you (dear open question interlocutor) agree?  
What is the CONCEPTUAL distinction between grounding  
an action in fulfilled love vs. non-fulfilled love?  
On one level, I wanna say that WCW is being too restrictive...  
not denying the validity or the possibility of unfulfilled  
love as a basis for poetry, at least occasionally, and

kinda takes some of the "poetic license" (that allows for pain and despair, etc.) away--and is too ideal....  
but then i think that can't be the real point here  
because WHAT IS the difference between loves?  
IS THERE really such a thing as "fulfilled love"?  
And even if there IS such a thing (the love you take is equal to the love you make), is it possible WCW's really point here is more to question and challenge the assumption that poetry should even PRESUME to be apocalyptic-judgmental, to reward the virtuous (i.e. those who like me are frustrated--the whole christian guilt trip in which one is BETTER only to the extent one is self-sacrificing, or martyred, or BETTER only insofar as BITTER) and punish the wicked (or the successful). That WCW is checking the reader's urge to categorize people on a moral scale in the first place. But, then, isn't he actually judging those who judge too much? Can judgment really be done away with that easily? I am skeptical (as you might have guessed) and maybe the only way "out" of the quandary (the "quary", the "wilderness of tropes" is to judge judging, to damn damning, to hate hatred, to have one's rice cake and eat it too, and accelerate the process of meaning so it approximates meaningless (a disclaimer on a meaning level--mere aesthetic formal structural concerns) while at the same time getting to be apocalyptic (kinda like Will Alexander's ASIA AND HAITI, but other examples too).....chris s.

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654. **main**

**Re: WCW QUOTE---**

*Tue 31 Dec 1996*

---

wcw:

"A poem is a capsule where we wrap our punishable selves."

judging judgment, wcw's capsule might look like a moebius strip.

dan featherston

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655. **maria damon**

***Re: patr-iarchy/onization***

*Tue 31 Dec 1996*

---

Now for "best  
> male"? Anyone?  
>  
> Kathrine

jean genet, anytime, anywhere, hands down.--md

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656. **Charles Alexander**

***Re: patr-iarchy/onization***

*Tue 31 Dec 1996*

---

At 09:44 PM 12/31/96 -0600, you wrote:

> Now for "best  
>> male"? Anyone?  
>>  
>> Kathrine  
>

>jean genet, anytime, anywhere, hands down.--md

Are we speaking "all time" or 20th Century? I'm overwhelmed by the choices. Genet for you, but for me, even in France, Mallarme just for that throw of the dice & the book as spiritual instrument, or maybe Apollinaire, and even Proust I have to go back to every few years. I think I'll just go back to being overwhelmed. I don't think anybody wins hands down -- but up, perhaps?

ca

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657. **maria damon**

***Re: Query***

*Tue 31 Dec 1996*

---

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

> Susan,  
> this may not be exactly what you're looking for, but Lee Edelman wrote  
> an interesting book on Hart Crane's rhetoric called *\_Transmemberment of  
> Song\_* (Stanford UP, 1987. isbn 0804714134). She analyses his work through  
> the lens of a set of tropes characterized by intentional distortions -

> links it up to the engineering theme in The Bridge (literally twisting  
> it into shape).

for what it's worth, lee edelman is a male type person. crane is a neologist;--  
"irrefrangible" or some such, don't have my book in front of me --is that what yr  
after susan?--md

Can't recall the name of the major trope.... sheesh...

> help, anybody? It's a trope of exaggeration, distortion, etc. & while  
> you're onto Crane, Paul Giles's book "Hart Crane: the Contexts of the  
> Bridge" (Cambridge UP, 1986) has an incredible run-through on double  
> meanings & puns in The Bridge.  
>  
> "Cheerios", Henry

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