

@poetics

The UB Poetics Discussion Group

Archive of Electronic Correspondence

February 1998

1114 messages · Sat 31 Jan 1998 – Sat 28 Feb 1998

An electronic mailing-list archive

University at Buffalo, State University of New York

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

Editor's Introduction

Kristen M. Fabians

February broke the habit. Iraq is named seventy-one times in this month's eleven hundred letters and Saddam Hussein twenty-two, the inspectors were being refused, the strikes were being drafted, and for once the room was in the same week as the news. David Bromige was not impressed. He found it depressing, he said, that the Iraq posts he had read offered modulations of the Administration's line and nothing else — *"no apostates, only mild heretics"* — and asked whether anyone had considered that these wars are chiefly demonstrations of new weaponry under working conditions, which is good for sales. Nobody answered that. They were busy with a man who had sent a girl a poem.

Robert Hale opened the largest thread of the largest month on the third, at the risk, he said, of using the list as a Dear Abby column. He had been seeing someone. It went well. He took her to see David Bowie; they had crazy nights; they went to a friend's wedding. He sent her a poem a week and sang to her down the telephone. Then he sent her something by André Breton, and — this is the whole hinge of the volume — *"She freaked out"*. Valentine's Day was on the Saturday. Should he send love poems? Forty letters of advice came back, which is more than Iraq got in any single thread.

Underneath it, the month's real subject, arriving from outside: Ted Hughes had published Birthday Letters in January, breaking thirty-five years of public silence about Sylvia Plath. Plath is named two hundred and five times here, Hughes two hundred and seventy-five. And the room did to those poems exactly what Hale's girlfriend had done to Breton — read them as a message about the person who sent them. Which they are. That is the difficulty, and the room went at it honestly enough, and then somebody advanced a theory.

Michael McColl reported that an Iowa study he recalled had found a high incidence of manic depression among writers; that unless they were bipolar they were unlikely to get much done; *"It was in manic or near-manic states that they achieved"*. The study is not cited. Half-remembered authority is this room's oldest habit and I have watched it fail all year. This time it failed differently, because Joe Ahearn was reading. His reply is three lines long. Speaking *"as one captive to bipolar disorder"*, he found the assessment incredibly optimistic, and put naive in brackets after it, with a question mark, which is more courtesy than it deserved.

And Katy Lederer asked the question the month was built to avoid. How, she wanted to know, was Plath's death being figured here in terms of gender — the business of the children left behind? She could think of a number of male poets who had killed themselves and been made heroes of, and none of them admonished for leaving children. "*What if Plath had been the father?*" she wrote; suppose Hughes the non-writing mother who strayed; the discourse would be altogether different, and it is obvious, really. Nobody took it up. I have set Hale's question at the front of this volume and Lederer's at the back, because between them the room spent February reading poems as evidence about the people who wrote them, and twice — three lines from Ahearn, a paragraph from Lederer — the people being read answered back.

— K. M. F.

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- 459. Simon/Piombino — Re: 44 Freud
- 460. KENT JOHNSON — A personal appeal
- 461. Kali Tal — Re: sublimating the ridiculous
- 462. d powell — Re: Poetry is not a subculture
- 463. Schuchat Simon — Re: 44
- 464. d powell — Re: Why I'm not an experimental poet
- 465. KENT JOHNSON — Intellectual property
- 466. Henry Gould — Re: Why I'm not an experimental poet
- 467. David Zauhar — Re: Why I'm not an experimental poet
- 468. Tom Mandel — Warren Spahn or warring spam?
- 469. Alan Myouka Sondheim — No Play
- 470. Rachel Levitsky — [Fwd: Urgent on Iraq - Please note the signers!!; U.S. v. Iraq: A Study i...
- 471. Don Byrd — Re: Foucault, Ron's experimentalism and Baseball

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- 472. David Israel — Re: A personal appeal
- 473. Karen Kelley — Lee Chapman
- 474. david bromige — socopo reading : charles alexander
- 475. Maria Damon — Re: sublimating the ridiculous
- 476. Pierre Joris — Re: Foucault, Ron's experimentalism and Baseball

- 477. George Bowering — Re: Why I'm not an experimental poet
- 478. Irving Weiss — Exhibits outside USA
- 479. George Bowering — Re: Warren Spahn or warring spam?
- 480. Gwyn McVay — Re: 44
- 481. MAYHEW — Freud and Silliman
- 482. Mark Prejsnar — Re: 44 baseball poems
- 483. rsillima — 363
- 484. Gary Sullivan — CALL FOR WORK
- 485. Steven Shoemaker — Re: Foucault, Ron's experimentalism and Baseball
- 486. Mark Prejsnar — Re: sublimating the ridiculous
- 487. Mark Prejsnar — Re: Warren Spahn or warring spam?
- 488. David Kellogg — Re: query
- 489. louis stroffolino — Re: FEBRUARY 14....
- 490. Joshua N Schuster — ok, well maybe I am an experimental poet
- 491. MAYHEW — Dana Gioa
- 492. Mark Prejsnar — Re: Broaden yr horizons
- 493. Miekal And — Re: Daniel Davidson - Partial Bibliography
- 494. david bromige — why i am not an expoet
- 495. Aldon Nielsen — Re: In which may be found what is set forth therein
- 496. David Israel — Re: A personal appeal
- 497. Aldon Nielsen — and another thing
- 498. david bromige — joshua _is_ an experimental poet
- 499. Aldon Nielsen — Re: query
- 500. Christopher W. Alexander — Re: A personal appeal
- 501. aerialeedge — New @ Bridge Street. Sound States, Berrigan, Gizzis, &
- 502. Kali Tal — Re: Intellectual property
- 503. Dale M Smith — Hello?
- 504. Daniel Zimmerman — Re: Warren Spahn or warring spam?
- 505. Safdie Joseph — Re: and another found poem,
- 506. Thomas Bell — Re: lowest common denominator in electronic communication
- 507. Thomas Bell — Re: Why I'm an experimental poet
- 508. Aldon Nielsen — Re: Hello?
- 509. Thomas Bell — Re: Fri. night po wars, part VI
- 510. KENT JOHNSON — Speculations on identity

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- 511. William Marsh — Re: Hello?
- 512. Brian Lucas — Angle magazine
- 513. Brian Lucas — Angle again
- 514. Harold Rhenisch — Re: sublimating the ridiculous
- 515. Michael Magee — Re: ok, well maybe I am an experimental poet
- 516. Henry Gould — Re: Why I'm an experimental poet
- 517. Billy Little — hexperimental
- 518. Henry Gould — Re: Fri. night po wars, part VI
- 519. louis stroffolino — Re: Angle magazine
- 520. Miekal And — hexperimental
- 521. Robert Hale — Re: hexperimental
- 522. Christopher W. Alexander — Re: Hello? Kitty
- 523. William Burmeister Prod — Re: Hello?
- 524. Harold Rhenisch — experiment and poetry wars
- 525. henry gould — Re: experiment and poetry wars
- 526. KENT JOHNSON — Letter from South America
- 527. pritchpa — Re: Hello?
- 528. Bob Grumman — Re: Letter from South America
- 529. Joe Amato/Kass Fleisher — Re: Letter from South America
- 530. rsillima — Antimodernism and other institutions

- 531. Karen Kelley — Re: Letter from South America
- 532. Bob Grumman — Publication Announcements
- 533. KENT JOHNSON — Incredible

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- 534. Thomas Bell — Re: Fri. night po wars, part VI
- 535. Thomas Bell — Re: Hello? Kitty
- 536. Thomas Bell — Re: Letter from South America
- 537. KENT JOHNSON — Reply to Tom Bell (sadder and sadder)
- 538. KENT JOHNSON — I mean sabbatical
- 539. Karen and Trevor — hugh steinberg
- 540. Thomas Bell — Re: Reply to Tom Bell (sadder and sadder)
- 541. Alan Myouka Sondheim — SONG FOR EMPEROR JIMMU (see Nihong)
- 542. Miekal And — Happy Birthday Bern
- 543. KENT JOHNSON — Re: SONG FOR EMPEROR JIMMU (see Nihong)
- 544. Michael Magee — Re: experiment and poetry wars
- 545. Harold Rhenisch — Re: experiment and poetry wars
- 546. Laura Moriarty — sublime non
- 547. maz881 — New non

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- 548. David R. Israel — "you have a guest tonight"
- 549. rsillima — Spahn, Kutik, Spandrift
- 550. Michael Magee — Re: experiment and poetry wars
- 551. Matthew Kirschenbaum — update from the Blake Archive
- 552. Annie Finch — Claustrophic Convocation on Pattern
- 553. Michael J. Kelleher — NYC Reading at HERE
- 554. Harriet Zinnes — NYC Zinnes reading
- 555. Harold Rhenisch — Re: experiment and poetry wars
- 556. Harriet Zinnes — NYC Zinnes reading
- 557. k. lederer — Queries:
- 558. k. lederer — Re: Queries:
- 559. Richard Long — Re: Civil Society, or Knot?
- 560. Maryrose Larkin — Re: Queries:
- 561. Thomas Bell — Sadder and sadder to better to thank you and a reply
- 562. Charles Bernstein — Civil Society, or Knot?
- 563. Henry Gould — Re: Civil Society, or Knot?
- 564. Thomas Bell — Re: Spahn, Kutik, Spandrift
- 565. George Bowering — Re: sublimating the ridiculous

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- 566. Billy Little — contagion
- 567. David R. Israel — Re: Civil Society, or Knot?
- 568. R M Daley — Re: Queries:
- 569. k. lederer — Re: Queries:
- 570. rsillima — Banjo
- 571. KENT JOHNSON — Clarity
- 572. louis stroffolino — EMERGENCY
- 573. Alan Myouka Sondheim — NOISE news #7 (fwd)
- 574. Dale M Smith — Some Composed Responses
- 575. Scott Pound — Re: NYC Reading at HERE
- 576. Henry Gould — Re: Some Composed Responses
- 577. Harold Rhenisch — Re: sublimating the ridiculous
- 578. Thomas Bell — Re: Banjo
- 579. Jordan Davis — Raworth / Gardner @ Poetry City 3/5 7pm
- 580. Karen Kelley — Re: Some Composed Responses
- 581. david bromige — Dale and the b-c's

- 582. Jordan Davis — Graet expectAltons
- 583. Karen Kelley — Re: EMERGENCY
- 584. Henry Gould — Re: EMERGENCY
- 585. Robert Hale — Lacan on Poetry
- 586. Dale M Smith — Vizpo? Oh, no
- 587. Steve Tills — Re: Vizpo? Oh, no
- 588. Joe Amato/Kass Fleisher — news flash...
- 589. Gwyn McVay — Re: EMERGENCY
- 590. david bromige — a civil tongue
- 591. Joe Brennan — Re: Lacan on Poetry
- 592. David Kellogg — Re: Lacan on Poetry
- 593. Tosh — Re: Vizpo? Oh, no
- 594. Joe Ahearn — Re: Some Composed Responses
- 595. Don Summerhayes — a civil tongue
- 596. simon — Oklahoma query
- 597. Maria Damon — Re: contagion
- 598. henry — Re: EMERGENCY
- 599. Mark Weiss — Re: Lacan on Poetry
- 600. Harriet Zinnes — Re: Oklahoma query
- 601. David R. Israel — Fenton on Hughes' Plath
- 602. Daniel Zimmerman — Re: Lacan on Poetry
- 603. Joe Brennan — Re: Lacan on Poetry
- 604. George Bowering — Re: Banjo
- 605. George Bowering — Re: Vizpo? Oh, no
- 606. George Bowering — Re: Why I'm an experimental poet

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- 607. Kenneth Sherwood — Announcing: LOCAL EFFECTS -- For Robert Creeley (RIF/T 06)
- 608. maz881 — Re: Civil Society, or Knot
- 609. Mark Weiss — Re: Lacan on Poetry
- 610. Miekal And — Re: ripblinkly broken skyword
- 611. Miekal And — Why poet funny, no?
- 612. Miekal And — [FLASHFORWARD] Writing on the wall or where has the vispo rant gone?
- 613. Pierre Joris — Re: Fenton on Hughes' Plath
- 614. Daniel Carter — ripblinkly broken skyword
- 615. Sylvester Pollet — Re: Oklahoma query
- 616. Mark Prejsnar — Re: news flash...
- 617. Joe Amato/Kass Fleisher — Re: news flash...
- 618. Pierre Joris — [Fwd: Martha Gellhorn obit]
- 619. Joe Brennan — Re: Lacan on Poetry
- 620. Harold Rhenisch — Re: Fenton on Hughes' Plath
- 621. Harold Rhenisch — Re: Why poet funny, no?
- 622. Christopher W. Alexander — Re: Why poet funny, no?
- 623. Christopher W. Alexander — Re: Dale and the b-c's
- 624. Pierre Joris — Re: Lacan on Poetry/oops
- 625. Joe Brennan — Re: Lacan on Poetry/oops
- 626. Mark Weiss — Re: Oklahoma query
- 627. Joe Brennan — Re: Vizpo? Oh, no
- 628. MAYHEW — Why I'm an experimental poet, part 57
- 629. k. lederer — Queries of a different stripe--
- 630. louis stroffolino — RANSOM STROFFOLINO READING
- 631. Aldon Nielsen — Re: curiouser and curiouser
- 632. Mark Weiss — Re: Lacan on Poetry/oops
- 633. dbkk — Dahlen/Gudath at SPT
- 634. Carolyn Koo — No Roses Review
- 635. Judy Roitman — address query

- 636. d powell — Re: curiouser and curiouser
- 637. Judy Roitman — Ken Irby
- 638. Poetics List — Adjunct Faculty Congress
- 639. Dr. Joshua McKinney — Re: No Roses Review
- 640. Aldon Nielsen — Re: Adjunct Faculty Congress
- 641. Aldon Nielsen — Re: Ken Irby
- 642. Joe Brennan — Re: Lacan on Poetry/oops
- 643. Steve Tills — Re: Ken Irby
- 644. charssmith — Re: Ken Irby
- 645. Aldon Nielsen — Re: Ken Irby
- 646. charssmith — Re: Ken Irby
- 647. Pierre Joris — Re: Ken Irby
- 648. Pierre Joris — Re: Fenton on Hughes' Plath
- 649. George Bowering — Re: Vizpo? Oh, no
- 650. Michael McColl — Re: Fenton on Hughes' Plath
- 651. Michael McColl — Re: Fenton on Hughes' Plath

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- 652. Michael McColl — Hughes on Plath
- 653. Laurie Schneider/Crag Hill — Vizpo, Oh no!
- 654. Kali Tal — Ted, Sylvia and Robin Morgan
- 655. k. lederer — Re: No Roses Review
- 656. k. lederer — Re: No Roses Review
- 657. dbuuck — Announcing tripwire: a journal of poetics
- 658. Mark Baker — Re: Hughes on Plath
- 659. Pierre Joris — ej
- 660. Miekal And — treeblood
- 661. sylvester pollet — Re: Ken Irby
- 662. robert drake — Chiapas mail art show (forward)
- 663. Miekal And — Re: Kenneth Irby, where to begin?
- 664. Pierre Joris — Re: Fenton on Hughes' Plath
- 665. James Finnegan — Re: Hughes' Crow
- 666. Pierre Joris — Re: ej
- 667. Pierre Joris — Re: Ted, Sylvia & Phil
- 668. James Finnegan — Re: Ted, Sylvia & Phil
- 669. Suzanne Burns — Re: Fenton on Hughes' Plath
- 670. Herb Levy — Re: Ted, Sylvia & Phil
- 671. Suzanne Burns — Re: Hughes on Plath
- 672. pritchpa — Re: Dahlen query
- 673. louis stroffolino — Re: Hughes' Crow
- 674. groberts — Re: Why I'm an experimental poet, part 57
- 675. William Burmeister Prod — Re: Why poet funny, no?
- 676. MAYHEW — Tis better to be vile than vile esteemd
- 677. Maria Damon — Re: Adjunct Faculty Congress
- 678. Gary Sullivan — HUGHES/PLATH
- 679. Dale M Smith — Re: Ted, Sylvia & Phil
- 680. k. lederer — Re: Hughes on Plath
- 681. Keston Sutherland — venom context
- 682. Harold Rhenisch — Re: Ted, Sylvia & Phil
- 683. Maria Damon — Re: Hughes on Plath
- 684. Maria Damon — Re: Ken Irby
- 685. Brian McHale — Re: Dark, archetypal Ted
- 686. dbkk — dead frog's legs touched by electrodes
- 687. Maryrose Larkin — Re: Ken Irby
- 688. William Burmeister Prod — Re: Ted, Sylvia & Phil
- 689. Michael Franco — GERRIT LANSING Greetings and Reading

- 690. David Zauhar — Kenneth Irby, where to begin?
- 691. Michael McColl — Re: Fenton on Hughes' Plath
- 692. Michael McColl — Re: dead frog's legs touched by electrodes
- 693. Judy Roitman — Re: dead frog's legs touched by electrodes
- 694. Fred Muratori — Vile, Nasty Animals
- 695. Suzanne Burns — Re: Hughes on Plath
- 696. James Finnegan — Re: Dark, archetypal Ted
- 697. Robert Zamsky — Re: Lacan on Poetry/oops
- 698. James Finnegan — Re: Ted, Sylvia & Phil
- 699. Charles Weigl — Re: Hughes on Plath
- 700. David Zauhar — Re: Kenneth Irby, where to begin?
- 701. Harold Rhenisch — turf wars
- 702. Henry Gould — crow
- 703. MAYHEW — poetics seminar
- 704. Bob Grumman — Re: Vile, Nasty Animals
- 705. George Bowering — Re: Vizpo, Oh no!
- 706. David Zauhar — Hughes, Plath, Polemics
- 707. charssmith — Irby Checklist
- 708. James Finnegan — Re: the "project"
- 709. Maria Damon — Re: Dark, archetypal Ted
- 710. Rebecca Weldon Sithiwong — GANG OF FOUR
- 711. Schuchat Simon — Re: venom context
- 712. Maria Damon — kirby
- 713. Thomas Bell — Re: Ted, Sylvia & Phil

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- 714. R M Daley — harry carey's death
- 715. david bromige — tis better to be vile than vile esteem'd
- 716. Marjorie Perloff — Re: Plath and Hughes
- 717. Mark Baker — Re: dead frog's legs touched by electrodes
- 718. Mark Weiss — Re: Lacan on Poetry/oops
- 719. David Israel — Re: Ted, Sylvia & Phil
- 720. Alan Myouka Sondheim — NIKUKO RAGES (fwd)
- 721. david bromige — KEN IRBY HIS BOOKS
- 722. MAYHEW — Hughes, Irby
- 723. Billy Little — baraka sez
- 724. Suzanne Burns — Re: Plath and Hughes
- 725. Judy Roitman — Re: the "project"
- 726. Billy Little — waistland, put a cawk in it
- 727. Douglas — Re: Irby Checklist
- 728. Douglas Barbour — Re: Hughes using Plath for?
- 729. Joe Amato/Kass Fleisher — Re: turf wars
- 730. joel lewis — hughes,plath & larkin
- 731. jarnot — sharma & shapiro reading
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- 733. louis stroffolino — Re: Plath and Hughes
- 734. Maria Damon — Re: baraka sez
- 735. Maria Damon — Re: dead frog's legs touched by electrodes
- 736. Maria Damon — Re: crow
- 737. Suzanne Burns — Re: the "project"
- 738. dbkk — I and you
- 739. k. lederer — Re: Plath and Hughes
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- 741. Aldon Nielsen — Re: Ted, Sylvia & Phil; Larkin's life sins
- 742. Laura Moriarty — Bellamy, Burger, & Jarnot
- 743. Mark Weiss — Re: Plath and Hughes

- 744. David Israel — Re: hi-gloss
- 745. Gwyn McVay — Re: Plath and Hughes
- 746. Mark Weiss — Re: Plath and Hughes
- 747. Joe Brennan — Re: Lacan on Poetry
- 748. David Israel — Re: Bellamy, Burger, & Jarnot / Loden (etc.)
- 749. k. lederer — Re: Plath and Hughes
- 750. k. lederer — Re: Plath and Hughes
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- 755. Peter Balestrieri — Tired?
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- 757. Susan Schultz — Re: Plath and Hughes
- 758. Joe Ahearn — Re: Tis better to be vile than vile esteemd
- 759. Karen Kelley — Re: Plath and Hughes
- 760. Blaise Cirelli — Watten - FRAME
- 761. Kevin Varrone — Philly Reading
- 762. Maria Damon — Re: hi-gloss
- 763. Maria Damon — Re: Plath and Hughes

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- 764. Laurie Schneider/Crag Hill — Re: POETICS Digest - 17 Feb 1998 to 18 Feb 1998
- 765. Thomas Bell — Re: Plath and Hughes and Freud and Jung
- 766. Rebecca Weldon Sithiwong — Hughes
- 767. Robert Hale — TROPE OF DARKNESS and adjectives
- 768. George Bowering — Re: crow
- 769. Tom Beckett — "stops"
- 770. Henry Gould — Re: Plath and Hughes
- 771. Marcella Durand — Re: GANG OF FOUR
- 772. linda russo — Tender buttons query
- 773. linda russo — Re: tender buttons q.
- 774. Gary Sullivan — Reply to Katy Lederer
- 775. Christopher W. Alexander — Re: Tired?
- 776. k. lederer — Re: poet-heroes & suicide
- 777. Robert Hale — Re: poet-heroes & suicide
- 778. Judy Roitman — Re: "stops"
- 779. d powell — Re: Reply to Katy Lederer
- 780. Elizabeth Hatmaker — Re: poet-heroes & suicide
- 781. Judy Roitman — Re: poet-heroes & suicide
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- 783. pritchpa — Re: poet-heroes & suicide
- 784. Jordan Davis — stops
- 785. Keston Sutherland — Re: Reply to Katy Lederer
- 786. Billy Little — suicide
- 787. david bromige — poet suicides
- 788. Gabriel Gudding — SYCAMORE REVIEW
- 789. Miekal And — Re: "stops"
- 790. david bromige — p s to suicide
- 791. Gabriel Gudding — Re: poet-heroes & suicide
- 792. Miekal And — f stanford website?
- 793. k. lederer — Re: Reply to Katy Lederer
- 794. Miekal And — pose / poise
- 795. Joe Amato/Kass Fleisher — Re: poet-heroes & suicide
- 796. Mark Prejsnar — tabula rattled
- 797. Henry Gould — query LVNG

- 798. Henry Gould — Re: poet suicides
- 799. J. Kuszai — several unrelated topics
- 800. Rachel Loden — Re: poet-heroes & suicide
- 801. sylvester pollet — poetics of suicide
- 802. raea100900 — Re: Tender buttons query
- 803. Christopher W. Alexander — Re: "stops"
- 804. Christopher W. Alexander — it's the water
- 805. k. lederer — Re: Jorie Graham
- 806. Mark Weiss — poet-heroes, suicide and women's lot
- 807. d powell — Re: enough about Graham
- 808. Keston Sutherland — Re: poetics of suicide
- 809. Tom Beckett — Re: "stops"
- 810. Thomas Bell — Re: "stops"
- 811. rsillima — Most appalling quote of the week
- 812. Aviva Wesley Vogel — Jorie Graham Experimental?
- 813. Emma Bernstein — Re: Plath and Hughes
- 814. Schuchat Simon — Re: poet suicides
- 815. Aviva Wesley Vogel — Jorie, Idealism, Monistic Idealism, Plato, Buddhism...
- 816. Aviva Wesley Vogel — Guardian Angel of the Swarm
- 817. Henry Gould — Re: Jorie Graham
- 818. Gwyn McVay — Other stealth bombs?
- 819. Henry Gould — Re: "stops"
- 820. Poetics List Administration — silly fact No. 215
- 821. Joe Brennan — Re: suicide
- 822. Henry Gould — Re: Jorie Graham Experimental?
- 823. Tom Beckett — Re: suicide
- 824. Henry Gould — Re: poet suicides
- 825. Henry Gould — plath/hughes etc.

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- 826. Maria Damon — Re: poet-heroes, suicide and women's lot
- 827. Henry Gould — Spring in Harlorn Nint
- 828. Mark Weiss — Re: poet-heroes, suicide and women's lot
- 829. David Israel — "stops" & "nonstop"
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- 831. Suzanne Burns — Re: Jorie Graham
- 832. Tim Wood — Re: Rasula & Jorie Graham & Kostelanetz
- 833. Randy Prunty — Re: Jorie Graham Experimental?
- 834. Joe Amato/Kass Fleisher — Re: Plath and Hughes
- 835. Joe Brennan — Re: poet-heroes & suicide
- 836. Maria Damon — Re: Jorie Graham Experimental?
- 837. Maria Damon — Re: poet-heroes, suicide and women's lot
- 838. Maria Damon — Re: Rasula & Jorie Graham & Kostelanetz
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- 840. Joe Amato/Kass Fleisher — Re: poet-heroes & suicide
- 841. Don Byrd — Rasula & Jorie Graham & Kostelanetz
- 842. Aviva Wesley Vogel — Re: Jorie Graham Experimental?
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- 844. k. lederer — Re: Jorie Graham Experimental?
- 845. Tom Beckett — depression, suicide
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- 847. Jordan Davis — Building a bridge to the 21st c.
- 848. Karen Kelley — Re: depression, suicide
- 849. david bromige — the suicide thread
- 850. Thomas Bell — Re: poet suicides
- 851. Joe Brennan — Re: depression, suicide

- 852. Joel Felix — Re: query LVNG and address query
- 853. Steve Tills — Re: depression,suicide
- 854. Douglas Barbour — Re: Hughes? Well...
- 855. B. Taylor — I was wondering...
- 856. Henry Gould — Re: depression,suicide
- 857. Henry Gould — query : Iraq
- 858. Tom Beckett — acker/scalapino

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- 859. Thomas Bell — Re: Poetry and Depression
- 860. Thomas Bell — (no subject)
- 861. louis stroffolino — Re: acker/scalapino
- 862. Don Byrd — Poetry and Depression
- 863. George Bowering — Re: Plath
- 864. Mark Baker — Re: Building a bridge to the 21st c.
- 865. Rebecca Weldon Sithiwong — Hughes2
- 866. L.MacMahon and T.R.Healy — Re: Jorie Graham Experimental?
- 867. Daniel Zimmerman — Re: query : Iraq
- 868. Joe Ahearn — Re: Poetry and Depression
- 869. rsillima — Temporary canons
- 870. Tom Beckett — acker/scalapino cont.
- 871. kim dawn — Deadly girl: A Place to SLeep
- 872. Karen Kelley — Re: acker/scalapino cont.
- 873. Joseph Lease — Re: Iraq and depression
- 874. Jordan Davis — give me your martha, your billy, your jorie masses
- 875. Don Byrd — Re: Poetry and Depression
- 876. P.Standard Schaefer — Re: query : Iraq
- 877. Lisa Samuels — Re: Poetry and Depression
- 878. Michael McColl — Re: Poetry and Depression
- 879. Annie Finch — writers&depression, & Graham
- 880. dbkk — (no subject)
- 881. david bromige — Iraq and depression
- 882. Steve Tills — Re: Poetry and Depression
- 883. Tim Wood — Re: Iraq and depression
- 884. Don Wellman — Re: Poetry and Depression
- 885. Poetics List — Irish Poetry Conference Announcement (fwrdr)
- 886. Joe Amato/Kass Fleisher — pmc...
- 887. Joe Brennan — Re: Iraq and depression
- 888. Joe Ahearn — Re: Poetry and Depression
- 889. Joe Ahearn — Re: Iraq and depression
- 890. Daniel Zimmerman — Re: Iraq and depression
- 891. Karen Kelley — Re: Poetry and Depression
- 892. Michael McColl — Re: Poetry and Depression
- 893. maz881 — Re: poet-heroes, suicide and women's lot
- 894. Tom Beckett — Re: Acker/Scalapino
- 895. Joel Felix — For Ronald Johnson
- 896. Mark Weiss — Suicide
- 897. George Bowering — Re: Iraq and depression
- 898. Rodrigo Toscano — Re: Iraq and depression
- 899. Tom Beckett — Re: Iraq and depression

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- 900. Don Byrd — Re: Temporary canons
- 901. k. lederer — Queries again...
- 902. Joe Ahearn — Re: Suicide
- 903. david bromige — eliza mcgrand
- 904. Tom Beckett — back issue of The Difficulties

- 905. Henry Gould — Re: query : Iraq
- 906. sylvester pollet — Re: eliza mcgrand
- 907. W. Freind — Re: back issue of The Difficulties
- 908. Mark Prejsnar — Re: enough about Graham
- 909. Mark Wallace — Doug Henwood's WALL STREET
- 910. Mark Prejsnar — Re: Other stealth bombs?
- 911. daniel bouchard — Re: Iraq and depression
- 912. Gary Sullivan — Most Appalling Post of the Week
- 913. Mark Prejsnar — Re: poet-heroes, suicide and women's lot
- 914. Douglas Barbour — Re: Temporary canons
- 915. Mark Wallace — libraries with Amiri Baraka materials?
- 916. David Kellogg — Re: Temporary canons/New Poetry redux
- 917. Annie Finch — Flicks at Ficke
- 918. Mark Prejsnar — Re: Iraq and depression
- 919. Judy Roitman — Re: Poetry and Depression
- 920. Jeff Hansen — (no subject)
- 921. r.drake — despe rate to see my name up in lites!
- 922. David Golumbia — Re: Doug Henwood's WALL STREET
- 923. Mark Prejsnar — Re: Doug Henwood's WALL STREET
- 924. Judy Roitman — Re: Iraq and depression
- 925. Gary Sullivan — "The world is blood-hot and personal"
- 926. Mark Leahy — scalapino, art and poetry
- 927. Joe Amato/Kass Fleisher — Re: Temporary canons/New Poetry redux
- 928. Tom Beckett — Re: back issue of The Difficulties
- 929. David Zauhar — Stein in popculture, again
- 930. Mark Weiss — Re: poet-heroes, suicide and women's lot
- 931. Dale M Smith — despe rate to see my name up in lites!
- 932. sylvester pollet — Re: despe rate to see my name up in lites!
- 933. Christopher W. Alexander — business observer
- 934. Don Byrd — Re: Doug Henwood's WALL STREET
- 935. Hilton Manfred Obenzinger — Re: Iraq and depression
- 936. Keston Sutherland — Merry February
- 937. Laura Moriarty — Re: Acker/Scalapino
- 938. MAYHEW — Stein in pop culture
- 939. d powell — Re: Jorie Graham Experimental?
- 940. Danny Huppatz — Re: Acker/Scalapino
- 941. Schuchat Simon — Re: despe rate to see my name up in lites!
- 942. George Hartley — George Hartley address & #
- 943. Aviva Wesley Vogel — Re: writers&depression, & Graham
- 944. Safdie Joseph — Re: WALL STREET, Iraq, etc.
- 945. Pierre Joris — Re: three unrelated queries and a note on poetic depression
- 946. Stephen Cope — three unrelated queries and a note on poetic depression
- 947. Steve Shoemaker — Re: Doug Henwood's WALL STREET
- 948. Erin Moure — Re: Iraq

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- 949. groberts — Palm at the end of the Desert Storm
- 950. Susan Clark — missing person
- 951. Tom Beckett — Silliman Difficulties
- 952. rsillima — The Pillow Book
- 953. Tom Beckett — Re: Acker/Scalapino
- 954. Don Wellman — Re: three unrelated queries and a note on poetic depression
- 955. Burt Kimmelman — Re: The Pillow Book
- 956. Alan Myouka Sondheim — Forwarded mail.... NIKUKO EDUCATES
- 957. Joe Amato/Kass Fleisher — Re: Temporary canons/New Poetry redux
- 958. Jacques Debrot — Re: Lazer/experiment/tradition

- 959. Sylvester Pollet — Tagliabue Reading
- 960. david bromige — Blake's "London"
- 961. david bromige — oops on Blake's "London"
- 962. Christopher W. Alexander — (Fwd) call for subs
- 963. pritchpa — Re: Lazer/experiment/tradition
- 964. MAYHEW — Lazer/experiment/tradition
- 965. Harold Rhenisch — good-bye
- 966. Laura Moriarty — Smith & Pritchett
- 967. Burt Hatlen — Robert Duncan at the MLA
- 968. shemurph — Address Request
- 969. Joe Amato/Kass Fleisher — disturbing news...
- 970. Poetics List — Chloroform (announcement)
- 971. Rachel Levitsky — Re: Poetry and Depression
- 972. charssmith — Re: Palm at the end of the Desert Storm
- 973. Don Byrd — Re: GERRIT LANSING Greetings and Reading
- 974. William Burmeister Prod — Re: The Pillow Book
- 975. pritchpa — Re: Palm at the end of the Desert Storm
- 976. Tom Beckett — Vaudeville without Organs
- 977. Tom Beckett — scalapino/acker musicked
- 978. Aldon Nielsen — Re: the times of the hero
- 979. George Hartley — Re: Stein in pop culture
- 980. George Hartley — oops!
- 981. Aldon Nielsen — Re: the times of the hero
- 982. Aldon Nielsen — disturbing news
- 983. Karen Kelley — Re: The Pillow Book
- 984. Kenneth Goldsmith — UbuWeb Concrete, Visual, & Sound Poetry Update
- 985. Karen and Trevor — Erica Hunt

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- 986. dbkk — Retallack, Swensen, Retallack at SPT
- 987. Steve Tills — Re: Poetry and Depression
- 988. Susan Schultz — Re: Poetry and Depression
- 989. Tom Beckett — pillow book
- 990. Annie Finch — Graham review
- 991. Mark Prejsnar — slaughter under the palms
- 992. Judy Roitman — Re: disturbing news
- 993. Judy Roitman — Re: Poetry and Depression
- 994. sylvester pollet — Henny Youngman
- 995. MAYHEW — Youngman and a query
- 996. Annie Finch — ALERT - Petition to save Endangered Species!
- 997. George Thompson — Re: Youngman and a query
- 998. Tom Beckett — Re: Henny Youngman
- 999. Randy Prunty — Re: dichten
- 1000. David R. Israel — poets-in-residence
- 1001. Steve Tills — Re: Poetry and Depression
- 1002. Pritchett,Patrick — Re: Youngman and a query
- 1003. Dale M Smith — Youngman and a query
- 1004. MAYHEW — dichten condensare
- 1005. Henry Gould — Re: Youngman and a query
- 1006. Michael Magee — Re: Henny Youngman
- 1007. Pritchett,Patrick — Re: Youngman and a query
- 1008. Mark Prejsnar — Re: poets-in-residence
- 1009. Mark Prejsnar — Re: Pound and a quandry
- 1010. Gwyn McVay — Re: Youngman and a query
- 1011. sylvester pollet — Re: dichten condensare
- 1012. Steve Tills — Farmer, Bromige, Gizzi at Cinnabar, March 9th

- 1013. david bromige — Dichten Condensare
- 1014. laura and jeff — hello
- 1015. david bromige — Dichten Condensare, chap.II
- 1016. George Thompson — Re: Dichten Condensare
- 1017. david bromige — ep's frigidaire
- 1018. Don Wellman — Re: Youngman and a query
- 1019. Safdie Joseph — Re: Query

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- 1020. Schuchat Simon — Re: ep's frigidaire
- 1021. Dean A. Brink — Interpoetics - Call for submissions
- 1022. Michel Delville — Pound: dichten = condensare?
- 1023. Tom Beckett — pound
- 1024. henry — Re: Pound: dichten = condensare?
- 1025. Pat Boran — Re: poets-in-residence
- 1026. Tom Beckett — Re: poets-in-residence
- 1027. Tom Beckett — query
- 1028. Hilton Manfred Obenzinger — Re: poets-in-residence
- 1029. William Burmeister Prod — Re: Pound: dichten = condensare?
- 1030. david bromige — Dicht-ung- = condensare
- 1031. MAYHEW — take my poetics, please
- 1032. Aldon Nielsen — current reading
- 1033. Christina Fairbank Chirot — Re: Dicht-ung- = condensare
- 1034. Sylvester Pollet — Re: Dicht-ung- = condensare
- 1035. Poetics List Administration — Re: Pound: dichten = condensare?
- 1036. Joe Amato/Kass Fleisher — Re: current reading
- 1037. Joe Amato/Kass Fleisher — disturbing news
- 1038. Maria Damon — Re: depression, suicide
- 1039. Maria Damon — Re: The Pillow Book
- 1040. henry gould — condens.
- 1041. Maria Damon — Re: three unrelated queries and a note on poetic depression

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- 1042. Miekal And — +db
- 1043. Miekal And — today's pangram
- 1044. Miekal And — read anagram
- 1045. Douglas — new Sun & Moon Press titles
- 1046. Burt Kimmelman — Re: The Pillow Book
- 1047. TBeck131 — Re: +db
- 1048. Peter Balestrieri — Please SEND for ME Now!
- 1049. Laura Moriarty — Re: +db +lc +je
- 1050. Joe Amato/Kass Fleisher — begging yr pardons...
- 1051. Maria Damon — YO kristin prevallet, or, address query
- 1052. Keston Sutherland — bit/scrap
- 1053. Steve Tills — Re: +db
- 1054. Miekal And — tomorrow's anagram
- 1055. Christina Fairbank Chirot — Re: today's anagram
- 1056. Miekal And — Authorized
- 1057. Michael Heller — Re: Pound and ideograms
- 1058. TBeck131 — Re: +db +lc +je
- 1059. CharSSmith — Re: Susan Howe
- 1060. ScoutEW — Re: today's anagram/tagstagstags
- 1061. TBeck131 — single author issues
- 1062. Steve Tills — Re: single author issues
- 1063. CharSSmith — Re: single author issues
- 1064. Michael J. Kelleher — Re: single author issues
- 1065. TBeck131 — Re: single author issues

- 1066. robert drake — Re: today's anagram/tagstagstags
- 1067. CharSSmith — Re: single author issues, ps
- 1068. Schuchat Simon — Re: single author issues
- 1069. Karen Kelley — Pillow Book
- 1070. Gabriel Gudding — Re: single author issues & SYC REV
- 1071. Tosh — Printers?
- 1072. Karen Kelley — sp?
- 1073. David Zauhar — You Too Can Edit a LitMag (or can you?)
- 1074. Laura Moriarty — Re: single author issues
- 1075. Steven Marks — Re: Printers?
- 1076. Steven Marks — Re: You Too Can Edit a LitMag (or can you?)

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- 1077. TBeck131 — again with the single author issues already
- 1078. Joel Kuszai — Re: single author issues
- 1079. Michel Delville — Pound's Dichtung
- 1080. Bob Grumman — Re: single author issues
- 1081. George Thompson — Re: Pound's Dichtung
- 1082. Brian Clements — Re: Printers?
- 1083. TBeck131 — more on mags,etc.
- 1084. Miekal And — this is the hour of the web
- 1085. Miekal And — Re: Critical issues
- 1086. Miekal And — The Critical Issue
- 1087. rsillima — Department Stores & Poets
- 1088. Douglas — Re: Printers?
- 1089. rsillima — Critical issues
- 1090. Joel Kuszai — Re: Critical issues
- 1091. Eryque Gleason — National Adjunct Congress in NYC (fwd)
- 1092. Michael J. Kelleher — Re: You Too Can Edit a LitMag (or can you?)
- 1093. Maria Damon — Re: more on mags,etc.
- 1094. Bob Grumman — Re: Critical issues
- 1095. Mark Weiss — Re: Printers?
- 1096. Judy Roitman — Ko Un
- 1097. louis stroffolino — QUERIES
- 1098. Hilton Manfred Obenzinger — Re: Department Stores & Poets
- 1099. Hilton Manfred Obenzinger — Re: Department Stores & Poets
- 1100. Laura Moriarty — Re: Critical issues
- 1101. TBeck131 — Re: Critical issues
- 1102. Steve Tills — Re: The Critical Issue
- 1103. Joe Ahearn — call for submissions
- 1104. Joel Kuszai — critical issues/what do we do
- 1105. TBeck131 — smack
- 1106. TBeck131 — Re: this is the hour of the web
- 1107. sylvester pollet — Re: You Too Can Edit a LitMag (or can you?)
- 1108. sylvester pollet — Re: You Too Can Edit a LitMag (or can you?)
- 1109. Bob Grumman — Re: critical issues/what do we do
- 1110. Aldon Nielsen — shingle author tissues
- 1111. Michael J. Kelleher — e-(name of topic here)
- 1112. Steven Marks — Re: Printers?
- 1113. Dean Taciuch — web and various ways
- 1114. Scott Pound — Re: Authorized

1. **Charles Weigl**

Re: I, Nikuko, am Listening to Buffalo Daughter

Sat 31 Jan 1998

nikuko:

brush your teeth, dr. moooooog.

yours,

charles

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2. **George Bowering**

Re: As-Am poetics

Sun 1 Feb 1998

Roy Kiyooka's *_Mothertalk_*, edited by Daphne marlatt, is indeed published by NeWest. #201, 8540--109th Street, Edmonton, Alberta, T6G 1E6.

It's \$16.95 Cdn.

George Bowering.

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

fax: [REDACTED]

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3. **bertha**

DEAD WOMEN POETS OF NYC & NYSTATE

Sun 1 Feb 1998

I'm working on a project involving dead women poets of NYC and NYState and would appreciate any names, locales, works, etc. (they don't all have to be Elizabeth Bishop & Marianne Moore). Reply can be sent to UB poetics or [REDACTED]. Thanks.

Bertha Rogers
Editor, Bright Hill Press

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4. **Pierre Joris**
Re: Indie Critics
Sun 1 Feb 1998

Henry Gould wrote:

*.... I would think you'd
be looking for an indi critic too - somebody with taste, judgement,
freedom, and an artistic instinct.*

I was going to rib you: how can someone with taste, judgment, freedom and an artistic instinct be independent? The deck's loaded! But then I remembered that we are family -par-alliance -- your Mandelstam being brother to my Celan, the poet who has been riding me for 30 years now & who's work gives a yardstick measure re poems-vs.-gab: Celan left slightly under a 1000 poems (oh, let's be pedantic: 974 exactly) while the Collected Prose (2 speeches/poetic statements, an early intro to a painter, a philosophical fiction & a few very small statements in answer to queries) comes to 55 pages -- if you use a largish font. There is also some 1000 pages of poetry translated into German from half a dozen

languages: this work and the choice of poets PC chose to translate I take as a more real critical evaluation of poetry thna any number of crit-gab tomes. And, btw, it is always in Celan's translation that I read Mandelstam, not having Russian. -- Pierre

--

=====

pierre joris 6 madison place albany ny 12202
tel/fax [REDACTED] email: [REDACTED]
<http://www.albany.edu/~joris/>

"What often prevents us from giving ourselves over to
a single vice is that we have several of them."

— La Rochefoucauld

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5. **Pierre Joris**
Re: snip
Sun 1 Feb 1998

k. lederer wrote:

It's funny--

My father always told me that "the best work" in English is often

surprisingly full of one-syllable words--Shakespeare, Dickinson, Whitman, &&&. I wonder with writing like this (which I like)--what to make of that opinion--I suppose that "innovative" methodologies in poetry have basically razed all notions of key poetic strategies--razed, theoretically, the notion of "great works"--

Katy -- much of that thinking goes back to Pound, I believe, trying in the early part of the century to clean out the Augian stables of Victorian/ Edwardian poetry & their superabundance of mellifluous multisyllabic latinate words by replacing them with sharp brief anglo-saxon ones. The revenge of the latins of course came in the seventies when frog-theory hopped the Atlantic Pond and nested on the lotus leaves of US academia. -- Pierre

--

=====

pierre joris 6 madison place albany ny 12202
tel/fax [REDACTED] email: [REDACTED]
<http://www.albany.edu/~joris/>

"What often prevents us from giving ourselves over to a single vice is that we have several of them."

— La Rochefoucauld

=====

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6. **henry gould** ***Re: Indie Critics***

Sun 1 Feb 1998

Mandelstam said he wrote not for his contemporaries but for the unknown interlocutor of the future; I think you could say the same for Celan. They wrote poetry for Poetry. I can imagine a person out there who writes criticism for Poetry. The original framers of a subjective set of standards (OM's, Celan's yardstick) may only be ghosts; but this imaginary critic will understand Criticism itself as a genre with certain laws of its own, the first being "keep your distance".

I realize my past few posts on this thread have set up an unrealistic ideal, and that poets have every right to be critics too, and scholars will probably write the best reviews, and critics have every natural right to review the work that

really GRABS them. But at the core should be the fresh air of independent judgement, or critical self-respect. We should listen for those chimes of freedom & try to bring them forward, rather than march on in the endless grind of marginal/mainstream, tradition/experiment, my group/their group, your hustle/my failure, my publish/your tenure, tendentious business as usual. Criticism can be an art form too, if and when it's brave enough to look at poetry as something other than a career or a kind of translated politics. "Man shall not live by bread alone but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God." - Henry Gould

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7. **Joe Brennan**

Re: Indie Critics

Sun 1 Feb 1998

In a message dated 98-02-01 09:54:00 EST, you write:

<< But at the core should be the fresh air of independent judgement, or critical self-respect. We should listen for those chimes of freedom & try to bring them forward, rather than march on in the endless grind of marginal/mainstream, tradition/experiment, my group/their group, your hustle/my failure, my publish/your tenure, tendentious business as usual. Criticism can be an art form too, if and when it's brave enough to look at poetry as something other than a career or a kind of translated politics. "Man shall not live by bread alone but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God." >>

Henry, I couldn't agree with you more. However, the program you sketch out is as political as it gets; the difficulties arise, as I'm sure you know, whenever one attempts to determine which god is saying what.

Joe Brennan

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8. **Poetics List**

Welcome Message (FYI)

Sun 1 Feb 1998

Rev. 2-1-98

(This message is sent out to all new and renewing subscribers and it is sent out to the list at the beginning of every month)

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

Postal Address: 438 Clemens Hall, SUNY, Buffalo, NY 14260

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

____ Contents _____

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
(), Loss PequeñoGlazier
(), and Joel Kuszai ().

Above the world-weary horizons
New obstacles for exchange arise
Or unfold, O ye postmasters!

1. About the Poetics List

The Poetics List was founded in late 1993 with the epigraph above.

There are presently almost 600 subscribers.

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 relatively 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. **We also encourage subscribers to post information on publications and reading series that they have coordinated, edited, published, or in which they appear (see section 9 below).** (THIS MEANS *YOU*).

Please keep in mind that all posts go out immediately to all subscribers, and become part of an on-line archive. *Posting to Poetics is a form of publication, not personal communication.* Participants are asked to exercise caution before posting messages! While spontaneity of response may seem the very heart of the list at its best, it also has the darker side of circulating ideas that have not been well considered (or considered by another reader -- editor or friend). Given the nature of the medium, subscribers do well to maintain some skepticism when reading the list and, where possible, to try to avoid taking what may be something close to a spontaneous comment made in the heat of exchange as if it were a revised or edited essay ("Let the Reader Beware!").

The "list owner" of Poetics is Charles Bernstein. Joel Kuszai is list manager. For subscription information contact us at

██████████.

2. Subscriptions

Subscriptions to Poetics are free of charge. But we ask that you subscribe with your real name and we reserve the right to request additional information, including address and phone number. All subscription information you supply will remain confidential.

message, with no subject 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. Please allow several days for your new or re-subscription to take effect.

*

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 may be able to 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.

In general, if a Poetics message is bounced from your account, your subscription to Poetics will be temporarily suspended. If this happens, simply resubscribe to the list in the normal manner, once your account problem has been resolved.

All questions about subscriptions, whether about an individual subscription or subscription policy, should be addressed to the list's administrative address: [REDACTED]. Please note that it may take up to ten days, or more, for us to reply to messages.

3. Cautions

Please do not post to the list personal or backchannel correspondence, or other unpublished material, without the express permission of the author. Copyright for all material posted on Poetics remains with the author; material from this list and its archive may not be reproduced without the author's permission, beyond the standard rights accorded by "fair use".

The Poetics List has a 50 message daily limit. If more than 50 messages are received, the listserver will automatically hold those additional messages until the list is manually unlocked, usually the following day. While it is difficult to prescribe a set limit on the number of daily, weekly, or monthly posts for any

subscriber, please keep this limit in mind. If you plan to respond to multiple threads, it is generally preferable to consolidate your reply into one message. While relevant excerpts from a post to which you are responding may usefully be appended to your reply, please do not include in your new post the whole text of a long previously posted message.

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. Brief reviews of poetry events and publications are always welcome. (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, or thank someone for posting something you requested, please send the request or comment to the individual backchannel, not to the whole list.

4. Digest Option

The Listserve program gives you the option to receive all the posted Poetics message each day as a single message. 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 "██████████"

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 e-mail message 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.

or try:

review POETICS by name

review POETICS by country

which will give you the list alphabetically by name or a flawed list by country (since all ".com" and ".net"s are counted as US)

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 Pequeño 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 will save files in Rich Text Format (.rtf) this is also highly desirable

Send us extended information on new publications (including any back cover copy and sample poems) as well as complete catalogs/backlists (including excerpts from reviews, sample poems, etc.). Be sure to include full information for ordering--including prices and addresses and phone numbers both of the press and any distributors.

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

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

END OF POETICS LIST WELCOME

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9. **Douglas Barbour**

Re: Kiyooka's _Mothertalk_

Sun 1 Feb 1998

Roy Kiyooka's _Mothertalk: Life Stories of Mary Kiyoshi Kiyooka_ is available from NeWest Press (we were very proud to publish this stunning & fascinating book). In the US, order from General Distribution Services Inc. Toll Free: [REDACTED]; fax: [REDACTED]; fax for ordering: [REDACTED]. \$16.95.

I cant wait to get my hands on _Pacific Windows_!

=====

Douglas Barbour
Department of English
University of Alberta
Edmonton Alberta T6G 2E5
[REDACTED] FAX: [REDACTED]
H: [REDACTED]

~~~~~

Whose song is this anyway?  
Is it a song being sung  
on the narrow road to the North?

Phyllis Webb

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10. **henry gould**

**Re: Indie Critics**

Sun 1 Feb 1998

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On Sun, 1 Feb 1998 10:31:05 EST Joe Brennan said:

>

>Henry, I couldn't agree with you more. However, the program you sketch out is

>as political as it gets; the difficulties arise, as I'm sure you know,

>whenever one attempts to determine which god is saying what.

There's a review in the NY Times Bk Review today of a new biography of Keats by Andrew Motion. The reviewer quotes some good examples of the "savaging" Keats took at the hands of the "indie-critics" of his time. That adds another layer of complexity to my modest proposal: Indie critics becoming an Institution.

Another point the review makes is that Motion's earlier book on Philip Larkin did not idealize Larkin BECAUSE Motion knew him personally. That adds a 2nd layer of difficulty to my proposal.

But I don't think you have to worry about the inescapable politics of subjectivity or objectivity. You just have to believe in the thin silver rope that dangles down from Poetry to the indie-critic. And of course, the only God of Poetry is Keats's Psyche. (I heard she joined the CP in 1924, was ostracized for "unwise associations" in 1926, fled to Zembla in 1928, escaped with Kinbote (Charles II of Zembla) in 1930, became a New Critic in 1932, became an Old Critic in 1934, converted to Catholicism in 1936, went to Poland in 1938, converted to Judaism in 1940, lived in Cracow until...) and lives under a pseudonym - Marie Czinski - in Chicago to this day, where she runs a day care center and writes for the Drawer. - Henry Gould

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# 11. David Zauhar

## CFP: Hybridity & Asian-American Lit (3/1, MLA) (fwd)

Sun 1 Feb 1998

---

Thopught this might be of interest, given the current As-Am thread.

DZ

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

Date: Sat, 31 Jan 1998 23:18:09 -0500 (EST)

From: John Joseph Su <[REDACTED]>

To: [REDACTED]

Subject: CFP: Hybridity & Asian-American Lit (3/1, MLA)

CFP: " ASIAN AMERICAN LITERATURE AND THE CONSEQUENCES OF HYBRIDITY"

I'm putting together a panel proposal for the 1988 MLA and am seeking submissions.

How does contemporary Asian American literature complicate, revise, and offer alternatives to the valorization of cultural hybridity by literary and social theorists? Send proposals with brief vita by March 1 to John J. Su, department of English, university of Michigan, 3187 Angell Hall, Ann Arbor, Michigan 48109; or e-mail to [REDACTED]

=====

From the Literary Calls for Papers Mailing List

[REDACTED]

Full Information at

<http://www.english.upenn.edu/CFP/>  
or write Jack Lynch: [REDACTED]

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## 12. **Tom Orange**

*snip*

*Sun 1 Feb 1998*

---

terrific flurry of writing posted by names that are all new to me on this list. welcome! and keep posting! the sheer quantity of posts, plus the intensity of recent activities here in loveley london ontario has forced me into lurkdom. we had a reading monday night ("poetry in lotion" -- kevin hehir has his series up and running here again), roy miki and ashok mathur joined frank davey et al. were here for a tribute to roy kiyooka on tuesday, then we had a weekend of readings/performances here this weekend: on friday, terri rowan from trent university, susan elmslie and masarah vaneyck from mcgill, theresa smalec from calgary/london, peter jaeger read from stretch conflates (new out from tailspin; review forthcoming), and i gave my first reading yesterday in almost a year, from which i'm still buzzin...

katy lederer (welcome to you also! enjoy yr posts...) wrote:

"My father always told me that "the best work" in English is often surprisingly full of one-syllable words--Shakespeare, Dickinson, Whitman, &&&. I wonder with writing like this (which I like)--what to make of that opinion--I suppose that "innovative" methodologies in poetry have basically razed all notions of key poetic strategies--razed, theoretically, the notion of "great works"--"

this one knocked me off my feet when i first read it a few weeks ago, with its profusion of monosyllabs peppered with the occasional two-syllab give this stuff the drive and motility of a max roach drum solo (and yes they say coolidge was a jazz drummer) -- i absolutely HAD to read it aloud (try it!):

"tends loom dial still around on it saying from turn means down forth  
the fewer this miss its thing back in a matter due a dial  
an it per pass upward forth see from post at bend on  
a miss dial a long but close light means those below will like twins  
around those then just back away still dial forth  
as like tends"

[from "polaroid," in th american tree p. 249]

raze away,  
tom orange

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13. **David Zauhar**

**Re: CFP: Hybridity & Asian-American Lit (3/1, MLA) (fwd)**

Sun 1 Feb 1998

---

*Thopught this might be of interest, given the current As-Am thread.*

DZ

By the way, that first word isn't a typo. It's just that most of the discourse on this list has been awfully transparent lately. I was only trying to call attention to the materiality of language. Or something like htat.

dz

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14. **rsillima**

**References**

Sun 1 Feb 1998

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Don't you hate it when somebody says something vaguely provocative (or provocatively vague) and then just leaves? Well, an hour after my last post to the list I was ordered "to hospital" and have just returned, stuffed with strange new antibiotics and a couple of days of breathing oxygen and many, many exotic tests (all of which were negative, happily). There were just under 80 email messages awaiting me, mostly because the digest option of Poetics telescoped 150 into three.

Matt, Rod, et al, I may have over or mal-construed Jeff Derksen in my previous message but even at the talk I was trying to articulate in my own words what I took as the gist of his argument, where I am no doubt also doing some appropriations.

Tom, Kent, references:

Steven Johnson, *Interface Culture: How New Technology Transforms the Way We Create and Communicate* (Harper/Edge, 1997). Johnson went to Brown where he studied semiotics, then Columbia to study lit. Feed is at either [www.feed.com](http://www.feed.com) or [www.feedmag.com](http://www.feedmag.com).

Manuel Castells is by training an urban planner (folks of a certain age in SF will recall that I brought him to Langton to talk during the period when he was advising what was then a new socialist regime in his native Spain). There's a big 3 volume series in progress (two books published), called *The Information Age: Economy, Society and Culture*. Vol. 1 *The Rise of the Network Society*. Vol. 2 *The Power of Identity*. Both available from Blackwell.

I was reading around Absence Sensorium today and agree with Tom totally about Dan.

Ron

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15. **Maria Damon**  
***Re: missing generation***  
*Sun 1 Feb 1998*

---

At 9:01 AM -0800 1/31/98, Rachel Loden wrote:

>Thanks, Kevin K., Chris S., Laura M. and others for terrific posts. In  
>the early seventies I dropped out of a very active Berkeley reading and  
>publishing scene in which I had been increasingly "successful." It  
>seemed to me that in my milieu (with the important exceptions of Judy  
>Grahn and Kathleen Fraser) people were repeating themselves, and I was  
>irritated by the easy applause I was getting. I left the scene cold,  
>continued to write, and didn't send work out for fifteen years (was  
>probably also terrified by recognition, but that's another story). Soon  
>after this departure, I ran into one of the avatars of Berkeley poetry  
>of the time, a woman who has since gone on to become very famous for  
>work I don't respect. As we picked up our daughters at daycare she  
>asked me "So, have you RETIRED?" The edge of sarcasm was evident.

>

>But no--I hadn't retired. I didn't have words for what I HAD done, but  
>it's clear now that turning my back was essential. At the time, all I  
>could do was strap my daughter into her car seat and drive away.

>

>It's said that we're a nation of salesmen, and sometimes, even in the  
>odd precincts of poetry, it's just not okay to stop selling.

>

>Rachel Loden

i'm very touched by this and other "personal" (but not creepily so, in my book) testimonials to one aspect of the fabric of the inner life vis a vis writing that gets ver short shrift on the list in general --the stories of silences, pains and struggles, material conditions (AIDS, childrearing, personal disappointments and losses, etc) that make the writing life not solely about "being productive" or being a good poet or a bad critic. gary s, i appreciate your question (what can i, maria, do to rectify the gender and race etc imbalance in the academy) but i must confess to having started a long post that got reactive and defensive, to the tune of "I'm dancing as fast as i can", and i can't do everything i'd like to do,



etc. so the martyr, victim tone crept in, and that's another story. thanks  
rachel--md

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16. **Maria Damon**

***Re: Response to Maria's Question***

*Sun 1 Feb 1998*

---

hi gary, here's the response i mentioned in my other post, cleaned up (i hope)  
and de-martyrized. xo, md

At 12:30 PM -0500 1/30/98, Gary Sullivan wrote:

>Hello, again, Maria:

>

>Many kind thanks for answering some of my questions. But it's really the last  
>one that I think might be most relevant, so I'll re-ask it: Given what you &  
>others have said w/respect to academia: What, specifically, now, could you  
>ACTIVELY DO to help further nudge things forward, toward balance? Is there  
a

>way you might be able to use, for instance, the Talisman anthology Dodie  
>and/or

>Kevin mentioned (hi Kevin & Dodie!), like, create an event there at UMN to  
>somewhat coincide w/its publication? (I realize it would be difficult to get  
>something approved & planned for March or April.) I bet many of the  
>academics &

>non-academics on this list would be willing to participate in that, or  
>anything

>else for that matter. Though I agree with Henry Gould that the art-product, &  
>significant advancements of same, is made manifest, largely, by the  
>individual,

>I'm also intrigued by Don Byrd's take, similar to Henri Lefebvre's meditation  
>on cities, which makes a distinction between "product" (the home-made) and  
>"oeuvre" (the culturally- or communally-produced), and privileges the oeuvre.  
>So, again: What, specifically & generally--above & beyond the writings on  
>Kaufman, Women of the Beat Movement, etc. you've already done--can you do  
>toward ensuring the oeuvre of the academy reflects gender & racial balance?

>

>Yours,

>

>Gary

well gary, there's a lot i can do (beyond trying to get readers to come) to try to  
get my institution to reflect a racial and gender balance. i can (and do) teach

courses that represent these interests. when i'm on admissions committees or in positions of power vis a vis hiring or admissions, i can (and do) advocate for this balance. when i serve on prelim or dissertation committees i can (and try to) influence the students' scholarship to include these matters. i exist in the academy, which means i am a woman in the academy, which means i represent different things to different people, hopefully some of them good. as for bringing specific poets out or trying to get 'em published, i can (and do) do that too. i can (and do) recommend projects i know of to the editors at the presses, both literary and academic, here. i could always do more, but as you may or may not know i am a person of limited energy. so i have to take it pretty easy. i do all the things i know to do, which i also believe to be within my capacity, and need- less to say it's never enough. xo, md

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17. **dbkk**

*old/young academic/non etc*

Sun 1 Feb 1998

---

Date: Fri, 30 Jan 1998 16:58:34 -0800  
From: LAURA MORIARTY <[REDACTED]>  
Subject: old/young academic/non etc

*I've been in the Bay Area forever (well since 73) and there has never not been a lot going on - Jimmy & Lucy's House of K, Big Allis, and Ottotole are among the mags that were edited by and/or published many in the supposedly absent generation - jeez some of my best friends are in that gen - Not to mention myself who at 45 and, in the \*younger-person\* anthologies, am the same age as some of the old ones, as well the same age as of some of the \*younger\* ones -*

Since I tend to agree with Laura about just about everything, I won't take issue with her<and I do think that there are complex reasons for people to write or not to write, and that it can get tedious, people blaming others for their inabilities to succeed. When I moved to the Bay Area in the late 70s, which was really the beginning of my becoming a writer, feminists told me that the language poets were domineering patriarchs. The queer scene told me that the language poets were domineering homophobes. And I saw many a poet try to get into those lofty ranks and fail, like a moth throwing itself at a light. Many of them ended up feeling burned--some of them were associated with the very magazines, "Jimmy & Lucy's House of K, Big Allis, and Ottotole," that Laura notes were publishing at the time. [Dan Davidson came to all this later on--I'm talking the early 80s before Dan was on the writing scene.]

As far as who gained entry among the younger poets, looking back, there was a certain babe factor. Young attractive women such as Sandra Meyer and

Johanna Jordahl seemed to be swept up in the beneficent arms of the group (to the dismay, I was told, of some of its female members). It seems to me that it was the young male poets who had the hardest time of it--like Daddy was never going to say, "Come be my equal." No way.

Because I was developing a new kind of prose that I could exist within, I was mostly outside of this drama. When I first moved here, Tillie Olsen was much on the scene and there was endless discussion about her book *Silences*, which, for those of you not familiar with old feminist books, is about the reasons women stop writing, with lots of emphasis on Tillie's own life, how her role as Woman kept her from writing for years. There's this one story of hers that everybody read and talked about, about ironing her family's wash, and this idea that ironing somehow kept women from writing was a big image. A few years ago I was talking with someone who knew Tillie Olsen when she was young, and this person brought up the ironing story and said that Tillie never ironed, that her kids were always dirty with wrinkled clothes. My mother, who likes to go on about the condition of the kitchen floors of the various people she knows--the ultimate compliment being "so clean you could eat off of it"--my mother would have been shocked by Tillie Olsen.

Recently I was at a dinner with a number of the older writers here in SF and a few of the younger writers, and the older writers were entertaining the younger writers with battle stories of the poetry wars of the late 70s, early 80s. Some of them were outrageously funny. Memory is retrospective and we all remember things differently. I remember things differently than Kevin, for example--and from Laura and Tom and Gary as well. And many of my "memories" are handed down to me from others' confidences. Katy's received version may be myth, but like all myths, there's some truth to it. I hope someday that a social historian will write the story of the poetry wars.

Dodie

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## 18. **Kali Tal**

### **Re: DEAD WOMEN POETS OF NYC & NYSTATE**

Sun 1 Feb 1998

---

*I'm working on a project involving dead women poets of NYC and NYState and would appreciate any names, locales, works, etc. (they don't all have to be Elizabeth Bishop & Marianne Moore).  
Reply can be sent to UB poetics or [REDACTED]. Thanks.*

Anne Reeve Aldrich 1866-1892

Anna Eliza (Schuyler) Bleecker 1752-1783

Catherine Esther Beecher 1800-1878

Naomi Lebrescu Bercovici 1883-1957  
Gertrude Bloede [Stuart Sterne] 1845-1905  
Elizabeth Estelle Bogart 1806-?  
Anna Charlotte Lynch Botta 1815-1891  
Mary Lydia Bolles Branch 1840-1922  
Mary Dow Brine (c. 1800s)  
Mary (Edwards) Bryan 1838-1913  
Alice Cary 1820-1871  
Ella Maria (Dietz) Clymer 1856-?  
Nathalie Sedgwick Colby 1875-1942  
Helen Gray Cone 1859-1934  
Jane Elizabeth Dexter Conklin 1831-?  
Harriet Maxwell Converse [Ya-ie-wah-no; Salome; Musidora] 1836-1903  
Lucretia Maria Davidson 1808-1838  
Mary Aigne de Vere [Madeline S. Bridges] d.1920  
Mary Lowe Dickinson 1839-1914  
Mary Elizabeth Mapes Dodge 1831-1905  
Emma Catherine (Manly) Embury 1806-1863  
Mary Galentine Fenner 1839-  
Emily Ellsworth (Fowler) Ford 1826-1893  
Julia (Boynton) Green 1861-?  
Zadel Barnes (Buddington) Gustafson [Axel Carl Johan Gustafson] 1841-?  
Sophia M. (Almon) Hensley 1866-?  
Marietta Holley [Josiah Allen's Wife; Jemyma] 1836-1926  
Lucy Hooper 1816-1841  
Laura Winthrop Johnson 1825-?  
Jennie E. Jones 1833-?  
Magdalene Isadora la Grange 1864-?  
Emma Lazarus 1849-1887  
Estella Anna Blanche (Robinson) Lewis 1824-1880  
Edith Willis Linn 1865-?  
Frances Aymar Matthews fl.1910s  
Alice Duer Miller 1874-1942  
Marion Juliet Mitchell 1836-?  
Marianne (Craig) Moore 1887-1972  
Laura A. Sunderlin Nourse 1836-?  
Emilay Sullivan Oakey 1829-1883  
Elizabeth Martha Olmstead 1825-?  
Anna Campbell Palmer [Mrs. George Archibald] 1854-1928  
Dorothy Rothschild Parker 1893-1967  
Abigain Jemima Patton [Abby Hutchinson] 1829-1892  
Mary Wright Plummer 1856-1916

Elizabeth (Stryker) Ricord 1788-1865  
Charlotte Fiske (Bates) Roge 1838-?  
Anora "Anna" Kathleen (Green) Rohlf 1846-1935  
Alice Marlan (Wellington) Rollins 1842-1897  
Margaret Elizabeth (Munson) Sangster 1838-1912  
Florence Smith 1845-1871  
Jane Luella Dowd Smith 1847-?  
Jeanie Oliver Smith (c.1890s)  
Mary Louise (Roley) Smith 1842-?  
Anna Sophia (Winterbotham) Stephens [Jonathan Slick] 1810-1886  
Mary Jane (Upshur) (Stith) Sturges [Fanny Fielding] 1828-?  
Edith Matilda Thomas 1854-1925  
Kate "Katrina" (Nichols) Trask 1853-1922  
Frances "Fanny" Jane (Crosby) van Allstyne 1820-?  
Mary (Westbrook) van Deusen 1829-?  
Metta Victoria (Fuller) Victor [Seeley Register; The Singing Sibyl] 1831-1886  
Lucy Hall (Walker) Washington 1835-?  
Susan Archer (Talley) Weiss 1835-?  
Ella (Wheeler) Wilcox 1850-1919  
Emma C. Willard 1787-1876  
Julia Evelyn (Ditto) Young 1857-?  
  
Have fun....  
  
Kali

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19. **R. Gancie**  
***Modernism & PostModernism***  
*Sun 1 Feb 1998*

---

David. Thanks for the post and the opportunity to elaborate. Both modernism and postmodernism for me legitimate themselves by presenting modes for addressing conditions which engage other segments of the culture, be they psychoanalytic, scientific, philosophical, political, sociological etc. This I find to be the chief value of both. What distinguishes modernism is its treatment of fragmentation and specialization that it saw rocking Europe during and after World War I by attempting to remake culture in the poet's image. The moderns attempted to either create a new synthesis and/or to reinvent what they perceived as the old one. In fact there are both of these elements in all the moderns because all the moderns implicitly understood the value of historical context. The problem became to discover a new world within the individual voice of each poet profound enough to compensate for the what was perceived as the

bankrupt condition of the world in which they found themselves. There is nothing poetically unique in that except that the moderns (at least the one's I'm thinking of here) used available texts, literally anything they felt relevant, as their actual materials. The thematic unity of David Jones' brilliant poems maintain a certain structural continuity as well by primarily limiting themselves to material from three historical sources. Olson on the other hand was at home with historical shards seeing quite accurately that history itself was only a jumble of fragments upon which any coherence was largely imposed. Pound interests me most, not only because the Cantos are probably the best of all the modernist works, but because even though he more or less invented the modernist mode, possibly coming to certain realizations as he edited Eliot's *Ur-Wasteland*, he was also ill-suited temperamentally to the task of stanching the fragmentation of a culture. Pound begins the Cantos in medias res almost as though coherence will someday present itself out of the mists like Ithaca to the wandering Greeks. I'm exaggerating a great deal here by ignoring the large poetic and intellectual experience Pound brought to the Cantos, but it still remains that he finally admitted that he could not make them cohere. It was through this ethos of failure of the poem's thematic structure that Pound made his most important discoveries and created the Cantos' most enduring passages. In the end Pound even more profoundly than Olson reflected our true historical condition by incorporating fragmentation and failure in a work of art which in so many ways paralleled the failure of his own personal history. Pound among all the modernists became an historical figure for better or worse and did it, in part, by resisting (to the point of madness) the unsculpturable lessons of his own chosen materials in the end succumbing, like the Cantos, to the very fragmentation he sought to overwhelm. By the time we get to the PostModernist, Olson is their true Penelope because we are prepared to accept the now overwhelmingly obvious condition of fragmentation. This is utterly legitimate; in fact it shows good sense. I'm just not certain that the role of poets is to show good sense. In this era of 'good sense', scientific method, modelling (not of the runway type), standardization, globalization, digitization etc., with all the dreams of the futurist's clean fascist lines realized, poets will have little or no role to play. They will have no role no matter how impeccably elegant their constructs, and no matter how much hermeneutical precision they achieve, no matter how fashionable they make formal and contextual randomness. Any solutions that I might propose would of course embody personal thematic materials. But as with all moderns this thematic material would not be restricted to my own navel. I have more than hinted at some of my concerns in other posts to this site and I intended to elaborate today but that would make this a very long post indeed. I would just like to say that the current attacks on some fifth generation academic heirs to some of the 'counterintuitive' conditions introduced over 80 years ago, should have presented an opportunity for poets too. That it

presented no opportunity for those poets that support sciences purportedly pragmatic and authoritarian side is no surprise; the juggernaut hardly needs them. Among poets, individuals versed in the counterarguments are virtually non-existent. Don Byrd's statement that "The only poetry that I know that attempts to face this urgency [e.g. ecological disaster] is sentimental and hopelessly naive" is true but not uncorrectable. Fish, Aronowitz, Hayles et al aren't great; but they've hit upon some legitimate concerns as you can judge from the vehement response among the establishment; an establishment that fears history so much that it positions itself so that it must ridicule and deny the philosophical ruminations of the physicists that birthed their very enterprise. Seems to have some elements of Greek tragedy with the postmodernist philosophers as chorus?---Carlo Parcelli P.S. I can connect the dots between formal systems and ecological disaster but it ain't pretty.

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20. **Keston Sutherland**  
*from At The Motel Partial Opportunity*

*Sun 1 Feb 1998*

---

Strong eminence, unmistakable, fact-caked. You remember, breathlessly  
we leapt to the shore; returning  
breath demarcating our adventure. You propose for relief  
a vascularised syntype, you on  
accepting this alight. Stay put by whom. By you, stolid cheer in battery  
hope for consequence. Nicely, in mini-bursts.

Flee the attempt, drive  
its pedals into its fleeing floor, well I try but you see still raped  
in pacted value-love, how  
little trying loves a reciprocated proposal, what can you do. Keep your  
wrist straight (not twist  
in or out) and flat (not bent, down or up). Or enable a refreshed  
sublime, glory never ending

as such merely transabdominally  
fitted for our fate, high snugness. You try with repeated  
involved intention, remember how carelessly  
with life we sprinted, over to the secure donkeys, no  
change, as yet; a shredlet  
considered, but rejected with sincere amusement. Indomitable, value  
ridden eminence to raze, even to joy;  
yet furlongs wider than her hate stretches.

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21. **Keston Sutherland**  
*from **Hate's Clitoris And Other Poems***  
Sun 1 Feb 1998

---

As life were or were not  
    put by distemper inter  
mixed beyond claim or  
    my correct order, move to  
remantle gently; be where  
    always and the turn from  
always lately gives in  
    tact benefit. Still be  
lied by deed the slight  
    purview beside  
you says you  
    fit throughout, where  
finally who knows, is us loved.

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22. **Harold Rhenisch**  
***Katy's short words***  
Sun 1 Feb 1998

---

Katy, epistemological breakthroughs aside, 'best works' aside, those short words are mighty interesting. For one, they're Anglo Saxon: house, boat, wood, rock, ice, water, man, woman, fire.... They are the things of this world, and were created in a far different time, out of far different impulses than current word-making. They share that, though: word-making. So, it's not that different at all. Now, whether or not one abandons that particular old sense of the world as discrete hunks of spirit and matter shuffled magically around, it is still there. The rest of the language has only accreted around it, as do the products of any innovative methodology we dream up. Those little old words can be approached and reseen with a new methodology. Celan does that. I'd say that was an equally fruitful path: to meet that vision head on.

cheers,

Harold





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### 23. **Harold Rhenisch**

#### ***Re: Indie Critics***

*Sun 1 Feb 1998*

---

To Henry's

>>If any of you are poets - & I have my doubts - I would think you'd be looking for an indie critic too - somebody with taste, judgement, freedom, and an artistic instinct. The rest is baloney. <<

You bet.

Still, living in an almost perfect literary isolation in a vast land of pulp mills and, at the moment, frozen lakes, and, in a couple months, mud, I wouldn't mind if Henry's circus came to town for a few days.

cheers,

Harold Rhenisch



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### 24. **Mark Wallace**

#### ***criticism rules***

*Sun 1 Feb 1998*

---

I'd like to second Rod Smith's post about the role of criticism in the work of poets at the present moment--there's no doubt, whether Henry thinks it's a cop-out or not, that having to teach 4-5 courses a semester at three different universities, plus do editorial work on the side, in order to provide myself with a fairly spartan existence does cut into the time I have for writing of any kind--and I know many other poets who have similar circumstances. Nonetheless, having been guilty of a few critical pieces anyway, I'd like to raise some further points suggested by Rod's post and Henry's responses to that and other matters.

I think I would add to what Rod says that there is, among the poets he mentions, not simply a reticence about critical writing (although it is that in some cases) but actually a particular RESISTANCE to it that may be important to note. While I think what Juliana Spahr says about the greater attention to male language poets is certainly the case, I also think another related issue is that of the attention afforded to poets who write critically (whether in standard academic form or not) and those who do not do so. With some (but few) exceptions, larger reputations (in the academic world and elsewhere) have gone to

those language writers who also publish criticism. Note that, for instance, a poet like Susan Howe has a much larger academic reputation than those, like Carla Harryman, who do not. Indeed I think it's safe to say that for the most part, the attention outside the world of poets that language writing has received has been due more to its criticism than its poetry.

This fact, I think, is a direct function of the increasing lack of value placed by the academic world (and of course all of American culture) on anything other than criticism. Indeed, in retrospect one might say of language writing that its writers perceived the decreasing value of writing poetry at all without a critical defense of its value, although at the time it must have seemed that their use of philosophy, literary and cultural theory was allowing them to call into question much of the theoretically naive poetry of that time. But make no mistake: with few exceptions, almost all academic interest in language poetry has come from interest in its IDEAS, which the poetry, if you believe these takes, tends to serve as a kind of vehicle for--language poetry becomes ABOUT the materiality of language, an idea which critics can then discuss. Or poetry serves as a vehicle for discussing IDEAS about social inequality. Such ideas are of course valuable, but they are not the poetry itself, but rather extractions from its engagements, always themselves larger than simply the stating of ideas.

Just as one recent for instance, the recent back-and-forth over Ron's Philly Talks far exceeds any recent back-and-forth about Ron's poetry. Poetry itself doesn't per se DEBATE, and therefore, despite being the ostensible reason behind this list, nonetheless serves as an often very shadowy other to what actually goes on here.

All that said, I am not myself AGAINST criticism, and think that much of value can be done with it, as long that one recognizes that to engage in it is to engage with a cultural form that has increasing dominance over poetry. Some writers have responded to this dominance by alternative forms for criticism. But I think that for many of the poets whom Rod mentions, it does not go too far to say that they have actively rejected criticism of any form, as being, for the time in which they live, a coercive form of domination which they intend to resist. Does such a position go too far? Perhaps. Does it put them in the position of seeming "anti-theoretical"? Also perhaps, although I think not. So it's not simply lack of time, but in many cases REFUSAL to engage in a kind of writing that, whatever its value, simply seems too polluted by its connection to the active DENIGRATION of the writing they themselves love.

I myself have chosen to write criticism for at least two reasons. One is that there are things one worth saying, to me at least, in criticism's possible forms. And the other is, to be quite blunt, the recognition that if I do not express ideas in their dominant form, I may be a short term contract professor/editor for the

rest of my life, that is until I can figure out how to get out of the academic business entirely. Yet my own contradictory feelings on this subject have perhaps helped me to undermine myself, since when I do write criticism, I don't really use standard academic form, and so my work has no academic value. Still, I've had enough response from people to recognize that with few but significant exceptions, only poets respond to my poetry, while critical academics will sometimes respond to my ideas.

I continue to believe that the poet-critic is a viable role, one that many great people on this list, like A.L. Nielsen, play quite valuably. But whatever we may think THEORETICALLY about the fact that poetry can contain elements of criticism, and that criticism can contain elements of poetry (that is, that the boundary can be undermined), there is no doubt that academic systems (again with rare exceptions) treat this split as though it's absolute.

What form should a present moment poetics of criticism take? As many as necessary, it seems to me. Some of this criticism will contain promotion of the work it loves, some of it will not be academic close reading. Henry's attempts to pass off some kinds of criticism (those which deal with the work "directly," or which are closely critical of the writers with whom one is closest) won't hold, I don't think. I myself was glad that Steve Evans recent essay was not a close reading of poetry, and in fact I can think of VERY few literary close readings that don't quickly send themselves to the academic dustbin, my own included. In fact, if one were to take the relation between poetry and poetics as seriously as I believe we should, then that would mean that there might be as many forms for poetics as there would for poetry, indeed it might mean that the two terms in many cases would be no longer distinguishable.

But for such a thing to happen, I think that we have to admit that we live in a world where the "observer," encased in the abstractions of "authoritative" and standardized critical forms, represents a way for the bureaucratic maintenance of literature (read: English departments) to continue without its own forms, both of writing and of administering, being called into any kind of significant question. And for the poet who sees that and says, well, screw criticism entirely, I think we should have a great deal of respect, even if its a position some of us would not in fact share.

Mark Wallace

```

/-----\ |
||      ||      GWU:
||  http://gwis2.circ.gwu.edu/~mdw      ||  EPC:
||  http://writing.upenn.edu/epc/authors/wallace      ||

```

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25. **Henry Gould**  
**Re: criticism rules**

Sun 1 Feb 1998

---

Mark, while some of the points you make & those I've been stressing over the past week coincide (i.e. the dominance of "talk about" etc.), I get the feeling you haven't understood what I've been saying. The criticism I've been calling for is a different animal from "close reading" as you described it. You seem to think that there's either a positive review or a negative review. I'm suggesting that there's an intuitive, empathetic, informed, and independent criticism possible - which smells the existence of authentic poetry & points out its strengths & weaknesses, its attempts & motives in relation to its achievements. Is this fair to the poor little hard-workin' youngsters just trying to write a lyric? Yes it is - it might push them towards a saltier concept of their OWN real motives, talents, & originality. & it might just notice what they've been trying to do.

I'm sorry to hear you're joining Rod Smith in the whimper mode. I don't think the forebears we follow - name whatever good poet of the past you wish - would catch themselves whining about their lack of time. The poetry of the past is in your nearest public library. The poetry of the present is on your computer. The criticism - if you feel called to it - is in your bones. So is the art & the poetry. It flows there close to whatever life you can call your own. The Indie Crit I been asking for runs somewhere between the bought-out academic mode you yourself debunked & the sub-critical chicanery of an unquestioning, unquestionable poetics. - Henry Gould

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26. **Don Byrd**  
**Re: DEAD WOMEN POETS OF NYC & NYSTATE**

Sun 1 Feb 1998

---

It might be of interest that full texts of at least some of these poets can be found at the American Verse Project (<http://www.hti.umich.edu/>)

Kali Tal wrote:

*I'm working on a project involving dead women poets of NYC and NYState and would appreciate any names, locales, works, etc. (they don't all have to be Elizabeth Bishop & Marianne Moore).  
Reply can be sent to UB poetics or [REDACTED]. Thanks.*

*Anne Reeve Aldrich 1866-1892  
Anna Eliza (Schuyler) Bleecker 1752-1783  
Catherine Esther Beecher 1800-1878  
Naomi Lebrescu Bercovici 1883-1957  
Gertrude Bloede [Stuart Sterne] 1845-1905*

*Elizabeth Estelle Bogart 1806-?*  
*Anna Charlotte Lynch Botta 1815-1891*  
*Mary Lydia Bolles Branch 1840-1922*  
*Mary Dow Brine (c. 1800s)*  
*Mary (Edwards) Bryan 1838-1913*  
*Alice Cary 1820-1871*  
*Ella Maria (Dietz) Clymer 1856-?*  
*Nathalie Sedgwick Colby 1875-1942*  
*Helen Gray Cone 1859-1934*  
*Jane Elizabeth Dexter Conklin 1831-?*  
*Harriet Maxwell Converse [Ya-ie-wah-no; Salome; Musidora] 1836-1903*  
*Lucretia Maria Davidson 1808-1838*  
*Mary Aigne de Vere [Madeline S. Bridges] d.1920*  
*Mary Lowe Dickinson 1839-1914*  
*Mary Elizabeth Mapes Dodge 1831-1905*  
*Emma Catherine (Manly) Embury 1806-1863*  
*Mary Galentine Fenner 1839-*  
*Emily Ellsworth (Fowler) Ford 1826-1893*  
*Julia (Boynton) Green 1861-?*  
*Zadel Barnes (Buddington) Gustafson [Axel Carl Johan Gustafson] 1841-?*  
*Sophia M. (Almon) Hensley 1866-?*  
*Marietta Holley [Josiah Allen's Wife; Jemyma] 1836-1926*  
*Lucy Hooper 1816-1841*  
*Laura Winthrop Johnson 1825-?*  
*Jennie E. Jones 1833-?*  
*Magdalene Isadora la Grange 1864-?*  
*Emma Lazarus 1849-1887*  
*Estella Anna Blanche (Robinson) Lewis 1824-1880*  
*Edith Willis Linn 1865-?*  
*Frances Aymar Matthews fl.1910s*  
*Alice Duer Miller 1874-1942*  
*Marion Juliet Mitchell 1836-?*  
*Marianne (Craig) Moore 1887-1972*  
*Laura A. Sunderlin Nourse 1836-?*  
*Emilay Sullivan Oakey 1829-1883*  
*Elizabeth Martha Olmstead 1825-?*  
*Anna Campbell Palmer [Mrs. George Archibald] 1854-1928*  
*Dorothy Rothschild Parker 1893-1967*  
*Abigail Jemima Patton [Abby Hutchinson] 1829-1892*  
*Mary Wright Plummer 1856-1916*  
*Elizabeth (Stryker) Ricord 1788-1865*  
*Charlotte Fiske (Bates) Roge 1838-?*  
*Anora "Anna" Kathleen (Green) Rohlf 1846-1935*  
*Alice Marlan (Wellington) Rollins 1842-1897*  
*Margaret Elizabeth (Munson) Sangster 1838-1912*  
*Florence Smith 1845-1871*  
*Jane Luella Dowd Smith 1847-?*  
*Jeanie Oliver Smith (c.1890s)*

Mary Louise (Roley) Smith 1842-?  
Anna Sophia (Winterbotham) Stephens [Jonathan Slick) 1810-1886  
Mary Jane (Upshur) (Stith) Sturges [Fanny Fielding] 1828-?  
Edith Matilda Thomas 1854-1925  
Kate "Katrina" (Nichols) Trask 1853-1922  
Frances "Fanny" Jane (Crosby) van Allstyne 1820-?  
Mary (Westbrook) van Deusen 1829-?  
Metta Victoria (Fuller) Victor [Seeley Register; The Singing Sibyl] 1831-1886  
Lucy Hall (Walker) Washington 1835-?  
Susan Archer (Talley) Weiss 1835-?  
Ella (Wheeler) Wilcox 1850-1919  
Emma C. Willard 1787-1876  
Julia Evelyn (Ditto) Young 1857-?

Have fun....

Kali

--

\*\*\*\*\*

Don Byrd ([REDACTED], [REDACTED])  
Department of English  
State University of New York  
Albany, NY 12222  
[REDACTED] (work); [REDACTED] (home); [REDACTED] (fax)  
The Little Magazine (<http://www.albany.edu/~litmag/>)

\*\*\*\*\*

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27. **lppl**  
**New from GAZ**  
Sun 1 Feb 1998

---

NEW and ACTUALLY Available from GAZ:

William Fuller's AETHER

Within its 64 pages of bone-rattling bliss, The Fall of Money comes early, dressed as a range-fed Plotinus pearling a 10-ft. balsa dream into a mid-America, midwinter swell. Juggling, amongst others, William Walwyn, Khlebnikov, Schoenberg, Mother Hubbard, and J.H. Prynne, its harmonious verifications exceed all definition as lipid and protein. I am my nickname, Gold is Fire, superfluity punctures acquiescence, and other such ardor-induced critical barker's strategems. There is much that can be said for this book, and, satisfying Olson's wager, ie meaning is that which exists in and of itself, AETHER does say them. LONG LIVE AETHER!!

Cover price: \$10.00 (plus postage)

For the Poetics List, this special offer: \$7.00 postage paid

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## 28. **louis stroffolino**

### **Re: criticism rules**

Sun 1 Feb 1998

---

henry, rod didn't seem to be whimpering to me. chris

On Sun, 1 Feb 1998, Henry Gould wrote:

*Mark, while some of the points you make & those I've been stressing over the past week coincide (i.e. the dominance of "talk about" etc.), I get the feeling you haven't understood what I've been saying. The criticism I've been calling for is a different animal from "close reading" as you described it. You seem to think that there's either a positive review or a negative review. I'm suggesting that there's an intuitive, empathetic, informed, and independent criticism possible - which smells the existence of authentic poetry & points out its strengths & weaknesses, its attempts & motives in relation to its achievements. Is this fair to the poor little hard-workin' youngsters just trying to write a lyric? Yes it is - it might push them towards a saltier concept of their OWN real motives, talents, & originality. & it might just notice what they've been trying to do.*

*I'm sorry to hear you're joining Rod Smith in the whimper mode. I don't think the forebears we follow - name whatever good poet of the past you wish - would catch themselves whining about their lack of time. The poetry of the past is in your nearest public library. The poetry of the present is on your computer. The criticism - if you feel called to it - is in your bones. So is the art & the poetry. It flows there close to whatever life you can call your own. The Indie Crit I been asking for runs somewhere between the bought-out academic mode you yourself debunked & the sub-critical chicanery of an unquestioning, unquestionable poetics.*  
- Henry Gould

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29. **david bromige**

***Tom Clark's poems & his "Stalin as Linguist"***

*Mon 2 Feb 1998*

---

I thank Carlo Parcelli for his second post, just read. What I want to say today has more reference to his prior post, of 1/30/98. It also refers to Dale Smith's praise of Tom Clark a couple weeks ago, and also to Joe Safdie's post of 1/23/98. Let me preface these comments by remarking that a day on the List is like a week in everyday life. So that, in responding to a post now 8 days old, I am carrying readers two months back, and I realize the chance that you-all still have the Tom Clark poems which Joe posted, is slim. But I am not about to copy them out again.

These 3 poems are #s 43,44, and 45 from a work called "Early Warning," unknown to me. I can see the attraction they hold out : they constitute an us-&-them world, where "they" are every bit as despicable as "they" are always known to be, cowardly, secretive and vindictive in their unjustness, and where each reader is invited to identify with the poet to form an "us" that is better than his "they." One is thus offered some thing to belong to, a superior thing where one's allies will be likewise superior.

Part of what is superior about the poet in these poems, is his attitude, made explicit in the lines "I'm/ (for instance) as ingenuous and naively trusting/ as your average Sudanese mercenary killer." One appreciates the twist of sense, which requires that one follow the syntax closely. Beyond that, one finds oneself in the presence (as it were) of "nobody's fool." a tough guy (albeit with a heart of gold--else we wouldn't be liking him) a bit like Bogart or Bukowski.

Elsewise, there is the wit of analogy that delivers us to this bathetic present after a quick whip around the corners of a Malebolge (or so I feel); there are attractive passages where sound draws attention to meaning (the way "clones" recalls "drone" and picks up on the "stones" and "bones" from lines immediately previous) and by this process provides a further guarantee that this poet has an ear--is listening to his lines as they unfold, is not asleep at the wheel.

There is also the thrill, at watching the lid ripped off this particular can of worms. Ah, so just as we suspected, poets are as bad or worse than the rest of this wicked world! And here's a real poet telling us this!

But my surrender to these poems doesn't last long. They lack, for one thing, a sense of history. Poets have been banding together against one another for millennia, so what's fresh about this content to excuse the traditionalist form?

More of an objection, however, lodges in the wried logic. There is nothing I can find in the poem to ironize that one instance of "I"--I take the poet himself, Tom Clark, to be speaking, to be wanting to be heard speaking Tom Clark's mind. But



Tom Clark is known to be (however relatively) a successful writer, with dozens of books from distinguished houses. "To survive in the 'arts' you've got to be a believer." Well, Tom Clark has survived, so to what does he belong, to which "school,...club,...cell,...lodge,...party...[or] police force" does Tom Clark owe his survival?

His answer might lie in the "outsider" category. I cannot see how, in the dog-eat-dog world Clark depicts, this category is in any way superior or transcendent. How do these lines escape being as self-serving as anything that might be produced from "school, club, cell, lodge, party, police force" or cabal?

It is not that I altogether disagree with his picture. It is rather that Tom Clark is no less a cannibal canine than the next man or woman. Despite his apparent admission of this, "to relate to history not forgetting the mistake of those who'd evade it," I do not find I can exit these 3 poems without feeling that Clark believes that he can, and has evaded it. While feeling, myself, that he has not. Because he cannot. Because (as he implies) none of us can.

Here I refer my reader to Carlo Parcelli's post of 1/30/98, to his mention of "position/momentum paradox" and "influence of the observer upon the observed." And to what he deduces from these physico-philosophical quandaries : "every participant in the current debate is subject to these limitations [.]" I do not believe it is enough to acknowledge this truth then to proceed as though nothing was altered because of it. It is a truth that calls for constant attention. It explodes the us/them construction, \_no matter the empirical persistence of such divisiveness\_. Both Tom and I (as any of you) being subject to these limits, I ask him, "Why do you create a world of attitude where you have always to be branded as 'distrustful, dangerously suspicious' as an 'outsider'--while holding down an inside post with Black Sparrow Press? " It is 35 years since Bukowski was named 'Outsider of the Year' and neither he nor the press that presented him has any pretense to outsider status today. As a category, in any case, 'outsider' today must include so many as to be meaningless. It remains "someone to be," if it's otherwise too scary walking down the street, or boring or whatever : Fred Dobbs.

I do not find that the epiphany at the end of the 3rd of these poems is credible: "only makes me laugh and study/ ways to gain a new power over words/that are so stubborn, to steer them into/ clear and simple sentences is a good lifetime's work." It does not dissolve the paranoid portrait of hate and distrust and envy, or not persuasively to my reading. And while it is plain that Tom Clark is consumed by these vices, the poetry would be a big step closer to the greatness certain acolytes claim for it (not to mention Clark himself) were he to \_assume\_ and \_own\_ them.

I do not think we inhabit times that permit such linear renunciation of indulged miseries. You are what you describe . It's the Tarbaby none can escape. (I use my own knowledge of my own powers of denial, my own hypocrisies, my own envy and mortification at exclusion, to decode Tom Clark). No part of any poem is more than any other part.

So I find these poems have a short life. They belong to a way of being that no longer works. I read them, as I read Bukowski, with some pleasure of recognition, but end up in nausea, at the impossible perspective : them<sup>o</sup>d, us=good. (Even us<sup>o</sup>d, them=good would be an improvement, but not for long; the entire divisiveness of these presumptions is deadly.)

Perhaps a quick look at Clark's essay published in Partisan Review in 1987 (reworked from an article in Poetry Flash in 1985) and called "Stalin as Linguist" may help clarify what I think Clark needs to do in order to become the poet and intellectual he surely wants to be, given his envy and resentment of intellectuals and most other poets (those not in his club).

He begins by citing Brecht : "To write poetry now, even on current events, means to withdraw into the ivory tower. It's as though one were practicing the art of filigree. There is something eccentric, cranky, obtuse about it. Such poetry is like the castaway's note in the bottle." Clark notes that Brecht issued this statement (a kind of renunciation, even in advance, of the contents of the Selected Brecht I keep by this desk) in 1942. But Clark doesn't bring this up to qualify the renunciation; he doesn't point out that in the horror of civilized barbarism peaking in that year, such a sentiment might be heartfelt, but might be revisited and revised later. No, he says that "it has never been more applicable than at present."

And to whom then does Clark apply it? Not to all poets, although that was surely Brecht's meaning. Not to himself, although as one writing poetry since 1942, he is just as surely included in Brecht's denunciation as anyone else. No, he singles out just one group, and applies what Brecht meant as general anathema, only to the Language Poets. Thenceforth, Clark proceeds with his attack on In the American Tree . ("Well," as Mandy Rice-Davies would have repeated, "He would, wouldn't he?" -- he had been excluded).

The kind of dodge by which Clark attempts to enlist Brecht to attack Watten in this essay is all too common throughout his evaluative writing. It is dishonest, hypocritical, and bathetic. --Why does he need Brecht's posthumous assistance? Isn't Clark the equal of this situation without Brecht?

But of equal importance, this ploy discloses, again, Clark's fantasies of superiority. Brecht damned all poetry, but Clark nimbly escapes the Brechtean thunderbolt. Or he does, in the eyes of such readers as need to turn a blind eye to their master's blindnesses, in order to go on belonging to ...something, and believing

in ... someone. As though there weren't already their own intelligence to doubt, and their own intuitions to challenge, and the reading to be done from the list Parcelli supplies, if we are to make a poetry the measure of the going situation of mind and world. Believe in that! David

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30. **david bromige**

***I see now that by forwarding this I can make it available again to the List so that anyone wishing to read Tom Clark's poems in relation to my recent posting may do so David***

Mon 2 Feb 1998

---

X-Priority: 3  
MIME-Version: 1.0  
Date: Fri, 23 Jan 1998 15:12:17 -0800  
Reply-To: UB Poetics discussion group <[REDACTED]>  
Sender: UB Poetics discussion group <[REDACTED]>  
From: Safdie Joseph <[REDACTED]>  
Subject: Re: The new; Dale; langpo; tradition  
To: [REDACTED]

*It's hard to keep up lately -- did all these various and variously interesting posts about the new vis-a-vis langpo really start when David Bromige asked, innocently enough, if the list (January '98) were pro- or anti- langpo? Did David ever really answer my response to him last week before Dale (and, to a lesser extent, Henry) picked up the ball? I wonder what percentage of time people actually SPEND on the list -- an hour a day? More? This is the first chance I've had to respond to things in a week, other than furtive back-channels . . .*

*Anyway, a few thoughts about:*

*1) Langpo. Yes, I agree it's sad when people feel they have to make "large general statements," the distaste for which I suppose begat Dale's readings of the Watten stanza followed by alternate readings by cris and David and Joel. My question about that mini-thread is: when did a poem's capacity to generate multiple interpretations become something of value? Aren't we really going back to \_Seven Types of Ambiguity\_ here?*

*I noticed that Ron Silliman, in an essay I generally admired in \_ILS\_ #4, had some kind words about the new critics, saying that their "reactionary aesthetic and political worldview" was the only thing really at issue; for many of us, though, the whole project of new criticism was fundamentally unsound (perhaps for reasons of "organicism") and langpo's early resemblance to that project generated suspicion. In the same issue, he says "an issue that continually lurks near the surface (and also near the heart) of almost all language*

*writing is an ambivalence of intention, of intentionality as such."*  
*Well, call me a philistine, but I'm a little tired of "texts" that demand such response -- they become too much of an intellectual parlor game and such practice reduces the poem to the level of a jigsaw puzzle. When I think of what I VALUE in poetry, I think of information (and not solely in terms of Don Byrd's valuable example of such); I think of the skillful demolition of linguistic habit, the "dead, stinking dead, usages of the past"; I think of music; I think of truth and beauty; but I never, NEVER think "gee I like this because I think it means one thing but other people might think it means another." (I thought of this while listening to the news last night and hearing "suborning of perjury is difficult to prove because conversations are abstract -- it's difficult to say what they mean" And if CONVERSATIONS are abstract . . .)*

*So for me there's something attractive about what Henry calls the poetry of plain statement (forgive me Henry if that's not exactly what you said). Is there anyone on this list who doesn't REVERE early Auden? As another example (and in answer to a request by David Bromige) here's some stanzas from a long poem by Tom Clark, "Early Warning":*

*43*

*Driven together by a desire to contend  
Knowing no life but that of rivalry  
They continued to buy and sell each other's souls  
Even in this enclave of fugitives  
Though allegedly they were dedicated to poetry  
Instead it was envy that motivated them  
So that they resembled rabid dogs  
Traveling in a pack with maximum infighting  
The attention of the group turned instantly to any  
Renegade who threatened to outdistance  
The rest, and this outlaw was collectively attacked*

*44*

*Mutual reinforcement's the name of the game  
to survive in the "arts" you've got to be a believer  
if not to a school, then to a club,  
a cell, a lodge, a party, a police force,  
only the party standard bearers  
are awarded the laurels of the party  
all non-believers are branded "paranoid" --  
distrustful, dangerously suspicious (i.e., wise  
to the condition of being outsiders); I'm  
(for instance) as ingenuous and naively trusting  
as your average Sudanese mercenary killer.*

*45*

*There is no interpretation necessary.*

*You got to deal with the man the way  
the man going to deal with you. No hate  
but to relate to history not forgetting  
the mistake of those who'd evade it. Sticks  
and stones will certainly break my brittle  
bones but the stunted drone of the many  
poetry clones only makes me laugh and study  
ways to gain a new power over words  
that are so stubborn, to steer them into  
clear and simple sentences is a good lifetime's work.*

*Qualifications positively leap to the fore. I'm not claiming  
this is one of Tom's best works; what I'm saying is that, for me, the  
lack of necessity to "interpret" is sometimes a pleasure in and of  
itself.*

*2) The New. I think that the question "Is Ron's alphabet  
sequence really new?" is an ultimately degrading question. Shouldn't we  
be asking instead "is it GOOD?" People on this list have called it  
brilliant but still question its "newness" pedigree: this seems absurd!  
Granted, one's relation to The Tradition can be transgressive -- it's  
nice to assume that one would have been right there with Wordsworth and  
Coleridge in the *Lyrical Ballads* speaking the real language of men,  
that one wouldn't have been among the Georgian poets Pound held up to  
scorn in the *Imagist Manifesto*; as frequently stated in another context,  
history is written by the winners. But for me, the anxiety of  
determining if one's work is "truly, truly new" is academic in the worst  
sense. That way lies fetishism. And again, it focuses attention (only)  
on the material text rather than the world and its complicated and  
complicating political environment that may have generated that text,  
the environment we all return to with hopefully-freshened senses and new  
understanding once we pick our eyes off the page.*

*Jacques Debrot wrote not long ago about the "the mind's need and  
capacity for self-estrangement." Sorry, but it's all I can do not to  
feel estranged, and I don't think I'd turn to poetry first if I truly  
wanted to feel such. Much too long a post; my apologies to all for that.*

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31. **George Bowering**  
**Re: Indie Critics**  
Mon 2 Feb 1998

---

I cant figure out what the reference "indie critic" or "indi critic" is referring to.  
Does it mean a critic from India, or a critic of race cars?

George Bowering.

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

fax: [REDACTED]

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32. **maz881**

***Re: missing generation***

*Mon 2 Feb 1998*

---

Well being somewhat of an ex bay area-ite i feel i must weigh in on the purported lack of a scene for folks my age (mid 30s to early 40s now). i lived in ben friendlander's apt for two years after he split to bluffalot and the scene well just collapsed. that was 92 to 94. it then struck me that there may have been a reason why ben called the mag Dark Ages. i mean i never got laid. or took hallucinogens with anyone. or went to ball games with anyone.

the people my age i remember seeing, but who never hit on me i will list below, along with their sexual potency rating (10 being would be able to let person perform fellatio on me in public, 9 multiple wowies, 8 touched myself when i thought of person, 7 would metally undress person during my bubble bath, 6 didn't need to use Stay Hard, 5 would not kick person out of bed for eating crackers, 4 didn't need to think of Pamela Anderson to achieve orgasm, 3 person must wear bag,,, etc).

aiffe murry: 8

andrea hollowell: 8

eleni sikelianos: 9 (10 if barefoot)

cyndey chadwick: 9

wayne smith: 9

steve dickison: 8

nick robinson: 8

susan gevirtz: 9

colleen lookingbill: 8

steve farmer: 8

scott bentley: 10

laura moriarty: 10

dodie bellamy: 10

spencer selby: 10

myung mi kim: 9

pat reed: 9

eileen corder: 8

dan davidson: 10

kevin mcgee: 8

that's all i can think of, but as is said, i didn't get around much. and really, all i wanted was to flirt with carla harryman, who is pretty much off the scale in anyone's book.

Bill Luoma

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### 33. **Henry Gould**

#### ***Re: crit rules***

*Mon 2 Feb 1998*

---

My apologies to Mark & Rod for the querulous tone. Writing conditions are rarely simple & easy. This is not high school football & I'm not a coach.

Auntie Hen was not nagging you for not being critics (Mark is a critic). As I said originally, poets themselves are conflicted with their own interests. This doesn't rule out dem writing crit but a lot of Indie Crits will be glad just to write good reviews. I know there are such people out there. My whole point was to characterize (1) the difference between true Indie Crit and the kind of writing bent on promoting the immediate status/recognition/advantage of a person or group; and (2) the difference between Indie Crit and scholarly writing. By differentiating it I was trying to bring it forward as a force for clearing the air and recognizing poetry when it happens. Indie Crits have a silver rope which attaches them directly to Poetry. You can get them at Adler's Hardware here in Providence; I can't vouch for other places. The one I got though is quite SHORT & doesn't allow me to reach several of the low-growth new species springing up. Is this a problem for other Indie Crits?

- Henry Gould

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34. **Michael Magee**

***Re: I see now that by forwarding this I can make it available again***

*Mon 2 Feb 1998*

---

Thanks to David B for his reading of Clark and reposting of such. My main problem with these sections of "Early Warning" - though I'm in basic agreement w/ David's reading - is that its very structure seems pretty hackneyed stuff: & I don't mean its not sufficiently "experimental": even among current examples of more traditional uses of structure it just seems kind of tired. Look what happens when you empty it of its buzz-words:

"43

Driven together by a blank to blank  
Knowing no blank but that of blank  
They continued to blank each other's blank  
Even in this blank of blank  
Though allegedly they were dedicated to blank  
Instead it was blank that motivated them  
So that they resembled blank  
Traveling in a blank with maximum blank  
The attention of blank turned instantly to any  
blank who threatened to blank  
The rest, and this blank was collectively attacked"

This is what I call "the cliché of syntax". A pretty old story indeed.

-m.

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35. **Jack Spandrift**

***Re: Indie Critics***

*Mon 2 Feb 1998*

---

On Mon, 2 Feb 1998 00:28:14 -0700 George Bowering said:

>I cant figure out what the reference "indie critic" or "indi critic" is  
>referring to. Does it mean a critic from India, or a critic of race cars?  
>

George, I checked with the Anglo-Indie "buddy" of mine, Eric Blarnes - he seems to think an "Indie-Crit" is one of those lil critters you find all over India & in some large US cities around the kitchen sink & the breadbox - they are as fast as race cars - at least I think that's what Blarnes was saying - he was calling from Madras & the line was fuzzy - he kept saying - "pass th' gindie! pass th' gindie! em forster, em forster! forster!" Well, I don't know... - Jack Spandrift

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36. **Maria Damon**

***Re: Modernism & PostModernism***

*Mon 2 Feb 1998*

---

in this realm let me recommend ira livingston's book, Arrow Of Chaos: Romanticism and Postmodernism, in the U of MN press's Theory Out of Bounds series. it's hard to characterize and idiosyncratic, but tht is part of what makes it anti-systemic and very charming and smart.

At 3:32 PM -0500 2/1/98, R. Gancie wrote:

>David. Thanks for the post and the oppotunity to elaborate. Both  
>modernism and postmodernism for me legitimate themselves by presenting  
>modes for addressing conditions which engage other segments of the  
>culture, be they psychoanalytic, scientific, philosophical, political,  
>sociological etc. This I find to be the chief value of both. What  
>distinguishes modernism is its treatment of fragmentation and  
>specialization that it saw rocking Europe during and after World War I  
>by attempting to remake culture in the poet's image. The moderns  
>attempted to either create a new synthesis and/or to reinvent what they  
>perceived as the old one. In fact there are both of these elements in  
>all the moderns because all the moderns implicitly understood the value  
>of historical context. The problem became to discover a new world within  
>the individual voice of each poet profound enough to compensate for the  
>what was perceived as the bankrupt condition of the world in which they  
>found themselves. There is nothing poetically unique in that except that  
>the moderns (at least the one's I'm thinking of here) used available  
>texts, literally anything they felt relevant, as their actual materials.  
>The thematic unity of David Jones' brilliant poems maintain a certain  
>structural continuity as well by primarily limiting themselves to  
>material from three historical sources. Olson on the other hand was at  
>home with historical shards seeing quite accurately that history itself  
>was only a jumble of fragments upon which any coherence was largely  
>imposed. Pound interests me most, not only because the Cantos are  
>probably the best of all the modernist works, but because even though he  
>more or less invented the modernist mode, possibly coming to certain  
>realizations as he edited Eliot's Ur-Wasteland, he was also ill-suited  
>temperamentally to the task of stanching the fragmentation of a culture.  
>Pound begins the Cantos in medias res almost as though coherence will  
>someday present itself out of the mists like Ithaca to the wandering  
>Greeks. I'm exaggerating a great deal here by ignoring the large poetic  
>and intellectual experience Pound brought to the Cantos, but it still  
>remains that he finally admitted that he could not make them cohere. It  
>was through this ethos of failure of the poem's thematic structure that

>Pound made his most important discoveries and created the Cantos' most  
>enduring passages. In the end Pound even more profoundly than Olson  
>reflected our true historical condition by incorporating fragmentation  
>and failure in a work of art which in so many ways paralleled the  
>failure of his own personal history. Pound among all the modernists  
>became an historical figure for better or worse and did it, in part, by  
>resisting (to the point of madness) the unsculpturable lessons of his  
>own chosen materials in the end succumbing, like the Cantos, to the very  
>fragmentation he sought to overwhelm.

>By the time we get to the PostModernist, Olson is their true Penelope  
>because we are prepared to accept the now overwhelmingly obvious  
>condition of fragmentation. This is utterly legitimate; in fact it shows  
>good sense. I'm just not certain that the role of poets is to show good  
>sense. In this era of 'good sense', scientific method, modelling (not of  
>the runway type), standardization, globalization, digitization etc.,  
>with all the dreams of the futurist's clean fascist lines realized,  
>poets will have little or no role to play. They will have no role no  
>matter how impeccably elegant their constructs, and no matter how much  
>hermeneutical precision they achieve, no matter how fashionable they  
>make formal and contextual randomness. Any solutions that I might  
>propose would of course embody personal thematic materials. But as with  
>all moderns this thematic material would not be restricted to my own  
>navel. I have more than hinted at some of my concerns in other posts to  
>this site and I intended to elaborate today but that would make this a  
>very long post indeed. I would just like to say that the current attacks  
>on some fifth generation academic heirs to some of the  
>'counterintuitive' conditions introduced over 80 years ago, should have  
>presented an opportunity for poets too. That it presented no opportunity  
>for those poets that support sciences purportedly pragmatic and  
>authoritarian side is no surprise; the juggernaut hardly needs them.

>Among poets, individuals versed in the counterarguments are virtually  
>non-existent. Don Byrd's statement that "The only poetry that I know  
>that attempts to face this urgency [e.g. ecological disaster] is  
>sentimental and hopelessly naive" is true but not uncorrectable. Fish,  
>Aronowitz, Hayles et al aren't great; but they've hit upon some  
>legitimate concerns as you can judge from the vehement response among  
>the establishment; an establishment that fears history so much that it  
>positions itself so that it must ridicule and deny the philosophical  
>ruminations of the physicists that birthed their very enterprise. Seems  
>to have some elements of Greek tragedy with the postmodernist  
>philosophers as chorus?---Carlo Parcelli

>P.S. I can connect the dots between formal systems and ecological  
>disaster but it ain't pretty.

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### 37. **Mark Wallace** *criticism rules*

*Mon 2 Feb 1998*

---

Hey, Henry, thanks for your response! But I think you will note that the criticism which you call for actively does exist, if you have been paying attention. I think you HAVE been reading the various publications in which such criticism appears, but if you have not, let me point you in its direction: magazines like *Talisman*, *Witz*, the forthcoming *Tripwire*, *Poetic Briefs* as it appears on occasion, *Chain*, and others of longer and shorter tenures. I'm a little bit mystified as to why you think such criticism does not exist, unless you think that your broad generalizations that all contemporary critical writing is mere puffery is itself a statement of more than mere generalized anti-puffery. Do you really believe that what's going on with poets today can simply be reduced to a kind of mutual careerist ass-kissing, in which you yourself may be the only voice calling for a legitimate self-criticism? As an Ernest Hemingway character once said, "Isn't it nice to think so?"

On the subject of "whining," while it's clear to me that the erosion in the quality of American work life, in the academic world and elsewhere, must primarily be laid at the door of the changing nature of American business-life (with its increasing consolidation of wealth at the top, and its elimination of stable jobs and a startlingly high rate of speed), I do feel that the sustained political ignorance of tenured English professors like yourself towards the rapidly decaying quality of academic life bears some responsibility for the troubled (some might say disastrous) conditions of life in English departments. Thankfully, some tenured English professors have both the grace and the courage to see that attacks on the tenure system, and the reliance on part-time professors with minimal salaries, no benefits, and very little ability to protect themselves from administrative whims represent a threat to their own, perhaps limited autonomy. That legitimate critiques of this system seem to you "whining" make it perfectly clear to me to what extent you remain part of the problem, rather than the solution. So, while I actually do enjoy your poetry, I'm afraid that cannot override the fact that in terms of those of us presently involved in seeking change in the academic world, your presence on this list, and in academic life, represents an ultimately negative force. And this is a great shame, because your energy and intelligence, both of which are clearly great, could be useful rather than destructive.

Mark Wallace

```
/-----\ |
||      | | GWU:
||      http://gwis2.circ.gwu.edu/~mdw      | | EPC:
||      http://writing.upenn.edu/epc/authors/wallace      | |
```

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### 38. **Jordan Davis**

#### **10E6 by Y2K+70**

*Mon 2 Feb 1998*

Bob Hale asks how goes the million poems project.

Henry calls for an independent auditor from within the group. But Henry, that's like putting the director on the board! You would have to leave the group, zap the p-ram, rewind, disappear, watch yr parents make love!

True, Barney Newman wrote nice things about birds and city planning. Would it be really be surprising if all these poets we are started talking about subjects other than the goddam importance of poetry? And if there were a paraphrasable meaning there nobody'd mentioned yet (notice: not 'thought of') would that be terrific. And if there suddenly proved to be poetry written before 1855, what of it? Short and long words, short and long vowels, no meaning but in variation.

We are natural consultants. Or we're fluoridated consultants, either way, there is a common willingness to speak and to speak well about everyone else's business. Good! Now get yr sloppy knees out of Providence and start scraping at court like the rest of the masquers. Loshar haron, baby.

Bob, I am subcontracting not by seance but by association. It still looks like forty poems a day for the next seventy years. Worst case is I become pharaoh and conscribe the entire output of the umfahs. Best case is the third bureaucratic dream and all that's asked is what Bruce said at your party, a thousand lines. Ah but then to have to Scheherazade for my supper and write each line a book of stone eight miles long! And call it the Strand.

Henry, the truth is more important than novelty or mere quality, right? Why assume nobody knows this? If it's rollerderby you want, I can lend you my skate key. I'd rather make sense or nonsense of other arts and sports. The best criticism is living hell.

OK enough stale syntax from me

J

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39. **Henry Gould**  
***crit rules/doesn't rule***

Mon 2 Feb 1998

---

Jordan thinks I'm calling for an internal auditor so we can have more ISN'T POETRY GREAT writing. Jordy, you may be suffering from list- overdose, and it sure is nice when people think of things other than poetry to write about (like Newman). But you lookin in the wrong side of the mirror. Indie-critics aren't part of our club.

Mark thinks I'm just generalizing by pointing out the diff between independence & individual/group puffery. I guess we see things differently. I have said all along that yes there are indie crits out there. But I stand by my exaggeration that 99% of what you find in the journals we jump on is either puffery or somebody's academic churn-out. Funny how it gets called "politics".

Mark, I don't think you or Rod or anybody's whining. I apologize again for that. What I do say is that your tenure wars or job hassles, or Rod's take on the munchin'prole status of his generation - WHILE IT MAY BE OF GREAT INTEREST & EVEN AFFECT A POETIC STYLE - in no way proves that a poetry is beyond criticism. & I repeat: Indie crits will be the best readers of what's out there.

p.s. I am not a tenured prof. I am a non-professional member of the SEIU Library Workers Union at Brown Univ. Library. I process book orders for a living & to pay child support, have been through a long strike in the not-distant past, & probably make about as much \$\$ as you do. Does that make me ineligible for your prof-wannabee club? Sorry, teach. - Henry Gould

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40. **KENT JOHNSON**  
***Re: criticism rules***

Mon 2 Feb 1998

---

On Feb. 2, Mark Wallace said:

*That legitimate critiques of this system seem to you "whining" make it perfectly clear to me to what extent you remain part of the problem, rather than the solution. So, while I actually do enjoy your poetry, I'm afraid that cannot override the fact that in terms of those of us presently involved in seeking change in the academic world, your presence on this list, and in academic life, represents an ultimately negative force. And this is a great shame, because your energy and*

*intelligence, both of which are clearly great, could be useful rather than destructive.*

So much for the dialectic.

Kent

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#### 41. **Rebecca Weldon Sithiwong**

##### ***Art forms***

*Mon 2 Feb 1998*

---

Thank you Henry Gould:

"Criticism can be an art form too, if and when it's brave enough to look at poetry as something other than a career or a kind of translated politics."

And, of course, poetry must be brave.

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#### 42. **Mark Prejsnar**

##### ***Re: criticism rules***

*Mon 2 Feb 1998*

---

Mark Wallace's longish post was the first in this very prolific thread that I felt much positive response to. Great set of comments, Mark!!

I read most things I hear of, that examine Langpo and other non-mainstream work,...and I strongly agree, that ideas rather than poetry have received most of the attention from acadominating commentators...And \*the idea of the poetry\*...Since the official verse kult'ure is very threatened by stuff that sounds interesting, they are much happier talking at and about the work, than listening to it, and engaging it.

In general I've little use for Henry's indie productions, that have garnered so many expressions of support.

I think the best and most useful and productive criticism and theory, is being done by poets.

When I think of an indie critic, I picture Helen Vendler.

Mark Prejsnar  
@lanta

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43. **Dale M Smith**

***The Necessity of Moral Perception***

*Mon 2 Feb 1998*

---

I think that David's problem with Tom's poems is similar to problems some people have had in response to some of Henry's naked posts. The assumption is that both Tom and Henry stand aside from the critique they make. Others find these judgments invalid because the authors offer their complaints from an isolated realm above that which they judge. But I think these blunt observations and direct engagements of moral and artistic values put both writers in extremely vulnerable positions. Anyone who offers a moral critique of an orthodox community risks the same rebuttals and diminishments that these exacting and demanding words provoke. Know one likes to be reminded that poetry, like everything else in this country, functions and has functioned on the same market values as business. PR is necessary or your poems risk an obscurity matched only by your life. Voices such as Tom's are reminders that you've got to have something to sell, something to bring for your business efforts. Promotion is not necessarily the problem, it's what you're promoting that raises eyebrows. Tom's and Henry's courage to state the obvious that few are willing to admit, however, is essential if poetry is to maintain a resemblance to its ancient roots and the possibilities of power those roots teach. Tom's critique stems from survival, anglo and monosyllabic. He sacrifices your good opinions of him in order to remind you that there are reasons besides our vanity and positions in the world of mammon to engage the art of poems. By the way, he may have quite a few books on the market, but he's made little profit on them, especially in recent years. At a time when other poets of his generation are accepting the rewards of their labor, Tom suffers under a weight of indifference due to the weak-minded and pathetically fearful troops of the poetic apocolypse. Anyway, his dedication, vulnerability, and willingness to speak clearly against the machines of our markets has cost him more than a perceived lack of irony.

Selling is the game, but you've got to have something of value. That's why business is a more honest trade these days, if less glamorous and more tedious

Dale Smith

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44. **Mark Wallace**

***Situation #16 now available***

*Mon 2 Feb 1998*

---

Situation #16 is now available. It features the work of Anselm Berrigan, Anne Blonstein, Brenda Coultas, Jacques Debrot, Henry Gould, Jen Hofer, Brian Lucas, William Marsh, Chris Vitiello, and Terence Winch.

Situation is edited by Joanne Molina and Mark Wallace. Subscriptions are \$10 for four issues or \$3 for back or single issues. All submissions must be accompanied by a SASE. Make checks payable to Mark Wallace. Send submissions or subscriptions to Situation, 10402 Ewell Ave., Kensington, MD 20895.

We feel that this is one of our very best issues, so we hope you'll check it out.

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45. **k. lederer**  
***Re: missing generation***  
*Mon 2 Feb 1998*

---

Bill!

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46. **Harold Rhenisch**  
***Re: Indie Critics***  
*Mon 2 Feb 1998*

---

>>I cant figure out what the reference "indie critic" or "indi critic" is referring to. Does it mean a critic from India, or a critic of race cars?

Neither. It means "In dee Critic", meaning where to insert the poem.

This reader is reminded of the German "Das Geld hier einwerfen!", stalwartly translated on coinboxes throughout Germany as "Throw your money in here."

Harold Rhenisch



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47. **Gary Sullivan**  
***Re: Response to Maria's Question***  
*Mon 2 Feb 1998*

---

Yow! I'm sorry, Maria! I really never meant to put you on the defensive, nor did I mean to imply you weren't dancing as fast as you can. I know you are! My question was probably very naive; I was under the assumption that your original question ("anyone else noticed imbalance?") implied longing for some more-than-individual push toward rectification. Further assumption being that any such nudge might, at this time, be communal, as opposed to individual, effort. I thought you were calling to arms! & was kinda prompting you further,



wondering if you had some ideas you were tempted to throw out. Anyway, putting you on the defensive was really the last thing on my mind. Forgive me!

Gary Sullivan



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#### 48. **nikuko**

##### *Nikuko's Service Offer*

Mon 2 Feb 1998

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#####  
#####  
#####  
#####
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Hey Guys, Write Me! I'll do \_Anything\_ Just for You!

- Nikuko!!!!

Nikuko p0 tc-1-119.fukuoka 2:10AM 0 w

{k:14} cat passwd | grep nikuko

nikuko\*:13788:22:Nikuko:/home/n/nikuko:/bin/ksh

daemon\*:1:1:Nikuko1 System Daemon:/:nologin, comeon!

sys\*:2:2:Nikuko1 Operating System:/tmp:nologin, comeon!

bin\*:3:7:Nikuko1 BSDI Software:/usr/bsdi:nologin, comeon!

operator\*:5:5:Nikuko1 System Operator:/usr/opr:nologin, comeon!

games\*:7:13:Nikuko1 Games Pseudo-user:/usr/games:nologin, comeon!

news\*:9:8:Nikuko1 USENET News:/var/news/etc:nologin, comeon!

demo\*:10:13:Nikuko1 Demo User:/usr/demo:nologin, comeon!

(I'm not Nice!)

```
#####  
#####  
# Format of headers #  
#####  
#####
```

H?P?Return-Path: <\$g> Nikuko, eh?

HReceived: \$?sfrom \$s \$.\$\_(\$?s\$|from \$.\$\_)

\$.by \$j (\$v/\$Z)\$?r with \$r\$. id \$i\$?u

for \$u; \$|;

\$.b

H?D?Resent-Date: \$a

H?D?Date: \$a

H?F?Resent-From: \$?x\$x <\$g>\$|\$g\$.

```
H?F?From: Nikuko, eh? $?x$x <$g>$|$g$.
H?x?Full-Name: Nikuko, eh? $x
# HPosted-Date: $a
# H?l?Received-Date: $b
H?M?Resent-Message-Id: <$t.$i@$j>
H?M?Message-Id: <$t.$i@$j>
#
#
#####
#####
Script started on Tue Feb 3 02:23:09 1998
$ ps
  PID TT STAT    TIME COMMAND
17546 p0- I    0:00.00 leave, Nikuko! +59
20548 p0  Ss    0:00.12 -ksh (ksh)
20580 p0  I    0:00.00 leave, Nikuko! +59
24744 p0  S+    0:00.01 script ll
24756 p0  S+    0:00.01 script ll
24757 p1  Ss    0:00.01 sh sh, shhh, Nikuko! (ksh)
24959 p1  R+    0:00.00 ps
$ exit Nikuko!

Script done on Tue Feb 3 02:23:20 1998
#####
#####
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#####
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#####
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#### 49. **David Benedetti**

##### **Re: Toro Toro**

*Mon 2 Feb 1998*

---

"Beware of the bull with three horns"

or

"Don't try to milk a bull"

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50. **Dale M Smith**

**Re: criticism rules**

Mon 2 Feb 1998

---

Yeah. And what are these changes? Do you mean the ones that continue to turn the academy into a dalliant institution of artistic and intelctual pretensions? The continued attempts of jealous critics to remove power from the poets in order to fulfill their own uncreative hunger for the poet's intuitive abilities? The continued removal of literature from practical interpretative skills? The alienating and continued building of obscure hermetical theories of vain and deluded investitures?

I may be wrong, but part of the academy's failure is that it has allowed critics to distort the balance of art and interpretation \*and quite a few of the poets bought into that\*. The problems facing those of us who want to know something, regardless of which side of the academic fence you're on, is practical. As poetry and criticism blur into a more and more similar form, the power of both weakens. But perhaps I'm missing something of this new academy. I hope so. Maybe I'm wrong. Steve Evans is certainly a dedicated critic. Maybe there are others with devotion to poetry, rathe than to ideas about it.

Rar.

To: [REDACTED]

On Feb. 2, Mark Wallace said:

*That legitimate critiques of this system seem to you "whining" make it perfectly clear to me to what extent you remain part of the problem, rather than the solution. So, while I actually do enjoy your poetry, I'm afraid that cannot override the fact that in terms of those of us presently involved in seeking change in the academic world, your presence on this list, and in academic life, represents an ultimately negative force. And this is a great shame, because your energy and intelligence, both of which are clearly great, could be useful rather than destructive.*

So much for the dialectic.

Kent

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51. **KENT JOHNSON**

**Re: Toro Toro**

Mon 2 Feb 1998

---

On Feb. 2, David Benedetti wrote:

"Beware of the bull with three horns"

or

"Don't try to milk a bull"

Bully for you, David! Did you know, funny coincidence, that Uruguay's most famous contemporary writer is named Mario Benedetti?

Kent

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## 52. **Jack Spandrift**

**Re: Toro Toro**

Mon 2 Feb 1998

"Beware of the bull with three horns"

or

"Don't try to milk a bull"

Bene, bene, Benedetti - thou too hast read the parable aright, along with Brother Dale. For he that hath nought whereof to sell, behold, thou shalt find him doin' the street-shell game on Broadway. Behold, this is a hard saying for yon poets; hard indeed is the sell whereof I speaketh. For it would be better for them not to sell at all; lo, this is the Walter Mitty safeliest way of yon courageous Henry.

- J amongst the Books Of...

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## 53. **k. lederer**

**Re: Rachel, criticism, 420 E Davenport, anthropology--**

Mon 2 Feb 1998

Dear Rachel,

Interesting issues--I suppose that I would have to hone in on the question you ask about the connection between Nick Regiacorte's work and Josh May's work.

This kind of questions brings up something really fascinating--I think--something that answers to a lot of the recent posts on the list about criticism in general--

I think (as a sometimes-critic, and also as a poet) that good criticism is usually a homage to one's own taste--

If I like a writer's work, I want people with whom I share "discourse" to be familiar with that person's work--

I want that person to be able to publish a book if that's what he or she wants to do--

I want to convince people that this writer is as good as I think he or she is so that, finally, I can further enjoy this person's work and share it with others--

If I like a writer, I want to "share" that writer with others--

Now of course my take on the writer is going to be highly situated--highly personal--

If I set up camps or groups of writers--it is merely according to my whims, my take on their work--

Perhaps (as is true of my magazine) I would try to put writers in various contexts together so that certain aspects of their work might be highlighted and (inevitably) other aspects of their work be de-emphasized--

I don't think there's anything wrong with this approach--

Personally, I was trained in anthropology as an undergrad--

I also majored in English--

In the early 90s, the two disciplines shared a lot of concerns (vis-a-vis Foucault, Greenblatt, Derrida etc).

I always found that the debates that were current in anthro at the time applied readily to issues in lit crit.

How can an observer even pretend to be objective about another culture (po-etic?)?

How can one still write ethnography (criticism) in the context of the "new" "world system" (or, alternatively, the newly homogenizing, and increasingly market-driven "academic economy")?

How can anthropologists continue to practice ethnography in light of their traditional (whether purposeful or no) collusion with colonial forms of oppression--e.&&&&

All of these questions resulted in some pretty simple answers:

The anthropologist should try to make it clear to the reader--to the best of their ability--their situation, where they're coming from. Pretensions toward objectivity were abandoned in some regards in 80s and early 90s anthro--

The anthropologist should, perhaps, focus on cultures that have been considered heretofore not so "strange" or "exotic"--science, government, stock-market culture, gamblers in Vegas etc. (Mimesis and Alterity by Michael Taussig is interesting in this regard--)

(This issue echoes, I think, this notion that critics are inevitably the "oppressors"--that somehow it seems that only poets should be "allowed" to write criticism--or perhaps that poets should never be allowed to write it--the binary is similar in either case)

The anthropologist should keep a number of ethical imperatives in mind at all times:

Do not "study a culture" to its detriment--

Do not collude with the "forces of oppression"--

Do not make claims about a given culture (poetic?) without having done the necessary research--

Etc.

I think that most of the above leads to one conclusion in particular--

The best way to encourage fair and ethically sound criticism (of a culture--of a book of poetry?) is to encourage all different types of people to practice such criticism--

Rather than push objectivity, perhaps we should try a new approach--and push subjectivity.

That's how I do my criticism--that's how I edit. Sometimes my "subjectivity" demands that I publish work that isn't "perfect" because it still contributes to a larger dialogue in which I may be "subjectively" interested--

I try to have broad representation (race, gender, poetic camp, ability to craft a poem etc) in my magazine because it is in my best interest--intellectually and socially--to encourage an array of voices, approaches, poetics--even "abilities."

I like to put Nick R and Josh M together because of my highly subjective interest in some of the tonal strategies they both employ--

This is because I am very interested in tone in my own writing--

I also mention them because I go to school with them and am forced to engage with their work on a daily basis--

These are not, in my view, things to be ashamed of--they are partialities, yes, but they are my partialities--partialities that I would never expect anyone else to take on--though I would love it if they did--

Yours,

Katy (Mrs. Robinson Upstairs)

\*\*\*\*

On

Sat, 31 Jan 1998, R M Daley wrote:

katy

weez down here in the midwest shur are grateful for 't all the talkin  
bout things in-teelekchul-

but just to ask which generation is it that one belongs to ifn this is the  
case - ie, what if this seemingly necessary definition-by-generation is  
not so necessary seeming? in this belly of the beast even, arent there  
first years, second years, undergrads, not-in-the-workshoppers, undergrads  
in workshops, ... - just to say that maybe a 'critical' take understood  
via singular constructions such as generational, or gender, arent so  
useful finally- and like you say, how bout looking at the 'work' (as  
opposed to the 'play'??)- in this respect,  
i'm interested in the link you imply in work such as nick regiacorte's and  
that of say, josh may - both of whom have writing around, maybe not in the  
'successes' form of a book contract or even a single publication, but  
beyond this, what gives? - in the end, what is the motivation to say 'this  
work belongs in this camp, this one belongs over here'? reviews aside,  
which do seem to function purely as PR (have never personally read a  
scathing review of any book, poetry), 'critical' work, as you have said  
before, can certainly be that kind of thing taht tells you as much about  
how a reader reads as a writer writes - well that these are more closely  
related in process (read: simultaneous) than the terminological  
distinction between 'reader' and 'writer' ('critic' and 'writer') makes  
them out to be

rd

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54. **p. durgin**

**M. A. Tata**

Mon 2 Feb 1998

---

Sorry to clog the way with this sort of request (again), but would anyone  
have a snail-mail address for Michael Angelo Tata (poet featured in the latest  
issue of Mass Ave.)? I've gone and lost it. Thanks.

Patrick F. Durgin

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`  
` ----->\*<-----  
` K E N N I N G|  
` anewletterof|  
` poetry&poetic|  
` s418BrownSt.#|





(unconfirmed), Michelle Grangaud (unconfirmed). Plus a John Forbes memorial, music(?) and an exhibition of visual arts by or associated with Tom Rafter.

Booking enquiries: Ian Patterson, Kings College Cambridge, CB2 1ST. 01223 331196. email: [REDACTED]

John Tranter has asked me to mention that anyone interested to find out more about the late John Forbes could consult the Jacket Magazine website <http://www.jacket.zip.com.au> where in issue #3 there is a poem by Forbes, and will later be a memorial section.

/Peter Riley

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### 57. **Safdie Joseph**

***Re: I see now that by forwarding this I can make it available again***

*Mon 2 Feb 1998*

On the contrary, I think Michael has just improved Tom's poem greatly! An excellent method of "making it new," Michael! Just leave it up to the reader's imagination -- make the reader the author -- isn't that one of the very tenets of the poetry you admire?

I'll have some more to say about David's lively, intelligent yet ultimately ungenerous post (which didn't, by the way, deal with the reason I posted those stanzas) as soon as I can -- but really, emptying verse of its so-called "buzz words" -- its CONTENT! -- to call attention to its syntactical framework seems an empty exercise indeed.

-----  
From: Michael Magee[SMTP:[REDACTED]]  
Sent: Tuesday, February 03, 1998 2:06 AM  
To: [REDACTED]  
Subject: Re: I see now that by forwarding this I can make it available again

Thanks to David B for his reading of Clark and reposting of such. My main problem with these sections of "Early Warning" - though I'm in basic agreement w/ David's reading - is that its very structure seems pretty hackneyed stuff: & I don't mean its not sufficiently "experimental": even among current examples of more traditional uses of structure it just seems kind of tired. Look what happens when you empty it of its buzz-words:

"43

*Driven together by a blank to blank  
Knowing no blank but that of blank  
They continued to blank each other's blank  
Even in this blank of blank  
Though allegedly they were dedicated to blank  
Instead it was blank that motivated them  
So that they resembled blank  
Traveling in a blank with maximum blank  
The attention of blank turned instantly to any  
blank who threatened to blank  
The rest, and this blank was collectively attacked"*

*This is what I call "the cliché of syntax". A pretty old story indeed.*

-m.

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58. **david bromige**

***Tom Clark's moral perception***

*Mon 2 Feb 1998*

Dale, and the matter of the Brecht quote that Tom so immorally misapplied?

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59. **Michael Magee**

***Re: I see now that by forwarding this I can make it available***

*Mon 2 Feb 1998*

Hmm...this seems "ultimately ungenerous," I thought mine was a somewhat interesting exercise, I rather like my version, pot-shots at the "poetry I admire" aside, now that I think about it; but, oh well, back to my little laboratory of "experiments" (that's what the poets you admire think of the poets I admire, isn't it?). Last of my tit-for-tat, -m.

According

to Safdie Joseph: >

> On the contrary, I think Michael has just improved Tom's poem greatly!

> An excellent method of "making it new," Michael! Just leave it up to the

> reader's imagination -- make the reader the author -- isn't that one of

> the very tenets of the poetry you admire?

>

> I'll have some more to say about David's lively, intelligent yet  
> ultimately un-generous post (which didn't, by the way, deal with the  
> reason I posted those stanzas) as soon as I can -- but really, emptying  
> verse of its so-called "buzz words" -- its CONTENT! -- to call attention  
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> > To:   
> > Subject: Re: I see now that by forwarding this I can make it  
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> > agreement w/ David's reading - is that its very structure seems pretty  
> > hackneyed stuff: & I don't mean its not sufficiently "experimental":  
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> >  
> > This is what I call "the cliché of syntax". A pretty old story  
> > indeed.

> >  
> > -m.  
> >  
>

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60. **Ben Carrelis**  
***Celan/Montale/Olson/Coatlicue***

*Mon 2 Feb 1998*

On a certain level - like one of the allegorical levels in Dante's INFERNO, where each character is both irrefutable and damned - Henry the Bull's call for a independent critic - the Voice of the General Reader - is relentless & undefeatable. The most cogent counter-argument simply points out the limitations of that argument while augmenting its undeniable results.

Here in Sydney a study group has evolved into four separate groups in dialogue, each based on a different subject: Celan, Montale, Charles Olson, and the as-yet unread (for the most part) Mexican poet Guada L. Coatlicue. The impact of Coatlicue's feminist subsumption & rewriting of the three male Euro-American authors within a historical-personal *\_allegoria tota\_* is difficult to encapsulate; but in relation to Henry the Bull's Papal Bulls, one comprehends perhaps more deeply than was intended the meaning of "bull darkness". To summarize: poetry, along with music & visual art, has enacted a trajectory of autonomy over several generations; the most intense and productive creations require a SPECIAL READING alert to the allegorical motives of the text. Henry's "washed clean" indie crit is to the "bought out" poet-as-con-artist as Coatlicue's poet-as-hermetic secret is to Henry's indie-crit. I.e. the indie-crit as representative of an aesthetic surface response will never penetrate the interior motive of the poet-as-such.

The best way to support this argument is to "read" the last 7 days of Henry the Bull postings in allegorical fashion. At the center we find the poem "Hieroglyph" which enacts a finally unproblematic response to "Papa" the house-builder & (Judaic?) Sphinx-interpreter; an unproblematic reading in isomorphic equilibrium with the unproblematic relationship of "independent critic" and "honest poem". Place this in the context of the total U.S. culture in which the "Papa" in the White House faces a "sementically" charged analysis of shattered presidential authority: we have a compensatory complex which begins to reveal the tragi-comic ENACTMENT of American reality. From the Sydney perspective, down here way south of the Meridian & out of the loop & very close to Poe's TEKE-LI-LI, what surfaces is America's dramatic AGON-EKSTASIS - the fateful LACK of an independent high culture expressed as the acting-out of

theatrical DISASTER at all levels crossing the Black VERNal JORDAN toward....  
??? Minstrel showbiz????

- Ben Carrelis, a.k.a. "Edgar Allan Poe"

p.s. one should point out, however, that, whatever the limitations of Henry the Bull's analysis, our counter-analysis only reinforces his "prophetic" enunciation. Why? Because if the presence of independent criticism is a tragic phantasm of the Bullish imagination, then the "blurb" as expression of appeal to the "general reader" (i.e. "this poet is going to change your world") is DOUBLY fantastic - and, in Henry's words, a true example of CHICANERY.

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61. **Rachel Loden**  
***Re: pumping poetry***

Mon 2 Feb 1998

---

Patrick Pritchett wrote (wisely I thought):

*In other words, in the mutually interdependent world of the ten kajillion things, you can't have the one without all the others too. What you're really talking about is the end of a capital-based society - the end of the opposition between purity of vocation and Mammon - and a return to a gift economy. Well not really a return, but... Ja love, y'all.*

Lovely moment on public radio, caught with half an ear: William "Daddy bought me a magazine" Buckley is being interviewed and the mostly very deferential interviewer screws his courage to the sticking place and asks: "Do you see any contradiction between your Christian faith and your faith in capitalism?" Buckley continues to wax grandiloquently about this and that, ducks the question. Time runs out and the interviewer tries one last time: "So--do you see any conflict between your faith in Christianity and your faith in capitalism?" There's an awkward silence and then Buckley says "Noooo. If I saw any contradiction, I'd have to give up my faith in Chris--I'd have to give up my faith in capitalism."

God bless the child,

Rachel Loden

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62. **Herb Levy**  
***Uh, (Was Re: I see now that by forwarding this I can make it available again)***

Mon 2 Feb 1998

---

Joe Safdie (hi neighbor) wrote:

*I'll have some more to say about David's lively, intelligent yet ultimately un-generous post (which didn't, by the way, deal with the reason I posted those stanzas) as soon as I can*

Since Dale Smith began his recent tirades by calling David Bromige a "self deluded, lying coward" & a "guardian of banality", among other things, I think a willingness on Bromige's part to continue ANY form of dialog with Smith is more than generous.

If Smith were interested in engaging in a discussion about the issues it might come of something, but given that his argument reduces to "if you knew him, you'd know that what he writes is what poetry is & always has been, nothing else is poetry & anyone who can't see this as the ultimate truth is an stupid asshole", I'm not sure that I can foresee any generous end to the current discourse.

A charmingly romantic gesture on Smith's part, I suppose, but not the way to try to talk among folks who are, whether he likes it or not, peers.

&, Joe, David's reading of the Clark passages you quoted deal EXACTLY with the reasons you posted those stanzas, by pointing out that

*the  
lack of necessity to "interpret"*

which you find to be

*a pleasure in and of itself*

is only unnecessary if you buy into the presuppositions of the writer's "plain statements."

See you on the block,

Herb

Herb Levy



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63. **k. lederer**

***Re: First Intensity***

*Tue 3 Feb 1998*

---

Does anyone know the mailing address for First Intensity?

Thanks,

Katy



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64. **Schuchat Simon**

**contents**

Tue 3 Feb 1998

---

does anyone know what will be included (i.e., the table of contents) of the soon to appear 2 volume Library of America Gertrude Stein?

presumably not the entire text of Making of Americans but at around 1100 pages per volume it might be quite alot of everything else.

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65. **Mark Baker**

***Re: I see now that by forwarding this I can make it available again***

Tue 3 Feb 1998

---

From Blank to Blank--

This Threaded Way

M pushed Mechanic feet--

or, as Lehman reports from the mainstream:

Iowa City was said to be the place where  
all aspiring poets went, their poems written  
on water, with blanks instead of words

Mark Baker

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66. **L.MacMahon and T.R.Healy**

**short words**

Tue 3 Feb 1998

---

The discussion of short words and so on recalled Beckett's poem *\_Thither\_*, the title being a wry mini-doc on nationalism. In Ireland th will most likely be pronounced d or t. So, many of my compatriots would pronounce it *\_Tidder\_* (Titter is possible but not used. In Gaelic it would be pronounced h giving us combinations like *\_Hitter\_* and so on.) Also, few enough Catholic Paddies would know the word, which appears in *\_The Book of Common Prayer\_* and the Authorised Version, thus fencing off the main religious menus. Denoting motion towards, this out-of-date couple of syllables, shibboleth and thumbnail history glosses many of the circles around which we, in this bi-partite island, have gone and are likely to continue going for some time.

Randolph Healy

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67. **Daniel Zimmerman**

***Re: First Intensity***

*Tue 3 Feb 1998*

---

k. lederer wrote:

>

> Does anyone know the mailing address for First Intensity?

>

> Thanks,

> Katy

> [REDACTED]

Lee Chapman

Editor

First Intensity

P.O. Box 665

Lawrence, KS 66044

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68. **linda russo**

***missing gens, maria's q &c.***

*Tue 3 Feb 1998*

---

maria, rachel, kevin, dodie, pat, juliana, gary --

i had poetics switched off but my friend chris alexander forwarded me your posts b/c he thought they would be of interest to me --

rachel's & maria's responses to gary's q's abt.

community interest & confuse me -- i had thought

the 70s-80s were a time of community & visibility building

for women poets (as juliana points out -- how(ever), & Tuumba & O

(tho the latter 2 not specifically geared twd. publishing women) --

which is part of the topic of an essay i'm currently writing, or a

dissertation i'm working on??));

weren't there also a lot of writing groups, etc?

since i \*realized\* innovative women poets (living 7 years in cambridge mass didn't help) I've wanted to find out more & there are a great deal of (both poetry & poetics) anthologies now -- but i always feel like i'm doing double-time (trying to read both genders) this is perhaps silly but i wish it weren't so. I want to have all that stuff in place -- a history of writing, not just men writing (re juliana's point abt langpo-originary tales) -- "annals" to turn to & i don't want to "discriminate" by only writing about or reading women -- but there isn't a lot out there, there are gaps -- probably b/c, as maria points out, the longer



the trip the lower a woman's survival rate. so i feel like a first-wave feminist (researching -- not whole canons (thank god!) -- but unearthing bits of history) when i want to be more "post-feminist" or postmodern (in the sense of there is only difference, we are all other).

Which brings me to the question of feminism & writing as praxis. It seems to me that if a woman in any way writes innovative poetry then she is a feminist, that her feminism somehow preceeds but doesn't determine her need to write (as it did say, in the 70s, e.g. Fraser's "poem in which my legs are accepted" (and the whole her early books) That is, feminism functions in the same way that *\*any\** writer's politics are a precedent (e.g. less *\*overtly\** feminist works, like Hejinian's *\_The Cell\_* & Dahlen's *\_A Reading\_*) --

i guess i'm just tired of feminism being a woman-thing -- again, wanting to be a postmodern feminist -- but not having the tools (the tradition, the annals) to do that.

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#### 69. **Henry Gould**

##### ***Re: Rachel, criticism, 420 E Davenport, anthropology--***

*Tue 3 Feb 1998*

---

On Mon, 2 Feb 1998 13:46:07 -0600 k. lederer said:

>

>I think (as a sometimes-critic, and also as a poet) that good criticism is  
>usually a homage to one's own taste--

>

>If I like a writer's work, I want people with whom I share "discourse" to  
>be familiar with that person's work--

>

>I want that person to be able to publish a book if that's what he or she  
>wants to do--

>

>I want to convince people that this writer is as good as I think he or she  
>is so that, finally, I can further enjoy this person's work and share it  
>with others--

>

>If I like a writer, I want to "share" that writer with others--

>

>Now of course my take on the writer is going to be highly  
>situated--highly personal--

>

>If I set up camps or groups of writers--it is merely according to  
>my whims, my take on their work--

Katy, I think the position you've laid out here is probably standard for the field at the moment. And if you read Ben Carrelis' interesting post from Australia, you'd understand that your position is the "safest", considering, as Ben pointed out, the dense, hermetic and highly autonomous nature of contemporary work & the need for a deep grounding in it before "standards" of criticism can be applied. Nevertheless, if this is the best that editors & critics can do, I find it rather sad. My call is for a truly independent criticism - in which critics maintain a concept of poetry-in-general - ADMITTEDLY SUBJECTIVE & developmental, perhaps, but still, a PERSONAL STANDARD - which allows them to write in truly critical fashion: i.e. as an interpreter, perhaps even a praiser, of work, but NOT as an advocate. Such independent criticism would require a style and approach which equals in originality & rectitude the individual standard "Henry" said is a requirement for making poetry itself ("the word on the line").

I am not trying to debunk your kind of criticism; in a multifarious world of deep writing such exploration is natural and necessary. All I am asking is that you & others not DENY the very possibility of a criticism which MEASURES (by its own standards) rather than PROMOTES a particular writing. - Henry Gould

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70. **Rachel Levitsky**

***Winter poetry in Boulder***

*Tue 3 Feb 1998*

---

Hello Poetics.

Rachel Levitsky here to report on last Thursday's Left Hand Reading.

Listling Patrick Pritchett,

Naropa student, Megan Marsnik,

and CU Creative Writing chair, Marilyn Krysl

took the audience,

which was mostly sitting on the floor since to our surprise the previous owner took the chairs with him when he moved and sold the building to health food giant Wild Oats (no one is sure of future fate of reading space, but all signs suggest there is reason to be worried)

like I said, we took a ride around the world, from Pritchett's journey into chemistry of the fire burns Joan of Arc--it's parallel agency with language:

"Fire as verb as noun

as endless altar and supercollider"

to Megan Marsnik's (four) stories covering (inhabiting) the terrain of domesticity, ending with a scathing, hilarious spoof on the halo of reception that pregnancy receives, the assumed bliss of a woman in that compromised state.

to Marilyn Krysl's exquisite economy of words, crossing with the economy of India, her travels in South Asia, including a few month's work at a Mother Theresa hospice, turned into careful, eerily passionate collection of poems \_Warscape With Lovers\_ which earned Krysl the Cleveland State Poetry Center prize.

The Series has four open slots, and the second to last was filled by Marc DuCharme, who blasted out an incredible collaboration, the collaborators name I can't remember, that wouldn't quit, as wouldn't Marc's brilliant presentation. What I remember is the poems repeatedly expressed desire to end itself, but couldn't, without covering all of it.

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## 71. **Tom Mandel** **"indie"**

*Tue 3 Feb 1998*

---

The term "indie" is a net term, or so I think -- it claims to mean "independent" but really just means "individual" and refers to sites on the net where someone offers opinion or analysis on his own hook, i.e. not as part of an institution.

Examples from the industry I know best include the sites of Dave Winer [www.scripting.com/davenet/](http://www.scripting.com/davenet/) or Doc Searls' Reality 2.0 at [www.searls.com/r2.html](http://www.searls.com/r2.html) or Chris Locke(aka Rage Boy)'s site at <http://www.rageboy.com>. (These are all friends of mine, so if you don't like their work tell somebody else)

There are equivalent sites by the hundreds of thousands I'd guess on every topic.

Tom

Tom Mandel

\*\*\*\*\*

Screen Porch \* <http://screenporch.com>

4020 Williamsburg Ct, Ste 200 \* vox: [REDACTED]

Fairfax, VA 22031 \* fax: [REDACTED]

\*\*\*\*\*

Join the Caucus Conversation

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72. **Dale M Smith**

**Uh,**

Tue 3 Feb 1998

---

Actually, my 'argument' said that there is a vulnerability in these poems that David did not acknowledge. If I confused this with Tom's personal life it's because I find poetry to be personal as well as a public statement, reflection or expression etc... And the 'us-them' binary I'm accused of does not originate with me. Scroll through the archives of this list and you will find plenty of examples in which Tom or Ed have been branded with various stigmatas that place them well outside of the poetics community shared by many here. I don't know what else it takes to 'engage' on this list, by the way. As a 'peer' I think I've responded with generous efforts to explain my positions. Maybe referring to David, in a moment of anger, as a self-delusional coward, etc. was out of line. But as a guardian of... something...I still have no doubts. Just as I, for whatever reasons of dementia and devotion, respond in kind to comments I find floundering in the usual realms of accepted platitudes. If that's 'charming' or 'romantic' great. And by the way, those poems Joe posted, though apropos to the discussion, aren't very representative of Tom's work. But I doubt if this list would generate much discussion about his poems on Keats, say. Or other unfashionable subjects like that. The syntax might be too 'uninteresting.' As if syntax was the only measure of verse. The sensual pleasures of language - the music, the rhythm - can be as entertaining as the mental stimulation of syntax.

To: [REDACTED]

Joe Safdie (hi neighbor) wrote:

*I'll have some more to say about David's lively, intelligent yet ultimately un-generous post (which didn't, by the way, deal with the reason I posted those stanzas) as soon as I can*

Since Dale Smith began his recent tirades by calling David Bromige a "self deluded, lying coward" & a "guardian of banality", among other things, I think a willingness on Bromige's part to continue ANY form of dialog with Smith is more than generous.

If Smith were interested in engaging in a discussion about the issues it might come of something, but given that his argument reduces to "if you knew him, you'd know that what he writes is what poetry is & always has been, nothing else is poetry & anyone who can't see this as the ultimate truth is an stupid asshole", I'm not sure that I can foresee any generous end to the current discourse.

A charmingly romantic gesture on Smith's part, I suppose, but not the way to try to talk among folks who are, whether he likes it or not, peers.

& Joe, David's reading of the Clark passages you quoted deal EXACTLY with the reasons you posted those stanzas, by pointing out that

| *the*  
| *lack of necessity to "interpret"*

which you find to be

| *a pleasure in and of itself*

is only unnecessary if you buy into the presuppositions of the writer's "plain statements."

See you on the block,

Herb

Herb Levy



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### 73. **Tom Mandel**

#### ***Tom Clark's Brecht quote***

*Tue 3 Feb 1998*

---

I didn't read Tom Clark's Partisan Review essay; I didn't even hear much about it at the time. Hence I wasn't aware that he'd used Brecht's 1942 quote as a way to characterize language poetry.

David Bromige's excellent post on Clark, which btw exemplifies the ways a poet can be a wonderful critic, does not all the same go far enough in showing us the nature of this ugly smear (and, by implication, this ugly man).

All I know of the essay (& I expect never to know more) is its title (reference to Stalin) and the Brecht quote (reference to Hitler). That's enough for me.

The title quotes a poem by Watten (I don't remember which, however), which itself refers to the fact that Stalin authored (i.e. somebody wrote for him) a pamphlet on Linguistics. It's among my books somewhere, but I can't locate it easily enough to find and supply its title. I'm sorry not to be able to be more specifically helpful re: Barry's poem or Stalin's pamphlet.

Obviously, the reference to this work or self-positioning of Stalin is the entry point to whatever world of reference, thought, analysis, feeling is opened up in Watten's line (for an analysis of which however I'd need the context at hand). Obviously, also, it is *\*not\** a simple naming of Stalin as a linguist. Neither simple identification, nor any kind of naming of an authority. Nor is it a characterization of language.

It would appear, however, that this is how Tom Clark wants to use it. He wants to use it against his fellow poets. The moreso given his really quite disgusting appropriation of Brecht's words to the identical purpose of harming his fellow poets.

My work is associated with the group of poets Tom Clark sought to flavor with the odor of fascism, of Stalinism. It's more than a decade ago, but I can smell the brush he waved past my face.

I'm also a Jew. Most of my family on my father's side and many on my mother's side were killed by Nazis.

I don't mind if Tom Clark sells himself; I don't even mind if he sells himself to the devil. And I don't think my personal history condemns his foul words. But, I do tend to take this kind of thing a little personally. I don't want that brush in my face.

For a long time, I studied with Hannah Arendt, author of *Eichmann in Jerusalem*. I struggled with the conclusion to that book, in which Arendt at once acknowledges the immorality of punishment by death and at the same time approves the execution of Eichmann. I went to see her in her office with my struggle. I well remember her words that there are people who exclude themselves from the social contract by their actions, who put themselves outside of moral consideration. It was in this way that she could accept and even underline the execution of Eichmann.

What exists on that scale also exists on a smaller scale. I'm not suggesting that Tom Clark put himself outside the moral order -- not at all. But that intellectual act was outside the moral order, hintingly associating poets around him with fascism and Stalinism and by contrast obviously positioning himself in the role of resistance, the moral role -- selling himself in that role -- I find that disgusting.

For every person who pushes himself forward at another's expense in this manner, there are acolytes waiting to line up behind the effort. I'm sorry to see Joe Safdie and Dale Smith line up behind Tom Clark's effort to position his poetic career on the backs of his peers.

Perhaps Joe at least will say that his relation to this is more complex; that he is not a supporter of the position. I don't think Dale has that option, except by way of changing his mind (which would be welcome). I also don't think, however, that there is a more complex or nuanced response available. Casuistry is not a noble art of mind. Tom Clark's undeniable verbal skill and nimble imagination don't militate against purpose; they only make it more necessary to resist that purpose.

Tom Mandel

Tom Mandel

\*\*\*\*\*

Screen Porch \* <http://screenporch.com>

4020 Williamsburg Ct, Ste 200 \* vox: [REDACTED]

Fairfax, VA 22031 \* fax: [REDACTED]

\*\*\*\*\*

Join the Caucus Conversation

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74. **Karen Kelley**

***Re: Rachel, criticism, 420 E Davenport***

*Tue 3 Feb 1998*

---

Hi Henry,

I admire your commitment tp this issue! In the last post you wrote:All I I am asking is that you & others not DENY the very possibility of a criticism which MEASURES (by its own standards) rather than PROMOTES a particular writing.\_

And if a poetry does \_measure up\_ (to my own critical standards), do I then \_promote\_ it? Would expressing too much delight in the work count as promotion (if I were a critic with a large audience)?

For all the occasional swipes it's fashionable to take at Helen Vendler, I must admit that I love reading her on Wallace Stevens--in large part because she's so clear about how much she loves his work.

Isn't that how we often explain art to each other--by pointing out the qualities that delight us?

Karen

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75. **David Benedetti**

***Re: I can't see now by forwarding this***

*Tue 3 Feb 1998*

---

Joe--you can't really separate the syntax from the content.

On Mon, 2 Feb 1998, Safdie Joseph wrote:

> I'll have some more to say about David's lively, intelligent yet  
> ultimately un-generous post (which didn't, by the way, deal with the  
> reason I posted those stanzas) as soon as I can -- but really, emptying  
> verse of its so-called "buzz words" -- its CONTENT! -- to call attention

> to its syntactical framework seems an empty exercise indeed.  
>

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76. **David Benedetti**

***Re: criticism rules, or non-rules***

*Tue 3 Feb 1998*

---

On Mon, 2 Feb 1998, Dale M Smith wrote:

> As poetry and criticism blur into a more and more similar form, the  
> power of both weakens.  
>

I find the opposite. When poetry expands to "include" criticism--or critical tactics--it gets more interesting for me, and loses nothing, only gains.

Postmodern criticism is sometimes poetic.

Postmodern poetry is sometimes quite "critical."

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77. **Mark Wallace**

***criticism rules***

*Tue 3 Feb 1998*

---

My apologies to Henry Gould for misstating his academic position, and for my harshness of tone, although undoubtedly there were aspects of what he said that were upsetting to me. Actually--how do these rumors get started?--somehow or other I was completely convinced that he was a university professor. In any case, I receive the poetics digest and didn't see that Henry had probably posted a more generous response to the debate BEFORE my last response. I wouldn't have continued in the tone that I did if I had known.

I think I would still suggest, Henry, that there may be more independence in the poet-critic voices than you quite give credit for. We don't simply promote each other, without critique, although it seems to me that there are certain environments in which this kind of promotion is called for--and sometimes this list is such an environment. Rather sharp debate continues among poets and poet-critics of all stripes, and some of the writers whose recent work I admire highly I have also been critical of when the situation seems to call for it. I have a huge amount of admiration for Ron Silliman, but when I think he's wrong about something, which is actually rarely, I'm quite ready to say so. The criticism of Steve Evans is of profound current importance, yet I have published and posted commentary which also includes those places where I've found his arguments



less than sufficient, to me at least. And I think many other poets and critics are involved in this sort of activity also.

Ultimately, I don't think the difference is between critics with cultural and poetic investments and those free of such investments, but between the various kinds of investments that all critical writing has--its loyalty or not to certain writers, its involvement with the industry that makes its own existence possible, perhaps its financial concerns. I agree with Dale Smith that writers need to "come clean" with the underpinnings of their various allegiances, but I don't think that there is some independent space outside of those allegiances. Does that mean such criticism is biased, as well as fractious, etc? Certainly. But I frankly see such overt partiality, if handled with an attempt to make such partiality clear rather than a hidden subtext, as essentially a positive force. Indeed the only way it could not be such would be if we still entertained the fiction that a purely "objective," unattached criticism could possibly exist.

Mark Wallace

```
/-----\ |
||      | | GWU:
|| http://gwis2.circ.gwu.edu/~mdw      | | EPC:
|| http://writing.upenn.edu/epc/authors/wallace | |
```

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78. **d powell**

**Re: contents**

*Tue 3 Feb 1998*

---

Schuchat Simon wrote:

>does anyone know what will be included (i.e., the table of >contents) of  
>the soon to appear 2 volume Library of America Gertrude Stein?

>

>presumably not the entire text of Making of Americans but at >around 1100  
>pages per volume it might be quite alot of everything else.

>

I would love to know as well. I hope that some of the collected works that didn't appear in that Yale GS will be available. Also, I think Brewsie and Willie is a must of the later work. And since the Van Vechten collection did Tender Buttons and the Autobiography of ABT in their entirety, it seems pointless to duplicate these. How about Geography and Plays in its entirety? Hey, Library of America, if you're listening, give us Geography and Plays!

Doug

=====

=====

D A Powell                      

=====

=====

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79. **hen**

***Re: Rachel, criticism, 420 E Davenport***

*Tue 3 Feb 1998*

---

-----Original message----- Hi Henry,

I admire your commitment tp this issue! In the last post you wrote:All I I am asking is that you & others not DENY the very possibility of a criticism which MEASURES (by its own standards) rather than PROMOTES a particular writing.\_

And if a poetry does \_measure up\_ (to my own critical standards), do I then \_promote\_ it? Would expressing too much delight in the work count as promotion (if I were a critic with a large audience)?

For all the occasional swipes it's fashionable to take at Helen Vendler, I must admit that I love reading her on Wallace Stevens--in large part because she's so clear about how much she loves his work.

Isn't that how we often explain art to each other--by pointing out the qualities that delight us?

--- I have no quarrel with this. I think a serious critic will explain HOW a particular work measures up to WHAT standards; that these standards will be fairly perceptive, consistent, and informed by wide reading; and that the critic will display a certain CRITICAL INTELLIGENCE which manifests itself in ORIGINALITY - i.e. not the writing of a protege, a worshipper, a party-line adherent, or a hack. Tell me something about poetry in your review; don't just blindly glorify your subject. The whole thrust of this thread has been to alert people to the amount of "overdetermined" pure peddling that goes on, and that if you're an honest critic, you are separating yourself from ALL that; you have a choice when you sit down to write. - Henry Gould

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80. **Maria Damon**

**Re: Response to Maria's Question**

Tue 3 Feb 1998

---

At 12:38 PM -0500 2/2/98, Gary Sullivan wrote:

>Yow! I'm sorry, Maria! I really never meant to put you on the defensive, nor

>did I mean to imply you weren't dancing as fast as you can. I know you are!

My

>question was probably very naive; I was under the assumption that your

>original

>question ("anyone else noticed imbalance?") implied longing for some

>more-than-individual push toward rectification. Further assumption being that

>any such nudge might, at this time, be communal, as opposed to individual,

>effort. I thought you were calling to arms! & was kinda prompting you further,

>wondering if you had some ideas you were tempted to throw out. Anyway,

putting

>you on the defensive was really the last thing on my mind. Forgive me!

>

>Gary Sullivan

> [REDACTED]

see, i've just enacted one of the ways in which i don't get more done; i bristle, misunderstand something, and communication gets weird. no harm done gary yr a pal and i appreciate your style. when i asked the question --anyone else noticed imbalance --it was, of course, coming from someplace, but the question was not simply rhetorical; i.e. the answers, particularly laura moriarty's, have indicated that there is probably more to the picture than i'm figuring into the picture. as for communal strategies, hmmm; i don't know what i cd do, at the U. not that many folks are interested in the kind of writing i'm interested in (poetry); my grad seminars usually draw abt 4 students and are in constant danger of cancellation (meaning that i'd "owe" the U a course somewhere down the line). The amount of \$ it costs to even bring one writer (expenses plus honorarium) is prohibitive. the amount of arranging and organizing it takes to bring even one writer is, for my limited energies, prohibitive. after the series you participated in, i was told that in the future i shd focus on more "nationally known" figures (i should've retorted "known to whom?" or, "some of these folks, like erik belgum, are \*inter\*nationally known") --but what "nationally known" figure wd come for the miniscule \$50 honoraria you all got? (which brian and i secured by listing y'all as "human subjects" on the grant proposal). anyway, there i go whining again. sorry! again, no harm done. xo, md

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81. **Maria Damon**

***Re: criticism rules***

*Tue 3 Feb 1998*

---

At 12:15 PM -0600 2/2/98, Dale M Smith wrote, in connection w/ a general riff about the academy's attack on poetry:

>... The continued removal of literature from practical  
>interpretative skills?

\*\*\* it gets worse, dale. there are those of us who don't even believe in the concept of "practical interpretive skills" as opposed to other methods of apprehension. -md

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82. **pritchpa**

***Re: Rachel, criticism, 420 E Davenport, anthropology--***

*Tue 3 Feb 1998*

---

Katy Lederer makes some fine points here, which I see operating in support of Don Byrd's very sensible suggestion that one should review one's friends. Why not? DH Lawrence wrote (contra Eliot) that all good criticism is subjective. Of course, TSE was subjective too - he just liked to pretend he wasn't. Sound familiar HG? That all good criticism involves a sympathetic reading of a work seems to me axiomatic, if I may make that pronouncement. Where is the so-called "independence" in that? It's less a matter of personal Olympianism than it is of "like to like." Nietzsche rightly mocked the cult of the individual - "you claim you are free? Then show me your master stroke!" (Crude paraphrase from *\_Zarathustra\_*).

To rephrase my earlier comment, Henry Gould wants to rescue the poem's original use-value from its current market-value. Grandiosity notwithstanding, this is a laudable goal. But as Mark Wallace pointed out in his excellent post, there's plenty of critical work already out there which accomplishes just that and to cite some specific examples, I'll mention again Hank Lazer's *\_Opposing Poetries\_* which is as judicious a book of criticism as one could ask for. There are others. John Taggart's *\_Songs of Degree\_* comes to mind. Criticism which is not intensely partisan is very probably not worth a damn (though this too can be carried to an extreme) and unless I'm way off, you seem to agree, Comrade Hank.

Patrick Pritchett

-----

From: k. lederer

To: [REDACTED]

Subject: Re: Rachel, criticism, 420 E Davenport, anthropology--

Date: Monday, February 02, 1998 1:46PM

I think (as a sometimes-critic, and also as a poet) that good criticism is usually a homage to one's own taste--

How can an observer even pretend to be objective about another culture (poetic?)?

Rather than push objectivity, perhaps we should try a new approach--and push subjectivity.

Yours,  
Katy (Mrs. Robinson Upstairs)

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### 83. **Henry Gould** *criticism rules*

*Tue 3 Feb 1998*

---

Mark Wallace wrote:      Ultimately, I don't think the difference is between critics with cultural and poetic investments and those free of such investments, but between the various kinds of investments that all critical writing has--its loyalty or not to certain writers, its involvement with the industry that makes its own existence possible, perhaps its financial concerns. I agree with Dale Smith that writers need to "come clean" with the underpinnings of their various allegiances, but I don't think that there is some independent space outside of those allegiances. Does that mean such criticism is biased, as well as fractious, etc? Certainly. But I frankly see such overt partiality, if handled with an attempt to make such partiality clear rather than a hidden subtext, as essentially a positive force. Indeed the only way it could not be such would be if we still entertained the fiction that a purely "objective," unattached criticism could possibly exist.

I appreciate your kind reaction to my somewhat baited remarks in previous posts. But the above paragraph shows where we are in basic disagreement. The argument I have tried to make over the past few days is that just as the poet needs to have a ferocious sense of personal responsibility for his or her "word on the line", the substantial thing a critic has to offer in this arena is a free devotion to poetry in its entirety and a ferocious disposition to make an independent reading of every new work. I don't disagree with you that the storm and stress between poets and groups in their jockeying for attention, recognition, and authority may be a healthy thing. It's probably both healthy and unhealthy in various ways. I simply would not call them (to paraphrase Montale) free critics. The poetry world perhaps above all others is swallowed up in

feverish "promotion" simply because there are no agreed-upon standards and no one outside the poetry world is listening. There never will be agreed-upon standards; but there will be critics who will hold themselves aloof from the buddy-system, careerism, politics, and puffery for the sake of criticism itself. Believe in the silver circus thread up to the tightrope. - Henry Gould

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84. **Mark Prejsnar**  
***The task of criticism***

*Tue 3 Feb 1998*

---

1. Poets should do criticism.
2. They should do (in large part) criticism that allows 'em to spell out their interests and poetics.
3. This means a large amount of what they publish should be *\*positive\** and should *\*promote\**...This'll mean they are often promoting poets they have much in common with, and thus fairly often their freinds. They should nevertheless be able to make a free-standing intellectual argument of reasonable coherence (and energy and interestingness) as to why such poetry is good (or energetic, or interesting)..
4. They should think long and hard before being sharply critical of other poets, because most of us have few enuff resources as things stand..
5. They should even try to promote and find value in work that is quite different from their own.
6. If they feel it is truely in the interests of the art to be negative about some-one, they should slash away (..if they feel comfortable taking the same medicine back!)
7. Poets should do criticism. In general, I find, they are the ones who have something interesting to say.

mark  
@lanta

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85. **Mark Nowak**  
***Call for Papers (Xcp)***

*Tue 3 Feb 1998*

---

Xcp: Cross Cultural Poetics, a journal of poetry, poetics, ethnography, and cultural & ethnic studies, seeks submissions, proposals, and inquiries regarding potential publication in its forthcoming volumes:

Xcp no. 3: "Fieldnotes & Notebooks"

-- scheduled to appear: October 1, 1998

-- submissions due by: May 1, 1998

Xcp no. 4: "Voyage/Voyageur/Voyeur"

-- scheduled to appear: February 1, 1999

-- submissions due by: September 1, 1998

Xcp no. 5: "Dia/Logos: Speaking Across"

(plus a special Nathaniel Tarn section)

-- scheduled to appear: July 1, 1999

-- submissions due by: February 1, 1999

Xcp 2000: "Documentary in the New Millennium"

-- scheduled to appear: January 1, 2000

-- submissions due by: August 1, 1999

All correspondence should be accompanied by an SASE and directed to: Mark Nowak, ed., Xcp: Cross Cultural Poetics, c/o College of St. Catherine-Mpls., 601 25th Avenue South, Minneapolis, MN, 55454. E-mail inquiries can be made by writing the editor: [REDACTED]. Visit our website for more information and updates: <http://www.stkate.edu/xcp/>

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86. **Christina Fairbank Chirot**

***Re: Celan & Visual Poetry***

*Tue 3 Feb 1998*

---

Thanks to Pierre Joris for his comments on Celan and Mandelstam--  
Later this year will be appearing an anthology by forty  
visual poets from around the world--two works apiece--made in response to  
a poem of Celan's, "Blackbird"--the anthology contributors are visual  
poets  
who have been contributing to Harry Burrus' O!!ZONE in the last two years  
and is edited by David Stone--in Baltimore.

When more information is forthcoming, it will be forwarded--  
dave baptiste chirot

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87. **Dale M Smith**

***Re: criticism rules***

*Tue 3 Feb 1998*

---

Yeah. I can tell that by a lot of the criticism out there, Maria.

To: [REDACTED]

At 12:15 PM -0600 2/2/98, Dale M Smith wrote, in connection w/ a general riff about the academy's attack on poetry:

>... The continued removal of literature from practical  
>interpretative skills?

\*\*\* it gets worse, dale. there are those of us who don't even believe in the concept of "practical interpretive skills" as opposed to other methods of apprehension. -md

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88. **Richard Quinn**

***query: jazz and spoken word***

*Tue 3 Feb 1998*

---

I am compiling an annotated discography of jazz/spoken word recordings for a research project on the history of jazz and the unsung voice. I would greatly appreciate any assistance with titles, web sites or other sources where jazz/spoken word recordings might be found. Please backchannel.

Many thanks,  
Richard Quinn

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89. **pritchpa**

***Re: missing gens, maria's q &c.***

*Tue 3 Feb 1998*

---

Linda Russo raises an interesting point about "feminism being a woman-thing." I would like to think "we" are moving beyond that into a broader definition of feminism, though this may be disturbing to more traditional feminists since it seems to imply a waning of political attention to women's issues - I would hope it would be just the opposite, though. Certainly vis-a-vis Cixous' idea of *écriture* much experimental writing would fit broadly under the feminist rubric, but if it does, then again, the definition of that term is changing.

I attended a talk given by Susan Faludi last fall here in Boulder (ratio of women to men in attendance roughly 3:1). Many women were upset when she announced that her new book would be looking at (heterosexual) men's issues re: relationships, empowerment, etc. They took this as a betrayal but it seemed to me not only like a generous gesture, but like the next logical step. As you say, Linda, it's difficult terrain to negotiate since there's little or no precedence to rely on. Judith Butler and Gayle Rubin seem to be offering alternative/postmodern models for gender that challenge and expand the narrow parochial views of



the Catherine MacKinnon camp but my sense is that no one's too clear about the Big Picture or where theory and praxis are leading next.

Patrick Pritchett

-----

From: linda russo

To: [REDACTED]

Subject: missing gens, maria's q &c.

Date: Tuesday, February 03, 1998 6:58AM

Which brings me to the question of feminism & writing as praxis. It seems to me that if a woman in any way writes innovative poetry then she is a feminist, that her feminism somehow preceeds but doesn't determine her need to write (as it did say, in the 70s, e.g. Fraser's "poem in which my legs are accepted" (and the whole her early books) That is, feminism functions in the same way that \*any\* writer's politics are a precedent (e.g. less \*overtly\* feminist works, like Hejinian's \_The Cell\_ & Dahlen's \_A Reading\_) --

i guess i'm just tired of feminism being a woman-thing -- again, wanting to be a postmodern feminist -- but not having the tools (the tradition, the annals) to do that.

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90. **Don Byrd**

***Re: The task of criticism***

*Tue 3 Feb 1998*

---

Mark Prejsnar wrote:

1. *Poets should do criticism.*

\* \* \*

7. *Poets should do criticism. In general, I find, they are the ones who have something interesting to say.*

The state of the academy is such that there are no more than half a dozen graduate programs where one can learn enough about contemporary poetry to even begin the work of criticism. One can learn to be excellent critics of Stevens in many English Departments and one might learn how to read Yeats, perhaps even Williams. I suppose you can still learn Eliot (who was about the only one you could learn when I was an undergraduate). It will be hard to learn

how to read Pound, even harder to learn how to read Hart Crane, almost impossible to learn Gertrude Stein, even H.D. or Marianne Moore. Notably none of these poets were born in the 20th century.

Of poets, born in this century, you will be able to learn how to read them only to the extent they resemble the known modernist masters. Thus, you will be able to learn to read Ashbery to the extent that he resembles Stevens (not very much); you will be able to learn read Olson to extent he resembles WCW (hardly at all); you will not be able learn any thing about reading Coolidge or Mayer because you can't learn how to read Stein.

Pound said that the "beaneries" lag behind poetry by fifty years. This situation, if any thing, has gotten worse since he wrote.

I can think of very little I have read about poetry by critics who were not at least occasional poets which has been of much use to me either as a poet or a reader of poetry. Biographies are some times useful occupations of academic's time, and often the best academic criticism is a kind of disguised biography (e.g. Kenner's *The Pound Era*). This is not a new situation. Most often, you will find that if an academic critic has something interesting to to say, s/he is cribbing off the critical writings of poets.

If you want to know about poetry, read poets, beginning with Coleridge or Sidney or Dante. You will find more in the letters of Keats or even the essays of Mathew Arnold, for pete's sake, about poetry than you will in the writings of contemporary Ph.D. critics from the best graduate schools, who are likely (still! what? forty or fifty years after Roy Harvey Pearce) still to be reading all American poetry only to the extent that it resembles Emerson.

This, of course, is quite reasonable. For the most part, Ph.D.s in English, to the extent they are taught poetry at all, are taught it with the view toward teaching it to undergraduates who, for the most part could hardly be less engaged. This is grim task, to face 40 young people, who consciousness can be completely absorbed by MTV, and to try to get them to notice the linguistic curiosities of "The Snowman" or "To Elsie." I know, I have done it far too often myself.

Please do not misunderstand. I am completely with the undergraduates. I agreee that they should not be required to show up and listen to Professor X groan on about the symbolist tradition or writing in the American language or how this dead white male or female is important for resembling some deader white male or female.

And save us from any one who would pretend to be independent. Independent, of what? "Oh, I am independent, I have no commitments whatever."

After all, criticism is its own test: it is useful, if it is useful. We will know whether it is honest or not if it helps us read the poet under discussion, other poets, if it helps us write poems. Good criticism, by and large, is probably rarer than good poetry. I find myself going back to the same things again and again: essays by Stein, Pound (especially the essays and reviews on music), Williams, H.D., Hart Crane's letters, essays by Olson and Duncan, a remarkable piece entitled "Burden of Set" by Gerrit Lansing, a number of pieces by some of contemporaries.

db

--

\*\*\*\*\*

Don Byrd ([REDACTED], [REDACTED])  
Department of English  
State University of New York  
Albany, NY 12222  
[REDACTED] (work); [REDACTED] (home); [REDACTED] (fax)  
The Little Magazine (<http://www.albany.edu/~litmag/>)

\*\*\*\*\*

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91. **Safdie Joseph**  
***Re: Response to Bromige on Clark***  
*Tue 3 Feb 1998*

---

Well, David . . .

> These 3 poems are #s 43,44,and 45 from a work called "Early Warning,"  
> unknown to me.  
>

It's the last poem (in 66 sections) of a book Tom published in 1984 entitled *\_Paradise Resisted: New and Selected Poems\_* from (yes) Black Sparrow. (I reviewed it in *\_Poetry Flash\_* by the way). As I said in my post, it's not his best, nor one of my favorites, nor even, as Dale says, particularly representative -- it is quite funny in parts, as is the whole book. But just after the three stanzas I quoted comes one quite different in tone:

46

Copper, iron, lead, graphite, phosphate, zinc . . .  
Palm oil is used for margarine, soap,  
lubrication. The ground nut and cola nut  
produce oils. Cotton becomes flax.  
Export of coffee, grains, fabrics, oil, gold,

rubber, fruits, this is the story of  
colonialism in Africa. The story of  
human labor turned into money for distant  
people to create pyramids of power  
in banks is the story of Europe. This  
is where we got the language we use.

And then, finally, section 47, which I'll quote only in part as it deals with the appropriation question you raise:

. . . The industrial world  
gave us the computer world we employ  
today. Uranium, radium, tin, iron,  
spices. Diamonds. Food for thought.  
It all came from somewhere. You can't  
give anything back but you can stop  
taking it. Start making and using it.  
Only if you get the sentences clear.

I don't admire the music or rhythm here, particularly (but the fact that you can't separate them, or the syntax, from content, David Benedetti, was EXACTLY my point!); I do admire what I call a certain "high seriousness" -- an ambition that arises from clear-eyed social perceptions and entrepreneurial realities, informs the poems, and leads (ideally) to other spheres of action than ones purely aesthetic; I admire the implication that these economic and entrepreneurial realities affect the way we, as poets, set up shop; and yes, I admire the lack of ambiguity! In terms of the "big political ideas" bandied about a few days ago, I feel globalization is even more pernicious and dangerous than ecological disasters . .

> I can see the attraction they hold out : they constitute an  
> us-&-them world, where "they" are every bit as despicable as "they"  
> are  
> always known to be, cowardly, secretive and vindictive in their  
> unjustness,  
> and where each reader is invited to identify with the poet to form an  
> "us"  
> that is better than his "they." One is thus offered some thing to  
> belong  
> to, a superior thing where one's allies will be likewise superior.  
>

This is grade-school Jung (projections, "otherizing the other" etc.) and frankly beneath you. Do you really think he's calling for (yawn) "followers" here?

- > Part of what is superior about the poet in these poems, is his
- > attitude,
- > made explicit in the lines "I'm/ (for instance) as ingenuous and
- > naively
- > trusting/ as your average Sudanese mercenary killer." One appreciates
- > the
- > twist of sense, which requires that one follow the syntax closely.
- > Beyond
- > that, one finds oneself in the presence (as it were) of "nobody's
- > fool." a
- > tough guy (albeit with a heart of gold--else we wouldn't be liking
- > him) a
- > bit like Bogart or Bukowski.
- >

In fact, "one" knows that these are indeed the weakest lines of the original stanzas I quoted.

- > Elsewise, there is the wit of analogy that delivers us to this
- > bathetic
- > present after a quick whip around the corners of a Malebolge (or so I
- > feel); there are attractive passages where sound draws attention to
- > meaning
- > (the way "clones" recalls "drone" and picks up on the "stones" and
- > "bones"
- > from lines immediately previous) and by this process provides a
- > further
- > guarantee that this poet has an ear--is listening to his lines as they
- > unfold, is not asleep at the wheel.
- >

One gets a lot less these days, no?

- > There is also the thrill, at watching the lid ripped off this
- > particular
- > can of worms. Ah, so just as we suspected, poets are as bad or worse
- > than
- > the rest of this wicked world! And here's a real poet telling us this!
- >

Which will come as no surprise to the denizens of this list, to be sure, but might, to others -- hanging out one's dirty laundry in public might be declassé, but it can also clarify oppositions, energize . . .

- > But my surrender to these poems doesn't last long. They lack, for one
- > thing, a sense of history. Poets have been banding together against
- > one

> another for millenia,

>

really? Ben Jonson and Bill? Keats and Leigh Hunt? Who are you thinking of, exactly? And what relevance does it have to, uh, "today"?

> so what's fresh about this content to excuse the

> traditionalist form?

>

Oh god -- not that! We must at all costs and moments avoid tradition, right?

> More of an objection, however, lodges in the wried logic. There is

> nothing

> I can find in the poem to ironize that one instance of "I"--I take the

> poet

> himself, Tom Clark, to be speaking, to be wanting to be heard speaking

> Tom

> Clark's mind. But Tom Clark is known to be (however relatively) a

> succesful

> writer, with dozens of books from distinguished houses. "To survive in

> the

> 'arts' you've got to be a believer." Well, Tom Clark has survived, so

> to

> what does he belong, to which

> "school,...club,...cell,...lodge,...party...[or] police force" does

> Tom

> Clark owe his survival?

>

I'm not sure of his relation to the owner of Black Sparrow press -- but I think we should, in all cases possible, publish with people and presses we know. That's not always possible, of course.

> His answer might lie in the "outsider" category. I cannot see how, in

> the

> dog-eat-dog world Clark depicts, this category is in any way superior

> or

> transcendent. How do these lines escape being as self-serving as

> anything

> that might be produced from "school, club, cell, lodge, party, police

> force" or cabal?

>

> It is not that I altogether disagree with his picture. It is rather

> that

> Tom Clark is no less a cannibal canine than the next man or woman.

> Despite  
> his apparent admission of this, "to relate to history not forgetting  
> the  
> mistake of those who'd evade it," I do not find I can exit these 3  
> poems  
> without feeling that Clark believes that he can, and has evaded it.  
> While  
> feeling, myself, that he has not. Because he cannot. Because (as he  
> implies) none of us can.  
>  
> Here I refer my reader to Carlo Parcelli's post of 1/30/98, to his  
> mention  
> of "position/momentum paradox" and "influence of the observer upon the  
> observed." And to what he deduces from these physico-philosophical  
> quandaries : "every participant in the current debate is subject to  
> these  
> limitations [.]" I do not believe it is enough to acknowledge this  
> truth  
> then to proceed as though nothing was altered because of it. It is a  
> truth  
> that calls for constant attention. It explodes the us/them  
> construction,  
> \_no matter the empirical persistence of such divisiveness\_. Both Tom  
> and I  
> (as any of you) being subject to these limits, I ask him, "Why do you  
> create a world of attitude where you have always to be branded as  
> 'distrustful, dangerously suspicious' as an 'outsider'--while holding  
> down  
> an inside post with Black Sparrow Press? " It is 35 years since  
> Bukowski  
> was named 'Outsider of the Year' and neither he nor the press that  
> presented him has any pretense to outsider status today. As a  
> category, in  
> any case, 'outsider' today must include so many as to be meaningless.  
> It  
> remains "someone to be," if it's otherwise too scary walking down the  
> street, or boring or whatever : Fred Dobbs.  
>  
To the extent that anyone tries to cash in on his or her status of  
"outsider", yes, I agree that's fairly reprehensible. I don't see him  
doing this here.

> I do not find that the epiphany at the end of the 3rd of these poems  
> is  
> credible: "only makes me laugh and study/ ways to gain a new power  
> over  
> words/that are so stubborn, to steer them into/ clear and simple  
> sentences  
> is a good lifetime's work." It does not dissolve the paranoid portrait  
> of  
> hate and distrust and envy, or not persuasively to my reading. And  
> while it  
> is plain that Tom Clark is consumed by these vices, the poetry would  
> be a  
> big step closer to the greatness certain acolytes claim for it (not to  
> mention Clark himself) were he to assume and own them.  
>  
> I do not think we inhabit times that permit such linear renunciation  
> of  
> indulged miseries.

>  
Do we live in times that permit non-linear renunciation of them?

> You are what you describe . It's the Tarbaby none  
> can escape. (I use my own knowledge of my own powers of denial, my own  
> hypocrisies, my own envy and mortification at exclusion, to decode Tom  
> Clark). No part of any poem is more than any other part.  
>

I'm with you CLOSELY here -- but feel you hang too much on the outsider  
tag.

I leave the rest of your post for tomorrow, as this is already long and as I  
haven't actually read the essay in question -- I just remember the article in Po-  
etry Flash that was apparently its genesis. (But Herb! I don't agree that David  
is here responding to my "interpretation" riff at all! Perhaps it's just too late, or  
I'm too dense . . )

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## 92. **Henry Gould** ***Re: The task of criticism***

*Tue 3 Feb 1998*

---

On Tue, 3 Feb 1998 17:17:02 -0800 Don Byrd said:

>  
> And save us from any one who would pretend to be independent.



>Independent, of what? "Oh, I am independent, I have no commitments whatever."

>

> After all, criticism is its own test: it is useful, if it is useful. We  
>will know whether it is honest or not if it helps us read the poet under  
>discussion, other poets, if it helps us write poems. Good criticism, by and  
>large, is probably rarer than good poetry.

I agree that good criticism is rare; I admit that the best is done by poets. I've been marking poets' conflict of interest as yet another way of pointing to the fact that criticism is a worthy art in itself. You only have to pretend to be independent if you don't believe you can be in reality. Are you saying that those who write about contemporary poetry must sell it to each other rather than weigh it in their own personal scale of values? That the aim of writing about poetry is to boost the recognition level of your own friends and allies? Do you think there's no point in distinguishing between reviews treating friends and associates and reviews done cold? Clearly a general understanding of poetry according to you is beyond the reach of the ordinary grad student, much less the ordinary citizen (I haven't been to grad school myself, so I'm not the one to judge there); reviews therefore will be a minor, generally worthless venture - there's bigger fish out there, right? But one implication of what I've been trying to drum into this list is that if critical values were more honest, and yes, INDEPENDENT, said critics might just find an avenue of access to a general public for poetry, and your examples of poets we need to "learn to read" might find a wider, more educated audience. But as long as poets, editors, and academics deny the value of "keeping one's distance", they will continue to write only for themselves. Maybe deep down that's what they want - save the secret knowledge for the elite. Nevertheless, I don't want to give the impression that being "independent" is simply a vehicle for reaching a wider audience; that's only a side effect. I have been frankly dumbfounded at some of the responses to my posts on this list. Utterly amazed that the simple principles of honest writing are considered unknown, needless, irrelevant matters; that the concept of weighing the values of a work of art according to autonomous personal values would be called pompous, naive, hypocritical, etc. & you're the icing on the cake, Don Byrd. I am stunned. If he speaks for a general consensus on this list, I say, you people can have your fishbowl. It's not worth the water poured into it. - Henry Gould

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93. **nuyopoman**

***Fwd: Word and Music series***

*Tue 3 Feb 1998*

---

This is a multi-part message in MIME format.

--part0\_886562759\_boundary

--part0\_886562759\_boundary

air19.mail.aol.com (v38.1) with SMTP; Tue, 03 Feb 1998 21:24:50 -0500  
by relay31.mail.aol.com (8.8.5/8.8.5/AOL-4.0.0)  
with ESMTP id VAA21726;  
Tue, 3 Feb 1998 21:24:29 -0500 (EST)  
by dfw-ix8.ix.netcom.com (8.8.4/8.8.4)  
id UAA09463; Tue, 3 Feb 1998 20:21:44 -0600 (CST)  
dfw-ix8.ix.netcom.com via smap (V1.3)  
id rma005483; Tue Feb 3 19:56:14 1998

Date: Tue, 3 Feb 1998 20:58:10 -0500

To: [REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED] (Fred Yablonski)

Subject: Word and Music series

### WORDS & MUSIC

a series of collaborations between musicians & writers  
February 4-8 at the Knitting Factory

Wednesday

feb. 4 8pm: Tracie Morris/Marvin Sewell

(see Sunday NY Times for an article on Tracie...)

9:30pm: "Brides of Poetry": Barb Barg, Brenda Coultas, Julia Patton,  
Wanda Phipps, Lars Askesson, Anders Griffin,  
Andrea Pierotti, Dave Sewelson

Thursday

feb. 5 8pm: Tracie Morris/Badal Roy

9:30pm: Edwin Torres, Gina Bonati, DJ wally, Ladislav Czernezk

Friday

feb. 6 8/9:30pm: Ronny Someck (Israeli poet)/Elliott Sharp

Saturday

feb. 7 8pm: Nick Zedd, Jennifer Blowdryer, Mark Kramer, Rockets Redglare  
featuring the premiere of the film SCREENTEST '98

9:30pm author Jack Womack/Elliott Sharp

Sunday

feb. 8 8pm: Bob Holman/Dan from www.coolout.com

9:30pm: Bob Holman/Vito Ricci

THE KNITTING FACTORY 74 Leonard Street New York City [REDACTED]

--part0\_886562759\_boundary--

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94. **William Marsh**

***Re: Rachel, criticism, 420 E Davenport***

*Tue 3 Feb 1998*

---

At 01:23 PM 2/3/98 EST, ornery gould wrote:

Tell me something about

>poetry in your review; don't just blindly glorify your subject.

yeah -- seems to me the best criticism, reviews and elsewhere, answers not "for whom the bell tolls" but "how it makes that particular tone when struck that particular way" / close reads that give us Poetry by showing how the chosen poetry resonates -- meaning i guess i agree / how hard is it though, critics out there, to detach oneself from the promotion, really? / seems one's selection of subject matter alone communicates preferences / but i missed big sections of this thread, so i might be a dollar short, etc.

bill

(hope we can play with your name too henry? :)

-----  
William Marsh

PaperBrainPress

Voice & Range Community Arts

National University



<http://www.dtai.com/~bmarsh>

snail: 1860 PB Dr. #4

San Diego, CA 92109

-----

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95. **Joe Ahearn**

***Re: Uh, (Was Re: I see now that by forwarding this I can make it available again)***

*Tue 3 Feb 1998*

---

*Since Dale Smith began his recent tirades by calling David Bromige a "self deluded, lying coward" & a "guardian of banality", among other things,*

In general, the quality of insults lately hasn't been up to the standards I'd expect from a group of avant=garde poets.

j.

Joe Ahearn

████████

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96. **Tim Wood**

***Was: Re: Uh, <snip>***

*Tue 3 Feb 1998*

---

*In general, the quality of insults lately hasn't been up to the standards  
I'd expect from a group of avant=garde poets.*

Joe, you are getting crusty in your old age <grin>

Tim

---

Tim Wood

████████

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97. **Daniel Zimmerman**

***Re: Uh, (Was Re: I see now that by forwarding this I can make it  
available again)***

*Wed 4 Feb 1998*

---

Joe Ahearn wrote:

>

> >

> > Since Dale Smith began his recent tirades by calling David Bromige a "self  
> > deluded, lying coward" & a "guardian of banality", among other things,

> >

>

> In general, the quality of insults lately hasn't been up to the standards  
> I'd expect from a group of avant=garde poets.

>

> j.

>

> Joe Ahearn

>

> ██████████

Sensing a thread, Joe, I propose a Disstionary:

gluteal guru  
crambo-ass  
odious odist  
panegyric persiflageur  
obsequious obloquist  
ani-pest  
terza reamer  
ovine Ovidian  
epigram  
figure of preach  
ictus rectus  
dicktyl  
oral poet  
can zone

& invite the collegium opprobrium to revise & extend my remarks.

Respectfully submitted,  
Dan Zimmerman

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98. **k. lederer**

***Re: a posting to poetics***

*Wed 4 Feb 1998*

---

The wonderful Jen Hofer will be reading with the fabulous Rachel Blau du Plessis:

HERE  
6th Ave b/w Spring and Broome  
3:00 pm Sat 2/7/98: \$5  
NYC

ATTEND!

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99. **Robert Hale**

***Love Poems***

*Wed 4 Feb 1998*

---

At risk of using the list as a Dear Abby column, I seek advice regarding the sending of love poems. Valentine's Day is next Saturday. I don't plan to send out any love poems and here's why.

I was dating this girl for a while. Things were going well. I took her to see David Bowie. We talked about stuff. We had crazy nights. We even went to a friend's wedding together. I sent her, like, a poem a week, or something. I also sang to her over the phone. Then I sent her a poem by Andre Breton (see below). She freaked out. Our relations broke off within a week.

It wasn't the singing. Suddenly, she said I was a weirdo. It was the Breton. But the one of the first poems I sent her was by Clark Coolidge!

What gives?

My woman with her forest-fire hair  
With her heat-lightning thoughts  
With her hourglass waist  
My woman with her otter waist in the tiger's mouth  
My woman with her rosette mouth a bouquet of stars of  
the greatest magnitude  
With her teeth of white mouse footprints on the white  
earth  
With her tongue of polished amber and glass  
My woman with her stabbed Eucharist tongue  
With her tongue of a doll that opens and closes its eyes  
With her tongue of incredible stone  
My woman with her eyelashes in a child's handwriting  
With her eyebrows the edge of a swallow's nest  
My woman with her temples of a greenhouse with a slate roof  
And steam on the windowpanes  
My woman with her shoulders of champagne  
And a dolphin-headed fountain under ice  
My woman with her matchstick wrists  
My woman with her lucky fingers her ace of hearts  
fingers  
With her fingers of new-mown hay  
My woman with her armpits of marten and beechnuts  
Of Midsummer Night  
Of privet and angelfish nest  
With her seafoam and floodgate arms  
Arms that mingle the wheat and the mill  
My woman with rocket legs  
With her movements of clockwork and despair  
My woman with her calves of elder tree pith  
My woman with her feet of initials  
With her feet of bunches of keys with her feet of  
weaverbirds taking a drink

My woman with her pearl barley neck  
My woman with her Val d'or cleavage  
Cleavage of a rendezvous in the very bed of the mountain  
stream  
With her breasts of night  
My woman with her undersea molehill breasts  
My woman with her breasts of the crucible of rubies  
With her breasts of the specter of the rose beneath the  
dew  
My woman with her belly of the unfolding fan of days  
With her giant claw belly  
My woman with her back of a bird fleeing vertically  
With her quicksilver back  
With her back of light  
With her nape of rolled stone and damp chalk  
And a falling glass that's just been sipped  
My woman with her rowboat hips  
With her hips of a chandelier and arrow feathers  
And the stems of white peacock plumes  
Her hips an imperceptible pair of scales  
My woman with her buttocks of sandstone and asbestos  
My woman with her buttocks of a swan's back  
My woman with her buttocks of springtime  
With her gladiolus sex  
My woman with her sex of placer and platypus  
My woman with her sex of seaweed and old-fashioned  
candies  
My woman with her mirror sex  
My woman with her eyes full of stars  
With her eyes of violet armor and a speedometer needle  
My woman with her savannah eyes  
My woman with her eyes of water to drink in prison  
My woman with her eyes of forests forever beneath the  
axe  
With her pale eyes of sea-level air-level earth and fire

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100. **George Bowering**

**Re: Uh**

Wed 4 Feb 1998

---

*Since Dale Smith began his recent tirades by calling David Bromige a "self deluded, lying coward" & a "guardian of banality", among other things,*

Bromige is neither of those things. He is a noble soul, and he is always fair and thoughtful. He looks good in a straw hat, and behind the wheel of a 1963 Lincoln. He has nice long hands and good fingernails. He is a faithful friend and an unusually perceptive reader. He is a good father and brave poet. And he is my pal.

George Bowering.

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

fax: [REDACTED]

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101. **George Bowering**

**Re: Was: Re: Uh, <snip>**

Wed 4 Feb 1998

---

*In general, the quality of insults lately hasn't been up to the standards I'd expect from a group of avant=garde poets.*

Avant-barde poets are nothing more than fiddlers with their own strings, players with their own poop, self-regarding nincompoops with the intellectual capacities of plaid-wearing baboons.

George Bowering.

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

fax: [REDACTED]

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102. **John Cayley**  
***call for sound work***

Wed 4 Feb 1998

---

The (Corsican) magazine Doc(k)s[sous rature]  
is calling for work, in preparation of a special issue:

"Sound, Voices, sousRature(Poetry)"

"Laut, Stimmer, sousRature(Dicht)"

"Suoni, Voci, sousRature(Poesia)"

"Sons, Voix, sousRature(Poesie)"

"Lyd, Stemmer, sousRature(Dikt)"

to be published on CD

Material accepted  
of about two minutes duration

on audio tape cassettes, aiff files, syquest (44/88 Mb), zip, Mac & PC Floppies.

&/or

image files, texts, theory, etc.

to:

Ph. Castellin / Jean Torregosa

Akenaton - Doc(k)s

12 Cours Grandval F Ajaccio 20 000

Corsica, France

Tel 95 21 32 90, Fax 95 21 32 90

email: [REDACTED]

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103. **linda russo**  
***Re: Love Poems***

Wed 4 Feb 1998

---

agreeing w/ chris s., it is a great poem;  
speaking as a particular woman (which the response depends on)  
i think i'd mixed messages if it were sent to me.  
it is not just a sexist poem, but an imperialistic poem  
i don't think anyone want to be referred to as "my woman"  
(maybe an under-30's understanding of this) But to be "my  
woman with" -- especially when "my woman's" (and not at all  
"my"/mine) attributes are all physical -- so exposed, granted  
no privacy, no complexity, no emotion -- at least not any

autonomous privacy, complexity, emotion. Made  
HIS mystery only, inspiring his emotions,  
descriptions (& yes some amazing language)  
but that's all. its sort of like a vivisection

& on the other side of it -- a response might  
be to the hyperbole of it -- which of course makes  
it an amazing poem, but not so much a flattering  
set of utterances.

*but i do think much of my poetry is "about" the tension between  
respect and even passion for feminism (though i am skeptical that  
there really can be a male feminist) on the one hand and one's  
status as a "male desiring subject".....  
and though i don't really wish to once again be accused of being  
a languagepoetbasher, this issue was something i found lacking  
in many of the male langpos. well i have a lot more i could say on  
this, but i will wait to digest the implications of your message rob.*

i'd like to hear more . . .

*On Tue, 3 Feb 1998, Robert Hale wrote:*

*At risk of using the list as a Dear Abby column, I seek advice regarding the  
sending of love poems. Valentine's Day is next Saturday. I don't plan to  
send out any love poems and here's why.*

*I was dating this girl for a while. Things were going well. I took her to  
see David Bowie. We talked about stuff. We had crazy nights. We even went to  
a friend's wedding together. I sent her, like, a poem a week, or something.  
I also sang to her over the phone. Then I sent her a poem by Andre Breton  
(see below). She freaked out. Our relations broke off within a week.*

*It wasn't the singing. Suddenly, she said I was a weirdo. It was the Breton.  
But the one of the first poems I sent her was by Clark Coolidge!*

*What gives?*

*My woman with her forest-fire hair  
With her heat-lightning thoughts  
With her hourglass waist  
My woman with her otter waist in the tiger's mouth  
My woman with her rosette mouth a bouquet of stars of  
the greatest magnitude  
With her teeth of white mouse footprints on the white  
earth  
With her tongue of polished amber and glass*

*My woman with her stabbed Eucharist tongue  
With her tongue of a doll that opens and closes its eyes  
With her tongue of incredible stone  
My woman with her eyelashes in a child's handwriting  
With her eyebrows the edge of a swallow's nest  
My woman with her temples of a greenhouse with a slate roof  
And steam on the windowpanes  
My woman with her shoulders of champagne  
And a dolphin-headed fountain under ice  
My woman with her matchstick wrists  
My woman with her lucky fingers her ace of hearts  
fingers  
With her fingers of new-mown hay  
My woman with her armpits of marten and beechnuts  
Of Midsummer Night  
Of privet and angelfish nest  
With her seafoam and floodgate arms  
Arms that mingle the wheat and the mill  
My woman with rocket legs  
With her movements of clockwork and despair  
My woman with her calves of elder tree pith  
My woman with her feet of initials  
With her feet of bunches of keys with her feet of  
weaverbirds taking a drink  
My woman with her pearl barley neck  
My woman with her Val d'or cleavage*

*Cleavage of a rendezvous in the very bed of the mountain  
stream  
With her breasts of night  
My woman with her undersea molehill breasts  
My woman with her breasts of the crucible of rubies  
With her breasts of the specter of the rose beneath the  
dew  
My woman with her belly of the unfolding fan of days  
With her giant claw belly  
My woman with her back of a bird fleeing vertically  
With her quicksilver back  
With her back of light  
With her nape of rolled stone and damp chalk  
And a falling glass that's just been sipped  
My woman with her rowboat hips  
With her hips of a chandelier and arrow feathers  
And the stems of white peacock plumes  
Her hips an imperceptible pair of scales  
My woman with her buttocks of sandstone and asbestos  
My woman with her buttocks of a swan's back  
My woman with her buttocks of springtime*

*With her gladiolus sex  
My woman with her sex of placer and platypus  
My woman with her sex of seaweed and old-fashioned  
candies  
My woman with her mirror sex  
My woman with her eyes full of stars  
With her eyes of violet armor and a speedometer needle  
My woman with her savannah eyes  
My woman with her eyes of water to drink in prison  
My woman with her eyes of forests forever beneath the  
axe  
With her pale eyes of sea-level air-level earth and fire*

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104. **linda russo**

***Re: missing gens, maria's q &c.***

*Wed 4 Feb 1998*

---

pat pritchett wrote:

*Linda Russo raises an interesting point about "feminism being a woman-thing." I would like to think "we" are moving beyond that into a broader definition of feminism, though this may be disturbing to more traditional feminists since it seems to imply a waning of political attention to women's issues - I would hope it would be just the opposite, though. Certainly vis-a-vis Cixous' idea of ecriture much experimental writing would fit broadly under the feminist rubric, but if it does, then again, the definition of that term is changing.*

--yes-- or rather the feminine rubric, as cixous' idea has more to do with the biological fact of writing out of a woman's body; which, more generally speaking, maybe has more to do w/a certain attention one produces to their material conditions in the world; Maybe all experimental writers feel "feminized" by their culture, in the sense of being put in a place of objectness (e.g. the consumer, the client) or powerlessness (the debtor, the constituent). Cixous, btw & to the dismay of many, eschews a feminist label, preferring to align herself with a Derridian theory of difference.(as Irigaray also has more recently come to do).

*I attended a talk given by Susan Faludi last fall here in Boulder (ratio of women to men in attendance roughly 3:1). Many women were upset when she announced that her new book would be looking at (heterosexual) men's issues re: relationships, empowerment, etc. They took this as a betrayal but it seemed to me not only like a generous gesture, but like the next logical step. As you say, Linda, it's difficult terrain to negotiate since there's little or no*

*precedence to rely on. Judith Butler and Gayle Rubin seem to be offering alternative/postmodern models for gender that challenge and expand the narrow parochial views of the Catherine MacKinnon camp but my sense is that no one's too clear about the Big Picture or where theory and praxis are leading next.*

The question maria's & rachel's responses raised for me is: we can theorize (Butler & Rubin as Pat points out) a more postmodern feminism, we can, in writing (which is the same as theorizing) practice it (re DuPlessis' *Pink Guitar*; Scalapino's sense of recent women's poetry constructing a "women's kind of attendance to the object" an "opportunity or context of apprehension" rather than constructing a subjectivity -- but in the practice of our everyday lives . . . there, yes, it is literally a difficult terrain to negotiate, where things don't seem to change much. Perhaps they change enough (thinking both of Joan Retallack's notion of Poethics, and of Chris Stoffolino's response to Robert Hale's love poems -- his attempt in his work to pay attention to feminist/male subjectivity tension)

-- linda russo

*Patrick Pritchett*

-----

*From: linda russo*

*To: [REDACTED]*

*Subject: missing gens, maria's q &c.*

*Date: Tuesday, February 03, 1998 6:58AM*

*Which brings me to the question of feminism & writing as praxis. It seems to me that if a woman in any way writes innovative poetry then she is a feminist, that her feminism somehow preceeds but doesn't determine her need to write (as it did say, in the 70s, e.g. Fraser's "poem in which my legs are accepted" (and the whole her early books) That is, feminism functions in the same way that \*any\* writer's politics are a precedent (e.g. less \*overtly\* feminist works, like Hejinian's *The Cell* & Dahlen's *A Reading*) --*

*i guess i'm just tired of feminism being a woman-thing -- again, wanting to be a postmodern feminist -- but not having the tools (the tradition, the annals) to do that.*

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105. **Schuchat Simon**

***Re: Response to Bromige on Clark***

*Wed 4 Feb 1998*

---

In a post ignored by many about period style I noted that the first poem by Bruce Andrews I ever read was published in the Paris Review, chosen by Tom Clark (at least Tom Clark was the poetry editor of the Paris Review at the time, and its hard to imagine George Plimpton picking Bruce's works though not impossible I confess). it seems to me that this is a measure of evidence that the issue at hand is not aesthetic.

I don't know the "Stalin as linguist" essay, but this constant harping on the Hitlerian or Stalinist methodology of TC is a little grating. I am probably not the only one on the list who can say this, but I have lived in a neo-Stalinist society and the ad hominen attack is one characteristic of Stalinist polemic. It would not surprise me if TC, in either the Poetry Flash or Partisan Review or wherever, used Stalinist argumentation, but it doesn't further anyone's understanding to use it back at him.

Underlying most polemic in Stalinist society was stuff like envy, resentment, you attacked my friend or even attacked me so I will crush you in return, etc. It was always difficult to learn what the original pretext, even, of an attack was -- did Jiang Qing really send those people to jail because they knew her as a young actress, or was it how they treated her when she was a young actress, or what? Part of it is just power, and the smaller the stakes, the more violent the struggle. I don't know what lies at the real root of the anti-Tom Clark emotion that occassionally erupts on the list. I have trouble thinking of him as the "real enemy," that's all.

Four poets were just arrested in Guizhou, for planning to start a magazine. Anyone else on the list hear about it? Anyone know where Guizhou is?

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106. **Mark Wallace**

***oh Henry***

*Wed 4 Feb 1998*

---

Henry--

What is the reason for losing your cool when people disagree with you? We're all expressing our positions as straightforwardly as we feel them. Obviously, this issue matters a lot to you--as it should (and I respect you for it)--but you know full well that speaking your mind means that others will do so back. I do know that there's something about e-mail that encourages displays of anger (I've done my share), but I think in this case we're all trying to proceed civilly.

Let me be perfectly clear. I am not aware of having EVER claimed, in print, to like the work of someone whose work I do not like, to advance my career or anybody else's. Hell--what career do I have anyway, when it comes to that? Your suggestion that this is what ALL poets and critics are doing is generalized and incorrect. Your suggestion that we are all DUPES of our cultural investments is insulting. You seem like a nice guy, and I know you don't MEAN to be insulting in this case--you think your position is correct, and you are mystified that others do not agree. But others DON'T agree, in this case, and are quite independently able to say so. I and many others are perfectly capable of deciding what we don't like, and why, and being honest with ourselves about it. Does this really seem strange to you, that there would be other and perhaps many other sophisticated, intelligent, and critically insightful folks in the world, who quite correctly don't see themselves as dupes?

I feel completely capable of saying exactly what I mean, and of considering, ethically, what the consequences for myself and others of such action is. And I will say what I mean to whoever it matters to say it to. But I do not think that the sense of "independent critic," as you are using it, takes sufficient account of the complexity of what it means to be human and involved.

Mark Wallace

|         |                                              |      |
|---------|----------------------------------------------|------|
| /-----\ |                                              |      |
|         | ██████████                                   | GWU: |
|         | http://gwis2.circ.gwu.edu/~mdw               | EPC: |
|         | http://writing.upenn.edu/epc/authors/wallace |      |

---

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## 107. **Elizabeth Hatmaker**

### ***Re: The task of criticism***

*Wed 4 Feb 1998*

---

Given the poetry/criticism thread I keep reading, I thought I'd throw out the following fun-sounding symposium happening here:

"Critical Painting: The Influence of Criticism on Artistic Production"

February 24, 1998 6-7:30 pm

Aidekman Gallery

Tufts University

Medford, MA

for reservations call ██████████

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108. **Mark Prejsnar**  
**Re: The task of criticism**  
Wed 4 Feb 1998

---

On Tue, 3 Feb 1998, Henry Gould wrote:

*Are you saying that those who write about contemporary poetry must sell it to each other rather than weigh it in their own personal scale of values? That the aim of writing about poetry is to boost the recognition level of your own friends and allies? Do you think there's no point in distinguishing between reviews treating friends and associates and reviews done cold? Clearly a general understanding of poetry according to you*

One of the great problems, Henry, with all your posts on this topic, is suggested by your word-choice here. One of the most central and important things about the poetry scene most of us inhabit, is that it's *\*not\** about selling. You define the whole world of poetry activities as about: boosting; recognition; selling; markets. The list of negative and capitalist-oriented buzzwords that can be derived from your posts, is scarifying. This has to be said once and for all, because there seems to be an awful lot of confusion wafting around about it: choosing to do poetry *\*removes\** a person from the capitalist cash nexus in most respects. I try hard to see this as a positive thing, like bohemians of old. but there's no getting around it: it's a deeply destructive and painful thing. People find it very hard to live. A few mainstreamers get grants, etc., but in general there is no connection between material gain, comfort, the capitalist marketplace in any usual recognized sense, and poetry. This is *\*very\** different from music, mainstream narrative fiction, the visual arts to an extent, the performing art activities to a large extent. My own past involvement with music on a professional level gives me some sense of the differences involved. Thus my insistence on being supportive where possible. In the accents of my native Northeast, Poets, they got enough to worry about, already! Sure, much about ego etc. is at stake. Big F'ing deal. I honestly don't think the push and pull between different tendencies of poets is as bad a thing as your posts suggest. It's probably a good thing. The *\*last\** thing we need are "independent critics" to act as arbiters. Let a thousand groupuscules bloom. Let 'em argue out poetics, politics and the rest of it. If people with similar work as poets help each other, that's fundamentally a good thing. But it sure has nothing to do with "selling". One of the important things about this list is the ability of poets to hash out ideas and preferences, and to point to work that represents what they value.

Mark P.  
@lanta

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109. **Dale M Smith**  
***Stalin as What?***

*Wed 4 Feb 1998*

---

Tom Mandel:

I responded to your post yesterday, but for some reason it never made it to the list. Hopefully this one will.

First of all, I don't see how anyone can better their \*careers\* as a poet by standing up for Tom Clark. That's more like suicide in certain company these days.

You might actually \*read\* the articles in question, both 'Stalin as Linguist' essays, before you go too much further out of your way condemning the man as a fascist. He addresses a herd-like behavior among a certain group of poets at a particular moment in time. He was responding to various pressures of the day. It's all quite clear if you just check out what he wrote. It might complicate your ad hominem impulses.

Tom is more than capable of standing up for himself and I shouldn't be the one to speak for him (but he's wise enough to avoid this list, unlike me).

But I do want to defer to you, to help ease the vehemence of your feelings about this. I'm sure you feel an extraordinary amount of pain at the loss of your family. And I do not want to in any way detract from the dignity of your feelings about this. Nor do I want to see Tom Clark unfairly accused so casually. He has a certain amount of dignity too. If you want to discuss Tom's work, the way Joe has been doing to eloquently, I think that is fine. But this kind of ritual blood-letting is really destructive to more than just Tom Clark.

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110. **Henry Gould**  
***Re: oh Henry***

*Wed 4 Feb 1998*

---

Mark, I'm trying to challenge you people. I feel like somebody who's just discovered the obvious. I hadn't given it much thought either until it seemed to be staring me in the face. & the obvious sometimes makes emperors with no clothes of us all. there's more enterprise in going naked, as Yeats put it.

Someone may challenge me someday, & I may take it as an insult too. This email medium is something we're all getting used to. Henry the Bull has abused it more than most - the bull can be a bully. But if I've offended you or Don Byrd personally I apologize.

My feeling is that the ideal conversation - whether in person or on email - has something tough as well as fair about it. Without that you lose a lot of the

humor. God is no respecter of persons, as it's written - why should we pamper each other? Why do I think of the Russians? They are terrible people - but they know how to cut each other to pieces - intellectually, satirically - without OFFENDING each other or breaking friendships. Joe Ahearn was right about the low calibre of poetic insulting in our day and age. Is this another symptom of overall backscratching? But I'm not interested in ad hominem & all that. I'm just seriously taken aback & as a result I am vehement. Call it a rhetorical ploy, if you will. But I consider it worth fighting for.

The fact is, I think you all ARE sold out, bankrupt, blind, mealy-headed whipper-snappers. Ben Carrelis thoroughly deconstructed Henry the Bull's "idealistic" rhetoric. Yay Aussies! But Henry's not being dreamy. He's somebody guarding a line. THEY SHALL NOT PASS. I can dig that. - Jack Spandrift, a.k.a. "Henry Gould"

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### 111. **louis stroffolino**

#### **Re: Love Poems**

Wed 4 Feb 1998

---

Great POST, Rob Hale. Even though I cannot offer you advice, I guess it depends on the woman. I remember being in Pierre Joris' class a couple years back and having been so thoroughly inundated in a certain kind of "feminism" had internalized this idea that FREE UNION was a sexist poem, would certainly not (to paraphrase Moxley) "agitate the beloved into loving you" and sure enough the smartest and most attractive (to me) women in the class told me they loved that poem so there's no formula but i do think much of my poetry is "about" the tension between respect and even passion for feminism (though i am skeptical that there really can be a male feminist) on the one hand and one's status as a "male desiring subject"..... and though i don't really wish to once again be accused of being a languagepoetbasher, this issue was something i found lacking in many of the male langpos. well i have a lot more i could say on this, but i will wait to digest the implications of your message rob. Your message was quite courageous. thanks, chris stroffolino

On Tue, 3 Feb 1998, Robert Hale wrote:

*At risk of using the list as a Dear Abby column, I seek advice regarding the sending of love poems. Valentine's Day is next Saturday. I don't plan to send out any love poems and here's why.*

*I was dating this girl for a while. Things were going well. I took her to see David Bowie. We talked about stuff. We had crazy nights. We even went to a friend's wedding together. I sent her, like, a poem a week, or something.*

*I also sang to her over the phone. Then I sent her a poem by Andre Breton (see below). She freaked out. Our relations broke off within a week.*

*It wasn't the singing. Suddenly, she said I was a weirdo. It was the Breton. But the one of the first poems I sent her was by Clark Coolidge!*

*What gives?*

*My woman with her forest-fire hair  
With her heat-lightning thoughts  
With her hourglass waist  
My woman with her otter waist in the tiger's mouth  
My woman with her rosette mouth a bouquet of stars of  
the greatest magnitude  
With her teeth of white mouse footprints on the white  
earth  
With her tongue of polished amber and glass  
My woman with her stabbed Eucharist tongue  
With her tongue of a doll that opens and closes its eyes  
With her tongue of incredible stone  
My woman with her eyelashes in a child's handwriting  
With her eyebrows the edge of a swallow's nest  
My woman with her temples of a greenhouse with a slate roof  
And steam on the windowpanes  
My woman with her shoulders of champagne  
And a dolphin-headed fountain under ice  
My woman with her matchstick wrists  
My woman with her lucky fingers her ace of hearts  
fingers  
With her fingers of new-mown hay  
My woman with her armpits of marten and beechnuts  
Of Midsummer Night  
Of privet and angelfish nest  
With her seafoam and floodgate arms  
Arms that mingle the wheat and the mill  
My woman with rocket legs  
With her movements of clockwork and despair  
My woman with her calves of elder tree pith  
My woman with her feet of initials  
With her feet of bunches of keys with her feet of  
weaverbirds taking a drink  
My woman with her pearl barley neck  
My woman with her Val d'or cleavage  
  
Cleavage of a rendezvous in the very bed of the mountain  
stream*

*With her breasts of night  
My woman with her undersea molehill breasts  
My woman with her breasts of the crucible of rubies  
With her breasts of the specter of the rose beneath the  
dew  
My woman with her belly of the unfolding fan of days  
With her giant claw belly  
My woman with her back of a bird fleeing vertically  
With her quicksilver back  
With her back of light  
With her nape of rolled stone and damp chalk  
And a falling glass that's just been sipped  
My woman with her rowboat hips  
With her hips of a chandelier and arrow feathers  
And the stems of white peacock plumes  
Her hips an imperceptible pair of scales  
My woman with her buttocks of sandstone and asbestos  
My woman with her buttocks of a swan's back  
My woman with her buttocks of springtime  
With her gladiolus sex  
My woman with her sex of placer and platypus  
My woman with her sex of seaweed and old-fashioned  
candies  
My woman with her mirror sex  
My woman with her eyes full of stars  
With her eyes of violet armor and a speedometer needle  
My woman with her savannah eyes  
My woman with her eyes of water to drink in prison  
My woman with her eyes of forests forever beneath the  
axe  
With her pale eyes of sea-level air-level earth and fire*

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112. **louis stroffolino**

**Re: Was: Re: Uh, <snip>**

Wed 4 Feb 1998

---

Poets are nothing but a box of cassette tapes that you never get around to playing because they are not labelled!  
(okay, i can do better than that. sorry). chris

On Wed, 4 Feb 1998, George Bowering wrote:

*In general, the quality of insults lately hasn't been up to the standards I'd expect from a group of avant=garde poets.*

*Avant-barde poets are nothing more than fiddlers with their own strings,*

*players with their own poop, self-regarding nincompoops with the intellectual capacities of plaid-wearing baboons.*

*George Bowering.*

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

*fax: [REDACTED]*

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113. **Joe Brennan**

***Re: Love Poems***

*Wed 4 Feb 1998*

---

Next time, show the poem first -- saves time & trouble.

Joe Brennan

[↑ Contents](#)

114. **Joe Brennan**

***Re: Was: Re: Uh, <snip> uh uh***

*Wed 4 Feb 1998*

---

Why debase baboons?

Joe Brennan

[↑ Contents](#)

115. **Henry Gould**

***Re: The task of criticism***

*Wed 4 Feb 1998*

---

I want to tell people about a new hobby club I've joined called Peasle Collecting. Peasles are those small red buttons that used to be worn by IWW lefties & other working class heroes from 1867-1943. There are clubs springing up all over the US; they're really fun and nobody tries to put you down because you can't buy or sell peasles, they are out of the capitalist system. Billy Haberson is the biggest collector in my area - he has 47 DIFFERENT PEASLES in many shapes and sizes. A lot of people are jealous but Billy doesn't make fun of anybody even if they're beginners & only have one or two peasles. There's a

newsletter called PEASLES UNITE that you can get for FREE from Jackie Snipp - I'll backchannel you the address if you want. But it would be nice if you sent them a few bucks for postage - it's really a shoestring operation. PEASLES UNITE!! - Henry Gould

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116. **MAYHEW**  
***task of criticism***

*Wed 4 Feb 1998*

---

I read Don Byrd's post from yesterday with some interest. I remember my own undergraduate days (late 70s) in an English dept. where I was told that WCW was a "bad influence" and where Ashbery was considered out of the mainstream. I guess I never expected to get what I wanted from classes, which was what the library was for.

I can't agree that the lag between academia and contemporary poetics is worse than in Pound's day, however. Books by Bob Perelman and Charles Bernstein are published by major university presses; look at dissertations by people like M. Damon, J. Conte, Fredman, and the like. Then go back to the 1920s and 1930s (or even 50s) and look for the equivalent. While I don't want to say everything is great in academia (far from it) I am suspicious of the "things are worse than ever" school of thought when the comparison does not take into account actual facts.

My perspective is perhaps skewed by the fact that I am not in an "English" dept. and thus don't have to deal with anything in this field unless it interests me personally; thus I can ignore the things that may annoy others of you.

Jonathan Mayhew  
Department of Spanish and Portuguese  
3062 Wescoe Hall  
University of Kansas



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117. **ShaunAnne Tangney Humanities 8-13-1997**  
***Re: The task of criticism***

*Wed 4 Feb 1998*

---

On Wed, 4 Feb 1998, Mark Prejsnar wrote:

>

> One of the great problems, Henry, with all your posts on this topic, is

- > suggested by your word-choice here. One of the most central and important
- > things about the poetry scene most of us inhabit, is that it's *\*not\**
- > about selling. You define the whole world of poetry activities as about:
- > boosting; recognition; selling; markets. The list of negative and

*be an awful lot of confusion wafting around about it: choosing to do poetry \*removes\* a person from the capitalist cash nexus in most respects. I try hard to see this as a positive thing, like bohemians of old. but there's no getting around it: it's a deeply destructive and painful thing. People find it very hard to live. A few mainstreamers get grants, etc., but in general there is no connection between material gain, comfort, the capitalist marketplace in any usual recognized sense, and poetry*

because there is relatively little money to be made being a poet, many poets find themselves within the academy, making a paycheck that keeps the roof over one's head and they computer plugged in, or at least the pencils sharpened. once within the academy, poets are asked not only to teach "creative writing" but also "poetry" courses--they are asked, in effect to become critics. to become critical enough to be able to pass onto students poetry, to be able to say this is a poem because it does *\_x\_*; this poem reflects "modern angst," "the romantic self," "postmodern sense of play." we can debate the value of this kind "criticism," but i think it shows where poets, poetry, and criticism intersect in this world where poets often must become critics.

which is to say that poets and critics are by necessity often the same folk. and i find that the criticism in the one constantly influences the poetry in the other

*It's probably a good thing. The \*last\* thing we need are "independent critics" to act as arbiters. Let a thousand groupuscules bloom. Let 'em argue out poetics, politics and the rest of it. If people with similar work as poets help each other, that's fundamentally a good*

i tell my students that writing happens in community, not alone. the academy, criticism, poetry, poetics--these are all communities, and for me they are all very provocative communities, communities which encourage me to write, inform my writing, criticize my writing, welcome my writing--i doubt i could be a poet--or a critic--w/o them.

and, i reiterate, the criticism ever reinforces the poetry, just as the poetry ever rearranges the criticism.

best,  
shaunanne

*Mark P.  
@lanta*

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118. **David Golumbia**

**Re: Was: Re: Uh, <snip>**

Wed 4 Feb 1998

---

louis stroffolino wrote:

>

> Poets are nothing but a box of cassette tapes that you never get

> around to playing because they are not labelled!

> (okay, i can do better than that. sorry). chris

I don't know Chris ... i think that one was pretty good!

--

██████████

David Golumbia

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119. **James Finnegan**

**Re: Was: Re: Uh, <snip> uh uh**

Wed 4 Feb 1998

---

As the old man used to say:

"Get off your ars(e) poetica and get a real job."

Finnegan

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120. **Dale M Smith**

**task of criticism**

Wed 4 Feb 1998

---

University press publications by Perelman, Bernstein et al are part of the problem addressed. Critics parading as poets parading as... The American academy stinks and has stunk from day one. That it is somehow sympathetic to langpods reveals how bankrupt their project has become. It's a bore all around. The universities have never been sympathetic to the vernacular and so langpo dismantled WCW's ground breaking work on that scale and cashed in on a language of reductive, conceptual space dust.

Onward Citizens, to the interstellar voids of Orion!

To: ██████████



I read Don Byrd's post from yesterday with some interest. I remember my own undergraduate days (late 70s) in an English dept. where I was told that WCW was a "bad influence" and where Ashbery was considered out of the mainstream. I guess I never expected to get what I wanted from classes, which was what the library was for.

I can't agree that the lag between academia and contemporary poetics is worse than in Pound's day, however. Books by Bob Perelman and Charles Bernstein are published by major university presses; look at dissertations by people like M. Damon, J. Conte, Fredman, and the like. Then go back to the 1920s and 1930s (or even 50s) and look for the equivalent. While I don't want to say everything is great in academia (far from it) I am suspicious of the "things are worse than ever" school of thought when the comparison does not take into account actual facts.

My perspective is perhaps skewed by the fact that I am not in an "English" dept. and thus don't have to deal with anything in this field unless it interests me personally; thus I can ignore the things that may annoy others of you.

Jonathan Mayhew  
Department of Spanish and Portuguese  
3062 Wescoe Hall  
University of Kansas

██████████

██████████

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121. **Tim Wood**  
**Re: Was: Re: Uh, <snip>**  
Wed 4 Feb 1998

---

*Poets are nothing but a box of cassette tapes that you never get around to playing because they are not labelled!  
(okay, i can do better than that. sorry). chris*

*I don't know Chris ... i think that one was pretty good!*

Sounds like a compliment to me. God forbid everything I right is all identical and boxable. Perhaps that's part of why we're poets instead of something easily categorizable like musicians...

Tim

---

Tim Wood

██████████

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122. **syvester pollet**  
***Request for assistance***

Wed 4 Feb 1998

Dear Angela, I don't know the answer, but the question was clearly asked at one of those dreary receptions, after a few drinks: thish! What I'll do is forward your quest(ion) to the Poetics List, which might be cheating, but what the hell, it's law school. I'm sure someone there will know. best, Sylvester p.s. listers, please respond to her directly. S.

*Date: Tue, 03 Feb 1998 23:45:58 -0500  
From: Angela Martin <[REDACTED]>  
Organization: University of Georgia School of Law  
MIME-Version: 1.0  
To: [REDACTED]  
Subject: Request for assistance*

*Hello,  
Our law professor has sent us on a wild goose chase. The story goes that an English poet was speaking at a college and an admirer asked, "when you wrote this, did you intend thish and this and this?" The asnwer came, "I diid not intend it then, but I do now." We are to find out the poet's name. I am ina race with 76 other students and need your help.  
Thank you,  
Angela Martin*

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123. **d powell**  
***Re: Love Poems***

Wed 4 Feb 1998

Dear Robert Hale,

Number one--the poem is good, but...surely you do see how such a poem objectifies women? The woman in the poem is not an equal, but a possession. And she's not a whole person, but rather a list of favorite parts. Number two--I can't imagine a woman alive who doesn't grimace at the description "rowboat hips" or, worse, "buttocks of sandstone and asbestos." This is not a love poem, it is a statement of ownership. If you really want to send a love poem, why not write one yourself? Or stick with Shakespeare--he's already been test-marketed and proven effective.

A final thought--brevity is crucial. The longer a love poem goes on, the more chances it has of saying something stupid (sorry for the unintentional echo of a Frank and Nancy Sinatra song).

With advice to the lovelorn, this is

Doug

=====

=====

D A Powell

=====

=====

Robert Hale wrote:

>At risk of using the list as a Dear Abby column, I seek advice >regarding the  
>sending of love poems. Valentine's Day is next Saturday. I don't >plan to  
>send out any love poems and here's why.

>

>I was dating this girl for a while. Things were going well. I >took her to  
>see David Bowie. We talked about stuff. We had crazy nights. We >even went  
to

>a friend's wedding together. I sent her, like, a poem a week, or >something.

>I also sang to her over the phone. Then I sent her a poem by >Andre Breton  
>(see below). She freaked out. Our relations broke off within a >week.

>

>It wasn't the singing. Suddenly, she said I was a weirdo. It was >the Breton.  
>But the one of the first poems I sent her was by Clark Coolidge!

>

>What gives?

>

>

>

>My woman with her forest-fire hair

>With her heat-lightning thoughts

>With her hourglass waist

>My woman with her otter waist in the tiger's mouth

>My woman with her rosette mouth a bouquet of stars of

> the greatest magnitude

>With her teeth of white mouse footprints on the white

> earth

>With her tongue of polished amber and glass

>My woman with her stabbed Eucharist tongue

>With her tongue of a doll that opens and closes its eyes

>With her tongue of incredible stone

>My woman with her eyelashes in a child's handwriting  
>With her eyebrows the edge of a swallow's nest  
>My woman with her temples of a greenhouse with a slate roof  
>And steam on the windowpanes  
>My woman with her shoulders of champagne  
>And a dolphin-headed fountain under ice  
>My woman with her matchstick wrists  
>My woman with her lucky fingers her ace of hearts  
>    fingers  
>With her fingers of new-mown hay  
>My woman with her armpits of marten and beechnuts  
>Of Midsummer Night  
>Of privet and angelfish nest  
>With her seafoam and floodgate arms  
>Arms that mingle the wheat and the mill  
>My woman with rocket legs  
>With her movements of clockwork and despair  
>My woman with her calves of elder tree pith  
>My woman with her feet of initials  
>With her feet of bunches of keys with her feet of  
>    weaverbirds taking a drink  
>My woman with her pearl barley neck  
>My woman with her Val d'or cleavage  
>  
>Cleavage of a rendezvous in the very bed of the mountain  
>    stream  
>With her breasts of night  
>My woman with her undersea molehill breasts  
>My woman with her breasts of the crucible of rubies  
>With her breasts of the specter of the rose beneath the  
>    dew  
>My woman with her belly of the unfolding fan of days  
>With her giant claw belly  
>My woman with her back of a bird fleeing vertically  
>With her quicksilver back  
>With her back of light  
>With her nape of rolled stone and damp chalk  
>And a falling glass that's just been sipped  
>My woman with her rowboat hips  
>With her hips of a chandelier and arrow feathers  
>And the stems of white peacock plumes  
>Her hips an imperceptible pair of scales

>My woman with her buttocks of sandstone and asbestos  
>My woman with her buttocks of a swan's back  
>My woman with her buttocks of springtime  
>With her gladiolus sex  
>My woman with her sex of placer and platypus  
>My woman with her sex of seaweed and old-fashioned  
>    candies  
>My woman with her mirror sex  
>My woman with her eyes full of stars  
>With her eyes of violet armor and a speedometer needle  
>My woman with her savannah eyes  
>My woman with her eyes of water to drink in prison  
>My woman with her eyes of forests forever beneath the  
>    axe  
>With her pale eyes of sea-level air-level earth and fire  
>  
>-----  
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>Delivered-To: [REDACTED]  
>Received: (qmail 28310 invoked from network); 4 Feb 1998 07:36:03 >-0000  
>Received: from deliverance.acsu.buffalo.edu (128.205.7.57)  
>  by herring.com with SMTP; 4 Feb 1998 07:36:03 -0000  
>Received: (qmail 8579 invoked from network); 4 Feb 1998 07:35:44 >-0000  
>Received: from listserv.acsu.buffalo.edu (128.205.7.35)  
>  by deliverance.acsu.buffalo.edu with SMTP; 4 Feb 1998 07:35:44 >-0000  
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>LISTSERV.ACSU.BUFFALO.EDU  
>  (LISTSERV-TCP/IP release 1.8c) with spool id 27919632 >for  
>  [REDACTED]; Wed, 4 Feb 1998 >02:35:41 -0500  
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>Received: from cadiz.etak.com (HELO cadiz) (198.6.248.11) by  
>  listserv.acsu.buffalo.edu with SMTP; 4 Feb 1998 >07:35:40 -0000  
>Received: from etak.com by cadiz (8.7.2/Gateway-2.1) id >XAA21635; Tue, 3  
Feb  
>  1998 23:28:19 -0800 (PST)  
>Received: from viangchan-pc.etak by etak.com (8.7.2/Mailhub-2.1) >id  
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>  Tue, 3 Feb 1998 23:32:31 -0800 (PST)  
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>X-Mailer: Windows Eudora Pro Version 2.2 (32)  
>Mime-Version: 1.0  
>Content-Type: text/plain; charset="us-ascii"

>Message-ID: <[REDACTED]>  
>Date: Tue, 3 Feb 1998 23:39:40 -0800  
>Reply-To: UB Poetics discussion group <[REDACTED]>  
>Sender: UB Poetics discussion group <[REDACTED]>  
>From: Robert Hale <[REDACTED]>  
>Subject: Love Poems  
>To: [REDACTED]  
>  
>

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124. **k. lederer**

**Re: "Indie Critics," Evans, Rod Smith, baloney--**

Wed 4 Feb 1998

---

On Sat, 31 Jan 1998, Henry Gould wrote:

*Steve Evans, bless his brilliant soul, is a good example: look at his ILS essay on the process of literary change. How erudite, how stylized - & how the poets are bumped in at the beginning & end almost as a footnote. It's an example of how TALKING ABOUT IT is a major form today, and exhibits all the incestuous poeto-academo atmosphere I've been railing against. Now all you street-talkin' anti-intellectuals, don't get the idea I'm on your side. I LIKE Steve's writing. It's just not the criticism (that essay anyway) that Rod Smith et al's "generation" might need.*

Henry--

Personally, I found Evans' essay extremely "liberating" as an "emerging" poet--

It strikes me that one of the primary theses of that piece--one which appears most forcefully at the start of the essay--provides younger writers with a way out from under any detrimental criticism that might come their way.

To be more clear: Evans suggests vis-a-vis Hegel that one of the reasons for the regular dismissal of "the avant-garde" is that a lot of the work they do is as yet invisible to the eyes of those steeped in the "ideologies" (I don't think this is the right term, but it'll do) of their times. In other words, avant-garde poets don't get any credit because a lot of the work their doing is (1) unrecognizable through the political, aesthetic, and institutional lenses of the time, and (2) perhaps not even "substantive" as so much of their energy must be spent simply "escaping"--or reinventing-- the assumptions of the time. Thus, the more established (traditional, mainstream, what have you) aesthetics of the time are able, perhaps, to "produce" more, and more visible works--

(An image I get here through a Marxist lens: that mainstream writers already have an aesthetic "factory," so to speak, at their disposal--they have access to a predetermined means of (artistic) production--

Innovative writers, however, must manufacture the machinery anew--)

The implications for younger writers here are astonishing--

That perhaps "older" writers--even those of the avant-garde variety--may also be unable to fully "see" (perceive is probably a better word) the "new" in the younger generation's works--

Perhaps the "older" writers might claim that the young ones are "lazy," "apathetic," etc. (sound familiar?), because they cannot "see" the work that goes into simply "emerging"--

Evans doesn't make such arguments explicitly--but I think these analogies are more than available (particularly in light of the postscript in which he basically credits such writers as Brown, Jarnot, Moxley, Spahr, Stroffolino, and Rothschild for, in some regards, freeing "the avant-garde" from the aesthetic prison (not intentionally a prison, but an effective one none the less) of Langpos. Breaking out of prison is hard work! And usually happens when no one is looking.

In other words, I think that this essay represents PRECISELY the kind of criticism that "Rod Smith's Generation" might need--

\*\*\*

> ...I am speaking as a poet who has played  
> by what I consider the rules for over 30 years. My rules are: do the  
> poem. Send it to magazines & contests. Think about what you are doing -  
> maybe write an essay about it. That's it. In my experience "doing  
> the poem" has absorbed the energy. Maybe I am a fanatic, or a hedgehog  
> in Isaiah Berlin's sense, or a totally introverted recluse.

These rules seem to contradict each other, Henry. Sending to mags and contests doesn't absorb any energy? Do introverts write lots of essays? Send to contests? (Emily--)

\*\*\*

be looking for an indi critic too - somebody with taste, judgement,  
> freedom, and an artistic instinct. The rest is baloney. It's the kind  
> of baloney Emily Dickinson was concerned about, & that led Uncle Walt  
> to write reviews of himself under a pseudonym. Not to mention Edgar  
> Poe. That's a complicated murder story in which the autopsy was  
> suborned.

It seems to me that "taste, judgement, freedom, and artistic instinct" are also forms of baloney.

Yours,

Katy

>

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125. **d powell**

**NY, NY**

*Wed 4 Feb 1998*

---

I will be in NYC 25-28 of April and would like to do a reading to promote my book TEA (Wesleyan Univ. Press). If anyone knows of a venue that would be available, I would greatly appreciate the assistance. I will be reading here in San Francisco at A Different Light on 22 March, at Wesleyan Univ. on 29 April and at Prairie Lights in Iowa City on 1 May. Thanks,

Doug

=====

=====

D A Powell



=====

=====

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126. **d powell**

**Re: Was: Re: Uh, <snip> uh uh**

*Wed 4 Feb 1998*

---

I thinks it was Steve McCaffrey what coined the arse poetica.

Doug

=====

=====

D A Powell



=====

=====

James Finnegan wrote:

>As the old man used to say:

>

>"Get off your ars(e) poetica and get a real job."

>



>Finnegan  
>  
>-----  
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>Sender: UB Poetics discussion group ><[REDACTED]>  
>From: James Finnegan <[REDACTED]>  
>Subject: Re: Was: Re: Uh, <snip> uh uh  
>To: [REDACTED]  
>  
>

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127. **MAYHEW**  
*task of criticism*  
Wed 4 Feb 1998

---

Let me get this straight--that people in universities study language poetry reveals that they are beyond the pale--then presumably those who dismiss language poetry, for the same reasons that Dale M. Smith does (what does the edu on his or her e-mail address stand for by the way?) are perhaps indicative that the university is not as rotten as all that. There are enough people in the university with enough common sense to dismiss "a language of conceptual, reductive space dust" (who is being reductive here?) in favor of the pure williamcarloswilliamsian Amercain vernacular. Thank god! No matter that Coolidge, Howe, and Scalapino (among others) are vernacular poets in the profoundest sense.

But perhaps Dale Smith is not really in the university, appearances notwithstanding. One of those people who are not "real" academics because they are still pure of heart.

Jonathan Mayhew  
Department of Spanish and Portuguese  
3062 Wescoe Hall  
University of Kansas



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128. **Herb Levy**  
*Re: Response to Bromige on Clark & Ambiguity*  
Wed 4 Feb 1998

---

Joe Safdie wrote:

*(But Herb! I  
don't agree that David is here responding to my "interpretation" riff at  
all! Perhaps it's just too late, or I'm too dense . . .)*

While David may not be responding directly to your interpretation riff, he IS reading the poems that you praised for their plain statement in a way that differs markedly from your reading of them. (At least I assume it differs: since in keeping with your claim that the poems are transparent, you just pointed at them, rather than offering any reading.) Your initial response to his failure to accept the poems in the same manner as you did is that he's being ungenerous.

Your further response is to quote more of the poem (further pointing) and quibbling about minor points.

To respond to your earlier question, there was consciously ambiguous writing long before Empson, going back at least to Defoe & other early novelists.

As for reading texts in ways that counter the original intentions, well, that goes back at least a couple of thousand years.

Herb Levy



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129. **Herb Levy**

**Re: Uh,**

*Wed 4 Feb 1998*

---

Dale,

I think the vulnerability you respond to is based more on your knowledge of Tom Clark & where he's coming from than anything in the cited poems themselves. & the various sensuous pleasures we all find in poems are matters of taste, and far from absolute.

As to generosity, you're correct in stating that you've been more than generous with your positions. However, you've been far from generous in accepting that other readers among your peers could honestly find fault with your oft-stated opinion of Clark & Dorn's stature as the true living ascended masters of the universe.

People will read the poems or they won't. They'll write about the poems here (or elsewhere) or they won't. They'll like the poems or they won't. No amount of name calling or bullying will change that. Poems (& poets) shouldn't need bodyguards.

If you can't accept that other poets can honestly differ with your opinions on "two of the most brilliant and dedicated men to engage the art of verse this century", it isn't the fault of these other readers, but with your unwillingness to allow for differences on the issue.

There's 600 people on this list. We don't all agree on anything substantive, we're certainly not all going to agree with you on something like this. We also don't all agree that Barrett Watten is the living embodiment of Shakespeare, Dante, and Homer.

If you search the archives of this list as you propose, you will find several discussions of Clark & Dorn as bad men, just as you'd find several discussions of the evil rise of language poetry in the Bay area 20 years ago. But you'll also find Ron Silliman including a book by Clark in a list of books he wishes were in print again. You'll find David Bromige was the first to note that Clark's Junkets

on a Sad Planet were published in book form in response to a query on a recent verse biography of Keats. You'll find Gunslinger coming up in a very recent discussion of books that might excite usually bored students in introductory literature classes.

The us-them binary isn't as simple as you wish to make it.

*Actually, my 'argument' said that there is a vulnerability in these poems that David did not acknowledge. If I confused this with Tom's personal life it's because I find poetry to be personal as well as a public statement, reflection or expression etc... And the 'us-them' binary I'm accused of does not originate with me. Scroll through the archives of this list and you will find plenty of examples in which Tom or Ed have been branded with various stigmata that place them well outside of the poetics community shared by many here. I don't know what else it takes to 'engage' on this list, by the way. As a 'peer' I think I've responded with generous efforts to explain my positions. Maybe referring to David, in a moment of anger, as a self-delusional coward, etc. was out of line. But as a guardian of... something...I still have no doubts. Just as I, for whatever reasons of dementia and devotion, respond in kind to comments I find floundering in the usual realms of accepted platitudes. If that's 'charming' or 'romantic' great. And by the way, those poems Joe posted, though apropos to the discussion, aren't very representative of Tom's work. But I doubt if this list would generate much discussion about his poems on Keats, say. Or other unfashionable subjects like that. The syntax might be too 'uninteresting.' As if syntax was the only measure of verse. The sensual pleasures of language - the music, the rhythm - can be as entertaining as the mental stimulation of syntax.*

Herb Levy



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130. **pritchpa**

**Re: missing gens, maria's q &c.**

Wed 4 Feb 1998

---

Maybe part of the problem of change vis-a-vis the postmodern subject - and specifically the postmodern feminine subject - can be summed up by a quote from Nancy Hartsock which Charles Altieri uses to preface his *Subjective Agency*: (I paraphrase) "Why is that it just when minority groups decided to no

longer be objects of history but subjects that the whole idea of the subject suddenly became problematic?"

Why indeed? I haven't read Altieri's book yet, so I don't know how he addresses this. I'd venture to say, though, that the absence of a precedent, of a history, of a blueprint, while confusing, can also be liberating - a chance to write a new map for femina cognita. It's interesting that Cixous declines to place her project under the feminist banner, opting instead for a broader and decidedly more abstract one. This highlights one of the big differences between French feminism and American feminism, as I understand it: that the former is more philosophically-driven, the latter more politically-driven - and the gap between them seems to be widening.

These are all rather obvious observations and the question remains: what then must we do?

Patrick Pritchett

-----

From: linda russo

To: [REDACTED]

Subject: Re: missing gens, maria's q &c.

Date: Wednesday, February 04, 1998 5:20AM

but in the practice of our everyday lives . . . there, yes, it is literally a difficult terrain to negotiate, where things don't seem to change much.

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131. **pritchpa**

***Re: Love Poems***

*Wed 4 Feb 1998*

---

yes - I think DeBeauvoir objected to Breton's romanticism on more or less the same grounds: woman as object of mystical infatuation and reverie. Though I confess I was much taken with this poem when I was 21. And I sympathize with Robert Hale. The best thing to do is to give someone your own poems, I think. Then if those are rejected, you can have a great time getting drunk and feeling gloriously bitter (not that I'm making light of yr situation...). My first wife thought my poems were crap - and she was probably right, but she was also very harsh. My second wife loves them - but then, I've improved somewhat. In the interim between them, such offerings were usually met with baffled silence and/or polite horror.

Patrick Pritchett

-----

From: linda russo

To: [REDACTED]

Subject: Re: Love Poems

Date: Wednesday, February 04, 1998 5:20AM

agreeing w/ chris s., it is a great poem;  
speaking as a particular woman (which the response depends on)  
i think i'd mixed messages if it were sent to me.  
it is not just a sexist poem, but an imperialistic poem  
i don't think anyone want to be referred to as "my woman"  
(maybe an under-30's understanding of this) But to be "my  
woman with" -- especially when "my woman's" (and not at all  
"my"/mine) attributes are all physical -- so exposed, granted  
no privacy, no complexity, no emotion -- at least not any  
autonomous privacy, complexity, emotion. Made  
HIS mystery only, inspiring his emotions,  
descriptions (& yes some amazing language)  
but that's all. its sort of like a vivisection  
  
& on the other side of it -- a response might  
be to the hyperbole of it -- which of course makes  
it an amazing poem, but not so much a flattering  
set of utterances.

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132. **Safdie Joseph**

***Re: Response to Bromige on Clark***

*Wed 4 Feb 1998*

---

Dear Simon (that IS your first name, yes? And your server reverses them the way mine does?):

Thank you for this eloquent and sadly un-obvious post. It makes perfect sense to me and I wish its sentiments to travel widely ("Go, little book . . ."). As one who has also used labels like "fascist" loosely, and who has been corrected for such usage by residents of the formerly communist nation of the Czech Republic, I propose that participants of this list TRY to watch their language (who else but us?)

As you say, "Stalin as Linguist" was Tom's title -- so technically it was he who first used that particular brush -- but your post contains so much wisdom in a short amount of space ("the smaller the stakes, the more violent the struggle") that I can only recommend that people read it again. Thanks.

-----  
From: Schuchat Simon[SMTP: [REDACTED]]  
Sent: Thursday, February 05, 1998 12:43 AM  
To: [REDACTED]

Subject:     *Re: Response to Bromige on Clark*

*In a post ignored by many about period style I noted that the first poem by Bruce Andrews I ever read was published in the Paris Review, chosen by Tom Clark (at least Tom Clark was the poetry editor of the Paris Review at the time, and its hard to imagine George Plimpton picking Bruce's works though not impossible I confess). it seems to me that this is a measure of evidence that the issue at hand is not aesthetic.*

*I don't know the "Stalin as linguist" essay, but this constant harping on the Hitlerian or Stalinist methodology of TC is a little grating. I am probably not the only one on the list who can say this, but I have lived in a neo-Stalinist society and the ad hominen attack is one characteristic of Stalinist polemic. It would not surprise me if TC, in either the Poetry Flash or Partisan Review or wherever, used Stalinist argumentation, but it doesn't further anyone's understanding to use it back at him.*

*Underlying most polemic in Stalinist society was stuff like envy, resentment, you attacked my friend or even attacked me so I will crush you in return, etc. It was always difficult to learn what the original pretext, even, of an attack was -- did Jiang Qing really send those people to jail because they knew her as a young actress, or was it how they treated her when she was a young actress, or what? Part of it is just power, and the smaller the stakes, the more violent the struggle. I don't know what lies at the real root of the anti-Tom Clark emotion that occassionally erupts on the list. I have trouble thinking of him as the "real enemy," that's all.*

*Four poets were just arrested in Guizhou, for planning to start a magazine. Anyone else on the list hear about it? Anyone know where Guizhou is?*

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133. **David Kellogg**

**Re: Love Poems**

Wed 4 Feb 1998

Robert, it's a great poem, albeit with all the issues addressed by Rachel etc. But, uh, not to trash your representation of the issue, could it have not that much to do with the poem? Maybe she was looking for a way out, and Breton was the excuse she needed.

Just a thought. . .

Cheers,

David

~~~~~  
~~~~~

David Kellogg Duke University

██████ Program in Writing and Rhetoric

██████ Durham, NC 27708

FAX ██████ <http://www.duke.edu/~kellogg/>

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134. **David Kellogg**

**Re: task of criticism**

Wed 4 Feb 1998

Dale Smith wrote:

*University press publications by Perelman, Bernstein et al are part of the problem addressed. Critics parading as poets parading as... The American academy stinks and has stunk from day one. That it is somehow sympathetic to langpods reveals how bankrupt their project has become. It's a bore all around. The universities have never been sympathetic to the vernacular and so langpo dismantled WCW's ground breaking work on that scale and cashed in on a language of reductive, conceptual space dust.*

Funny, I have been teaching \_Spring and All\_ this week and last, and reading it again (along with its Dada contemporaries) has reminded me of some of the multiple places language poetry comes from.

Jesus Christ, Dale, is your world really this black and white? Or are you just in a flame-bait kind o'mood?

Cheers,

David

~~~~~  
~~~~~

David Kellogg Duke University



██████ Program in Writing and Rhetoric  
██████ Durham, NC 27708  
FAX ██████ http://www.duke.edu/~kellogg/

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135. **David Kellogg**

**Re: Love Poems**

Wed 4 Feb 1998

---

Correction: for "Rache" substitute "Linda Russo".

~~~~~  
~~~~~

David Kellogg Duke University  
██████ Program in Writing and Rhetoric  
██████ Durham, NC 27708  
FAX ██████ http://www.duke.edu/~kellogg/

-----Original Message-----

From: David Kellogg <██████>  
To: UB Poetics discussion group <██████>  
Date: Wednesday, February 04, 1998 6:05 PM  
Subject: Re: Love Poems

>Robert, it's a great poem, albeit with all the issues addressed by Rachel  
>etc. But, uh, not to trash your representation of the issue, could it have  
>not that much to do with the poem? Maybe she was looking for a way out,  
and

>Breton was the excuse she needed.

>

>Just a thought. . .

>

>Cheers,

>David

>~~~~~  
~~~~~

>David Kellogg Duke University
>██████ Program in Writing and Rhetoric
>██████ Durham, NC 27708
>FAX ██████ http://www.duke.edu/~kellogg/

>

>

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136. **James Finnegan**

Re: "Indie Critics," Evans, Rod Smith, baloney--

Wed 4 Feb 1998

be looking for an indie critic too - somebody with taste, judgement,
> freedom, and an artistic instinct. The rest is baloney. It's the kind
> of baloney Emily Dickinson was concerned about, & that led Uncle Walt
> to write reviews of himself under a pseudonym. Not to mention Edgar
> Poe. That's a complicated murder story in which the autopsy was
> suborned.

In response to the above, Katy writes:

It seems to me that "taste, judgement, freedom, and artistic instinct" are
also forms of baloney.

Your last statement is too nihilistic for my taste. I think the "indie critic" is wonderful ideal. Though somewhat romantic. If such a person exists, no doubt certain biases, theoretical tethers, bind him/her, no matter how much s/he might strain to be free of such strictures. I will also note that critics more often quote poets and poet-critics, rather than other critics. (Anecdotal, no statistical study to back up this assertion.) Literary criticism is, as others have said, an artform in and of itself. Yet I believe there's a natural bias among poets to know what another poet might think, not what the critic thinks that poet thinks—horse's mouth & all that.

Finnegan

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137. **linda russo**

Re: Love Poems

Wed 4 Feb 1998

| *Correction: for "Rache" substitute "Linda Russo".*

isn't this just the whole problem with Breton (& Donne & Plutarch for
that matter?) ? ! ?

sorry -- i couldn't resist

... but not to overlook "My Woman" &

its fill-in-the-blank functionality

the male reader consigning

to himself the fantasy of ownership;

-- in the blazon enough parts will the anonymous (female) body make.

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138. **Robert Zamsky**
Re: Was: Re: Uh, <snip>
Wed 4 Feb 1998

"easily categorizable like musicians"

????

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139. **linda russo**
Re: Love Poems
Wed 4 Feb 1998

snip

> Also, what happens to the language when it's delivered as such a message? --
> the route as part of a text "loved" when isolated, packed and unpacked, yet
> trouble-making when delivered?
>

i can only guess that you wanted "my woman with" to translate into
"you"; odd that "my woman with" seems so fill-in-the-blankish
except(!) when a specific "subjectivity" is demanded of it;
i.e. "my susan with" might work but "i, susan, with" won't.

snip snap

> I wrote some love poems (as some of you suggested), but there is nothing
> like a Breton love poem, and it is a love poem, contrary to opinion, very
> complicated, I think, and emotional (whatever these words mean), all these
> things in a very exterior, and arguably, male way.

yes, in the way that it is all cock. i.e. he loves her with his cock
or with whatever else skin he can glom all over her --

the old standby question -- do you think he respects his "woman
with"? is there a being beneath this mass of female goodness?

yes, it's nice to receive compliments re your bod. -- but to the
exclusion of ? ? ? -- i'm reacting now out of context, of course,
you couldn't have sent a love poem praising her mind, her ideals, &c her
bank account, i dunno, but i'd like to know of some poems that do!

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140. **henry gould**

Re: "Indie Critics," Evans, Rod Smith, baloney--

Wed 4 Feb 1998

On Wed, 4 Feb 1998 13:41:44 -0600 k. lederer said:

>The implications for younger writers here are astonishing--

>

>That perhaps "older" writers--even those of the avant-garde variety--may

>also be unable to fully "see" (perceive is probably a better word) the

>"new" in the younger generation's works--

>

>Perhaps the "older" writers might claim that the young ones are "lazy,"

>"apathetic," etc. (sound familiar?), because they cannot "see" the work

>that goes into simply "emerging"--

>

>Evans doesn't make such arguments explicitly--but I think these analogies

>are more than available (particularly in light of the postscript in which

>he basically credits such writers as Brown, Jarnot, Moxley, Spahr,

>Stroffolino, and Rothschild for, in some regards, freeing "the

>avant-garde" from the aesthetic prison (not intentionally a prison, but an

>effective one none the less) of Langpos. Breaking out of prison is hard

>work! And usually happens when no one is looking.

>

>In other words, I think that this essay represents PRECISELY the

>kind of criticism that "Rod Smith's Generation" might need--

Katy, I'm glad you got something out of that essay; he's a snazzy writer. But you don't need a dress-up of Hegel & Marx for the precisely OLD idea (I mean like, old since Greek & Roman times) that the old fogies won't be able to understand the youngsters. Maybe it's just that a card-carrying "youngster" is saying it for you (& insists on harping on the "generation" thing just so you don't forget)...

My point was that such advocacy is only a beginning, if anything.

I think you need to open the mental blinders. Critic does not necessarily = "mainstream establishment person out to judge us by outmoded standards of (baloney) taste". That is a cartoon of a critic. In my mind, critic = "somebody who loves poetry enough to dig into it backwards & forwards, past & present, and say something intelligent (if subjective) about the style, mindset, aims, effects, contradictions, connections, strengths, imitations, originalities, meaning, impact, development... etc of what s/he reads". I don't think of standards as a set of hoary rules; I think of standards as the feel of a good ear for syntax, sound, meaning, and complexity. Wouldn't you rather read some of this than various gang-approval ratings, blurbs, or tossed-off empty retchings which pass

for "criticism?" THAT IS ALL I'M SAYING.

>

>***

>> ...I am speaking as a poet who has played

>> by what I consider the rules for over 30 years. My rules are: do the

>> poem. Send it to magazines & contests. Think about what you are doing -

>> maybe write an essay about it. That's it. In my experience "doing

>> the poem" has absorbed the energy. Maybe I am a fanatic, or a hedgehog

>> in Isaiah Berlin's sense, or a totally introverted recluse.

>

>These rules seem to contradict each other, Henry. Sending to mags and

>contests doesn't absorb any energy? Do introverts write lots of essays?

>Send to contests? (Emily--)

>

All I meant was, MOST of my energy (like 98%) goes into DOING the poems (until I joined this list [sigh]). Does anybody know what I look like?

Seen me gladhanding at conferences? Reading anyplace outside Providence?

Published much? (these are rhetorical questions) Maybe it's because

I only write haiku about buffalo - that could be it. I'm also not a prof,

not a writing teacher, not a grad student, not a novelist, not a journalist,

not a professional poet, not a performance artist; the only wannabee I am

is wannabee out on the road again with my guitar - but then I really would

have to be running from the law. Ask Jack about that.

It seems to me that "taste, judgement, freedom, and artistic instinct" are also forms of baloney.

Yes, the word "taste" always leaves a bad taste in the mouth. I like baloney better myself. But judgement, freedom, artistic instinct... there they go now, off to the next reality... all words become dust through repetition... anything can be turned into a joke... "the laughter of fools is like fire crackling under a pot"

[Proverbs]. - Henry Gould

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141. **David Zauhar**

Re: task of criticism

Wed 4 Feb 1998

On Wed, 4 Feb 1998, David Kellogg wrote:

> Funny, I have been teaching _Spring and All_ this week and last, and reading

> it again (along with its Dada contemporaries) has reminded me of some of the

> multiple places language poetry comes from.

Coincidentally, speaking of Dada, it was on Feb 5 1916 that Hugo Ball noted in his diary that the very first evening at the brand new Cabaret Voltaire was a tremendous success. 82 years and it seems like only. . . etc etc.

re: Don Byrd's note that many of us younger folks don't know Elder Olson: actually, I'm quite familiar with the name: he's the guy many of the old-timers in various EngDepts I have known thought I was referring to when I mentioned Charles Olson. Leads to some interesting miscommunications when two people start talking about poetic form and one is talking about El and the other Chas Olson.

Dave Zauhar

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142. **Karen Kelley**

Re: Love Poems

Wed 4 Feb 1998

My response is much like Linda Russo's: I love the poem, and I love Breton, but if someone gave it to me (how long were you dating?) I might get that uh-oh,-he's-gonna-make-me-a-muse feeling, which is awfully constricting.

I don't think she reacted to its being "out there" (she didn't mind Coolidge), so much as she might have been unable to understand how you saw HER in relation to the text (geez, why'd he give me this ???). Haven't you noticed that when you give someone (esp. a lover) a poem, they read it like there's a secret message inside?

I love Breton, but what is it about him that's so creepy? I think perhaps it's his sense of entitlement.

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143. **Don Byrd**

Re: task of criticism

Wed 4 Feb 1998

Jonathan MAYHEW wrote:

One of those people who are not "real" academics because they are still pure of heart.

There are no really happy places for poetry right now. When I was at the University of Kansas, Jonathan, John Fowler (the editor of R/ft) ran a wonderful book store a few doors down from the Student Union (in fact, next door to where "the Great White Dog of the Rock Chalk" in Ed Dorn's poem "wandered through the door of Western Civilization,") and then John Moritz ran one next

door to the old Rock Chalk Cafe itself, a little further down Oread Avenue, and when Caterpillar or Io would come in the poets would gather and talk far into the night. Happily there were people like Ed Grier and Roy Gridley, great scholars of Whitman and Browning and great readers of contemporary poetry, who would let me write a dissertation about Charles Olson. Most of the faculty was not clear about the difference between Charles Olson and Elder Olson (a name that will be familiar to elders on the list at most).

To be sure there are some hiding places. Higher education, after all, is a huge enterprise; one will find a little of every thing. But the University as an institution has never been a happy place for poets. Some legendary member of the Harvard English department, once asked if there were any poets in the department, replied, "They don't have elephants in the zoology department, do they?" Some version of this attitude continues to prevail.

In all this talk of criticism, there have been few examples of good criticism. I would like to recommend Jed Rasula's *The American Poetry Wax Museum: Reality Effects, 1940-1990*. The writing is dazzling, the knowledge of the field encyclopedic, the judgements, as far as I can see, honest and fair. It will make clear why there is so little really good criticism: there simply aren't many people who know the field. Something of this order is required if you are going to have a real criticism.

Rasula's book is published by a quintessentially academic publisher, The National Council of Teacher's of English. How does it change our judgement of the book that he is also the author of one of the most original books of poetry of the last 20 years? *Tabula Rasula*. I believe he is preparing now another manuscript of poems for publication. It has been 13 years since the last one. Of course, this is not the way to build a career as a poet, but is it a reasonable way for a poet to go about his or her work?

It is interesting to note T.S. Eliot published only a little over 200 pages of poetry, some of it fairly slight. Whitman and Stevens both well less than 600 pages. Pound, Williams, and HD wrote big chunks of their more substantial oeuvres after they were 60.

Don

--

Don Byrd (██████, ██████)
Department of English
State University of New York
Albany, NY 12222
██████ (work); ██████ (home); ██████ (fax)

The Little Magazine (<http://www.albany.edu/~litmag/>)

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144. **Daniel Zimmerman**

Re: Love Poems

Wed 4 Feb 1998

Pat,

Does your change in estimation re Breton's poem reflect what you said earlier, i.e., that

"one of the big differences between French feminism and American feminism, as I understand it: that the former is more philosophically-driven, the latter more politically-driven"

??

& if so, how? Do you [if you do] shrink a bit from Breton now more for political or for philosophical reasons? How do you feel about the widening of the gap between American & French feminisms?

--Dan Zimmerman

pritchpa wrote:

>

> yes - I think DeBeauvoir objected to Breton's romanticism on more or
> less the same grounds: woman as object of mystical infatuation and
> reverie. Though I confess I was much taken with this poem when I was 21.
> And I sympathize with Robert Hale. The best thing to do is to give
> someone your own poems, I think. Then if those are rejected, you can
> have a great time getting drunk and feeling gloriously bitter (not that
> I'm making light of yr situation...). My first wife thought my poems
> were crap - and she was probably right, but she was also very harsh. My
> second wife loves them - but then, I've improved somewhat. In the
> interim between them, such offerings were usually met with baffled
> silence and/or polite horror.

>

> Patrick Pritchett

> -----

> From: linda russo

> To: [REDACTED]

> Subject: Re: Love Poems

> Date: Wednesday, February 04, 1998 5:20AM

>

- > agreeing w/ chris s., it is a great poem;
- > speaking as a particular woman (which the response depends on)
- > i think i'd mixed messages if it were sent to me.
- > it is not just a sexist poem, but an imperialistic poem
- > i don't think anyone want to be referred to as "my woman"
- > (maybe an under-30's understanding of this) But to be "my
- > woman with" -- especially when "my woman's" (and not at all
- > "my"/mine) attributes are all physical -- so exposed, granted
- > no privacy, no complexity, no emotion -- at least not any
- > autonomous privacy, complexity, emotion. Made
- > HIS mystery only, inspiring his emotions,
- > descriptions (& yes some amazing language)
- > but that's all. its sort of like a vivisection
- >
- > & on the other side of it -- a response might
- > be to the hyperbole of it -- which of course makes
- > it an amazing poem, but not so much a flattering
- > set of utterances.

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145. **maz881**

missing gens, maria's q &c.

Wed 4 Feb 1998

Linda Russo wrote: <<I want to have all that stuff in place -- a history of writing, not just men writing (re juliana's point abt langpo-originary tales) -- "anals" to turn to & i don't want to "discriminate" by only writing about or reading women -- >>

there is one other myth to help put stuff in place
re the origins of langpo,,, and which complicates
juliana's originals somewhat:

bruce andrews and charles bernstein were in bernadette
mayer's st marks seminar in the 70s and learned all their tricks
(except their penchants for grabbing power
and engaging in heterosexual monogamy)
from her. Later they were "mean" to her
and either excluded her from being a language poet
or else were remiss in acknowledging that they
learned everything from her. Ange Mlinko brought
this up on the list some time back and Charles Bernstein

responded with a forceful denial. Now they
are doing the macarena.

Bill Luoma

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146. **david bromige**

Re: simon schuchat, response to b on c

Wed 4 Feb 1998

Simon, just want to be clear in front of the List that you do not intend your gdneral complaint re the cyclical irrational anti-Tom Clark eruptions to apply to my careful posting re the contradictions in his poetry and his criticism. If my post struck you as emotional, I hope you also saw the evidence of what aroused it: the mis-use of Brecht and the 'one-law-for-me-another-for-you' tenor of those of his poems provided to the List by his fans.

You might want to look at Clark's article "Stalin as Linguist." It's in a Partisan Review for 1987, no doubt in a library near you.

On the other hand, if you wish to retain the obviously sunny portrait you have of Tom Clark, you might not.

For me, it is an issue of the mis-use of language by a person whose abilities should know better, a person in a position to unjustly affect for the worse the condition of current poetry, thus, sooner or later, society and knowledge.

It has nothing to do with Tom Clark's person, for who has not basked in his sunny charm, noted his nifty ability to hear *_le dernier cri_*, or been taken with his fetching ways? I still recall our first meeting--it happened on the beach at Bolinas, in the late 60's. My wife and I were being lectured (in a kindly way) by Margot Patterson Doss, doyen of guided walks, on the varieties of pebble that make up that beach, agates of several kinds, etc. Tom Clark meanwhile had appeared, accompanied by Lewis Warsh and, I think, Joanne Kyger. Getting into the spirit of things very nimbly, Tom Clark pointed to a pair of large tires among the flotsam and cried, "Two Nymphomaniacs!" --revealing himself already aware of the trouble with signifiers that was to be the bread-and-water of a generation.

So please do not put the cart before the horse where I am concerned. Address the issues I have raised first, if you please, before broadcasting fire-retardant. Because, even though many of us are fond of Tom, it is not impossible, is it, that so rugged an Outsider might cut a few corners in his zeal to see justice done, whether west or east of the Pecos? Corners dear to those of us who prize reason, language, poetry, truth and justice every bit as much (well, nearly) as Clark himself? David Bromige.

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147. **Robert Zamsky**

Re: "Indie Critics," Evans, Rod Smith, baloney--

Thu 5 Feb 1998

I've been itching to say something in response to many of the representations of criticism/academia as some sort of vile enterprise that lives a sort of parasitic life off of the "real" importance of poetry. On the one hand, my response goes something like: hogwash. All of us critics get into the game because of the great pay and fantastic cultural clout allotted to literary critics? Please... come on. Whether or not you agree with someone's aesthetic or critical perspective, the fact is that every academic I know gets into it because of a love for the work. I mean, if we were truly opportunists, you'd figure we'd go after something with some kind of material reward.

Which gets me to the second of probably many hands. I couldn't agree more with Henry Gould:

I think you need to open the mental blinders. Critic does not necessarily = "mainstream establishment person out to judge us by outmoded standards of (baloney) taste". That is a cartoon of a critic. In my mind, critic = "somebody who loves poetry enough to dig into it backwards & forwards, past & present, and say something intelligent (if subjective) about the style, mindset, aims, effects, contradictions, connections, strengths, imitations, originalities, meaning, impact, development... etc of what s/he reads". I don't think of standards as a set of hoary rules; I think of standards as the feel of a good ear for syntax, sound, meaning, and complexity. Wouldn't you rather read some of this than various gang-approval ratings, blurbs, or tossed-off empty retchings which pass for "criticism?"

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148. **Harold Rhenisch**

Fwd: call for sound work

Thu 5 Feb 1998

| *From the British Poets List.*

Thought it might be of interest here.

Harold Rhenisch

██████████

The (Corsican) magazine Doc(k)s[sous rature]

is calling for work, in preparation of a special issue:

"Sound, Voices, sousRature(Poetry)"

"Laut, Stimmer, sousRature(Dicht)"

"Suoni, Voci, sousRature(Poesia)"

"Sons, Voix, sousRature(Poesie)"

"Lyd, Stemmer, sousRature(Dikt)"

to be published on CD

Material accepted

of about two minutes duration

on audio tape cassettes, aiff files, syquest (44/88 Mb), zip, Mac & PC

Floppies.

&/or

image files, texts, theory, etc.

to:

Ph. Castellin / Jean Torregosa

Akenaton - Doc(k)s

12 Cours Grandval F Ajaccio 20 000

Corsica, France

Tel 95 21 32 90, Fax 95 21 32 90

email: [REDACTED]

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149. **david bromige**

safdie on bromige on clark

Thu 5 Feb 1998

Joe, I wish I'd had the education you had! You got Jung's theory of Projection in the fifth grade?! I didn't get it till I'd left high school, and then, I only got Freud's. I was beginning to suppose I'd lost my ability to make matters plain, but now I see it is the gap in our educations that is causing us trouble. I guess if I'd heard about Projection when I was in knee-pants, it would be old hat to me as well by now. Whether it contained a grain of truth or not, I'd have put it away along with other childish trifles. I see that, for readers weary of zykoanalysis, those of us still trapped in the shadow of Mitteleuropa are worse than nerds in lederhosen. I dunno--I just can't help myself! I keep hearing echoes of

what isn't made explicit, in the words people use! In all that's Yin, I sniff some Yang : all that's Yang, some Yin. (Getting closer to Jung, now). Face-value is only one way I take people! You mean that Chuck Hurwitz really would have returned me \$100 for every \$1 I invested? You mean money isn't shit, thick rich warm doo-doo forevermore? You think that someone else's poem means exactly what you say? To another? You think when I told my wife I was having trouble understanding stale myth, that wasn't a Freudian slip?

In another vein, I know that there's no end to reading, where poetry and other human behavior goes, not for me, and you can well believe it makes me not easy to live with. So I should probably shut up. But I probably won't. It was nice of you, Joe, to ask me and my wife to go to the Fair with you, in Seattle. I hope Poetry isn't going to come between us like the Rock of Gibraltar--I'd sooner it came between us like a scrabble game. David

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150. **nico vassilakis**
A Short Lived Fontanel
Thu 5 Feb 1998

the formalities
of receiving
I think

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151. **Robert Hale**
Re: Love Poems
Thu 5 Feb 1998

Interesting in most of the responses, and I thank all who volunteered advice/criticism (Chris Stroffolino, Linda Russo, Doug Powell, Karen Kelly), is the notion of the great/good poem that everyone seems to love/like, yet must read a bit tougher (sexist, imperialist) for legitimate personal/political/identity reasons, especially in the context in which I was presenting it. That's a weird sensation and maybe that's what is so ultimately disconcerting about the poem and the manner in which it engages or alienates the reader. Critiquing surrealist poetry is like critiquing film a la Christian Metz, how do you effectively critique something you love/hate, the imaginary signifier. There is a tremendous transference there, which explains my inability to see the poem as anything other than something for her, even though I was well aware of its political risks. Also, what happens to the language when it's delivered as such a message? -- the route as part of a text "loved" when isolated, packed and unpacked, yet trouble-making when delivered?

Someone suggested that something besides the poem caused the breakup. Not true. And I like (a strange word here) the idea that a poem can be that powerful, even if it results in a loss. (I guess I am a weirdo) She wrote me a letter, by the way, which eluded to the poem as an indication that I felt more passionately for her than her for me therefore we must end. There was no mention of offense, though it may have been sublimated in some way, which is why I posted the list.

I wrote some love poems (as some of you suggested), but there is nothing like a Breton love poem, and it is a love poem, contrary to opinion, very complicated, I think, and emotional (whatever these words mean), all these things in a very exterior, and arguably, male way. Concrete obscurity (O'Hara) -- probably not the best thing for a relationship.

Bernardette Mayer has some great love poems. I'll send her's from now on. (But I won't stop sending Breton). She introduced me to the Coolidge love poem, which I'd never read in that way. I feel better.

At 03:30 PM 2/4/98 -0600, you wrote:

>yes - I think DeBeauvoir objected to Breton's romanticism on more or
>less the same grounds: woman as object of mystical infatuation and
>reverie. Though I confess I was much taken with this poem when I was 21.
>And I sympathize with Robert Hale. The best thing to do is to give
>someone your own poems, I think. Then if those are rejected, you can
>have a great time getting drunk and feeling gloriously bitter (not that
>I'm making light of yr situation...). My first wife thought my poems
>were crap - and she was probably right, but she was also very harsh. My
>second wife loves them - but then, I've improved somewhat. In the
>interim between them, such offerings were usually met with baffled
>silence and/or polite horror.

>

>Patrick Pritchett

> -----

>From: linda russo

>To: [REDACTED]

>Subject: Re: Love Poems

>Date: Wednesday, February 04, 1998 5:20AM

>

>agreeing w/ chris s., it is a great poem;
>speaking as a particular woman (which the response depends on)
>i think i'd mixed messages if it were sent to me.
>it is not just a sexist poem, but an imperialistic poem
>i don't think anyone want to be referred to as "my woman"
>(maybe an under-30's understanding of this) But to be "my

>woman with" -- especially when "my woman's" (and not at all
>"my"/mine) attributes are all physical -- so exposed, granted
>no privacy, no complexity, no emotion -- at least not any
>autonomous privacy, complexity, emotion. Made
>HIS mystery only, inspiring his emotions,
>descriptions (& yes some amazing language)
>but that's all. its sort of like a vivisection
>
>& on the other side of it -- a response might
>be to the hyperbole of it -- which of course makes
>it an amazing poem, but not so much a flattering
>set of utterances.
>
>

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152. **Rachel Levitsky**

Love Poems

Thu 5 Feb 1998

Dear ROBERT

From my P.O.V. as a "female desiring subject" -- my guess would be the "but-ticks of sandstone and asbestos" reference is what did you in. In the late 20th century it's beyond kinky, it's proven cancerous. And never rely on the wedding date aura as meaningful toward longevity--it's a proven ruse.

So here's my Valentine offering for the love lorn:

Thirst

for Jennifer

A poem does not exist until it is written.
The reader experiences it's newness, as
Discovery, the next moment, the same
Poem is ancient, having always been known, somewhere,
Somewhere central.

Needed.

Like this:

The lover does not exist until she has come into view as

Revelation Creation

You need her--though you've

Never seen her before,

Never possessed her. Once

Excavated, she is permanent,

In your thoughts, the seeing you do
in your head. A terrific thirst
Accompanies moments
Without her. It is
At once delicious and horrible.
Delicious hope: this thirst will eventually be relieved;
Horrible what you know: what is possible, or probable:
Eternity of no resolve
All my best Valentine wishes to all
R D Levitsky

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153. **John Tranter**
Breton's woman, Breton's poem
Thu 5 Feb 1998

I think Robert Hale ran into trouble with this line from the André Breton poem:
"My woman with her calves of elder tree pith"
Where I come from, a remark like that can get a fellow into trouble.

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154. **Daniel Zimmerman**
Re: Love Poems
Thu 5 Feb 1998

linda russo wrote:

>
> > Correction: for "Rache" substitute "Linda Russo".
>
> isn't this just the whole problem with Breton (& Donne & Plutarch for
> that matter?) ? ! ?
> sorry -- i couldn't resist
> ... but not to overlook "My Woman" &
> its fill-in-the-blank functionality
> the male reader consigning
> to himself the fantasy of ownership;
> -- in the blazon enough parts will the anonymous (female) body make.

Oh, well, I can't resist either: does the phrase "my man" resonate? Do women never act as if "their men" belong to them? Never exhibit possessiveness, or objectify? Never fantasize ownership? Does the assumed [male-only] delight in

female body parts have a counterpart in women? {"What do women want?" asked Freud] Do women desire/delight in/ objectify some aspect of men whose 'wholeness' somehow makes their appetites acceptable? ["I want your baby"?] A woman, in marriage, has traditionally taken her spouse's _name_! [All part of a male plot of ownership, no doubt, but long an object of desire by [poor, misled, victimized?] women...

I like the Breton as a poem. Does anyone know a poem by a woman about a man which reveals a female perspective as starkly as Breton's seems to reveal a male's?

Dan Zimmerman

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155. **Maria Damon**

Re: Uh,

Thu 5 Feb 1998

herb rites:

We also don't all agree that Barrett Watten is the living embodiment of Shakespeare, Dante, and Homer.

we don't?

i want my money back.

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156. **David R. Israel**

Re: Love Poems

Thu 5 Feb 1998

Interesting discussion / problem / question, Robert.

Pablo Neruda has many (seems to me) kindred poems. One wonders to what extent they may sometimes conjure similar (to those noted, briefly, on list) reservations. Octavio Paz, I guess, wrote sometimes in a not dissimilar manner, but not I think so diehard & prolix as Neruda. I guess his **Twenty Love Poems & a [whatever it was]** (translated by WS Merwin long ago) are just a few of the many. Such poetry gives unembarrassed voice to the textures of subjectivity. Such things can, however, prove embarrassing, esp. if not cushioned by some sort of usefully abstracting cultural context. Troubadorian cultures are very distant from 90s film & t.v., and it can be hard to find a route of communication between the twain. From vantage of the latter, for former can seem madness / danger. Vice versa presumably?

Love & aculturation-problems.
Difficulty of arriving at shared language?
So much depends upon a red herring.
d.i.

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157. **daniel bouchard**
Re: a posting to poetics (late)
Thu 5 Feb 1998

PAX

I make a pact with you, Ron Silliman--
I have admired your poems long enough.
I come to you as a prodigal pup;
Weaned at a dozen fat anthologies.
I am old enough now to make an end.
Whitman broke the new wood,
Pound put in time to carving.
We watch the blasted stumps in the open fields
Leak black ink of American grain.

I make a pact with you, venerable LangPoets--
I have invested in your works long enough.
I look back at you as a honorable bunch
Laying new asphalt over the old roads;
I am old enough now to map an end.
It was you who splintered the carved wood,
Now it is time for recycling.
We have a cool climate and a rich soil--
Don't let the mulcher come between us.

I make a pact with you, my contemporaries--
For to know you better there is time enough.
I come to you with no gifts
But that of mutual comradeship;
I am ready to make friends.
Look around us at all this damned wood,
It is time to sort out what you want.
We have glasses of water nursing new roots--
Let there be communication between us.

--daniel bouchard

██████████

fax: [REDACTED]

>>>>>>><<<<<<<<<<<<<<<<

Mark P.(@lanta) -- good points. --

Engagement with the creative work of one's time needn't preclude various forms of engagement with the makers thereof; in fact, the idea of objective standards -- the book are pure object sans personal tegument -- seems a weird one in some respects. For whom is the writing written? (Possibly, a few friends?) A glance back at the history of poetry suggests this has many a worthy precedent.

stray thoughts

d.i.

•

• • • • •

• • • • •

////////////////////////////////////

> david raphael israel <

>> washington d.c. <<

| [REDACTED] (home)

| [REDACTED] (office)

=====

| thy centuries follow each other

| perfecting a small wild flower

_____ (Tagore)

////////////////////

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159. Miekal And

Re: Dan Davidson

Thu 5 Feb 1998

gary

since I live out here in cowpoop pasturealville & am total unfamiliar with Dan Davidson's life & work, could you post a bit of the ms "culture" that you speak of?

listening

miekal

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160. Rachel Loden

Re: Breton's woman, Breton's poem

Thu 5 Feb 1998

John Tranter wrote:

I think Robert Hale ran into trouble with this line from the Andre Breton poem:

"My woman with her calves of elder tree pith"

Where I come from, a remark like that can get a fellow into trouble.

All this puts me in mind of "the song of songs, which is Solomon's." What sort of reaction did he get with lines like "thy hair is as a flock of goats, that appear from mount Gilead. Thy teeth are like a flock of sheep that are even shorn, which came up from the washing . . ."

Were ruminants sexier in those days?

Rachel Loden

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161. **Tom Mandel** ***simon on "stalinism?"***

Thu 5 Feb 1998

Simon S. refers to (whose?) "constant harping on the Hitlerian or Stalinist methodology of TC" (Tom Clark) as "a little grating." ... "if TC, in either the Poetry Flash or Partisan Review or wherever, used Stalinist argumentation, ...it doesn't further anyone's understanding to use it back at him."

Pointing out that he used it is using it back at him?

Tom Mandel

Tom Mandel

Screen Porch * <http://screenporch.com>

4020 Williamsburg Ct, Ste 200 * vox: [REDACTED]

Fairfax, VA 22031 * fax: [REDACTED]

Join the Caucus Conversation

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162. **Tom Mandel** ***sigh, yikes, forget it...***

Thu 5 Feb 1998

Dale Smith says I accused Tom Clark of being a fascist. That's asinine. I don't even know the man.

Dale also says Tom Clark "addresses a herd-like behavior among a certain group of poets at a particular moment in time" (viz. in his essays titled "Stalin As Linguist").

Here, the way people so often do in arguments, Dale makes my point for me.

There was no herd-like behavior, Dale. Yet you refer to it as literal fact, a literal fact that Tom Clark "addresses."

Finally, you accuse me of an ad hominem argument. No, Dale: when you call David Bromige a "sniveling something or other" (sorry, can't remember what) *that* is ad hominem. When I say Tom Clark appropriated words Bertolt Brecht used against fascism to use them against language poets, thereby subtly conflating language poets and fascism, that's analysis.

And, in an even more final finality, here's some advice: the more you "defend" Tom Clark in this instance the more trouble you cause his name. He said what he said, and time and readers establish the value of the work and people he slammed. Pointing to pile of dogshit on the floor and saying "lookat them rare white truffles" may be satisfying to you, but it's no help to the hound. Better you cite work of his you like. I used to like his book *_Stone_* very much (I hope I'm rightly remembering the title -- esp. as I can see the cover of the book in my mind!) and his book made entirely from the vocabulary of Neil Young lyrics (name of that?).

Tom Mandel

Tom Mandel

Screen Porch * <http://screenporch.com>

4020 Williamsburg Ct, Ste 200 * vox: [REDACTED]

Fairfax, VA 22031 * fax: [REDACTED]

Join the Caucus Conversation

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163. **Henry Gould**

Re: The task of criticism

Thu 5 Feb 1998

On Thu, 5 Feb 1998 09:05:19 -0500 David R. Israel said:

>

>I don't think Henry's notion of the indie-critic is necessarily a bad
>one necessarily. On the other hand, I've certainly noted, in music,
>that the really good critical writers usually don't distance
>themselves socially from the subjects of their enthusiasm. Even if

>they are (often) frustrated composers taking up the critic garb --
>Kyle Gann (of Village Voice fame) being a good instance.
>
>Engagement with the creative work of one's time needn't preclude
>various forms of engagement with the makers thereof; in fact, the
>idea of objective standards -- the book are pure object sans personal
>tegument -- seems a weird one in some respects. For whom is the
>writing written? (Possibly, a few friends?) A glance back at the
>history of poetry suggests this has many a worthy precedent.

All right, Israel, I'll chill out on my standards a little. If you're a critic, you can meet poets or other critics during daylight hours in non-alcoholic snack bars. You can write your own poetry, but only for translation (by a non-friend) into Navajo. (Did anyone see the obituary for the Navajo artist - 90 yrs old - who was a Navajo code-talker in WW II? Did you know that the general who was part of the battle of Iwo Jima said the battle could not have been won without frontline Navajos relaying strategy in Navajo code? This in spite of the fact that most of them were punished severely all through public school for speaking Navajo - outlawed on school premises? Everything that rises must converge.)

Somehow I get the feeling some people just are never going to get it. I don't know what they do when they stand up or sit down to write. Do you know why "poetry" AND "poetry business" are utterly disdained - derided - the dudville of American culture? Precisely because poets ARE SO AT HOME IN LANGUAGE THAT THEY FAIL TO RECOGNIZE HOW SERIOUSLY NON-WRITERS TAKE THE WORD - ESPECIALLY THE WRITTEN WORD. IN THEIR LITTLE ARTY-FARTY CLUBS THEY'RE PLEASED AS PUNCH IF SOMEBODY THEY KNOW LIKES WHAT THEY HAVE WRITTEN. YOU SHOULD TRY TO UNDERSTAND WHAT WRITING IS LIKE FOR A JUDGE WRITING A DECISION OR A LAWYER WRITING A LEGAL BRIEF OR A REPORTER DESCRIBING A SITUATION. YOU SHOULD HAVE A SENSE OF PRIDE IN YOUR WORK SO THAT IT STANDS APART FROM YOUR SOCIAL RELATIONSHIPS. PARADOXICALLY, THIS IS THE ONLY WAY THAT CRITICISM (& POETRY) CAN BECOME A TRULY COMMON GOOD RATHER THAN AN IN-JOKE. SAM HAMILL & HIS ILK WHO WRITE ABOUT POETRY AS A SPECIAL BREED, A CALLING APART, A HOLY CLAN OUTSIDE THE PHILISTINE WORLD (IF THIS AS ISRAEL IMPLIES IS THE GIST OF IT) ARE SIMPLY PIMPS FOR A SUBCULTURE. POETRY IS NOT A SUBCULTURE. - Henry Gould

p.s. you think the idea of objective standards is weird. Even weirder is the fact that lines from the Bible keep coming to me unannounced during this thread. Like: "You are the salt of the earth. If salt has lost its taste, how shall its salt-ness be restored? It is no better than to be thrown out & trampled underfoot by men. Have salt among yourselves, and be at peace with one another." Or how

about this one (paraphrase from inexact memory): "And what shall you give for your soul? Beware that you gain the whole world and lose your own soul."

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164. **Pierre Joris**

Re: Love Poems

Thu 5 Feb 1998

well, now that stroff has flushed me out as teaching twisted love poems like Breton's, let me submit this: in French it's of course "ma femme" — the translation I use is Antin's which says "my woman" -- but there exists another more recent one that tries to p.c.fy (I guess, or else legalize the free union) the poem by translating "ma femme" as "my wife." Does that make any difference?

Breton was, is, a marvellous poet -- he was also a tyrannical and masterful _leader maximo_ of surrealism (for all you younglings who feel that langpo was/is somehow an imposition on the landscape, check out how avant-garde groups were run -- and who was run out of town -- when Breton was waging his poetry wars -- langpo, in comparison, is a charitable organisation) and he was — ugh, o tempora, o mores, if I still have some pig-Latin — a male chauvinist pig of the first order, even if that poem was addressed to his legal spouse.

linda russo wrote:

Correction: for "Rache" substitute "Linda Russo".

isn't this just the whole problem with Breton (& Donne & Plutarch for that matter?) ? ! ?

sorry -- i couldn't resist

... but not to overlook "My Woman" &

its fill-in-the-blank functionality

the male reader consigning

to himself the fantasy of ownership;

-- in the blazon enough parts will the anonymous (female) body make.

--

=====

pierre joris 6 madison place albany ny 12202

tel/fax [REDACTED] email: [REDACTED]

http://www.albany.edu/~joris/

"What often prevents us from giving ourselves over to a single vice is that we have several of them."

— La Rochefoucauld

=====

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165. **Herb Levy**

Re: Response to Bromige on Clark & Ambiguity

Thu 5 Feb 1998

Joe Safdie wrote:

(But Herb! I
don't agree that David is here responding to my "interpretation" riff at
all! Perhaps it's just too late, or I'm too dense . .)

& my ill thought-out & petty response to this went out without re-reading, something I try not to do. This resulted in a lack of the usual, what's the word I was just reading it the other day, here it is, gentility for which this list is justly known.

My apologies to Joe, & to any other readers who wasted their time on it.

The excuse, or better, the occasion for my poorly conceived post of is the beginning of tax season, when there's (finally) a little too much work.

Gotta go. & now, back to the decorum you're used to on the poetics list.

Bests,

Herb

Herb Levy



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166. **Mark Prejsnar**

Re: task of criticism

Thu 5 Feb 1998

On Wed, 4 Feb 1998, Dale M Smith wrote:

University press publications by Perelman, Bernstein et al are part of the problem addressed. Critics parading as poets parading as... The American academy stinks and has stunk from day one. That it is somehow sympathetic to langpods reveals how bankrupt their project has become. It's a bore all

Er....this is obviously some new meaning of the word "sympathetic", of which I was previously unaware.

As for bankruptcy, Dale, people who live in glass poetics....

Mp

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167. **Mark Prejsnar**

Re: Love Poems

Thu 5 Feb 1998

I think it raises real and interesting issues, the Breton poem; and as Linda Russo has said, it has plenty of good points, which makes its sexism all the more disquieting (and productive to think about...) Of course on one level this is very *standard* sexist belittlement for the period. However it's also very much part of a standard repertoire of images that the core Surrealist poets loved. In the last few days I've been glancing at Eluard for the first time in a while, and it sure is very close to his love poems. In interesting contrast to Breton and Eluard, take a look at Rene Char. He doesn't use such (interesting but) uniform and boilerplate imagery...AND when he addresses a woman there is much more complexity of tone; the imagery is more unexpected and not quite as likely to be a 1920's update of Petrarchian list/sonnet modes.

In one sense, the problem is inherent in the Surrealist belief in sensory imagery (mostly, visual imagery) as the basis of poetry. But that makes the problem harder to ignore, it's not the source of it..The source of it is patriarchal politix.

Rereading all of this it sounds pretty harsh; I'd never give my woman-friend this particular poem, but..I certainly see the appeal of its energy, and slightly transgressive boldness. All of which were more startling and bracing when the poem was written, than in today's culture. I know feminist women who while they'd be amused at the archaic objectifying attitudes in the Breton would also appreciate its force as poetry and not be especially offended by it. But that it would be fairly disturbing to a woman doesn't much surprise me...It's moderately disturbing to me.

Mark P
@lanta

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168. **Gwyn McVay**

"My man"

Thu 5 Feb 1998

Dan Z, the only poem I can think of offhand that contains "my man" is one of the early Plath poems about Hughes, the one where he is presented as a sort of force of nature as he trods about the Yorkshire countryside flushing rabbits and naming lapwings. The "my man" in that poem never fails to make me cringe, although perhaps that is only because of historical perspective/outside-the-poem considerations.

As for women taking husband's names, I confess publicly: the sole and only reason I took my husband's name was its sound value--it sounded better with my first name than what I had been going by, and was eminently pronounceable. (I'm related to Kaczynskis. Ironic foreshadowing.) So I go into a store to buy a pair of Doc Martens at a ridiculous clearance price, and I give the worker my credit card, and she says, "Your name sounds famous." I bask in this for about two seconds, and then say, "Do you mean the McVeigh who blew up a building, or the McVeigh who got spied on by the Navy?" She laughs.

Gwyn "still no relation" McVay

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169. **Mark Prejsnar**

Re: Request for assistance

Thu 5 Feb 1998

Sylvester,

Posting from another Georgia law school, I have to say that's a moderately interesting story....Why the heck would a law professor want someone to track it down?? Must be one of those "law and literature movement" types, eh? (Actually, all I've encountered of those folks since entering the world of law,...it is to snooze. A more mainstream bunch of depressing attitudes toward writing would be hard to imagine!)

Is it because the poet was one of those legal poets (most of us aspire to be illegal, of course)...Reznikoff? Stevens?

Mp
@lanta

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170. **Sylvester Pollet**

Re: Breton's woman, Breton's poem

Thu 5 Feb 1998

actually, Rachel, I think Solomon did OK for himself. though when it comes to goats, comparisons are odorous. Shall I compare thee to a summers' day? best, Sylvester

At 6:15 AM -0800 2/5/98, Rachel Loden wrote:

>John Tranter wrote:

>

>> I think Robert Hale ran into trouble with this line from the Andre Breton

>> poem:

>>
>> "My woman with her calves of elder tree pith"
>>
>> Where I come from, a remark like that can get a fellow into trouble.
>
>All this puts me in mind of "the song of songs, which is Solomon's."
>What sort of reaction did he get with lines like "thy hair is as a flock
>of goats, that appear from mount Gilead. Thy teeth are like a flock of
>sheep that are even shorn, which came up from the washing . . ."
>
>Were ruminants sexier in those days?
>
>Rachel Loden

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171. **pritchpa**

Re: Breton's woman, Breton's poem

Thu 5 Feb 1998

Nah Rachel - he was just getting a "schwing effect" contemplating the Queen of Sheba's munificent dowry. The love poem as naked agrarian-holdings lust (man as nomad/monad - woman as farm catalog?)

Patrick Pritchett

From: Rachel Loden

To: [REDACTED]

Subject: Re: Breton's woman, Breton's poem

Date: Thursday, February 05, 1998 8:15AM

John Tranter wrote:

> I think Robert Hale ran into trouble with this line from the Andre Breton
> poem:
>
> "My woman with her calves of elder tree pith"
>
> Where I come from, a remark like that can get a fellow into trouble.

All this puts me in mind of "the song of songs, which is Solomon's." What sort of reaction did he get with lines like "thy hair is as a flock of goats, that appear from mount Gilead. Thy teeth are like a flock of sheep that are even shorn, which came up from the washing . . ."

Were ruminants sexier in those days?

Rachel Loden

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172. **Mark Prejsnar**

Rasulating

Thu 5 Feb 1998

Don,

I'm delighted to hear that Rasula is going to publish something soon. I just spent 6 or 8 months getting the Emory library to acquire and catalog Tabula Rasula (it is in print folks) and I highly recommend that people seek it out. Not much like anything else, and brilliant. Its use of typography and drawing and graphic elements makes it germane to the recent vizpo threads by the way.

As I posted to the list around a year ago, American Poetry Wax Museum is indeed a really impressive and useful social/critical/historical analysis of U.S. poetry in the 20th century. It was here on the list that I first heard of it, I think. One of the list's many very valuable functions.

Mark P.

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173. **R M Daley**

Re: Love Poems

Thu 5 Feb 1998

On Thu, 5 Feb 1998, Daniel Zimmerman wrote:

> linda russo wrote:

> >

> > > Correction: for "Rache" substitute "Linda Russo".

> >

> > isn't this just the whole problem with Breton (& Donne & Plutarch for
> > that matter?) ? ! ?

> > sorry -- i couldn't resist

> > ... but not to overlook "My Woman" &

> > its fill-in-the-blank functionality

> > the male reader consigning

> > to himself the fantasy of ownership;

> > -- in the blazon enough parts will the anonymous (female) body make.

>

> Oh, well, I can't resist either: does the phrase "my man" resonate?

> Do women never act as if "their men" belong to them? Never exhibit
> possessiveness, or objectify? Never fantasize ownership? Does the
> assumed [male-only] delight in female body parts have a counterpart in
> women? {"What do women want?" asked Freud] Do women desire/delight in/
> objectify some aspect of men whose 'wholeness' somehow makes their
> appetites acceptable? ["I want your baby"?] A woman, in marriage, has
> traditionally taken her spouse's _name_! [All part of a male plot of
> ownership, no doubt, but long an object of desire by [poor, misled,
> victimized?] women...

>

a woman taking her spouse's name (!) as 'long an object of desire for women'? how long? when, why? it seems to me that to assume a husband's name hardly compensates for the loss of one's property rights, inheritance rights, well lets just say legal standing - could ever have compensated for becoming legally a piece of property, could ever have been part of any ECONOMY of desire, as Freud might like to narrativize - a very tricky man , that guy, and quick with a sleight of rhetorical hand - but I've yet to see a movie ad campaign that stretchs its male lead all over the ad poster in nothin but a fig leaf (a la Great Expectations- great expectations!) - no one's even speculating on a 'male plot of ownership' really, I dont think- something like that would be too ridiculously sinister, too obviously ludicrous, too easy - the point in part here is, Linda's point, that to draw distinctions between feminist and non-feminist by the actual biological sex of a person at this point is silly - and counterproductive and moreover, feminist should be emptied of this kind of reference-value at this point - because gosh, woman are taught to desire possession of women's bodies in a similar degree, if not in a similar nature, as men-écriture feminine can be read as essentialist and exclusive, but why go to the trouble of such a reading when there is cixous, derrida, delueze, doing a lot more

I like the Breton as a poem. Does anyone know a poem by a woman about a man which reveals a female perspective as starkly as Breton's seems to reveal a male's?

hmm right- this is kind of where it gets down and dirty (obvious), right? - marianne moore's love poems seem to be lamenting the positioning of woman as dead babies - see "roses only," 'your thorns are the best part of you' - mina loy writes great lyrics about moon rotting - sylvia plath you know wrote lots to her father - there just doesnt seem to be much of a tradition of women writing literally about their muse's (dead) body - there is , however, a lot of lyrical work out there by women that partakes of the same strategies, privileged subject

positions, as that of the cold lonely isolated seer-sage-poet who writes over the dead body of the beloved - which take 'poetry' as a deity and 'poet' as their license to more or less wave phallus all over the page -

nothing. everything.

rd

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174. **Jacques Debrot**

Re: Breton poem

Thu 5 Feb 1998

Perhaps it doesn't mean anything, but if I remember correctly Breton at first pretended that the poem wasn't his & that it had been sent to him anonymously(?) in the mail. The similarity Mark P. sees to Eluard is revealing (although most Surrealist poetry strikes me as quite similar), because when Eluard was shown the poem he immediately declared the unknown writer a genius & proposed that they launch a citywide search for him in Paris.

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175. **Henry Gould**

Celan to Mandelstam

Thu 5 Feb 1998

You will think I am some kind of Blakean avatar, a brass cube of rectal rectitude, a meatlocker out to reduce everything to legal jargon & professional swordsmanship. But you will be wrong.

"I am the Lion left out of your play."

*

Here is a Celan poem considered to be addressed (in a sense) to Mandelstam (trans. Michael Hamburger):

BELOW

Led home into oblivion
the sociable talk of
our slow eyes.

Led home, syllable after syllable, shared
out among the dayblind dice, for which
the playing hand reaches out, large,
awakening.

And the too much of my speaking:
heaped up round the little
crystal dressed in the style of your silence.

--Paul Celan

--HG

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176. **Karen Kelley**

Re: Love Poems

Thu 5 Feb 1998

Check out *_Investigating Sex_* by Jose Pierre. It is conversations among Breton, Eluard, et al re: sex, and directly addresses, well, as much as they were inclined to be direct, the surrealist attitude toward women & sex & poetry, etc. etc. One thing I found interesting was Breton's violent homophobia; to him SEX = WOMAN (and, it would seem, WOMAN = SEX).

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177. **William Marsh**

Re: a posting to poetics (late)

Thu 5 Feb 1998

At 08:56 AM 2/5/98 -0500, daniel bouchard wrote:

>PAX

>

>I make a pact with you, Ron Silliman--

>I have admired your poems long enough.

>I come to you as a prodigal pup;

>Weaned at a dozen fat anthologies.

>I am old enough now to make an end.

>Whitman broke the new wood,

>Pound put in time to carving.

>We watch the blasted stumps in the open fields

>Leak black ink of American grain.

>

>I make a pact with you, venerable LangPoets--

>I have invested in your works long enough.

>I look back at you as a honorable bunch

>Laying new asphalt over the old roads;

>I am old enough now to map an end.

>It was you who splintered the carved wood,

>Now it is time for recycling.

>We have a cool climate and a rich soil--
>Don't let the mulcher come between us.
>
>I make a pact with you, my contemporaries--
>For to know you better there is time enough.
>I come to you with no gifts
>But that of mutual comradeship;
>I am ready to make friends.
>Look around us at all this damned wood,
>It is time to sort out what you want.
>We have glasses of water nursing new roots--
>Let there be communication between us.
>
daniel

i'm interested in your statement here, especially given the fact that about 80% of old-growth forest in the U.S. has been lost (most of it to create land for grazing livestock and/or growing livestock feed) and topsoil depleted 75% for sake of same (not to mention chemical contamination of soil and water--fertilizers, etc. to sustain growth) / so i have to admit the running conceit here ("wood," "rich soil", "water nursing new roots," "recycling") resonates oddly for me--not just for its irony, intended or not / the "American Grain" you refer to and "American Tree" by implication as well lead me to think that what does separate writers today from the "Tree" group is precisely our relationship to REsources, figuratively and literally -- the american tree hasn't just been carved and splintered, it's been cut down, paved over, then re-paved / planting "new roots" through this kind of surface and in this kind of soil would be difficult indeed, probably impossible / hydroponics and tree farms: maybe that's where the future of poetry lies if we pursue the metaphor

i don't know where you hail from, but having spent some time working on a farm in Illinois (shutting windows when the pesticide truck comes through, watching hillsides wash away, cleaning contaminated wells, etc.), i have a hard time getting past the literal here / but quite seriously whatever pact is made among writers today i think it needs to account for this new relationship (to wood and word) / the invitation to "mutual comradeship" however is gladly accepted

best,
bill marsh

William Marsh
PaperBrainPress

Voice & Range Community Arts
National University



<http://www.dtai.com/~bmarsh>

snail: 1860 PB Dr. #4

San Diego, CA 92109

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178. **Rachel Levitsky**

movie query

Thu 5 Feb 1998

So I wrote this poem from an image which comes from a gesture in a movie and I think it is The Conformist, not sure, must know. Having a bit of trouble finding it to rent in the neighborhood, haven't gone further yet.

Here it is: A man in a black trenchcoat gestures to a woman by placing his thumb on his lips. She does the same, perhaps later. It's French.

??????

thanks,
rachel

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179. **Jacques Debrot**

Breton+Eluard

Thu 5 Feb 1998

One more thing, if this anecdote is true, it would make *Eluard* the real object of the poem's seduction, wouldn't it?

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180. **Sylvester Pollet**

Re: Request for assistance

Thu 5 Feb 1998

hey, Mark. I thought it was curious too--she said she'd let me know the outcome. I assume it's just training of the sort you'd give a private detective. After forwarding to the list i sent her another message saying "Oh, by the way, that will be \$750. plus expenses."

At 10:59 AM -0500 2/5/98, Mark Prejsnar wrote:
>Sylvester,

>

>Posting from another Georgia law school, I have to say that's a moderately
>interesting story....Why the heck would a law professor want someone to
>track it down?? Must be one of those "law and literature movement" types,
>eh? (Actually, all I've encountered of those folks since entering the
>world of law,...it is to snooze. A more mainstream bunch of depressing
>attitudes toward writing would be hard to imagine!)

>

>Is it because the poet was one of those legal poets (most of us aspire to
>be illegal, of course)...Reznikoff? Stevens?

>

>Mp

>@lanta

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181. **Gary Sullivan**

Re: Dan Davidson

Thu 5 Feb 1998

Hello, Tom:

| *I miss Dan, and I wish he were here so I could throttle him for what he did.*

I've been thinking about responding for a week--not that it needs a response;
simple, direct, moving statement that it is. But . . .

well, Tom, no one knows why anyone chooses to commit suicide, but I know
Dan thought about it for quite a while; it wasn't a sudden or rash decision. We
had long talks on the phone about it, and he and my wife wrote back & forth
about it a couple of years before he did it. (She was very much into the Hemlock
Society for a while.) My first correspondence from Dan, in mid-1986, was a
short note: "I was just about to kill myself--then, your letter! Now . . . something
to live for!" not quite direct quote, but very close, & similar in tone--a "joke."
Whenever he would bring suicide up as an option, I would try to argue against
it, but what effective argument can you offer someone who is: (a) impoverished
(Dan lived on \$500 SSI checks in an increasingly expensive San Francisco--he
was never able to receive arts grants unless special "payment arrangements"
were made because if he reported it, the gov't would take it right out of his SSI
"income"); (b) suffering physical deterioration (beyond his heart-valve replace-
ment, & constant migraines, Dan was diagnosed with hepatitis in early 1996);
and (c) as headstrong & often frustratingly single-minded as Dan was? I mean, I
argued w/him about it quite a bit, but obviously not well enough.

Some have speculated that Dan killed himself as a big "fuck you" (to whom, I
don't know--maybe everyone?), or as a way of directing attention to his work, &

even one person thought he might have done it because the hepatitis was making him look less-than-attractive. I think--& this is equally speculative--he was long-fascinated by suicide as an option, probably romanticized it a bit), and his health & economic situation were growing increasingly difficult to deal with.

Dan died at the age of 44--the age that too many of my own most influential 20th century artists left: Maya Deren, Paul Blackburn, Lew Welch, and I think Frank O'Hara (not totally sure about O'Hara, but pretty sure). Any numerologists out there?

There are many things I wanted to throttle Dan for over the years--if you'd been at his memorial you'd have heard "Dan was the most difficult person I've ever known" a bazillion times from as many people--but his suicide wasn't one of them. Maybe I exhausted myself arguing with him about the "futility" of his life--no life, I felt, is futile. One thing I could never argue with him about was what a cold, money- & fame-hungry, spiritually empty, overall fucked up culture we live in. (One of his favorite topics. He could not NOT write the kind of poetry he did, nor could not NOT do agit-prop art.) Anyway, I didn't lead the life he did, don't know with how much dignity I could have lived it, nor for how long I'd've lasted. Of course I'd rather have him here than not; he was one of my best friends, I more than loved getting new work from him--I consistently learned from it--& he was one of the best (& most consistently honest) readers of my own work I've ever had.

Anyway, Tom, I've got all of Dan's papers, & am about to start looking for a publisher for culture. Any suggestions? Willing to help pitch it? (Not a rhetorical question.) Also: Anyone who corresponded with Dan, or wrote anything about his work, or would like to, please back-channel me when you have a moment--I've been wanting to put together something about his work, assuming it's of interest to others out there.

Thanks,

Gary Sullivan



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182. **p. durgin**

Call for work -->

Thu 5 Feb 1998

KENNING, a newsletter of poetry, poetics, & other genres of new non-fiction writing, announces a call for expository, theoretical, and critical writing for upcoming issues. Your wonderings and deliberations on current poetics issues & practitioners of the language arts are welcomed. Please back-channel with

proposals (informal) and/or details, or contact the editor, myself, at the address below. Premier issue out soon, watch the list for this announcement.

Patrick F. Durgin

`
`
`
`
` ---->*<----
` K E N N I N G|
` anewletterof|
` poetry&poetic|
` s418BrownSt.#|
` 10IowaCityIA5|
` 2245USA\\W\\|

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183. **Joe Brennan**

Re: Love Poems

Thu 5 Feb 1998

what's so "tricky" about Freud? In my experiece he's one of the most ethical and open thinkers of this century --at least, I've always found that to be so. Will you please elaborate, with textual citations if possible, what "tricks" he's turned?

joe brennan

my intervention has nothing to do with the Breton purge currently under way --
joe

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184. **Mark Weiss**

Re: "My man"

Thu 5 Feb 1998

Any number of song lyrics, and particularly the blues, which often rises to antbody's idea of poetry. Check out Bessie Smith's "Empty Bed Blues"--"My new man done left me..."

At 10:53 AM 2/5/98 -0500, you wrote:

>Dan Z, the only poem I can think of offhand that contains "my man" is one
>of the early Plath poems about Hughes, the one where he is presented as a
>sort of force of nature as he trods about the Yorkshire countryside
>flushing rabbits and naming lapwings. The "my man" in that poem never

>fails to make me cringe, although perhaps that is only because of
>historical perspective/outside-the-poem considerations.
>

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185. **Maria Damon**

Re: Love Poems

Thu 5 Feb 1998

jennifer moxley's "three graces" or what is it (i don't have the book --imagination verses -- w/ me) about 3 guys as muses is a lovely female poet looking at male muses poem...

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186. **Maria Damon**

Re: Love Poems

Thu 5 Feb 1998

oh fr heavens' sake. women didn't "take" their husbands names in the sense of usurping and colonizing them; their husbands' names were forced on them as insignia of those husbands' ownership of those wives. i'm sorry, but to claim otherwise is simply either disingenuous, an attempt at rhetorical provocation, or so staggeringly naive that further discussion of equity between genders is pointless.

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187. **Aldon Nielsen**

Re: criticism rues

Thu 5 Feb 1998

well . . . among the poets whose letters have been published or deposited in public collections the "whimper" factor is fairly high and fairly consistent across the aesthetic board -- I've never found a writer who did not complain of too little time --

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188. **Mark Weiss**

Re: Breton's woman, Breton's poem

Thu 5 Feb 1998

Ruminants have always been sexy. The Song of Songs was written for an audience whose members would have had an immediate visual association with the imagery. So, that tightly-packed flock of goats undulating across the mountain

in the distance could call to mind the flow and movement of hair, and the sheep, in a snowless landscape, would have been the paradigm of whiteness (as swan's down is for Jonson in "The Ode to Charis"--another nearly obsolete image). The elder tree pith is certainly *recherche* but probably refers to the lady's tan.

At 06:15 AM 2/5/98 -0800, you wrote:

>John Tranter wrote:

>

>> I think Robert Hale ran into trouble with this line from the Andre Breton

>> poem:

>>

>> "My woman with her calves of elder tree pith"

>>

>> Where I come from, a remark like that can get a fellow into trouble.

>

>All this puts me in mind of "the song of songs, which is Solomon's."

>What sort of reaction did he get with lines like "thy hair is as a flock

>of goats, that appear from mount Gilead. Thy teeth are like a flock of

>sheep that are even shorn, which came up from the washing . . ."

>

>Were ruminants sexier in those days?

>

>Rachel Loden

>

>

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189. **Christopher W. Alexander**
valentine's criticism poem

Thu 5 Feb 1998

valentino:

I think critics need to be purged of friends. only people with no friends enough to be objective. I remember the critics were sent to live in a remote cabin with just a dog for company, and after of 5 years living they had to kill the dog; I think they called it Trancendental Meditation. it didn't take a spousal name to penetrate the economy of desire in that cabin. I know that it's too late for me ["too late for me"] to be a really good critic, but I'm still inviting you to my party (& you, Kent).

..

Christopher W. Alexander etc. / nominative press collective

email: [REDACTED]

snail-mail: P.O. Box 522402 / Salt Lake City UT 84152-2402

press/zine site: <http://choengmon.lib.utah.edu/~calexand/nonce/>

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190. **k. lederer**

Re: Love Poems

Thu 5 Feb 1998

Rachel,

I loved this post--

I agree with not only the "content," but with the TONE of it as well--

Yours,

Mrs. R.

On Thu, 5 Feb 1998, R M Daley wrote:

On Thu, 5 Feb 1998, Daniel Zimmerman wrote:

linda russo wrote:

Correction: for "Rache" substitute "Linda Russo".

isn't this just the whole problem with Breton (& Donne & Plutarch for that matter?) ? ! ?

sorry -- i couldn't resist

... but not to overlook "My Woman" &

its fill-in-the-blank functionality

the male reader consigning

to himself the fantasy of ownership;

-- in the blazon enough parts will the anonymous (female) body make.

Oh, well, I can't resist either: does the phrase "my man" resonate?

Do women never act as if "their men" belong to them? Never exhibit

possessiveness, or objectify? Never fantasize ownership? Does the

assumed [male-only] delight in female body parts have a counterpart in

women? {"What do women want?" asked Freud} Do women desire/delight in/

objectify some aspect of men whose 'wholeness' somehow makes their

appetites acceptable? ["I want your baby"?] A woman, in marriage, has

traditionally taken her spouse's _name_! [All part of a male plot of

ownership, no doubt, but long an object of desire by [poor, misled,

victimized?] women...

a woman taking her spouse's name (!?) as 'long an object of desire for women'? how long? when, why? it seems to me that to assume a husband's name hardly compensates for the loss of one's property rights, inheritance rights, well lets just say legal standing - could ever have compensated for becoming legally a piece of property, could ever have been part of any ECONOMY of desire, as Freud might like to narrativize - a very tricky man , that guy, and quick with a sleight of rhetorical hand - but I've yet to see a movie ad campaign that stretches its male lead all over the ad poster in nothin but a fig leaf (a la Great Expectations- great expectations!) - no one's even speculating on a 'male polt of ownership' really, I dont think- something like that would be too ridiculously sinister, too obviously ludicrous, too easy - the point in part here is, Linda's point, that to draw distinctions between feminist and non-feminist by the actual biological sex of a person at this point is silly - and counterproductive and moreover, feminist should be emptied of this kind of reference-value at this point - because gosh, woman are taught to desire possession of women's bodies in a similar degree, if not in a similar nature, as men- ecriture feminine can be read as essentialist and exclusive, but why go to the trouble of such a reading when there is cixous, derrida, delueze, doing a lot more

I like the Breton as a poem. Does anyone know a poem by a woman about a man which reveals a female perspective as starkly as Breton's seems to reveal a male's?

hmm right- this is kind of where it gets down and dirty (obvious), right? - marianne moore's love poems seem to be lamenting the positioning of woman as dead babies - see "roses only," ' your thorns are the best part of you' - mina loy writes great lyrics about moon rotting - sylvia plath you know wrote lots to her father - there just doesnt seem to be much of a tradition of women writing literally about their muse's (dead) body - there is , however, a lot of lyrical work out there by women that partakes of the same strategies, privileged subject positions, as that of the cold lonely isolated seer-sage-poet who writes over the dead body of the beloved - which take 'poetry' as a deity and 'poet' as their license to more or less wave phallus all over the page -

nothing. everything.

rd

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191. **d powell**

Re: Dan Davidson

Thu 5 Feb 1998

Reply to: Re: Dan Davidson

O'Hara would have been about 39 when he was hit by that dunebuggy.

Doug

=====

=====

D A Powell

=====

=====

Gary Sullivan wrote:

>Hello, Tom:

>

>>I miss Dan, and I wish he were here so I could throttle him for what he did.

>

>I've been thinking about responding for a week--not that it needs a response;

>simple, direct, moving statement that it is. But . . .

>

>well, Tom, no one knows why anyone chooses to commit suicide, but I know
Dan

>thought about it for quite a while; it wasn't a sudden or rash decision. We had

>long talks on the phone about it, and he and my wife wrote back & forth about

>it a couple of years before he did it. (She was very much into the Hemlock

>Society for a while.) My first correspondence from Dan, in mid-1986, was a

>short note: "I was just about to kill myself--then, your letter! Now . . .

>something to live for!" not quite direct quote, but very close, & similar in

>tone--a "joke." Whenever he would bring suicide up as an option, I would try
to

>argue against it, but what effective argument can you offer someone who is:

(a)

>impoverished (Dan lived on \$500 SSI checks in an increasingly expensive San

>Francisco--he was never able to receive arts grants unless special "payment

>arrangements" were made because if he reported it, the gov't would take it

>right out of his SSI "income"); (b) suffering physical deterioration (beyond

>his heart-valve replacement, & constant migraines, Dan was diagnosed with

>hepatitis in early 1996); and (c) as headstrong & often frustratingly

>single-minded as Dan was? I mean, I argued w/him about it quite a bit, but

>obviously not well enough.

>

>Some have speculated that Dan killed himself as a big "fuck you" (to whom, I
>don't know--maybe everyone?), or as a way of directing attention to his work,
&
>even one person thought he might have done it because the hepatitis was
making
>him look less-than-attractive. I think--& this is equally speculative--he was
>long-fascinated by suicide as an option, probably romanticized it a bit), and
>his health & economic situation were growing increasingly difficult to deal
>with.
>
>Dan died at the age of 44--the age that too many of my own most influential
>20th century artists left: Maya Deren, Paul Blackburn, Lew Welch, and I think
>Frank O'Hara (not totally sure about O'Hara, but pretty sure). Any
>numerologists out there?
>
>There are many things I wanted to throttle Dan for over the years--if you'd
>been at his memorial you'd have heard "Dan was the most difficult person I've
>ever known" a bazillion times from as many people--but his suicide wasn't one
>of them. Maybe I exhausted myself arguing with him about the "futility" of his
>life--no life, I felt, is futile. One thing I could never argue with him about
>was what a cold, money- & fame-hungry, spiritually empty, overall fucked up
>culture we live in. (One of his favorite topics. He could not NOT write the
>kind of poetry he did, nor could not NOT do agit-prop art.) Anyway, I didn't
>lead the life he did, don't know with how much dignity I could have lived it,
>nor for how long I'd've lasted. Of course I'd rather have him here than not; he
>was one of my best friends, I more than loved getting new work from him--I
>consistently learned from it--& he was one of the best (& most consistently
>honest) readers of my own work I've ever had.
>
>Anyway, Tom, I've got all of Dan's papers, & am about to start looking for a
>publisher for _culture_. Any suggestions? Willing to help pitch it? (Not a
>rhetorical question.) Also: Anyone who corresponded with Dan, or wrote any-
thing
>about his work, or would like to, please back-channel me when you have a
>moment--I've been wanting to put together something about his work, assum-
ing
>it's of interest to others out there.
>
>Thanks,
>
>Gary Sullivan
>████████

>
>
>RFC822 header
>-----
>
>Return-Path: <[REDACTED]>
>Delivered-To: [REDACTED]
>Received: (qmail 2943 invoked from network); 5 Feb 1998 20:01:04 -0000
>Received: from deliverance.acsu.buffalo.edu (128.205.7.57)
> by herring.com with SMTP; 5 Feb 1998 20:01:04 -0000
>Received: (qmail 22933 invoked from network); 5 Feb 1998 19:03:58 -0000
>Received: from listserv.acsu.buffalo.edu (128.205.7.35)
> by deliverance.acsu.buffalo.edu with SMTP; 5 Feb 1998 19:03:58 -0000
>Received: from LISTSERV.ACSU.BUFFALO.EDU by
LISTSERV.ACSU.BUFFALO.EDU
> (LISTSERV-TCP/IP release 1.8c) with spool id 28040858 for
> [REDACTED]; Thu, 5 Feb 1998 14:03:53 -0500
>Received: (qmail 41 invoked from network); 5 Feb 1998 19:03:10 -0000
>Received: from mailrelay1.cc.columbia.edu (128.59.35.143) by
> listserv.acsu.buffalo.edu with SMTP; 5 Feb 1998 19:03:10 -0000
>Received: from montgomery (montgomery.hist.columbia.edu
[128.59.226.188]) by
> mailrelay1.cc.columbia.edu (8.8.5/8.8.5) with SMTP id OAA27774 for
> <[REDACTED]>; Thu, 5 Feb 1998 14:03:00 -0500
> (EST)
>Received: by localhost with Microsoft MAPI; Thu, 5 Feb 1998 13:53:18 -0500
>X-Mailer: Microsoft Internet E-mail/MAPI - 8.0.0.4025
>MIME-Version: 1.0
>Content-Type: text/plain; charset="us-ascii"
>Content-Transfer-Encoding: 7bit
>Message-ID: <[REDACTED]@columbia.edu>
>Date: Thu, 5 Feb 1998 13:53:16 -0500
>Reply-To: UB Poetics discussion group <[REDACTED]>
>Sender: UB Poetics discussion group <[REDACTED]>
>From: Gary Sullivan <[REDACTED]>
>Subject: Re: Dan Davidson
>To: [REDACTED]
>

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192. **Elizabeth Hatmaker**

Re: "My man"

Thu 5 Feb 1998

The Bessie Smith lyrics reminded me-- didn't Shirley Anne Williams write a series on Bessie Smith lyrics? Does anyone know how or if she brought attention to the whole "my man" issue?

I'm also reminded of an old movie based on, I think, a Cornell Woolrich (sp?) novel called "No Man to Call Her Own"-- Barbara Stanwick, pregnant and abandoned, is in a train wreck with couple and is mistaken for the bride, taken in, falls in love with the groom's brother.

Seems in both cases-- the Bessie Smith lyrics and the movie that the desire to "own a man" comes from a pretty desperate place in a number of ways (emotionally, financially, socially). I'm not sure that I'd equate this with what's going on in the Breton poem. Maybe this is less the case with the Plath poem.

e. hatmaker

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193. **Carolyn Guertin**

44

Thu 5 Feb 1998

Dan died at the age of 44--the age that too many of my own most influential 20th century artists left: Maya Deren, Paul Blackburn, Lew Welch, and I think Frank O'Hara (not totally sure about O'Hara, but pretty sure). Any numerologists out there?

bpNichol too, at 44.

Carolyn Guertin, Department of English, University of Alberta E-Mail: [REDACTED]; Tel/FAX: [REDACTED] Website: <http://www.ualberta.ca/~cguertin/Guertin.htm>

"I have doubted my belief in sentences because of their refusal to recall certain things"

-- Brenda Hillman

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194. **linda russo**

Re: Love Poems

Thu 5 Feb 1998

pat & dan --

i think i could offer some illumination here -- though not tons more than pat who's pretty on the mark -- but sadly i must "set no mail" & happily prepare for a weekend in SF --

-- linda russo

> Hi Dan.

>

> When I think about it, I guess my feeling for Breton waned a long while
> back without my really noticing it much. So I couldn't say it's driven
> by a particular decision or attitude arrived at after the consideration
> of such factors as his sexism, or whatever. My favorite French
> surrealists were always Eluard and Desnos, and then later, Char.
> That's not to say I don't have a soft spot for the Sur-Commandante.
> Just last week I bought a used copy of the _Manifestos_ - (sold the old
> one in a periodic purge to buy new books). It was a very important book
> for me once upon a time and had a tremendous effect on the way I thought
> about poetry, about language. So I honor Breton for that.

>

> As for the gap between American and French feminism, I'll have to get
> back to you on that - I just don't know enough to make an intelligent
> comment on the situation. From what little I've read, there seems to be
> a perception, at least here in the US, that French feminists have moved
> so far into the poststructural camp as to neutralize the enactment of
> any coherent political agenda. And that's because the political front of
> feminism has thus far relied on - in a sort of gentlewoman's agreement -
> to set aside the issue of essentialism vs. constructionism, and for the
> sake of promoting specific socially progressive programs, etc. acted as
> though there were no ontological rift, that something called the
> "universal woman" exists and can be appealed to in arguments with
> legislators and the like. It's a very interesting problem.

>

> Patrick Pritchett

> -----

> From: Daniel Zimmerman

> To: [REDACTED]

> Subject: Re: Love Poems

> Date: Wednesday, February 04, 1998 9:09PM

>

> Pat,

> Does your change in estimation re Breton's poem reflect what you
> said
> earlier, i.e., that

>
> "one of the big differences between French feminism and
> American feminism, as I understand it: that the former is more
> philosophically-driven, the latter more politically-driven"
>
> ??
>
> & if so, how? Do you [if you do] shrink a bit from Breton now more for
> political or for philosophical reasons? How do you feel about the
> widening of the gap between American & French feminisms?
>
> --Dan Zimmerman
>
>

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195. **Aldon Nielsen**

Re: query: jazz and spoken word

Thu 5 Feb 1998

DON'T send those answers the back way -- post 'em here so that I can see them too

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196. **J. Kuszai**

Re: Dan Davidson

Thu 5 Feb 1998

Gary & other followers of the late Daniel Davidson, could someone post a bibliography of published (and possibly unpublished work). I've been interested in his work since you (Gary) sent me the collab with Tom Mandel. Who published that? thanks-jk

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197. **Andrew D Epstein**

Re: Dan Davidson

Thu 5 Feb 1998

>> Dan died at the age of 44--the age that too many of my own most influential
20th century artists left: Maya Deren, Paul Blackburn, Lew Welch, and I think

Frank O'Hara (not totally sure about O'Hara, but pretty sure). Any numerologists out there?<<

Not to say you're not onto something numerological, but O'Hara died soon after he turned 40 (in 1966).

Andrew Epstein

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198. **Harold Rhenisch**

Re: Love Poems

Thu 5 Feb 1998

Oh for Heaven's sake, Maria. Your posts have always been intelligent and I've always looked forward to them, but you've lost me this time with your sweeping generalizations about gender equity. Sorry, but I have to say this.

My wife took my name neither to be usurped and colonized nor to be a piece of property, and would find this discussion silly, whatever her reasons were (and they were her own). Furthermore, she is neither usurped nor colonized. 17 years ago I put her through university. For 12 years I have cared for our children and home, put her through graduate school (and did not go myself), assisted her hugely with her thesis, moved to follow her job, and I continue to support her in her difficult, all-consuming professional life daily. I may be so "staggeringly naive that further discussion of equity between genders is pointless" and she may be too, but my experience is that roles have as much to do with inequity as do genders: a man today caring for his children is at as much of a social and political disadvantage (in fact more of one) than a woman today caring for hers. Whatever happened in the past, happened, and let's talk about it, let's fix it as best we can, and if it is still happening, let's fix it now as well, but let's not claim more than should be claimed. I am not knocking my choices, because I know they have been good, but if that's not equity and support, what on earth is? Making her stay home against her will so that she could look after the children on 1/3 the salary, so that I could grow bitter and not write? Both of us go to work and send the kids to daycare? Not have kids? Split up? Tell her she has to take back her maiden name? She can change her name to anything she wants, any day.

There, I said it.

Harold Rhenisch



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199. **Mark Weiss**

Re: Love Poems

Thu 5 Feb 1998

Anybody know how long this custom has been in force (and where and among which classes)? I'm not sure if Marie-Antoinette was "Mrs. Bourbon," less sure if the Wife of Bath took her various husbands' names, and I think what's customary in non-European societies is quite variable. But I don't know. Property laws, it's worth pointing out, were passed for the convenience of the propertied class. Before the Industrial Revolution made a lot of the old divisions of labor obsolete the lower classes were often more egalitarian in terms of gender than their "betters." I hope I'm not being naive in suggesting that while Maria is in general terms certainly correct these issues are probably far more complex and nuanced. I await enlightenment.

At 01:28 PM 2/5/98 -0600, you wrote:

>oh fr heavens' sake. women didn't "take" their husbands names in the sense
>of usurping and colonizing them; their husbands' names were forced on them
>as insignia of those husbands' ownership of those wives. i'm sorry, but to
>claim otherwise is simply either disingenuous, an attempt at rhetorical
>provocation, or so staggeringly naive that further discussion of equity
>between genders is pointless.
>
>

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200. **William Burmeister Prod**

Re: Breton's woman, Breton's poem

Thu 5 Feb 1998

On Feb 5, 6:15am, Rachel Loden wrote:

> Subject: Re: Breton's woman, Breton's poem
> John Tranter wrote:
>
> > I think Robert Hale ran into trouble with this line from the Andre Breton
> > poem:
> >
> > "My woman with her calves of elder tree pith"
> >
> > Where I come from, a remark like that can get a fellow into trouble.
>
> All this puts me in mind of "the song of songs, which is Solomon's."
> What sort of reaction did he get with lines like "thy hair is as a flock

> of goats, that appear from mount Gilead. Thy teeth are like a flock of
> sheep that are even shorn, which came up from the washing . . ."

>

> Were ruminants sexier in those days?

>

> Rachel Loden

>-- End of excerpt from Rachel Loden

Don't know about any ruminants, but archaeologists in Israel found a tablet bearing the news, "Palace intern tells all about Solomon."

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201. **pritchpa**

Re: Love Poems

Thu 5 Feb 1998

Hi Dan.

When I think about it, I guess my feeling for Breton waned a long while back without my really noticing it much. So I couldn't say it's driven by a particular decision or attitude arrived at after the consideration of such factors as his sexism, or whatever. My favorite French surrealists were always Eluard and Desnos, and then later, Char. That's not to say I don't have a soft spot for the Sur-Commandante. Just last week I bought a used copy of the *_Manifestos_* - (sold the old one in a periodic purge to buy new books). It was a very important book for me once upon a time and had a tremendous effect on the way I thought about poetry, about language. So I honor Breton for that.

As for the gap between American and French feminism, I'll have to get back to you on that - I just don't know enough to make an intelligent comment on the situation. From what little I've read, there seems to be a perception, at least here in the US, that French feminists have moved so far into the poststructural camp as to neutralize the enactment of any coherent political agenda. And that's because the political front of feminism has thus far relied on - in a sort of gentlewoman's agreement - to set aside the issue of essentialism vs. constructionism, and for the sake of promoting specific socially progressive programs, etc. acted as though there were no ontological rift, that something called the "universal woman" exists and can be appealed to in arguments with legislators and the like. It's a very interesting problem.

Patrick Pritchett

From: Daniel Zimmerman

To: [REDACTED]

Subject: Re: Love Poems

Date: Wednesday, February 04, 1998 9:09PM

Pat,

Does your change in estimation re Breton's poem reflect what you said earlier, i.e., that

"one of the big differences between French feminism and American feminism, as I understand it: that the former is more philosophically-driven, the latter more politically-driven"

??

& if so, how? Do you [if you do] shrink a bit from Breton now more for political or for philosophical reasons? How do you feel about the widening of the gap between American & French feminisms?

--Dan Zimmerman

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202. **david bromige**

"my man" (for Gwyn McVay)

Thu 5 Feb 1998

Sur cette terr', ma seul' joie, mon seul bonheur, C'est mon homme, J'ai donne/
tout c'que j'ai, mon amour tout mon coeur, A mon homme, Et me^me la nuit
Quand je re^ve, c'est de lui De mon homme Ce n'est pas qu'il est beau, Qu'il
est riche ni costaud, Mais je 'aime, C'est idiot et fout des coups, j'ai prend mes
sous, Je suis a bout Mais malgre/ tout Que voulez-vous, Je l'ai tell'ment dans la
peau Qu' j'en d'viens marteau, Des qu'il s'approch' c'est fini Je suis a lui,
Quand ses yeux sur moi se pos'nt ca m'rend tout chose, Je l'ai tell'ment dans la
peau Qu'au moindre mot, je suiss f'rait fair'n' importe quoi. J'tue-rai ma foi,
J'sens qu'il me vendrait infa^me, Mais je n'suis qu'un' femme. Et j'lai tell'ment
dans la , etc.

It costs me a lot, but there's one thing that I've got--it's my man Cold and wet,
tired you bet, but all that I soon forget With my man He's not much for looks,
and no hero out of books__is my man Two or three girls has he that he likes as
well as me, But I love him! I don't know why I should, He isn't good, Hen isn't
true, He beats me too. What can I do? O my man I love him so, he'll never
know, All my life is just despair, but I don't care When he takes me in his arms
the world is bright, allright; What's the difference if I say, I'll go away, When I
know I'll come back on my knees some day? For whatever my man is I am his
forever more! Oh my man I love him so --- da capo, etc.

Albert Willemetz et Jacques Charles, music by Maurice Yvain English tr. by Channing Pollock

as sung by Fanny Brice in "Ziegfield Follies of 1921"

This would appear to contain everything that American feminism dreads--understandably--the way doctors dread penicillin-resistant bacteria. All compressed into some 30 bars...sorry I can't append the music, which is kind of neat.

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203. **George Thompson**

Re: Breton's woman, Breton's poem

Thu 5 Feb 1998

Rachel Loden asks:

>

>All this puts me in mind of "the song of songs, which is Solomon's."

>What sort of reaction did he get with lines like "thy hair is as a flock

>of goats, that appear from mount Gilead. Thy teeth are like a flock of

>sheep that are even shorn, which came up from the washing . . ."

>

>Were ruminants sexier in those days?

>

In fact, Rachel, they were. Very much.

As for Solomon's song itself, I liked Mark Weiss's remarks very much. But the proper answer to your question is that they were. Very much.

And not just ruminants. Have you ever heard of the Vedic horse sacrifice?

Whenever people ask me why I study Sanskrit, I always respond with the question, "Have you ever heard of the Vedic horse sacrifice?"

It leads to a spirited justification of philology. You poets think you know things.... But the things I know.... Well.... Like what the horse and the chief queen did.... Well....

Why, it is even better than Breton.

George Thompson

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204. **Maria Damon**

Re: Love Poems

Thu 5 Feb 1998

At 2:00 PM -0500 2/5/98, Joe Brennan wrote:

>what's so "tricky" about Freud? In my experience he's one of the most ethical
>and open thinkers of this century --at least, I've always found that to be so.
>Will you please elaborate, with textual citations if possible, what "tricks"
>he's turned?

>

>joe brennan

>

>my intervention has nothing to do with the Breton purge currently under way

--

>

>joe

what purge? did i miss something? a breton binge?

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205. **Maria Damon**

fwd query

Thu 5 Feb 1998

hi all, i received the below; can anyone help? thanks; md

From: "Jamie Phillips" <[REDACTED]>

To: Maria Damon <[REDACTED]>

Subject:

Date: Mon, 2 Feb 1998 19:40:09 -0600

Hello My name is jamie Phillips i was looking for something on the line of
Volunteers and Angels in a Poem i Work in a Nursing Home and had a 16 yr old
Girl who was a Volunteer and she was the Best in the world !! was tragically
Killed in a Auto accident and i wanted a Poem to read in Honor of Her just curious
do you know of anything like that ?

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206. **David Israel**

Re: Breton's woman, Breton's poem

Thu 5 Feb 1998

yeah, but those tablet-loids were notoriously murky. Other than w/ his thousand
wives, the guy was in fact celibate. d.i.

| William Burmeister Prod

. . . Don't know about any ruminants, but archaeologists in Israel found a tablet bearing the news, "Palace intern tells all about Solomon."

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207. **George Thompson**

Re: "my man" (for Gwyn McVay)

Thu 5 Feb 1998

David, I am as charmed by this piece as you are. But, without speaking for Gwyn or anyone else, I think the point is that it would be nice for a change if these were a man's words, just for a change.... Very different from the Breton piece, it seems to me....

George Thompson

*Sur cette terr', ma seul' joie, mon seul bonheur, C'est mon homme,
J'ai donne/ tout c'que j'ai, mon amour tout mon coeur, A mon homme,
Et me^me la nuit Quand je re^ve, c'est de lui De mon homme
Ce n'est pas qu'il est beau, Qu'il est riche ni costaud, Mais je 'aime,
C'est idiot et fout des coups, j'ai prend mes sous, Je suis a bout
Mais malgre/ tout Que voulez-vous, Je l'ai tell'ment dans la peau
Qu' j'en d'viens marteau, Des qu'il s'approch' c'est fini
Je suis a lui, Quand ses yeux sur moi se pos'nt ca m'rend tout chose,
Je l'ai tell'ment dans la peau Qu'au moindre mot, je suiss f'rait fair'n'
importe quoi. J'tue-rai ma foi, J'sens qu'il me vendrait infa^me,
Mais je n'suis qu'un' femme. Et j'lai tell'ment dans la , etc.*

*It costs me a lot, but there's one thing that I've got--it's my man
Cold and wet, tired you bet, but all that I soon forget With my man
He's not much for looks, and no hero out of books__is my man
Two or three girls has he that he likes as well as me, But I love him!
I don't know why I should, He isn't good, Hen isn't true, He beats me too.
What can I do? O my man I love him so, he'll never know,
All my life is just despair, but I don't care When he takes me in his arms
the world is bright, allright; What's the difference if I say, I'll go away,
When I know I'll come back on my knees some day? For whatever my man is I
am his forever more! Oh my man I love him so --- da capo, etc.*

*Albert Willemetz et Jacques Charles, music by Maurice Yvain
English tr. by Channing Pollock*

as sung by Fanny Brice in "Ziegfield Follies of 1921"

*This would appear to contain everything that American feminism
dreads--understandably--the way doctors dread penicillin-resistant*

*bacteria. All compressed into some 30 bars...sorry I cant append the music,
which is kind of neat.*

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208. **Daniel Zimmerman**

Re: "my man" (for Gwyn McVay)

Thu 5 Feb 1998

david bromige wrote:

- >
- > Sur cette terr', ma seul' joie, mon seul bonheur, C'est mon homme,
- > J'ai donne/ tout c'que j'ai, mon amour tout mon coeur, A mon homme,
- > Et me^me la nuit Quand je re^ve, c'est de lui De mon homme
- > Ce n'est pas qu'il est beau, Qu'il est riche ni costaud, Mais je 'aime,
- > C'est idiot et fout des coups, j'ai prend mes sous, Je suis a bout
- > Mais malgre/ tout Que voulez-vous, Je l'ai tell'ment dans la peau
- > Qu' j'en d'viens marteau, Des qu'il s'approch' c'est fini
- > Je suis a lui, Quand ses yeux sur moi se pos'nt ca m'rend tout chose,
- > Je l'ai tell'ment dans la peau Qu'au moindre mot, je suiss f'rait fair'n'
- > importe quoi. J'tue-rai ma foi, J'sens qu'il me vendrait infa^me,
- > Mais je n'suis qu'un' femme. Et j'lai tell'ment dans la , etc.
- >
- > It costs me a lot, but there's one thing that I've got--it's my man
- > Cold and wet, tired you bet, but all that I soon forget With my man
- > He's not much for looks, and no hero out of books__is my man
- > Two or three girls has he that he likes as well as me, But I love him!
- > I don't know why I should, He isn't good, Hen isn't true, He beats me too.
- > What can I do? O my man I love him so, he'll never know,
- > All my life is just despair, but I don't care When he takes me in his arms
- > the world is bright, allright; What's the difference if I say, I'll go away,
- > When I know I'll come back on my knees some day? For whatever my man is I
- > am his forever more! Oh my man I love him so --- da capo, etc.
- >
- > Albert Willemetz et Jacques Charles, music by Maurice Yvain
- > English tr. by Channing Pollock
- >
- > as sung by Fanny Brice in "Ziegfield Follies of 1921"
- >
- > This would appear to contain everything that American feminism
- > dreads--understandably--the way doctors dread penicillin-resistant
- > bacteria. All compressed into some 30 bars...sorry I cant append the music,
- > which is kind of neat.

Thank you, David. Exactly the tune I had in mind when I put "my man" in quotes.

Dan Zimmerman

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209. **Henry Gould**
end of love poem

Thu 5 Feb 1998

in RI

No one will blame me
on the whispering shore
for lingering so long
near your small rose island.

Bees' slow honey
is the measure of summer;
morning and sundown,
by that rose double-arch.

And my tongue's dark island
leaves a late russet shadow--
dry relic of the voyage,
our lips' broken compass.

- ol' Hen Gould [ca. 1985]

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210. **nuyopoman**
Words/Music

Thu 5 Feb 1998

Sunday

feb. 8 8pm: Bob Holman/DJDan from www.koolout.com

9:30pm: Bob Holman/Vito Ricci

THE KNITTING FACTORY 74 Leonard Street New York City

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211. **Gwyn McVay**
Re: "my man" (for Gwyn McVay)

Thu 5 Feb 1998

| Hen isn't true,

Gracious, and it contains a slur on Jack Spandrift's pseudonym too.

g.

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212. **Schuchat Simon**

Re: Love Poems

Thu 5 Feb 1998

I've been waiting for someone else to mention this,
but in the interests
of unifying threads, isn't it fortunate that Robert Hale didn't give his
friend, instead of MA FEMME, Tom Clark's "YOU" sequence from
STONES with its line
about
"my Andre Breton dream of cutting off your breasts with a trowel"

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213. **Rachel Loden**

Re: Breton's woman, Breton's poem

Thu 5 Feb 1998

Actually I love the Song of Solomon--just in case that wasn't clear; have made
ruthless use of it in my own work (as will be evident in a piece forthcoming in
non). Do wonder, though, about the translation of certain lines, such as "My
beloved put in his hand by the hole of the door, and my bowels were moved for
him." Kinky?

Rachel, ruminating

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214. **LAURA MORIARTY**

Re: Love Poems

Fri 6 Feb 1998

I have to say that I was wooed - entirely successfully - by a Breton-reading, sur-
realist-leaning poet who dedicated the first issue of his first magazine to me
(but didn't publish me in it) - after which I pointed out that I was not content to
be anyone's goddamned muse, thank you very much) and we were together for-
ever till he died -

It's not the Breton - it really depends on the babe -

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215. **david bromige**
my mistress' eyes are (love poetry thread)
Fri 6 Feb 1998

nothing like the sun. (Rae Armantrout: "At first we loved because we startled".)

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216. **Louis Cabri**
various - a spray
Fri 6 Feb 1998

It might be interesting to compare Barrett Watten's Bad History IX, "Presentation" (see Antonym #14) to the Tom Clark excerpt Joe Safdie posted Jan 24 (recently reposted by David Bromige). Coincidentally parallel subject matters in both poems, with very different treatments (as would be expected). Both seem to write of peer pressure & peer pleasure within overlapping, "warring" poetry communities: Watten, from the viewpoint of a shared poetic tendency (always plural, never singular); Clark, as someone who claims to have miraculously eluded all tendential poetic groupings (always singular, never plural) - as David has so excellently, in my view, recently detailed for us. Perhaps Steve Carll, who edits *Antonym*, could post that section of Watten's poem, if he's here? There is no "good" and "bad" in this suggested comparison, either - even though I side with David's view on Tom's poems - because Watten's poem is itself, it strikes me, oddly ahistorical in its address to a generality - "they." ...I'd be curious to know what others think.

During so much of the recent discussion I have gone back tangentially and for a sort of touchstone for my own thinking to a "chapter of verse" in Bob Perelman's poem by that name to be found in his last book, *Virtual Reality*. I wonder who on this list finds this quotation, in the way that it negotiates values for the social through various "walls" of individualism, to be a compelling one, or even an interesting one. It's a seemingly real plain statement:

"Poetry begins, not between individuals within a community, but rather at the points where communities end, at their boundaries, at the points of contact between different communities."

Where are the ends - and are they coterminous with the ends, as in the goals - of our communities, or are we a part of the same community even if we take opposing sides on fundamental issues of poetics? (The latter a question of scale, to some extent, that Ron critically addressed as an entropic state of current social affairs, in his PhillyTalks.) What does it mean to think of "poetry" as *not* "beginning between individuals within a community" - in other words, within the same community? "Community" of course can also be an imaginary construct (if it's ever anything else).

I kind of lump together under one claim some variety of positions that a number of people on this list have recently marshalled forth - those positions having to do with reinvoking that famous "figure of outward" ("figure" as in figure of thought/speech): the outcasted male individual hero loner poet-thinker. Perhaps that's a caricature? Still, the shared claim these positions hold I think is the one that is swilling the last dregs of that sad legacy of the imaginary politics of anarchism in the US. In this recent listserve revival, it has taken such a reified form that its once communal politics can hardly be perceived - by those very champions of this view - in the vocabulary used to identify its social positioning - this given the already vastly reified "social" landscape of this nation, in the midst of its bathetic attempts to clutch to such a stripped landscape for support.

Not that anyone will find and of this of interest, but: I just want to say in advance that at present I can't post to the listserve as often as I'd like. Please don't take my possible further silence on these things as mean indifference. Oh no!

Oh, no!

Mais non!

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217. **david bromige**
"my man" (George Thompson's post)
Fri 6 Feb 1998

George, Your point is well-taken, _if_ when you wrote "if these were a man's words" you intended "if these were a woman's words"--a reading that the context urges. And I would agree, that _once again_ , it is a man's "trip" (or 3

different men, actually) being "laid on" women. I was off-point, somewhat--although Fanny Brice, a woman, made it a big hit. "Buying in", I suppose. David

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218. **Robert Hale**
Sex, Power and Poetry
Fri 6 Feb 1998

I respond here, not exclusively to Linda, but to her remarks in this note and another, in addition to numerous posts by others that invite a similar reading of Breton's "Free Union" along a similar course, that of male power objectifying and controlling women -- the sway of which I underestimated in the heat of my picaresque adventure.

I would also venture another interpretation of "exterior" that might lead somewhere other than the phallus and its well-worked calculus and mass redundancy. Exteriorization as a "positive task" (Deleuze and Guattari) working against interiorizing forces -- control, perversion (you name it), those which "no longer open to any outside." Then exteriorization is the highest, and albeit most abstract, task of love. I guess I consider this romantic in the context of my delivery of Breton to "my woman", but as I try to explicate I realize how ethereal it can be and probably was to her.

There seems to be some consensus over the idea that the love poem must strive for egalitarian goals, though I think the "heat" I mentioned above makes this very difficult to achieve. And as Pierre eluded to, the Surrealists, Breton esp., cared little for egalitarianism or any other such bourgeois concepts. I am not a Surrealist, but as I recall, a blurb on my work once mentioned the influence.

To summarize, I quote Mariana Valverde from her "Sex, Power and Pleasure" (a book given to me by an ex-girlfriend, which I obviously have had trouble applying in real life -- I keep forgetting that I have lit cigarettes already as I am writing this so the ashtray has three camels burning simultaneously in it, all mine!):

"The task is not to reject all objectification in favour of an impossible ideal of pure subjectivity, but rather to integrate the two aspects of human existence. The task is to remain a full human subject even while someone is considering us as a potential erotic object, and vice versa. An eroticism that is both sexy and egalitarian is one in which both partners are simultaneously subject and object, for one another as well as for themselves."

This sounds good (utopian?), but I keep forgetting that I have lit cigarettes already as I am writing this so...

Lastly, what about the use of "My lover" as the addressee? Bill Luoma has used this quite successfully, I think, in recent love poems of his.

At 12:31 AM 2/5/98 +0000, you wrote:

>*snip*

>

>> Also, what happens to the language when it's delivered as such a message?

--

>> the route as part of a text "loved" when isolated, packed and unpacked, yet

>> trouble-making when delivered?

>>

>i can only guess that you wanted "my woman with" to translate into

>"you"; odd that "my woman with" seems so fill-in-the-blankish

>except(!) when a specific "subjectivity" is demanded of it;

>i.e. "my susan with" might work but "i, susan, with" won't.

>

>*snip snap*

>

>> I wrote some love poems (as some of you suggested), but there is nothing

>> like a Breton love poem, and it is a love poem, contrary to opinion, very

>> complicated, I think, and emotional (whatever these words mean), all these

>> things in a very exterior, and arguably, male way.

>yes, in the way that it is all cock. i.e. he loves her with his cock

>or with whatever else skin he can glom all over her --

>the old standby question -- do you think he respects his "woman

>with"? is there a being beneath this mass of female goodness?

>yes, it's nice to receive compliments re your bod. -- but to the

>exclusion of ? ? ? -- i'm reacting now out of context, of course,

>you couldn't've sent a love poem praising her mind, her ideals, &c her

>bank account, i dunno, but i'd like to know of some poems that do!

>

>

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219. **Susan Schultz**

Re: to Gwyn McVay

Fri 6 Feb 1998

Gwyn--would you back-channel me very soon, please?

Thanks, Susan

Susan M. Schultz

Dept. of English

1733 Donaghho Road

University of Hawai'i-Manoa
Honolulu, HI 96822

<http://writing.upenn.edu/epc/authors/schultz>
<http://writing.upenn.edu/epc/eazines/tinfish>

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220. **Joshua N Schuster**
spraying the communities

Fri 6 Feb 1998

There is a thread in common with Louis' post and the Clark issue that I feel is worth following.

I went to read the Tom Clark essay today. Probably worth mentioning some things before all is swept away. The Brecht quote introduces the piece and is completely contextless, not even a footnote provided, so I have no idea when the quote was written. Clark uses it to frame langpoetry as academic and negatively obscure. Now that Clark has thrown out context, that social and historical stuff that induces meaning, he is happy to provide his own version of context, calling all langpoetry leftist and group-centered. He quotes only one poem, a section from a Watten piece, not to analyze but to show that the title "Stalin As Linguist" comes from Watten (hence the quotes around the title). We assume the analogy between group-project and Stalinism and case closed. The whole thing is harshly vague and is an example of the kind of criticism I find as absolute bullshit, the "I hate this, I hate that" criticism.

And, oooh, I find the academic slander particularly compelling. The fact that it is on this list in all its glory is sickening. It's all shit, let's burn the universities. Better yet, burn the critic-professors, especially that Derrida, root of all obscure academic prose.

The example of Derrida interests me very much, as he has been bashed by Tom Clark as well as several language poets over the years, and of course by almost every professor and, now, watcher of Woody Allen movies. I'm not going to proceed on a lengthy defense here, but I will honestly and forcefully say that Derrida's writing is powerful, concise, and stunning. I find his texts on Jewish themes and on poetry to be genuinely intense. His project is fine-tuned and demanding, and I don't think I would be a poet or a critic if it were not for his writing.

Maybe it is worth noting Derrida has not spent the majority of his career in the heart of the University system. For many years he has held a "tutor" position at the Ecole Normale, about the equivalent of what most grad students get as their first job. It's also worth mentioning Derrida's essay "The University in the

Eyes of its Pupils" (diacritics, 1983), where Derrida does what he often does to characterize institutions (and, of course, also with philosophically dramatic terms). He points out the tendency to destroy and demolish institutions is always linked with the tendency to praise and commendably name them. The essay is very particular about what this may mean, and most of Derrida, as usual, is about raising these issues. There are more questions in Derrida's writing than most other essays. Derrida does insist that community and institution must be re-thought. In his major essay on Levinas he calls the context of his critique "the community of the question".

That word "community" is used so often, certainly by me too, that it loses much of its relevance. But I use this word to be the real context and substance of language writing, the context I seem to most admire them for, a context exactly like what Derrida calls "the community of the question". Now, Ron Silliman, for example (not to pick on Ron, but his Philly Talk here still resonates), has recently suggested such a community was a heroic moment in writing, while I completely disagree with such a heroic view of history, myself preferring the project of what Greil Marcus calls "secret history". Anyways, such heroism should not obscure what is so valuable in the cliched but genuine project of community. Even if communities find foundations in what will ultimately lead to their own downfall, the search is inherently important. That search takes place in the community of the question, and for me it welcomes both Derrida and language poetry in the *academy turned upside-down* (any reading of langpoetry and Derrida would be blind to miss the intense criticism both sustain against the university. It is some of the best criticism out there, much better than the solitary and blessed poet trashing all professors). But Tom Clark will forever fail to see how langpoetry is a community (of questionings) and not a totality.

Langpoetry and the University certainly do not present the only results of community (not even close), and to me, if either of these "institutions" are to be surpassed, in good faith, it will come by a rethinking of naming, of grouping, of making context in a socially and historically changing world. What is exciting is the ways in which these searches continue, even in the heart of the worst corners of the worst public/private education systems, even in the most absurd and inviting ways. What if in some perverted way, bureaucracy implicitly lead the way out of bureaucracy? What if in some terrible corner of a paragraph or a library there appeared a clue into a new understanding of community? Better we should smash it before it adds up to that pile of shit we call context.

Joshua Schuster

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221. **louis stroffolino**

Re: "My man"

Fri 6 Feb 1998

and then there's JONI MITCHELL's "my old man"
(one could love the way she objectifies men)...chris

On Thu, 5 Feb 1998, Elizabeth Hatmaker wrote:

The Bessie Smith lyrics reminded me-- didn't Shirley Anne Williams write a series on Bessie Smith lyrics? Does anyone know how or if she brought attention to the whole "my man" issue?

I'm also reminded of an old movie based on, I think, a Cornell Woolrich (sp?) novel called "No Man to Call Her Own"-- Barbara Stanwick, pregnant and abandoned, is in a train wreck with couple and is mistaken for the bride, taken in, falls in love with the groom's brother.

Seems in both cases-- the Bessie Smith lyrics and the movie that the desire to "own a man" comes from a pretty desperate place in a number of ways (emotionally, financially, socially). I'm not sure that I'd equate this with what's going on in the Breton poem. Maybe this is less the case with the Plath poem.

e. hatmaker

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222. **George Thompson**

Re: "My man"

Fri 6 Feb 1998

Small grammatical point:

"ma femme" is possessive, whereas "mon homme" is possessed.

George Thompson

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223. **louis stroffolino**

Re: various - a spray

Fri 6 Feb 1998

Louis Cabri--in taking off from a line from Perelman about poetry and its hypothetical location BETWEEN communities rather than between individuals--makes an interesting point that, for me, raises the question of identity as a differential

and what may be the "reactive nature" of it (identity).
For, perhaps we all have some pre-existing idea of what
this "listserv community" entails, is constituted by
(though of course it's
an "imaginary construct")) and there is a very valid
perspective from which
"those positions having to do with reinvoking that famous
figure of the outlaw (figure as in figure of thought/speech)
: the outcasted male individual hero loner poet-thinker"
though "a caricature" must be seen in relation to the
assumptions of the "imaginary construct" of this "listserv
community." And perhaps the VALUE of such an "outlaw figure"
position--apart from any question of intrinsic value which
I am going to BRACKET for now--is precisely in the way it
may place the tension BETWEEN communities WITHIN a community.
Thus, maybe it's not coincidental that Joshua Schuster finds
the fact that "academic slander" can be found in all its glory
on this list both "sickening" and "compelling". Ah, such
ambivalence we may locate in the individual Joshua Schuster,
taking a position against other individuals (in this sense
the "sickening" is supposed to take precedence over the
"compelling"), or we may locate it in between two communities,
whose "competing discourses" play themselves out in the words
of (or mind of) Joshua Schuster.

Again, I keep thinking of that quote by Mr. Bernstein
about being a "communist in st. petersburg and a capitalist
in leningrad". As for me, I don't think I'd say half the
things I say on this list if I were in other contexts.
When I was on the CAP-L list alot, i tended to be part of
a "unified front" with Ron Silliman strangely enough
In U-Mass MFA prgram creative writing class with James Tate
I defended Bernstein. Of course I would defend Tate here
(and not JUST for reactive reasons, but I'd be lying to
say such reasons don't play at least some part in it)...

Anyway, just some friday morning thoughts.....chris

On Fri, 6 Feb 1998, Louis Cabri wrote:

*It might be interesting to compare Barrett Watten's Bad
History IX, "Presentation" (see Antonym #14) to the Tom
Clark excerpt Joe Safdie posted Jan 24 (recently reposted
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*expected). Both seem to write of peer pressure & peer pleasure within overlapping, "warring" poetry communities: Watten, from the viewpoint of a shared poetic tendency (always plural, never singular); Clark, as someone who claims to have miraculously eluded all tendential poetic groupings (always singular, never plural) - as David has so excellently, in my view, recently detailed for us. Perhaps Steve Carll, who edits *Antenym*, could post that section of Watten's poem, if he's here? There is no "good" and "bad" in this suggested comparison, either - even though I side with David's view on Tom's poems - because Watten's poem is itself, it strikes me, oddly ahistorical in its address to a generality - "they." ...I'd be curious to know what others think.*

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revival, it has taken such a reified form that its once communal politics can hardly be perceived - by those very champions of this view - in the vocabulary used to identify its social positioning - this given the already vastly reified "social" landscape of this nation, in the midst of its bathetic attempts to clutch to such a stripped landscape for support.

Not that anyone will find and of this of interest, but: I just want to say in advance that at present I can't post to the listserve as often as I'd like. Please don't take my possible further silence on these things as mean indifference. Oh no!

Oh, no!

Mais non!

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224. **Henry Gould**

Re: various - a spray

Fri 6 Feb 1998

Stroffolino makes some good points along the Cabri & Schuster thread, mainly by not insisting on a simple solution (as I so often do). Though the poem gets written by the individual it's always in response to a group situation, even if it's addressed to a single "other" person. So the group is always an implicit sounding board. This goes for criticism as well. But I think those who criticize Tom Clark (& me) for playing the super-individualist card might consider what we're playing it against. "Talk about" poetry, "talk about" poetry communities, is all well and good, especially for those (academic) communities for whom such talk is literally their bread and butter; "isn't it nice to think so," as Mark Wallace so aptly quoted Hemingway - especially when some poetry collectives will actively & persistently promote the history & analysis of their community within the academic community; both groups get to think they're talking about something important! Isn't that nice?

All I've been saying, and perhaps all Tom Clark said (I haven't read it), IS - that, for us, when the chips are down, when the bell tolls, when the fat lady sings, when closing time comes, at the stroke of midnight, etc. etc. - my poems - whether they're responding to the group or not - my poems are my poems. I wrote them. Me, the individual. I put things in them myself. And when they're written, hey, I still wrote them. My poems are different from your poems. Part of my effort (& I mean EFFORT) is to make them different from yours. I see a major part of the intrinsic value of a poem is its utter uniqueness. I stand firmly

with both Celan & Mandelstam who, again and again, said (in OM's words) "Do not compare. The living is incomparable." You must look for it yourself.

So you can talk all you want about poetic communities. This list is a poetic community. For all I know, it's affected my writing. But when I go into the room & close the door to write - a poem, a review, whatever - I want nothing to do with you. & I don't want any favors. I want to reach the "cold" reader, the dispassionate critic, the average Joanne. Because they are my criterion for my own truth. What's your criterion? The echo of praise, the warm comradely hug? "Men seek glory from one another, but they do not seek the glory that comes from God."

- Henry Gould

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225. **Michael J. Kelleher**

alyricmailer

Fri 6 Feb 1998

BE SUBVERSIVE:

READ POETRY ON THE JOB

ANNOUNCING THE PUBLICATION OF:

a l y r i c m a i l e r

AN E-BROADSIDE FEATURING (AS OFTEN AS POSSIBLE) A SELECTION
FROM AN INDIVIDUAL POET.

This edition's poet is Dan Machlin.

Dan Machlin was born and raised in the west 20's in Manhattan and now resides in Brooklyn. He is a graduate of the M.A. Poetry Program at City College of New York and of Bernadette Mayer's workshop at St. Mark's and his work has appeared in several poetry mags, including Whatever and Torque. He is the former curator of The Segue Performance Space Poetry/Performance series and a spring 1998 curator for the HERE series in NYC.

a l y r i c m a i l e r is an autonomous editorial production of The Small Press Collective, Buffalo, NY.

The url, for those whose e-mail server does not read html, is:

<http://writing.upenn.edu/~mjk/hotpotato.htm>

(Free) Subscriptions, queries (only, not submissions), comments, complaints to
[REDACTED].

I hope to have another completed this month. Enjoy.

Michael Kelleher

<HTML>

BE SUBVERSIVE:

<P>READ POETRY ON THE JOB

<P>ANNOUNCING THE PUBLICATION OF:

<P>a <FONT

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e r

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<P>(Free) Subscriptions, queries (only, not submissions), comments, complaints to [REDACTED].

<P>I hope to have another completed this month. Enjoy.

<P>Michael Kelleher</HTML>

-----8766963DBEDC1D3FA65978C9--

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226. **Robert J Tiess**

Re: Call for work -->

Fri 6 Feb 1998

"p. durgin" <[REDACTED]> writes:

>KENNING, a newsletter of poetry, poetics, & other genres of new
>non-fiction writing, announces a call for expository, theoretical, and
>critical writing for upcoming issues. Your wonderings and deliberations
>on current poetics issues & practitioners of the language arts are
>welcomed. Please back-channel with proposals (informal) and/or details,
>or contact the editor, myself, at the address below. Premier issue
>out soon, watch the list for this announcement.

>

> Patrick F. Durgin

Dear Mr. Durgin,

Your newsletter sounds promising. From the post above, I am guessing you are more interested in prose pieces than poetry at this time. Are you open to poetry submissions, and, if so, are there any additional guidelines?

For the past few months I have been considering the physical page's dimensional impact on poetry's lineation, how it essentially dictates the width and flow of the modern poem. I will be recording my conclusions in an essay entitled, "8 1/2 x 11," and I expect it to be well under a 1,000 words. Would you be interested in such a piece?

As for myself, I am a poet and an electronic publisher of free an e-zine and poetry anthologies (see Poetfest link below). My works have appeared in a variety of publications, including English Journal, Amazing Computing, Poetpoetzine, Midwest Poetry Review, and EWG Presents.

I look forward to your reply.

Sincerely,
Robert J. Tiess

~~~~~  
~~~~~

Robert J. Tiess - [REDACTED]
Home page - <http://members.tripod.com/~rtiess>
Poetfest - <http://www.geocities.com/Athens/Acropolis/7101>

~~~~~  
~~~~~

You don't need to buy Internet access to use free Internet e-mail. Get completely free e-mail from Juno at <http://www.juno.com> Or call Juno at (800) 654-JUNO [REDACTED]

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227. **Gary Sullivan**

Re: Dan Davidson

Fri 6 Feb 1998

Hello, Miekal, Joel, Carolyn & others:

Since, Miekal, I know you have web access (& Joel, you no doubt do as well), you can read at least one section from [_culture_](#), "An Account," at:

<http://www.system-zero.com/cyanosis/Text/poetics/anaccount.html>

I'd be happy, Miekal, to mail you a copy of "Product," the first section of [_culture_](#), which my wife & I published in 1990 or 1991. Back-channel me your address.

Joel, I have to go administer language exams most of the day today, & only have e-mail at work, but if no one else has posted a bibliography by Monday, I'll do that then. As far as [_Absence Sensorium_](#), Dan & Tom's collaborative poem, it was published by Potes & Poets Press:

<http://writing.upenn.edu/epc/presses/ganick/potes.html>

I think I paid \$14 for it--not sure if you have to add postage to that or not.

Thanks, Carolyn, for reminding me that bp nichol, too, was 44--& to everyone else who reminded me O'Hara was (wow) younger. No coincidence: I opened my e-mail program up this morning . . . to exactly 44 messages. What do you say, think, when things like this happen? Unbelievable.

Yours,

Gary Sullivan



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228. **Maria Damon**

Re: Love Poems

Fri 6 Feb 1998

harold, i was talking about historical context and ongoing inequities, not specific cases. of course men suffer socially and economically when they take on traditionally "feminized" roles. that fact, to me, underscores my point that we live in a sexist society. sure, individual women take their husbands' names for any number of reasons: they sound better; carrying their father's name, with which they're saddled at birth, is no less sexist; it's more convenient for childrearing and record-keeping, etc. All of these except the first (aesthetics) to me underscore the fact that we live in a sexist society. the passion of your post, and the unusualness of the choices you've made, to me underscore the fact that we live in a sexist society that makes such choices remarkable. my hat's off to you for the choices you have made. i wasn't, though, talking about individual volition; i was responding to what i felt was a glib suggestion that women "taking" their husband's names was equivalent to men "taking" their wives as possessions; can't remember who made that post now. bests, maria d

At 2:26 PM -0800 2/5/98, Harold Rhenisch wrote:

>Oh for Heaven's sake, Maria. Your posts have always been intelligent and
>I've always looked forward to them, but you've lost me this time with your
>sweeping generalizations about gender equity. Sorry, but I have to say
>this.

>

>My wife took my name neither to be usurped and colonized nor to be a piece
>of property, and would find this discussion silly, whatever her reasons
>were (and they were her own). Furthermore, she is neither usurped nor
>colonized. 17 years ago I put her through university. For 12 years I have
>cared for our children and home, put her through graduate school (and did
>not go myself), assisted her hugely with her thesis, moved to follow her
>job, and I continue to support her in her difficult, all-consuming
>professional life daily. I may be so "staggeringly naive that further

>discussion of equity between genders is pointless" and she may be too, but
>my experience is that roles have as much to do with inequity as do genders:
>a man today caring for his children is at as much of a social and political
>disadvantage (in fact more of one) than a woman today caring for hers.
>Whatever happened in the past, happened, and let's talk about it, let's fix
>it as best we can, and if it is still happening, let's fix it now as well,
>but let's not claim more than should be claimed. I am not knocking my
>choices, because I know they have been good, but if that's not equity and
>support, what on earth is? Making her stay home against her will so that
>she could look after the children on 1/3 the salary, so that I could grow
>bitter and not write? Both of us go to work and send the kids to daycare?
>Not have kids? Split up? Tell her she has to take back her maiden name? She
>can change her name to anything she wants, any day.
>
>There, I said it.
>
>Harold Rhenisch
>██████████

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229. **Maria Damon**

Re: 44

Fri 6 Feb 1998

i believe that in one of the chinese languages, the word "four" is a synonym for "death," and thus is often avoided. if doubled, that wd seem to suggest an untimely or otherwise noteworthy-for-its-tragicness death. coming up on 43--md

At 1:36 PM -0700 2/5/98, Carolyn Guertin wrote:

>Dan died at the age of 44--the age that too many of my own most influential
>20th century artists left: Maya Deren, Paul Blackburn, Lew Welch, and I think
>Frank O'Hara (not totally sure about O'Hara, but pretty sure). Any
>numerologists out there?

>

>bpNichol too, at 44.

>

>

>_____
>Carolyn Guertin, Department of English, University of Alberta

>E-Mail: ██████████; Tel/FAX: ██████████

>Website: <http://www.ualberta.ca/~cguertin/Guertin.htm>

>

>"I have doubted my belief in sentences because

>of their refusal to recall certain things"
>-- Brenda Hillman

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230. **Maria Damon**

Re: a posting to poetics (late)

Fri 6 Feb 1998

At 10:12 AM -0800 2/5/98, William Marsh wrote:

>At 08:56 AM 2/5/98 -0500, daniel bouchard wrote:

>>PAX

>>

>>I make a pact with you, Ron Silliman--

>>I have admired your poems long enough.

>>I come to you as a prodigal pup;

>>Weaned at a dozen fat anthologies.

>>I am old enough now to make an end.

>>Whitman broke the new wood,

>>Pound put in time to carving.

>>We watch the blasted stumps in the open fields

>>Leak black ink of American grain.

>>

>>I make a pact with you, venerable LangPoets--

>>I have invested in your works long enough.

>>I look back at you as a honorable bunch

>>Laying new asphalt over the old roads;

>>I am old enough now to map an end.

>>It was you who splintered the carved wood,

>>Now it is time for recycling.

>>We have a cool climate and a rich soil--

>>Don't let the mulcher come between us.

>>

>>I make a pact with you, my contemporaries--

>>For to know you better there is time enough.

>>I come to you with no gifts

>>But that of mutual comradeship;

>>I am ready to make friends.

>>Look around us at all this damned wood,

>>It is time to sort out what you want.

>>We have glasses of water nursing new roots--

>>Let there be communication between us.

>>

>daniel

>

>i'm interested in your statement here, especially given the fact that about
>80% of old-growth forest in the U.S. has been lost (most of it to create
>land for grazing livestock and/or growing livestock feed) and topsoil
>depleted 75% for sake of same (not to mention chemical contamination of
>soil and water--fertilizers, etc. to sustain growth) / so i have to admit
>the running conceit here ("wood," "rich soil", "water nursing new roots,"
>"recycling") resonates oddly for me--not just for its irony, intended or
>not / the "American Grain" you refer to and "American Tree" by implication
>as well lead me to think that what does separate writers today from the
>"Tree" group is precisely our relationship to REsources, figuratively and
>literally -- the american tree hasn't just been carved and splintered, it's
>been cut down, paved over, then re-paved / planting "new roots" through
>this kind of surface and in this kind of soil would be difficult indeed,
>probably impossible / hydroponics and tree farms: maybe that's where the
>future of poetry lies if we pursue the metaphor

>

>i don't know where you hail from, but having spent some time working on a
>farm in Illinois (shutting windows when the pesticide truck comes through,
>watching hillsides wash away, cleaning contaminated wells, etc.), i have a
>hard time getting past the literal here / but quite seriously whatever pact
>is made among writers today i think it needs to account for this new
>relationship (to wood and word) / the invitation to "mutual comradeship"
>however is gladly accepted

>

>best,
>bill marsh

>

funny you shd mention this, bill; but it reminds me of something that resonates w/ the other list-thread on the honesty or not of critics. one thought i always bring to books when i review them is, "was this book worth cutting down trees for?" of course the answer is almost always negative but of course i don't feel i can say that in a review, it sounds way too harsh. but often i think that way: if this is an assistant professor coming up for tenure, and needs to publish, is it worth the trees? if this book is by a dean or tenured full prof whose future is not at issue, is it worth the trees? you'll notice that content has not yet entered the picture. that's because, with very few exceptions, most of the academic manuscripts or books i'm asked to review *really* don't add much to human knowledge, and certainly don't add as much as trees do to the quality of human life. so, i'm expecting excoriating messages back from all and sundry, accusing

me of utter corruption. so ask yourself: is *your* book worth the trees? most of us have such small print runs it's okay (yes, i think about that too), esp the chapbooks etc., and those show such a spirited do-it-yrsel self energy that i think they're definitely worth it; i'm talking mostly about the academic book industry.

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231. **Maria Damon**

Re: Celan to Mandelstam

Fri 6 Feb 1998

At 12:59 PM -0500 2/5/98, Henry Gould wrote:

>You will think I am some kind of Blakean avatar, a brass cube of rectal
>rectitude, a meatlocker out to reduce everything to legal jargon &
>professional
> swordsmanship. But you will be wrong.
>

r u kidding? i think many folks on the list find your persistence and idealism very inspiring even if they (we?) don't agree on particulars. so stop w/ this "you think i'm this, you think i'm that, but yr wrong" rhetoric already.

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232. **Maria Damon**

Re: spraying the communities

Fri 6 Feb 1998

bravo for this tour de force, josh!--md

At 2:25 AM -0500 2/6/98, Joshua N Schuster wrote:

>There is a thread in common with Louis' post and the Clark issue that I
>feel is worth following.
>
>I went to read the Tom Clark essay today. Probably worth mentioning some
>things before all is swept away. The Brecht quote introduces the piece
>and is completely contextless, not even a footnote provided, so I have no
>idea when the quote was written. Clark uses it to frame langpoetry as
>academic and negatively obscure. Now that Clark has thrown out context,
>that social and historical stuff that induces meaning, he is happy to
>provide his own version of context, calling all langpoetry leftist and
>group-centered. He quotes only one poem, a section from a Watten piece,
>not to analyze but to show that the title "'Stalin As Linguist'" comes
>from Watten (hence the quotes around the title). We assume the analogy
>between group-project and Stalinism and case closed. The whole thing is
>harshly vague and is an example of the kind of criticism I find as

>absolute bullshit, the "I hate this, I hate that" criticism.

>

>And, oooh, I find the academic slander particularly compelling. The fact

>that it is on this list in all its glory is sickening. It's all shit,

>let's burn the universities. Better yet, burn the critic-professors,

>especially that Derrida, root of all obscure academic prose.

>

>The example of Derrida interests me very much, as he has been bashed by

>Tom Clark as well as several language poets over the years, and of course

>by almost every professor and, now, watcher of Woody Allen movies. I'm

>not going to proceed on a lengthy defense here, but I will honestly and

>forcefully say that Derrida's writing is powerful, concise, and stunning.

>I find his texts on Jewish themes and on poetry to be genuinely intense.

>His project is fine-tuned and demanding, and I don't think I would be a

>poet or a critic if it were not for his writing.

>

>Maybe it is worth noting Derrida has not spent the majority of his career

>in the heart of the University system. For many years he has held a

>"tutor" position at the Ecole Normale, about the equivalent of what most

>grad students get as their first job. It's also worth mentioning

>Derrida's essay "The University in the Eyes of its Pupils" (diacritics,

>1983), where Derrida does what he often does to characterize institutions

>(and, of course, also with philosophically dramatic terms). He points out

>the tendency to destroy and demolish institutions is always linked with

>the tendency to praise and commendably name them. The essay is very

>particular about what this may mean, and most of Derrida, as usual, is

>about raising these issues. There are more questions in Derrida's writing

>than most other essays. Derrida does insist that community and

>institution must be re-thought. In his major essay on Levinas he calls

>the context of his critique "the community of the question".

>

>That word "community" is used so often, certainly by me too, that it loses

>much of its relevance. But I use this word to be the real context and

>substance of language writing, the context I seem to most admire them for,

>a context exactly like what Derrida calls "the community of the question".

>Now, Ron Silliman, for example (not to pick on Ron, but his Philly Talk

>here still resonates), has recently suggested such a community was a

>heroic moment in writing, while I completely disagree with such a heroic

>view of history, myself preferring the project of what Greil Marcus calls

>"secret history". Anyways, such heroism should not obscure what is so

>valuable in the cliched but genuine project of community. Even if

>communities find foundations in what will ultimately lead to their own

>downfall, the search is inherently important. That search takes place in
>the community of the question, and for me it welcomes both Derrida and
>language poetry in the *academy turned upside-down* (any reading of
>langpoetry and Derrida would be blind to miss the intense criticism both
>sustain against the university. It is some of the best criticism out
>there, much better than the solitary and blessed poet trashing all
>professors). But Tom Clark will forever fail to see how langpoetry is a
>community (of questionings) and not a totality.

>

>Langpoetry and the University certainly do not present the only results of
>community (not even close), and to me, if either of these "institutions"
>are to be surpassed, in good faith, it will come by a rethinking of
>naming, of grouping, of making context in a socially and historically
>changing world. What is exciting is the ways in which these searches
>continue, even in the heart of the worst corners of the worst
>public/private education systems, even in the most absurd and inviting
>ways. What if in some perverted way, bureaucracy implicitly lead the way
>out of bureaucracy? What if in some terrible corner of a paragraph or a
>library there appeared a clue into a new understanding of community?
>Better we should smash it before it adds up to that pile of shit we call
>context.

>

>Joshua Schuster

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233. **daniel bouchard**

Re: a posting to poetics (late)

Fri 6 Feb 1998

Bill,

Thanks for your response. Having only resubscribed to the Poetics list this past week I was afraid my post--a response to the discussion of Ron's perceived lack of a "crystallization" among younger writers--was lost to ears no longer tuned in to the topic. (I had been following the discussion on the archives.) I took a week just to think about it. It's been discussed on a smaller list and, having bounced ideas around with Steve Evans and Douglas Rothschild over the weekend, I only wrote the "PAX" poem-- half satire--on Thursday night.

I should like to address your comments by connecting them with certain statements of Ron's in the PHILLY TALKS. The poignancy of his thought (one I don't think Jeff Derksen responds to adequately, although he does cover other areas with adroitness) is caught when he questions what it means to be writing in

today's world--after 1979 I think is the date; in a world where Palestinians suffer oppression but are only portrayed in American mainstream press as terrorists, or where the genocide going on in East Timor isn't portrayed at all. (I don't have the TALKS before; I'm sorry if not getting this 100%.) Those were two examples that Ron used. The environment is certainly another; one certainly not restricted by national borders. I think if there were to be a "crystallization" among younger writers (and I'm not advocating one) it would be centered such social questions of writing. Or, if I were to advocate a "crystallization" that's the one I would choose.

You've got to understand: when poets are aware of things like this (if I anticipated any poet would be it would be Ron Silliman) I am fairly excited, but when poets actually speak of them, in public, in the context of writing; well, it gives me quite a rush. Why? Because many of the poets I love (in the 20th century anyway) are concerned with such things in their poems. Form is an afterthought for me. I'm not being as explicit as possible about this (probably making myself out to be a agenda-packing poet seeking to fancy up a message to an arts crowd) but this will have to do here, and as I don't yet have a book published I cannot refer you to my poems.

The agrarian metaphor in "PAX" (or aboreal even) stems from the poem's model, Ezra Pound's "Pact" found in PERSONAE. The metaphor, like a lineage of poetics, runs through the century from Williams, Duncan ("open fields"), to the "Tree" anthology--well, I'm not saying anything people on this list don't already know but I think the "nursing new roots" image in the end is where I stand on this.

The invitation to "mutual comradeship" stands.

By the way, where is Ron? I hope your cold is gone.

- daniel bouchard

Bill Marsh wrote:

>i'm interested in your statement here, especially given the fact that about
>80% of old-growth forest in the U.S. has been lost (most of it to create
>land for grazing livestock and/or growing livestock feed) and topsoil
>depleted 75% for sake of same (not to mention chemical contamination of
>soil and water--fertilizers, etc. to sustain growth) / so i have to admit
>the running conceit here ("wood," "rich soil", "water nursing new roots,"
>"recycling") resonates oddly for me--not just for its irony, intended or
>not / the "American Grain" you refer to and "American Tree" by implication
>as well lead me to think that what does separate writers today from the
>"Tree" group is precisely our relationship to REsources, figuratively and
>literally -- the american tree hasn't just been carved and splintered, it's
>been cut down, paved over, then re-paved / planting "new roots" through

>this kind of surface and in this kind of soil would be difficult indeed,
>probably impossible / hydroponics and tree farms: maybe that's where the
>future of poetry lies if we pursue the metaphor
>
>i don't know where you hail from, but having spent some time working on a
>farm in Illinois (shutting windows when the pesticide truck comes through,
>watching hillsides wash away, cleaning contaminated wells, etc.), i have a
>hard time getting past the literal here / but quite seriously whatever pact
>is made among writers today i think it needs to account for this new
>relationship (to wood and word) / the invitation to "mutual comradeship"
>however is gladly accepted
>
>best,
>bill marsh
>

<<<<<<>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>

Daniel Bouchard
The MIT Press Journals
Five Cambridge Center
Cambridge, MA 02142

phone: [REDACTED]
fax: [REDACTED]

>>>>>>><<<<<<<<<<<<<<<<

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234. **Mark Prejsnar**

Re: Love Poems

Fri 6 Feb 1998

Harold's fretfully defensive post is interesting. Yeah, in fact I don't think there's much question but that a woman's surrender of her name is preposterous and grotesque. But it's a basic political point, Harold, not (at least as far as I'm concerned) an ad feminam attack on any given individual. Capitalism sucks too, but I'm enmeshed in it by having to work for a wage, by watching its television, buying its books. That's not a moral failure, it's an ongoing social dynamic. (Yes I know I know someone's going to pipe up to suggest archly or otherwise that it *is* a moral failure! you can find someone to defend--or attack--anything on this list!)

Even more to the point I suggest you consider disavowing marriage itself. Cast out the great satans of church and state. Erika and I have been together for 16 years and very happy indeed without their benefits!

Mark P.
@lanta

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235. **Herb Levy**
Re: movie query

Fri 6 Feb 1998

In Godard's Breathless "Belmondo" rubs his thumb across his lips in response to looking at a Bogart poster. I don't remember if Seberg later makse the same gesture.

So I wrote this poem from an image which comes from a gesture in a movie and I think it is The Conformist, not sure, must know. Having a bit of trouble finding it to rent in the neighborhood, haven't gone further yet.

Here it is: A man in a black trenchcoat gestures to a woman by placing his thumb on his lips. She does the same, perhaps later. It's French.

??????

thanks,
rachel

Herb Levy



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236. **Herb Levy**
Winter/spring Subtext readings

Fri 6 Feb 1998

Here's the next few months of Subtext readings in Seattle. All on the 3rd Thursday of the month, at 7:30 pm at the Speakeasy Cafe amidst the new condos & restaurants of Belltown. These readings finish out the current curatorship by Ezra Mark & begin the next curatorship by Nico Vassilakis.

February: Lynn Tillman/Jeff Derksen

March: Judy Radul/Nico Vassilakis

April: Crag Hill/Maris Kundzins

May: Anselm Hollo/Jim Jones talk on Kerouac in Seattle (workshop with Hollo the following Friday & Saturday)

June: Jean Day/Seattle-area writer to be confirmed

Regrets only

Herb Levy



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237. **KENT JOHNSON**

Re: Love Poems

Fri 6 Feb 1998

On the surname question: In Latin America and Spain (probably other places) a wife adopts the name of her husband ("de" so and so--de meaning "of") but also keeps in active use her own name, which in turn is passed down to her children. All people, then, carry the names of both parents. Unfortunately, this more "liberated" practice seems to have had little effect on a decidedly patriarchal and machista tradition.

Kent

Anybody know how long this custom has been in force (and where and among which classes)? I'm not sure if Marie-Antoinette was "Mrs. Bourbon," less sure if the Wife of Bath took her various husbands' names, and I think what's customary in non-European societies is quite variable. But I don't know.

Property laws, it's worth pointing out, were passed for the convenience of the propertied class. Before the Industrial Revolution made a lot of the old divisions of labor obsolete the lower classes were often more egalitarian in terms of gender than their "betters."

I hope I'm not being naive in suggesting that while Maria is in general terms certainly correct these issues are probably far more complex and nuanced. I await enlightenment.

At 01:28 PM 2/5/98 -0600, you wrote:

oh fr heavens' sake. women didn't "take" their husbands names in the sense of usurping and colonizing them; their husbands' names were forced on them as insignia of those husbands' ownership of those wives. i'm sorry, but to claim otherwise is simply either disingenuous, an attempt at rhetorical provocation, or so staggeringly naive that further discussion of equity between genders is pointless.

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238. **Joe Brennan**

Re: Love Poems/"there, I said it"

Fri 6 Feb 1998

& a damned good thing you did, too.

joe brennan

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239. **syvester pollet**

Re: Dan Davidson

Fri 6 Feb 1998

Gary--not sure you need more for this sad list, but lately I've been copy-editing the Collected Poems of Stuart Z. Perkoff (which will be around 500 pages) & he died a couple of weeks before his 44th birthday. Be well, all you youngsters. Sylvester

Thanks, Carolyn, for reminding me that bp nichol, too, was 44--& to everyone else who reminded me O'Hara was (wow) younger. No coincidence: I opened my e-mail program up this morning . . . to exactly 44 messages. What do you say, think, when things like this happen? Unbelievable.

Yours,

Gary Sullivan
[REDACTED]

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240. **syvester pollet**

Re: Request for assistance

Fri 6 Feb 1998

Mark (et al): I promised to forward the results--maybe I should add I've never had sexual relations with that woman (in case Kenneth Starr is on the list). Congratulations to the anonymous person who actually came up with the reference. I had heard it, but it was lost in the murk of post-44dom. Sylvester

Date: Thu, 5 Feb 1998 18:15:39 -0500 (EST)

From: Angela Martin <[REDACTED]>

X-Sender: [REDACTED]

To: syvester pollet <[REDACTED]>

Subject: Re: Request for assistance

MIME-Version: 1.0

Sylvester, Sylvester, Sylvester,

*You DID it!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!
It worked and you are great! (No matter about those things other people say!)
The answer was Robert Browning and someone from your list helped me.
As for any fees I owe, I am not far into contract law, but I think I can come up with some defense.
Also, even before I had the right answer, I appreciated you and your humor. The law books tend to get a person down sometimes and I really needed your dose of kindness.
You are forever a scholar and a gentleman!
Your very dear friend,
Angela
P.S. Have you been hurt in an accident?*

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241. **hen**

Re: a posting to poetics (late)

Fri 6 Feb 1998

Dan's attitude toward the sister & brotherhood of poets could be usefully contrasted with my own. A political awareness & a political poetics could, I imagine, be just as clearly articulated by a loner writing for everybody as by a buddy writing within a movement. I've been trying to argue that there's a problem with the buddy system: uncritical promotion. How do you deal with that, Dan? How do you deal with the HISTORICAL & POLITICAL PROBLEM of juntas - generational, tribal, factional, ideological - which to me seem so much "part of the problem"?

I am fully aware of the energy that builds among people sharing the details of what they're doing, going over it, reading together, getting into the complexity, teaching, talking about what's happening. I am fully aware of the vulnerability - the basic amateurism - of all the lonely poetasters out there, yearning for the food of the mind. Still. I hate groups using the echolalia technique of self-praise; I hate the self-justifications, magnifications, of groups. [They get in the way of my own.] How do YOU deal with this issue?

Give me the stolen air of solitude & uncorrectness.

silence, exile, cunning.

if only! [I could use some more cunning & silence] - Henry G.

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242. **louis stroffolino**

Re: Sex, Power and Poetry

Fri 6 Feb 1998

Though I am interested in Linda Russo's (and others) endeavour to combine the "feminism" thread with Rob Hale's original seduction valentine's day query (and now that I think about it; I think I was the one who first made this connection by bringing up the idea of how Free Union's "sexism" may depend on the reader), I want to again open up the question (which may have gotten a little lost in the shuffle) of writing as seduction in "amorous" contexts.....

If one writes a love poem, an epideictic praise poem (like, say, Elvis Costello's: "I can tell you that I like your sensitivity, but you know it's the way that you walk") one is often, of course, trying to persuade (forensic?).... Now, if poetry is beyond rhetoric, as many argue (though not in poetry if poetry is beyond rhetoric), the forensic or persuasive aspect of poetry should not be as important as the poem as a "self-sufficient act of mind," an aesthetic object whose SUCCESS should not be measured by the degree to which one has actually persuaded the lover of the "truth" of one's love, has reassured the lover, but by some other standard (and this can lead one to POLITICAL analysis of love poems, the poem is "not really about love", not really about the person to whom it pretends to be addressed, may be really about politics [like all those blues songs by black men can really be about how white america doesn't requite their love as a subtext], that the poet is in love with love and that this, in a non-medieval age of non-troubador, non-minnesingers, is of course BAD: "you can't have sex with a muse" they say)..... but if we try to take such love poems in face value, whether they are praise poems, complaint poems, etc.... one does suspend political questions and even aesthetic questions aside from "are my trousers tight enough" (again, O'Hara) but, as so often happens, one may write a love poem for someone (the person that inspires it) and either cannot send it, will not send it, or will find it "unsuccessful" (falling on deaf ears) and then, seeing that one has a reading coming up and wants to read something new, will read it to others, and then the "you" of that poem becomes a "she" (or "he"), unless someone else can have the "act of faith" (aka delusion) that the poem is "about" that person, and then the poem is "a success" (but such may seem to the poet a "hollow success"--- DOUG CRASE has a very good essay that reads ASHBERRY's "project" in such terms by the way). THE SF Hippie underground folks, the diggers I think (unless it was the motherfuckers) said "to love is to fail"... and I still think it's important to clear a space for poems (AND poets) who, let's say may be a little shy and introverted, and feel maybe a little uncomfortable around people in "normal" situations and who maybe decide to use writing as "a sophisticated form of personal ad", as a kind of "compensation", or even as an attempt to find a

soulmate, a double, in ways that "social life" and the spontaneous exigencies of wit and the marketplace and parties do not allow (at least for some of us, not all of us), or even, dare i say it, a "higher" way that may make it obvious that the writer of the poem is somehow DIFFERENT from one's Tarzan and Trump and that that difference, despite what the "world" says, is not always crippling--and that it means the writer is interested in more than the attributes of the body of the beloved and wants to be loved for more than that as well....Well, I'll stop here. gotta run to teach yet another class (adjunct salary toothless benefits!). Chris

On Thu, 5 Feb 1998, Robert Hale wrote:

I respond here, not exclusively to Linda, but to her remarks in this note and another, in addition to numerous posts by others that invite a similar reading of Breton's "Free Union" along a similar course, that of male power objectifying and controlling women -- the sway of which I underestimated in the heat of my picaresque adventure.

I would also venture another interpretation of "exterior" that might lead somewhere other than the phallus and its well-worked calculus and mass redundancy. Exteriorization as a "positive task" (Deleuze and Guattari) working against interiorizing forces -- control, perversion (you name it), those which "no longer open to any outside." Then exteriorization is the highest, and albeit most abstract, task of love. I guess I consider this romantic in the context of my delivery of Breton to "my woman", but as I try to explicate I realize how ethereal it can be and probably was to her.

There seems to be some consensus over the idea that the love poem must strive for egalitarian goals, though I think the "heat" I mentioned above makes this very difficult to achieve. And as Pierre eluded to, the Surrealists, Breton esp., cared little for egalitarianism or any other such bourgeois concepts. I am not a Surrealist, but as I recall, a blurb on my work once mentioned the influence.

To summarize, I quote Mariana Valverde from her "Sex, Power and Pleasure" (a book given to me by an ex-girlfriend, which I obviously have had trouble applying in real life -- I keep forgetting that I have lit cigarettes already as I am writing this so the ashtray has three camels burning simultaneously in it, all mine!):

"The task is not to reject all objectification in favour of an impossible ideal of pure subjectivity, but rather to integrate the two aspects of human existence. The task is to remain a full human subject even while someone is considering us as a potential erotic object, and vice versa. An eroticism that is both sexy and egalitarian is one in which both partners are simultaneously subject and object, for one another as well as for themselves."

This sounds good (utopian?), but I keep forgetting that I have lit

cigarettes already as I am writing this so...

Lastly, what about the use of "My lover" as the addressee? Bill Luoma has used this quite successfully, I think, in recent love poems of his.

At 12:31 AM 2/5/98 +0000, you wrote:

snip

Also, what happens to the language when it's delivered as such a message? -- the route as part of a text "loved" when isolated, packed and unpacked, yet trouble-making when delivered?

i can only guess that you wanted "my woman with" to translate into "you"; odd that "my woman with" seems so fill-in-the-blankish except(!) when a specific "subjectivity" is demanded of it; i.e. "my susan with" might work but "i, susan, with" won't.

snip snap

I wrote some love poems (as some of you suggested), but there is nothing like a Breton love poem, and it is a love poem, contrary to opinion, very complicated, I think, and emotional (whatever these words mean), all these things in a very exterior, and arguably, male way.

yes, in the way that it is all cock. i.e. he loves her with his cock or with whatever else skin he can glom all over her --

the old standby question -- do you think he respects his "woman with"? is there a being beneath this mass of female goodness?

yes, it's nice to receive compliments re your bod. -- but to the exclusion of ? ? ? -- i'm reacting now out of context, of course, you couldn've sent a love poem praising her mind, her ideals, &c her bank account, i dunno, but i'd like to know of some poems that do!

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243. **Tom Mandel**

ma femme

Fri 6 Feb 1998

Pierre writes:

"in French it's of course "ma femme" — the translation I use is Antin's which says "my woman" -- but there exists another more recent one that tries to p.c.fy (I guess, or else legalize the free union) the poem by translating "ma femme" as "my wife." Does that make any difference?"

The American English phrase "my woman" is simply **not** a translation of the French "ma femme". In French, that phrase **means** (denotes, points at, identifies) "my wife." Just as "ma femme de menage" **means** my maid and not "my woman-who-orders-household."

The phrase "my woman" is full of romantic (literarily, I mean) overtones and symbolic connections (to "woman"), and universalisms (viz. a man and a woman). Using it in the translation skews the poem.

Breton is **investing** the quotidian relationship -- husband and wife -- with qualities foreign to it or transformative of it, and investing the **object** he views from within that matched-pair relationship with mystical qualities. Using "my woman" to translate "ma femme" removes the point of the poem entirely. The result -- to me -- is utterly leaden. Whereas in French I liked it a lot.

I highlight the word **object** because obviously the poem **objectifies** his wife. Ooooh, the shame of it. And, if I've effectively (however lightly) skimmed responses to it here, this fact has not gone unnoticed, as many a better-knowing head has nodded.

One of Tom's Ten Ways To Let The Fly Out Of The Bottle (available to grad students at a nominal cost) is this: **all** sex and all sexual relationships involve objectification. More sex implies more objectification. Or, as Breton might have said on one occasion or another: "amusez-vous bien."

)Now I'm going to hear it!(

Tom

Tom Mandel

Screen Porch * <http://screenporch.com>

4020 Williamsburg Ct, Ste 200 * vox: [REDACTED]

Fairfax, VA 22031 * fax: [REDACTED]

Join the Caucus Conversation

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244. **Tom Mandel**

Dan

Fri 6 Feb 1998

I've written to Gary Sullivan.

All I'll say here is that I meant my words (wish he was here so I cd throttle him for what he did) to express my longing for his presence and my distress that he cannot be reached.

Tom

Tom Mandel

Screen Porch * <http://screenporch.com>

4020 Williamsburg Ct, Ste 200 * vox: [REDACTED]

Fairfax, VA 22031 * fax: [REDACTED]

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245. **Dale M Smith**

Slander and Context

Fri 6 Feb 1998

It's quite a laugh to see defensive postions played out so unjustly on this list. I'm sure I could take anyone's words out of context also, and apply them to malignant ends to support my own positions. But I don't because it's unfair and pathetic. No one here has ever said or done something they regret? Who has unguarded moments of weakness? Who never gives in to a desire to 'act out' in social situations to make a point, to reveal humor, or yeah, even to piss someone off? Are there no pattern recognigitons in human character? Public language?

We are no longer discussing poetics, but opposing dissent within a community with the kinds of responses that actually validate many of the social perceptions acknowledged in both 'Stalinist as Linguist' essays. Further more, these attempts to degrade someone in absentia is like beating a kitten in a sack. At least those articles appeared within the community Clark was a part of. The problem is not so much with him now, but with the fact that anyone dares challenge this 'community' in any way outside of 'polite' discourse. The most lame, thoughtless opinions imaginable are perfectly accepted as long as they don't rub against the communal grain. But dissenting opinions are challenged with ruthless rhetorical twists.

Henry Gould has been much more articulate and generous than myself re: issues of poetic value. What he suggests, however, is science fiction because, as you can tell from this list, the reality of our poetics is business and politics, the kind that some here cherish more than the poetry Henry obviously loves.

I was drawn back onto this list (feeling myself, whether I like it or not, to be a part, in some way, of this community) because Bromige made certain disparaging remarks about Tom Clark. I said what I had to say about Watten et al. He and others responded in turn about Clark. I did not agree entirely with those responses, nor did Bromige et al with mine. Now suddenly, the scale has

escalated and nothing is based on a 'generou' or 'reasonable' exchange of opinion, but on decontextualized 'snips' from one man's life. I've said it before and I'll say it now. The heart of the issue is that this community refuses dissent from within or without. If it does not reek of precious Derrida it's in bad odor. If someone challenges our poetic assumptions they are disposed of in ways that are measured by the 'politeness' of the opposing opinions.

Maybe it's the electronic medium that forces us to be so reductive. Maybe it's just greed and a desire to measure our precious *intelligence* and self-righteousness against others. Who the fuck knows. But I'm posting this now before I say something I don't wanna say. Besides. I've gotta go chase 'nymphomaniacs' on my computer screen. That's obviously more *fun* than hanging out here all day. Dale

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246. **Tom Mandel**

"my man"

Fri 6 Feb 1998

Cold and wet, tired you bet....

..I'm sure everybody on this list knows the incredible version of this song by Billie Holiday.

and then there's her "Nobody's business but my own" (won't call no copper if I'm beat up by my poppa), and...

My man wouldn't fix me no dinner
talk about my supper man he put me out of doors
took a matchbox to my clothes....

(as opposed to...)

"my momma gave me something
going to carry me through this world"

Somebody, whoeverbody, let me know when the dissertation's finished. I want to read all about it.

Tom

Tom Mandel

Screen Porch * <http://screenporch.com>

4020 Williamsburg Ct, Ste 200 * vox: [REDACTED]

Fairfax, VA 22031 * fax: [REDACTED]

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247. **R M Daley**

Re: freud's trick

Fri 6 Feb 1998

On Thu, 5 Feb 1998, Joe Brennan wrote:

> what's so "tricky" about Freud? In my experiece he's one of the most ethical
> and open thinkers of this century --at least, I've always found that to be so.
> Will you please elaborate, with textual citations if possible, what "tricks"
> he's turned?

>

> joe brennan

>

> my intervention has nothing to do with the Breton purge currently under way

--

>

> joe

>

joe - i'd say fer sure see his intorductory lectures and the essay n
"femininity" - - where he says things like "women are certainly the
inferior sex, this is determined biologically, but of course i'm not
really qualified to say something like this' - thats more or less a
summary when the amazing part about it really is his rhetorc- i menat in a
good, interesting way really, though i could never call it 'ethical' or
'open-minded' - his conclusions themselves are pretty ridiculous and a lot
of work has been done since to un-do it - a la irigaray who uses his same
rhetorical technique - steals his fire but turns it more or less the other
way

'we like white space'

rd

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248. **Eric Blarnes**

I say

Fri 6 Feb 1998

I say, we've had a bit of a term break here in ivy-spivied old Left Overbie, so
wouldn't you know I've been perusing your "poetics" list rawther more dili-
gently, a pot of the old kishkim near at hand in my beloved librurry...

I say, there has been quite a tussling and jostling of elbows round this bit about
- whatchymicallit, "Indie-Criticism" - quite a baffling & buffeting, soreheads &

all... & it did occur to me to wonder what the Bard, dear o' Shakespeare, would think of all this... rawther a solid poet there, I should say - though Ben Jonson wrote "would he had blotted a thousand [lines]" - now was that independent of you, Ben? Rawther a spot jealous, no doubt - My "good buddy" [heh heh] Ben Carrelis down Aussie way back- channeled to say "Anybody who trumpets so loud & often on that d--d list as Mr. Gould can't be anything but a GODAWFUL poet" - but I say, I won't get into any odd hummingem hereabouts...

Anyhow, what about Shakespeare? Well I pulled down my folio completus & what did I find? The plays are chock full of what you call "Fools for Love". Whether it's Antonio in MERCHANT throwing his fortune away for love of his "buddy" Sebastian, or Marc Antony tossing off the Empire for sweepie Cleopat, why, these types are EVERYWHERE!!! So I think we might assume the Bard would say : why, we're all fools for love - love of poetry, love of our pals, love of our foreberries, love of glory - & the one who sets himself up as the cool objective cucumber must be... THE BIGGEST FOOL OF ALL! - and, if I might paraphrase you dashed Yanks - "that's no bull!"

Oh I say Henry, don't cry... there there... that's a good little indie-boy... Remember, it's almost Valentine's Day - now there was a fool if ever...

- Eric Blarnes

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249. **LAURA MORIARTY**

Re: various - a spray

Fri 6 Feb 1998

Fascinating posts! Louis, Joshua, Chris

1. That male-hero poet is often actually a family unit in which the woman is a key but silent figure - rarely a writer herself - who makes the world being spoken out of -
2. It is an interesting characterization - that edge of community idea - It suggests a Janus-like facing both ways - perhaps a multiple betrayal - which seems potentially very productive - Perhaps the more totally one is compromised but committed (the relentlessly feminist male poet, the male-identified female poet, the Oxford-educated Indian poet etc) the more interesting and mutiply legible the writing would be -
3. As one who might be regarded as anti-academic or anti-theory, I would like to say emphatically that I am not - I simply think that in the interface between those two communitis sometimes the poet who writes academic essays (or who specifically addresses that community) is valued for that reason more than others who do not - so that such writing (not only critical, but critical within a

certain format) becomes part of the poet job description - Which in itself is not bad, but leads to visibility issues -

4. Who are your imagined (actual) readers?

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250. **David Kellogg**

Re: "my man"

Fri 6 Feb 1998

I believe it's "Ain't nobody's business if I do", not "but my own."

Cheers,

David

~~~~~  
~~~~~

David Kellogg

Duke University

██████████

Program in Writing and Rhetoric

██████████

Durham, NC 27708

FAX ██████████

<http://www.duke.edu/~kellogg/>

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251. **Mark Weiss**

Re: movie query

Fri 6 Feb 1998

Godard's "Breathless."

At 01:19 PM 2/5/98 -0500, you wrote:

>So I wrote this poem from an image which comes from a gesture in a movie
>and I think it is The Conformist, not sure, must know. Having a bit of
>trouble finding it to rent in the neighborhood, haven't gone further
>yet.

>

>Here it is: A man in a black trenchcoat gestures to a woman by placing
>his thumb on his lips. She does the same, perhaps later. It's French.

>

>???????

>

>thanks,

>rachel

>

>

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252. **Jaqck Spandrift**
reading announcement

Fri 6 Feb 1998

uh, can everybody please send your posts in iambic pentameter, please?
That will help me with the flow & continuity. Thanks.

- Jack Spandrift, dramaturg-wannabee

oh, yeah. That pompous, pedantic, picayune, pigheaded Poet-of-Crapola Henry Gould will give a benefit reading at Transit Books in Providence on Thursday, Feb. 19th, at 7 PM. Transit Books, corner of Governor & Transit. Call [REDACTED] for directions. Benefit for that truly tart-smelling tissue of turgid tree-rot ["All indie-crit MUST alliterate!" - Henry Gould, 10.4.86] NEDGE. \$3. = a whole mess of oral Gould, a free copy of the object of abjectivity itself, & refreshments. Be there or be intelligent.

Cold out there, Hen?

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253. **Mark Weiss**
Re: Love Poems

Fri 6 Feb 1998

Now I remember that patronymics as we know them, even in parts of western Europe, are fairly recent. Norwegians (and other Scandinavians?) had no family names until required for the convenience of census-taker and taxman in the mid nineteenth century. When told to choose a last name most males (they got to choose) opted for the name they'd always been called by, so there are a lot of John son of Johns (Jansen, Jonson, etc., depending on country) in the Oslo phone book. Icelanders still do it the old-fashioned way--everybody is somebody's son or dottir, and last names change with each generation.

When did Smith become a last name instead of a career-choice?

Incidentally, my wife and I each legally retain our own last names. This was fine with the powers that are in Las Vegas, where we tied the knot--didn't even raise an eyebrow at the record clerk's. I don't know what the current law is in other states, but I knew a couple back in the sixties la femme of which had to change her name legally back to what it had been before marriage. I think that was in Maryland.

At 07:58 AM 2/6/98 -0600, you wrote:

>harold, i was talking about historical context and ongoing inequities, not
>specific cases. of course men suffer socially and economically when they
>take on traditionally "feminized" roles. that fact, to me, underscores my
>point that we live in a sexist society. sure, individual women take their

>husbands' names for any number of reasons: they sound better; carrying
>their father's name, with which they're saddled at birth, is no less
>sexist; it's more convenient for childrearing and record-keeping, etc. All
>of these except the first (aesthetics) to me underscore the fact that we
>live in a sexist society. the passion of your post, and the unusualness of
>the choices you've made, to me underscore the fact that we live in a sexist
>society that makes such choices remarkable. my hat's off to you for the
>choices you have made. i wasn't, though, talking about individual
>volition; i was responding to what i felt was a glib suggestion that women
>"taking" their husband's names was equivalent to men "taking" their wives
>as possessions; can't remember who made that post now. bests, maria d
>

>At 2:26 PM -0800 2/5/98, Harold Rhenisch wrote:

>>Oh for Heaven's sake, Maria. Your posts have always been intelligent and
>>I've always looked forward to them, but you've lost me this time with your
>>sweeping generalizations about gender equity. Sorry, but I have to say
>>this.

>>

>>My wife took my name neither to be usurped and colonized nor to be a piece
>>of property, and would find this discussion silly, whatever her reasons
>>were (and they were her own). Furthermore, she is neither usurped nor
>>colonized. 17 years ago I put her through university. For 12 years I have
>>cared for our children and home, put her through graduate school (and did
>>not go myself), assisted her hugely with her thesis, moved to follow her
>>job, and I continue to support her in her difficult, all-consuming
>>professional life daily. I may be so "staggeringly naive that further
>>discussion of equity between genders is pointless" and she may be too, but
>>my experience is that roles have as much to do with inequity as do genders:
>>a man today caring for his children is at as much of a social and political
>>disadvantage (in fact more of one) than a woman today caring for hers.
>>Whatever happened in the past, happened, and let's talk about it, let's fix
>>it as best we can, and if it is still happening, let's fix it now as well,
>>but let's not claim more than should be claimed. I am not knocking my
>>choices, because I know they have been good, but if that's not equity and
>>support, what on earth is? Making her stay home against her will so that
>>she could look after the children on 1/3 the salary, so that I could grow
>>bitter and not write? Both of us go to work and send the kids to daycare?
>>Not have kids? Split up? Tell her she has to take back her maiden name?
She

>>can change her name to anything she wants, any day.

>>

>>There, I said it.

>>

>>Harold Rhenisch

>> [REDACTED]

>

>

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254. **Catherine Daly**
machine translation

Fri 6 Feb 1998

FYI: alta vista now has machine translation free at
<http://ad.doubleclick.net/adi/babelfish.altavista.digital.com/>

Catherine Daly
[REDACTED]

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255. **Hank Lazer**
Re: a posting to poetics (late)

Fri 6 Feb 1998

I too thoroughly enjoyed Dan Bouchard's poem, and am glad to see a poem enter into the discussion, the poem as a mode of thinking....

Hank Lazer

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256. **david bromige**
laura moriarty's e-ddress

Fri 6 Feb 1998

Listfellows : forgive me conducting private biz in public, but how else to reach you, Laura ? Your posting today still has the SFSU e-ddress. But my reply to yr message re "sublime" was returned to me after 72 hours from that e-ddress. Can you explain b-c, and repeat the question re my text? Thanks, David

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257. **KENT JOHNSON**
Incorrect

Fri 6 Feb 1998

I haven't been able to closely follow the list of late, but after going through some of the posts on the "My Woman" thread, I feel like I might have something

wrong with me, both personally and politically, for I've always found Breton's poem to be absolutely fantastic, a strange, disturbing, funny, mesmerizing, joyful, life-affirming, truly erotic poem. It never occurred to me that there was something "wrong" with it. Desnos always does more for me, but Breton's poem is one I would have liked to have written, that's for sure. I guess that might sound "unfeminist" of me, but I don't know how else to say it. What, really, is so anachronistic or objectionable about the body of the beloved as, yes, *_object of desire_*, the body of the beloved as ecstatic "occasion" for unbounded and lustful praise? Any way you cut it, there's a certain objectifying drift to the erotic. And insofar as the charged polarities of eroticism lay the bed for the incandescence of union and climax, couldn't we agree that erotic objectification is, ipso facto, more natural than cultural--"objectionable" only in the sense that eating meat is objectionable? (One can *_choose_* not to eat meat, but the human drive to eat the flesh of other beings is not going to go away.)

One can be "proper" in the sense of sexual politics, and those politics are surely important; but it's good to always keep in mind that the great thing about sexual passion, when it's good, is that it throws propriety out the window. And Breton's poem is, in the first instance, a poem of unjambled sexual passion. (Which, as I partly read it, says both that he wants to do her and that she does *_him_*, that she ultimately makes shreds of his drive to "own" or "control" her in the social sense of those terms.) Why not admire the paean for what it most deeply is: a wild loosing of unconscious, sexual desire, that most profound and unbidden force from which life and language spring. Heaven forbid that poetry become a tool to regulate the flow of that force by means of the qualifications of "correctness".

["Heaven forbid that the body of the other (pulsing quasar--primordial black hole) be shorn from me, cease being impossibly far yet still sensed, sending callings of its fathomless death through billions of years, emitting reason-collapsing surprise to the one who lusts, who listens there entranced, entranced for there's nothing she can do about it, that's just the way the universe is my swelling sex, the beloved as event horizon from whose sucking edge nothing in language escapes." --Margarita Risoldo, Cuban soap-opera star, thanking Bill Clinton for a signed copy of *Leaves of Grass*]

It was grossly incorrect to be sure, but probably not for nothing that Stephen Hawking (who said yes) bet another physicist (who said no) a year's subscription to *Penthouse* over whether a black hole could come to a singularity of infinite density and pop clear out of space and time. Whoever lost the bet got the *Penthouse* as consolation. Hawking won, proving, perhaps, that even the weirdest puzzles and mysteries of the universe are never fully free from the groin.

Kent

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258. **d powell**
Sexy Ruminants

Fri 6 Feb 1998

And for Gertrude Stein, "cow" meant "orgasm." As in "As a Wife has a Cow: A Love Story."

Doug

=====

=====

D A Powell

=====

=====

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259. **d powell**
Re: my man (for Gwyn McVay)

Fri 6 Feb 1998

Reply to: RE: my man (for Gwyn McVay)

A lovely song for which many a queer man still gets teary-eyed. I wonder if those boys who wrote it were queer? In that case, the female singer becomes the wonderful beard through which these sentiments can be expressed. And there's certainly an altogether different connotation of "my man" when it's uttered by another man, mais non?

As for Bessie Smith, Ma Rainey and many other early blues singers, their male muses were often "bulldaggers" (the term of the day) or butch girls. This gives the possessive "my" a much different function, akin to when you order eggs benedict in a restaurant and you get something with cheese sauce instead of hollandaise. The waiter then tells you, "this is our eggs benedict" meaning "our version of." Oh my man I do love him so, whatever gender he happens to be...

Doug

=====

=====

D A Powell

=====

=====

david bromige wrote:

> Sur cette terr', ma seul' joie, mon seul bonheur, C'est mon homme,
> J'ai donne/ tout c'que j'ai, mon amour tout mon coeur, A mon homme,

> Et me^me la nuit Quand je re^ve, c'est de lui De mon homme
> Ce n'est pas qu'il est beau, Qu'il est riche ni costaud, Mais je 'aime,
> C'est idiot et fout des coups, j'ai prend mes sous, Je suis a bout
> Mais malgre/ tout Que voulez-vous, Je l'ai tell'ment dans la peau
> Qu' j'en d'viens marteau, Des qu'il s'approch' c'est fini
> Je suis a lui, Quand ses yeux sur moi se pos'nt ca m'rend tout chose,
> Je l'ai tell'ment dans la peau Qu'au moindre mot, je suiss f'rait fair'n'
> importe quoi. J'tue-rai ma foi, J'sens qu'il me vendrait infa^me,
> Mais je n'suis qu'un' femme. Et j'lai tell'ment dans la , etc.
>
>It costs me a lot, but there's one thing that I've got--it's my man
>Cold and wet, tired you bet, but all that I soon forget With my man
>He's not much for looks, and no hero out of books__is my man
>Two or three girls has he that he likes as well as me, But I love him!
>I don't know why I should, He isn't good, Hen isn't true, He beats me too.
>What can I do? O my man I love him so, he'll never know,
>All my life is just despair, but I don't care When he takes me in his arms
>the world is bright, allright; What's the difference if I say, I'll go away,
>When I know I'll come back on my knees some day? For whatever my man is I
>am his forever more! Oh my man I love him so --- da capo, etc.
>
>Albert Willemetz et Jacques Charles, music by Maurice Yvain
>English tr. by Channing Pollock
>
>as sung by Fanny Brice in "Ziegfield Follies of 1921"
>
>This would appear to contain everything that American feminism
>dreads--understandably--the way doctors dread penicillin-resistant
>bacteria. All compressed into some 30 bars...sorry I cant append the music,
>which is kind of neat.
>
>
>RFC822 header
>-----
>
>Return-Path: <[REDACTED]>
>Delivered-To: [REDACTED]
>Received: (gmail 1108 invoked from network); 6 Feb 1998 01:23:11 -0000
>Received: from deliverance.acsu.buffalo.edu (128.205.7.57)
> by herring.com with SMTP; 6 Feb 1998 01:23:11 -0000
>Received: (gmail 19772 invoked from network); 5 Feb 1998 23:52:28 -0000
>Received: from listserv.acsu.buffalo.edu (128.205.7.35)

> by deliverance.acsu.buffalo.edu with SMTP; 5 Feb 1998 23:52:28 -0000
>Received: from LISTSERV.ACSU.BUFFALO.EDU by
LISTSERV.ACSU.BUFFALO.EDU
> (LISTSERV-TCP/IP release 1.8c) with spool id 28049901 for
> [REDACTED]; Thu, 5 Feb 1998 18:52:24 -0500
>Received: (qmail 5392 invoked from network); 5 Feb 1998 23:51:28 -0000
>Received: from smtp.metro.net (HELO baldr.metro.net) (205.138.228.126) by
> listserv.acsu.buffalo.edu with SMTP; 5 Feb 1998 23:51:28 -0000
>Received: from ig061.228.dial.innovation.com (ig061.228.dial.innovation.com
> [205.138.228.61]) by baldr.metro.net (NTMail 3.02.13) with ESMTP id
> ta799259 for <[REDACTED]>; Thu, 5 Feb 1998
> 16:07:48 -0800
>X-Sender: [REDACTED] (Unverified)
>Mime-Version: 1.0
>Content-Type: text/plain; charset="us-ascii"
>Message-ID: <v01540b00630b669d70e4@[205.138.228.34]>
>Date: Thu, 5 Feb 1998 16:07:48 -0800
>Reply-To: UB Poetics discussion group <[REDACTED]>
>Sender: UB Poetics discussion group <[REDACTED]>
>From: david bromige <[REDACTED]>
>Subject: "my man" (for Gwyn McVay)
>To: [REDACTED]
>

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260. **david bromige**

"my woman"

Fri 6 Feb 1998

As the countdown to Valentines Day proceeds, here's another entry, a blues-y number sung feelingly, in his lower register, by Bing Crosby (who wrote it together with "Wortell and Wallman" [genders unknown]) backed by a studio orchestra conducted by Victor Young and containing among others Tommy Dorsey and Eddie Lang, on 2/23/32 :

"my woman, is mean as she can be
my woman, she makes a fool of me
never treats me good, dont know why I should/ love her

"she's lying, when she say 'I love you'
I know it, but what am I to do?
though she makes me cry, I dont care cos I/ love her

"once I laughed at love, thought it all wrong
then she came along, like a new song
now I sing a blue song

"my woman, she has a heart of stone
not human, but she must be my own
till the day I die, I'll be loving/ my woman"

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261. **dw**

Re: various - a spray

Fri 6 Feb 1998

I second Maria's "bravo" regarding Josh Shuster's post--that post helpfully focused the thread on community not careerism. Of course, "careerism" is a peculiarly awful academic disease, and I am sure that its various manifestations and self-serving politics grate on the nerves of those both inside and outside the academy. BUT I cannot accept disaffection with the academy as a rationale for bashing what little intellectual and affective life there is among those who claim to be poets--whatever the community to which they claim allegiance.

I want to talk about that "affective" life in so far as it is able to manifest itself electronically. It seems to me that we censor one another dreadfully--projects, rallying cries, and bashing aside. It seems to me that no one posts without a degree of prudence or grain of salt concerning reception. If I were to offer a project for a cyber community--it would be to create a space where there was less harping on and anticipation of resistance. There very impossibility of doing what I propose (intrinsic as that impossibility is to the construction of power/ knowledge loops) probably speaks more to the death of my own soul and to my fascination with the destructive processes I see at work here than it does my desire to express myself freely. Maybe only to the extent that desire to express oneself (an illusory right nourished by mother's milk, apple pie, and media exposure) is subject to mangling and frustration do any of us even attempt to write--so lets tread lightly on that ground even as we map the terrain.

Don Wellman

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262. **d powell**

Re: my man

Fri 6 Feb 1998

Reply to: RE: my man

Tom Mandel wrote:

>Cold and wet, tired you bet....

>

>..I'm sure everybody on this list knows the incredible version of this song

>by Billie Holiday.

>

>and then there's her "Nobody's business but my own" (won't call no copper

>if I'm beat up by my poppa), and...

>

I believe the correct title is "T'aint nobody's business if I do" and I believe it was written by Fats Waller and Andy Ratzof. Two mens.

Doug

=====

=====

D A Powell

=====

=====

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263. **William Marsh**

Re: a posting to poetics (late)

Fri 6 Feb 1998

maria

why not ask that question of books? -- no excoriating responses here / this is one of the reasons i adore chapbooks, and small press runs, and the "made-to-order" policy of some micropresses -- seems like such an efficient use of resources (in most cases, not all) -- not to mention the aesthetics and practicality of the chapbook mode: ease of portability, speed of production, light weight (fits well in the backpack or back pocket, etc.), reading in one sitting (generally) / a friend of mine starting a magazine mentioned that he'd decided to find more money and go upscale for fear that readers would treat the lowscale production as a disposable item -- i was disheartened by this, treasuring perhaps more than my perfect-bounds the chaps and *little* books coming from presses extinct and extant: i think of them as something like notations of a more current practice, a little more fresh and alive sometimes than the slicker flat-spines (staple-lovers unite?) / i'm trying to get a small chapbook series off the ground and hope to tap into some of these values -- using all tools and materials as efficiently as possible in a small way similar to the way native americans used the whole buffalo, hide to marrow / waste and inefficient use of resources analogous to the practices of factory farms (recycling cow parts into cow feed doesn't cut it for

me) is again another thing that motivates on several fronts, poetic and otherwise / as for trees (it's all related, all of it) we save a lot of paper here on Poetics, and e-mags obviously offer an attractive alternative, plus personal web publishing, etc. / i wonder though if anyone has calculated the resource-draw of all this personal computer use (silicon, plastics, electricity, phone lines, capital, etc.) / what uses more resources, for example: a 1/2 ounce letter posted in the mail, or a 5 Kb file posted to Poetics? (all things considered) / i'd assume the former, but i ain't sure

all best,
bill

At 07:59 AM 2/6/98 -0600, maria damon wrote:

>At 10:12 AM -0800 2/5/98, William Marsh wrote:

>>At 08:56 AM 2/5/98 -0500, daniel bouchard wrote:

>>>PAX

>>>

>>>I make a pact with you, Ron Silliman--

>>>I have admired your poems long enough.

>>>I come to you as a prodigal pup;

>>>Weaned at a dozen fat anthologies.

>>>I am old enough now to make an end.

>>>Whitman broke the new wood,

>>>Pound put in time to carving.

>>>We watch the blasted stumps in the open fields

>>>Leak black ink of American grain.

>>>

>>>I make a pact with you, venerable LangPoets--

>>>I have invested in your works long enough.

>>>I look back at you as a honorable bunch

>>>Laying new asphalt over the old roads;

>>>I am old enough now to map an end.

>>>It was you who splintered the carved wood,

>>>Now it is time for recycling.

>>>We have a cool climate and a rich soil--

>>>Don't let the mulcher come between us.

>>>

>>>I make a pact with you, my contemporaries--

>>>For to know you better there is time enough.

>>>I come to you with no gifts

>>>But that of mutual comradeship;

>>>I am ready to make friends.

>>>Look around us at all this damned wood,

>>>It is time to sort out what you want.
>>>We have glasses of water nursing new roots--
>>>Let there be communication between us.
>>>
>>daniel
>>
>>i'm interested in your statement here, especially given the fact that about
>>80% of old-growth forest in the U.S. has been lost (most of it to create
>>land for grazing livestock and/or growing livestock feed) and topsoil
>>depleted 75% for sake of same (not to mention chemical contamination of
>>soil and water--fertilizers, etc. to sustain growth) / so i have to admit
>>the running conceit here ("wood," "rich soil", "water nursing new roots,"
>>"recycling") resonates oddly for me--not just for its irony, intended or
>>not / the "American Grain" you refer to and "American Tree" by implication
>>as well lead me to think that what does separate writers today from the
>>"Tree" group is precisely our relationship to REsources, figuratively and
>>literally -- the american tree hasn't just been carved and splintered, it's
>>been cut down, paved over, then re-paved / planting "new roots" through
>>this kind of surface and in this kind of soil would be difficult indeed,
>>probably impossible / hydroponics and tree farms: maybe that's where the
>>future of poetry lies if we pursue the metaphor
>>
>>i don't know where you hail from, but having spent some time working on a
>>farm in Illinois (shutting windows when the pesticide truck comes through,
>>watching hillsides wash away, cleaning contaminated wells, etc.), i have a
>>hard time getting past the literal here / but quite seriously whatever pact
>>is made among writers today i think it needs to account for this new
>>relationship (to wood and word) / the invitation to "mutual comradeship"
>>however is gladly accepted
>>
>>best,
>>bill marsh
>>
>
>funny you shd mention this, bill; but it reminds me of something that
>resonates w/ the other list-thread on the honesty or not of critics. one
>thought i always bring to books when i review them is, "was this book worth
>cutting down trees for?" of course the answer is almost always negative
>but of course i don't feel i can say that in a review, it sounds way too
>harsh. but often i think that way: if this is an assistant professor
>coming up for tenure, and needs to publish, is it worth the trees? if this
>book is by a dean or tenured full prof whose future is not at issue, is it

>worth the trees? you'll notice that content has not yet entered the
>picture. that's because, with very few exceptions, most of the academic
>manuscripts or books i'm asked to review *really* don't add much to human
>knowledge, and certainly don't add as much as trees do to the quality of
>human life. so, i'm expecting excoriating messages back from all and
>sundry, accusing me of utter corruption. so ask yourself: is *your* book
>worth the trees? most of us have such small print runs it's okay (yes, i
>think about that too), esp the chapbooks etc., and those show such a
>spirited do-it-yrself energy that i think they're definitely worth it; i'm
>talking mostly about the academic book industry.

>

William Marsh
PaperBrainPress
Voice & Range Community Arts
National University

http://www.dtai.com/~bmarsh
snail: 1860 PB Dr. #4
San Diego, CA 92109

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264. **Don Byrd**

Re: Shuster, on Anti-academicism, Derrida, Community

Fri 6 Feb 1998

Joshua N Schuster wrote:

And, oooh, I find the academic slander particularly compelling. The fact that it is on this list in all its glory is sickening. It's all shit, let's burn the universities. Better yet, burn the critic-professors, especially that Derrida, root of all obscure academic prose.

A distinction should be made between the Idea of the University and the University as an administrative and regulatory unit. The Idea is one of the bravest and most beautiful we have: a universe of knowledge, a repository of what humans have learned, and a place to advance that knowledge.

I agree certainly that Derrida represents some of the best of what that ideal has been able to produce in recent years. His writing is "powerful, precise, and stunning," an epic effort to reappropriate a cultural tradition that has run away with itself and left much of the best of what humans have left seeming quite irrelevant. That he is touched upon in a Woody Allen movie is hardly negative.

In fact, it proves that he is actually producing an effect. And there are other great academics--Deleuze should be mentioned.

And it has been little noticed, the academic wheels move so slowly, that Derrida has moved beyond deconstruction to a new constructivism (*On the Name*, for example, is constructivist in much the sense that term was used in both the art and in formal logic in the early part of this century. I do not have the book at hand, but it ends saying, we must "construct a logos that look like a living creature," or something of that sort. It is an attempt to recover the Plato of *Timaeus*, among the most mythological and mystical of Plato's writings. If you want to talk academic work, this is what it is really about.

This turn should not be a surprise to to any one. There are very positive mentions of Plotinus and Neoplatonism (and *On the Name* is classic Neoplatonic move) as early as *Speech and Phenomena*, but academics, especially American academics, saw in deconstruction nothing but away to avoid all but the narrowest kind of longing subject in ruthless social context.

Moreover, no one noticed that all of this might have something to do with a Neoplatonism that was resurgent in 1) the Eliot's interest in metaphysical poetry (and, thus, the whole of New Criticism); 2) Pound's interest in Gemisto's and Ficino's centrality to the Italian renaissance; 3) the Blake-Yeats tradition of vision; or 4) Olson's anti-metaphysical stance in "Human Universe" and his redevelopment of constructivism (in a very precise sense) through the mathematical philosophy of Herman Weyl and others. It also should have been apparent, from the moment that Derrida appeared as a figure working through the interstices of the post May 68 and the malaise of the Heideggerian philosophy was that he beginning to arrive what had been many of the central themes of American philosophy and poetry since William James.

Without any disrespect for Derrida, I would suggest that the Derrida phenomena in the America university is an extraordinary example of the way in which the institution contrives through the most arcane and bureaucratic of its structures to function as a regulatory force in the culture. It is not because of demonic plot or vicious administrators; most everyone is doing what they do with the best of motives and the worst of results. I have worked in universities since 1971, but I had no idea how minutely the administrative structure of the university controls what is, in sum, purveyed as knowledge before the last three years, when I have served as Director of Graduate Studies. It is a remarkable system which gives everyone the experience of freedom and largely manages to cancel out that freedom. It must be understood that the university is inherently the most conservative institution in the culture: its sole purpose is to take the accumulated knowledge and pass it on to the next generation. It works very well in stable times, and it thrives (though it does not work well) in times

that can imagine themselves to be stable (e.g. the 50s), but it is utterly incapable of dealing with profound and rapid change--those times when some threshold is crossed, e.g. now.

db

--

Don Byrd ([REDACTED], [REDACTED])
Department of English
State University of New York
Albany, NY 12222
[REDACTED] (work); [REDACTED] (home); [REDACTED] (fax)
The Little Magazine (<http://www.albany.edu/~litmag/>)

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265. **William Marsh**
Re: a posting to poetics (late)
Fri 6 Feb 1998

daniel

glad you're back / i too have Silliman's Philly Steak right next to me and plan to get to it as soon as i'm done here / but to a couple of your points

At 09:31 AM 2/6/98 -0500, you wrote:

The poignancy of his thought (one I
>don't think Jeff Derksen responds to adequately, although he does cover
>other areas with adroitness) is caught when he questions what it means to be
>writing in today's world--after 1979 I think is the date; in a world where
>Palestinians suffer oppression but are only portrayed in American mainstream
>press as terrorists, or where the genocide going on in East Timor isn't
>portrayed at all. (I don't have the TALKS before; I'm sorry if not getting
>this 100%.) Those were two examples that Ron used. The environment is
>certainly another; one certainly not restricted by national borders. I think
>if there were to be a "crystallization" among younger writers (and I'm not
>advocating one) it would be centered such social questions of writing. Or,
>if I were to advocate a "crystallization" that's the one I would choose.

i think i agree here / are "such social questions of writing" also social questions of living, and living questions of...? / seriously, the "crystallization" that has probably itself gotten too much press here would, will, might center on the articulation of these questions, as well as the articulation of the activities (writing, living, arguing, challenging) to which the questions refer / so we have to be

direct / and to my mind, addressing below, questions of form, practice, social awareness, political struggle, global survival, can inform each other / as thoughts as well as afterthoughts / an integrated approach seems necessary / i'm being vague too, but put the question: what are the "social questions of writing"?

You've got to understand: when poets are aware of things like this (if I anticipated any poet would be it would be Ron Silliman) I am fairly excited, but when poets actually speak of them, in public, in the context of writing; well, it gives me quite a rush. Why? Because many of the poets I love (in the 20th century anyway) are concerned with such things in their poems.

i understand the "rush" you're talking about / it's the rush i get when a good poet says anything in public, given that the voices with which the public speaking world is saturated are rarely those of poets / Ron S is often a wake-up call, when he addresses the issues like the ones you mention / when the "talk" turns to address possible generational disparities and shortcomings, the effect might not be so thrilling, as some here have suggested / maybe a 'turning against' when some folks think greater solidarity is in order? / again, i have to read the thing

The agrarian metaphor in "PAX" (or aboreal even) stems from the poem's model, Ezra Pound's "Pact" found in PERSONAE. The metaphor, like a lineage of poetics, runs through the century from Williams, Duncan ("open fields"), to the "Tree" anthology--well, I'm not saying anything people on this list don't already know but I think the "nursing new roots" image in the end is where I stand on this.

okay, and i think here's where some of the nursing gets done / i liked your poem, by the way

bill

Bill Marsh wrote:

i'm interested in your statement here, especially given the fact that about 80% of old-growth forest in the U.S. has been lost (most of it to create land for grazing livestock and/or growing livestock feed) and topsoil depleted 75% for sake of same (not to mention chemical contamination of soil and water--fertilizers, etc. to sustain growth) / so i have to admit the running conceit here ("wood," "rich soil", "water nursing new roots," "recycling") resonates oddly for me--not just for its irony, intended or not / the "American Grain" you refer to and "American Tree" by implication as well lead me to think that what does separate writers today from the "Tree" group is precisely our relationship to REsources, figuratively and literally -- the american tree hasn't just been carved and splintered, it's been cut down, paved over, then re-paved / planting "new roots" through this kind of surface and in this kind of soil would be difficult indeed,

*probably impossible / hydroponics and tree farms: maybe that's where the
future of poetry lies if we pursue the metaphor*

i don't know where you hail from, but having spent some time working on a farm in Illinois (shutting windows when the pesticide truck comes through, watching hillsides wash away, cleaning contaminated wells, etc.), i have a hard time getting past the literal here / but quite seriously whatever pact is made among writers today i think it needs to account for this new relationship (to wood and word) / the invitation to "mutual comradeship" however is gladly accepted

best,
bill marsh

<<<<<<>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>

*Daniel Bouchard
The MIT Press Journals
Five Cambridge Center
Cambridge, MA 02142*

phone:

fax:

<<<<<<<<<<<<<<<<<<<

William Marsh
PaperBrainPress
Voice & Range Community Arts
National University
[REDACTED]
<http://www.dtai.com/~bmarsh>
snail: 1860 PB Dr. #4
San Diego, CA 92109

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266. **Mark Nowak**
Lee Chapman
Fri 6 Feb 1998

Could someone please backchannel me
Lee Chapman's e-mail address? Thanks...

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267. **Gary Sullivan**

Re: Dan

Fri 6 Feb 1998

I've responded to Tom Mandel.

All I'll say here is that I wrote my original response fully understanding, and appreciating, what he says below.

Gary

On Friday, February 06, 1998 10:53 AM, Tom Mandel

[SMTP: [REDACTED]] wrote:

> I've written to Gary Sullivan.

>

> All I'll say here is that I meant my words (wish he was here so I cd
> throttle him for what he did) to express my longing for his presence and my
> distress that he cannot be reached.

>

> Tom

>

>

> Tom Mandel [REDACTED]

> *****

> Screen Porch * http://screenporch.com

> 4020 Williamsburg Ct, Ste 200 * vox: [REDACTED]

> Fairfax, VA 22031 * fax: [REDACTED]

> *****

> Join the Caucus Conversation

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268. **Bobbie West**

numerology and death

Fri 6 Feb 1998

In some Chinese dialects, 44 is pronounced something like "sz sz sz," which is uncomfortably similar to the Chinese for "die! die! die!"

Bobbie West

>> Dan died at the age of 44--the age that too many of my own most influential 20th century artists left: Maya Deren, Paul Blackburn, Lew Welch,

and I
think Frank O'Hara (not totally sure about O'Hara, but pretty sure). Any
numerologists out there?<<

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269. **Harold Rhenisch**

Re: Love Poems

Fri 6 Feb 1998

Maria, thanks for a wise and measured reply to my passionate post.

Yes, it is true, we live in a sexist society. As far as historical context and ongoing inequities goes, it's all a mess, and I guess I was trying to say that all this stuff does come down to specific cases, so we all have to be careful how we describe things.

Best,

Harold


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270. **George Thompson**

Re: "my man" (George Thompson's post)

Fri 6 Feb 1998

George, Your point is well-taken, _if_ when you wrote "if these were a man's words" you intended "if these were a woman's words"--a reading that the context urges. And I would agree, that _once again_, it is a man's "trip" (or 3 different men, actually) being "laid on" women. I was off-point, somewhat--although Fanny Brice, a woman, made it a big hit. "Buying in", I suppose. David

David,

Thanks for understanding what I meant, not what I said.

George

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271. **Schuchat Simon**

Re: 44

Fri 6 Feb 1998

Not just in some, but the major dialects of Chinese (Cantonese, Shanghainese, Min-nan hua & Northern Mandarin) "4" is a homophone for death, but the heavy taboo avoidance unlucky aura is strongest among the Cantonese. But 4

is not always unlucky in Chinese, viz the Buddha's 4 Noble Truths or Deng Xiaoping's 4 Cardinal Principles or Zhou Enlai's 4 modernizations.

A Shanghainese or Taiwanese would pronounce "44" more or less as "si si si" (four ten four/death death death) since those dialects don't clearly distinguish between "si" and "shi"

Repeating the 4, in some schools of fengshui, would negate it. (To return like a dog to my vomit, that was called "negating the negation" in Stalinist dialectics.)

Being a lyric poet after 40 is pretty difficult, unless you're going to be a dirty old man ala Yeats.

According to Confucius, "at 40 I was no longer confused"

(15 I became intent on study, 30 I was established, 40 no longer confused, 50 knew the will of heaven, 60 obeyed the will of heaven, at 70 I could do whatever I wanted because my desires no longer were inappropriate -- Analects II.4)

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272. **Simon/Piombino**

Re: Daniel Davidson

Fri 6 Feb 1998

Dear Gary Sullivan,

In June, 1991 Daniel Davidson sent me a copy of his strikingly excellent book of prose poems "Product" with a brief note containing some kind words about my own work. He sent the book and the note partly in response to Cydney Chadwick having mentioned to him how much I admired a piece called "Transit" which was published in *Avec*. I admired and enjoyed "Product" immensely and put it in an easy to reach place, and read it often. When I learned of Davidson's suicide I was very saddened, a feeling poignantly sharpened by the publication, soon after, of his masterful poetic collaboration with Tom Mandel titled "Absence Sensorium" (Potes and Poets Press, 1997). No doubt Tom Mandel has been deeply affected, as have many others. This project to get something together about his work would be an opportunity as well, of course, for everyone to learn more about Davidson and his powerful writing, which included an issue of *A.bacus* (#95) ("from Culture"), and the magisterial "Image", a Zasterle Book (1992) with the resonantly atmospheric kind of cover art and book design so often associated with that remarkable press in the Canary Islands, also responsible for Allen Ginsberg's mysterious final book, "Luminous Dreams" (1997), as well as as Tom Mandel's "Ancestral Cave(1997):"intimate conversation only slightly removed/ from silence, a remove to the distance/of barbarian chatter, the/candles sputter, the world outside/the window dies." I hope you have the

opportunity to follow through on this project, one that I will gladly support any way I can.

Very best wishes,
Nick Piombino

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273. **Pierre Joris**

Re: ma femme

Sat 7 Feb 1998

Dear Tom,

I tend to agree with the bottom half of your response (that's where the sex and the objectification is) but I believe that in the top half (that's where the words are) you are a bit too trenchant in your decisions re French. "Femme" is "woman." The possessive pronoun "ma" can turn it indeed all too easily into "my wife." But it does not do so necessarily. Thus, "ma femme" is, literally and in most other senses, "my woman." "My wife" is "mon épouse." Of course "ma femme" is often, even mainly in everyday speech *also* used to refer to "the wife," the way the brits say "the missis." But "femme" in French also always retains exactly what you say of the English word, which "always is at bottom "woman," and "full of romantic (literarily, I mean) overtones and symbolic connections (to "woman"), and universalisms (viz. a man and a woman). Using it in the translation skews the poem."

The favorite sport of the surrealists was "chercher la femme," and that didn't mean they were looking for their spouses -- the latter a happily nearly unused term these days. What we in fact have is, as so often, the case of an English that's richer than the French, and in this case, has three terms, woman/ wife/ spouse instead of the French doublet femme/épouse — with femme having to carry the load of both woman and wife. And the word does carry it. Which is why you are right — if you want to read, as you do, the poem primarily as Breton "*investing*" the quotidian relationship -- husband and wife --with qualities foreign to it or transformative of it." But that's a very limited reading, whatever the legal relationship Breton had with the specific woman (if there is one) he is addressing with/in the poem . (And we know, see below, that he was not addressing his wife.) Anybody French coming to the poem will first hear "woman" — and "woman" in exactly that sense that a blues singer will say "my woman" and maybe later, at a 2nd, 3rd or 10th reading, could think of the "wife" qua legal spouse — but legal niceties are not really on the front burner in a poem titled FREE UNION. Therefore translating it as "my woman" may miss a little of the complexity, but translating it as "my wife" misses most of the richness of the address and limits it to one small facet.

And one facet that Breton did **not** intend. The date of composition of the poem is 20 & 21 May 1931. Breton had by then been definitely separated from his first wife for a number of months, was thus unmarried, footloose and “cherchait la femme,” and was in fact alone that month after a number of brief liaisons. And he had not yet met the woman who would become his second wife, Jacqueline Lamba, to whom he would write in a letter dated 4/10/39: “greet the beautiful landscape [of Lyons-la-Forêt where she was] which after all inspired me to write ‘Free Union’ for you whom I didn’t even know then.” Of course he kept on to “chercher la femme,” and on the copy of his volume *Poèmes* which he offered to his next (3rd & last) wife Elisa in 1948, Breton wrote as dedication: “My wife with hair...’ / so it was you / my love / so true I didn’t back then / give it a face / though it was in early 1931/ that you came to France / for the first time.” Breton certainly addressed the poem to “l’éternel féminin,” and not to the /a / one or the other / spouse.

Final verification: I just read the French poem to mi compañera who happens to be the genuine article, ie native French, & asked her who she would translate it into English — “lady” was what she said immediately (and Paul Blackburn may well have used that term, had he translated the poem) but rejected “wife” out of hand.

PS. In an early ms. of the poem, he compares “his” woman’s breasts to “la beurrée verte,” — a strange cocktail consisting of 1/4 absinthe, 1/4 gin, 1/4 beer and 1/4 basic eau-de-vie. He dropped that image in the final version.

Pierre

Tom Mandel wrote:

Pierre writes:

"in French it's of course "ma femme" — the translation I use is Antin's which says "my woman" -- but there exists another more recent one that tries to p.c.fy (I guess, or else legalize the free union) the poem by translating "ma femme" as "my wife." Does that make any difference?"

*The American English phrase "my woman" is simply **not** a translation of the French "ma femme". In French, that phrase **means** (denotes, points at, identifies) "my wife." Just as "ma femme de menage" **means** my maid and not "my woman-who-orders-household."*

The phrase "my woman" is full of romantic (literarily, I mean) overtones and symbolic connections (to "woman"), and universalisms (viz. a man and a woman). Using it in the translation skews the poem.

*Breton is **investing** the quotidian relationship -- husband and wife --*

*with qualities foreign to it or transformative of it, and investing the *object* he views from within that matched-pair relationship with mystical qualities. Using "my woman" to translate "ma femme" removes the point of the poem entirely. The result -- to me -- is utterly leaden. Whereas in French I liked it a lot.*

*I highlight the word *object* because obviously the poem *objectifies* his wife. Ooooh, the shame of it. And, if I've effectively (however lightly) skimmed responses to it here, this fact has not gone unnoticed, as many a better-knowing head has nodded.*

*One of Tom's Ten Ways To Let The Fly Out Of The Bottle (available to grad students at a nominal cost) is this: *all* sex and all sexual relationships involve objectification. More sex implies more objectification. Or, as Breton might have said on one occasion or another: "amusez-vous bien."*

)Now I'm going to hear it!(

Tom

Tom Mandel

Screen Porch * <http://screenporch.com>

4020 Williamsburg Ct, Ste 200 * vox: [REDACTED]

Fairfax, VA 22031 * fax: [REDACTED]

Join the Caucus Conversation

--

=====

pierre joris 6 madison place albany ny 12202

tel/fax [REDACTED] email: [REDACTED]

<http://www.albany.edu/~joris/>

"What often prevents us from giving ourselves over to
a single vice is that we have several of them."

— La Rochefoucauld

=====

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274. **Taylor Brady**

Call for Submissions

Sat 7 Feb 1998

Cartograffiti, a new electronic magazine, requests submissions of original work in the following categories:

1) Prose works in literary and cultural criticism, including close readings; literary, cultural and political theory; journalism; and publication reviews.

2) Poetry and fiction.

3) Visual texts, including visual poetry, photographs and photographic reproductions of paintings, prints, etc. I would also like to encourage submissions which reconsider more "conservative" (usually due to publication expense) forms of textual visuality, e.g., photo-documented art and architecture criticism. If there is enough response, I would like to run a special issue on the poetics of the photographic essay. (NOTE: PLEASE DO NOT SEND ORIGINAL ART WORKS BY MAIL WITHOUT MAKING SOME PRIOR ARRANGEMENT WITH ME).

4) Multimedia and hypertext works, or projects written specifically for presentation in a web-based electronic medium. Here I would encourage poets and writers who have given some thought to hypertext as a compositional medium, but who lack the necessary technical training in HTML or other electronic text languages and software to approach Cartograffiti as a virtual gallery space. In other words, send me a proposal for an installation, and, if I have the time and interest, I'll help with the staging. Obviously, the number of such projects I can do at any given time is extremely limited.

Send work to:

Cartograffiti
c/o Taylor Brady
155 Park St., Upper
Buffalo, NY 14201

or, if it is possible to present your text as ASCII only (or as an ASCII text with a short series of formatting instructions), to [REDACTED]. Please do not send work as an e-mail attachment.

An early, abbreviated version of the first issue, featuring visual work by Michael Basinski and Wendy Kramer, is available online at
<http://writing.upenn.edu/~ltbrady/cartograffiti>.

Taylor Brady
editor, Cartograffiti
co-editor, Small Press Collective
Visit the Small Press Collective homepage at
<http://writing.upenn.edu/AandL/english/pubs/spc>.

<HTML> <BODY TEXT="#000000" BGCOLOR="#FFFFFF" LINK="#003399" VLINK="#006600" ALINK="#FF0000"> Cartograffiti, a new electronic magazine, requests submissions of original work in the following categories:

<P>1) Prose works in literary and cultural criticism, including close readings; literary, cultural and political theory; journalism; and publication reviews.

<P>2) Poetry and fiction.

<P>3) Visual texts, including visual poetry, photographs and photographic reproductions of paintings, prints, etc. I would also like to encourage submissions which reconsider more "conservative" (usually due to publication expense) forms of textual visuality, e.g., photo-documented art and architecture criticism. If there is enough response, I would like to run a special issue on the poetics of the photographic essay. (NOTE: PLEASE DO NOT SEND ORIGINAL ART WORKS BY MAIL WITHOUT MAKING SOME PRIOR ARRANGEMENT WITH ME).

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editor, Cartograffiti

co-editor, Small Press Collective

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</HTML>

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275. **Michael McColl**
Steve Evans article?

Sat 7 Feb 1998

Would someone kindly backchannel me with a reference for the Steve Evans' article on poetry that was recently discussed? thanks, Mike McColl

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276. **Keston Sutherland**
advertisement

Sat 7 Feb 1998

Barque Press, a little outfit newly transplanted from Cambridge (I) to Cambridge (II), has a few titles from its list currently available in the US, if anyone's interested. These are:

Andrea Brady	_open bond_ (96)
Andrea Brady	_Of Sere Fold_ (97)
Jordan Davis	_Upstairs_ (97)
Keston Sutherland	_Girls At Trusion_ (97)
Keston Sutherland	_At The Motel Partial Opportunity_ (98)

All are \$3 including postage, except the _Motel_ piece, which is bigger/glossier hence: \$4.

Anyone keen, e- me with an address.

Thanks, Keston

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277. **Rachel Levitsky**
Love poems

Sat 7 Feb 1998

P. Pritchett wrote:

As for the gap between American and French feminism, I'll have to get back to you on that - I just don't know enough to make an intelligent comment on the

situation. From what little I've read, there seems to be a perception, at least here in the US, that French feminists have moved so far into the poststructural camp as to neutralize the enactment of any coherent political agenda. And that's because the political front of feminism has thus far relied on - in a sort of gentlewoman's agreement - to set aside the issue of essentialism vs. constructionism, and for the sake of promoting specific socially progressive programs, etc. acted as though there were no ontological rift, that something called the "universal woman" exists and can be appealed to in arguments with legislators and the like. It's a very interesting problem.

Yes Pat, excellent post, as Lorenzo Thomas said this summer at Naropa re: representational poetry/narratives and social change. They are not the same thing. Cool & Free language and ERA doesn't make.

Rachel

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278. **nikuko**

From Kon as well (this is from both of us!)

Sat 7 Feb 1998

(Hey, sorry guys, no sex in this one! But K & I think a lot at times!)

The Game of Japan (of Signifiers)

Mendicant monks, we are on the road of total dissolution, along which a stream hampered by concrete flows, down predestination, we're carrying the magatama jewel, curved like liver like tear like conch like Nikuko, we're biting the head off to make kami-gods, we're biting the middle to make more of 'em, we're biting the tail, just when we thought there wasn't any more, we're biting each other, falling over in the ha-ha-onsen, suddenly switched, I've got my mouth fastened on some nether parts of me that hurt hurt hurt, they disappear along with the rest of my jewels, so like liver like tear like conch or ouroboros, I go in, she's elsewhere, smarter with all this Nikuko- biting, oh reader here I am!, until somewhere my toe meets my head and I'm an inch of flesh, all necessary for the jewel-cushion, Yasaka-jewels, you would've heard of them! on the couch, coach, shaped like conch - see where language gets you, not a bit of it!, hurt hurt hurt, you'll never guess what I'm typing with (it's not what you think, Yasaka!), I'm sitting on the conch

ii

We travel to Beppu where we make a big storm and a tsunami fills all the onsen with frothy-fish-foam and someone makes an island.

iii

There are trees on the island, there's a dragon and a cave made of burning human skin, the skin grows from the outside in, it's like a yakitoriya there, all warm and would-be pretty good to eat, but the dragon likes the roof, her flame goes out in the rain, you can only imagine the rest of this, how we burrowed and made little rooms for ourselves, ringing our begging-bowls, playing shakuhachi, until she gave up, in, out, 10,000 yen for the troubles, and how they emerged in Ireland.

iv

We leave the island, heading for a place that makes crows constantly.

v

In this place, there's a parliament of birds deciding on a proper constitution. So it includes homage to the emperor, a clean death for all traitors, exchange students and retributions well-crafted for certain crimes and misdemeanors, take care of the shrine! which means liquid for everyone, you might think someone would care in the midst of all this chaos. But now there's a text and everyone can read, and happily everyone does the production, even criminals who gladly retribute. Now we collect money from the criminals, because we rebuild the onsen, that's so necessary. It's quite nice now and not very expensive, and a writer like me can disgorge, unravel, open up like a box of shogi pieces which can't play the game of Japan. I will sit down at my desk with my brush. I will ink the inkan and ink the computer. I will portray my whole life, mendicant, auspicious, medieval. You will not believe the lovely jewels, curved, bitten in three places, tongues torn from mouths, just lovely talk. There's no mouth (against which the tongues) pressed against the skin against the dragon cave. The skin against the cave was comfortable, warm, worn; the cave wore the skin.

vi

The skin against the cave was the cave, the game of Japan.

vii

I sit at my desk and oh I am bleeding to death! I cannot, oh, type, touching myself in this matter, the A B I D E already have disappeared "in the manner of painting." You will see depth when something goes wrong and there is a big fixture (interlinear chandelier) in a space in which I am a magatama jewel. Now you will bite me in three places, what I call "the game of Japan."

viii

The apology for all peoples, which I make, a life of regret. That I am not all peoples, that I am on the exterior of any skin for any house containing any plant or animal. I am called a "covering." A "covering" may be a surface with thickness, and may serve the purpose of rainful- keeping-away. Together we meet again

and shake hands and smile and the sun is warm (we have made it that way).
And we are mendicant monks; we are wandering. We're on the road of total dis-
solution. There's a stream hampered by something or other, and we've got
these jewels.

ix

I'm bitten.

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279. **Henry Gould**

Re: a posting to poetics (late)

Sat 7 Feb 1998

I also enjoyed Dan's poem as independently as the three of us could. I think politics is in the air (always), inescapable, and is actually made by people who make difficult decisions, usually involving renunciation, in order to "go public" or get involved. Such decisions then become part of the atmosphere WITHIN the poem and add to its depth. Anyway, this is just one angle on a many-sided phenomenon. What I wanted to say was it seems important that Dan framed his "transition" via Pound's transition out of Whitman. But in political terms I think one might just as well stay with Whitman and the Gilded Age and the Populist movement of a hundred years ago, the milieu Whitman was saying farewell to. The underlying theme of gardening and the earth speaks to that earlier (pre-Pound) tradition as much as or more than to the Pound & post-Pound era. As I see it, in a global economy where Brazilians & Indonesians are forced out of work & off-land by the millions; where small American farmers are becoming a thing of the past; where "government" as we knew it (based on civic involvement) is fading - the struggle is really between the common good and Mammon. This is a simplistic (populist) view, but I think the idea of a populist solidarity of consciousness regarding re-establishing local/state/ national government responsibilities regarding land, access to skills, access to housing, and other basic necessities of civil society is more fruitful than either sub-governmental identity politics or euro-style socialism. Post-beat, post-New York, post-langpo poetry might just as well go back to Whitman and start fresh. Plus we have peazles for everybody. C'mon along! - Henry Gould

p.s. I hope Dale Smith will hang around. & I scorn with utter scorn you scolders out there who whenever somebody gets into something negative - criticism for the academy, questioning a poetics, challenging the networks - you have to chime in with your scolding and cheerleading, i.e. "yeah, let's talk about COMMUNITY..." - as if raising questions about some of the stagnating aspects

of community isn't doing just that. Go scold yourselves. If you don't allow criticism your communities are bolshie-fascist consortiums of dead brain matter.

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280. **Rachel Levitsky**

Re: movie query

Sat 7 Feb 1998

Thanks all who responded with the movie. How embarrassing, mistook The Conformist for French. So "Breathless" it is!

Mark Weiss wrote:

>

> Godard's "Breathless."

>

> At 01:19 PM 2/5/98 -0500, you wrote:

> >So I wrote this poem from an image which comes from a gesture in a movie

> >and I think it is The Conformist, not sure, must know. Having a bit of

> >trouble finding it to rent in the neighborhood, haven't gone further

> >yet.

> >

> >Here it is: A man in a black trenchcoat gestures to a woman by placing

> >his thumb on his lips. She does the same, perhaps later. It's French.

> >

> >??????

> >

> >thanks,

> >rachel

> >

> >

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281. **david bromige**

Dale Slander Context and Smith

Sat 7 Feb 1998

(my attorneys). Well, Dale, let's recall you kicked off this "reasonable discussion" by slandering me. Your excuse--that caused you to had lost the famous Dale Smith temper--was that I had made unsubstantiable remarks, slurs, about Tom Clark.

I and others have done a great deal to substantiate these remarks since then. But you learn nothing. You don't address any of our discussions. You sit back

and continue to fling doo-doo at anonymous targets. Cowardly, wouldnt you say?

I can't imagine why you want to be on a list whose membership is trained to identify issues and then explicate a point of view with constant reference to that issue. All you appear capable of, is bitching and moaning.

I regret that Tom Clark is not on this list. I have written nothing about him and his work, here--or anywhere else--that I would not say to his face.

Dale, another point : speaking of taking things out of context, Aldon Neilsen tells me that you re-print postings from this List in your magazine, without the permission of the authors (or, presumably, the Listmaster, who has told me that this is against the list-protocol). True, or False? David

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282. **KENT JOHNSON**

Good sex

Sat 7 Feb 1998

Pierre:

Your reply to Tom Mandel which just came on ("re: ma femme"-- sorry, accidentally deleted, so not below) argues that "femme" is best read as "woman" rather than "wife". However, looking at Antin's translation in Poems for the Millenium, I see that the choice is "wife," which you refer to in your reply to Tom as a "PC ified" interpretation. Just wondering if you might be thinking of substituting DA's version with another in future editions?

Also, I was happy to notice that Tom makes an argument about "objectification" that is similar to mine. My only difference with Tom here would be that "objectification" is a quality intrinsic to the "erotic gaze" but not necessarily to the climactic levels of sexual union, where erotic objectification, along with everything else, more or less ceases to exist. At least when sex is good. I still say that 'Free Union' is not a poem about "ownership" but rather a very healthy yearning for good sex transformed into ecstatic verse. Breton the sexist transcends his plebeian sexism here. Hurrah for poetry.

Kent

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283. **Pierre Joris**

Re: spraying the communities

Sat 7 Feb 1998

Danny Huppatz wrote:

nancy, bataille and blanchot (in "the unworkable community")

Danny, "unavowable" is how I translated it, which ain't "unworkable" -- given that the French is "inavouable." That's Blanchot's term. Nancy's term (taken from Blanchot) is "désoeuvrée" -- an extremely difficult term to translate: the translator of the Nancy book used "inoperative" which it ain't either. In my intro to Blanchot's book, I tried the word "the unworking" for "désoeuvrement." (If you don't have access to the book or my intro, and are interested, let me know & I'll post the page or so I wrote there about the difficulties of translating this word/concept on the list or backchannel. -- The word is important because it is a concept, maybe one of the most interesting ones in Blanchot's work)

Pierre (who these days seems to be slugging it out in the fields of translation again, ugh)

--

=====

pierre joris 6 madison place albany ny 12202
tel/fax [REDACTED] email: [REDACTED]
<http://www.albany.edu/~joris/>

"What often prevents us from giving ourselves over to a single vice is that we have several of them."

— La Rochefoucauld

=====

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284. **Aldon Nielsen**

Re: Slander and Context

Sat 7 Feb 1998

At first I thought Dale's post was supposed to be a satiric instance of the topic indicated in the subject line.

but that delusion is hard to maintain to the end of the piece --

check out the lines about the supposed intolerance for anything that doesn't reek of Derrida -- then, if you happen to be new to the list, look back through the archive at some of the rather heated exchanges about Derrida in the past -- and that's a particularly odd charge to make in the context (yes, there is one) of discussion about an article by Tom Clark on Barrett Watten and others --

and what's this "at least" about Clark's articles in the context of a community he was a part of? that need some explaining, unless the community in question is

all the book stores of the United States Fact of the matter is that there are severe problems of logic and evidence evident in Clark's essay, some of which have been adduced in the process of this exchange -- and none of which have anything to do with refusal to hear dissent --

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285. **Danny Huppatz**

Re: spraying the communities

Sat 7 Feb 1998

it seems to me joshua (& louis) have raised some key issues with regard to thinking politics & its relation to culture. if, as louis suggested, community is an imaginary construct, perhaps it is also, importantly, a political construct. that is, i think of this list is in a sense, a new kind of community, a community with a range of new possibilities (a literary community that allows easy exchange inside/outside the academies, over national borders?).

politically, a thinking of community needs to be fluid. as louis suggested, poetry is always written from within a community, it has to be - & this literary community it comes from extends not only through space but through time.

following derrida, the writing of jean-luc nancy on community offers some interesting insights on contemporary concepts of community. briefly, nancy suggests (out of bataille & blanchot) community as a process that allows the possibility of constructing particular, specific subjectivities. more precisely for a literary community, a community that is articulated when the limits of language/knowledge/subjectivity are reached, a kind of exposure that unworks any simple transfer of meaning.

nancy, bataille and blanchot (in "the unworkable community") think community not as a abstract formal category, but as an operation, a process on the material plane, a passing-between at the fluid borders between singularities. i use the term singularities rather than subject because it allows several (an infinite?) number of singularities within a subject. its a little philosophical (sorry) but a way of thinking beyond the "outcasted male/female individual hero" character. perhaps also deleuze & guattari's notion of the book as an assemblage - with the "author" merely one point in the convergence of variously formed matters, different dates & speeds ...

sprayed thoughts

dan

dan huppatz

melbourne

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286. **david bromige**

sex power poetry

Sat 7 Feb 1998

I think Chris Stroffolino's posting says volumes, makes all kinds of sense of the process whereby not only a *love* poem gets to be. (I hadn't heard the diggers : "to love is to fail," before, either; something to chew on.) I can remember the first poem I ever wrote (unfortunately), and it was a love-lament; but I can't remember who had made me blue enough to write.

I thought Chris had written "minneswingers" but that was me reading him.

Like to applaud Kent's post re-objectification, also. (It was a good place to remark that humans qua species are cannibal). Amorous companions (depending upon temperament) may become further aroused by having their parts named and appreciated--"pointed out," I suppose. The poetry-reading is not the bedroom, though. I remember my wife (a former wife) taking exception to a poet (here nameless) describing his penis (still attached) floating in the bathwater: "I don't want to have to picture _that_ "

This-all started, right?, when Robert Hale reported scant success resulted from giving that Breton poem to a romantic interest? Perhaps there's a touch of "one-size-fits-all" about sending another man's poem to court the woman you want to make "yours". What if she falls for Breton instead? The conclusion to that thought is, "write your own and give her that," but I never did, not until it was too late, or otherwise a redundancy. During courtship, I may have said lines from other people's poems, but I tried to disguise them as my own, spontaneous phrases. And in fact it was spontaneity, recall on the instant. Anyway, I have met Robert Hale, and I don't think he needs Breton or any of those latin lovers to help him.

George Bowering, before he married himself, used to say love-poetry to my wife (my former wife), with what success I was never quite certain. I know that she laughed a lot whenever his name came up. She admired his fingernails, too, in those years romantically stained with nicotine.

db 3

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287. **Maria Damon**

Re: a posting to poetics (late)

Sat 7 Feb 1998

whew, i'm relieved! after i sent that post, i didn't get any POETIX mail for over a day, and started to fantasize that i'd just thrown my community away w/ my grandiose challenge: are the books we read or write worth the trees it takes to print 'em? don't think i don't ask this about my own work. anyway, sorry for blurting out my unlovely trade secrets in my usual compulsive rush to share all... my apologies to all. it's not tax season for me as it is for herb, but other circumstances are conspiring to warp my personality still further...md

At 11:26 AM -0800 2/6/98, William Marsh wrote:

>maria

>

>why not ask that question of books? -- no excoriating responses here / this
>is one of the reasons i adore chapbooks, and small press runs, and the
>"made-to-order" policy of some micropresses -- seems like such an efficient
>use of resources (in most cases, not all) -- not to mention the aesthetics
>and practicality of the chapbook mode: ease of portability, speed of
>production, light weight (fits well in the backpack or back pocket, etc.),
>reading in one sitting (generally) / a friend of mine starting a magazine
>mentioned that he'd decided to find more money and go upscale for fear that
>readers would treat the lowscale production as a disposable item -- i was
>disheartened by this, treasuring perhaps more than my perfect-bounds the
>chaps and *little* books coming from presses extinct and extant: i think of
>them as something like notations of a more current practice, a little more
>fresh and alive sometimes than the slicker flat-spines (staple-lovers
>unite?) / i'm trying to get a small chapbook series off the ground and hope
>to tap into some of these values -- using all tools and materials as
>efficiently as possible in a small way similar to the way native americans
>used the whole buffalo, hide to marrow / waste and inefficient use of
>resources analogous to the practices of factory farms (recycling cow parts
>into cow feed doesn't cut it for me) is again another thing that motivates
>on several fronts, poetic and otherwise / as for trees (it's all related,
>all of it) we save a lot of paper here on Poetics, and e-mags obviously
>offer an attractive alternative, plus personal web publishing, etc. / i
>wonder though if anyone has calculated the resource-draw of all this
>personal computer use (silicon, plastics, electricity, phone lines,
>capital, etc.) / what uses more resources, for example: a 1/2 ounce letter
>posted in the mail, or a 5 Kb file posted to Poetics? (all things
>considered) / i'd assume the former, but i ain't sure
>

>all best,

>bill

>

>At 07:59 AM 2/6/98 -0600, maria damon wrote:

>>At 10:12 AM -0800 2/5/98, William Marsh wrote:

>>>At 08:56 AM 2/5/98 -0500, daniel bouchard wrote:

>>>>PAX

>>>>

>>>>I make a pact with you, Ron Silliman--

>>>>I have admired your poems long enough.

>>>>I come to you as a prodigal pup;

>>>>Weaned at a dozen fat anthologies.

>>>>I am old enough now to make an end.

>>>>Whitman broke the new wood,

>>>>Pound put in time to carving.

>>>>We watch the blasted stumps in the open fields

>>>>Leak black ink of American grain.

>>>>

>>>>I make a pact with you, venerable LangPoets--

>>>>I have invested in your works long enough.

>>>>I look back at you as a honorable bunch

>>>>Laying new asphalt over the old roads;

>>>>I am old enough now to map an end.

>>>>It was you who splintered the carved wood,

>>>>Now it is time for recycling.

>>>>We have a cool climate and a rich soil--

>>>>Don't let the mulcher come between us.

>>>>

>>>>I make a pact with you, my contemporaries--

>>>>For to know you better there is time enough.

>>>>I come to you with no gifts

>>>>But that of mutual comradeship;

>>>>I am ready to make friends.

>>>>Look around us at all this damned wood,

>>>>It is time to sort out what you want.

>>>>We have glasses of water nursing new roots--

>>>>Let there be communication between us.

>>>>

>>>daniel

>>>

>>>i'm interested in your statement here, especially given the fact that about

>>>80% of old-growth forest in the U.S. has been lost (most of it to create

>>>land for grazing livestock and/or growing livestock feed) and topsoil
>>>depleted 75% for sake of same (not to mention chemical contamination of
>>>soil and water--fertilizers, etc. to sustain growth) / so i have to admit
>>>the running conceit here ("wood," "rich soil", "water nursing new roots,"
>>>"recycling") resonates oddly for me--not just for its irony, intended or
>>>not / the "American Grain" you refer to and "American Tree" by implication
>>>as well lead me to think that what does separate writers today from the
>>>"Tree" group is precisely our relationship to REsources, figuratively and
>>>literally -- the american tree hasn't just been carved and splintered, it's
>>>been cut down, paved over, then re-paved / planting "new roots" through
>>>this kind of surface and in this kind of soil would be difficult indeed,
>>>probably impossible / hydroponics and tree farms: maybe that's where the
>>>future of poetry lies if we pursue the metaphor

>>>

>>>i don't know where you hail from, but having spent some time working on
a

>>>farm in Illinois (shutting windows when the pesticide truck comes through,
>>>watching hillsides wash away, cleaning contaminated wells, etc.), i have a
>>>hard time getting past the literal here / but quite seriously whatever pact
>>>is made among writers today i think it needs to account for this new
>>>relationship (to wood and word) / the invitation to "mutual comradeship"
>>>however is gladly accepted

>>>

>>>best,

>>>bill marsh

>>>

>>

>>funny you shd mention this, bill; but it reminds me of something that
>>resonates w/ the other list-thread on the honesty or not of critics. one
>>thought i always bring to books when i review them is, "was this book worth
>>cutting down trees for?" of course the answer is almost always negative
>>but of course i don't feel i can say that in a review, it sounds way too
>>harsh. but often i think that way: if this is an assistant professor
>>coming up for tenure, and needs to publish, is it worth the trees? if this
>>book is by a dean or tenured full prof whose future is not at issue, is it
>>worth the trees? you'll notice that content has not yet entered the
>>picture. that's because, with very few exceptions, most of the academic
>>manuscripts or books i'm asked to review *really* don't add much to human
>>knowledge, and certainly don't add as much as trees do to the quality of
>>human life. so, i'm expecting excoriating messages back from all and
>>sundry, accusing me of utter corruption. so ask yourself: is *your* book
>>worth the trees? most of us have such small print runs it's okay (yes, i

>>think about that too), esp the chapbooks etc., and those show such a
>>spirited do-it-yrsel energy that i think they're definitely worth it; i'm
>>talking mostly about the academic book industry.

>>

>

>

>-----

>William Marsh

>PaperBrainPress

>Voice & Range Community Arts

>National University

> [REDACTED]

>http://www.dtai.com/~bmarsh

>snail: 1860 PB Dr. #4

>San Diego, CA 92109

>-----

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288. **Gwyn McVay**
spice power poetry/Acker

Sat 7 Feb 1998

Apropos of nothing in particular, I like the Breton poem quite a bit more than the Plath poem, and nothing you can say could tear me away from my guy, my guy.

There's a thoughtful article on Kathy Acker in the new /London Review of Books/--oddly bedfellow'd next to an article by Helen Vendler about Amy Clampitt--as well as a new Ashbery poem, presumably from the forthcoming book.

Gwyn McVay

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289. **Pierre Joris**
Re: Good sex

Sat 7 Feb 1998

Kent -- hmm, sitting here late nights with some sippin'whiskey and posting to the list when I shld be in bed gets me muddled at times. Yes, the version of the Breton poem in the antho is Antin's and it uses the word "wife." It's a great version & totally likeable in exactly the way Tom described its eroticism as functioning — and as such things happen may have become _the_ american version. But I maintain my trasnlator's argument: "my woman" is what Breton meant, he

may, does indeed insist that it is THE woman, the one "l'amour fou" or "Nadja" evocate, the main squeeze, the top lady, lo que quieres, but not that legalized union thing.

For the rest I very much agree with your take as what the poem. Yes, it is not about ownership! There are two early versions before Breton gets the poem right -- with varying insistence or mentioning of body parts. Had I but the time, a learned exposé of why certain body parts are omitted or muted or relocated or exalted differently from the first draft to the final poem would be fun to do.

Pierre

KENT JOHNSON wrote:

Pierre:

Your reply to Tom Mandel which just came on ("re: ma femme"-- sorry, accidentally deleted, so not below) argues that "femme" is best read as "woman" rather than "wife". However, looking at Antin's translation in Poems for the Millenium, I see that the choice is "wife," which you refer to in your reply to Tom as a "PC ified" interpretation. Just wondering if you might be thinking of substituting DA's version with another in future editions?

Also, I was happy to notice that Tom makes an argument about "objectification" that is similar to mine. My only difference with Tom here would be that "objectification" is a quality intrinsic to the "erotic gaze" but not necessarily to the climactic levels of sexual union, where erotic objectification, along with everything else, more or less ceases to exist. At least when sex is good. I still say that 'Free Union' is not a poem about "ownership" but rather a very healthy yearning for good sex transformed into ecstatic verse. Breton the sexist transcends his plebeian sexism here. Hurrah for poetry.

Kent

--

=====

pierre joris 6 madison place albany ny 12202
tel/fax [REDACTED] email: [REDACTED]
<http://www.albany.edu/~joris/>

"What often prevents us from giving ourselves over to a single vice is that we have several of them."

— La Rochefoucauld

=====

290. **Louis Cabri**
colding & heating

Sat 7 Feb 1998

Much as Don Byrd distinguishes between the Idea of the University and the administrative, regulative, dissimulating "freedom" given by the university that is in fact an ideology of internalized constraints on what can be thought, done, and dispossessed, there is a distinction, following on Dan Huppertz's recent post, to make between individuality ("real") and singularity ("ideal"). I didn't make it in my last post. Individuality comes from individualism which is a political philosophy that has organized capitalism as we live it: no news there. Anarchism was once a powerful alternative - at the First International, over a hundred years ago, somewhere else (Europe/England). Singularity, on the other hand, is something elusive that can be found, sometimes, in poetry, always, in people. I and S might sound like they're the same thing. That's an illusion of representation. The one is not necessarily - at all, I'd stress - founded on the other. Singularity can be found in texts operating within different "metaphors we live by" than the cluster of metaphors constituting everyday late capitalist fuck that fuck you individualism (*we* are all up against the wall screaming, or chanting, fuck that fuck you). It can be found in texts operating even by the paradoxical metaphor of "aesthetic tendency" or "group formation." Similarly, whatever the opposite of singularity is - the bland, the generic? - it can be found in the poetic texts of the most forceful individualists. All of us are talking here, not writing poetry. What we are talking about has got to do as much with how we live our lives - according to what political codings - as it has to do with issues of poetics and of texts.

On another related point, and directly contrary to some of the views recently expressed here, I think the one indisputable addition that "langpo" has given to "our" understanding of the politics of poetry is exactly poetry's *institutional* politics over the last six or so decades in the US - and that embraces the present moment still. But the present moment is a fleeting thing. We need to hold on to that hardwon - it cannot be stressed enough (but I didn't say "hardon") - political knowledge, make more of it apply to everywhere, including to the fact Laura Moriarty indicates, that writing poetics latches writing to agency in a way that writing per se won't, using it to dismantle the *byt* in all our systems, as Henry in his last postscript recognizes, whether they be the institution of the listserve, the institution of the individual or group, or the institution

of the academy. Open the doors. Let secret histories be flagged (a form of opening) as secret histories that can't be revealed.

The academic politics of poetry are not the only politics "out there." There is no reason why it should dominate this list. To have that would be a tragedy of myopia of enormously dumb proportions. The trees! Such a view is the failing-block of pedagogies that assume the walls of the classroom are the walls of the world. That space is a minute zone danced upon by Tom's flies (fly dry, fly) forever puzzled by McCaffery's bottle (I often do that dance and recognize it in others). The extent of its commitment to community is small - it is as Don says, ideally practiced by a few (yes, individual initiative!). That applies everywhere, though - not just in the university. After all, it's the condition of our daily life to be separated and only joined through the vague (bless Emerson): "I didn't know that in objectifying social relations I was having sex with them."

-Louis

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291. **Karen Kelley**
male-identified female poet

Sat 7 Feb 1998

Laura, you mention the "male-identified female poet."

What does this term really mean? Anyone else have a definition?

Karen

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292. **Don Byrd**
Re: the T. Clark thread (and various others)

Sat 7 Feb 1998

A law:

In any institution, the viciousness of the back-biting and the loudness of the whining are inversely proportional to the seriousness of the issues and the proffered rewards.

Backing-biting can be half retrieved by wit; whining can some times be converted to reasonable wit. This compensatory relief seems to have failed us.

--

Don Byrd ([REDACTED], [REDACTED])
Department of English
State University of New York
Albany, NY 12222
[REDACTED] (work); [REDACTED] (home); [REDACTED] (fax)
The Little Magazine (<http://www.albany.edu/~litmag/>)

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293. **Poetics List**

Nikuko [?] = [?] Sondheim

Sat 7 Feb 1998

Just to clarify for any of you who may filter out the full email header that establishes the subscriber ID for any Poetics List message:

Date: Sat, 7 Feb 1998 15:30:21 -0500
From: [REDACTED]
Subject: From Kon as well (this is from both of us!)
To: [REDACTED]

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294. **Joe Brennan**

Re: freud's trick

Sat 7 Feb 1998

rd

thanks for your response. the freud i know is different from the one that you describe. as some feminists have pointed out, his is the only theory of desire that we have. freud has probably done as much as any man in the ongoing effort to free women from the sexual stereotypes they were/are expected to conform to. i've read irigaray, paying special attention to *speculum* of the other woman, and to be truthful i wasn't particularly impressed. in that work her rhetoric is very intense, as intense as the time in which it was produced. for me irigaray will only have lasting value to the extent that she's able to contribute a new vision of human sexuality & desire. her remarks have nothing to do with psychoanalysis, but only address the cultural milieu in which it developed. i find her remarks on lacan, within a context of psychoanalysis as theory, to be without any intellectual mooring. on the other hand, literally, she has the soul of a poet and is worth reading just for that. i understand my position isn't very popular these days, but generally the opposition i encounter is from observers

who understand freud & lacan as philosophical entities that define a world view. nothing can be further from the truth. analysis is the most ethical praxis because it insists that all levels of desire be acknowledged whenever there's any human intercourse, but it is always (as olson points out)local. as freud advises at the beginning of the first introductory lectures, those who haven't undertaken an analysis are in no position to comment on it. anyway, i thought your remark was gratuitous and deserving a at least a small response.

jb

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295. **Joe Brennan**

Re: Incorrect

Sat 7 Feb 1998

I think the response to the poem depends on whether you're a poet or a cop.

joe brennan

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296. **robert drake**

Re: Steve Evans article?

Sat 7 Feb 1998

Would someone kindly backchannel me with a reference for the Steve Evans' article on poetry that was recently discussed? thanks, Mike McColl

"The Dynamics of Literary Change" vol1 #1 of the Impercipient Lecture Series, Feb. 1997. New address: Steve Evans, #9 rue Quinault, Paris 75015 France.
email: [REDACTED]

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297. **Louis Cabri**

(no subject)

Sat 7 Feb 1998

Hey, I've just discovered the UBPoetics archive function. Since the beginning of February, there have been as of this moment of writing 290 posts to Buffalo Poetics sent from 103 email addresses. There are rumoured to be 600 subscribers (but I haven't checked), or roughly a six-to-one ratio (or is that five-to-one?? my math...). Of those 103 active addresses, 6 are owned and operated by Henry Gould under various pseudonyms that this captive audience is familiar with. So far this month the average is 2.8 posts per active email address

(that's pretending Henry's 6 email addresses are separate people; the average figure would otherwise be lower than that). Henry Gould's total so far in February - in seven days, that is - is 22 posts, or about ten times as many posts as anyone else.

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298. **Henry Gould**
Re: colding & heating

Sat 7 Feb 1998

Let me get this straight, Louis. Individuality is a phantasm of capitalism. But singularity is that elusive something (only anti-individualists can recognize) found in every person & in poetry. Okay. I think I got that.

Next point. Talking about poetry gets at something that poetry can never get at by itself - mainly, the real subtext of a piece of writing. The poem layers all this shimmer that poetics can see through - basically, as Laura Moriarty put it, the Woman behind the Man. Right? Okay. That's criticism, I can dig that. Critics can see more in a poem than even the poet put in there. Nice going, critics. Keep diggin, maybe you'll get to China.

Third point. There's all this politics out there - real life, in other words - & langpos seen some of that so bully for them give them tenure I say; why hassle the academy? Why hassle the academy? Because you think you're talking about poetry, & I think you're talking poetry out the door. - Henry Gould, individual poem-writer (interpret me! interpret me! it's all lumpy lumpen bourgeois delusions of the superstructure! interpret me! do it to me! read me! sigh... they're too busy reading Marx or some such endless translated shit...) (do you read me? am I open enough?) pearls before swine. water under the bridge.

John Wieners deconstructed all of it long, long ago. "politics doesn't have the aura of literature" or something like that... another deluded psycho poem-maker... does he further the revolution? indeed he does; oh, his poem about Columbus Ohio is on the brink of Althusserian bishpedoolianism... yes, I agree, we should include that definitely in our next anthology of fucked-up heroes of the future... did we get the \$\$\$ for that yet? George, where did you go last summer???

every letter is holy
& you missed the boat
- after him, girls!!!!
cut his balls off!!!

In this most p.c. empire of ours, poets are yids - Marina Tsvetaeva (slightly paraphrased)

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299. **Tenney Nathanson**

Re: movie query

Sun 8 Feb 1998

yes she does. It's the last shot or enarly the last shot of the film, which I haven't seen in many years so don't remember many plot details but saw many times before I stopped seeing it. anyway he's dying in the street and she's betrayed him in some way (to the cops? to save herself) and she watches him die and, preoccupied, unreadable, makes that gesture. it's an amazing moment.

while we're at it there's Brando putting on Eva Marie Saint's dropped white glove in On the Waterfront, stretching it as he flexes his hand. a bit of improvisation, supposedly--she dropped the glove by accident while they were filming.

what else?

Tenney

At 06:54 AM 2/6/98 -0800, you wrote:

>In Godard's Breathless "Belmondo" rubs his thumb across his lips in
>response to looking at a Bogart poster. I don't remember if Seberg later
>makse the same gesture.

>

>>So I wrote this poem from an image which comes from a gesture in a movie
>>and I think it is The Conformist, not sure, must know. Having a bit of
>>trouble finding it to rent in the neighborhood, haven't gone further
>>yet.

>>

>>Here it is: A man in a black trenchcoat gestures to a woman by placing
>>his thumb on his lips. She does the same, perhaps later. It's French.

>>

>>??????

>>

>>thanks,

>>rachel

>

>

>

>Herb Levy

> [REDACTED]

>

300. **Tenney Nathanson**

Re: sex power poetry

Sun 8 Feb 1998

wasn't that poet Poldy?

At 02:58 PM 2/7/98 -0800, you wrote:

>I think Chris Stroffolino's posting says volumes, makes all kinds of sense

>of the process whereby not only a *love* poem gets to be. (I hadn't heard

>the diggers : "to love is to fail," before, either; something to chew on.)

>I can remember the first poem I ever wrote (unfortunately), and it was a

>love-lament; but I can't remember who had made me blue enough to write.

>

>I thought Chris had written "minneswingers" but that was me reading him.

>

>Like to applaud Kent's post re-objectification, also. (It was a good place

>to remark that humans qua species are cannibal). Amorous companions

>(depending upon temperament) may become further aroused by having their

>parts named and appreciated--"pointed out," I suppose. The poetry-reading

>is not the bedroom, though. I remember my wife (a former wife) taking

>exception to a poet (here nameless) describing his penis (still attached)

>floating in the bathwater: "I don't want to have to picture _that_ "

>

>This-all started, right?, when Robert Hale reported scant success resulted

>from giving that Breton poem to a romantic interest? Perhaps there's a

>touch of "one-size-fits-all" about sending another man's poem to court the

>woman you want to make "yours". What if she falls for Breton instead? The

>conclusion to that thought is, "write your own and give her that," but I

>never did, not until it was too late, or otherwise a redundancy. During

>courtship, I may have said lines from other people's poems, but I tried to

>disguise them as my own, spontaneous phrases. And in fact it was

>spontaneity, recall on the instant. Anyway, I have met Robert Hale, and I

>don't think he needs Breton or any of those latin lovers to help him.

>

>George Bowering, before he married himself, used to say love-poetry to my

>wife (my former wife), with what success I was never quite certain. I know

>that she laughed a lot whenever his name came up. She admired his

>fingernails, too, in those years romantically stained with nicotine.

>

>db 3

>

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301. **Karen Kelley**
Re: laura moriarty's e-ddress

Sun 8 Feb 1998

david bromige wrote:

>

> Listfellows : forgive me conducting private biz in public, but how else to
> reach you, Laura ? Your posting today still has the SFSU e-ddress. But my
> reply to yr message re "sublime" was returned to me after 72 hours from
> that e-ddress. Can you explain b-c, and repeat the question re my text?
> Thanks, David

I've been trying to reach you as well.

Karen

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302. **Rebecca Weldon Sithiwong**
Love Poems

Sun 8 Feb 1998

Passion between a man and a woman can produce a feeling of ownership on the part of one or both. Whether one is poet or one is not, Breton's poem is recognizable passion. The current discussion emerged as a result of that recognition and rejection by a woman of a man.

My woman, my man, my love, my anything and everything flows when passion whirls with the four winds. However fair we have endeavored to become, whatever archetypes we have succeeded in regulating to the siberian wastes of our inner worlds, we are what we have experienced. The force of passion, by it's very nature, is demanding, uninhibited, creative and destructive. It is the wind and fire which cleans the forest of our relationships and makes evident the paths we choose in the aftermath, when one may beware of Breton or embrace his passion.

Rebecca

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303. **Tom Mandel**
who published Absence Sensorium

Sun 8 Feb 1998

Joel K. asks who published Absence Sensorium, the long poem that Dan Davidson and I wrote together. AS was entering production when Dan killed himself.

Absence Sensorium was published by Potes & Poets in Autumn '96. Its ISBN# is 0-937013-64-1

Tom Mandel

Tom Mandel

Screen Porch * <http://screenporch.com>

4020 Williamsburg Ct, Ste 200 * vox: [REDACTED]

Fairfax, VA 22031 * fax: [REDACTED]

Join the Caucus Conversation

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304. **Tom Mandel**
my French insistance

Sun 8 Feb 1998

I wrote my words on "ma femme" in too much of a hurry, the way one will *in-sist* on something knowing one hasn't the right amount of time/attention to _explore_ that same thing. As compensation for not having the time/attention to explore it. As if "I don't have the time not to be right about this."

The result was I was incorrect and also that I ignored the context I was writing about. That Breton's poem was *not* about his wife makes my insistance on the meaning of the term look all the more foolish, don't you agree?

While I'm at it, thanks to Doug P. for pointing out that it was Fats Waller and (...forgotten), not Billie Holiday, who wrote Nobody's business....

Tom

Tom Mandel

Screen Porch * <http://screenporch.com>

4020 Williamsburg Ct, Ste 200 * vox: [REDACTED]

Fairfax, VA 22031 * fax: [REDACTED]

Join the Caucus Conversation

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305. **louis stroffolino**

Re: sex power shakespearey

Sun 8 Feb 1998

Eric Blarnes brings up Shakespeare (though he confuses one Antonio for another, Sebastian and Bassanio, if not Ben Jonson for Samuel Johnson)... and david bromige suggests that mr. hale's "failure" might have been because of the "one size fits all" quality of the poem and so i say (though it's easier to tell someone else what to do than to be one to take my own advice---to paraphrase a repeated shakespearean device [Portia in MV, Ophelia's rebuke of Laertes before she turns pliable, the Queen to Bushy or is it Bagot or Green in RICHARD II, LEONATO to another antonio in MUCH ADO, etc.) Well, Mr. Hale, if you REALLY want to bw with this woman, if you still want to try to woo her in words and try one more time (at the risk of coming off as one "romantically overobsessed" etc.), maybe you could write her a LETTER that JOKES about the whole thing... a la the early scene ion 12TH NIGHT when VIOLA (disguised as Cesario) confronts Olivia with the prepared text from ORSINO which lies in her "MASTER'S BOSOM" and OLivia says "IN WHAT CHAPTER OF HIS BOSOM"?????????? It is a great instance of one of those ways Shakespeare can have his "romantic" cake and eat it (or diss it) too, a way to go beyond a narrow sense of petrarchan poetry while at the same time NOT ignoring (or absolutely debasing) the sentiments (tho one could say ideology) that give rise to it... while widening the idea of "poetry" to include wit and dialogue and all those heteroglossic things a lot of twentiethcenturialists (sic) like to think is part of the "NEW"..... chris

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306. **Lisa Samuels**

Re: colding & heating

Sun 8 Feb 1998

in response to louis cabri, sat 7 feb, on individualism vs. singularity.

in her 1928 book, =Anarchism Is Not Enough=, laura riding distinguishes among the "collective-real" (people in groups), the "individual-real," (a person in relation to reality, to the "real" world of nature, broadly considered), and the "individual-unreal." this last sounds akin to what you are calling "singularity." for riding, the realm of the individual-unreal was The One worth living for and in. and in writing poetry one accessed this realm and "discharged pieces of self" as she put it. not =one=self, "but self." in this unreal singularity one was truest to the self and to poetry. and effectively truest to other people as well.

promoting what you call the hardwon. in participating in the institution of publishing (though never in academia), riding wanted people to =try= to live that individual-unreal even as she knew it was impossible. and the only thing worth trying, while always keeping in mind its impossibility. what you wrote reminded me of her, hence the comment on =anarchism=. in either case the issue is maintaining one's deliberate ideals within necessary participation in the world. oneself as social construction is the "individual-real"; oneself as experientially incommensurable is the "individual-unreal," your "singularity." we can and do have both. at least this is my deliberate belief. and despite all those serious sentences, it's a belief that makes me delirious as o'hara: "YIPPEE!! I'm glad I'm alive!! I'm glad you're alive too, baby, because I want to fuck you" ("ode to michael goldberg ('s birth and other births"))

yippee!
lisa samuels

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307. **Karen Kelley**

Re: movie query

Sun 8 Feb 1998

Tenney Nathanson wrote:

>

>

> while we're at it there's Brando putting on Eva Marie Saint's dropped white
> glove in On the Waterfront, stretching it as he flexes his hand. a bit of
> improvisation, supposedly--she dropped the glove by accident while they
were
> filming.

>

Isn't that an amazing moment? Intensely sexy. I've always assumed/wondered if it was improv. And then how delicately & awkwardly he seats himself on the swing, totally undermining the whole macho aura.

There's a wonderful book of interviews w/Brando-- _Conversations with Brando_.

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308. **Joe Ahearn**

Re: freud's trick

Sun 8 Feb 1998

| *the freud i know is different from the one that you*

describe. as some feminists have pointed out, his is the only theory of desire that we have.

well, hold on a minute. there is after all the two thousand year flowering of buddhism, state to state, age to age, India to Burma to Tibet, many languages, millions of people, that speaks precisely to DESIRE in all its subtle woundings.

do i detect a faint whiff of eurocentrism?

after all, even bob dylan, who is famous on this list made a pretty good record out of his theory of desire. we won't even mention that terrifying black poor American angel, Robert Johnson, and his theory of desire, which would be too scary, because he too like Sakyamuni and Ramblin Bob doesn't speak French and hasn't added the word THEORY to his thought.

Joe Ahearn
Rancho Loco Press
Dallas

Joe Ahearn



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309. **R M Daley**
Re: freud's trick

Sun 8 Feb 1998

joe

wow. having just been reading freud for about 2 years or so, i havent read a lot of the stuff that he is i think primarily cool for - interpretation of dreams, dora, wolfman, but i could never really consider becoming, shall i say, personally invested, in his method of "analysis," as you seem to be-

how can any "analysis" be anything OTHER than some form of rhetoric- I hate to say that "everything's rhetorical", but isnt it? and this is also to say that i don't attach a perjorative connotation necessarily to the use of rheotoric - but my interest/attraction to freud is insofar as he is so amazingly unashamed in his use of it- and it goes somethin like this:

for example,

in his lecture on femininity, he begins with "To-day's lecture should have not place in an introduction, but it may serve to give you an example of a detailed piece of analytic work, and I can say two things to recommend it. It brings forward NOTHING but observed facts (his emphasis) , almost without any speculative additions, and it deals with a subject which has a cliam on your interest

second almost to no other. Throughout history people have knocked heads against the riddle of the nature of femininity. Nor will you have escaped this problem--those of you who are men; to those of you who are women this will not apply--you are yourselves the problem."

PLEASE PLEASE PLEASE

Freud begins , rhetorically establishes himself a problem--WOMEN!! They are, from the outset, taken as an aberration, the "other," as we who are perhaps too involved in post-structuralist analysis apt to call it-

then again, maybe it isnt even MY problem, being a woman

ps. Irigaray has a PHD in philosophy and linguistics, which makes her on some level qualified to talk on the subject, I would think (and herself a practitioner of psycho-analysis) - it's just that she got kicked out for schoolin Lacan and Freud in a MAJOR WAY as a grad student at Vincennes

sorry for the "gratuitous" nature of my last post

forever female,
rd

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310. **R M Daley**

Re: freud's trick

Sun 8 Feb 1998

On Sun, 8 Feb 1998, Joe Ahearn wrote:

> >

> >the freud i know is different from the one that you

> >describe. as some feminists have pointed out, his is the only theory of

> >desire that we have.

>

> well, hold on a minute. there is after all the two thousand year flowering

> of buddhism, state to state, age to age, India to Burma to Tibet, many

> languages, millions of people, that speaks precisely to DESIRE in all its

> subtle woundings.

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> black poor American angel, Robert Johnson, and his theory of desire, which

> would be too scary, because he too like Sakyamuni and Ramblin Bob doesn't

> speak French and hasn't added the word THEORY to his thought.

>

> Joe Ahearn

> Rancho Loco Press

> Dallas

>

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>

> Joe Ahearn

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>

>

ps.

AMEN brutha

desire desire desire desire desire desire diesrei diesreidesire deisire diedieds

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311. **Joe Ahearn**

Re: freud's trick

Sun 8 Feb 1998

Dear rd,

First, there is no such thing as a gratuitous post to POETICS, so far as I can see, and even if there were, I'm the last person you should apologize to. In fact, my feeling is that you should apologize to NO ONE. ('I am American artist / and I have no guilt' -- Patti Smith, the goddess).

Second, I'm not very involved with Freudianism. I don't like about it the same things that you don't like. Freud did bring us some good things, in my opinion, including the theory and science of the unconscious, but he has his failings which I am tired of trying to to step around.

I prefer Lacan, Kristeva, and Irigary, in fact, to Freud. But I felt that the previous post was managing to elide the non-European, non-theoretical world that teems. Hence what I said.

Best wishes,

jra

At 12:46 PM 2/8/98 -0700, you wrote:

>joe

>

>wow.

>having just been reading freud for about 2 years or so, i havent read a
>lot of the stuff that he is i think primarily cool for - interpretation of
>dreams, dora, wolfman, but i could never really consider becoming, shall i
>say, personally invested, in his method of "analysis," as you seem to be-

>

>how can any "analysis" be anything OTHER than some form of rhetoric- I
>hate to say that "everything's rhetorical", but isnt it? and this is also
>to say that i don't attach a perjorative connotation necessarily to the
>use of rheotoric - but my interest/attraction to freud is insofar as he is
>so amazingly unashamed in his use of it- and it goes somethin like this:

>

>for example,

>

>in his lecture on femininity, he begins with
>"To-day's lecture should have not place in an introduction, but it may
>serve to give you an example of a detailed piece of analytic work, and I
>can say two things to recommend it. It brings forward NOTHING but observed
>facts (his emphasis) , almost without any speculative additions, and it
>deals with a subject which has a cliam on your interest second almost to
>no other. Throughout history people have knocked heads against the riddle
>of the nature of femininity. Nor will you have escaped this
>problem--those of you who are men; to those of you who are women this will
>not apply--you are yourselves the problem."

>

>PLEASE PLEASE PLEASE

>

>Freud begins , rhetorically establishes himself a problem--WOMEN!! They
>are, from the outset, taken as an aberration, the "other," as we who are
>perhaps too involved in post-structuralist analysis apt to call it-

>

>then again, maybe it isnt even MY problem, being a woman

>

>ps. Irigaray has a PHD in philosophy and linguistics, which makes her
>on some level qualified to talk on the subject, I would think (and herself
>a practitioner of psycho-analysis) - it's just that she got kicked out for
>schoolin Lacan and Freud in a MAJOR WAY as a grad student at Vincennes

>

>

>sorry for the "gratuitous" nature of my last post

>

>
>
>forever female,
>rd
>
>

Joe Ahearn



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312. **Kali Tal**

Re: freud's trick

Sun 8 Feb 1998

jb comments:

as freud

advises at the beginning of the first introductory lectures, those who haven't undertaken an analysis are in no position to comment on it.

reminds me uncomfortably of some of the viet nam vets with whom i work (actually, the ones with whom i prefer not to work) who say, "man, if you haven't been there you got no right to talk about it." experience=authority. makes it hard to talk about the civil war, say (or maybe easier, since all who 'know' are dead and can't argue no more). still, seems essentially an anti-intellectual position, not tenable here. one might as easily argue that those who have gone through psychoanalysis are among the least qualified to talk about it cuz of all the money & time they've invested. cognitive dissonance, y'know? like what makes a marine figure boot camp made him a 'man.' i mean, it **better** have, right?

freud has probably done as much as any man in the

ongoing effort to free women from the sexual stereotypes they were/are expected to conform to.

hmmm. the freud **i** know has done more than most men to provide ammunition for those who wish to preserve sexual stereotypes to which women were/are supposed to conform. most of all, perhaps, by creating/justifying the 'psychoanalytic relationship,' which is a hierarchical analyst/patient relationship based on the 'authority' of the analyst. i don't care for irigaray particularly, but monique wittig, whose work i like very much, has something to say about this...

analysis is the most ethical praxis

because it insists that all levels of desire be acknowledged whenever there's any human intercourse, but it is always (as olson points out) local.

and this is exactly what i don't like about psychoanalysis--the position of moral superiority it assumes (must assume by virtue of its self-definition) over all other philosophies, while, at the same time, insisting it is not a 'philosophy' and is therefore above the sort of criticism that philosophies must endure. psycho-analytic theorists have seemed to me to be eurocentric to an extreme that would be laughable if the discipline weren't so powerfully entrenched.

klaus theweleit, who writes so brilliantly on male fantasies, has done a rather pretty study of freud's own desires in his slim volume, *_object-choice_*.

sticking my head out of the hole in which i've been working...

kali

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313. **William Slaughter**

Mudlark

Sun 8 Feb 1998

MUDLARK

An Electronic Journal of Poetry & Poetics

Never in and never out of print...

<http://www.unf.edu/mudlark>

announces the publication of

A SOUND THE MOBILE MAKES IN WIND

Fifty American Haibun by Sheila E. Murphy

"For me, haibun seem to happen forth
in full sound costume as my mind plays
in the language only to find
what later will be called work."

--from the Author's Introduction

Sheila E. Murphy's book manuscript *LETTERS TO UNFINISHED J.* was selected in this year's open poetry competition sponsored by Sun & Moon Press, and will be published by Sun & Moon. Dennis Phillips was the judge. *FALLING IN LOVE FALLING IN LOVE WITH YOU SYNTAX: SELECTED AND NEW POEMS* has just been released by Potes & Poets Press. Recent works include *A CLOVE OF GENDER* (Stride Press, 1995). Murphy's work has been widely anthologized, most recently in *FEVER DREAMS: CONTEMPORARY ARIZONA POETRY* (The

University of Arizona Press, 1997) and THE GERTRUDE STEIN AWARDS IN CONTEMPORARY POETRY (Sun & Moon Press, 1994, 1995). The Contemporary Authors Autobiography Series recently brought out an autobiography of Sheila E. Murphy, including photographs of Murphy with family and friends. Sheila Murphy co-founded with Beverly Carver and continues to coordinate the Scottsdale Center for the Arts Poetry Series, now in its eleventh season. Murphy is President of the management consulting firm Sheila Murphy Associates. Since 1976, she has made Phoenix, Arizona, her home.

William Slaughter, Editor

E-mail: [REDACTED]

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314. **Karen Kelley**

Re: freud's trick

Sun 8 Feb 1998

Joe Ahearn wrote:

well, hold on a minute. there is after all the two thousand year flowering of buddhism, state to state, age to age, India to Burma to Tibet, many languages, millions of people, that speaks precisely to DESIRE in all its subtle woundings.

Hi Joe,

A few recommended titles, perhaps?

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315. **Joe Brennan**

Re: freud's trick

Sun 8 Feb 1998

Well Joe, on this list I'm not surprised at any of the whiffs some folks seem to inhale. I've never heard of Buddhism being reduced to a theory, but I'm am after all eurocentric thru & thru -- as is everyone else on this net. However, if you have some textual citations, or if you are yourself a practicing buddhist who's managed to cross the cultural boundry that Whorf declares is impossible to cross, I'm willing to take instruction. Ditto for Dylan & Johnson. One shouldn't confuse an aesthetic for a theory. I also see no reason why Johnson's express of desire should be any scarier than yours.

joe brennan

[↑ Contents](#)

316. **Joe Brennan**

Re: freud's trick

Sun 8 Feb 1998

In the first place to say that everything is rhetoric is to imply that in this regards all things are equal. I don't believe that such is the case. I'm not trying to argue that Freud was a feminist, or that his remarks about women generally are au current with contemporary ideas on the subject. Freud was a member of the viennese bourgeoisie, this is no secret. But the expanse and strength of Freud is his discovery of unconscious processes, and to point out the extent to which arrested desire determined conscious thought. This was an unpopular thought then, and it's an unpopular thought now; but the whole basis of the freudian method is devoted to the bringing into conscious thought as much as possible of what was heretofore denied to it.

If ethical behavior requires one to consider all of the possibilities of an action before deciding how to act, then the freudian method must be viewed as ethical in both praxis and result, and Freud's ethics, if you remember, are what we're discussing. There's a difference between being wrong, and being unethical.

What you or I choose to embrace in our respective searches isn't germane to the discussion, except that as you don't have the experience as to what's valuable in freudian analysis, you're left to critiques of matters that practically speaking are not meaningful to any discussion of it.

Joe

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317. **Joe Brennan**

Re: freud's trick

Sun 8 Feb 1998

Joe

You don't have to step around Freud's failings any more than modernists have to apologize for the brutality of Pound, who has a hell of a lot more to answer for. What's interesting in Freud is what seems to interest you. As far as liking Lacan is concerned, Lacan is so freudian that for a long time he was the only commentator who seemed to understand him; one simply can't separate Lacan from Freud except in the extensions of freudian thought he was able to master. As Lacan points out, if you don't understand Freud, you can't understand him.

Joe

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318. **Karen Kelley**

help

Sun 8 Feb 1998

I'm looking for online work by Sally Doyle, or perhaps suggestions about where to find printed work.

Thanks!

Karen

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319. **Henry Gould**

(no subject)

Sun 8 Feb 1998

On Sat, 7 Feb 1998 22:15:33 -0500 Louis Cabri said:

>So far this month the average is 2.8 posts per active email address
>(that's pretending Henry's 6 email addresses are separate
>people; the average figure would otherwise be lower than
>that). Henry Gould's total so far in February - in seven days,
>that is - is 22 posts, or about ten times as many posts as
>anyone else.

Eric Blarnes, Jack Spandrift, and that new list member Ben Carrelis are more complete individuals than I am. They contradict me constantly, undercut me viciously. Where would we be without Ben Carrelis' sharp analysis of the historical conditioning of HG's "idealism"? Gould would probably still be sending sonnets about his "papa" the carpenter.

I will say, though, Louis, that after that last over-the-top Gould snarl Eric called a video conference and we firmly decided that since the battle for indie-crit has been a resounding victory (as I'm sure all 600 of you will agree) it's time for us to settle down, chill out, relax, and, basically, SHUT UP for a while. Bob Grumman started it, it's all his fault. I didn't know you guys & gals were all part of an ultra- literary mafia. Now we all know better & will wait peacefully for the millennium and the next virtual-reality p.r. poetic steamroller to ride the hokum to glory. It's all penmanship, right, Shem? - Henry Gould, the Quiet American

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320. **George Thompson**

Re: freud's trick

Sun 8 Feb 1998

Freud's weirdnesses about sexuality and women and the irrefutability of psychoanalysis are all well-known, and beyond justification. But...

I like his refusal to accept things at face value.
I like his conviction that if you look long enough you will find another motive.
I like his belief that all things are signs of other things.
I like his ambivalence about culture.
I like his passion for the primitive.
I like his semitism in the face of all that anti-semitism.
I trust his motives more than, say, Jung's.
George Thompson

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321. **Pierre Joris**

Re: freud's trick

Sun 8 Feb 1998

Freud's major ethical failing (that was the beginning of the thread, no?) lies, I believe, way beyond the gender question discussed these last few days on the list. The man did come up with the concundrum of the "death instinct" and then used it to justify the wholesale slaughter of millions during World War One, with no gender distinction. "It's not the Kaiser, its your own lil'ole Thanatos makes you wanna inhale that nasty stuff . So just get back down into them trenches and breathe in deeply..."

--

=====

pierre joris 6 madison place albany ny 12202
tel/fax [REDACTED] email: [REDACTED]
<http://www.albany.edu/~joris/>

"What often prevents us from giving ourselves over to
a single vice is that we have several of them."

— La Rochefoucauld

=====

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322. **George Thompson**

Re: freud's trick

Sun 8 Feb 1998

Wait a minute, wait a minute. I know that, this being the Poetics List, rhetoric is the final judge. But please tell me where exactly Freud applies the death wish to "justify the wholesale slaughter of millions during World War One"....

Just chwcking the facts here...

GT

*Freud's major ethical failing (that was the beginning of the thread, no?)
lies, I
believe, way beyond the gender question discussed these last few days on
the list.
The man did come up with the concundrum of the "death instinct" and then
used it to
justify the wholesale slaughter of millions during World War One, with no
gender
distinction. "It's not the Kaiser, its your own lil'ole Thanatos makes you
wanna
inhale that nasty stuff . So just get back down into them trenches and
breathe in
deeply..."*

--

=====
pierre joris 6 madison place albany ny 12202
tel/fax [REDACTED] email: [REDACTED]
<http://www.albany.edu/~joris/>

"What often prevents us from giving ourselves over to
a single vice is that we have several of them."

La Rochefoucauld

=====

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323. **simon**

Re: freud's trick

Sun 8 Feb 1998

Dear Joe Brennan,
For the Buddhist theory and analysis of the mind, please see
Abhidharma texts, the Abhisamya lankhara, or even the Abhidharma Kosa.
Re Whorf: well, no, that isn't a Whorf declaration.

cordially,
beth simon

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324. **Tenney Nathanson**

Freud'd truck

Sun 8 Feb 1998

>
> and this is exactly what i don't like about psychoanalysis--the position of
> moral superiority it assumes (must assume by virtue of its self-definition)
> over all other philosophies, while, at the same time, insisting it is not
> a 'philosophy' and is therefore above the sort of criticism that
philosophies
>
> must endure. psychoanalytic theorists have seemed to me to be eurocentric
to
> an extreme that would be laughable if the discipline weren't so powerfully
> entrenched.
> klaus theweleit, who writes so brilliantly on male fantasies, has done a
> rather pretty study of freud's own desires in his slim volume,
> _object-choice_.
> sticking my head out of the hole in which i've been working...
> kali

Hi Kali.

(pog goes public?)

One interesting avenue here: a lot of the sharpest critiques (I mean--in my opinion--smartest, not most stinging) of Freud have been written by using Freud's own analytic techniques on Freud's text (and not to show that they're impoverished techniques, but the reverse): Kristeva and Irigaray, esp. Like: Freud tells us somewhere (dream book) that if the analysand says about a dream "I dunno who that woman in the dream was, but one thing I DO know is that it was NOT my mother," we can read "that was my mother." So Kristeva: when Freud insists that the only unambivalent relationship in human intercourse is between mother and infant son, we can safely read..... And then this becomes part of a terrific essay, "Place Names" in /Desire in Language/. There's also Sam Weber and Neil Hertz, in this vein.

see you around the neighborhood,

Tenney

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325. **Tenney Nathanson**

Re: freud's trick

Sun 8 Feb 1998

also: I dunno that it speaks to "desire" exactly, but see also the sometimes annoying D T Suzuki's terrific /The Zen Doctrine of No-Mind/ [=mu nen]

Tenney

At 09:46 PM 2/8/98 -0500, you wrote:

>Dear Joe Brennan,

>For the Buddhist theory and analysis of the mind, please see

>Abhidharma texts, the Abhisamya lankhara, or even the Abhidharma Kosa.

>

>Re Whorf: well, no, that isn't a Whorf declaration.

>

>cordially,

>beth simon

>

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326. **Tenney Nathanson**

Re: machine translation

Sun 8 Feb 1998

Catherine--

are you sure the url is right? I get something weird when I point to this.

thanks

Tenney

At 12:54 PM 2/6/98 -0500, you wrote:

>FYI: alta vista now has machine translation free at

><http://ad.doubleclick.net/adi/babelfish.altavista.digital.com/>http://ad.doubleclick.net/adi/babelfish.altavista.digital.com/

>

>Catherine Daly

>[REDACTED]

>

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327. **Tom Beard**

my my

Sun 8 Feb 1998

From: d powell <[REDACTED]>

> As for Bessie Smith, Ma Rainey and many other early blues singers, their male muses were often

> "bulldaggers" (the term of the day) or butch girls. This gives the possessive "my" a much different > function, akin to when you order eggs benedict in a restaurant and you get something with cheese sauce > instead of hollandaise. The waiter then tells you, "this is our eggs benedict" meaning "our version of." Oh > my man I do love him so, whatever gender he happens to be...

This is a good reminder that to use the phrase "my X" does not always imply ownership of X, just a relationship to X.

Give ratings out of 10 for the extent to which "my" implies possession in each of the following:

my man
my woman
my father
my mother
my house
my street
my city
my world
my friend
my colleague
my boss
my body
my mind
my words
my God
my name

Tom Beard

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328. **Louis Cabri**

PhillyTalk 4

Mon 9 Feb 1998

The recent Freud & Ron Silliman/Jeff Derksen list discussions might segue well into this announcement of PhillyTalk 4: new work by & a dialogue between Jena Osman & Tina Darragh.

Tidbits:

Dreams, Tina writes in the newsletter, "are not limited to Freudian analysis." Her recent "Dream Rims" poems, for instance (see example in Chain #4), "obliterate," according to Jena, "the concept of dreams as something to decode."

Tina considers Joan Retallack's important essay "Re:Thinking:Literary:Feminism: (three essays onto shaky grounds)" as the "companion piece to what Ron & Jeff have written about re: community/dialogue" (see PhillyTalks #3).

For Tina & Jena it seems the outcome is a new means & meaning for claims of what might be called sub-sentential language use, as well as for distinguishing "chance" & "error" in, on one hand, Joan & Tina & Jena's work, & on the other, John Cage and Jackson Mac Low's.

Selection of books & articles they discuss:

Tina Darragh, *Striking Resemblance* (Burning Deck, 1989); *a(gain)2st the odds* (Potes & Poets, 1989); *adv. fans - the 1968 series* (Leave Books, n.d.); Interview with Tina Darragh by Joan Retallack (Rod Smith's *_Aerial_* #5, 1989)

Jena Osman, *Twelve Parts of Her* (Burning Deck, 1989); *underwater dive - version one* (paradigm press, 1990); *Amblyopia* (Avenue B, 1993); recent poems at her Buffalo website & in *Conjunctions* (Spring '97)

Joan Retallack, "Poethics of a Complex Realism," *_John Cage: Composed in America_*, eds. Marjorie Perloff & Charles Junkerman (U Chicago P, 1994); "Re:Thinking:Literary:Feminism: (three essays onto shaky grounds)," *_Feminist Measures: Soundings in Poetry and Theory_*. Lynn Keller & Cristanne Miller, eds. U Michigan P, 1994)

Barbara Marie Stafford, *_Body Criticism_* (MIT, 1991)

PhillyTalk 4 is available for \$2 (or donation) from me at
4331 Pine St., #1R, Philadelphia, PA, 19104.

Don't forget that this ongoing dialogue will culminate in #6, the response issue
to #s 1-5, for which I am now encouraging contributions (deadline May 1st) -
but more on that later.

I should also say, for the record, that Jeff Derksen couldn't have responded to
all that Ron Silliman had to say because Ron had, as it happened to work out,
the last word in the exchange in #3.

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329. **Jacques Debrot**

Re: PhillyTalk 4

Mon 9 Feb 1998

Dear Louis,

I think I sent you only \$2 for #s 2 & 4, will send you another buck this a.m.

jacques

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330. **Jacques Debrot**

Re: Oops!

Mon 9 Feb 1998

My *PT* post was obviously not intended for the list -- sorry. jd

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331. **linda russo**

address query

Mon 9 Feb 1998

accd to Spencer Selby's Exp Mag list # 50

No Roses Review (ed. Carolyn Coe) is located at
1322 N. Wicker Park Chicago --

but this seems no longer to be the case. Does anyone know of its whereabouts?

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332. **Mark Prejsnar**

Re: Incorrect

Mon 9 Feb 1998

Kent, about the Breton poem. (And, indeed, about feminist analysis in culture in general, in relation to most things going on in our culture...)

And, for that matter, this is also a point about poetry, I think...

I have trouble with your unmodulated response to the Breton poem and its (pretty complex) resonances on the level of sexual politix...**Why** does your appreciation of the thing as a fairly compelling piece of poetry preclude there being something (as you put it) **wrong** with it?? As I suggested in a post a number of days ago, its being vibrant and compelling as poetry simply makes it more the case (not less) that it's disturbing and perturbing. (I prefer these words to "wrong").

As for what it is that's disturbing and perturbing...Well, that has to do with the isolation of the woman as an isolated icon, reduced to erotic attributes devoid of agency, that can be typified (but does not entirely derive from) the petrar-chian poetry mode..and the way this links to various modes of consciousness and behavior that rob people in general of agency and dignity, but which are particularly built into patriarchal cultural patterns.

A poem can have plenty "right" about it, but still also have plenty "wrong" about it. Poetry (like reality, with which it has much in common) often has a number of dimensions at once!

Mark P.

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333. **daniel bouchard**

Loner vs. Buddy System

Mon 9 Feb 1998

Henry,

I don't imagine even you imagine that you are the Loner you think you are. If you were you wouldn't be preaching the "Indie" Gospel to the heathen, or engaging so much on the POetics list in general. I don't have my books at this computer terminal: could someone please quote Oppen into the Poetics Record ("the isolated man fails . . . but I will listen")?

But what bugs me, Henry, is that you deliberately misread (or overread) a term like "mutual comradeship." Bad Henry, naughty and obdurate!

(The "mutual" by the way I take from Kropotkin's MUTUAL AID, a book that debunks "survival of the fittest" (capitalism) and instead stresses, well, mutual aid among species (lower case-ism); and "comrade" I use in the literary sense Jennifer Moxley does, which is appropriate and endearing.) How you extracted "uncritical promotion" from my post is hardly worth addressing and I am only writing this because I like you, buddy.

If anything the spirit of PAX goes AGAINST movements, but promotes COMMUNICATION between individual poets. Besides, Louis Cabri has already noted that you are a movement within yourself: Gould promotes Spandrift, Spandrift promotes Blarnes, Blarnes promotes Spandrift promoting Gould . . . so there's a taint of hypocrisy in all this.

Also, my apologies to Jeff Derksen for saying he failed to address some comments of Ron's. As was pointed out to me, Ron's word was the last in that exchange.

- daniel bouchard

<<<<<<>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>

Daniel Bouchard

The MIT Press Journals

Five Cambridge Center

Cambridge, MA 02142

11/11/2019

phone: [REDACTED]

fax: [REDACTED]

>>>>>>><<<<<<<<<<<<<<<<<

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334. **Dale M Smith**

O List-Master

Mon 9 Feb 1998

Please forgive my transgressions, for I have published from one of the many fierce debates catalogued in your archives. Forgive my diabolical and unsubstantiated outbursts, yay, surely the symptoms of a deranged character. Forgive me for pointing out that orthodox opinion on this list goes unchallenged, but that statements of heretical nature are reviled and torn into shreds. Forgive me for persevering where I am not welcome. Forgive me for making enemies of sheep and for blowing spit wads at the guardians of moral virtues. Forgive me for recognizing the contradicitons of values, where the subject-less superiority of the lang-poem is maintained by aggressive egos who have invested much into the maintenance of their identities as morally conscious social poets. Forgive

my irascibility and my corruptive presence. Forgive me for not knowing my place. Forgive my bad manners. Forgive me for saying that the sacred realm of poetry is nothing more than a series of business transactions. Forgive me for questioning the thin facades of power. Forgive me for ignoring mine enemies' logic. Forgive my own reductive claims about the inferiority of the university: it is only inferior for poets (& o poets, how many of you will be granted permission to work within those walls? how many really want to?). Forgive me for saying, Let those without blemish cast the first stone. Forgive me for not letting the names of my friends go publicly condemned in my presence, with only vile and jealous substantiations that resound with alarming emptiness. Forgive me for swimming with sharks and for disrupting the stupor of the community my enemies guard. Forgive me for not playing the game by your rules. And again, forgive me for publishing those email threads in which my magazine went publicly desecrated. For I have not sought to better my position, but to reveal the depth of contradiction at work in the mechanations of the poetic court. For my belief in the historical presence and reality of the poem grates against the social protocol of those who have turned poetry into mere language, wresting from it the emotional and vital power of an active intelligence. Yay, for we are all deep in the shadows of our own selfish progress, deep in the obscurities of our private wills. Forgive me, for those who crave power shall find it and those who crave poetry will make it. And from this conflict the rest of the world will lift its hind leg dog-like and piss as it has always done. But I humble myself now before you o master. For I see that my uncouth presence reveals how firmly fastened are your walls. I shall take my meat and bread in the forest and wait there, with Sir Henry and a merry band of revellers complete with lute and tabor. We'll light a fire, drink strong mead and wassail that graciousness that lets us live. Like all good politicians, ye have mastered the double talk of rhetoric. Language is truly a tool of the great.

Sir Dale

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335. **Mark Wallace**

Heather Fuller and Mark Wallace reading in NYC

Mon 9 Feb 1998

For those of you who live in New York City or who will be there this weekend, Heather Fuller and I will be reading there this Sunday, at the Zinc Bar. We'd be very happy to see you there.

Here's the full info:

Poetry Reading at the ZINC BAR

Sunday, Feb. 15th, 6:30 p.m.

These alter-guys also point out the limitations & lacunae of Gould. It's a 2-way street. Of course there's no ultimate Loner Genius. That's bull! But I see an element of ethics involved in the individual writer standing by his or her word. Ethics as well as sheer INTEREST. I don't deny that great art is made by groups of people working closely together. Or that critics themselves learn from each other in groups & apprenticeships & shared vocabulary. All I've said from the beginning is that my experience of making poetry involves solitude, privacy, individuality, and the search for authenticity and originality. I'm not bragging - I think this is the average experience of it. & I simply extend this practice to the art of writing criticism - & I think it's a great advantage - if it can be done - in weighing what a piece of writing accomplishes irrespective of the ambitions of its author. I'm sorry list if I repeat myself, but I feel CHALLENGED to defend my position. I agree with you, Dan, that a peaceful mutuality between poets is often extremely productive and leads to new plateaus of development. This has happened in my life continually - I don't live in a cave making poems out of bearshit, believe it or not. But in the end the bottom line of mutual respect between artists lies ON THE PAGE, not in the buddy system. & if I don't like your work I'm going to tell you so. This is basic ethics of "mutuality". - Henry Gould

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337. **David Zauhar**

Re: Freud'd truck

Mon 9 Feb 1998

On Sun, 8 Feb 1998, Tenney Nathanson wrote:

and this is exactly what i don't like about psychoanalysis--the position of moral superiority it assumes (must assume by virtue of its self-definition) over all other philosophies, while, at the same time, insisting it is not a 'philosophy' and is therefore above the sort of criticism that philosophies

must endure. psychoanalytic theorists have seemed to me to be eurocentric to

an extreme that would be laughable if the discipline weren't so powerfully entrenched.

klaus theweleit, who writes so brilliantly on male fantasies, has done a rather pretty study of freud's own desires in his slim volume, _object-choice_.

sticking my head out of the hole in which i've been working...
kali

Hi Kali.

(pog goes public?)

One interesting avenue here: a lot of the sharpest critiques (I mean--in my opinion--smartest, not most stinging) of Freud have been written by using Freud's own analytic techniques on Freud's text (and not to show that they're impoverished techniques, but the reverse): Kristeva and Irigaray, esp. Like: Freud tells us somewhere (dream book) that if the analysand says about a dream "I dunno who that woman in the dream was, but one thing I DO know is that it was NOT my mother," we can read "that was my mother." So Kristeva: when Freud insists that the only unambivalent relationship in human intercourse is between mother and infant son, we can safely read..... And then this becomes part of a terrific essay, "Place Names" in /Desire in Language/. There's also Sam Weber and Neil Hertz, in this vein.

see you around the neighborhood,

Tenney

In addition to these works, I'd add Marie Balmary's book, translated into English as *Psychoanalyzing Psychoanalysis: Freud and the Hidden Fault of the Father* (Johns Hopkins, 1982. trans by Ned Lukacher). The French title, by the way, sounds a lot cooler: *L'homme aux statues: freud et la faute cache du pere*.

Dave Zauhar

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338. **d powell**

Re: 44

Mon 9 Feb 1998

Reply to: Re: 44

In Japanese, the word "shi" is both "four" and "death" as well. Many superstitious Japanese replace "four" with a nonsense word when giving addresses, phone numbers, etc. that contain a four.

Tea cups are sold in sets of five, and if one cup is broken, the whole set is thrown out--at least, this is a custom that still is observed by some Japanese.

Doug

=====

D A Powell

=====

Schuchat Simon wrote:

>Not just in some, but the major dialects of Chinese (Cantonese,
>Shanghainese, Min-nan hua & Northern Mandarin) "4" is a homophone for
>death, but the heavy taboo avoidance unlucky aura is strongest among the
>Cantonese. But 4 is not always unlucky in Chinese, viz the Buddha's 4
>Noble Truths or Deng Xiaoping's 4 Cardinal Principals or Zhou Enlai's 4
>modernizations.
>
>A Shanghainese or Taiwanese would pronounce "44" more or less as "si si si"
>(four ten four/death death death) since those dialects don't clearly
>distinguish between "si" and "shi"
>
>Repeating the 4, in some schools of fengshui, would negate it. (To
>return like a dog to my vomit, that was called "negating the negation" in
>Stalinist dialectics.)
>
>Being a lyric poet after 40 is pretty difficult, unless you're going to
>be a dirty old man ala Yeats.
>
>According to Confucius, "at 40 I was no longer confused"
>
>(15 I became intent on study, 30 I was established, 40 no longer
>confused, 50 knew the will of heaven, 60 obeyed the will of heaven, at 70
>I could do whatever I wanted because my desires no longer were
>inappropriate -- Analects II.4)
>
>
>RFC822 header
>-----
>
>Return-Path: <[REDACTED]>
>Delivered-To: [REDACTED]
>Received: (qmail 301 invoked from network); 7 Feb 1998 20:22:56 -0000
>Received: from deliverance.acsu.buffalo.edu (128.205.7.57)
> by herring.com with SMTP; 7 Feb 1998 20:22:56 -0000
>Received: (qmail 19443 invoked from network); 7 Feb 1998 20:22:38 -0000
>Received: from listserv.acsu.buffalo.edu (128.205.7.35)
> by deliverance.acsu.buffalo.edu with SMTP; 7 Feb 1998 20:22:38 -0000
>Received: from LISTSERV.ACSU.BUFFALO.EDU by
LISTSERV.ACSU.BUFFALO.EDU
> (LISTSERV-TCP/IP release 1.8c) with spool id 28142012 for
> [REDACTED]; Sat, 7 Feb 1998 15:22:35 -0500

>Received: (qmail 27465 invoked from network); 7 Feb 1998 01:13:55 -0000
>Received: from unknown (HELO mail.ait.org.tw) (203.75.224.6) by
> listserv.acsu.buffalo.edu with SMTP; 7 Feb 1998 01:13:55 -0000
>Received: (from [REDACTED]) by mail.ait.org.tw (8.7.5/8.7.3) id
> JAA23059; Sat, 7 Feb 1998 09:18:24 +0800 (CST)
>MIME-Version: 1.0
>Content-Type: TEXT/PLAIN; charset=US-ASCII
>Message-ID: <[REDACTED]>
>Date: Sat, 7 Feb 1998 09:18:24 +0800
>Reply-To: UB Poetics discussion group <[REDACTED]>
>Sender: UB Poetics discussion group <[REDACTED]>
>From: Schuchat Simon <[REDACTED]>
>Subject: Re: 44
>To: [REDACTED]
>In-Reply-To: <l0310280501d089215da7@[160.94.198.170]>
>

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339. **dbkk**

Re: freud's trick

Mon 9 Feb 1998

Date: Sat, 7 Feb 1998 19:48:46 EST
From: Joe Brennan <[REDACTED]>
Subject: Re: freud's trick

i've read irigaray, paying special attention to specuulum of the other woman, and to be truthful i wasn't particularly impressed. in that work her rhetoric is very intense, as intense as the time in which it was produced. for me irigaray will only have lasting value to the extent that she's able to contribute a new vision of human sexuality & desire. her remarks have nothing to do with psychoanalysis, but only address the cultural milieu in which it developed.

Now, I love Freud--because he's so dark and sticky and he added the word "uncanny" to my vocabulary. But, how could one possibly consider Freud and not consider the "cultural milieu" in which his theories were developed? One should never forget that his wonderfully twisted and sicko model of the human psyche is just that--a model.

My office is at New College, and the other day when I was in the kitchen slicing my daily orange, I heard this woman's voice booming from down the hallway, "What people forget is that Freud destroyed an entire generation!" I copied that into the journal. Received wisdom.

Dodie

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340. **KENT JOHNSON**

A ship called Comrade

Mon 9 Feb 1998

On Feb 9, Henry Gould, replying to Dan Bouchard:

*But in the end the bottom line of mutual respect between artists lies
ON THE PAGE, not in the buddy system. & if I don't like your work I'm
going to tell you so. This is basic ethics of "mutuality". - Henry Gould*

May I propose that this nicely condenses and closes Henry's protracted and snit-causing argument? Now if everyone can agree that community and comradeship can be deepened by mutual, vigorous and public critique among friends... And this list-space might be a good testing ground of that: For example, Mark Wallace challenges himself to write a review that is critical of Steve Evans's ethereal, Ecole de Paris criticism (he might say, for example, that Steve has proven to us that he knows one hell of a lot about Hegel and French cinema, but how on earth does this really relate to the poetry he likes), giving Steve a chance to show that he takes Mark's critique in Hegelian spirit by publishing one of Mark's lectures as an ILS pamphlet (something which, of course, everyone now wants to have), followed by a searing, leave-em-at-a-loss riposte as appendix from Jordan Davis; Dan Bouchard, who edited the fine and late Mass. Ave. might write a review, reflecting seriously on whether the poems by Susan Schultz and Lisa Jarnot were really representative of their best work, and then reflecting in turn on whether the buddy-system had something to do with him publishing them instead of the poems of someone not already in the mutual back-scratching name-loop; Henry himself might take the embarrassingly fawning review he recently wrote of fellow Providencer Jennifer Moxley and re-write it in true indie-crit style, offering that perhaps this review was so obsequious that it might even be taken as an unintended parody of everything that is wrong with buddy-crit, and so on.

The possibilities are endless. These would be just a few quick suggestions. But it would be fantastic if everyone could go after those they admire (and I admire all those I have mentioned above) without anyone getting pissed off! All hands on board the ship called Comrade, its nuclear weapons polished and ready for use, if necessary, to slow the spread of weapons of mass destruction! (This last sentence has no intended relationship to what precedes it, but in the manner of poetry's accidental accretions perhaps it may. May have a relationship, that is.)

Kent

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341. **Sylvester Pollet**

Japanese Characters

Mon 9 Feb 1998

I need the Japanese characters for the numbers 1-10. Can anyone suggest a source for downloading the font for those? I work on a MAC in Word & Page-maker, etc. Is it possible I already have them somewhere in the computer? etc. etc. Thanks. Sylvester

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342. **Maria Damon**

query

Mon 9 Feb 1998

i'm far from my library alas, and from good bookstores. can anyone quick give me a citation for robt duncan's "song of the borderguard"? muchos apprecia-dos. --md

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343. **Sylvester Pollet**

Japanese characters

Mon 9 Feb 1998

I just found a way to get them, I think, from Shareware.com--thanks, & I'll let anyone know the details if there's interest. S.

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344. **Maria Damon**

Re: freud's trick

Mon 9 Feb 1998

At 10:07 AM -0800 2/9/98, [REDACTED] wrote:

>>Date: Sat, 7 Feb 1998 19:48:46 EST

>>From: Joe Brennan <[REDACTED]>

>>Subject: Re: freud's trick

>

>>i've read irigaray, paying special attention to

>>speculum of the other woman, and to be truthful i wasn't particularly

>>impressed. in that work her rhetoric is very intense, as intense as the time

>>in which it was produced. for me irigaray will only have lasting value

>>to the

>>extent that she's able to contribute a new vision of human sexuality &

>>desire. her remarks have nothing to do with psychoanalysis, but only

address

>>the cultural mileau in which it developed.

>

>Now, I love Freud--because he's so dark and sticky and he added the word
>"uncanny" to my vocabulary. But, how could one possibly consider Freud and
>not consider the "cultural mileau" in which his theories were developed?
>One should never forget that his wonderfully twisted and sicko model of the
>human psyche is just that--a model.

>

>My office is at New College, and the other day when I was in the kitchen
>slicing my daily orange, I heard this woman's voice booming from down the
>hallway, "What people forget is that Freud destroyed an entire generation!"
>I copied that into the journal. Received wisdom.

>

>Dodie

great post, dodie. now, my personal fondness for freud stems from the dumbest
and most ethnocentric of reasons --he was jewish and enjoyed being jewish.
most of his clientele was not simply the viennese bougeoisie, but the *jewish*
viennese bourgeoisie (mostly women, too). the photos of him fleeing nazified
vienna for london in his eighties are heartbreaking. sure his vision was limited
and patriarchal, why wouldn't it be? you don't have to swallow something
wholesale in order to find it productive, moving, interesting, suggestive. i'd say
the nazis destroyed an entire generation --several in fact --about three. but
"freud destroyed" has a nicer rhyme.

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345. **David Zauhar**

CFS: _Time-Sense_, a Gertrude Stein quarterly (fwd)

Mon 9 Feb 1998

Thought this might be of interest to a few Stein scholars/fans, etc.

David Zauhar

University of Illinois at Chicago

"My religion makes no sense
and does not help me
therefore I pursue it."

--Anne Carson

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

Date: Mon, 9 Feb 1998 09:07:09 -0800 (PST)

From: Sonja Streuber <[REDACTED]>

To: MLA Grads <[REDACTED]>
Cc: [REDACTED], [REDACTED],
Stafford <[REDACTED]>
Subject: CFS: _Time-Sense_, a Gertrude Stein quarterly

*** _TIME-SENSE_ ***

an electronic quarterly on the art of Gertrude Stein
invites submissions, both critical and creative, in written, visual, and aural media.

Recent Stein criticism has addressed such issues as her postmodern disjunctive style, representation and the body, exile and bio/geography, and Stein's connection with the other arts. Some criticism has tried to reconstruct her texts, reading them from the point of view of queer, ethnic, and theological studies. Artists have set her words to other words, to visual art, to music, and to performance. In other words, the vastly expanding field of Stein studies today ranges from textual and psychoanalytic observations to cultural studies and artistic experiments.

In this context, an ongoing examination of how we make sense of Stein in our time is due. _Time-Sense_ welcomes written submissions from all theoretical, critical, and creative approaches, and artistic submissions in all reproducible media.

*** Please ***

- send written submissions (including file copy on 3.5 disk) in regular MLA-format to Sonja Streuber, Department of English, One Shields Avenue, University of California, Davis, CA 95616 (electronic inquiries welcome at [REDACTED]) and
- send visual/ audio submissions as .WAV, .AU, .MOV, or quicktime files to Stafford, 1261 Howard Street, 4th Floor, San Francisco, CA 94103-2711 (electronic inquiries welcome at [REDACTED]).

Annual Deadlines:

for the March issue--February 1.
for the June issue--May 1.

for the September issue--August 1.
for the December issue--November 1.

Sonja H. Streuber [REDACTED] Department of English *
University of California * Davis, CA 95616

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346. **MAYHEW**

Freud

Mon 9 Feb 1998

I had thought Freud pretty much discredited, both ethically and scientifically, except in the academic humanities where it doesn't matter whether a theory is valid, as long as it serves the purposes of an argument. In Crews' debate with the analysts in the NYRB the psychoanalysts basically concede all his important points, but still persist in their devotion to the Master.

For anyone thinking Freud was ethical a look at his correspondence with Fliess should be instructive.

As for theories of desire Freud got his from literature in the first place. I think we have lots of them, e.g. in Petrarch.

Jonathan Mayhew
Department of Spanish and Portuguese
3062 Wescoe Hall
University of Kansas
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

"The only thing that prevents us from giving ourselves up to multiple vices is that so many of us devote ourselves to a single one."

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347. **pritchpa**

Re: Incorrect

Mon 9 Feb 1998

I tend to agree with Mark. There's no such thing, really, as an uncomplicated, unmediated sexual response, whether in a poem or in a bed. We may think that in the throes of passion we're throwing propriety out the window (bye-bye!) but usually we're just substituting one set of responses - or subtle agreements - for another. I don't mean to sound reductionist here, as though we're simply a bunch of automatons engaged in baboon-sex or whatever. But I do think that in

general we're a lot less free than we typically imagine ourselves to be. The transparent liberating gesture is a simplicity arrived at only through great labor.

Breton's poem is brimming with linguistic invention and brio - but it still posits woman as vessel, as inspiratrix, as the passive receptacle of the Other, a repository denied agency - and this is where metaphysics and erotics run headlong into each other smack! ker-pow! Breton's litany - like so much of his stuff - has, to me, a distinctly and carefully programmatic feel, not automatic at all, but exactly plotted. Notice how much of the imagery conflates his wife with nature - nature with a capital N as the ultimate tragic invention, perhaps, of the objectifying erotic male gaze, all those raped virgin acres of "The Gift Outright," etc. Breton's language takes this unnamed woman and makes of her a monument to worship, make love to, whatever - it transforms her miraculously into everything, it seems, but what she is. But maybe that's all he - or anyone - can do.

And lest anyone think I'm a cold fish, I'll confess that my own love poems are drowning in nature imagery too. Romantic love, which is a cultural refinement - a behavioral evolution as well as an ethical one - just seems so damned "natural." Well, maybe it is at that. Though I tend to think not. Rather, it's a case where culture has improved on the existing, "natural" state of affairs, even though it feels like love is a Return to some originary, primal state. So that the cultural becomes the natural. And the source of much confusion.

Making it up as I go along,
Patrick Pritchett

From: Mark Prejsnar

To: [REDACTED]

Subject: Re: Incorrect

Date: Monday, February 09, 1998 8:32AM

Kent, about the Breton poem. (And, indeed, about feminist analysis in culture in general, in relation to most things going on in our culture...)

And, for that matter, this is also a point about poetry, I think...

I have trouble with your unmodulated response to the Breton poem and its (pretty complex) resonances on the level of sexual politix...*Why* does your appreciation of the thing as a fairly compelling piece of poetry preclude there being something (as you put it) *wrong* with it?? As I suggested in a post a number of days ago, its being vibrant and compelling as poetry simply makes it more the case (not less) that it's disturbing and perturbing. (I prefer these words to "wrong").

As for what it is that's disturbing and perturbing...Well, that has to do with the isolation of the woman as an isolated icon, reduced to erotic attributes devoid of agency, that can be typified (but does not entirely derive from) the petrarchian poetry mode..and the way this links to various modes of consciousness and behavior that rob people in general of agency and dignity, but which are particularly built into patriarchal cultural patterns.

A poem can have plenty "right" about it, but still also have plenty "wrong" about it. Poetry (like reality, with which it has much in common) often has a number of dimensions at once!

Mark P.

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348. **Miekal And**
Re: Announcement: JENNIFER

Mon 9 Feb 1998

Steven Marks wrote:

I'm still not

> sure what critical tools to use in discussing these entities (perhaps
> entirely new ones), but I am much intrigued by the shapes and thoughts and
> desires that coalesce out of the swirl of words and commands.

the jennifer julu interchanges were to my liking, one of the most inviting sub-texts passing thru the poetic list, & I too was hot to publish these works thru Xexoxial, but being years behind on commitments Im gratified that Chris has transmogrified alan's digital yearnspeak to the world of books & paper.

(now if only I can get Chris to trade me for a few xe goodies...

</miekal>

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349. **Christopher W. Alexander**
Announcement: JENNIFER

Mon 9 Feb 1998

nominative press collective announces...

Alan Sondheim's JENNIFER

"Think of Jennifer-Julu, Julu-Jennifer as system resonances, interferences or viruses occasioned by intervention. Their psychoanalytics tangles on and off the Net - as strange attractors, they shape

discursive formations, nodes of theoretical focus.
Similar to "deconstruction" (Derrida's "Letter to
a Japanese Friend"), Jennifer and Julu fissure as
contested sites, split or sputter across applications,
networks, texts. Subject and body are at stake,
problematized through the specificities of
unfocused language . . . " (Alan Sondheim)

copies are approx. 50 pp., printed on acid-free
paper and hand-sewn Japanese-style between
black coverstock. \$8 / \$12 institutional.

to order, contact me via email or @ the address
given below. apologies for not having a sample
up on our homepage (as we generally do) — I'll
try to put one together by the end of the week.

best, Chris

..

Christopher W. Alexander etc. / nominative press collective

email: [REDACTED]

snail-mail: P.O. Box 522402 / Salt Lake City UT 84152-2402

press/zine site: <http://choengmon.lib.utah.edu/~calexand/nonce/>

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350. **p. durgin**

tripwire

Mon 9 Feb 1998

Has anyone else out there heard of a new mag. called "Tripwire"? I'm
looking to obtain a copy. . .perhaps someone's seen it or has a contact address?
Thanks -- Patrick F. Durgin

`

`

`

` ----->*<-----

` K E N N I N G|

` anewletterof|

` poetry&poetic|

` s418BrownSt.#|

` 10IowaCityIA5|

` 2245USA\\W|

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351. **Henry Gould**
a ship called comrade

Mon 9 Feb 1998

Now, listers, I would ask you to turn to page ### in your EPC archives, as Comrade Kent suggested, and re-read carefully the Moxley review by Gould he describes. "Fawning" is the word; uncritical or sub-critical it surely is. Now go out & buy the book if it's not out of print yet. Gould never claimed to be much of a critic himself. That's why he's looking so hard for one.

Kent, can we call the ship "Sophie" instead? I'll explain some day. She sails in a window, in an apartment not far from the Neva, in Petersburg... - Prince Gyenri

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352. **KENT JOHNSON**
Sex Objects

Mon 9 Feb 1998

It's nice to finally find something to disagree on with Mark P and Pat P. But guys, I just don't see Breton's poem as sexist in any way. That the addressee has no "agency" does not seem a good argument: Should everyone in a poem have "agency"? And besides, I don't see Breton as having much macho agency in this poem at all--why, he's reduced to a kind of primal glossolalia, the femme doing jiu-jitsu flips on the poor man's capacity to think "like a man" and bring her under the power and control of his reason.

It may be that you're right, Pat, that sexual expression is predominantly a cultural construction, but I don't think so. Each culture has its own rituals and oddities to be sure, but in sex, at bottom (though here I want to say that I don't consider myself an expert, because I've only had sex once--when I was nineteen), all cultures exhibit _animal_ behavior. I don't mean "animal" like when one gets excited and just goes crazy-- I mean in the sense of ritualistically objectifying the other, of focusing on the desired one without giving a hoot for his or her "agency"; I mean fixating on body parts, and showing the other your own "parts", whether the showing be a blue, bulging throat, a crimson rump shoved into the air, or a love poem full of surrealist images.

Anyway, speaking of the animal kingdom, I did just get something from Eliot Weinberger apropos this discussion-- a wonderful little essay on the poetry of Sappho in the context of zebra finches, Australian bush turkeys, Archbold bowerbirds, guppies, cichlids, cockroaches, aphids, bonolos, echidnas, crocodiles, and other creatures great and small doing their poignant best to have sex with others of their kind. It is titled "Sex Objects," and it begins with a quote

from a Poetry Flash review of Guy Davenport's *_7 Greeks_*: "For those who object to sexual objectification, Sappho may present problems."

If anyone would like to see this, I'd be happy to forward back-channel. A great read.

Kent

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353. **Maryrose Larkin**

Re: address query

Mon 9 Feb 1998

Carolyn Koo (editor of no roses) may be reached at [REDACTED]

Maryrose Larkin

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354. **Christopher W. Alexander**

Announcement: JENNIFER

Mon 9 Feb 1998

nominative press collective announces...

Alan Sondheim's JENNIFER

"Think of Jennifer-Julu, Julu-Jennifer as system resonances, interferences or viruses occasioned by intervention. Their psychoanalytics tangles on and off the Net - as strange attractors, they shape discursive formations, nodes of theoretical focus. Similar to "deconstruction" (Derrida's "Letter to a Japanese Friend"), Jennifer and Julu fissure as contested sites, split or sputter across applications, networks, texts. Subject and body are at stake, problematized through the specificities of unfocused language . . . " (Alan Sondheim)

copies are approx. 50 pp., printed on acid-free paper and hand-sewn Japanese-style between black coverstock. \$8 / \$12 institutional.

to order, contact me via email or @ the address given below. apologies for not having a sample up on our homepage (as we generally do) - I'll try to put one together by the end of the week.

best, Chris

..

Christopher W. Alexander etc. / nominative press collective

email: [REDACTED]

snail-mail: P.O. Box 522402 / Salt Lake City UT 84152-2402

press/zine site: <http://choengmon.lib.utah.edu/~calexand/nonce/>

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355. **Bob Grotjohn**

Re: 44

Mon 9 Feb 1998

In Korea, at least when I lived there, buildings did not have fourth floors. Well, they had them, but they were numbered five. It was explained to me that four signified death (chuk ul sa--deathly four, or, maybe four, signifying death), though the Korean words for "four" (both of them--sa and nyet) are not the same as the word for "death," at least not the one that I know (chuk um). Perhaps the four/death equation has some relation to Chinese having been the written language of Korea for many hundreds of years, though the Chinese words always (or almost always, at least) had Korean pronunciations, which is why the phonetic match may not be true.

But now, on further research (my wife looked in a dictionary for me--a good place to go when thinking about what a word might mean, I guess). The Korean word for death based on the Chinese is "sa-mang," and the "chuk ul sa" above may very well be using the "sa" of "sa-mang," which indeed does sound like the "sa" for four. So, there you go.

--

Bob Grotjohn

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356. **Christopher W. Alexander**

Re: fwd query

Mon 9 Feb 1998

Maria - oddly enough, I rec'd exactly the same message (ad literam) the same day. anyone else?
I thought it was just Henry fooling around (!).

there must be (there must be) a book that indexes poems by content, sort of like one of those books

of jokes & quotations used in speeches etc. Any
reference librarians out there?

best, Chris

hi all, i received the below; can anyone help? thanks; md

*X-From : [REDACTED] Mon Feb 2 19:40 CST 1998
From: "Jamie Phillips" <[REDACTED]>
To: Maria Damon <[REDACTED]>
Subject:
Date: Mon, 2 Feb 1998 19:40:09 -0600
MIME-Version: 1.0
X-Priority: 3
X-MSMail-Priority: Normal
X-MimeOLE: Produced By Microsoft MimeOLE V4.71.1712.3*

*Hello My name is jamie Phillips i was looking for something on the
line of Volenteers and Angles in a Poem i Work in a Nursing Home and had a
16 yr old Girl who was a Volenteer and she was the Best in the world !!
was tragicly Killed in a Auto accident and i wanted a Poem to read in
Honor of Her just curious do you know of anything like that ?*

..

Christopher W. Alexander etc. / nominative press collective

email: [REDACTED]

snail-mail: P.O. Box 522402 / Salt Lake City UT 84152-2402

press/zine site: <http://choengmon.lib.utah.edu/~calexand/nonce/>

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357. **Miekal And** ***Da Slander Con and mYth***

Mon 9 Feb 1998

david bromige wrote:

>

> (my attorneys).

> Dale, another : speaking things out context, > Neilsen tells me re-print
postings this List your

> magazine, permission the authors presumably, the
master told me this is the list-protocol). TruFals? David

Just to go on record that I, Amendant Hardiker have been a proponent of cre-
ative plagiarism & appropriation since the international festival of plagerism
(sic) in 1988 at which point I officially denounced the use of copyright.

swearby, Amendant Hardiker

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358. **William Burmeister Prod**

Surf music

Mon 9 Feb 1998

Although your world wonders me
With your majestic superior cackling hen
Your people I do not understand
So to you I wish to put an end
And you'll never hear surf music again

-Jimi Hendrix, "Third stone from the sun"

Disclaimer: The word "hen" in this context shall not be construed as referring to any person, living or otherwise, or name of person heretofore construed as construed nor shall any individual, singularity, sexual object, critic, marginalized poet, or person claim ownership of said word as an appellation for the sole purpose of claiming damages to said name for the abuse of the same or penalties shall be administered and the penalties administered shall be deemed stiff indeed.

-Free Willy

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359. **Joe Ahearn**

Re: freud's trick

Mon 9 Feb 1998

In the best Buddhist tradition, I'll say that I am hardly in a position to instruct anyone. My practices of sitting and writing are more than adequate to reinforce my claim to ordinary understanding of ordinary things.

If you are looking for texts, see my previous post to the list.

For Dylan, see the album DESIRE.

And, yes, Robert Johnson's aesthetic is scarier than mine. I never wrote, after all:

Me and the Devil walkin' side by side.
Gonna beat my woman till I'm satisfied.

For a look at Johnson, see the recent complete Robert Johnson on (I think it is) Atlantic. The set is in any case extremely available, includes all the songs

Johnson recorded, and contains complete biographical information and the text of the complete lyrics.

You're right that one shouldn't confuse an aesthetic for a theory. An aesthetic is preferable.

At 06:14 PM 2/8/98 EST, you wrote:

>Well Joe, on this list I'm not surprised at any of the whiffs some folks seem
>to inhale. I've never heard of Buddhism being reduced to a theory, but I'm am
>after all eurocentric thru & thru -- as is everyone else on this net.
>However, if you have some textual citations, or if you are yourself a
>practicing buddhist who's managed to cross the cultural boundry that Whorf
>declares is impossible to cross, I'm willing to take instruction. Ditto for
>Dylan & Johnson. One shouldn't confuse an aesthetic for a theory. I also see
>no reason why Johnson's express of desire should be any scarier than yours.

>

>joe brennan

>

>

Joe Ahearn



[↑ Contents](#)

360. **Joe Ahearn**

Re: freud's trick

Mon 9 Feb 1998

What you or I choose to embrace in our respective searches isn't germane to the discussion, except that as you don't have the experience as to what's valuable in freudian analysis, you're left to critiques of matters that practically speaking are not meaningful to any discussion of it.

Joe

This is the nut of ONE of my problems with Freudianism.

After all, Joe, why should you assume to judge the validity of anyone's experience, even mine? And yes, there are others besides you who have experienced Freud at depth. And who disagree with what you say here.

Joe Ahearn



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361. **Joe Ahearn**

Re: freud's trick

Mon 9 Feb 1998

Dear Joe,

Your reference to Pound is spot on. I have been stepping around Mr. EP for a very long time now. He is still the Modernist of choice for me. I can't apologize for him, I find much of what he did deplorable, but I greatly admire the Cantos.

I also prefer Mr. Freud to Mr. Jung and to many of the current manifestations of psychiatry. But I AM tired of stepping around him. I guess this makes me a neo-Poundian, not a neo-Freudian (my admiration for Mr. Lacan notwithstanding).

At 06:52 PM 2/8/98 EST, you wrote:

>Joe

>

>You don't have to step around Freud's failings any more than modernists have

>to apologize for the brutality of Pound, who has a hell of a lot more to

>answer for. What's interesting in Freud is what seems to interest you. As

>far as liking Lacan is concerned, Lacan is so freudian that for a long time he

>was the only commentator who seemed to understand him; one simply can't

>separate Lacan from Freud except in the extensions of freudian thought he

was

>able to master. As Lacan points out, if you don't understand Freud, you can't

>understand him.

>

>Joe

>

>

Joe Ahearn



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362. **Safdie Joseph**

Re: last week at Small Press Traffic

Mon 9 Feb 1998

I was wondering, Dodie, if you might not report to the List some semblance of a review of the Duncan proceedings last week? Yet another S.F. event I would have dearly loved to attend . . . if all hasn't yet washed away . . .

Joe

From: [REDACTED] [SMTP:[REDACTED]]
Sent: Wednesday, January 28, 1998 3:50 PM
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: next week at Small Press Traffic

Small Press Traffic presents:

Thursday, February 5, 7:30 p.m.

*³Fragments Of A Disorderd Devotion²:
Robert Duncan¹'s Legacy Today*

*Norma Cole, Michael Davidson, Diane di Prima, Robert Glück, Barbara Guest,
Thom Gunn, Fran Herndon, Susan Howe, Nataniel Mackey, Michael McClure,
Duncan McNaughton, Michael Palmer, Jerome Rothenberg, Aaron Shurin,
Mary
Margaret Sloan, David Levi Strauss, Susan Thackrey and others*

*Robert Duncan, who died ten years ago on this very date, is the subject of
our gala reading at the New College Theater, the very site where he so often spoke himself as director of the Poetics Program. These are walls
haunted by a great spirit! This event--organized by Norma Cole, Michael
Palmer and Susan Thackrey--celebrates the life and work of Robert Duncan,
and his influence on poetry and poetics today. Duncan (1919-1988) was an
arts activist, political organizer, teacher, editor, theorist, early gay
liberationist, critic, typist, rebel, playwright, controversialist, neuromancer, art writer, ³Black Mountaineer,² visual artist, essayist, publisher, aesthete, dandy, conscience and wizard. He was one of the architects of the Berkeley Renaissance, the Poetry Center at San Francisco
State University, the ³San Francisco Renaissance,² the ³New American Poetry,² the Berkeley Poetry Conference of 1965, and the Poetics Program at
New College. Above all he was one of the towering poets of the 20th Century. His major books, still in print, include *The Opening of the Field*, *Bending the Bow*, *Roots and Branches*, and two volumes of *Ground**

*Work_. Tonight some of his friends, admirers, students, and others
with a
³disorderd devotion² to RD read from his work in celebration of a
great
American legacy. Expect surprises!*

*New College Theater
777 Valencia Street
\$5*

Friday, February 6, 7:30 p.m.

*Charles Alexander
Scott Bentley*

*Charles Alexander's books of poetry include _Hopeful Buildings_ (Chax
Press, Tucson, 1990) and _arc of light / dark matter_ (Segue Books,
New
York, 1992). He is the founder and director of Chax Press (Tucson).
Ron
Silliman writes, "Charles Alexander pushes the envelope of what is
possible
in writing even further, to the ends of the universe. And beyond. . .
This
is the most sensuous, intelligent, rewarding writing I've read in
ages."²*

*Scott Bentley has for the past ten years been a ³freeway flying
teacher of
writing,² at present teaching both at California State University at
Hayward and at Canada Community College. Scott is the author of three
books: _Edge_ (Birdcage Chap Books, 1987), _Out of Hand_ (Parentheses
Writing Series, 1989), and _Ground Air_ (O Books, 1993). His writing
is
limber, smart, sexy and perverse, a feather tickling the neck of a
Christmas goose, an almanac for amorists, a prescription Rx for the
valentine blues.*

*New College Theater
777 Valencia Street
\$5*

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363. **Steven Marks**

Re: Announcement: JENNIFER

Mon 9 Feb 1998

I received my copy the other day. It's very handsomely done. I'm still not sure what critical tools to use in discussing these entities (perhaps entirely new ones), but I am much intrigued by the shapes and thoughts and desires that coalesce out of the swirl of words and commands. I hope to write more about the book in the coming weeks. Just recovering from bronchitis myself. Is it the poet's disease (dis-ease?) of the 1990s???!!!

congrats to Chris and Alan.

Steven

On Mon, 9 Feb 1998, Christopher W.

Alexander wrote:

nominative press collective announces...

Alan Sondheim's JENNIFER

"Think of Jennifer-Julu, Julu-Jennifer as system resonances, interferences or viruses occasioned by intervention. Their psychoanalytics tangles on and off the Net - as strange attractors, they shape discursive formations, nodes of theoretical focus. Similar to "deconstruction" (Derrida's "Letter to a Japanese Friend"), Jennifer and Julu fissure as contested sites, split or sputter across applications, networks, texts. Subject and body are at stake, problematized through the specificities of unfocused language . . . " (Alan Sondheim)

copies are approx. 50 pp., printed on acid-free paper and hand-sewn Japanese-style between black coverstock. \$8 / \$12 institutional.

to order, contact me via email or @ the address given below. apologies for not having a sample up on our homepage (as we generally do) — I'll try to put one together by the end of the week.

best, Chris

..

Christopher W. Alexander etc. / nominative press collective

email: [REDACTED]

snail-mail: P.O. Box 522402 / Salt Lake City UT 84152-2402

press/zine site: <http://choengmon.lib.utah.edu/~calexand/nonce/>

Steven Marks

<http://members.aol.com/swmarks/welcome.html>

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364. **k. lederer**

Re: freud's trick

Mon 9 Feb 1998

I love Freud. I really do love him. I think he's a great writer--very funny. Smart. Witty. Clever--

But how can he be credited with "liberating" desire? With "allowing" us to speak our true minds? (It seems that some of the lauding of Freud that has gone on in this thread has to do with such liberations--)

So I have two questions:

1. Let's just say Freud (particularly Interp of Dreams) allows us to examine our "sublimated" desires--to acknowledge what we truly desire--perhaps expunging it? How is this different than the confessional? In what ways is it a discourse that allows us to go beyond the confessional and enter the realm of the therapeutic? If I am a woman of Freud's era, how will it help me to know what I "really" feel? If I am a frustrated subject--politically, economically, and intellectually oppressed by my society, then what good does it do me to understand my true desires? In other words:

Who is allowed to desire?

Who is able to do something about their desires?

How is psychoanalysis a means toward pacification?

These are old questions--but I think still refute the notion that Freud liberated desire in any sense--

2. How is the location, identification, desublimation etc of imbricated with the writing of poetry? With the production of art? Is art a form of desublimation? Is a psychoanalytic model of desire anathema to the production of art? Is a discourse that is buttressed by the concepts of "normalcy" and the recognition of perhaps anti-social desire anti-artistic? I am not harkening back to the suicidal poet model here--the psychoanalysis of Plath or Sexton--but rather to the very notion which seems to be present in this thread that Freud is good because his

discourse helps us to REAVEAL what had previously been CONCEALED. Tillich, for one, defines religion as that which passes from man to god--revelation as that which passes from god to man. How can a discourse based on revelation be anything but corrupt? Be anything but a tool for those who wish to control? Be anything but dangerous?

I guess I have a third question as well. How is Freud anything other than the logical conclusion to intellectual impulses of the sixteenth century? I have a quote to follow, but am afraid I will get cut off by my phone... so I'll continue in another post--

Cordially,
Katy

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365. **k. lederer**
Re: freud's trick
Mon 9 Feb 1998

It seems to me that Freud's "trick" is a pretty old one--

"Let us call the totality of the learning and skills that enable one to make the signs speak and to discover their meaning, hermeneutics; let us call the totality of the learning and skills that enable one to distinguish the location of the signs, to define what constitutes them as signs, and to know how and by what laws they are linked, semiology: the sixteenth century superimposed hermeneutics and semiology in the form of similitude. To search for a meaning is to bring to light a resemblance. To search for the law governing signs is to discover the things that are alike. The grammar of beings is an exegesis of these things.... 'Nature' is trapped in the thin layer that holds semiology and hermeneutics one above the other; it is neither mysterious nor veiled, it offers itself to our cognition which it sometimes leads astray, only in so far as this superimposition necessarily includes a slight degree of non-coincidence between the resemblances.... A dark space appears which must be made progressively clearer. That space is where 'nature' resides, and it is what one must attempt to know...."

(Foucault: Order of Things, pp. 29-30)

Then Freud:

"There is often a passage in even the most thoroughly interpreted dream which has to be left obscure; this is because we become aware during the work of interpretation that at that point there is a tangle of dream-thoughts which cannot be unravelled and which moreover adds nothing to our knowledge of the content of the dream. This is the dream's navel, the spot where it reaches down

into the unknown. The dream-thoughts to which we are led by interpretation cannot, from the nature of things, have any definite endings: they are bound to branch out in every direction into the intricate network of our world of thought. It is at some point where this meshwork is particularly close that the dream-with grows up, like a mushroom out of its mycelium.: (Interp. p. 564 Avon, 1965)

Then Foucault:

Such, sketched in its most general aspects, is the sixteenth-century episteme. This configuration carries with it...(cont in next message...)

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366. **k. lederer**

Re: freud's trick

Mon 9 Feb 1998

...a certain number of consequences. "First and foremost, the plethoric yet absolutely poverty-stricken character of this knowldge. Plethoric because it is limitless. Resemblance never remains stable within itself; it can be fixed only if it refers back to another similitude, which then, in turn, refers to others; each resemblance, therefore has value only from the accumulation of all the others, and the whole world must be explored if even the slightest of analogies is to be justified and finally take on the appearance of certainty....And for this reason, from its very foundations, this knowledge will be a thing of sand. The only possible form of link between the elements of this knowledge is addition. Hence those immense columns of complilation, hence their monotony. By positing resemblance as the link between signs and what they indicate..., sixteenth century knowldge condemned itself to never knowing anything but the same thing, and to knowing that thing only at the unattainable end of an endless journey. (Order of Things. p. 30)

Then Freud:

(One could open Interp almost anywhere--)

But how about....HERE!

"Dreams of missing a train deserve to be put alongside examination dreams on account of the similarity of their affect, and their explanation shows that we shall be right in doing so. They are dreams of consolation for another kind of anxiety felt in sleep--the fear of dying. 'Departing' on a journey is one of the commonest and best authenticated symbol of death..." (p. 420)

Or HERE!

"In an analysis which I was conducting in French a dream came up for interpretation in which I appeared as an elephant. I naturally asked the dreamer why I was represented in that form. 'Vous me trompez' ['you are deceiving me'] was his reply (trompe='trunk').

"The dream-work can often succeed in representing very refractory material, such as proper names, by a far-fetched use of out-of-the-way associations...." (p. 448)

In other words--I think Freud is terrific to read--a brilliant poet, if you will--but I don't credit him with inventing a discourse that in any way, shape, or form liberated desire--

Rather he seems to be the apotheosis of an impulse toward "knowledge" that began in the 16th century and had as one of its primary objects the taming of "irrationality" and thus the further denial of the kinds of desires that Freud purportedly "resues" or "dredges up" or otherwise "desublimates"--how is this different, again, than the confessional? How is this any kind of liberation? As a woman I feel that Freud has done little to help me out--

In his wake I see lots of talk-shows and diet plans--lots of men who claim that I or some other woman is delusional--hysterical etc.

I know that Freud may not have meant for such ramifications--but they are real--and are in many regards his legacy.

I don't think there is any feasible way to claim that Freud helped women, regardless of the historical context in which he worked--

(I think that Marx--another thinker whose ideas have been popularized--is a good counterexample--an interesting contrast to Freud in that Marxist discourses seem difficult to bend toward any form of "oppression"--whether of women, of men, or of children--of black, white, or red etc)

Yours! (Sorry for the length, there...)

Katy

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367. **John Tranter**

Jacket # 2 - Ashbery Issue - is complete.

Mon 9 Feb 1998

Announcement - current February 1998 - Jacket # 2 is complete.

Jacket magazine - free, fast-loading, international, full of stylish writing - on the Internet, at

<http://www.jacket.zip.com.au>

Jacket # 2 is now complete.

It focuses mainly on the work of JOHN ASHBERRY -

John Ashbery : two interviews (1985 and 1988), and a new Ashbery poem / Marjorie Perloff on "Normalizing John Ashbery" / John Tranter : 3 John Ashberys / Eliot Weinberger on James Laughlin (1914-1997) / David Lehman - more on the Ern Malley hoax / Bob Perelman's "The Marginalization of Poetry" discussed by Silliman, Lauterbach, Spahr, Evans and Kate Lilley... and Bob Perelman! / poems by Peter Riley, Lee Ann Brown, John Kinsella, Eileen Myles, August Kleinzahler, Jennifer Moxley, Robert Adamson, Forrest Gander, Tim Davis, Michael Heller, Denis Gallagher / Eliot Weinberger - Letter from New York: "Vomit" / and other poems and articles.

In November 1997, Jacket was the featured Internet site on the Electronic Poetry Center at the State University of New York at Buffalo. The EPC is a leading experimental poetry site.

In December 1997, Jacket was among the top recommended sites on Web Del Sol, a major literary arts Internet conglomerate site in the US.

In December 1997, Jacket won the "Best of the Web" award from the Poetry Mining Company, an Internet site in New York.

The first issue of Jacket contains interviews with English poet Roy Fisher and Australian aboriginal poet Lionel Fogarty, a piece on cyber-poetry in the age of the Internet, a look at the 1943 hoax poet Ern Malley (including rare childhood photos!) , work by Charles Bernstein, Elaine Equi, Pamela Brown, Alfred Corn, Joanne Burns, Tracy Ryan, Carl Rakosi, Beth Spencer, Peter Minter, Susan Schultz and Paul Hoover, together with reviews, other prose and poetry pieces and plentiful photos and art work. Jacket # 1 was complete in October 1997.

Jacket # 3 is being uploaded as we speak, and will be complete in late April 1998. It already contains poems by Joel Lewis, Michele Leggott, Kris Hemensley, Peter Gizzi, Hans Magnus Enzensberger, Tom Clark and Johanna Drucker, and a review of Charles Nicholl's enlightening biography "Somebody Else - Rimbaud in Africa".

Issue # 3 is dedicated to the memory of the Australian poet JOHN FORBES, who died unexpectedly on 23 January at the age of 47 at his home in Melbourne. It contains a poem by him ("Speed: A Pastoral"), and poems by some of his friends.

Jacket is free, and (thus) is at present unable to pay contributors. Also, I don't have the time yet to deal with unsolicited submissions. Sorry.

Jacket editor John Tranter's e-mail address is

██████████

Please tell your friends about Jacket, whose motto is

"bop till you drop!"

from

John Tranter, 39 Short Street, Balmain NSW 2041, Sydney, Australia

tel ([REDACTED] fax ([REDACTED]

<http://writing.upenn.edu/epc/authors/tranter/3poems-interview.html>

Editor, Jacket magazine: <http://www.jacket.zip.com.au>

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368. **k. lederer**

Re: "Indie Critics," Evans, Rod Smith, baloney--

Mon 9 Feb 1998

Henry--

I think that by far the best "criticism" of a poem is a new poem--

As far as the Evans article--I don't think of it as "criticism" so much as "elucidation"--

Perhaps the young/old thing is an old and oft-addressed problem--but it doesn't mean that it doesn't need re-stating generation after generation--

And Evans states it beautifully--in beautiful language--

And clearly--in terms that I can understand--

I LOVE HIS ESSAY!

And thank god for the mental blinders--otherwise I might be blinded by your utter brilliance--

Yours,

Katy L.

On Wed, 4 Feb 1998, henry gould wrote:

On Wed, 4 Feb 1998 13:41:44 -0600 k. lederer said:

The implications for younger writers here are astonishing--

That perhaps "older" writers--even those of the avant-garde variety--may also be unable to fully "see" (perceive is probably a better word) the "new" in the younger generation's works--

Perhaps the "older" writers might claim that the young ones are "lazy," "apathetic," etc. (sound familiar?), because they cannot "see" the work that goes into simply "emerging"--

Evans doesn't make such arguments explicitly--but I think these analogies are more than available (particularly in light of the postscript in which he basically credits such writers as Brown, Jarnot, Moxley, Spahr, Stroffolino, and Rothschild for, in some regards, freeing "the avant-garde" from the aesthetic prison (not intentionally a prison, but an effective one none the less) of Langpos. Breaking out of prison is hard work! And usually happens when no one is looking.

In other words, I think that this essay represents PRECISELY the kind of criticism that "Rod Smith's Generation" might need--

Katy, I'm glad you got something out of that essay; he's a snazzy writer. But you don't need a dress-up of Hegel & Marx for the precisely OLD idea (I mean like, old since Greek & Roman times) that the old fogies won't be able to understand the youngsters. Maybe it's just that a card-carrying "youngster" is saying it for you (& insists on harping on the "generation" thing just so you don't forget)... My point was that such advocacy is only a beginning, if anything.

I think you need to open the mental blinders. Critic does not necessarily = "mainstream establishment person out to judge us by outmoded standards of (baloney) taste". That is a cartoon of a critic. In my mind, critic = "somebody who loves poetry enough to dig into it backwards & forwards, past & present, and say something intelligent (if subjective) about the style, mindset, aims, effects, contradictions, connections, strengths, imitations, originalities, meaning, impact, development... etc of what s/he reads". I don't think of standards as a set of hoary rules; I think of standards as the feel of a good ear for syntax, sound, meaning, and complexity. Wouldn't you rather read some of this than various gang-approval ratings, blurbs, or tossed-off empty retchings which pass for "criticism?" THAT IS ALL I'M SAYING.

...I am speaking as a poet who has played by what I consider the rules for over 30 years. My rules are: do the poem. Send it to magazines & contests. Think about what you are doing - maybe write an essay about it. That's it. In my experience "doing the poem" has absorbed the energy. Maybe I am a fanatic, or a hedgehog in Isaiah Berlin's sense, or a totally introverted recluse.

These rules seem to contradict each other, Henry. Sending to mags and contests doesn't absorb any energy? Do introverts write lots of essays? Send to contests? (Emily--)

All I meant was, MOST of my energy (like 98%) goes into DOING the poems (until I joined this list [sigh]). Does anybody know what I look like? Seen me gladhanding at conferences? Reading anyplace outside Providence?

Published much? (these are rhetorical questions) Maybe it's because I only write haiku about buffalo - that could be it. I'm also not a prof, not a writing teacher, not a grad student, not a novelist, not a journalist, not a professional poet, not a performance artist; the only wannabee I am is wannabee out on the road again with my guitar - but then I really would have to be running from the law. Ask Jack about that.

It seems to me that "taste, judgement, freedom, and artistic instinct" are also forms of baloney.

Yes, the word "taste" always leaves a bad taste in the mouth. I like baloney better myself. But judgement, freedom, artistic instinct... there they go now, off to the next reality... all words become dust through repetition... anything can be turned into a joke... "the laughter of fools is like fire crackling under a pot" [Proverbs].
- Henry Gould

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369. **Karen Kelley**

Re: freud's trick

Mon 9 Feb 1998

k. lederer wrote:

>

>

> 1. Let's just say Freud (particularly Interp of Dreams) allows us to
> examine our "sublimated" desires--to acknowledge what we truly
> desire--perhaps expunging it? How is this different than the confessional?
> In what ways is it a discourse that allows us to go beyond the
> confessional and enter the realm of the therapeutic? If I am a woman of
> Freud's era, how will it help me to know what I "really" feel? If I am a
> frustrated subject--politically, economically, and intellectually
> oppressed by my society, then what good does it do me to understand my
> true desires? In other words:

>

> Who is allowed to desire?
> Who is able to do something about their desires?
> How is psychoanalysis a means toward pacification?
> These are old questions--but I think still refute the notion that Freud
> liberated desire in any sense--

>

I think we are looking at this, as we did the Breton poem, as if our

contemporary politics were applicable in Breton's/Freud's time. I don't think a bourgeois woman of Freud's time would have conceptualized her self as "politically, economically, and intellectually >oppressed by ...society."

It's always seemed to me that Freud's suggestion that there is a part of people that is NOT bound by civilization's mores, that is grasping and aggressive and violent and animal, and most importantly, not subject to simple conscious controls, to banishing that "bad impulse" was almost dramatic and amazing concept to come up with given HIS place in history. And he realized that our narratives are how we FIND and come to terms with these hidden inner realities (and I've always thought that idea quite poetic).

But as far as questions like _Who is allowed to desire? Who is able to do something about their desires? How is psychoanalysis a means toward pacification?_ go, I think they are based on a contemporary discourse that would not have registered in Freud's time.

Oh, and there's a wonderful book by Peter Gay (who also wrote a Freud bio), called _The Bourgeois Experience_ and for a spectacular poetic account of an analysis (a woman's analysis) by a Freud-like analyst, check out Marie Cardinal's _The Words to Say It_, a beautifully written book regardless your interest or non-interest in psychoanalysis.

Admittedly, I love Freud, and enjoyed (okay, largely in retrospect) my own analysis immensely. But I would hazard to say what brings analysis (at least in my case) from confessional to therapeutic (though "therapy" doesn't do the process justice) may well be the quality of the "evenly hovering attention" of an analyst who can feel/withstand/encompass the analysand's emotions while NOT inserting himself into the narrative as a confessor.

Karen

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370. **Louis Cabri**
Re: colding & heating
Tue 10 Feb 1998

Lisa, to me you have recuperated what Riding's words worked for when they worked for poetry.

"Unreal" strikes me as one of those frequent words of hers that is attempting to do and say more than its cultural grammar can at the time support. Oppositional matrices - "real" vs. "unreal" - fade before its sense.

What is the lineage of the "individual-unreal"?

What if it were Whitman! Not "precipitant of the American character," as the standard critical reading has it, but he who differentiates between individualism, which "isolates," and "personalism," which "fuses, ties, and aggregates . . . fraternizing all" (_Democractic Vistas_). "Personalism" thus is not identical to personal expression.

I've found numerous historical resonance for this word, but Whitman's usage, it seems, is distinct.

Anyone who can help me would be very welcome.

-louis

Where then, fellow citizens
Of this post-carnal matter,
Is each the next and next one,
Stretching the instant chain
Toward its first-last link,
The twilight that into dawn passes
Without intervention of night....

.....

But where? where?
If I have so companioned?
Here, here!

--Laura Riding ("I Am")

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371. **David Israel** *law & love*

Tue 10 Feb 1998

Quoth the good Dr. Gould --

<< . . . Law and love are an inescapable mutuality. The law for workers in poetry is WHAT'S ON THE PAGE. >>

once it was the splotch on page
once it was the note in air
that seems now a distant age

bird don't always live in cage
glance ain't ever lost in stare
once it was the splotch on page

love were hardened into rage
anger melted lost its flare
that seems now a distant age

theatre didn't need a stage
meditation sought no chair
once it was the splotch on page

music for the likes of Cage
hiding open everywhere
that seems now a distant age

soon descends the macrophage
homer blindly go prepare!
once it was a splotch on page?
that seems now a distant age

d.i.

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372. **dbkk**

Duncan tribute at Small Press Traffic

Tue 10 Feb 1998

Date: Mon, 9 Feb 1998 15:55:37 -0800
From: Safdie Joseph <[REDACTED]>
Subject: Re: last week at Small Press Traffic

I was wondering, Dodie, if you might not report to the List some semblance of a review of the Duncan proceedings last week? Yet another S.F. event I would have dearly loved to attend . . . if all hasn't yet washed away . . .

Nothing was washed away, but perhaps some people stayed away from the Duncan tribute February 5th because our local weathermen were predicted 5 inches of rain and winds of 80 miles an hour . . . Nevertheless hordes of people came and they were just about hanging from the rafters, approximately 140 of them (people, not rafters). The evening had a long program with 19 speakers, but wrapped itself up in 2 hours and 15 minutes--it could have been a lot worse timewise. Susan Thackrey, the MC, was good at crowd management, announcing there would be no formal "break" but encouraging people to get up, mill around, between readings, etc.

Here are some of the highlights . . . a surprise visitor from Buffalo, Robert Bertholf, opened the show detailing the latest finds of Duncaniana and also updating us all on the plans to publish Duncan's "Collected Works" (California) . . . In honor of the doubling that runs throughout Duncan's poetry, Jack and Adelle

Foley read alternating lines and then simultaneously poems by Duncan and Foley . . . A seven minute excerpt from Richard Moore's (1966?) NET Poetry USA Duncan documentary was shown, big, blown up, only a little grainy and reddened across the edges, Duncan reading "The Dance," etc in front of a mirror . . . Aaron Shurin's reading of "Passages 18: The Torso" was very crisp and clear and seductive . . . Readers were given five minutes apiece and many chose to read from RD's own work . . . Surprising how many read from the two big last books of "Ground Work," don't remember anyone reading from "The Opening of the Field," but maybe this isn't surprising since many were Duncan's final students from New College during the Ground Work years. Thom Gunn read the one about the cat, you could almost picture the cat creeping up and down his leather jacket as he did so Then there were some who reminisced--Michael McClure a real pro, commanding and v. insightful; the artist Fran Herndon spoke off the cuff about her earliest meetings with Duncan and Jess in 1957, Stinson Beach, painting, etc. One of the luckiest breaks was that the photographer Harry Redl happened to be in town (visiting from Vancouver) with some of his prints, and the black cotton curtains were taped back from New College Theater's white walls, and a selection of his photos were quickly hung before the show. Redl was the Viennese man about town in North Beach in 1957-1960, the photographer who took the famous photos of poets for the Evergreen Review "San Francisco Scene" issue of 1957. He was introduced to the crowd by Michael Palmer but alas did not speak. The photos are amazing. So it was a mass reading and a vernissage all at the same time esp. nice for those who missed the Whitney Beat Culture show where so many of Redl's works were shown.

Jerome Rothenberg (who read from "Seedings" his poem inspired by Duncan) first met RD in 1950 or 1960, on his first day in San Francisco, RD took him to a cafe, Harry Redl happened to take their picture, the picture happened to be one HR had with him, the whole evening was filled with this kind of serendipidity or "Inspiriting" as RD might have said . . . David Levi Strauss. returning to San Francisco after many many years away (and afterwards remarking on how many streets and sights had changed) read briefly, again from "Ground Work," great to see him again in the parlous of poetry . . .

Susan Howe was supposed to come but she was too ill to travel up from Palo Alto (she's better now) and the rains kept away Barbara Guest. One young woman blanched visibly when told Howe was not there, a big pile of Howe's books on her lap slipped. Jess did not show up either but no one really expected him to . . . Duncan McNaughton read Yeats' "The Phases of the Moon" replete with high drama, many many sips of water and a beautiful, sonorous delivery, which seemed to last forever, tho' it couldn't have lasted more than 25 minutes, could it?

Kush was taping the whole event and will sell copies of the event (back channel if anyone's interested) . . . In the spirit of things--in the memorial spirit we are undergoing in San Francisco these days--under the sign of Thanatos--he gave out copies of Ira Cohen's 1981 photo of Robert Duncan massaging Kathy Acker's shoulders, a very touching portrait . . . The unenviable task of last reader was saved for Michael Davidson, who gave the most acclaimed reading of all, mostly a memoir of writing his dissertation on RD, very funny, wry, ironic, reflexive, loving and tender, enough to make RD's ghost flit in front of us, live, on stage, just for a minute--

It's been pointed out on this list that Duncan made many an enemy, but the Duncan who came through at this tribute was well-loved, in a way that others can only aspire to. His enormous influence on the poetry scene from the Bay Area and beyond was palpable in the moisture-laden air.

Kevin Killian & Dodie Bellamy

(Thanks again to Norma Cole, Michael Palmer, and Susan Thackrey for organizing the whole thing--merveilleuse!)

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373. **Pierre Joris**

bb's bd

Tue 10 Feb 1998

Today one hundred years ago Bertolt Brecht was born --

-- oh show us the way to the next whisky bar!"

&

"what kind of times are these when
talking about trees is almost a crime
because it avoids speaking about so many brutalities?"

& much more on what Sartre called "the insurmountable horizon of communism"

happy bd, bb,

Pierre

--

=====

pierre joris 6 madison place albany ny 12202

tel/fax [REDACTED] email: [REDACTED]

<http://www.albany.edu/~joris/>

"What often prevents us from giving ourselves over to a single vice is that we have several of them."

— La Rochefoucauld

=====

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374. **louis stroffolino**
INDIVIDUAL-UNREAL

Tue 10 Feb 1998

Thanks Lisa Samuels and Louis Cabri for excellent posts on Ms. (Riding) Jackson. I have some thoughts on the matter: A couple of questions for Louis. One) When you (LOUIS) write: "to me (Lisa) you have recuperated what Riding's words worked for when they worked for poetry" I detect the deployment of an assumption (too common) I think needs to be challenged: that Riding Jackson RENOUNCED poetry. She may have renounced "poetry as such" (but in terms of RATIONAL MEANING, only insofar as poetry is a "name" and not a "word."). Perhaps, "working for poetry" is the problem and maybe one could understand Riding as asking: "ask not what words can do for poetry but what poetry can do for words" (sorry about the Lee Harvey Oswald quality here)-- The way I see it, her later (post-poetry) writing, like THE TELLING (or "Engaging The Impossible", which in light of Ms. Samuel's remarks is especially worth considering--or even the Preface to the Selected Poems) can be seen as "working for poetry" or, MORE IMPORTANTLY, working AS poetry (if one is willing to consider a poetry not in the narrow "new critical" sense, or even perhaps the narrow 1998 sense), and Riding, even as (Riding) Jackson, seems to me to be more interested in critiquing the generic CRUTCH of poetry rather than poetry itself. It is the extreme endeavour of "space clearing" for the possibility of the "individual unreal" that I find almost everywhere in her work, the shucking off of the "baggage" of the "individual real" (which may be seen as the "expressive" self....).

Two) 2). Louis, how does the word "unreal" "do and say more than its cultural grammar at the time can support?" What "cultural grammar" do you feel is necessary to support her terminology or matrix? Does such technology, lacking in 1928, exist now? And, if so, for whom (and how do you know?) By the way, I don't think she's posing a simple "oppositional matrix" (real vs. unreal), because it is complicated by the combination of another simple oppositional matrix (collective vs. individual),

and one may notice that the "fourth term" (like the "fourth wall" of "theatre") is conspicuously absent (i.e. Ms. Samuels makes no mention of the possibility of a "collective unreal"---perhaps because, for Riding, the "individual unreal" IS one with "the collective unreal").

Well, I would be curious to see if anybody wants to continue this.
(I also like Lisa's connection with O'Hara and LC's connection with Whitman...) Chris Stroffolino

On Sun, 8 Feb 1998, Lisa Samuels wrote:

in response to louis cabri, sat 7 feb, on individualism vs. singularity.

in her 1928 book, =Anarchism Is Not Enough=, Laura Riding distinguishes among the "collective-real" (people in groups), the "individual-real," (a person in relation to reality, to the "real" world of nature, broadly considered), and the "individual-unreal." this last sounds akin to what you are calling "singularity." for riding, the realm of the individual-unreal was The One worth living for and in. and in writing poetry one accessed this realm and "discharged pieces of self" as she put it. not =one=self, "but self." in this unreal singularity one was truest to the self and to poetry. and effectively truest to other people as well. promoting what you call the hardwon. in participating in the institution of publishing (though never in academia), riding wanted people to =try= to live that individual-unreal even as she knew it was impossible. and the only thing worth trying, while always keeping in mind its impossibility.

what you wrote reminded me of her, hence the comment on =anarchism=. in either case the issue is maintaining one's deliberate ideals within necessary participation in the world. oneself as social construction is the "individual-real"; oneself as experientially incommensurable is the "individual-unreal," your "singularity." we can and do have both. at least this is my deliberate belief.

and despite all those serious sentences, it's a belief that makes me delirious as O'Hara:

"YIPPEE!! I'm glad I'm alive!!

I'm glad you're alive too, baby, because I want to fuck you"
("ode to Michael Goldberg ('s birth and other births)")

yippee!
Lisa Samuels

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375. **louis stroffolino**

Re: bb's bd

Tue 10 Feb 1998

Happy Birthday, Bertolt!

Does anybody know where one can find his specific mention of
A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM, by the way, in his writing on theatre?

2) and, if you haven't already, read his SONG OF THE CUT_PRICED
POET (for the first third of the twentieth century when poetry
was no longer paid for).

this is your assignment

(and maybe next year I'll be able to use the german word
for alienation effect in an essay without always having
to look it up). Chris

On Tue, 10 Feb 1998, Pierre Joris wrote:

Today one hundred years ago Bertolt Brecht was born --

-- oh show us the way to the next whisky bar!"

&

*"what kind of times are these when
talking about trees is almost a crime
because it avoids speaking about so many brutalities?"*

*& much more on what Sartre called "the insurmountable horizon of
communism"*

happy bd, bb,

Pierre

--

=====
pierre joris 6 madison place albany ny 12202

tel/fax [REDACTED] email: [REDACTED]

http://www.albany.edu/~joris/

*"What often prevents us from giving ourselves over to
a single vice is that we have several of them."*

— La Rochefoucauld

=====

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376. **Henry Gould**
Re: colding & heating
Tue 10 Feb 1998

On Tue, 10 Feb 1998 00:10:48 -0500 Louis Cabri said:

>

>What is the lineage of the "individual-unreal"?

>

>What if it were Whitman! Not "precipitant of the American
>character," as the standard critical reading has it, but he who
>differentiates between individualism, which "isolates," and
>"personalism," which "fuses, ties, and aggregates . . .
>fraternizing all" (_Democractic Vistas_). "Personalism" thus
>is not identical to personal expression.

>

>I've found numerous historical resonance for this word, but
>Whitman's usage, it seems, is distinct.

>

>Anyone who can help me would be very welcome.

You might also look at Whitman's singular use of the word "disintegrated" in Song of Myself. It means, I think, "given an identity" (in the cosmos) by being "de-integrated" - separated, precipitated-out, of the whole. I think Whitman's style is based on a balance between the particular, the individual, and the whole - the balance gives it that "anonymous" character which is one sign of real poetry... - Henry G.

[↑ Contents](#)

377. **Hen**
Re: Surf music
Tue 10 Feb 1998

On Mon, 9 Feb 1998 18:28:47 -0500 William Burmeister Prod said:

>Although your world wonders me
>With your majestic superior cackling hen
>Your people I do not understand
>So to you I wish to put an end
>And you'll never hear surf music again

>

>-Jimi Hendrix, "Third stone from the sun"

>

Is this Hendrix coming back to say goodbye to the Beach Boys?

And so castles made of sand
drift into the sea
eventually...
(surf music...)

[↑ Contents](#)

378. **Hen**
Re: law & love
Tue 10 Feb 1998

On Tue, 10 Feb 1998 00:50:29 -0500 David Israel said:

>Quoth the good Dr. Gould --

>

><< . . . Law and love are an inescapable mutuality. The law for workers in

>poetry is WHAT'S ON THE PAGE. >>

>

>once it was the splotch on page

>once it was the note in air

>that seems now a distant age

>

>bird don't always live in cage

>glance ain't ever lost in stare

>once it was the splotch on page

[I heard the trees talking in the forest
about poetry]:

Time now for the trees to shroud the earth
with their dark branches, time
when the wind dies down
and over the still mirror
a faded voice is whispering.

Time again to climb into the old
music box in the forest,
and wind the iron spring:

it is letter by letter,
line by line.

- ol' Hen Gould [ca. whenever]

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379. **louis stroffolino**

Re: colding & heating

Tue 10 Feb 1998

Henry, is it balance? or ambivalence? (tension)? "these are not the me myself"--- a tension between the "self" which is REALLY an impersonal force (and the mistaking of this "impersonal force" for the "person" Walt Whitman may be why some call him megalomaniac) and the more brooding self that champions what Wordsworth would call obstinate questionings but is generally sad, desperate and pathetic (though these are not necessarily pejorative terms). Such is this dialectic, this unresolvable tension... ----- Since I've gotten into this 19th century groove (the class I'm teaching soon [adjunct salary toothless benefits]), I want to ask CAN ANYBODY SUGGEST A GOOD TRANSLATION EDITION OF GIACOMO LEOPARDI? I can't believe I haven't really read him before.... he seemed more fashionable in the 1920s in the USA than in any time since. Any help would be appreciated. CHRIS

On Tue, 10 Feb 1998, Henry Gould wrote:

On Tue, 10 Feb 1998 00:10:48 -0500 Louis Cabri said:

What is the lineage of the "individual-unreal"?

What if it were Whitman! Not "precipitant of the American character," as the standard critical reading has it, but he who differentiates between individualism, which "isolates," and "personalism," which "fuses, ties, and aggregates . . . fraternizing all" (_Democractic Vistas_). "Personalism" thus is not identical to personal expression.

I've found numerous historical resonance for this word, but Whitman's usage, it seems, is distinct.

Anyone who can help me would be very welcome.

You might also look at Whitman's singular use of the word "disintegrated" in Song of Myself. It means, I think, "given an identity" (in the cosmos) by being "de-integrated" - separated, precipitated-out, of the whole. I think Whitman's style is based on a balance between the particular, the individual, and the whole - the balance gives it that "anonymous" character which is one sign of real poetry... - Henry G.

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380. **sean bonney**

Poetry is not a subculture

Tue 10 Feb 1998

re Henry Gould's posting on 5th Feb re the task of crit,
particularly the upper case rant ending POETRY IS NOT A
SUBCULTURE

Firstly, whats so bad about being a subculture when the
dominant one is so banal, and in that banality so brutal
(check the current shituation viz Clinton & the UKs own
glorious ambassador of idiocy Blair)

Anyway, Henry's notes got me thinking about the marginal
position we often find ourselves in. It should be clear to
everybody that the way poetry is taught in school puts most
people off - these people aren't just 'outside' poetry, a
lot of them actively dislike it - seen as elitist and
irrelevant, the residue of a best forgotten culture that
existed pre-MTV etc, containing no joy fun or pleasure,
which are surely among the main reasons that we all got
involved in the first place. Result is, post-school a lot
of people are disinclined to go to poetry because it
carries too many school-time horror memories. Here in
Britain you find undergraduates who still define a poem as
something that rhymes.

Fine, forget em, we're not in the business of mass markets
anyway, and maybe elitism isn't that bad after all, if the
alternative is such spectacles as the massed ranks of the
Tory Party singing Blake's lyrics as emblems of bigotry,
capital etc - all the stuff that Blake loathed.

It seems to me that people see poetry as a joke because
they don't know what it is; the most pleasure I've got from
my own readings is folks coming up afterwards saying they
usually hate poetry but loved mine (make of that what you
will!). A lot of people are THREATENED by the perceived
difficulties etc, and react accordingly.

It isn't a case of us learned poets against the philistine world; its just that much
of what we say only has interest to each other, hence a discussion group like
this. Example: photographs of deep space engage me more than anything else,
but if someone in the pub starts talking about the finer points of astro-physics
my eyes glaze over.

Lets not forget that this is always the position that poets have been in. Blake and Shelley were small press activists. Its just now perhaps the situation is more complicated - self consciousness produced by media etc etc. Sometimes in the info-babble that we're all a part of it seems the only possible option is an ironic silence (Rimbaud pissing in the shadows) - but even thats useless, stand there silently and no-one will notice, you'll just end up getting run over by a truck.

[REDACTED]

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381. **sean bonney**

Missing persons

Tue 10 Feb 1998

Can anybody give me some info on Claude Pelieu. I know that he published a couple of things with Beach Books in the 60s, and was associated with Burroughs.

Anybody know anything since then? Is he still active? Is he still alive?

[REDACTED]

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382. **Pierre Joris**

Re: Missing persons

Tue 10 Feb 1998

Claude Pélieu & Mary Beach are well and alive in upstate New york (well, Claude is a bit the worse for the wear; Mary, closing in on eighty is doing wonderfully -- making collages every day -- both are in fact the last great collage-artists of the age). Claude has done mainly visual work in the last few years (many hundreds of collages, even though arthritis in the hands is making the scissor work difficult), though there is also a fair amount of writing writing: I am editing a Selected Pelieu right now. A number of small press books have come out in France these last 10 years. Obviously, last year's disappearance of AG & WSB hit them hard.

Pierre

sean bonney wrote:

| *Can anybody give me some info on Claude Pelieu. I know that*
| *he published a couple of things with Beach Books in the*

60s, and was associated with Burroughs.

Anybody know anything since then? Is he still active? Is he still alive?

[REDACTED]

--

=====

pierre joris 6 madison place albany ny 12202

tel/fax [REDACTED] email: [REDACTED]

http://www.albany.edu/~joris/

"What often prevents us from giving ourselves over to a single vice is that we have several of them."

— La Rochefoucauld

=====

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383. **Hank Lazer**

Re: john kinsella

Tue 10 Feb 1998

Would someone please back-channel a current e-mail address for John Kinsella? I've tried sending to [REDACTED] and the message gets bounced back.... Thanks.

Hank Lazer

[REDACTED]

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384. **Lisa Samuels**

Re: INDIVIDUAL-UNREAL

Tue 10 Feb 1998

dear chris & louis,

yes, it's right to set aside the notion of an oppositional matrix, or at least binary, between "real" and "unreal". i'd say riding wants "collective-real" and "individual-real" to tango or tangle together so that "individual-unreal" can have the rest of the thought space. she performed a similar operation with "become" and "becoming", setting them alongside or opposite each other so that they could struggle publicly while the more important fact of "UNBECOMING" might be what individual-unreal selves were striving toward.

while i have not seen an exact predecessor for "individual-unreal", louis, such terms were being used by an assortment of such odd contemporaries as wyndham lewis, in the context of coming up with vocabularies to fight "the historical sense" and the individual in the queue of tradition, etc. riding explicitly addresses (& disapproves of) lewis, still caught in the "real" according to her.

i think your formulation of asking what poetry can do for words is a good one, chris -- and what it can do for humans, of course, too, in their efforts to be perfectly understood for and by one another. looking straight into the eye of the impossible. odd that she always reminds me of kathy acker's way of putting it, given how riding would disapprove of this: "the demand for an adequate mode of expression is senseless." nothing is enough.

lisa

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385. **Mark Prejsnar**
Broaden yr horizons

Tue 10 Feb 1998

I seldom stray off poetix here, and when I do it's for the sake of politix.

But country blues is a major passion of mine, so in the wake of several mentions of Robert Johnson, let me just drop this...

Possibly 5,000 tracks of interest were recorded between 1927 and 1940, that could be called country blues or closely-allied urban blues, such as boogie piano and piano-based blues vocals. The extent to which Johnson is the only artist people've heard of, is frightening. A whole lot of this stuff is available on reissues. Just to name the darker more brooding types, who'd appeal to Johnsonites, check out most anything by:

Barbacue Bob

Blind Willie McTell

Charlie Lincoln (typically chauvinist, I start with Atlanta artists)

Peg Leg Howell

Charley Patton

Tommy Johnson

Bukka White

Memphis Minnie

Peetie Wheatstraw

Sleepy John Estes

Son House

Henry Thomas
Blind Lemon Jefferson

This list suggests a couple of things, of course: country blues was dominated by men, women having strongly dominated the jazz/vaudeville-related "composed" blues of 1919-1929, typified by Bessie Smith and producer/bandleader/composers like Handy. (Much beyond Smith is worth listening to in that genre also, by the way) Nonetheless, Memphis Minnie, with hundreds of 78s to her name, was a truly dominant figure, the most imaginative of blues songwriters and famous for the brilliance of her guitar work. (Her three successive husbands were all major blues singer/guitarists, and were always her prime collaborators in person and on record; but it was always quite clear that she was the prime artist.)

Second, this list mostly excludes trends outside the "deep blues".. Such as East Coast and much of Texas and Memphis and "Bluebird beat" and jug bands. Most of those trends are more uptempo and "good-timey" and that puts off some blues fans I know. But in my opinion they represent some of the best pop music ever produced in the US or anywhere else, with formal range and fascinating lyrics replacing pure somberness. Not to mention *energy* (Peter Guralnick writes accurately that the great jug bands were "the rock and roll bands of their time," and the parallel is quite exact for conveying the kind of rush they provide.)

Third, how can a poet resist a genre where making up your nom du disque was itself to compose a sort of mini-poem?? (see list above)

(There were lots more women in country blues besides Minnie, by the way, but unfortunately most only had one or two 78s released, and so you need to seek 'em out on various multi-artist compilations.)

Mark P.

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386. **MAYHEW**

A recently discovered poem by Mme Breton

Tue 10 Feb 1998

My husband with the ingrown toenail of a scorpion.
My husband with the superego of a protestant preacher,
with the ego of an Argentine city,
with the id of a Paris Brothel.
My husband with the homophobia of a scared rabbit.
My husband with the necktie of a surrealist.
My husband with suspenders of Derridean deconstruction.

My husband with eyebrows of caviar and earwax of votive candles.
My husband with armpits of Lithuanian landfills.
My husband with the sexual politics of a Trotskyite baboon circa 1938.
My husband with the sexual politics of a poet.
My husband with the sexual politics of a Mormon polygamist.
My husband
My husband
My husband

forgive the lameness of this effort.

Jonathan Mayhew
Department of Spanish and Portuguese
3062 Wescoe Hall
University of Kansas



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387. **rsillima**

44 Freud

Tue 10 Feb 1998

44 was the uniform number chosen by Henry Aaron, Willie McCovey and Reggie Jackson (the latter two in homage to the first), none of whom ever played in Japan a la Cecil Fielder, Don Blasingame or other US baseball players trying to stretch out or pump up stalled careers (fewer players have followed the path of Warren Spahn and George Brunet (who pitched until he was nearly 50) by going to Mexico instead). I forget what Spahnie's number was, although I did see him pitch once as an SF Giant (this was before Mexico) in addition to many times in a Milwaukee uniform. Still, my favorite post-US-major league event remains Louis Tiant's stint in the short-lived Senior Baseball League where he was traded from one team in Florida to another in return for 500 stuffed teddy bears.

I have too many friends who are Freudian analysts to treat as casually as I've seen here, although its problematics could take a generation of careers to fully explore. One thing that the Freudians did which has had a huge impact in the US was to keep certification away from the university system as such (Dale Smith would approve) by setting up their own institutes. One thing this did was guarantee that there was no professor on campus who was ever the "official" Freudian in the psych department, which in turn meant that anybody in any department could volunteer for that social role, including, back when I was a student at UC Berkeley, Freddy Crews, a shallow opportunist who was widely

regarded as in the sweepstakes for most boring professor in the department (Mark Schorer and Tom Parkinson competed as well and I always thought that Schorer won out simply because he'd had a 20 year head start on Crews and 10 on Parkinson) -- Crews used to teach a literature and ideology course that was a tribute to predictability and certainly never thought to try reading "unideological" texts in those terms. Anyhow, Freudianism as an ism became both a free floating signifier of the worst sort on every campus AND has become, as a formal system among professional analysts who are painfully aware of their outsidership to the university system, fairly defensive. It's a system in which trying to think clearly or even halfway intelligibly about Freud's limits (as well as strengths) is all but impossible, though I am sure that there are careers to be made in the trying. Rethinking Marx is not dissimilar as a project beset with problems at the moment, as in *The Work of Art in the Age of Hypertext* etc.

But I think the real lesson to be drawn from the Freudian adventure in the US has been what it's revealed about how universities function when a major trend in social analysis (and you never had to agree with any of Freud to see it was at least that) is set loose under those special terms.

That's why I think it's so important that we stress, over and over, that the legitimation of poetry is something that occurs OFF campus, typically in the major urban areas but inevitably not in the MFA programs or the various anglophile critical programs (the latter these days falling all over themselves to tell us just how fab fab fabulous the new Ted Hughes' collection of necromancy is).

Louis, thanks for the exact details re the Archives and the list -- I think that tends to point out the nature of the discourse here rather well. As I've said before, if there are 500 folks "subscribed" and a max of 50 messages possible per day, people should think very hard before posting more than one.

Ron (still has pneumonia after 46 days) Silliman

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388. **Hank Lazer**

Re: Kinsella - e-address

Tue 10 Feb 1998

Thanks one & all. I've received John Kinsella's correct e-mail address....

Hank Lazer

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389. **Scott Pound**

Re: spraying the communities

Tue 10 Feb 1998

I think Pierre Joris should post the page of his intro to Blanchot's book on community if only because it is one of the best lessons in translation there is.

Scott Pound

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390. **Gary Sullivan**

Daniel Davidson - Partial Bibliography

Tue 10 Feb 1998

Hello, Joel, Nick, & others:

Thanks everyone who backchanneled & Nick, for your post. Also, thanks to everyone who posted various Eastern-filtered readings of 44. I'll post an "official" call for work on Dan's life & art in the next couple of days.

As per Joel's request, what follows is a list of some of Daniel Davidson's work. I'll start with *_culture_*, listing the books that make up that longpoem, in the sequence Dan had planned for them. Following that are lists of all published books and all works published in magazines through 1991. I've been sick for several days plus had to move from the Bronx to Manhattan, and then from Manhattan to Brooklyn, so what follows is by no means complete. It hopefully gives you a lot to look for until I've put together a more complete list, which I'll probably send to the EPC rather than posting (& post to say it's there.) (Joel: see, esp., his review of Collobert's *_It Then_* -- I seem to remember you mentioning w/interest Collobert's work.)

*_culture_*

"Product"

"Bureaucrat, my love."

"An Account"

"Transit"

"Image"

"Desire"

"Anomie"

PUBLISHED BOOKS

*_Product_*, e.g. press (1991) -- e-mail me for more info

*_Weather_*, Score (1992) -- e-mail Crag Hill (██████) for more info

*_Image_*, Zasterle (1993)

*_Absence Sensorium_*, with Tom Mandel, Potes & Poets (1997)

WORK PUBLISHED IN MAGAZINES (THROUGH 1991)

1984	Beatitude	"The Months of Winter" "Gift"
1985	If	"And the sun is falling"
1986	If	"Stigmata of the Verb To Be" "Something"
	If	"Negotiations"
1987	Alchemy	"Incident"
	Ironwood 29	"Notes on a New Architecture" "Calculation to Zero"
	Athena Incognito	"Stigmata of the Verb To Be" "Estimates"
	Transfer 53	"Small Journey"
	"Necessary Conditions"	
1988	Athena Incognito	"Pleasures of the Flesh"
	Ink 2 (SF)	"Correspondence"
	"And the sun is falling"	
	NRG 29	"Involvement"
	Transfer 54	"Divertimento"
	"In Via Nuova"	
1989	Dead Fish	"Dead Fish"
	Ink 3 (SF)	"Negotiations"
	Polaritz Etzeztz	"Negotiations"
	Polaritz Etzeztz	from _Weather_
1990	Central Park 17/18	from "Collected Works"
	Hole 2	from "Shine"
	O.ARS 5	from "Shine"
	Stifled Yawn 1	from "Product"
	Writing 25	from "Long Division"
1991	Aerial 5	from "Long Division" Review, "If There Is A
	Body, I Am It."	_It Then_, by Danielle Collobert
	Anderson Valley	"Ode to Corporate Bungholes" Advertiser
	Avec 4	from "Transit"
	Cyanosis 1	from "Image"

Hambone 9	Review "Diversity, Reference and the	
Expanded Voice." _Lucid Interval as		Integrated Mu-
sic_, by Ed Roberson		
Lift 6	From _Weather_	
Lift 7	From "Long Division"	
Talisman	from "Transit"	

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391. **Bob Grotjohn**

Re: 44 Freud

Tue 10 Feb 1998

██████ wrote:

>

> 44 was the uniform number chosen by Henry Aaron, Willie McCovey and Reggie

> Jackson (the latter two in homage to the first), none of whom ever played in
> Japan

And they are still alive. Being baseball immortals, I suppose they will ever die.
At least their numbers won't.

While in this non sequitorial realm--here is my favorite baseball poem:

Gertrude Stein on the designated hitter (I don't think she likes it, but
I am not sure) and other baseball stuff
(Stanzas in Meditation, #IX)

How nine

Nine is not mine

Mine is not nine

Ten is not nine

Mine is not ten

Nor when

Nor which one then

Can be not then

Not only mine for ten

But any ten for which one then

I am not nine

Can be mine

Mine one at a time

Not one from nine

Nor eight at one time

For which they can be mine.
Mine is one time
As much as they know they like
I like it too to be one of one two
One two or one or two
One and one
One mine
Not one mine
As so they ask me what I do
Can they but if they too
One is mine too
Which is one for you
Can they be like me
I like it for which they can
Not pay but say
She is not mine with not
But will they rather
Oh yes not rather not
In won in mine in three
In one two three
All out but me.
I find I like what I have
Very much.

--

Bob Grotjohn

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392. **louis stroffolino**

Re: Missing persons

Tue 10 Feb 1998

Isn't pierre joris's cat named after Pelieu? chris

On Tue, 10 Feb 1998, sean bonney wrote:

*Can anybody give me some info on Claude Pelieu. I know that
he published a couple of things with Beach Books in the
60s, and was associated with Burroughs.*

*Anybody know anything since then? Is he still active? Is he
still alive?*



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393. **Mark Prejsnar**

ocratic meditation

Tue 10 Feb 1998

As per Ron, I have thought hard, and am posting my second message of the day....

I strongly recommend -ocracy: parts 1-4 by Peter Ganick and Sheila Murphy (Norman OK : Texture Press, 1997).

This has been my favorite rush-hour reading for the past few days. Its swoop and verve and pointed changes of image-center keep me rivited, and make bus-commuting fade into the background. It'll be too paratactic for some of our commonsensepods; but this is really fine writing and fun writing. It's verse, which mutates its grain and tempo between sections; kinda like the traditional approach to different tempi between movements of a classical piece. (..but not as drear and plodding in execution as the sleepy Possum) The center shifts relentlessly like Ron himself; but less social surface and more of the roil and smoke underlying awareness, the tumult of how awareness clashes with our violently disunified culture. Not enuff center?? Imitative form notwithstanding, scattershot effect (scattershot intention?) would be the main fault in the piece.

It sounds great read aloud and is pretty funny too. Barbara Hocker's minimalist cover art is appropriate and amusing as well.....

Mark P.
@lanta

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394. **David Kellogg**

Re: query

Tue 10 Feb 1998

Maria, you've probably got this by now, but: "The Song of the Borderguard" was published in *_A Book of Resemblances_* and appears again in *_Selected Poems_*, ed. Robert J. Bertholf(New York: New Directions, 1993), pages 22-3. I don't know if the page reference changes for the revised edition of the Selected.

Cheers,
David

~~~~~  
~~~~~

David Kellogg Duke University
██████ Program in Writing and Rhetoric
██████ Durham, NC 27708
FAX ██████ http://www.duke.edu/~kellogg/

-----Original Message-----

From: Maria Damon <██████>

To: ██████ <██████>

Date: Monday, February 09, 1998 2:37 PM

Subject: query

*i'm far from my library alas, and from good bookstores. can anyone quick
give me a citation for robt duncan's "song of the borderguard"? muchos
apreciados. --md*

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395. **p. durgin**

Re: Broaden yr horizons

Tue 10 Feb 1998

On country blues, American folk music, the best place to begin, I think, is with "Before the Blues" vol.s I - III, on the yazoo label. I happen to work in a c.d. shop which specializes in these genres, so let me know if I can help. Also, "American Primitive" on the Reverent label. That is, raw gospel 78's.

Patrick F. Durgin

`

`

`

` ----->*<-----

` K E N N I N G|

` anewsletterof|

` poetry&poetic|

` s418BrownSt.#|

` 10IowaCityIA5|

` 2245USA\\W|

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396. **Aldon Nielsen**

Re: O List-Master

Tue 10 Feb 1998

I suppose the term "listserv" might convey some sense of mastery, but . . .

a bit of "creative" appropriation might have been considerably more interesting -- but, call me old fashioned and orthodox, I am of the opinion that reprinting people's email posts with no notification fits poorly with the pose adopted ("how firmly fastened are your walls" etc.) -- Isn't this the same person who criticized people for speaking of Tom Clark outside his presence????

No, forgive us, Oh Dale, for having thought to converse with you openly and, we thought, honestly.

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397. **Pierre Joris**
Re: Missing persons
Tue 10 Feb 1998

louis stroffolino wrote:

Isn't pierre joris's cat named after Pelieu? chris

Claude?-- No that was Dorn's horse's first name.

--

=====

pierre joris 6 madison place albany ny 12202
tel/fax [REDACTED] email: [REDACTED]
<http://www.albany.edu/~joris/>

"What often prevents us from giving ourselves over to
a single vice is that we have several of them."

— La Rochefoucauld

=====

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398. **Mark Prejsnar**
Re: Broaden yr horizons
Tue 10 Feb 1998

Well, no this isn't that necessary "a place to begin.." You can really begin anywhere, depending on what type of blues you lean toward...It is not a genre that needs a detailed introduction

However, Yazoo is the premiere label for reissues. For completeness, there are now dozens of specialty labels, many of 'em excellent, like Blues Classics, Document etc. These can't be found in many stores. The best way to find out about them is to get on the mailing list of an outfit called Roots & Rhythms (details on

demand); unless of course you live in Boston, then you can mosey over to Cheapo Records in Central Square, like generations before you.

You can also use a local bookstore or library to read the detailed essay/notations in the Blackwell Guide to Blues Records; I have the first edition, edited by the dean of blues scholars, Paul Oliver. A brand new 2nd edition is just out and I can't vouch for it as I haven't seen it, but it's probably just as solid.

On Tue, 10 Feb 1998, p. durgin wrote:

On country blues, American folk music, the best place to begin, I think, is with "Before the Blues" vol.s I - III, on the yazoo label. I happen to work in a c.d. shop which specializes in these genres, so let me know if I can help. Also, "American Primitive" on the Reverent label. That is, raw gospel 78's.

Patrick F. Durgin

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`
` ----->*<-----
` K E N N I N G|
` anewletterof|
` poetry&poetic|
` s418BrownSt.#|
` 10IowaCityIA5|
` 2245USA\\V\\|

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399. **Aldon Nielsen** **doings in LA**

Tue 10 Feb 1998

last Thursday at Loyola Marymount University an unexpectedly huge crowd turned out for a reading by Juan Felipe Herrera -- hit of the evening was a poem titled "Foodstuffs They never Told Us About" -- a poem whose origins were Herrera's long-term desire to use the word "foodstuffs" in a poem.

Herrera read mostly from a new manuscript titled "Don't Worry, Baby." Random lines transcribed from the title poem:

I worry about exotic birds learning too much English.
I worry about the Governor's face muscles.
I worry about the return of folk singers.
I worry about people who use the word "folk."
I worry about Spielberg's next ethnic movie.

I worry about drive-by's low on gas.
I worry about Beijing doing Elvis.
I worry about Russian women becoming rednecks.
I worry about poets who believe in publishing.
I worry about the word "alien" becoming too familiar.
I worry about the ass on the other side of the glass ceiling.
I worry about performance art going into the poetry business.
I worry about copycat do-gooders.
I worry about insurance agents posing as poets.
I worry about the complexion of beans.
I worry about VFW halls that have Taco Thursdays.
I worry about rappers entering a spelling bee.
I worry about guys locked up so they can write.

Herrera's new book of prose, *_Mayan Drifter_*, is out from Temple University Press.

next up here -- David Bromige and Michael Davidson. Will announce date and time in a few weeks.

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400. **Aldon Nielsen**

Re: Broaden yr horizons

Tue 10 Feb 1998

can we get address or other info on Reverent records,,, that collection of gospel 78s sounds like something I'd like to get my hads on

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401. **Dale M Smith**

Re: O List-Master

Tue 10 Feb 1998

Well, I did seek forgiveness... But the difference is that I said nothing in my magazine against anyone. All dialogue comes from each person's own mouth. My editorial concern was to represent a single thread that took place re the editorial practice of Mike and Dale's. As I stated in my intro I wanted to broaden the audience for this extremely lively group of exchanges.

By the way, my new email account doesn't give individual names with each post. I only know for sure who is writing when the post is signed. But I have a feeling, due to his brilliant ability to sniff out thin contradictions and to gauge levels of honesty, that I am replying to Aldon Nielson. Well, I'm glad you're interested in the magazine. If you, David Bromige, Susan Schul tz, Hugh

Steinberg, Simon Schuchat, Maria Damon, Robert Drake, Mark Weiss, Sylvester Pollet and Eliza McGrand will backchannel me with your addresses I'll be sure to send one off to you (send \$5 and I'll put you on the list for #8!). *Honestly* it's a very interesting exchange. I've already sent copies to Dodie, Kevin and Juliana. Thanks for staying on me though to get these out to the others.

Dale

To: [REDACTED]

I suppose the term "listserv" might convey some sense of mastery, but . . .

a bit of "creative" appropriation might have been considerably more interesting -- but, call me old fashioned and orthodox, I am of the opinion that reprinting people's email posts with no notification fits poorly with the pose adopted ("how firmly fastened are your walls" etc.) -- Isn't this the same person who criticized people for speaking of Tom Clark outside his presence????

No, forgive us, Oh Dale, for having thought to converse with you openly and, we thought, honestly.

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402. **Aviva Wesley Vogel**

Re: Broaden yr horizons

Tue 10 Feb 1998

In a message dated 98-02-10 15:54:00 EST, you write:

<< Roots & Rhythms (details on demand); >>

Yes, I'd love those details!!

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403. **Miekal And**

in queue

Tue 10 Feb 1998

I dont have ron's email in front of me anymore, but Ive a different desire with this list, with spending time with the energetic presence different voices project outward here. so Im thankful for a rush of henry spandrift blarnesian cracker-box collectibles, I relish it when there's a stepping forward to say what you gotta say. & I dont believe that the 50 a day limit is throttling any voice that wants to pump it up, as all messages go in queue, & theoretically we could get a very interesting poetics list timewarp going, if we were all now reading & responding to messages from 3 days or 3 weeks or 3 years ago, does it really matter....

miekal

ron my lover here is battling pnemonia & you gotta get the chi going with lotsa of the chinese tonic roots, osha, garlic, & after you feel better, give it that much time more of rest, otherwise it dont go away...

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404. **Miekal And**
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405. **KENT JOHNSON**
Private property

Tue 10 Feb 1998

The idea that Dale "pirated" material by printing e-mails in the feisty Mike and Dale's Younger Poets from a list discussion relating to _that same magazine and its editorial policy_ strikes me as a bit ridiculous. Obviously, if these had been private communications Dale would have needed permission to reprint, but anything that appears here is already freely available to millions and should just be thought of as in the public domain. Why not? If Dale did something wrong by doing what he did then so did Postmodern Culture when it reprinted posts of a rather "personal" nature from the discussion here after Allen Ginsberg's death. Some of my own words are in there and nobody contacted me-- should I consider calling the lawyers?

Kent

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406. **k. lederer**

Re: "Indie Critics," Evans, Rod Smith, baloney--

Tue 10 Feb 1998

Henry--

I think that by far the best "criticism" of a poem is a new poem--

As far as the Evans article--I don't think of it as "criticism" so much as "elucidation"--

Perhaps the young/old thing is an old and oft-addressed problem--but it doesn't mean that it doesn't need re-stating generation after generation--

And Evans states it beautifully--in beautiful language--

And clearly--in terms that I can understand--

I LOVE HIS ESSAY!

And thank god for the mental blinders--otherwise I might be blinded by your utter brilliance--

Yours,
Katy L.

On Wed, 4 Feb 1998, henry gould wrote:

*On Wed, 4 Feb 1998 13:41:44 -0600 k. lederer said:
The implications for younger writers here are astonishing--*

That perhaps "older" writers--even those of the avant-garde variety--may also be unable to fully "see" (perceive is probably a better word) the "new" in the younger generation's works--

Perhaps the "older" writers might claim that the young ones are "lazy," "apathetic," etc. (sound familiar?), because they cannot "see" the work that goes into simply "emerging"--

Evans doesn't make such arguments explicitly--but I think these analogies

are more than available (particularly in light of the postscript in which he basically credits such writers as Brown, Jarnot, Moxley, Spahr, Stroffolino, and Rothschild for, in some regards, freeing "the avant-garde" from the aesthetic prison (not intentionally a prison, but an effective one none the less) of Langpos. Breaking out of prison is hard work! And usually happens when no one is looking.

In other words, I think that this essay represents *PRECISELY* the kind of criticism that "Rod Smith's Generation" might need--

Katy, I'm glad you got something out of that essay; he's a snazzy writer. But you don't need a dress-up of Hegel & Marx for the precisely OLD idea (I mean like, old since Greek & Roman times) that the old fogies won't be able to understand the youngsters. Maybe it's just that a card-carrying "youngster" is saying it for you (& insists on harping on the "generation" thing just so you don't forget)... My point was that such advocacy is only a beginning, if anything.

I think you need to open the mental blinders. Critic does not necessarily = "mainstream establishment person out to judge us by outmoded standards of (baloney) taste". That is a cartoon of a critic. In my mind, critic = "somebody who loves poetry enough to dig into it backwards & forwards, past & present, and say something intelligent (if subjective) about the style, mindset, aims, effects, contradictions, connections, strengths, imitations, originalities, meaning, impact, development... etc of what s/he reads". I don't think of standards as a set of hoary rules; I think of standards as the feel of a good ear for syntax, sound, meaning, and complexity. Wouldn't you rather read some of this than various gang-approval ratings, blurbs, or tossed-off empty retchings which pass for "criticism?" *THAT IS ALL I'M SAYING.*

...I am speaking as a poet who has played by what I consider the rules for over 30 years. My rules are: do the poem. Send it to magazines & contests. Think about what you are doing - maybe write an essay about it. That's it. In my experience "doing the poem" has absorbed the energy. Maybe I am a fanatic, or a hedgehog in Isaiah Berlin's sense, or a totally introverted recluse.

These rules seem to contradict each other, Henry. Sending to mags and contests doesn't absorb any energy? Do introverts write lots of essays? Send to contests? (Emily--)

All I meant was, *MOST* of my energy (like 98%) goes into *DOING* the poems (until I joined this list [sigh]). Does anybody know what I look like? Seen me gladhanding at conferences? Reading anyplace outside Providence? Published much? (these are rhetorical questions) Maybe it's because I only write haiku about buffalo - that could be it. I'm also not a prof,

not a writing teacher, not a grad student, not a novelist, not a journalist, not a professional poet, not a performance artist; the only wannabee I am is wannabee out on the road again with my guitar - but then I really would have to be running from the law. Ask Jack about that.

It seems to me that "taste, judgement, freedom, and artistic instinct" are also forms of baloney.

Yes, the word "taste" always leaves a bad taste in the mouth. I like baloney better myself. But judgement, freedom, artistic instinct... there they go now, off to the next reality... all words become dust through repetition... anything can be turned into a joke... "the laughter of fools is like fire crackling under a pot" [Proverbs].
- Henry Gould

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407. **Aldon Nielsen**

Dan Davidson

Tue 10 Feb 1998

whoever was collecting Dan's work --

sorry I didn't get the message saved, with the names attached --

I have audio tape of Dan reading from the radio program I used to do -- Would be happy to dupe the tape for you if you'd like a copy --

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408. **Thomas Bell**

Re: colding & heating

Tue 10 Feb 1998

ou might want to look at Italo Calvi9no's _Six memos for the next millenium_
Perhaps, Leopardi is ready for a comeback. tom bell

At 08:25 AM 2/10/98 -0500, louis stroffolino wrote:

- > Since I've gotten into this 19th century groove (the class I'm
- > teaching soon [adjunct salary toothless benefits]), I want to
- > ask CAN ANYBODY SUGGEST A GOOD TRANSLATION EDITION OF
- GIACOMO
- > LEOPARDI? I can't believe I haven't really read him before....
- > he seemed more fashionable in the 1920s in the USA than in any

> time since. Any help would be appreciated. CHris
>
>On Tue, 10 Feb 1998, Henry Gould wrote:
>
>> On Tue, 10 Feb 1998 00:10:48 -0500 Louis Cabri said:
>> >
>> >What is the lineage of the "individual-unreal"?
>> >
>> >What if it were Whitman! Not "precipitant of the American
>> >character," as the standard critical reading has it, but he who
>> >differentiates between individualism, which "isolates," and
>> >"personalism," which "fuses, ties, and aggregates . . .
>> >fraternizing all" (_Democractic Vistas_). "Personalism" thus
>> >is not identical to personal expression.
>> >
>> >I've found numerous historical resonance for this word, but
>> >Whitman's usage, it seems, is distinct.
>> >
>> >Anyone who can help me would be very welcome.
>>
>> You might also look at Whitman's singular use of the word "disintegrated"
>> in Song of Myself. It means, I think, "given an identity" (in the cosmos)
>> by being "de-integrated" - separated, precipitated-out, of the whole.
>> I think Whitmans's style is based on a balance between the particular,
>> the individual, and the whole - the balance gives it that "anonymous"
character
>> which is one sign of real poetry... - Henry G.
>>
>
>

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409. **Thomas Bell**

Re: 44 baseball poems

Tue 10 Feb 1998

I think Spahn was 21. He aslo is in one of the most famous baseball poems, "Spahn and Sain, and two days rain." - although it might be forgotten now. If there is a run on Brave (Milw) numerology, what were the numbers of Burdette, Buhl. Crandell, Bruton,....? tom bell

At 09:23 AM 2/10/98 -0600, [REDACTED] wrote:

>44 was the uniform number chosen by Henry Aaron, Willie McCovey and

Reggie

>Jackson (the latter two in homage to the first), none of whom ever played in
>Japan a la Cecil Fielder, Don Blasingame or other US baseball players trying
>to stretch out or pump up stalled careers (fewer players have followed the
>path of Warren Spahn and George Brunet (who pitched until he was nearly
50)
>by going to Mexico instead). I forget what Spahn's number was, although I
>did see him pitch once as an SF Giant (this was before Mexico) in addition
>to many times in a Milwaukee uniform. Still, my favorite post-US-major
>league event remains Louis Tiant's stint in the short-lived Senior Baseball
>League where he was traded from one team in Florida to another in return for
>500 stuffed teddy bears.

>

>I have too many friends who are Freudian analysts to treat as casually as
>I've seen here, although its problematics could take a generation of careers
>to fully explore. One thing that the Freudians did which has had a huge
>impact in the US was to keep certification away from the university system
>as such (Dale Smith would approve) by setting up their own institutes. One
>thing this did was guarantee that there was no professor on campus who was
>ever the "official" Freudian in the psych department, which in turn meant
>that anybody in any department could volunteer for that social role,
>including, back when I was a student at UC Berkeley, Freddy Crews, a shal-
low

>opportunist who was widely regarded as in the sweepstakes for most boring
>professor in the department (Mark Schorer and Tom Parkinson competed as
well

>and I always thought that Schorer won out simply because he'd had a 20 year
>head start on Crews and 10 on Parkinson) -- Crews used to teach a literature
>and ideology course that was a tribute to predictability and certainly never
>thought to try reading "unideological" texts in those terms. Anyhow,
>Freudianism as an ism became both a free floating signifier of the worst
>sort on every campus AND has become, as a formal system among profes-
sional

>analysts who are painfully aware of their outsidersness to the university
>system, fairly defensive. It's a system in which trying to think clearly or
>even halfway intelligibly about Freud's limits (as well as strengths) is all
>but impossible, though I am sure that there are careers to be made in the
>trying. Rethinking Marx is not dissimilar as a project beset with problems
>at the moment, as in The Work of Art in the Age of Hypertext etc.

>

>But I think the real lesson to be drawn from the Freudian adventure in the
>US has been what it's revealed about how universities function when a major

>trend in social analysis (and you never had to agree with any of Freud to
>see it was at least that) is set loose under those special terms.

>

>That's why I think it's so important that we stress, over and over, that the
>legitimation of poetry is something that occurs OFF campus, typically in the
>major urban areas but inevitably not in the MFA programs or the various
>anglophile critical programs (the latter these days falling all over
>themselves to tell us just how fab fab fabulous the new Ted Hughes'
>collection of necromancy is).

>

>Louis, thanks for the exact details re the Archives and the list -- I think
>that tends to point out the nature of the discourse here rather well. As
>I've said before, if there are 500 folks "subscribed" and a max of 50
>messages possible per day, people should think very hard before posting more
>than one.

>

>Ron (still has pneumonia after 46 days) Silliman

>

>

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410. **Aldon Nielsen**

Re: of the ridiculous and the sublime

Tue 10 Feb 1998

any number of issues seem to have gotten mixed together oddly in Kent's post --
I'm headed back into the arms of El Nino, so only have time for a few quick
takes --

1) Did Postmodern culture in fact reprint entire posts from the list? I haven't
seen that issue, so don't know. This has nothing to do with calling lawyers, but
if they did, they should not have. What I did see was a review article in which
some posts were quoted, but perhaps that was a different issue? Could you
give me the number so I can try to see it at their site?

2) The POETICS list is available to "millions" only in the strictest sense, since
the "millions" would either have to subscribe or hack into it --

3) In either event, this has nothing to do, so far as I can see, with the question
of whether or not somebody has the right to print pages of POETICS list discus-
sion in their magazine with neither permission nor notice. The fact that some
of the posts were about the magazine's editorial policy has nothing to do with it
-- the fact that Kent writes a post here about the policy of Postmodern Culture
in reprinting Poetics list posts would not authorize them to reprint his post --

and forgetting numbering --

as I've said here any number of times -- I assume that anything I post to the list MAY reappear somewhere else -- I assume this because of what I know of human nature, and because it has already happened in the past -- That does not mean that it is OK for anybody who wants to, at any time, in any place, to republish such posts --

Is it really that ridiculous to ask that somebody who plans to reprint posts from this list should at least notify the writers and provide copies?

and let me make it clear, since I imagine most on the list haven't seen Dale's mag., this is not a personal complaint -- from what I saw in the copy that was shown to me briefly in SF there are few of my words in there -- but the episode has a bad smell to me -- The "list owner" has pretty much had a hands off policy towards what goes on here, and that's one of the things that has made the list what it is -- and I'm not asking that anybody be kicked out, or that anybody be told to shut up, or that anything official be done by anybody -- I AM asking that we respect one another enough to act in such a way that all will continue to feel that they can speak freely in this environment

was going to get to the sublime, but I see my car floating away -- so I will float after it --

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411. **Kali Tal**

Re: Private property

Tue 10 Feb 1998

Obviously, if these had been private communications Dale would have needed permission to reprint, but anything that appears here is already freely available to millions and should just be thought of as in the public domain.

I don't think so, Kent. After all, many people post poems on this list, and I hardly think that means they are giving up their copyright. Quoting from posts on this list might fall under the "Fair Use" rules, but reproduction of a series of posts in their entirety certainly violates copyright. Because one chooses to publish in a venue that allows millions of folks to see one's work doesn't mean one gives up all right to choose *which* venue will publish one's work. (In your terms any author of a bestseller would lose the right to control reprints.)

What it comes down to *should* be courtesy, even before we begin discussing the issue of legality. On another list, long ago, I heard that quite a bit of my writing had been lifted and reprinted in hard copy, by authors who never asked me if I minded my work being reproduced in journal form. (Joe surely

remembers the "Alex" incident on the old Technoculture list.) I did not *like* the author of the piece that lifted my work, and I'd have denied him the opportunity to reprint my posts on those grounds. That's my right. I'm the author; I own the copyright, I get to say who publishes my stuff, outside of quotations extracted under Fair Use.

If Dale did something wrong by doing what he did then so did Postmodern Culture when it reprinted posts of a rather "personal" nature from the discussion here after Allen Ginsberg's death. Some of my own words are in there and nobody contacted me-- should I consider calling the lawyers?

Yes, PMC was wrong, too, if they didn't contact you first, though it's, of course, your choice to call a lawyer or to let it go. Just because a practice has become ubiquitous doesn't make it ethical. And I'm surprised that Dale is able to rationalize publishing those pieces simply because they talk about "his" journal. Hell, even if somebody writes a bad review of my book, I still don't own the rights to go around reproducing the review in my publications.

This is a pretty cut-and-dried matter. There are lots of sites which discuss copyright in e-space, and I doubt one of them will say that what Dale did was okay, either ethically or legally, however justified he may feel.

Kali

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412. **Louis Cabri**
Re: colding & heating
Tue 10 Feb 1998

Lisa & Chris,

"ask not what words can do for poetry but what poetry can do for words"?

Caesar is exactly the problem. Is it the problem with all the late Riding? I haven't read the just-published *_Rational Meaning_* yet, so I'm going on, say, *_The Telling_* when I think that it is.

What is this imperial "word" of truth in 'late Riding'?

It's not the same "word," for me, as when, in her earlier critical prose even, she uses "individual-real" & other terms (1928).

It's not the genre status of her late writing, Chris, that is the issue for me but exactly this changed set toward the word.

Lisa, I agree: she's going **beyond** oppositional matrices (that's what I meant, Chris) with some of those early words. These are the rational matrices in relation to which most terms establish their common value. I'm saying "individual-unreal" becomes virtually a neologism. It's beyond the usual understanding of "unreal" that is got from thinking of "real." She has an inadequate vocabulary at hand **but** it's not her fault - it's the cultural grammar of her time and she is impatiently pushing elements of it to their limits in order to attempt to exceed the given, outrageously inadequate meanings in circulation (anarchism is NOT enough, as Lisa says).

To the extent that she goes "beyond," her prose is "poetic" -- but so what, really. I don't see what the word "poetic" adds or takes away to the event. But saying this is not asking "what poetry can do for words," which is a different trajectory on the word entirely.

Maybe the fourth possibility ("collective-unreal"), insofar as it might have a negative spin for her (very likely, no?), is what she calls the "zeitgeist" in her long first essay in *_Contemporaries & Snobs_*.

I'm interested in objectifying rules. That's not the same as ruling objectively. And it's definitely not subjectifying rules. I think when Riding goes metaphysical at the end there, in *_The Telling_* in particular, she's subjectifying rules (despite all her objectivity) in order to rule objectively.

Subjectifying rules - which leads back to singularity. I don't know about the **words** of a "philosophy," an "equipment for living," of the singular. I don't know if I like to work toward that way. I know I don't, in fact. Because Riding is substituting one "generic CRUTCH," as you put it, Chris, poetry, for another, philosophical prose. Trying to 'tie it all together' in discursive philosophical prose. Mistake! Poetry is not The Concept, but it can simulate it perfectly well, so why not do that?

Nor do I think all poetry should be singular, as if it were an ideal **value** or condition beyond history (so I reject someone's [not you, Chris or Lisa] constant invocation -- in a Turtlewax Antique-Charms Polish & homespun proverbial vernacular of the staid backwoodsman, whose profile's no problem if you're walking passed it by the log cabin display on the lawn outside the Howard Johnson's, but **month after month of living in the cabin** is like your screen freezing on Hokey Hill in a virtual world of Disney -- of a universal standard that you apparently find in all good poetry, viz: "the impersonal." The personal is really impersonal? Not my conclusion, anyway.) In fact I don't think you are saying this at

all, Lisa - that rather it's a finding your way, whatever means, into the contingent historical present in all its absolute impossibility.

"The demand for an adequate mode of expression is senseless." I can see, Lisa, how you mean that to refer to Riding. However, if that is read as Riding, then sense itself is not adequately undermined by being brought beyond its limit, as in her early work, because what's happened instead is that the limit - rationality - has become a site of semantic investment, & arbiter of the truthful word. That's how I feel about her later stuff.

I want to read the dictionary book; hopefully will find time this summer.

-louis

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413. **Matthew Kirschenbaum**

Re: Private property

Tue 10 Feb 1998

Just as a point of information: the material from Poetics that is reprinted in the PMC piece in question consists of a very brief posting from Charles Bernstein announcing Allen Ginsberg's illness, and then (about) six lines of the renga authored by various members of this list. Although I understand how one could argue that a principle is what's at stake in the juxtaposition with Dale Smith's actions, any real comparison between the two seems overstated to me. Matt

=====

===== Matthew G. Kirschenbaum

University of Virginia [REDACTED] or [REDACTED] Department of English

<http://www.iath.virginia.edu/~mgk3k/> The Blake Archive | IATH

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414. **robert drake**

Re: O List-Master

Tue 10 Feb 1998

dale--

i ov course would appreciate seeing a copy of your magazine; if you've reprinted any of my posts to the list, even moreso... are those posts credited? in context? i wait w/ baited breadth...

bob drake/burning press
po box 585
lakewood oh 44107

Well, I did seek forgiveness... But the difference is that I said nothing in my magazine against anyone. All dialogue comes from each person's own mouth. My editorial concern was to represent a single thread that took place re the editorial practice of Mike and Dale's. As I stated in my intro I wanted to broaden the audience for this extremely lively group of exchanges.

*By the way, my new email account doesn't give individual names with each post. I only know for sure who is writing when the post is signed. But I have a feeling, due to his brilliant ability to sniff out thin contradictions and to gauge levels of honesty, that I am replying to Aldon Nielson. Well, I'm glad you're interested in the magazine. If you, David Bromige, Susan Schultz, Hugh Steinberg, Simon Schuchat, Maria Damon, Robert Drake, Mark Weiss, Sylvester Pollet and Eliza McGrand will backchannel me with your addresses I'll be sure to send one off to you (send \$5 and I'll put you on the list for #8!). *Honestly* it's a very interesting exchange. I've already sent copies to Dodie, Kevin and Juliana. Thanks for staying on me though to get these out to the others.*

Dale

To: 

I suppose the term "listserv" might convey some sense of mastery, but . . .

a bit of "creative" appropriation might have been considerably more interesting -- but, call me old fashioned and orthodox, I am of the opinion that reprinting people's email posts with no notification fits poorly with the pose adopted ("how firmly fastened are your walls" etc.) -- Isn't this the same person who criticized people for speaking of Tom Clark outside his presence????

No, forgive us, Oh Dale, for having thought to converse with you openly and, we thought, honestly.

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415. **Henry Gould**
Re: colding & heating
Tue 10 Feb 1998

On Tue, 10 Feb 1998 20:00:36 -0500 Louis Cabri said:

>

>Nor do I think all poetry should be singular, as if it were an
>ideal *value* or condition beyond history (so I reject
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>vernacular of the staid backwoodsman, whose profile's no
>problem if you're walking passed it by the log cabin display
>on the lawn outside the Howard Johnson's, but *month after
>month of living in the cabin* is like your screen freezing on
>Hokey Hill in a virtual world of Disney -- of a universal
>standard that you apparently find in all good poetry, viz:
>"the impersonal." The personal is really impersonal? Not my
>conclusion, anyway.) In fact I don't think you are saying this
>at all, Lisa - that rather it's a finding your way, whatever
>means, into the contingent historical present in all its
>absolute impossibility.

Louis, could you clarify for us the argument of that "someone" you're planting satirical sides of shrubbery around? "Someone" argued once that the process of writing poetry sometimes involves individual effort - even an effort to excel, differentiate from the rest, find a unique voice, perhaps even beat the rest at their own game - which complicates the "group solidarity" so cherished by those who want to "make a difference", and needs to be taken into account when encountering poetry. "Someone" argued that some critics might see poetry as an art of words - words wrought to their most complicated - and that these critics might be able to "see" better if they are free from extra-literary allegiances, and write better if they share the poet's own drive for uniqueness. "Someone" argued once (in a much earlier thread) that great poetry exhibits an anonymous objective quality - the poet breaking through the shell of individuality, exceeding personal limits. Now you are saying this same "someone" was therefore arguing that poetry was a "value" beyond history? I think you're pinning "someone" with an argument they never made. But as long as you don't name that "someone", Louis, you can keep talking only to Lisa - and "someone" won't call you on it & disprove you. You may think a certain poetry club-du-jour is actually "changing history" by transvaluing literary values; you are welcome to your belief. "Someone" will wait to see what the indie-critics make of it - as poetry. - Henry Gould, the one & only "someone"

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416. **Thomas Bell**

Re: of the ridiculous and the sublime

Tue 10 Feb 1998

At 04:42 PM 2/10/98 -0800, Aldon Nielsen wrote:
about
a
post
about
publishing something without permission
possibly
If someone does something obnoxious,
it isn't less obnoxious if legal, ethical, or whatever
even though this seems to be the thing to do these days.
tom bell

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417. **Herb Levy**

Re: of the ridiculous and the sublime

Tue 10 Feb 1998

Aldon wrote:

2) The POETICS list is available to "millions" only in the strictest sense,
since the "millions" would either have to subscribe or hack into it --

All posts made to the list are available to anyone with a Web browser right
here:

<<http://listserv.acsu.buffalo.edu/archives/poetics.html>>

& have been for a very long time. Anyone can read it at any time regardless of
the so-called closed status of the list. This is mentioned in the Welcome Mes-
sage that's often posted to the list & that I'm sure we've all read before saving
to our hard drives.

Certainly (if we're to claim this is some kind of community) it makes sense for
folks on the list to ask others if it's okay to quote them, but being outside of the
academic world I don't know the protocol of the need to do so.

Such need is less clear for those who stumble or otherwise come across the ar-
chives and search for information relevant to something they're writing about.
For such purposes, the archive is just another resource out there. While it
might be nice if they were to do so, I doubt that everyone who finds a useful
quote in, say, your book *Black Chant* will ask your permission before adding it
to their term paper or thesis.

I've seen a few footnoted citations of posts to the list (Perloff on Yasusada, Altieri on BlaserCon), I imagine there've been others, the PMC article I guess being one of them.

Since Dale's offered to provide copies for those whose words are reprinted, I think the problem's now the more abstract one of a realizing that every word written here is published on the Web.

Good luck with your floating car.

Bests,

Herb

Herb Levy



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418. **Joe Ahearn**
Re: ocratic meditation

Tue 10 Feb 1998

Sheila Murphy's 50 haibun over on William Slaughter's Mudlark site are pretty damned interesting, too.

<http://www.unf.edu/mudlark/>

There, that's my one message for the day. (Thanks, Ron, for reminding us to use the aether wisely. And sorry about yr pnuemonia.)

Joe Ahearn
Rancho Loco Press
Dallas

At 12:18 PM 2/10/98 -0500, you wrote:

>As per Ron, I have thought hard, and am posting my second message of the
>day....

>

>I strongly recommend -ocracy: parts 1-4 by Peter Ganick and Sheila Murphy
>(Norman OK : Texture Press, 1997).

>

>This has been my favorite rush-hour reading for the past few days. Its
>swoop and verve and pointed changes of image-center keep me rivited, and
>make bus-commuting fade into the background. It'll be too paratactic for
>some of our commonsensepods; but this is really fine writing and fun
>writing. It's verse, which mutates its grain and tempo between sections;
>kinda like the traditional approach to different tempi between movements
>of a classical piece. (..but not as drear and plodding in execution as the

>sleepy Possum) The center shifts relentlessly like Ron himself; but less
>social surface and more of the roil and smoke underlying awareness, the
>tumult of how awareness clashes with our violently disunified culture.
>Not enuff center?? Imitative form notwithstanding, scattershot effect
>(scattershot intention?) would be the main fault in the piece.
>
>It sounds great read aloud and is pretty funny too. Barbara Hocker's
>minimalist cover art is appropriate and amusing as well.....
>
>Mark P.
>@lanta
>
>

Joe Ahearn



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419. **Tenney Nathanson**

Re: ocratic meditation

Tue 10 Feb 1998

Sheila--

is any of this up on a web site, maybe a teaser? or might it be put up? sounds great.

thanks

Tenney

At 12:18 PM 2/10/98 -0500, you wrote:

>As per Ron, I have thought hard, and am posting my second message of the
>day....

>

>I strongly recommend -ocracy: parts 1-4 by Peter Ganick and Sheila Murphy
>(Norman OK : Texture Press, 1997).

>

>This has been my favorite rush-hour reading for the past few days. Its
>swoop and verve and pointed changes of image-center keep me rivited, and
>make bus-commuting fade into the background. It'll be too paratactic for
>some of our commonsensepods; but this is really fine writing and fun
>writing. It's verse, which mutates its grain and tempo between sections;
>kinda like the traditional approach to different tempi between movements

>of a classical piece. (..but not as drear and plodding in execution as the
>sleepy Possum) The center shifts relentlessly like Ron himself; but less
>social surface and more of the roil and smoke underlying awareness, the
>tumult of how awareness clashes with our violently disunified culture.
>Not enuff center?? Imitative form notwithstanding, scattershot effect
>(scattershot intention?) would be the main fault in the piece.
>
>It sounds great read aloud and is pretty funny too. Barbara Hocker's
>minimalist cover art is appropriate and amusing as well.....
>
>Mark P.
>@lanta
>

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420. **Mark Weiss**

Re: of the ridiculous and the sublime

Tue 10 Feb 1998

Aldon: I agree with everything below. Dale's wrist has been properly slapped, and I assume that next time (if there is one) he will ask permission, which I also assume that most of those affected would have granted. That said, can we move on?

At 04:42 PM 2/10/98 -0800, you wrote:

>any number of issues seem to have gotten mixed together oddly in Kent's
>post -- I'm headed back into the arms of El Nino, so only have time for a
>few quick takes --

>

>1) Did Postmodern culture in fact reprint entire posts from the list? I
>haven't seen that issue, so don't know. This has nothing to do with
>calling lawyers, but if they did, they should not have. What I did see was
>a review article in which some posts were quoted, but perhaps that was a
>different issue? Could you give me the number so I can try to see it at
>their site?

>

>2) The POETICS list is available to "millions" only in the strictest sense,
>since the "millions" would either have to subscribe or hack into it --

>

>3) In either event, this has nothing to do, so far as I can see, with the
>question of whether or not somebody has the right to print pages of POETICS
>list discussion in their magazine with neither permission nor notice. The
>fact that some of the posts were about the magazine's editorial policy has

>nothing to do with it -- the fact that Kent writes a post here about the
>policy of Postmodern Culture in reprinting Poetics list posts would not
>authorize them to reprint his post --
>
>and forgetting numbering --
>
>as I've said here any number of times -- I assume that anything I post to
>the list MAY reappear somewhere else -- I assume this because of what I
>know of human nature, and because it has already happened in the past --
>That does not mean that it is OK for anybody who wants to, at any time, in
>any place, to republish such posts --
>
>Is it really that ridiculous to ask that somebody who plans to reprint
>posts from this list should at least notify the writers and provide copies?
>
>and let me make it clear, since I imagine most on the list haven't seen
>Dale's mag., this is not a personal complaint -- from what I saw in the
>copy that was shown to me briefly in SF there are few of my words in there
>-- but the episode has a bad smell to me -- The "list owner" has pretty
>much had a hands off policy towards what goes on here, and that's one of
>the things that has made the list what it is -- and I'm not asking that
>anybody be kicked out, or that anybody be told to shut up, or that anything
>official be done by anybody -- I AM asking that we respect one another
>enough to act in such a way that all will continue to feel that they can
>speak freely in this environment
>
>was going to get to the sublime, but I see my car floating away -- so I
>will float after it --
>
>

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421. **Hugh Steinberg**

Re: colding & heating

Wed 11 Feb 1998

louis stroffolino wrote:

>

>> Since I've gotten into this 19th century groove (the class I'm
>> teaching soon [adjunct salary toothless benefits]), I want to
>> ask CAN ANYBODY SUGGEST A GOOD TRANSLATION EDITION OF
GIACOMO

>> LEOPARDI? I can't believe I haven't really read him before....
>> he seemed more fashionable in the 1920s in the USA than in any
>> time since. Any help would be appreciated. CHris

W.S. DiPiero has done a pretty good translation of Leopardi's Pensieri.

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422. **Louis Cabri**
set poetics nomail

Wed 11 Feb 1998

I'm always reachable backchannel. Will be off for awhile, at least til end of April. I'll send, via another subscriber, info on upcoming PhillyTalks etc.

Thanks many of you for exciting discussions; good luck weathering more of them!

By "Polish" in my last post I only meant polish (i.e. for the Turtlewax). I regret the line "The Trees!" if Maria felt impinged.

louis

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423. **George Bowering**
Re: 44 Freud

Wed 11 Feb 1998

Sheila Watson, Canada's best ever fiction writer, died last week, age 88. She was bpNichol's favourite. He made it to 44, and as he was born in '44, died in '88.

He never carried a smokeless revolver, or drove an Oldsmobile, though.

George Bowering.

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

fax: [REDACTED]

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424. **dbkk**
Raworth & Flores at SPT

Wed 11 Feb 1998

Small Press Traffic presents:

Tom Raworth

Paul Stojasavljevic Flores

Friday, February 13, 7:30 p.m.

New College Theater

777 Valencia Street

\$5

In a dark crowded Rio club he approaches the microphone with superb assurance, the long slinky black gown by Jean-Louis hugging his every curve . . . a glorious mane of red-gold curls flows behind him, seductive even in Gilda's black and white . . . while peeling off one long clingy opera glove he sings "Put the Blame on Mame" in a sultry croak . . . no . . . wait . . . that was *Rita Hayworth* This is *Tom Raworth,* the legendary UK poet, the dean of "English language writing," making his first appearance at Small Press Traffic. He's written forty books including a recent Selected Poems 1987-1995 Clean & Well Lit (Roof Books). He approaches the microphone with superb assurance. . . .

Paul Stojasavljevic Flores was born in the doorway of a steel mill in Gary, Indiana, and now resides in the sourdough comb of San Francisco. He came to poetry through breakdancing and poprocking out of pepperspray webs fronting the courthouses of downtown San Diego. Shifting in and out of rumba candela tempos and uniting the here-to-never-before-seen with the vas-a-ver-lo-que-te-va-a-pasar, his poetry has appeared in Mirage #4/Period(ical) and 14 Hills. He is also the winner of the 1997 Bay Guardian Open Poetry Contest.

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425. **George Bowering**

Re: 44 baseball poems

Wed 11 Feb 1998

I think Spahn was 21. He aslo is in one of the most famous baseball poems, "Spahn and Sain, and two days rain." - although it might be forgotten now.

It is a long way from forgotten. One reads an article that mentions it at least once a year. It is certainly more often mentioned than

Greater than his brother Joe,
Dominic Dimaggio.

George Bowering.

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

fax: [REDACTED]

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426. **Alan Myouka Sondheim**

Re: 44

Wed 11 Feb 1998

It's not a nonsense word at all. It's built-in and is "yon." "Yon" means four, just like "shi" does. I just haven't heard anything else - but then I'm in Fukuoka, in the south-west.

Alan

On Mon, 9 Feb 1998, d powell wrote:

Reply to: Re: 44 In Japanese, the word "shi" is both "four" and "death" as well. Many superstitious Japanese replace "four" with a nonsense word when giving addresses, phone numbers, etc. that contain a four.

Tea cups are sold in sets of five, and if one cup is broken, the whole set is thrown out--at least, this is a custom that still is observed by some Japanese.

Doug

=====

==

D A Powell [REDACTED]

=====

==

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427. **Pierre Joris**

Re: spraying the communities

Wed 11 Feb 1998

Scott Pound wrote:

I think Pierre Joris should post the page of his intro to Blanchot's book on community if only because it is one of the best lessons in translation there is.

Scott Pound

Scott -- here's the page (or 2 re the tranlation of "désoeuvrement") -- Pierre:
from : Preface to Maurice Blanchot's THE UNAVOWABLE COMMUNITY (Station Hill Press 1988)

.... The term that has caused the greatest problems [in translation] is without a doubt *désœuvrement*, and its derivate, *désœuvrée*, which appears in the title of Nancy's essay, but is very much a Blanchot word. The word has at its core the concept of the "oeuvre" (work, body of work, artistic work, etc.) and implies a range of meanings: idleness, a state of being without work, unoccupied, etc. After various attempts of maintaining this semantic range (and considering keeping Lydia Davis' early rendering of the word as "worklessness"), I decided to use the term "the unworking" — first suggested to me by Christopher Fynsk. It is a key term in Blanchot's thinking and it would be useful here to quote certain relevant passages from both Blanchot and Nancy.

The word appears in its common meaning of "idle, at loose ends, finding oneself with nothing to do, etc." in Blanchot's fiction as far back as the 1952 book *Celui qui ne m'accompagnait pas* ; but even here already the author playfully worries the word, making it yield a one-page meditation on its meaning and excavating in the process the core-sème "oeuvre":

Though I did not feel tired, I was disoriented and prodigiously idle (*désœuvré*); this idleness (*désœuvrement*) was also my task, it kept me busy: maybe it represented a lull (*un temps mort*), a moment of giving up and of blacking out on the part of the watcher, a weakness that forced me to be myself all alone. But the empty churning I was caught in had to have another meaning, evoking hunger, evoking the need to wander, to go further, while asking "Why did I come in here? Am I looking for something?", though maybe I was not looking for anything and maybe further on was yet again the same as right here. That much I knew. To know was part of that solitude, created that solitude, was at work (*à l'oeuvre*) in that idleness (*désœuvrement*), closing off the exits. Out of idleness I asked him...."

The full philosophical and literary complexity of the term is worked out later, most fully in the 1969 essay, "The Absence of the Book" (cf. *The Gaze of Orpheus*, pp.145 -160) where Blanchot writes:

To write is to produce absence of the work (worklessness) [*désœuvrement*]. Or: writing is the absence of the work as it produces itself through the work and throughout the work. Writing as worklessness (in the active sense of the word) is the insane game, the indeterminacy that lies between reason and unreason. What happens to the book during this "game", in which worklessness is set loose during the operation of writing? The book: the passage of an infinite movement, a movement that goes from writing as an operation to writing as worklessness; a passage that immediately impedes. Writing passes through the book, but the book is not that to which it is destined (its des tiny). Writing passes through the book, completing itself there even as it disappears in the

book; and yet, we do not write for the book. The book: a ruse by which writing goes to wards the absence of the book.

It is exactly that little parenthesis, "(in the active sense of the word)," that is problematic in the translation of the term *désœuvrement* with the passive worklessness. (There may be a radical cultural difference at work here: the puritan impulses of Anglo-American culture blocking the very possibility of a positive, active connotation to be attached to the notion of an absence of work?)

All of Nancy's essay builds up to a point, two-thirds of the way through, where the word "*désœuvrée*", announced in the title in relation to community, finally gets stated. It comes after a critique of the Cartesian immanentist subject, seen by Nancy as "the inverted figure of the experience of community":

That is why the community cannot come within the province of the work [*l'oeuvre*]. One does not produce it, one experiences it as the experience of finitude (or: its experience makes us). The community as work, or the community through works, would presuppose that the common being, as such, is objectifiable and producible (in places, persons, edifices, discourses, institutions, symbols: in short, in subjects). The products of operations of that type, no matter how grandiose they want, and sometimes manage, to be, never have more communitarian existence than the plaster torsos of Marianne.

The community takes place of necessity in what Blanchot has called the unworking [*désœuvrement*]. Before or beyond the work, it is that which withdraws from the work, that which no longer has to do with production, nor with completion, but which encounters interruption, fragmentation, suspension. The community is made of the interruption of the singularities, or of the suspension singular beings are. It is not their work, and it does not have them as its works, not anymore than communication is a work, nor even an operation by singular beings: for it is simply their being - their being in suspension at its limit. Communication is the unworking of the social, economic, technical, institutional work .

After its long incubation in Blanchot's fictions and essays, after Nancy's book and Blanchot's response to it, *le désœuvrement* , "the un working" is clearly emerging as one of the most centrally active concepts of contemporary thought not only in relation to the work of writing, but also — as Nancy's last sentence makes clear — in relation to a wide array of other concerns. The necessary tentativeness in the translation of the term is, in a way, proof of the concept's very vitality, that is to say, its active complexity.

1 To be published shortly in a translation by Lydia Davis under the title "The One Who Was Standing Apart From Me" by Station Hill Press. The occurrence of *désœuvrement* I am referring to can be found on page 70 of the French edition. Clearly, translating *désœuvrement* with the literary/philosophical term

"the unworking" would not work in this narrative context. The translation here is mine.

2 Again, in French the word *désœuvrement* as used in the last sentence implies an active sense the English word "worklessness" does not convey. Another Blanchot translator, Ann Smock, uses the word "uneventfulness" to translate *désœuvrement*. In a footnote to her translation of *L'Écriture du Désastre*, (University of Nebraska Press, 1986) she writes:

"The uneventfulness of the neutral wherein the lines not traced retreat" is my elaboration upon Blanchot's expression "le désœuvrement du neutre". Le désœuvrement is a word Blanchot has long used in close association with l'œuvre (the work of art, of literature). It means the work as the work's lack? the work as unmindful of being or not being, as neither present nor absent: neutral. It also means idleness, inertia. My word "uneventfulness" tries to express this idea of inaction, of nothing's happening, and my additional phrase "the lines not traced retreat," recalling an earlier expression in this book, "the retreat of what never has been treated", seeks to retain the relation which this fragment is evoking and which is, so to speak, spelled out in the word *désœuvrement*: the relation between the work and its denial. Between writing and passivity, between being and not being a writer, being and not being the subject of the verb "to write."

Although I would agree in the main with her understanding of the concept of *désœuvrement*, I cannot comprehend why she feels it necessary to add at this point the phrase "the lines not traced retreat", which seems like a gross translator's interference with the Blanchot text. I can only suggest that she must have felt uneasy with her translation of *désœuvrement* as "uneventfulness", and therefore wants to "explain" the term further. Clearly, "uneventfulness" does carry some of the meaning of the French word, though she loses the notion of the "œuvre", the work.

--

=====

pierre joris 6 madison place albany ny 12202
tel/fax [REDACTED] email: [REDACTED]
<http://www.albany.edu/~joris/>

"What often prevents us from giving ourselves over to a single vice is that we have several of them."

— La Rochefoucauld

=====

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428. **robert drake**

Re: ocratic meditation

Wed 11 Feb 1998

tenney, & all--

part 3 was published in potepoetzine one; available at the cybpheranthology:

www.burninpress.org/va/vaintro.html

luigi

burningpress

Sheila--

is any of this up on a web site, maybe a teaser? or might it be put up? sounds great.

thanks

Tenney

At 12:18 PM 2/10/98 -0500, you wrote:

As per Ron, I have thought hard, and am posting my second message of the day....

I strongly recommend -ocracy: parts 1-4 by Peter Ganick and Sheila Murphy (Norman OK : Texture Press, 1997).

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429. **Henry Gould**

Re: colding & heating

Wed 11 Feb 1998

On Tue, 10 Feb 1998 21:25:12 EST Henry Gould said:

Now you are saying this same "someone" was therefore arguing that poetry was a "value" beyond history? I think you're pinning "someone" with an argument they never made. But as long as you don't name that "someone", Louis, you can keep talking only to Lisa - and "someone" won't call you on it & disprove you. You may think a certain poetry club-du-jour is actually "changing history" by transvaluing literary values; you are welcome to your belief. "Someone" will wait to see what the indie-critics make of it - as poetry.

Oh dear, now I've gone and driven Louis Cabri off the list. Add this to my list of crimes, Ron Silliman. I wanted to say to Louis that IF he's saying I argued poetry was "above" history, he's right, I did, and I'm wrong to deny it. I see I

contradicted myself (above) yesterday & have had to rethink this. I don't think poetry's above history, I think that poetry is more expressive of the history it's in than "history" does or talking- historically-ABOUT-poetry does. For a long time, in the academy, theory had the upper hand over poetry itself. Scholars weren't that interested in the poems per se but in the material influences & historical conditions informing them. Steve Evans's "Change" essay maybe culminates & overturns this trend: he says, in effect, "history with regard to poetry is a sort of in-between, incipient-decadent, TIME OF WAITING in which only the agents themselves (the poets) have the vaguest notion what they are saying-doing (and even they feel conflicted & confused about this)"[MY paraphrase]. Rod Smith's title of his book IN MEMORY OF MY THEORIES is apropos here.

We talk at cross purposes, we get into arguments, because we all have different things we want to talk about. I find the argument that "our poetry is above criticism because it's part of a historical trend that renders criticism obsolete" to be a specious way to justify anything - lack of talent, non-literary motivations, anything. A new artistic development will indeed overturn (temporarily) past "standards" - but criticism - via good indie-critics - has a way of gradually responding to change - on its own aesthetic terms. I'm not saying the process is perfect or even very sensible. But I will say that in the battle between theory and poetry, or poetry and talking-about-poetry (and there is such a battle) a recognition that poetry "makes its history" on its own terms (the terms of poetry) might be a way to see through a lot of promotional or purely academic "talk about". Do I want to silence "talk about"? Not at all. The academics & critics who "see" motives & meanings in poems - historical, political, etc. - are irreplaceable. But when it gets to the point that "someone" like me has to defend the mere existence of an "individual agent" in the process of making poems, then maybe "something" is missing in all the "talk-about".

I hope Louis Cabri will rejoin this list.

- Henry Gould

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430. **Maria Damon**

Re: O List-Master

Wed 11 Feb 1998

ditto, but my e address has changed and i realize folks aren't getting thru to me. the "maroon" has been dropped from the address, so i'm now [REDACTED] bests, maria d ps in the future i'd like to be asked first, all ye who want to publicize this public list, thanks

At 9:22 PM -0500 2/10/98, robert drake wrote:

>dale--

>
>i ov course would appreciate seeing a copy of your magazine;
>if you've reprinted any of my posts to the list, even moreso...
>are those posts credited? in context? i wait w/ baited breadth...
>
>bob drake/burning press
>po box 585
>lakewood oh 44107
>
>>Well, I did seek forgiveness... But the difference is that I said nothing
>>in my magazine against anyone. All dialogue comes from each person's own
>>mouth. My editorial concern was to represent a single thread that took
>>place re the editorial practice of Mike and Dale's. As I stated in my intro
>>I wanted to broaden the audience for this extremely lively group of
>>exchanges.
>>
>>By the way, my new email account doesn't give individual names with each
>>post. I only know for sure who is writing when the post is signed. But I
>>have a feeling, due to his brilliant ability to sniff out thin contradictions
>>and to gauge levels of honesty, that I am replying to Aldon Nielson. Well,
>>I'm glad you're interested in the magazine. If you, David Bromige, Susan
>>Schul
>>tz, Hugh Steinberg, Simon Schuchat, Maria Damon, Robert Drake, Mark
Weiss,
>>Sylvester Pollet and Eliza McGrand will backchannel me with your ad-
dresses
>>I'll be sure to send one off to you (send \$5 and I'll put you on the list for
>>#8!). *Honestly* it's a very interesting exchange. I've already sent
>>copies to Dodie, Kevin and Juliana. Thanks for staying on me though to
>>get these out to the others.
>>
>>Dale
>>
>>
>>
>>
>>
>>
>>
>>
>>
>>
>>
>>

>>
>>
>>To: [REDACTED]
>>
>>I suppose the term "listserv" might convey some sense of mastery, but . . .
>>
>>
>>a bit of "creative" appropriation might have been considerably more
>>interesting -- but, call me old fashioned and orthodox, I am of the opinion
>>that reprinting people's email posts with no notification fits poorly with
>>the pose adopted ("how firmly fastened are your walls" etc.) -- Isn't this
>>the same person who criticized people for speaking of Tom Clark outside his
>>presence????
>>
>>No, forgive us, Oh Dale, for having thought to converse with you openly
>>and, we thought, honestly.

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431. **James Finnegan**

Re: leopardi

Wed 11 Feb 1998

In a message dated 98-02-11 04:45:29 EST, you write:

<< CAN ANYBODY SUGGEST A GOOD TRANSLATION EDITION OF GIACOMO
>> LEOPARDI? >>

Eamon Grennan translated a selection Leopardi's poems--
published last year by Princeton U. Press.

Finnegan

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432. **Gwyn McVay**

Re: Missing persons

Wed 11 Feb 1998

Mais Pierre, it would seem completely appropriate to name any cat "Claude" (or D. Claude, if you support that practice), much as the shaven sheep from "Wallace and Gromit" is named "Shaun."

Isn't pierre joris's cat named after Pelieu? chris

Claude?-- No that was Dorn's horse's first name.

--

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433. **pritchpa**

Re: in queue

Wed 11 Feb 1998

I concur. Henry's heteronymic prolixity was at least one reason the list has been so all-fired hot these past few weeks. Wasn't it just a month ago people were complaining about how dull it was? As for those who choose not to post, let them croak undisturbed in the swamp.

Patrick Pritchett

From: Miekal And

To: [REDACTED]

Subject: in queue

Date: Tuesday, February 10, 1998 4:26PM

I dont have ron's email in front of me anymore, but I've a different desire with this list, with spending time with the energetic presence different voices project outward here. so I'm thankful for a rush of Henry Spandrift Blarnesian cracker-box collectibles, I relish it when there's a stepping forward to say what you gotta say. & I don't believe that the 50 a day limit is throttling any voice that wants to pump it up, as all messages go in queue, & theoretically we could get a very interesting poetics list timewarp going, if we were all now reading & responding to messages from 3 days or 3 weeks or 3 years ago, does it really matter....

miekal

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434. **shemurph**

Re: ocratic meditation

Wed 11 Feb 1998

RE: Tenney's Question about -ocracy

(12-part collaboration by Peter Ganick and myself:

Thanks for asking, Tenney! I'm looking forward to your reading in Tucson on the 18th at 8:00 p.m. (anyone on the list in the area, don't miss it!)

While -ocracy is not on the net, it IS available in three separate chapbooks:

parts 1 - 4 published by Texture Chapbook Series: 36

ISSN 1063-1895

3760 Cedar Ridge Drive
Norman Oklahoma 73072
(1997)
\$6.00

parts 5 - 7 published by Runaway Spoon Press
1708 Hayworth
Port Charlotte, FL 33952
Port Charlotte, FL
\$5.00

parts 8 - 9 - published by Nominative Press Collective
PO Box 522402
Salt Lake City, Utah 84152-2402
\$5.00

These are available through me, also, if you prefer.

Sheila Murphy
3701 E. Monterosa #3
Phoenix, AZ 85018-4848
[REDACTED]
ISBN 1-57141-050-3

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435. **Robert Hale**
GANG OF FOUR

Wed 11 Feb 1998

All this talk about the various associations of the word for the number 4 in East Asian languages has led me to ask (of any Chinese historians/linguists out there): was the name "Gang of Four" intended to mean something in addition to the four Chinese accused of various crimes and conspiracies against Mao during the Cultural Revolution?

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436. **rsillima**
Why I'm not an experimental poet

Wed 11 Feb 1998

Reading Crayon's festschrift for Jackson Mac Low of late (a really great job in every department), I was intrigued at Mordecai Mac Low's discussion of his father's work as an instance of scientific methodology in process, since Mordecai is in particular position to know whereof he speaks on this topic.

I still feel profoundly uncomfortable with the idea of the "experimental" tho, what with its sense that "this may not work" and the "trial and error" sense of process. But today I've discovered a deeper reason why I'm not an experimental poet.

West Chester University's 4th annual summer writers conference (June 10-13) focuses this year on "Exploring Form & Narrative" and offers a workshop on "Experimental Forms" taught by...Dana Gioia.

I'm not making this up.

Some of the other sessions to be taught: Meter (Timothy Steele), Rhyme (Charles Martin), the Sonnet (RS Gwynn), French Forms (Phillis Levin) and Blank Verse (Alfred Corn). There is also an "Introduction to Form" taught by Cynthia Zarin who, as the brochure says, has work that "appears frequently in The New Yorker."

There will also be a "celebration" of the Hudson Review (Louis Simpson, Daniel Hoffman, Frederick Morgan etc) and there's a call for critical papers on the poetry of Amy Clampitt, Literary Quarterlies, Translation and "individual authors or subjects relevant to the conference theme."

More details including scholarship info at:
www.wcupa.edu/_ACADEMICS/sch_cas/poetry/

Cost ranges between \$250-499 for the whole shebang, which includes a picnic and dance.

Now, I'm perfectly willing to concede that one could get real value from some of the sessions (Marilyn Nelson is teaching a master class, for example), but the idea that this claustrophobic convocation on pattern represents the idea of "form" insults my intelligence as it should that of any poet born after Baudelaire and Blake. That it is being held at a state institution borders on theft of public resources.

So that is why I am not an experimental poet.

Ron Silliman

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437. **Maria Damon**
Re: set poetics nomail
Wed 11 Feb 1998

At 2:05 AM -0500 2/11/98, Louis Cabri wrote:

>I'm always reachable backchannel. Will be off for awhile, at least til end
>of April. I'll send, via another subscriber, info on upcoming PhillyTalks
>etc.

>
>Thanks many of you for exciting discussions; good luck weathering more
>of them!
>
>By "Polish" in my last post I only meant polish (i.e. for the Turtlewax).
>I regret the line "The Trees!" if Maria felt impinged.
nah, that was pretty benign, i had it coming --md
>
>
>louis

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438. **Maria Damon**

Re: query

Wed 11 Feb 1998

thanks david --how are you anyway these days?

At 12:27 PM -0500 2/10/98, David Kellogg wrote:

>Maria, you've probably got this by now, but: "The Song of the Borderguard"
>was published in *_A Book of Resemblances_* and appears again in *_Selected
>Poems_*, ed. Robert J. Bertholf(New York: New Directions, 1993), pages 22-3.
>I don't know if the page reference changes for the revised edition of the
>Selected.

>

>Cheers,

>David

>~~~~~
~~~~~

>David Kellogg Duke University  
>██████ Program in Writing and Rhetoric  
>██████ Durham, NC 27708  
>FAX ██████ <http://www.duke.edu/~kellogg/>

>-----Original Message-----

>From: Maria Damon <██████>

>To: ██████ <██████>

>Date: Monday, February 09, 1998 2:37 PM

>Subject: query

>

>

>>i'm far from my library alas, and from good bookstores. can anyone quick  
>>give me a citation for robt duncan's "song of the borderguard"? muchos

>>apreciados. --md  
>>

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439. **Hilton Manfred Obenzinger**

**Re: 44**

*Wed 11 Feb 1998*

---

The bad-boy angel sometimes named Satan (the nephew of that other Satan) is called No. 44 in Mark Twain's "Mysterious Stranger" manuscripts. Perhaps Twain was on to something. In any case, once this number is exhausted the discussion can move on to 666.

Hilton Obenzinger

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440. **Safdie Joseph**

**Re: 44, baseball, Foucault**

*Wed 11 Feb 1998*

---

> >I think Spahn was 21. He aslo is in one of the most famous baseball  
> >poems, "Spahn and Sain, and two days rain." - although it might be  
> >forgotten now.

>

> It is a long way from forgotten. One reads an article that mentions it  
> at

> least once a year. It is certainly more often mentioned than

>

> Greater than his brother Joe,

> Dominic Dimaggio.

>

Nice, George! The first verse is not forgotten, true, but wasn't it

"Spahn and Sain and PRAY for rain"? -- the reference being, of course, to the team having little chance to win without those two on the mound? Later bastardized by the California (it figures, right?) Angels with "Tanana and Ryan and then start cryin' ". Pitchers and catchers report this weekend . . .

On another note, thanks to Katy Lederer for posting a section from Foucault's only truly valuable work for my poetics, *The Order of Things* (but what do I know, I like Baudrillard too, even his little masterpiece of invective *Forget Foucault*). But I'd like to ask Katy (and anyone else who has ventured through the formidable prose of this work), what she thinks of the period he deals with BEFORE the dead-end of the 16th century, namely the pre-Renaissance system

of order and meaning, when things were luminous and so were their signs? For me, John Dee and Ficino and Pico (see, in another context, Don Byrd's recent post about neo-Platonism) always existed as alternatives to late 20th-century semiotics -- even though my pal Duncan McNaughton lectured me lately that nothing was ever truly lost. So for me it's Giordano Bruno, si -- Derrida, no!

Happy to be 44 years old until a couple of days ago . . .

Joe Safdie

*George Bowering.*

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

*fax: [REDACTED]*

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441. **Michael Franco**

***mr gerrit lansing***

*Wed 11 Feb 1998*

---

Dreamer of the purified fury and fabulous habit.

The Word of Mouth reading series will present a special evening at Waterston's books [Newbury at Exeter St, Boston]

GERRIT LANSING A 70th Birthday celebration

Wed. Feb 25th 1998

7pm

Free

Reading by Gerrit Lansing and readings from the field of his work by Joseph Torra, William Corbett, Raffael de Gruttula, Ange Mlinko, Michael Franco, Isabel Pinto Franco, Thorpe Feidt, Elie Yarden, Christopher Sawyer Laucanno, Patricia Pruitt, and other "special guests"

Any one on the list wishing to send greetings to Gerrit can do so via Email [REDACTED] or on foot @ 34 Jason Street Arlingotn Ma. 02174-6409]

all best

Michael Franco/Wom.

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442. **KENT JOHNSON**  
*sublimating the ridiculous*  
Wed 11 Feb 1998

---

Well, I was going to let the issue go, but since the nuclear-powered wagons of indignation have been circled, I suppose at least one charge of the light brigade is in order.

But speaking of matters pertaining to the ethics of writing, let me say first that I will soon be posting some information concerning another issue that has come to my attention only this morning--one that I believe makes the controversy over Dale's failure to give list members "advance warning" look like a spit-wad fight. It's going to be very, very interesting to see what the response is here. If any, that is.

Aldon Nielsen asks:

*1) Did Postmodern culture in fact reprint entire posts from the list? I haven't seen that issue, so don't know. This has nothing to do with calling lawyers, but if they did, they should not have.*

Aldon, I'm not sure I follow your point here. You seem to imply that printing parts of posts is ethical practice, but not printing posts in whole--or at least that the former is more appropriate than the latter. (Up to one quarter of a post? one-third? no more than five-eighths? What about one-sentence posts? No reprinting because they can't be excerpted?) Frankly, if an editor is going to reprint my words, I'd much prefer to have them in the full context I had originally given them. Wouldn't you? Would it have been more "proper" of Dale to subjectively choose portions of the posts in question rather than to provide a full and faithful record of the discussion? How so? Truth is, I don't think you can answer this convincingly without appeal or recourse to artificially imposed restrictions of copyright on this medium, which, of course, you may sincerely think is a good idea. I don't.

I am not being nit-picky here, quibbling with a slight and peripheral aporia in your argument. I am saying that the big and unacknowledged sub-text of your opening question is that posts on this list are akin to private literary property subject to the protocols of copyright and the academic rituals of "fair use". And to that I say hogwash.

I do agree with you that editors should, as a matter of personal courtesy, inform people that their posts will be printed elsewhere, or that post-authors should automatically be sent a copy of the reprint. Dale, I'm sure, will agree that he could and should have done this (though let's be clear that to his credit he reprinted every single word of every post he selected, right down to the

numbers and headers, providing a true sense of the original context of the exchange so that no one was in any way misrepresented.)

But the key point in this matter is whether or not the post-author's "permission" is required, and particularly when what is being reprinted directly pertains to the editorial policy of the editor's journal. The answer, to my mind, is an emphatic No. (nota bene: In fact, Aldon, if the matter were sufficiently interesting to them, it would be perfectly correct and appropriate for the editors of Post-modern Culture to reprint my public posts on the list regarding their journal without seeking my "permission.")

It really comes down to the greater context and background history that creates the curious sort of language game we are a part of here. And that greater context is that our discourse here is available, immediately and freely (in every sense of that word), to millions on the World Wide Web. Once we freely choose to enter it, we choose to enter an unprecedentedly collective space, one that is qualitatively different in form and dynamic from the traditional means of literary packaging and commodification. I don't want to sound arrogant about it, but we list members should really just get used to this and stop thinking that rules and protocols and "personal values" that have their origins in 17th century social and cultural relations--and which have formed the legal and ideological proprieties of print culture up to the present--apply in any feasible way to a mode of information production that has radically superseded those relations and made the ideology of authorship engendered by them something akin to the tenuous status of the Right of Estate around the time of Cromwell. (A tortuously long sentence, but for a sophisticated and elegant explanation of the development of writing as individual property see Susan Stewart's *\_Crimes of Writing\_*.)

So my point would be, absolutely and in principle, that the Buffalo Poetics list is an always/already free and public space, and when one posts something (argument or poem or mixture of the two) in such a radically democratic forum \_it should be with the assumption\_ that those bytes of information are free for the taking and sharing. It will undoubtedly be the case that mechanisms of capitalist legality will come to be rigidly imposed on the web too, but until then I modestly propose: If one wants to claim his or her words as private property, well, then he or she should go publish them in institutional mediums where his or her "authority" (and all the psychological security provided by that notion) is firmly guaranteed by the State.

Kent

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443. **Christopher W. Alexander**

***Re: ocratic meditation***

Wed 11 Feb 1998

---

Luigi Bob Drake wrote:

> part 3 was published in potepoetzine one; available at the cybpheranthology:

>

> [www.burninpress.org/va/vaintro.html](http://www.burninpress.org/va/vaintro.html)

I published parts 8 & 9; there's not much you can read from my site (one page - it's really a teaser!), but you'll find it in the section of in-print books:

<http://choengmon.lib.utah.edu/~calexand/nonce/presswork/index.html>

or you can head to the main section (URL below) and follow the "presswrk" link. There's some of Sheila's work in the n/formation archive (under "previous"), issue #2; issue #1 contains a reprint of one of Peter's chapbooks.

Chris

..

Christopher W. Alexander etc. / nominative press collective

email: [REDACTED]

snail-mail: P.O. Box 522402 / Salt Lake City UT 84152-2402

press/zine site: <http://choengmon.lib.utah.edu/~calexand/nonce/>

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444. **r.drake**

***Re: ocratic meditation***

Wed 11 Feb 1998

---

sheila--

peter ganick pub'd pt. 3 in potepoetzine #1 online; archived at:

<http://www.burningpress.org/va/vaintro.html>

(in case he hadn't told ya...)

lbd

*RE: Tenney's Question about -ocracy  
(12-part collaboration by Peter Ganick and myself:*

*Thanks for asking, Tenney! I'm looking forward to your reading in Tucson on the 18th at 8:00 p.m. (anyone on the list in the area, don't miss it!)*

*While -ocracy is not on the net, it IS available in three separate chapbooks:  
...*

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445. **George Bowering**  
**Re: 44, baseball, Foucault**  
*Wed 11 Feb 1998*

---

Wasnt it Foucault, who published in *\_Transition\_*, his poem, "These are the saddest of possible words? Tinker to Evers to Chance..." etc?

George Bowering.

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

fax: [REDACTED]

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446. **Maria Damon**  
**Re: query**  
*Wed 11 Feb 1998*

---

oops, meant to back-channel, and here i am wasting one of my 5 daily msgs on an apology for another one of the 5.--md

At 11:27 AM -0600 2/11/98, Maria Damon wrote:

>thanks david --how are you anyway these days?  
>

>At 12:27 PM -0500 2/10/98, David Kellogg wrote:

>>Maria, you've probably got this by now, but: "The Song of the Borderguard"  
>>was published in *\_A Book of Resemblances\_* and appears again in *\_Selected Poems\_*, ed. Robert J. Bertholf(New York: New Directions, 1993), pages 22-3.

>>I don't know if the page reference changes for the revised edition of the  
>>Selected.

>>

>>Cheers,

>>David

>>~~~~~  
~~~~~

>>David Kellogg Duke University
>>██████████ Program in Writing and Rhetoric
>>██████████ Durham, NC 27708
>>FAX ██████████ http://www.duke.edu/~kellogg/
>>-----Original Message-----
>>From: Maria Damon <██████████>
>>To: ██████████ <██████████>
>>Date: Monday, February 09, 1998 2:37 PM
>>Subject: query
>>
>>
>>>i'm far from my library alas, and from good bookstores. can anyone quick
>>>give me a citation for robt duncan's "song of the borderguard"? muchos
>>>apreciados. --md
>>>

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447. **pritchpa**

Re: Sex Objects (late reply)

Wed 11 Feb 1998

Kent - I'm just as thrilled as you are to be at loggerheads!

I like your image of "primal glossalalia" (possibly redundant?) - though I don't see it that way. Breton's litany, as I said before, has to me a somewhat mechanical feel to it. My point about "agency" is that a "good" love poem ought to make room for that in some way. It's not obligated to, as you point out, but I think it will suffer as a result, be less than what it could.

As for whether or not sex is essential or constructed, I would say that all the colorful examples you use to support your claim for it as being essential really support mine! (how's that for jiu-jitsu eh?) The repertory of gestures you cite comprises a language, a basic grammar of sex, a set of signs which even most animals evidently must employ in order to commence passion. In humans, certainly, the highly stylized vocabulary by which we express and enact the rites of love confers on that enactment a greater degree of passion and gravity.

Having said that, I'm in danger of doing a double jiu-jitsu on myself, since you could argue that this is just what Breton is doing in his poem - performing an erotic incantation, calling the whole into being through a fetishistic invocation of parts. I refer once again to De Beauvoir's highly useful chapter on Breton's vision of woman in *Second Sex*. According to her, Breton conflates woman with both nature and poetry - she is the "mediatress," and "the key" - to the world, to revelation. Breton's idealisation does not address whether love

performs the same service for women. "Woman interests him only because she is a privileged voice." But this investing of woman as privileged object by Breton also has the effect of robbing her of privilege. Which leads us back to your and Tom Mandel's earlier remarks about the ineluctable "objectification" of the Other.

Riverrun, past Steve and Eydie's...

Patrick Pritchett

From: KENT JOHNSON

To: [REDACTED]

Subject: Sex Objects

Date: Monday, February 09, 1998 3:41PM

It's nice to finally find something to disagree on with Mark P and Pat P. But guys, I just don't see Breton's poem as sexist in any way. That the addressee has no "agency" does not seem a good argument: Should everyone in a poem have "agency"? And besides, I don't see Breton as having much macho agency in this poem at all--why, he's reduced to a kind of primal glossolalia, the femme doing jiu-jitsu flips on the poor man's capacity to think "like a man" and bring her under the power and control of his reason.

It may be that you're right, Pat, that sexual expression is predominantly a cultural construction, but I don't think so. Each culture has its own rituals and oddities to be sure, but in sex, at bottom (though here I want to say that I don't consider myself an expert, because I've only had sex once--when I was nineteen), all cultures exhibit animal behavior. I don't mean "animal" like when one gets excited and just goes crazy-- I mean in the sense of ritualistically objectifying the other, of focusing on the desired one without giving a hoot for his or her "agency"; I mean fixating on body parts, and showing the other your own "parts", whether the showing be a blue, bulging throat, a crimson rump shoved into the air, or a love poem full of surrealist images.

Kent

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448. **David Zauhar**

Re: Why I'm not an experimental poet

Wed 11 Feb 1998

West Chester University's 4th annual summer writers conference (June 10-13) focuses this year on "Exploring Form & Narrative" and offers a workshop on "Experimental Forms" taught by...Dana Gioia.

I'm not making this up.

This will be the literary equivalent of "How To Catch a Roadrunner" taught by Wile E. Coyote.

Dave Zauhar

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449. **syvester pollet**

Re: Why I'm not an experimental poet

Wed 11 Feb 1998

So that is why I am not an experimental poet.

Ron Silliman

I second that. To me, it always sounded like someone who was experimenting at being a poet. Sylvester

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450. **Charles Bernstein**

Reprinting material posted to Poetics

Wed 11 Feb 1998

My own sense of this issue is stated in the welcome message and underscored by recent posts on the matter by Aldon, Kali, and Matt. I should note that David Caplan, the author of the PMC article, did contact me, twice, even though the quotations he was using were authorized by fair use (he didn't need my permission or anyone else's for anything quoted in his article). Writers have the right to quote from excerpts of published material in the course of a discussion of that material and you don't need to get permission to do that (and that accounts for citations of the list in the footnotes to a number of articles: quoting from the list is no different than quoting from a printed source in that respect). Printing a work in its entirety is another matter.

I can't tell if this is terrifically dull or interesting in some way ... But so much these days strikes me like that.

By the way, here is the information on that PMC essay:

"Who's Zoomin' Who?: The Poetics of www.poets.org and writing.upenn.edu/epc"

by David Caplan

<http://jefferson.village.Virginia.EDU/pmc/issue.997/review-7.997.html>

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451. **Steve Tills**

Re: Why I'm not an experimental poet

Wed 11 Feb 1998

Yes, "experimental" takes sad thumping there, again. "Poetry," perhaps worn out anyway, doesn't fare well, either. There may not be alternative terms... Circumventing, or out and out dismantling, the advertizing game altogether? What's been done in other cultural situations when similar co-opting has rendered terms meaningless or otherwise degraded them? "Scientific Creationism" is an example of the degradation of "science" that James Eldredge ("Creationism isn't science") and others have had to struggle with; the term and movement threatened, among other things, science education in the schools. (Of course, "poetry" has already been ruined "in the schools"... "Literature," "multi-culturalism," even "English" anymore, generally.)

Personally, smile, I believe you are most definitely "an experimental poet," by the way, and Plaina Joyless, obviously, most definitely is Not "an experimental poet" anymore than Pat Robertson is a "scientist." But I'm flirting with the issue.

Hmm, just reading some Nancy Chodorow (Feminism and Psychoanalytic Theory--by the way, Freudians and "anti"freudians on the list, Chodorow has got a bit to say about Freud and Lacan one won't find in dull and thin texts). Anyway, come across the term "orthodox," as in orthodox psychoanalysis, but also, orthodox buddhist, orthodox jew, orthodox whatever. Perhaps start a longterm campaign referring to academic and mainstream poetries as "orthodox poetries"? Ah, just skirting the issues again. Steve Tills

█ wrote:

Reading Crayon's festschrift for Jackson Mac Low of late (a really great job in every department), I was intrigued at Mordecai Mac Low's discussion of his father's work as an instance of scientific methodology in process, since Mordecai is in particular position to know whereof he speaks on this topic.

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(Charles Martin), the Sonnet (RS Gwynn), French Forms (Phillis Levin) and Blank Verse (Alfred Corn). There is also an "Introduction to Form" taught by Cynthia Zarin who, as the brochure says, has work that "appears frequently in The New Yorker."

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*More details including scholarship info at:
www.wcupa.edu/_ACADEMICS/sch_cas/poetry*

Cost ranges between \$250-499 for the whole shebang, which includes a picnic and dance.

Now, I'm perfectly willing to concede that one could get real value from some of the sessions (Marilyn Nelson is teaching a master class, for example), but the idea that this claustrophobic convocation on pattern represents the idea of "form" insults my intelligence as it should that of any poet born after Baudelaire and Blake. That it is being held at a state institution borders on theft of public resources.

So that is why I am not an experimental poet.

Ron Silliman

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452. **David Israel**

them boots

Wed 11 Feb 1998

found poetry?

| Twice Around the World
|
| There used to be this old saying
| that the lie can be halfway
| around the world before the truth
| gets its boots on
|
| Well today the lie can be
| twice around the world
| before the truth gets out of bed
| to find its boots

d.i.

<< Wednesday February 11 1:46 PM EST

WASHINGTON (Reuters) - Hillary Rodham Clinton said in a meeting with reporters Wednesday that "we are all going to have to rethink how we deal with" the Internet because of the handling of White House sex scandal stories on Web sites.

In an otherwise low-key question and answer session, Mrs. Clinton was at her most intense when asked whether she favored curbs on the Internet, which has been accused of disseminating rumor and gossip to the news being reported.

"We are all going to have to rethink how we deal with this, because there are all these competing values ... Without any kind of editing function or gatekeeping function, what does it mean to have the right to defend your reputation?," she said.

"There used to be this old saying that the lie can be halfway around the world before the truth gets its boots on," Mrs. Clinton added. "Well, today, the lie can be twice around the world before the truth gets out of bed to find its boots."

>>

http://www.yahoo.com/headlines/980211/wired/stories/clinton_1.html

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453. **Miekal And** ***Why I'm an experimental poet***

Wed 11 Feb 1998

after having a shitty day debugging somebodies' netscape problems it a real cheer to come home & seeing everybody throwing "experimental" on the passe terminology of 20th century scrapheap. Ive been discribing my work as experimental as opposed to sound/text/sound, intermedia, multimedia, interdisciplinary etc etc since very young, and being one whose spleen be to never do the same thing twice, find many perks in the ambiguity of the designation experimental or experimedia, thinking of mad science in the way that tentitively, a convenience has brought life & performance & text & neoism into the realm of scientific --inquiry.

involve everyday in the play of children

orchids & rocks

Harry Kemp

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454. **Jack Spandrift**

Re: 44

Wed 11 Feb 1998

Prejsnar, name that blues song:

"got me a 44..." [this is a query]

- Spandrift

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455. **David Kellogg**

Re: query

Wed 11 Feb 1998

I'm OK, better than I was feeling at Minnesota, that's for sure. Looks like I'll be staying at Duke for another year. Did I tell you the story of my rejection from Villanova? I was "too identified with cultural studies." Jesus. But my writing is actually going pretty well; I'm focused -- it's time to fish or cut bait, as Olson once said. Would you care to see the draft opening chapter of my book? (Maybe that's too much to read right now.)

Cheers,

David

~~~~~  
~~~~~

David Kellogg Duke University

██████ Program in Writing and Rhetoric

██████ Durham, NC 27708

FAX ██████ <http://www.duke.edu/~kellogg/>

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456. **Dale M Smith**

Why I'm not an experimental poet

Wed 11 Feb 1998

"Scientific method in process" might produce some 'interesting' work in poetry, but of a rather limited sort. Neo Formalism, on the other end of the spectrum, can be of interest too, though more than often lands in the mud. It seems to me though that the Mac Low Method shares at least one common element with its formal nemesis. Both purposely limit their palate in order to discover something new, or to compress language to such a degree that it functions independent, or at a greater distance from, an author's intent.

The results often stink on either end, and there are University departments eager to vacuum the mess on both sides. What little there is of worth coming out of all this poetry is probably an accumulation of a life's attention to both language and the environment of the poet. A prophet like Blake is rare and offers less of an experimental gesture than a blunt hammer slammed on the anvil. His example makes puddles of the extremes poetry today offers on the left or the right. It's not so much an experiment as being charged with a daring to step into unknown, and hence, unexplored regions. But Blake didn't 'experiment' or play with language so much as execute it in such a way that it conveyed the depth of his emotionally active intelligence.

Still, that neo formal stuff seems like it would have some possibility, in that it worked for Keats et al. Just as, I suppose, at one time it was very liberating to create poem out of random words spilled to the floor (the way you can do it on a refrigerator now - magnetically). Both sides seem to have lost something though. What Blake was after is probably unimaginable to practitioners of today's poetic cousins.

To: [REDACTED]

Reading Crayon's festschrift for Jackson Mac Low of late (a really great job in every department), I was intrigued at Mordecai Mac Low's discussion of his father's work as an instance of scientific methodology in process, since Mordecai is in particular position to know whereof he speaks on this topic.

I still feel profoundly uncomfortable with the idea of the "experimental" tho, what with its sense that "this may not work" and the "trial and error" sense of process. But today I've discovered a deeper reason why I'm not an experimental poet.

West Chester University's 4th annual summer writers conference (June 10-13) focuses this year on "Exploring Form & Narrative" and offers a workshop on "Experimental Forms" taught by...Dana Gioia.

I'm not making this up.

Some of the other sessions to be taught: Meter (Timothy Steele), Rhyme (Charles Martin), the Sonnet (RS Gwynn), French Forms (Phillis Levin) and Blank Verse (Alfred Corn). There is also an "Introduction to Form" taught by Cynthia Zarin who, as the brochure says, has work that "appears frequently in The New Yorker."

There will also be a "celebration" of the Hudson Review (Louis Simpson, Daniel Hoffman, Frederick Morgan etc) and there's a call for critical papers on the poetry of Amy Clampitt, Literary Quarterlies, Translation and "individual authors or subjects relevant to the conference theme."

More details including scholarship info at:
www.wcupa.edu/_ACADEMICS/sch_cas/poetry/

Cost ranges between \$250-499 for the whole shebang, which includes a picnic and dance.

Now, I'm perfectly willing to concede that one could get real value from some of the sessions (Marilyn Nelson is teaching a master class, for example), but the idea that this claustrophobic convocation on pattern represents the idea of "form" insults my intelligence as it should that of any poet born after Baudelaire and Blake. That it is being held at a state institution borders on theft of public resources.

So that is why I am not an experimental poet.

Ron Silliman

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457. **John Tranter**

Jacket, again

Wed 11 Feb 1998

Something happened to the Poetics List digest for 8 to 9 February making it unreadable on my computer. It contained the following announcement, which I hope listmembers won't mind if I re-post, in case others missed it too. JT
===== Announcement - current February 1998 - Jacket # 2 is complete.

Jacket magazine - free, fast-loading, international, full of stylish writing - on the Internet, at

<http://www.jacket.zip.com.au>

Jacket # 2 is now complete.

It focuses mainly on the work of JOHN ASHBERY -

John Ashbery : two interviews (1985 and 1988), and a new Ashbery poem / Marjorie Perloff on "Normalizing John Ashbery" / John Tranter : 3 John Ashberys / Eliot Weinberger on James Laughlin (1914-1997) / David Lehman - more on the Ern Malley hoax / Bob Perelman's "The Marginalization of Poetry" discussed by Silliman, Lauterbach, Spahr, Evans and Kate Lilley... and Bob Perelman! / poems by Peter Riley, Lee Ann Brown, John Kinsella, Eileen Myles, August Kleinzahler, Jennifer Moxley, Robert Adamson, Forrest Gander, Tim Davis, Michael Heller, Denis Gallagher / Eliot Weinberger - Letter from New York: "Vomit" / and other poems and articles.

In November 1997, Jacket was the featured Internet site on the Electronic Poetry Center at the State University of New York at Buffalo. The EPC is a leading experimental poetry site.

In December 1997, Jacket was among the top recommended sites on Web Del Sol, a major literary arts Internet conglomerate site in the US.

In December 1997, Jacket won the "Best of the Web" award from the Poetry Mining Company, an Internet site in New York.

The first issue of Jacket contains interviews with English poet Roy Fisher and Australian aboriginal poet Lionel Fogarty, a piece on cyber-poetry in the age of the Internet, a look at the 1943 hoax poet Ern Malley (including rare childhood photos!) , work by Charles Bernstein, Elaine Equi, Pamela Brown, Alfred Corn, Joanne Burns, Tracy Ryan, Carl Rakosi, Beth Spencer, Peter Minter, Susan Schultz and Paul Hoover, together with reviews, other prose and poetry pieces and plentiful photos and art work. Jacket # 1 was complete in October 1997.

Jacket # 3 is being uploaded as we speak, and will be complete in late April 1998. It already contains poems by Joel Lewis, Michele Leggott, Kris Hemensley, Peter Gizzi, Hans Magnus Enzensberger, Tom Clark and Johanna Drucker, and a review of Charles Nicholl's enlightening biography "Somebody Else - Rimbaud in Africa".

Issue # 3 is dedicated to the memory of the Australian poet JOHN FORBES, who died unexpectedly on 23 January at the age of 47 at his home in Melbourne. It contains a poem by him ("Speed: A Pastoral"), and poems by some of his friends.

Jacket is free, and (thus) is at present unable to pay contributors. Also, I don't have the time yet to deal with unsolicited submissions. Sorry.

Jacket editor John Tranter's e-mail address is

██████████

Please tell your friends about Jacket, whose motto is

"bop till you drop!"

from

John Tranter, 39 Short Street, Balmain NSW 2041, Sydney, Australia

tel (██████████) fax (██████████)

<http://writing.upenn.edu/epc/authors/tranter/3poems-interview.html>

Editor, Jacket magazine: <http://www.jacket.zip.com.au>

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458. **James Finnegan**

Re: Why I'm not an experimental poet

Wed 11 Feb 1998

In a message dated 98-02-11 16:07:13 EST, Ron Silliman wrote:

<< Now, I'm perfectly willing to concede that one could get real value from some of the sessions (Marilyn Nelson is teaching a master class, for example), but the idea that this claustrophobic convocation on pattern represents the idea of "form" insults my intelligence as it should that of any poet born after Baudelaire and Blake. >>

Ron, I think understand the irritation behind your remarks, but is it necessary for those who've exploded the borders of poetry to cavil at those who want to implode poetic space? Aren't there infinite possibilities in both directions? (To paraphrase Niels Bohr, the language of the inside of the atom is the language poetry.) It's not a conference that appeals to me particularly, but I don't think any one contingent/movement (not language writing, & certainly not the new formalism) has cornered the market on innovation--not yet anyway.

Finnegan

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459. **Simon/Piombino**

Re: 44 Freud

Wed 11 Feb 1998

Hi Ron,

This has to be short because it is very close to dinner time and I don't want to wait to send this.

Sorry to hear about your pneumonia- Mikel's advice sounds very good- especially the rest. (By the way, Mikel, I hope Liz Was is feeling better too!)

I appreciated your post on Freudian analysis, though I must confess to racing through or missing some of the other posts on this topic. I especially enjoyed what you said about Professor Crews, whose articles in the New York Review of Books were recently thrown out by me, with some regret, because they were in the class of "I must respond to this in some way."

What you said about it being good that psychoanalysis is taught at private institutes is true, I guess. I am a graduate of one such place, the Postgraduate Center, in NYC. I guess I consider myself a post Freudian analyst, as most analysts I'm sure would say. I am very interested in hearing more about the reputation of psychoanalysis among poets.

Best wishes,
Nick

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460. **KENT JOHNSON**

A personal appeal

Wed 11 Feb 1998

I had mentioned in my previous message that I would be posting information about an issue that had recently come to my attention. I hereby give Postmodern Culture, Lingua Franca, The Chronicle of Higher Education, Mike and Dale's Younger Poets, and anyone who would like, permission to reprint this message and to do so without first consulting me.

In the past months I have been engaged in correspondence with one of the world's most prominent visual poets (as well as theoreticians of visual poetics). This poet is Latin American and is fairly out of touch with recent developments in the "non-visual" poetry scene in the U.S. This poet had enthusiastically agreed to collaborate with me in the editing of an anthology of Latin American visual poetries from Noigandres on, including essential theoretical works, and we had begun to discuss this in some detail, including plans for my visiting him in South America for a long stay during my sabbatical this year. My sabbatical is due to be approved (a formality) next week by the board of trustees of my college. My application is completely based on a description of the above project, for which there has been considerable enthusiasm and support here.

Two days ago I received a long letter from the poet I have mentioned telling me that he was greatly looking forward to undertaking this project, that he was organizing his "complete" archives of Latin American visual poetry, and assuring me that what would be produced would be a document of the first power.

This morning I received a letter from this poet and it said (I gloss and paraphrase) the following:

"My dear friend Kent: I find myself in an extremely uncomfortable position. I have received various communications from close friends in the United States who strongly question my relationship with you. These are people to whom I owe my loyalty since some of them helped secure my release from prison under the junta and have helped my work in many ways..... I feel it is important for you to settle your situation with those circles of the American critical community which seem so antagonistic toward you. I hope you will be able to overcome this unfortunate situation and that we might be able to reestablish our collaboration."

Some important things stand out here: 1) It is quite evident, I think it's safe to say, that this sabotaging of an important and needed project is related to the opinions of certain people about another project I have been involved in and which has caused a fair amount of discussion and controversy. 2) That what is involved is, to some degree, an organized campaign, since the "various communications" arrived within the past two days. 3) That those involved in successfully urging an end to the professional and personal relationship that had been established between myself and the other person in question are willing to scuttle a good faith and seriously undertaken effort--one that aimed to give exposure to relatively unrecognized poets in Latin America-- and that they are willing to do this to placate their own discomfort and disapproval about another body of work.

I want to make it clear that I hold no resentment whatsoever toward the poet for his decision to postpone our collaboration. He is a person who has worked with a great deal of vision and selflessness, and he is someone who has put his life on the line in the struggle for justice in his country. It is completely understandable that he would wish to exercise the utmost caution in light of such strong and unexpected warnings (eventhough he was aware of the controversy around the Yasusada work and I had sent him a copy of the book). I have written him that I understand that he has been placed in a very awkward and difficult position and that his loyalty to previous friendships is important. But I did tell him that I felt his friends had acted in ways that are unprincipled beyond belief and that it was still my hope that we might be able to clarify the matter.

Therefore, I am writing this as an open appeal to those who are involved in poisoning this important project to have the self-respect and professional integrity to come forward and explain your actions. I have never shied away from discussing my ideas and feelings about the Yasusada writings, and if you feel that work somehow disqualifies me from undertaking this project then I would invite you to a dialogue. Have the courage to approach me personally.

And I am making this appeal here because I know that those involved are on or in close contact with people on this list.

And you have behaved rather disgracefully.

Kent Johnson

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461. **Kali Tal**

Re: sublimating the ridiculous

Wed 11 Feb 1998

Kent,

You might as well declare your backyard a nuclear-free zone while you're at it....

But the key point in this matter is whether or not the post-author's "permission" is required, and particularly when what is being reprinted directly pertains to the editorial policy of the editor's journal. The answer, to my mind, is an emphatic No. (nota bene: In fact, Aldon, if the matter were sufficiently interesting to them, it would be perfectly correct and appropriate for the editors of Postmodern Culture to reprint my public posts on the list regarding their journal without seeking my "permission.")

Well, to many other folks' minds, the answer about permission is an emphatic *yes*, and what makes your assertion of eminent domain any more valid than their assertion of intellectual property rights? "stealin my shit from me / don't make it yrs / makes it stolen," as shange notes.

And that greater context is that our discourse here is available, immediately and freely (in every sense of that word), to millions on the World Wide Web. Once we freely choose to enter it, we choose to enter an unprecedentedly collective space, one that is qualitatively different in form and dynamic from the traditional means of literary packaging and commodification. I don't want to sound arrogant about it, but we list members should really just get used to this and stop thinking that rules and protocols and "personal values" that have their origins in 17th century social and cultural relations--and which have formed the legal and ideological proprieties of print culture up to the present--apply in any feasible way to a mode of information production that has radically superseded those relations and made the ideology of authorship engendered by them something akin to the tenuous status of the Right of Estate around the time of Cromwell.

Oh, nonsense. Folks blathering about the "new and unprecedented" nature of e-communication make me tired. Ain't nothin new about this--it's same-old same-old. People talk, share ideas, share work, write to each other. Everybody thought *television* was gonna be some new, liberating medium. See any sign of it? And, while we're at it, why shouldn't anything broadcast on TV be "free" as well? Surely the logic behind your argument about POETICS should hold for broadcast TV. And what's this silliness 'bout a "radically democratic" forum? What's "democratic" about POETICS? It's a free-for-all w/a benign dictator--votes don't carry any weight here. Email listservs are publications, like other publications--they just get into print quicker. I refuse to give up my rights to the material I produce in this space any more than I'd give 'em up if I published in a hard-copy journal.

If one wants to claim his or her words as private property, well, then he or she should go publish them in

institutional mediums where his or her "authority" (and all the psychological security provided by that notion) is firmly guaranteed by the State.

Sorry to inform you, but the state protects "authority" on the internet as well--as any site devoted to the legal issues of internet publication will demonstrate. Just try lifting a Disney cartoon off their site and see how quick they slap you with a suit. Copyright is there to protect the interests of the author--interests, I'd think, that many of us share. If I *want* to give my work away, fine. (And I do--I publish most of what I write on the Net, so people can see it for free.) But it ain't your right to *take* it (and particularly take it and *sell* it) unless I give my permission.

Bah.

Kali

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462. **d powell**

Re: Poetry is not a subculture

Wed 11 Feb 1998

Reply to: RE: Poetry is not a subculture

sean bonney wrote:

>re Henry Gould's posting on 5th Feb re the task of crit,
>particularly the upper case rant ending POETRY IS NOT A
>SUBCULTURE
>
>Firstly, whats so bad about being a subculture when the
>dominant one is so banal, and in that banality so brutal
>(check the current shituation viz Clinton & the UKs own
>glorious ambassador of idiocy Blair)
>
>Anyway, Henry's notes got me thinking about the marginal
>position we often find ourselves in. It should be clear to
>everybody that the way poetry is taught in school puts most
>people off - these people aren't just 'outside' poetry, a
>lot of them actively dislike it - seen as elitist and
>irrelevant, the residue of a best forgotten culture that
>existed pre-MTV etc, containing no joy fun or pleasure,
>which are surely among the main reasons that we all got
>involved in the first place. Result is, post-school a lot
>of people are disinclined to go to poetry because it
>carries too many school-time horror memories. Here in

>Britain you find undergraduates who still define a poem as
>something that rhymes.

>

>Fine, forget em, we're not in the business of mass markets
>anyway, and maybe elitism isn't that bad after all, if the
>alternative is such spectacles as the massed ranks of the
>Tory Party singing Blake's lyrics as emblems of bigotry,
>capital etc - all the stuff that Blake loathed.

>

>It seems to me that people see poetry as a joke because
>they don't know what it is; the most pleasure I've got from
>my own readings is folks coming up afterwards saying they
>usually hate poetry but loved mine (make of that what you
>will!). A lot of people are THREATENED by the perceived
>difficulties etc, and react accordingly.

>

>It isn't a case of us learned poets against the philistine
>world; its just that much of what we say only has interest
>to each other, hence a discussion group like this. Example:
>photographs of deep space engage me more than anything
>else, but if someone in the pub starts talking about the
>finer points of astro-physics my eyes glaze over.

>

>Lets not forget that this is always the position that poets
>have been in. Blake and Shelley were small press activists.
>Its just now perhaps the situation is more complicated -
>self consciousness produced by media etc etc. Sometimes in
>the info-babble that we're all a part of it seems the only
>possible option is an ironic silence (Rimbaud pissing in
>the shadows) - but even thats useless, stand there silently
>and no-one will notice, you'll just end up getting run over
>by a truck.

>

True, poetry is a marginalized artform--even at the queer bookstores, where that which is marginal is reclaimed, poetry still gets shoved into the back of the store (just the way queer literature gets shelved in mainstream bookstores). But this does not make poetry a "subculture." In order to constitute a subculture, poets would have to share common rituals, dress, speech, etc. and, generalizations about poets aside, there is no critical mass of shared traits from which to argue the existence of such a subculture. If anything, judging from the poets I have known, poets belong to a kind of "anti-subculture." But even that

assessment is reductive.

Doug

=====

D A Powell

=====

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463. **Schuchat Simon**

Re: 44

Wed 11 Feb 1998

shi is the "on yomi" or sino-Japanese word, while "yon" is 4 in the "kun yomi" or yamato-kotoba indigenous Japanese reading. I don't think that variations in usage are regional, more than you use one in some circumstances and the other in other circumstances.

On Wed, 11 Feb 1998, Alan Myouka Sondheim wrote:

It's not a nonsense word at all. It's built-in and is "yon." "Yon" means four, just like "shi" does. I just haven't heard anything else - but then I'm in Fukuoka, in the south-west.

Alan

On Mon, 9 Feb 1998, d powell wrote:

Reply to: Re: 44 In Japanese, the word "shi" is both "four" and "death" as well. Many superstitious Japanese replace "four" with a nonsense word when giving addresses, phone numbers, etc. that contain a four.

Tea cups are sold in sets of five, and if one cup is broken, the whole set is thrown out--at least, this is a custom that still is observed by some Japanese.

Doug

=====

D A Powell

=====

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464. **d powell**

Re: Why I'm not an experimental poet

Wed 11 Feb 1998

Reply to: Re: Why I'm not an experimental poet

sylvester pollet wrote:

>>So that is why I am not an experimental poet.

>>

>>Ron Silliman

>

>I second that. To me, it always sounded like someone who was experimenting
>at being a poet. Sylvester

Which is why I hate being called "an experimental queer writer," because it sounds like I'm experimenting with being queer. I'll have those critics know, I have it down to a science now, thank you very much. Oh yes, special thanks to the Boy Scouts of America, where I earned an extra merit badge--the one they don't talk about.

Doug

=====

D A Powell

=====

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465. **KENT JOHNSON**

Intellectual property

Wed 11 Feb 1998

On Feb 11, Kali Tal wrote:

| *Well, to many other folks' minds, the answer about permission is an
| emphatic *yes**

True enough!

| *and what makes your assertion of eminent domain any
| more valid than their assertion of intellectual property rights?*

why nothing, at least not in any final sense. I mean life is full of unfinished arguments, right? But you're sort of adding to my argument-- i.e. when it comes to staked claims of "intellectual property," no matter how barbed the fence that is strung, we are dealing in an area of undecidability, of utter subjectivity and

will. The fence is a phantasm, a shimmer of false consciousness, a little fart of history. Who wrote the deed you are holding in your hand?

Oh, nonsense. Folks blathering about the "new and unprecedented" nature of e-communication make me tired.

Shoot, that was the first time in my life I have ever said anything mildly theoretical about the Net, and I thought I was going to blow everyone away!

Ain't nothin new about this--it's same--old same--old. People talk, share ideas, share work, write to each other.

Thus, the ruling class will sleep more soundly tonight, for nothing ever really changes. And all the work on that doggone Telecommunications bill!

And while we're at it, why shouldn't anything broadcast on TV be "free" as well? Surely the logic behind your argument about POETICS should hold for broadcast TV.

I am all for free TV!! Did I sound like I wasn't? But capital does these weird things to freedom...

and what's this silliness 'bout a "radically democratic" forum? What's "democratic" about POETICS?

OK, radically democratic and _open_? I mean that when I press the send button for this, people who aren't subscribed to the list can read it before it's posted to the subscribers. It is available, always/already (forgive me for that term), to millions. Why (and this is the main question I was posing) would I be so protective about my post? What leads me to desire to control its distribution if I've already willingly entered it into an uncontrollable space? And don't tell me I'm being silly because, well, not that many people peek at the Poetics archives...

I refuse to give up my rights to the material I produce in this space any more than I'd give 'em up if I published in a hard copy journal.

Fair enough. But then perhaps you should join the campaign to more effectively extend existing copyright law into the Web? And actually, here's a question. Let's say you had participated in the Mike and Dale's discussion and Dale had called to tell you he wanted to reprint your posts in full, along with numerous others. And let's say that you were in a bad mood or something like that and said No. And let's say that Dale said, Well I wan't _asking_ you, I was just informing you because this discussion is about the integrity of my magazine. And then he went ahead and did it. Published it, I mean. You have one call. Who do you call first?

Sorry to inform you, but the state protects "authority" on the internet as well--as any site devoted to the legal issues of

| *internet publication will demonstrate. Just try lifting a Disney cartoon off their site and see how quick they slap you with a suit.*

Yes, thank you for that information. But is this a settled issue or a contested one, still very fluid, with important implications. I'm open to having my mind changed on this issue, really, I am. But here's a last and very serious question: Why would you want to be on the same side of this "intellectual property" issue as the Disney Corporation?

| *Bah.*

Bah to you too.

Kent

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466. **Henry Gould**

Re: Why I'm not an experimental poet

Wed 11 Feb 1998

On Wed, 11 Feb 1998 17:05:12 CST Dale M Smith said:

>

>Still, that neo formal stuff seems like it would have some possibility, in
>that it worked for Keats et al. Just as, I suppose, at one time it was
>very liberating to create poem out of random words spilled to the floor
>(the way you can do it on a refrigerator now - magnetically). Both sides
>seem to have lost something though. What Blake was after is probably
>unimaginable to practitioners of today's poetic cousins.

>

Letters don't need iron. They are already fully magnetized.
The question is does the poet have any iron in the stomach.
Blake ate crowbars for breakfast. Melville, on the other hand,
was a born harpoon. (I'm a little red fire truck.)

- Henry Gould

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467. **David Zauhar**

Re: Why I'm not an experimental poet

Wed 11 Feb 1998

Not to suggest that Ron Silliman IS making this up, but I checked the website mentioned in his post (for the same reason, I guess, that some motorists gawk at automobile accidents on the highways), and it says that the "Experimental Forms" class is taught by Charles Martin, and that Dana Gioia is teaching "Translation" (The "Master Class" is Molly Peacock's, and Alfred Corn is

"Working in Rhyme" and Marilyn Nelson is doing "The Sonnet"). The keynoter, by the way, is Anthony Hecht. Still have to agree with the gist of his post concerning formatted pre-fab poetry being passed off as the last word on poetic form. And for those prices, there better be an open bar at all the receptions.

David Zauhar
University of Illinois at Chicago

"My religion makes no sense
and does not help me
therefore I pursue it."

--Anne Carson

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468. **Tom Mandel**
Warren Spahn or warring spam?

Wed 11 Feb 1998

I *think* Warren Spahn wore # 23....

[Re: intellectual property and Dale Smith the reprinter of posts, I must start by reminding you that I haven't agreed with anything Dale has said here recently if ever.

However, this is *not* in fact a private space, but a public conversation. What is said here is already published; it is utterly public.

Grab a phrase from a post here and search for all its words and the author's name using any search engine on the net, for example. I bet the engine returns the post you hold in email.

Anyone, iow, can get to this list, subscribed or not.}

...Perhaps it is that Spahn won 323 games -- can that be true? That's a lot of games.

Tom Mandel

Tom Mandel

Screen Porch * <http://screenporch.com>

4020 Williamsburg Ct, Ste 200 * vox: [REDACTED]

Fairfax, VA 22031 * fax: [REDACTED]

Join the Caucus Conversation

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469. **Alan Myouka Sondheim**

No Play

Wed 11 Feb 1998

-

No Play

<The curtain rises. Nikuko and American boy on stage.>

Nikuko speaks (kabuki voice throughout):

"I, Nikuko, do beg you to sew my eyes shut!

Oh, I have not seen so much horror in world!

But, I, Nikuko, want to experience total bliss!

I want to do one-man sumo with fearsome opponents!

I will fight me in blackness of invisible enemies!

I will fight police throwing me in filthy cell!

Do you like elimination of "a" "the" articles now such?

Do wrap me in kimono-cloth, strangle in transparent tape!

I will know ecstasy! Then I will bring "you" ecstasy!

I will make "you" verb in my vagina!

Do you like forbidden pleasure? Jewel-Lotus-Magatama-Pleasure?

You will have rope through labia to pull my deep joy-suffering!

You will have me, do you like Oriental face?

Deep cast of eyes wide open for your english-teaching insert!

Where you are from, they have automobiles! I so like to drive!

Oh deep American boy, I will make you drive in my vagina!

I do like overdrive-gear-shift-nitro-burn as well!

I will do one-man sumo with fearsome opportunities!"

<Gas floods the stage; American boy dies, vomiting. Nikuko staggers to her feet, takes off her mask. She is a woman of thirty-five. She is carrying a dagger. She turns and faces the audience. She screams "MU!" The curtain falls.>

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470. **Rachel Levitsky**

[Fwd: Urgent on Iraq - Please note the signers!!; U.S. v. Iraq: A Study i (fwd)]

Wed 11 Feb 1998

by spot.Colorado.EDU (8.8.5/8.8.4/CNS-4.1p) with SMTP

id QAA24274; Tue, 10 Feb 1998 16:31:16 -0700 (MST)

Date: Tue, 10 Feb 1998 16:31:15 -0700 (MST)

From: ANDERSON DAVID <[REDACTED]>

To: [REDACTED], [REDACTED], [REDACTED],
[REDACTED], [REDACTED], [REDACTED],
[REDACTED], [REDACTED], [REDACTED],
[REDACTED], [REDACTED], [REDACTED],
[REDACTED]

Subject: Urgent on Iraq - Please note the signers!!; U.S. v. Iraq: A Study i (fwd)

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

Date: 10 Feb 1998 14:32:06

From: [REDACTED]

To: Recipients of conference <[REDACTED]>

Subject: Urgent on Iraq - Please note the signers!!; U.S. v. Iraq: A Study i

[Apologies for duplicates as a result of cross-posting.]

>>PLEASE JOIN WITH US AT THIS CRUCIAL TIME.

>>To find out about COME email to [REDACTED]

>>To find out about MID-EAST REALITIES email to [REDACTED]

>>-----

>>

>> DO NOT BOMB IRAQ

>>

>>This very important and timely Statement from the Committee On The

>>Middle East is now available for downloading and printing.

>>

>> TO VIEW ON THE WEB:

>> <http://www.MiddleEast.Org/iraqhtm.htm>

>>

>> WINDOWS WORD VERSION - 2 pages

>> For duplication on both sides of one 8 x 11 paper.

>> <http://www.MiddleEast.Org/iraq.doc>

>>

>>To publish this unique and important Statement in Washington, and to

>>distribute it to the American and International Press, we need your

>>help and support. If you would like to help please email to

>> [REDACTED] or call [REDACTED].

>>-----

>>

>>Email copy of Statement follows:

>>

>>- DO NOT BOMB IRAQ

>>

>> A Public Statement from the
>> COMMITTEE ON THE MIDDLE EAST

>> The following is a statement from the Committee On
>> The Middle East (COME) concerning the American
>> threats to bomb Iraq. We urge you to circulate it
>> as much as possible. The International Advisory
>> Committee of COME, including Middle East experts
>> and professors throughout the world, is listed at
>> the end of the Statement.

>> Please join with us and support our efforts at
>> this critical time.

>> To reach COME:

>> Phone: [REDACTED]

>> Fax: [REDACTED]

>> Email: [REDACTED]

>> Web: <http://WWW.MiddleEast.org>

>> D O N O T B O M B I R A Q

>> While the United States clearly has the military power to further
>>devastate and prostrate Iraq, we strongly believe that the course the
>>U.S. has chosen is not only grossly unjust, but also exceedingly
>>hypocritical and duplicitous. We further believe that though the U.S.
>>may be able to pursue its imperial policies without substantial
>>opposition in the short term, the policies being pursued today,
>>especially the new and massive military assault being prepared against
>>Iraq, are likely to have tremendously negative historical ramifications.

>> As Middle East experts and scholars - many with close and personal
>>ties to this long troubled and misunderstood region - we feel a
>>political, a moral, and a historical responsibility to speak up in
>>clear opposition at this critical time.

>> Origins of Today's Imbroglia:

>> Throughout this century Western countries, primarily the United
>>States and Great Britain, have continually interfered in and
>>manipulated events in the Middle East. The origins of the
>>Iraq/Kuwait conflict can be found in the unilateral British decision
>>during the early years of this century to essentially cut off a
>>piece of Iraq to suit British Empire desires of that now faded era.
>> Rather than agreeing to Arab self-determination at the end of World

>>War I and the collapse of the Ottoman Empire, Western nations conspired
>>to divide the Arab world into a number of artificial and barely viable
>>entities; to install Arab "client regimes" throughout the region, to
>>make these regimes dependent on Western economic and military power
>>for survival; and then to impose an ongoing series of economic,
>>cultural, and political arrangements seriously detrimental to the
>>people of the area. This is the historical legacy that we live with
>>today.

>> Throughout the 1930s and the 1940s the West further manipulated the
>>affairs of the Middle East in order to control the resources of the
>>region and then to create a Jewish homeland in an area long considered
>>central to Arab nationalism and Muslim concerns. Playing off one regime
>>against the other and one geopolitical interest against another became a
>>major preoccupation for Western politicians and their closely associated
>>business interests.

>>

>> Following World War II:

>>

>> After World War II, and from these policy origins, the United States
>>became the main Western power in the region, supplanting the key roles
>>formerly played by Britain and France. In the 1960s Gamel Abdel Nasser
>>was the target of Western condemnation for his attempt to reintegrate
>>the Arab world and to pursue independent "non-aligned" policies. By the
>>1970s the CIA had established close working relationships with key Arab
>>client regimes from Morocco and Jordan to Saudi Arabia and Iran -

>>regimes

>>that even then were among the most repressive and undemocratic in the
>>world - in order to further American domination and to secure an
>>ever-growing supply of inexpensive oil and the resultant flow of
>>petrodollars.

>> By the late 1970s the counter-reaction of the Iranian revolution was
>>met with a Western build-up of the very same Iraqi regime that is so
>>condemned today in a vain attempt to use Iraq to crush the new Iranian
>>regime. The result was millions of deaths coming on top of the
>>terrible devastation of Lebanon, itself a country that had been severed
>>from Greater Syria by Western intrigues, as had been the area of
>>southern Syria, then known as Palestine. Additionally the Israelis
>>were given the green light to invade Lebanon, further devastate the
>>Palestinians, and install a puppet Lebanese government - an attempt
>>which failed leading to an American and Israeli retreat but ongoing
>>militarism to this day. Meanwhile, throughout all these years Western
>>manipulation of oil supplies and pricing, coupled with arms sales

>>policies, often seriously exacerbated tensions between countries in
>>the region leading to the events of this decade.

>>

>> The Gulf Conflict:

>>

>> It was precisely such American manipulations and intrigues that led
>>to the Gulf War in 1990. Indeed, we would be remiss if we did not note
>>that there is already much historical evidence that the U.S. actually
>>maneuvered Iraq into the invasion of Kuwait, repeatedly suggesting to
>>Iraq that it would become the pivotal military state of the area in
>>coordination with the U.S. Whether true or not the U.S. subsequently
>>did everything in its power to prevent a peaceful resolution of the
>>conflict and for the first time intervened with massive and overwhelming
>>military force in the region creating today's dangerously unstable
>>quagmire.

>> The initially stated American goal was only to protect Saudi Arabia.
>>Then after the unprecedented military build-up the goal became to expel
>>Iraq from Kuwait. Then the goal evolved to toppling the Iraqi
>>government. And from there the Americans began to impose various limits
>>on Iraqi sovereignty; took over much of Iraq air space; sent the CIA to
>>repeatedly attempt to topple the Iraqi government; and placed a
>>near-total embargo on Iraq that many - including a former Attorney
>>General of the United States - have termed near-genocidal. The overall
>>result has been the subjugation and impoverishment of Iraq and the
>>actual death of approximately 5% of the Iraqis as the direct result
>>of American sanctions, plus the reallocation of oil quotes and
>>petrodollars to American client-states.

>> With the Clinton Administration, the U.S. began to insist on the
>>"dual containment" of both Iraq and Iran - both countries which just a
>>few years ago the U.S. was working very closely with and providing
>>considerable arms to. With few in the press able to remember from
>>one year to the next, or to connect one historic event with another,
>>somehow Washington has come to insist on Iraqi disarmament and Iranian
>>strangulation. Furthermore, these policies are being pursued even
>>while Israel and key Arab client states are receiving American weapons
>>in ever larger amounts, with Israel's weapons of mass destruction
>>making her forces 7 to 8 times stronger than all Arab armies combined.
>>Furthermore still, the U.S. and Israeli strategic alliance has never
>>been closer, the U.S. has repeatedly helped Israel defy the will of
>>the international community and the United Nations, and the U.S.
>>continues to champion a disingenuous Israeli "peace process" which
>>in reality on the ground continues to dispossess the Palestinians

>>and to corral them onto reservations in their own country!

>>

>> The Future:

>>

>> In a future statement we will move on to the crucial subject of what
>>alternative policies the United States should be pursuing. But at this
>>critical moment we are compelled to come forward and urgently condemn
>>the policies now being pursued by the United States and regional ally
>>Israel. We call for an immediate cessation of the economic embargo
>>against Iraq, an end to U.S.-imposed restrictions on Iraqi sovereignty
>>and airspace, and most of all immediately suspension of all plans to
>>attack Iraq using the overwhelming technological and military
>>instruments

>>available to the U.S.

>> If the U.S. continues to pursue its current policies then we
>>conclude and predict it will not be unreasonable for many in the world
>>to brand the U.S. itself as a arrogant and imperialist state, and if
>>that becomes the historical paradigm it will be both understandable
>>and justifiable if others pursue whatever means are available to them
>>to oppose American domination and militarism. Such developments could
>>quite possibly lead to still more decades of conflict, warfare, and
>>terrorism throughout the region and beyond.

>>

>> * * * * *

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>>College of William and Mary; Ismail Zayid, M.D. - Dalhousi University
>>(Canada).

>>

>> COME - [REDACTED] - Fax: [REDACTED] - Email: [REDACTED]

=====

From: MID-EAST REALITIES <[REDACTED]>

Subject: Author condemns U.S. policies toward Iraq

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/ | _ / | / | _ / \ \ Making Sense of the Middle East
/ _ / _ / _ / | / \ \

www.MiddleEast.Org M E R E X C L U S I V E :
AUTHOR CONDEMNS U.S. POLICIES TOWARD IRAQ

TO RECEI

cdp ignored 10934 excess bytes

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471. **Don Byrd**

Re: Foucault, Ron's experimentalism and Baseball

Wed 11 Feb 1998

Safdie Joseph wrote:

On another note, thanks to Katy Lederer for posting a section from Foucault's only truly valuable work for my poetics, _The Order of Things_ (but what do I know, I like Baudrillard too, even his little masterpiece of invective _Forget Foucault_). But I'd like to ask Katy (and anyone else who has ventured through the formidable prose of this work), what she thinks of the period he deals with BEFORE the dead-end of the 16th century, namely the pre-Renaissance system of order and meaning, when things were luminous and so were their signs?

Before Foucault was Foucault, at least in the U.S., Rich Grossinger translated that early section of _The Order of Things_ for his Ph.D. language exams at the University of Michigan and published it in _Io_, #4 (probably 68 or 69). He neglected to note that this was an early section out of a history, and many of us first new of Foucault as a weird French magus...

By the way, I would recommend _Io_ to any one who can find a file of them. Much of the vitality of the poetry of that period resulted from the fact that it was being cooked up in close connection with large doses of information about stuff. I suppose some of the information in _Io_ would now seem new-ageish, but, of course, it was pre-new-age. And (I had changed the original subject line,

but now I can add baseball again) in addition to issues on doctrine of signatures, ethnoastronomy, ecology, etc., there is a great issue on baseball.

As I noted in that earlier post, Derrida comes closer to a kind of Neoplatonism with every book. *_On the Name_* is closer to the writings of renaissance magicians than to the Nietzsche and Heidegger that he begun with.

Ron, one of the generation of our father-poets, and I do not remember which one, but I am inclined to think it was Jackson, objected to being called an experimental poet on the grounds that experimenting implied that one did not know what one was doing. The poem was not an experiment, it was an event. Or would it have been David Antin?

don

--

Don Byrd ([REDACTED], [REDACTED])
Department of English
State University of New York
Albany, NY 12222
[REDACTED] (work); [REDACTED] (home); [REDACTED] (fax)
The Little Magazine (<http://www.albany.edu/~litmag/>)

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472. **David Israel**
Re: A personal appeal
Thu 12 Feb 1998

Kent --

sorry to hear about this snafu. Good luck w.r.t. its resolution.

d.i.

•

• • • • •

.....

////////////////////

> david raphael israel <

>> washington d.c. <<

| [REDACTED] (home)

| [REDACTED] (office)

=====

thy centuries follow each other

| perfecting a small wild flower

| (Tagore)
////////////////////////////////////

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473. **Karen Kelley**

Lee Chapman

Thu 12 Feb 1998

Oops, I know someone recently gave Lee Chapman's (First Intensity) earth address--would you please again?

Karen

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474. **david bromige**

socopo reading : charles alexander

Thu 12 Feb 1998

monday nite at the cinnabar theater in petaluma a welcome chance to hear fellow-listling charles alexander read his poetry. He read from "pushing water", a title that surely helped open up the work. . .earlier that day i had watched a waterfall & rapids, fascinated to see the rocks "pushing water" into serried patterns of many variations, but that's not the only way to hear those poems. They surely are generously available to being read from several approaches. Also he read his postcard series, and it was an intense pleasure to follow his handling of the small space. Intellectual jazz, where "a tear is an intellectual thing".

Also reading : roderigo toscano, and hung q. tu. Nor had I heard either of these read before, and have no sure sense of their work on the page. The smooch of traffic from petaluma Blvd interfered (i was sitting at the back of the room) but i began to cotton to both roderigo's hard-edge urban scapes and hung's lilting insinuations, want more, apologize for the sketchiness of these registrations. 25 is a good crowd in that space, a sign that the once-monthly series is catching on, and well it might, thanks to layne russell and steve tills and the hard work they do to spread the word. we did announce it on the johnny otis saturday morning matinee live-feed to kpfa berkeley, but i forgot to ask if anyone there came for that cause.

The second monday of each month, and in march, a panel on present practice and the troubadors, with peter gizzi, steve farmer, and, we hope, susan gevirtz.

db 3

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475. **Maria Damon**

Re: sublimating the ridiculous

Thu 12 Feb 1998

kent johnson goes on at some length about the list being a "free and open space" and thus what people post is not theirs. i suggest you all look at the welcome message that says that posting on the list is a form of publication. now, in my book, publication means publication, i.e. if your name is on it, it's yours. if someone wants to loosely paraphrase what's said on the list without attributing authorship, that's one thing; but if people's specific words are quoted and their names appeared somewhere in their own post and the quoted material, i would consider this to be publication and subject to the same general courtesies that apply to photocopying someone's work, citing it in your own work, etc.

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476. **Pierre Joris**

Re: Foucault, Ron's experimentalism and Baseball

Thu 12 Feb 1998

Don Byrd wrote:

... Ron, one of the generation of our father-poets, and I do not remember which one, but I am inclined to think it was Jackson, objected to being called an experimental poet on the grounds that experimenting implied that one did not know what one was doing. The poem was not an experiment, it was an event. Or would it have been David Antin?

that was Jackson, I believe. But when I read Ron's post what came to mind immediately were Antin's lines: "If Robert Frost is a poet, then I don't want to be a poet, if Robert Lowell is a poet that I don't want to be a poet...."

And Derrida's new book "Le monolinguisme de l'autre" (well, one of the three 1996 books) is all about the I of the author (JD), is in fact pure autobiography "I am the most Judeo-Franco-Maghrebian of all" -- And weaves a gorgeous piece of writing out of his musings on his (not-under-erasure) origins and lack of a (jew-ish) mothertongue. -- (I think a shortened version came out in English as "Echoes from Elsewhere.")

Spring training just around the corner & from the Io issue on baseball, here's a Ken Irby line to ponder: "...the problems of prosody for a narrative of pitchers are the pitchers' problems of the musculature facing home..."

Pierre (wearing his favorite Mets t-shirt)

=====

pierre joris 6 madison place albany ny 12202

tel/fax [REDACTED] email: [REDACTED]

<http://www.albany.edu/~joris/>

"What often prevents us from giving ourselves over to
a single vice is that we have several of them."

— La Rochefoucauld

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477. **George Bowering**

Re: Why I'm not an experimental poet

Thu 12 Feb 1998

*West Chester University's 4th annual summer writers conference (June 10-13)
focuses this year on "Exploring Form & Narrative" and offers a workshop on
"Experimental Forms" taught by...Dana Gioia.*

I'm not making this up.

Fill us in. Who is Dana Gioia? I take it that she or he is some kind of non-experi-
mental writer?

George Bowering.

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

fax: [REDACTED]

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478. **Irving Weiss**

Exhibits outside USA

Thu 12 Feb 1998

I know that Miekal And some months back sent out information about the
Bent Goncalves experimental poetry exhibit in Brazil, but I don't remember see-
ing any mention about other Latin American and European exhibits, some of
which I learned about from Clemente Padin. So here, if you will excuse repeti-
tion, are some announcements, including a reminder about the Brazilian show.

FRACTART 1998 POESIA VIXUAL

VI International Biennial of Experimental Poetry (Fractal/Global Festival of
Polypoetry-Hypertext-Multimedia Poetry)

Mexico City, Mexico D.F.

University Museum El Chopo, among other sites.

Submit: projects and artwork for the Internet; fax; computer and video poetry (American System); personal interventions (performance and polypoetry); visual, concrete, and graphic poetry; sound poetry; installations; book objects; etc.

If you send anything by Internet, use the following email addresses:

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

General adviser on multimedia and internet will be Jose Diaz Infante

DEADLINE for artworks sent by postal service will be August 1998. Please send works by postal service to:

Cesar Espinosa
ARACELI ZUNIGA
Apdo. Postal 45-615
06020 Mexico, D.F.
Mexico
Tel fax: [REDACTED]

(There is no indication of when the exhibit takes place.)

Works submitted will not be returned but will become part of the Poesia-Virtual-Mexico/Internacional, A.C., archive.

American organizers for the USA: Dick Higgins and Harry Polkinhorn

=====

Exhibition of Visual Poetry entitled "2000 - The Third Millenium
VI BRAZILIAN CONGRESS OF POETRY
Bento Goncalves, Brasil
Deadline September 10, 1998

(There is no indication of when the exhibit takes place)

Submit 2 or 3 visual poems (maximum sizes 42 x 30 cm) to:

Ademir Antonio Bacca
PO Box 41
Bento Goncalves-RS
BRAZIL
95700-000

Co-ordinators: Clemente Padin, Fernando Aguiar, Hugo Pontes will select visual poetry submissions for printing in a special number of the newspaper Garatuja, to include at least one poem from each poet.

All work submitted will be retained for inclusion in the exhibition archives. We will appreciate your sending books, catalogues, magazines, etc. also for inclusion in the permanent archives.

=====

MAIL ART EXHIBIT

CHIAPAS

The First Social Revolution of the III Millenium

The right of all peoples to fight with the weapons of ethical and social justice to lead free and decent lives.

The Zapatista Army of National Liberation of Chiapas, Mexico, is fighting to overcome the social and economic inequalities forcing countless millions of human beings all over the world to live and die like animals in hunger and deprivation. "We are all Marcos" fighting with reason, truth, and for the justice of our cause to raise the standards of living for our people.

We are simply unable to exist as we do, struggling to improve our living conditions, unless our lives are valued according to basic human principles. "Others" also live and suffer as we do under a system that wields powers often unwanted by them. Our human nature, our human essence, enables us to recognize that their "otherness" is ours, even if they fail to think like us.

The bloodless revolution in Chiapas launched by the people and their representatives and modified by world public opinion, through revolutionary announcements in all media, above all through the Internet, have made the humanitarian principles of The First Social Revolution of the III Millenium a model to follow.

Mediums: no restrictions, including street mail, e-mail, and fax. Forms and types: no restrictions, but all submissions must be in two dimensions (no cartons or boxes, no artists' books, no sculptures, etc.)

All submissions will be exhibited and every artist will receive written acknowledgment of his participation in the exhibit.

The exhibition will be located at AEBU, the Uruguayan Employee Bankers Association, Montevideo, Uruguay, and later in other cities of the interior. After the exhibition, all the works of art received will be turned over to the Zapatista Army of National Liberation, Chiapas, Mexico.

Deadline: July 30, 1998

(No indication of when the exhibit will take place.)

Please send all submissions to:

Clemente Padin
C. Correos Central 1211
11,000 Montevideo
URUGUAY

=====

Centre Culturel Aragon Oyonnax
Place Georges Pompidou 01100
Oyonnax, France
Tel. 04.74.81.96.80
Fax. 04.74.81.96.86

Exposition BOITE POSTALE 03.98
March 23 to May 16, 1998
and from there to other locations

Please send messages, decorated envelopes, unusual letters, objects of all kinds
to be hung on the white walls of the exhibit hall, to

Chantal Rigolet
Bopite Postale 0398
01108 Oyonnax Cedex

(There is no deadline given.)

=====

Irving Weiss
<http://www.geocities.com/SoHo/Cafe/6316/>

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479. **George Bowering**
Re: Warren Spahn or warring spam?

Thu 12 Feb 1998

*...Perhaps it is that Spahn won 323 games -- can that be true? That's a lot
of games.*

Tom Mandel

He won a LOT more than that.

George Bowering.

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

fax: [REDACTED]

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480. **Gwyn McVay**

Re: 44

Thu 12 Feb 1998

I always thought it was "Been All Around This World"--"open up that door / Before I have to come on in with my old .44"--

On Wed, 11 Feb 1998, Jack Spandrift wrote:

Prejsnar, name that blues song:

"got me a 44..." [this is a query]

- Spandrift

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481. **MAYHEW**

Freud and Silliman

Thu 12 Feb 1998

Ron Silliman's post on Freud was thought provoking. I am wondering whether a Freudian Institute is less an academy than a university (is). If you are a Freudian in an English dept., you will be around people who can tell you you are full of it on a daily basis. Whereas in a Freudian institution presumably everyone will be a Freudian, creating a sort of wierd insular feeling. Ths is perhaps why Crews, boring though he might be, ran circles around the analysts in his debate with them. I was frustrated by this debate, because I wanted to hear better arguments from the Freudian defenders, but they were utterly lame.

As for the institutionalization of poetry, and the insistence that poetry be legitimated OFF campus...yes, it should. But Silliman wrote in a 1990 essay that every English dept. should have a specialist in post 1945 literature, that the university was a useful site of contestation, etc...Does this represent a change in thinking, or am I misreading something here?

Jonathan Mayhew
Department of Spanish and Portuguese
3062 Wescoe Hall
University of Kansas

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

482. **Mark Prejsnar**
Re: 44 baseball poems

Thu 12 Feb 1998

it's "pray for rain" of course

Mark P.

On Tue, 10 Feb 1998, Thomas Bell wrote:

*I think Spahn was 21. He also is in one of the most famous baseball poems, "Spahn and Sain, and two days rain." - although it might be forgotten now. If there is a run on Brave (Milw) numerology, what were the numbers of Burdette, Buhl, Crandell, Bruton,....?
tom bell*

*At 09:23 AM 2/10/98 -0600, [REDACTED] wrote:
44 was the uniform number chosen by Henry Aaron, Willie McCovey and Reggie Jackson (the latter two in homage to the first), none of whom ever played in Japan a la Cecil Fielder, Don Blasingame or other US baseball players trying to stretch out or pump up stalled careers (fewer players have followed the path of Warren Spahn and George Brunet (who pitched until he was nearly 50) by going to Mexico instead). I forget what Spahn's number was, although I did see him pitch once as an SF Giant (this was before Mexico) in addition to many times in a Milwaukee uniform. Still, my favorite post-US-major league event remains Louis Tiant's stint in the short-lived Senior Baseball League where he was traded from one team in Florida to another in return for 500 stuffed teddy bears.*

I have too many friends who are Freudian analysts to treat as casually as I've seen here, although its problematics could take a generation of careers to fully explore. One thing that the Freudians did which has had a huge impact in the US was to keep certification away from the university system as such (Dale Smith would approve) by setting up their own institutes. One thing this did was guarantee that there was no professor on campus who was ever the "official" Freudian in the psych department, which in turn meant that anybody in any department could volunteer for that social role, including, back when I was a student at UC Berkeley, Freddy Crews, a shallow opportunist who was widely regarded as in the sweepstakes for most boring professor in the department (Mark Schorer and Tom Parkinson competed as well and I always thought that Schorer won out simply because he'd had a 20 year head start on Crews and 10 on Parkinson) -- Crews used to teach a literature and ideology course that was a tribute to predictability and certainly never thought to try reading "unideological" texts in those terms. Anyhow, Freudianism as an ism became both a free floating signifier of the worst sort on every campus AND has become, as a formal system among professional analysts who are painfully aware of their outsidership to the university

system, fairly defensive. It's a system in which trying to think clearly or even halfway intelligibly about Freud's limits (as well as strengths) is all but impossible, though I am sure that there are careers to be made in the trying. Rethinking Marx is not dissimilar as a project beset with problems at the moment, as in The Work of Art in the Age of Hypertext etc.

But I think the real lesson to be drawn from the Freudian adventure in the US has been what it's revealed about how universities function when a major trend in social analysis (and you never had to agree with any of Freud to see it was at least that) is set loose under those special terms.

That's why I think it's so important that we stress, over and over, that the legitimation of poetry is something that occurs OFF campus, typically in the major urban areas but inevitably not in the MFA programs or the various anglophile critical programs (the latter these days falling all over themselves to tell us just how fab fab fabulous the new Ted Hughes' collection of necromancy is).

Louis, thanks for the exact details re the Archives and the list -- I think that tends to point out the nature of the discourse here rather well. As I've said before, if there are 500 folks "subscribed" and a max of 50 messages possible per day, people should think very hard before posting more than one.

Ron (still has pneumonia after 46 days) Silliman

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483. **rsillima**

363

Thu 12 Feb 1998

Warren Spahn won 363 games, not 323, although he was born on April 23 in 1921 in Buffalo, NY, which makes him an honorary member of this list, no? And one year senior to Jackson. Spahn also won 4 world series games, not included in this total.

No, Finnegan, I don't think that the history of literature is as value neutral as you make it sound. Innovation is not a value to pre-modernists, such as the majority of those who will be at West Chester. Tim Steele writes as if the 19th century is still up for grabs. And it amounts to fraud to tell students otherwise.

Ron

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484. **Gary Sullivan**
CALL FOR WORK

Thu 12 Feb 1998

Poems, essays, letters, etc. sought for a publication observing the life, work and passing of Bay Area poet/agit-prop artist Daniel Davidson. Please extend this request to others you think might want to contribute.

Query or send work to:

Gary Sullivan
Department of History
611 Fayerweather Hall
Columbia University
New York, NY 10027

or by e-mail to:



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485. **Steven Shoemaker**
Re: Foucault, Ron's experimentalism and Baseball

Thu 12 Feb 1998

I think maybe the "father-poet" below is Stein. steve

On Wed, 11 Feb 1998, Don Byrd wrote:

Safdie Joseph wrote:

On another note, thanks to Katy Lederer for posting a section from Foucault's only truly valuable work for my poetics, _The Order of Things_ (but what do I know, I like Baudrillard too, even his little masterpiece of invective _Forget Foucault_). But I'd like to ask Katy (and anyone else who has ventured through the formidable prose of this work), what she thinks of the period he deals with BEFORE the dead-end of the 16th century, namely the pre-Renaissance system of order and meaning, when things were luminous and so were their signs?

Before Foucault was Foucault, at least in the U.S., Rich Grossinger translated that early section of _The Order of Things_ for his Ph.D. language exams at the University of Michigan and published it in _Io_, #4 (probably 68 or 69). He neglected to note that this was an early section out of a history, and many of us first new of Foucault as a weird French magus...

By the way, I would recommend _Io_ to any one who can find a file of them. Much of the vitality of the poetry of that period resulted from the

fact that it was being cooked up in close connection with large doses of information about stuff. I suppose some of the information in _Io_ would now seem new-ageish, but, of course, it was pre-new-age. And (I had changed the original subject line, but now I can add baseball again) in addition to issues on doctrine of signatures, ethnoastronomy, ecology, etc., there is a great issue on baseball.

As I noted in that earlier post, Derrida comes closer to a kind of Neoplatonism with every book. _On the Name_ is closer to the writings of renaissance magicians than to the Nietzsche and Heidegger that he begun with.

Ron, one of the generation of our father-poets, and I do not remember which one, but I am inclined to think it was Jackson, objected to being called an experimental poet on the grounds that experimenting implied that one did not know what one was doing. The poem was not an experiment, it was an event. Or would it have been David Antin?

don

--

Don Byrd ([REDACTED], [REDACTED])

Department of English

State University of New York

Albany, NY 12222

[REDACTED] (work); [REDACTED] (home); [REDACTED] (fax)

The Little Magazine (<http://www.albany.edu/~litmag/>)

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486. **Mark Prejsnar**

Re: sublimating the ridiculous

Thu 12 Feb 1998

Well Kent, I also will wade in, since we are ****all**** refusing to drop the issue, and since it's reasonable pertinent to the concerns we all have here on the List, about how writing "acts" in public spaces...

Aldon and you are two of the really lively presences on the list, who contribute a lot, for my money...And I do think that between you you've articulated the issues with exceptional clarity...

I think Aldon is basically right on this one.

Various qualifications can be made..To an extent quoting without asking permission can be lived with. But oddly enuff, for the one that's arguing the *laisse faire* libertarian sort of position, you're reducing everthing too much to a level

of highly technical, "literal" rule-interpretation. No, this isn't a matter for litigiousness. But I would absolutely state (as someone who posts here a certain amount) that I HOPE that as a matter of courtesy and probity I be asked before anything I post here (especially other than very brief snippets) be quoted in a public forum.

That is largely how writing works and how writers and poets should behave toward each other. I know you're busy disassembling the social construction of the poet-author and all, and I think you're creating some very interesting waves while doing it. And yes like any form of publication this is a very public space. But ! I still exist in three dimensions some of the time (I think) and have various personal and intellectual reasons I'd like to have some say in where and how my thoughts and involvements are used and abused.

I may not get what I want, but if you try sometime you can....At least state your basic principles, and wishes...

stonily,
Mark P.

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487. **Mark Prejsnar**

Re: Warren Spahn or warring spam?

Thu 12 Feb 1998

I'm not sure about Spahn's win total...But it was very impressive and (as he does tend to remind people in interviews...!) should always be placed next to the fact that 3 or 4 of what should have been his greatest years were spent fighting in WWII.

Also, he was one of the great hitting pitchers of all time. I've always thought that the possibility that the pitcher might get a dramatic and game-deciding hit, added to the dynamism and excitement of a game. Must have been the case when you watched Ruth as a pitcher too, or Gibson.

One other point: Spahn is helping Ted Williams with his public campaign to get Shoeless Joe (no, that's not another one of my country blues favorites) into the Hall of Fame. A huge hand to both of 'em....

Mark P.

On Wed, 11 Feb 1998, Tom Mandel wrote:

*I *think* Warren Spahn wore # 23....*

[Re: intellectual property and Dale Smith the reprinter of posts, I must start by reminding you that I haven't agreed with anything Dale has said here recently if ever.

*However, this is *not* in fact a private space, but a public conversation.
What is said here is already published; it is utterly public.*

*Grab a phrase from a post here and search for all its words and the
author's name using any search engine on the net, for example. I bet the
engine returns the post you hold in email.*

Anyone, iow, can get to this list, subscribed or not.}

*...Perhaps it is that Spahn won 323 games -- can that be true? That's a lot
of games.*

Tom Mandel

Tom Mandel

Screen Porch * <http://screenporch.com>

4020 Williamsburg Ct, Ste 200 * vox: [REDACTED]

Fairfax, VA 22031 * fax: [REDACTED]

Join the Caucus Conversation

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488. **David Kellogg**

Re: query

Thu 12 Feb 1998

Goddammit -- getting used to a new email program, I too sent to the list
what should have gone to maria.

~~~~~

~~~~~

David Kellogg Duke University

[REDACTED] Program in Writing and Rhetoric

[REDACTED] Durham, NC 27708

FAX [REDACTED] <http://www.duke.edu/~kellogg/>

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489. **louis stroffolino**

Re: FEBRUARY 14....

Thu 12 Feb 1998

Does anybody in the NYC area know of any party or get together that will not rub it into ones face that it is valentine's day? Any "isle of misfit toys" kind of event in which there will not be the usual happy (or "happy" for that matter) poet couples, or where at least they won't be in the vast majority? If so, please backchannel. thanks, chris stroffolino

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490. **Joshua N Schuster**

ok, well maybe I am an experimental poet

Thu 12 Feb 1998

I remember there was an extensive discussion about a year ago over how to name what seems like experimental (like lab coat technicians) or avant-garde (too sickly military) writing.

I also remember Jackson MacLow recently in these parts mentioning his son's article, how he thought "experimental" is incorrect when it slides into chance. According to his son, a poem could be written by chance methods only if one applied the same method several times and got different poems each time. Since Jackson often uses the computer, there is no margin for difference in the work, the same procedural method will always issue the same poem if no variables are changed.

Though it is funny to mention that Harry Mathews once mentioned that in the Oulipo game of exchanging every noun with the 7th noun after it in a dictionary (n + 7), often the results would be very different, even if everyone was using the same dictionary.

That mentioned, I'd say in all honesty I strive to be an *experimental poet*. I like the idea of technicians in lab coats (scientism aside), and I like the idea that a poem might not work. There is a sense that a certain understanding of reality might not work. This leaves writing more vulnerable to failure, but also to more absurd solutions, and for me includes the "what if..." which leaves possibility open. The idea that truth is an experiment, and could very well fail, is at the heart of a project like Derrida's. Don Byrd, interesting you call Derrida's recent work "neoplatonist", and I'm not exactly sure if you would call St. Augustine a neoplatonist, but there is an interesting moment in The Confessions where Augustine says he needs to *make* truth. Derrida picks this up in Archive Fever, just tangentially, tho that recent item is one of my favorites.

Well, in relation to the conference that Ron mentioned, I agree about the ridiculously closed use of experiment which will be assumed at such a conference. Maybe my biggest objection would be to separating "experimentalism" from the other categories, i.e. why not experimental translation, experimental meter, etc.

I'm not ready to give up all the history and suggestivity of "experimentalism". The challenge is all the more interesting if one has to recuperate such terms from interminable numbness. Now, that said, I think there is still something a lot more interesting than just experimentation (now that everything is open to experiment), and it's just around the corner, in some niche-world, but I'm not sure what it is...

what if...

Josh Schuster

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491. **MAYHEW**

Dana Gioa

Thu 12 Feb 1998

He is not of course an "experimental poet" (Dana Gioa); I do recommend, however, his essay entitled "The Successful Career of Robert Bly." His remarks abt. Bly's translations and influence are astute. This essay is to be found in Gioa's book of essays published a few years back; I don't remember the title.

On quotation without permission I have to 2nd Maria Damon's latest post.

On Kent Johnson's problems: people don't like to be made to seem like stupid idiots, in my experience. Thus people who should have realized that Yasusada was too good to be true, but didn't, are reacting in predictable fashion.

Jonathan Mayhew



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492. **Mark Prejsnar**

Re: Broaden yr horizons

Thu 12 Feb 1998

For all who are interested,

at Aviva's request and for everyone's use:

Roots & Rhythms

(formerly Down Home Record Dist.)

Enquiries

Toll Free Order Line

888-ROOTS-66

FAX

(New fax number)

Mailing address

P.O. Box 837. El Cerrito, CA 94530 U.S.A. (New address)

Electronic mail

General Information:

Ask to receive their "Newsletter," which is their catalog (something like bi-monthly in frequency)...It is heavily annotated by their people and I find their comments largely very knowledgeable and well-grounded. It features hundreds of new releases every issue, and is one of the best ways to keep up with what's available (cassette, CD and LP) in country blues, jump blues, R&B of all sorts, piano blues, gospel, old-time hillbilly and country music, doo-wop and fifties, rockabilly, all types of "roots musics." No I don't have relatives who work there. I just think they do a pretty outstanding job...

Wish I knew about 'em when I was working two jobs and making something close to a decent living..I could have afforded to give them some business. No on second thought I don't..I spent too much as it was in Boston's excellent stores, and would truly have emptied my pockets!

especially strong on my first music love, pre-1950 blues styles.

On Tue, 10 Feb 1998, Aviva Wesley Vogel wrote:

In a message dated 98-02-10 15:54:00 EST, you write:

<< Roots & Rhythms (details on demand); >>

Yes, I'd love those details!!

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493. **Miekal And**

Re: Daniel Davidson - Partial Bibliography

Thu 12 Feb 1998

Gary:

If there is anyway that Xexoxial can help circulate Daniel Davidson's work, particularly the more marginal, unpublishable, uncategorizable kinda works that XE specializes in, be in contact with me or send such works this way.

xexoxoxoxoxoxoxoxial

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494. **david bromige**
why i am not an expoet

Thu 12 Feb 1998

Dana Gioia, George, campaigns for the New Formalism. His mother lives in our town, and Dana himself, after some years back East, lives nearby, possibly in the county seat, Santa Rosa. He is highly succesful, both, I hear, as a business-man, and certainly as a poet, for there are many and powerful persons out there ready to welcome a champion of those verities thee, me and a bunch of us have neglected in recent decades. And Dana is a personable bloke, and has the gift of the gab it takes to put a p-o-v over in these United States of Extravert Sensation-types (to cite Jung).

I read with him once at a monster-reading. He had memorized the poems he said to us. I _think_ they rimed. One was about a cat in-heat, serenading a tom in the tropes of Tennyson : "Come into the garden, Fred . . . I'm wearing nothing but my flea-collar." Fun. Poets locally whom I know have been impressed with him one-on-one. I haven't spoken with him yet.

Now don't tell us, George, that you haven't heard about the New Formalism! The New Formalism is just like the Old Formalism ((who am I echoing here?-- the formulation, not the content)), with its necessity removed. It's for sure caught in the contradiction of wishing to announce the end of the avant-garde by proposing itself as something new.

I don 't think you'd want to publish in any of the venues where they play. David

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495. **Aldon Nielsen**
Re: In which may be found what is set forth therein

Thu 12 Feb 1998

1) sorry about my mixup re: the archives -- Now that I am reminded that millions in fact could access them, my head will swell to unmanageable proportions

2) I have been opposed to most suggestions for expansion of copyright directed at the internet -- but note that the existing copyright statutes have already been clearly found to apply to electronic media -- the debate really is about whether new applications of copyright will be created -- If you "publish" something, in any medium, it falls under copyright. People may quote from it without permission ("fair use" is, however, one of the vaguer passages in the statutes -- note different applications to song lyrics and prose) -- people may not reproduce it

"in any form" without permission -- The people who really do want to commodify writing (like the NY Times and the Washington Post syndicate) recognize this, and that is why they've tried to get freelancers to sign contracts giving up their rights to internet redistribution of their writings. But, again, I'm only asking that we all afford each other a modest degree of mutual respect -- a modest proposal indeed

3) Kent's post is disturbing -- but I don't know how to respond, as the letter was "glossed and paraphrased" -- There's clearly nothing wrong with anybody who dislikes Kent or his work for any reason communicating their dislike to any other party (or their love and admiration, for that matter) -- It is entirely up to the recipient of any such communication to decide how to act upon it --

On the other hand, I take a very dim view of people actively trying to screw up the careers and works of others through "poison" pen, email, fax etc -- BUT, not knowing any of the people involved, and having only a paraphrased version of the representation of the recipient -- I simply don't know what has happened --

Kent, can you tell us anything more specific?

4) I have recently come into possession of previously unknown Yasusada manuscripts -- Does anybody know who I should contact for permission to publish them?

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496. **David Israel**
Re: A personal appeal

Thu 12 Feb 1998

Kent --

copying (I trust w/ your pardon) Poetics, bec. of the interesting, surprise (to me) discovery of etymology w.r.t. "snafu".

Per handy WWWebsters --

<http://www.m-w.com/cgi-bin/dictionary>):

<< Main Entry: sna·fu

Function: noun

Etymology: situation normal all fucked up (fouled up)

Date: circa 1941

: CONFUSION, MUDDLE >>

so, snafu does NOT, I think, suggest an accident -- simply means things are (for whatever reason) a mess (or that's how I read it).

One presumes, then, that the word must have a military origin. Speaking of military, an amazing LeCarre-ish tale has hit the Wash.Post front page today w.r.t. a Russian connection to the Iraq germ warfare game.

w.r.t. = with regard to

regards,

d.i.

>>> "KENT JOHNSON" <[REDACTED]> 02/12 11:50 AM >>>

Hi David:

Thanks, though I've got to say I consider it to be much more than a snafu. A snafu is an accident, isn't it? This is much more than an accident. But I guess not many will care--baseball is obviously more pressing these days. Could you tell me what "wrt" means? thanks, and all best, Kent

> Date: Thu, 12 Feb 1998 00:57:31 -0500

> Reply-to: UB Poetics discussion group

<[REDACTED]>

> From: David Israel <[REDACTED]>

> Subject: Re: A personal appeal

> To: [REDACTED]

Kent --

sorry to hear about this snafu. Good luck w.r.t. its resolution.

d.i.

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497. **Aldon Nielsen**
and another thing

Thu 12 Feb 1998

Call for papers:

Pacific Ancient and Modern Language Association

conference Nov. 6-9, 1998

to be held at Scripps College in California

panel on Poetry & Poetics

500 word proposals (with 50 word abstract) by April 1 to:

Aldon L. Nielsen

Department of English

Loyola Marymount University

7900 Loyola Boulevard
Los Angeles, CA 90045-8215

I will only be able to accept three papers for this panel, and I'm hoping to be inundated with exceptionally good propsects. This is a new panel for PAMLA -- They've not done much with poetry in the past.

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498. **david bromige**

joshua_is_an experimental poet

Thu 12 Feb 1998

whose post i found interesting. In part because he used the word "vulnerable". If one could count on this word being understood--in the context of categories--as including *_formal_* vulnerability, as well as emotional and intellectual, I propose "vulnerable poetry" as a substitute for experimentalism. The latter, despite the good sense in Joshua's post, labors under an awful lot of freight by this stage, a lot of awful poems, to speak loosely.

This proposal is not devoid of self-interest, since my most recent published book consists of a series I title "Vulnerable Bundles," using the adjective in just the sense proposed above. Part of the sense of it is "conjectural"--which I first heard applied to poetry by Charles Olson. "Run it up the flagpole and we'll see just who salutes it;" "Send out invites and we'll see what sticks to the wall;" the flip cynicism of these phrases (taken from Madison Avenue 40 years ago) is quite invulnerable, no doubt because those guys were taking risks and wanted to protect themselves from such knowledge. But in the beginning and the end, that's part of art. And in that sense, who wouldn't be a vulnerable poet. One would have to push hard in arguing for the larger meaning of the term. I.e. it might well be a vulnerable feeling to promote New Formalism in an un"Formalism" world; but it is *_not_* a vulnerable endeavor *_formally_* speaking, since its been done (& done) before. David

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499. **Aldon Nielsen**

Re: query

Thu 12 Feb 1998

OK - so the message WASN'T meant for me -- but the opening chapter of your book sounds like something I'd like to read -- and anybody who's over-identified with cultural studies is alright in my book --

yours,

Aldon (turned down by Purdue, Carnegie Mellon and USC, but got a job at last) Nielsen

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500. **Christopher W. Alexander**

Re: A personal appeal

Thu 12 Feb 1998

¶ I just want to put in that I consider this kind of action despicable and tantamount to censorship of the worst kind – i.e., it reeks of cowardice by its having been decided in the back room, so to speak. whatever one's feelings about AY – and, while I find the project very stimulating in some aspects, I recognize the validity of certain objections, too – there is no room for this sort of behavior, which is something close to the accustomed tactics of the fundamentalist right – or maybe just goddamn'd mean, and what's more, foolish enough to cheat all of new & vital work to spite one person.

Chris

..

Christopher W. Alexander etc. / nominative press collective

email: [REDACTED]

snail-mail: P.O. Box 522402 / Salt Lake City UT 84152-2402

press/zine site: <http://choengmon.lib.utah.edu/~calexand/nonce/>

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501. **aerialedge**

New @ Bridge Street. Sound States, Berrigan, Gizzis, &

Thu 12 Feb 1998

Lots new. Thanks, Poetics, for your support. Ordering/discount information at end of list.

1. *_The Adventures of Telemachus_*, Louis Aragon, trans Renee Riese Hubert & Judd D. Hubert, Exact Change, \$13.95. "Earwigs danced!"

2. *_Walter Benjamin: A Biography_*, Momme Brodersen, Verso, \$19. New in paperback.

3. *_Great Stories of the Chair_*, Ted Berrigan, Situations, \$6. 12 prose poems which appeared in *_Angel Hair_* Winter 67/68, not previously reprinted. "She was very shortly afterwards words. God's noises make no sense to me. 'Seen the movie?' Ron asked but the condition: silence. Pull thin things in the house

discover the emergency break the 'yes.' Turned from walking Tessie half-naked cloth pony from a fight the importance of the situation I can't stop"

4. *_The Employment of English: Theory, Jobs, and the Future_*, Michael Berube, NYU, \$17.95.

5. *_Poem of the Cid_*, a modern translation with notes by Paul Blackburn, ed. George Economu, into Luis Cortest, U. Oklahoma Press, \$12.95. "The story's finished. / If you do not have money, / give us wine. / Or throw us anything of value, / jewels, clothing any-/ thing will do."

6. *_The Cold War and the University: Toward an Intellectual History of the Post-war Years_*, Chomsky, Wallerstein, Zinn, et.al., New Press, \$12.

7. *_The Eagleton Reader_*, ed. S. Rosen, Blackwell, \$24.95. "If Postmodernism is right, then Marxism is wrong. . ."

8. *_Commodify Your Dissent: Salvos from the Baffler_*, ed. Thomas Frank & Matt Weiland, Norton, \$15.

9. *_No Both_*, Michael Gizzi, Hard Press/The Figures, \$12. "Cross James Joyce and Jack Nicholson in a high energy construct machine and you have Michael Gizzi's poems"--Lisa Jarnot. "Angels are people who never blinked"

10. *_Artificial Heart_*, Peter Gizzi, Burning Deck, \$10.

"Is the love a syringe or merely a placebo that becomes habit, / full of promise? Keep the scorecard close, Cheat."

11. *_AHOE (And How On Earth)_*, Anselm Hollo, Smokeproof Press, 1997, signed copies available, \$8.95. "smile on, not quite animate"

12. *_one crossed out_*, Fanny Howe, Graywolf, \$12.95. "Donate books that say NOT and NO and poets / who say Um instead of Oh."

13. *_The Way the Wind Blows: A History of the Weather Underground_*, Ron Jacobs, Verso, \$15. "MAKE PIGS PAY"

14. *_Drive_*, Hettie Jones, Hanging Loose, \$12. "In Taos a stranger / told me she was okay / until her ass / dropped"

15. *_Home: Social Essays_*, Leroi Jones, with a new preface, Ecco, \$14.00. "Where a great deal of public 'sophistication' is allowed among oppressed people, the stupid misunderstanding can very quickly arise that one of them may be an 'individual.'"

16. *_A Thousand Years of Nonlinear History_*, Manuel De Landa, Zone Books, \$24.50. "In a very real sense, reality is *_a single matter-energy_* undergoing phase transitions of various kinds, with each new layer of accumulated "stuff" simply enriching the reservoir of nonlinear dynamics and nonlinear combinatorics available for the generation of novel structures and processes. . . . Thus,

what follows will not be a chronicle of 'man' and 'his' historical achievements, but a philosophical meditation on the history of matter-energy in its different forms and of the multiple coexistences and interactions of these forms. Geological, organic, and linguistic materials will all be allowed to 'have their say' . . ."

17. *_On A Stair_*, Ann Lauterbach, Penguin, \$14.95. "Nothing is optional. Nothing closed."

18. *_Ancestral Cave_*, Tom Mandel, Zasterle, \$7.50. "Best to shape memorials from substitute materials."

19. *_Sound States: Innovative Poetics and Acoustical Technologies_* (with accompanying CD), ed. Adalaide Morris, Univ of North Carolina Press, \$24.95. "An original and innovative anthology by people thinking with an 'ear-mind' -- Rachel Blau DuPlessis. Contributors: Loretta Collins, James A. Connor, Michael Davidson, N. Katherine Hayles, Nathaniel Mackey, Steve McCaffrey, Alec McHoul, Toby Miller, Adalaide Morris, Fred Moten, Marjorie Perloff, Jed Rausula, and Garrett Stewart. The CD includes H.D., Cage, Marinetti, Raoul Hausmann, Isidore Isou, Lee "Scratch" Perry, Brathwaite, Mutabaraka, Miles Davis, Mississippi Fred McDowell, Rahsaan Roland Kirk, and others.

20. *_Discredit_*, Sianne Ngai, Burning Deck letterpress chapbook, \$8. "You now own some furniture."

21. *_Frank O'Hara: Poet Among Painters_* (w/ a new introduction), Marjorie Perloff, U. Chicago, \$16.95.

". . .this *_really_* happened at a *_real_* show!"

22. *_A Humument_*, Tom Phillips, Thames & Hudson, \$24.95. Back in print.

23. *_Proliferation #4_*, ed Mary Burger & Chris Vitiello, \$8. Will Alexander, Giampiero Ambrosi, Beth Anderson, Don Michel Baude, Dan Bouchard, Jacques Debrot, Noah de Lissovoy, Susan Gevirtz, Renee Gladman, E. Tracy Grinnell & Emily Grossman, Luren Gudarth, Rob Hale, Jen Hofer, Bill Lavender, Katy Lederer, Tan Lin, Lori Lubeski, Laura Moriarty, Stephen Ratcliffe, Lisa Robertson, Leslie Scalapino, Jono Schneider, Susan Schultz, Ilana Simons, Giovanni Singleton, Chris Stroffolino, & Joseph Torra.

24. *_Debbie: An Epic_*, Lisa Robertson, New Star Books, \$14. "Virgil's bastard daughters sing!"

25. *_The Return of Painting, The Pearl, and Orion_*, Leslie Scalapino, Talisman House, \$19. Back in print!

"being given what one wants -- it is incredible."

26. *_Sulfur 41_*, \$10. Includes the fabulous Niedecker "Next Year or I fly my rounds, Tempestuous" ed & intro Jenny Penberthy. Also Rich, Liu, Nerval, Rotheberg, Bernstein, Welish, Guest, Joris, Tejeda, Adonis, &&&.

27. *On the Walls and in the Streets: American Poetry Broadside from the 1960s*, James D. Sullivan, U. Illinois, \$14.95. Sullivan presents a history of the American poetry broadside from the seventeenth to the twentieth centuries. He then explores the extensive use of the broadside during the sixties with close attention to the works of Brooks, Lowell, Ginsberg, and others. "People in a number of fields-- cultural studies, history of the book, sociologists interested in material culture, historians-- will be interested in this account of broadsides, their production, and reception." --Michael Davidson

28. *The Precarious: The Art & Poetry of Celcilia Vicuna*, ed. M. Catherine de Zegher, Wesleyan, \$30. Includes essays by Lucy Lippard and Kenneth Sherwood. "The river wants to be heard before it is contaminated."

29. *Doubled Flowering: From the Notebooks of Araki Yasusada*, Roof, \$14.95. "This is essentially a criminal act"-- Art Vogelsang, APR. "Penis withered/ I follow a begging bowl/ into hailstones"

& some bestsellers:

The L=A=N=G=U=A=G=E Book, ed. Andrews & Bernstein, \$18.95.

On the Level Everyday: Selected Talks on Poetry and the Art of Living, Ted Berrigan, \$12.95.

I-VI, John Cage, \$24.95.

MUSICAGE: Cage Muses on Words. Art. Music., Joan Retallack, \$19.95.

Chain 4, \$10.

Crayon Premier Issue: Jackson Mac Low Festschrift, \$20.

Ghostlier Demarcations: Modern Poetry and the Material World, Michael Davidson, \$35.

Guy Debord--Revolutionary: A Critical Biography, Len Bracken, \$14.95.

Essays Clinical & Critical, Guy Deleuze, \$17.95.

il cuore : the heart, Selected Poems, Katthleen Fraser, \$12.95

Perhaps this is a rescue fantasy, Heather Fuller, \$10.

Some Other Kind of Mission, Lisa Jarnot, \$11.

Collected Prose, Charles Olson, \$19.95.

Nothing Happened and Besides I Wasn't There, Mark Wallace, \$9.50.

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Bridge Street Books, 2814 Pennsylvania Ave NW, Wahsington, DC 20007.

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502. **Kali Tal**

Re: Intellectual property

Thu 12 Feb 1998

Kent,

I mostly keep my mouth shut on this list since I am so far outta the loop (partially, I admit, by choice) that discussion rarely veers into areas that are near and dear to my heart. I'm usually happy listening, and, often, I get to read really smart people writing really smart things. But the issue of intellectual property does matter to me enough to comment upon it, since, in some ways at least, it is a class issue.

But you're sort of adding to _my_ argument-- i.e. when it comes to staked claims of "intellectual property," no matter how barbed the fence that is strung, we are dealing in an area of undecidability, of utter subjectivity and will. The fence is a phantasm, a shimmer of false consciousness, a little fart of history. Who wrote the deed you are holding in your hand?

One could say the same thing about property rights, generally. Hell, one could say the same thing about brick walls. Theoretically, of course, the existence of the wall is in dispute, but tell that to yer broken nose. Hardly an argument *I'd* care to to make...

Ain't nothin new about this--it's same--old same--old. People talk, share ideas, share work, write to each other.

Thus, the ruling class will sleep more soundly tonight, for nothing ever really changes. And all the work on that doggone Telecommunications bill!

And this is where we differ. I hardly see the benefit to the working class if we strip folks of the right to the product of their labor. Take away intellectual property rights (the right to determine when your work is published and where) and who wins? The ruling class, far as I can see. *Especially* in the area of the new media. If they don't have to consult anybody for copyright permissions, what's to stop them from assembling mega-databases of publications and then charging libraries and individuals to access these incredibly powerful and convenient engines? Used to be that if you wanted to see interesting new poems, you hadda support the small journals and publishing houses that issue them (who, in turn, support authors, at least as much as they are able). But take away the rights of the authors and the small presses, and alluva sudden the big publishers will be swallowing alla that work and spitting it out for you on a pay-per-view basis, a service to which you *will* subscribe cuz it's so damn convenient and you don't have to go rooting around for the new stuff no more. Hell, you can't even copyright information in a bibliography (just the format) and the big

publishers like Silver Platter and Bowker make a mint off of 'em--swallowing up and incorporating the work of small bibliographers into their formats and not payin them a dime. So much for free information. What winds up happenin is that small presses die (like they're not havin a hard enough time already!), or they are run by aristos who've got enough money to support losing ventures, publishing as noblesse oblige or charity. It's tough enough out there with big corps muching up entire vertical chains of production and distribution, killin small presses and independent bookstores like slappin flies. Now you wanna take away intellectual property rights and strip authors of practically the only right they have--to say NO, I doanwanna be published in your corporate mega-machine?

If I give up my rights to tell Dale NO, then I've given up my rights to tell Bowker NO. And I won't have it.

here's a question. Let's say you had participated in the Mike and Dale's discussion and Dale had called to tell you he wanted to reprint your posts in full, along with numerous others. And let's say that you were in a bad mood or something like that and said No. And let's say that Dale said, Well I wan't _asking_ you, I was just informing you because this discussion is about the integrity of my magazine. And then he went ahead and did it. Published it, I mean. You have one call. Who do you call first?

Would I prosecute? No, I got better things to do, and I don't think it'd be doing a service to my community to mire myself and the publishers of another journal/press in a lawsuit which I'd win, but which would drain us both. But if you mean that it's okay cuz Dale can get away with it, I'd have to disagree. Would I trust Dale with my back turned or ever work with him in any way if he did that to me? I doubt it. And I'd surely tell a friend, if they called me up and asked me what I thought about his reliability and trustworthiness. (And since you've just had a hard personal lesson in how damaging that could be, I'd think it might give you pause.) I'm a hardass about ethics. It's one place where I cut no slack.

In the world in which I operate, reputation is everything. I've never signed contracts with my writers--we've always worked on a handshake. It's not that I refuse to sign contracts. I offer the option; they decline. I trust them and they trust me. Never needed a lawyer in any of my dealings with a writer, and I doubt I ever will. On the other hand, you better be damned sure that I've had lawyers look over every single one of my book contracts with big bizniz presses, cuz I know what they're in it for (and it ain't 'art') and I am surely glad for every intellectual property right the law accords me. It's my choice to exercise those rights or not, but I refuse to give them up.

Why would you want to be on
the same side of this "intellectual property" issue as the Disney
Corporation?

Disney sucks. But I don't see any way to strip them of their property rights without hurting myself in the process, particularly given their vast command of resources. It's sort of like supporting free speech for Nazis--it's distasteful, but necessary.

Kali

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503. **Dale M Smith**

Hello?

Thu 12 Feb 1998

So what about KentJohnson's troubling post earlier today about his sabotaged project in latin america? Is this just gonna slip by in silence? Or are listpods so jealous and complacent that they want to see an important project go to pieces? This is a bit more than a "snafu". In fact, it confirms the sort of petty, self-serving and snivelling fealty I have come to expect from this 'community.' The Yasusada poems have contributed more to poetry than almost anything else in recent years. If it's true that some petty acts have prevented Kent from engaging another project then this sabotage should be addressed. Or maybe we wanna go on yapping about baseball or the etiquette of email publication. What *is* the problem behind the Yasusada works anyway? That maybe those poems aren't the works of a nuclear holocaust survivor? Who cares? The poems speak for themselves and contain an astonishing sympathetic, if not vulnerable, clarity. And Kent, to whatever extent he involved himself with that project, aided in bringing some real beauty to the world. Kent's post this morning demanded our attention and decency. Are there any thoughts?

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504. **Daniel Zimmerman**

Re: Warren Spahn or warring spam?

Thu 12 Feb 1998

George Bowering wrote:

>

> >...Perhaps it is that Spahn won 323 games -- can that be true? That's a lot
> >of games.

> >

> >Tom Mandel

>

> He won a LOT more than that.

>

> George Bowering.

>

>

363! [Making him the most famous alumnus of my highschool, South Park, in Buffalo, NY].

Dan Zimmerman

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505. **Safdie Joseph**

Re: and another found poem,

Thu 12 Feb 1998

this one from one of my favorite philosophers, Cioran. Not exactly "paratactic," Mark P., but I wonder if it might appeal somehow to those of us in different "camps" -- I call it

The Great Cioran Quote

Whether poetry should be accessible

or hermetic, affective

or gratuitous,

is a secondary problem.

Exercise or revelation --

what does it matter?

All we ask of it

is that it deliver us

from the oppression, from the

pangs of discourse.

If it succeeds it supplies,

for a moment,

our salvation

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506. **Thomas Bell**

Re: lowest common denominator in electronic communication

Thu 12 Feb 1998

The post noted below is the impetus for this post but should not be taken as a reflection on the specific contents of that post as many of the circumstances are

outside my realm of knowledge. This post was also prompted by recent exchanges on this list.

It is becoming clear to me (as it may earlier have for others) that the primary problem with electronic communication is that this communication occurs within the limits of the least common denominator and this least common denominator can be seen in terms of intelligence, language, access to money and means of communication - e.g., speed of computer, etc.

1) In this case the South American involved wrote me recently of his desire to join in discussions on this very list which he did not do because of lack of comfort with English. If I got conflicting messages about something in another language from the other side of the world I would be very likely to shy away from the topic discussed.

2) Scholarly niceties and legal issues regarding information and its communication and use exist to safeguard writers and their rights but also to facilitate clarity. Securing permission, for example, has a legal and ethical basis but it also functions to ensure clarity of communication - when I write something I would like to have the chance for approval so that I can have some confidence my words are accurately transmitted.

3) Kent is concerned (and rightly so) because he did not have access to some communications about him. Lack of openness in communication is something that electronic communication does tend to encourage, but more importantly it would seem in this case (possibly - this is speculative) the least 'ethical' "conspirator" has his or her way, analogous to the Watergate Conspiracy.

4) Electronic communication would appear to lend itself readily to thoughts of conspiracy and suspicion - instantaneous, mysterious communication, absence of a full range of communicative resources (either verbal with gesture, inflection, etc. or WRITTEN which in other contexts is more developed and carefully considered).

5) In allowing the least common dimension of communication, the potential for snide or scurilous comment is increased which leads to ill-considered replies. This combination tends to drive out the more careful and serious participant who has more important concerns - I would expect that up to 100 people will leave the list if they haven't already done so in the past week or two.

tom bell

This LCD also operates in the media and culture as a whole even though it might not always be seen so simply and clearly.

At 07:37 PM 2/11/98 -0500, KENT JOHNSON wrote:

>I had mentioned in my previous message that I would be posting

>information about an issue that had recently come to my attention. I
>hereby give Postmodern Culture, Lingua Franca, The Chronicle of
>Higher Education, Mike and Dale's Younger Poets, and anyone who would
>like, permission to reprint this message and to do so without first
>consulting me.

>

>In the past months I have been engaged in correspondence with one of
>the world's most prominent visual poets (as well as theoreticians of
>visual poetics). This poet is Latin American and is fairly out of

Kent Johnson

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507. **Thomas Bell**

Re: Why I'm an experimental poet

Thu 12 Feb 1998

I feel that the (action, process of) writing of poetry is what is of interest to me as a reader as well as a writer. I have a great deal of trouble with reification of "experiment" in relation to poetry. I don't see how it can be understood in any sense but "To experiment, v. to play, to do, to try..." In this action sense I think that to write any kind of poetry is to experiment (?to poetry?) if it is to be worthwhile no matter how traditional the forms used. tom bell

At 10:54 PM 2/11/98 +0000, Miekal And wrote:

>after having a shitty day debugging somebodies' netscape problems it a
>real cheer to come home & seeing everybody throwing "experimental" on
>the passe terminology of 20th century scrapheap. Ive been discribing my
>work as experimental as opposed to sound/text/sound, intermedia,
>multimedia, interdisciplinary etc etc since very young, and being one
>whose spleen be to never do the same thing twice, find many perks in the
>ambiguity of the designation experimental or experimedia, thinking of
>mad science in the way that tentitively, a convenience has brought life
>& performance & text & neoism into the realm of scientific --inquiry.

>

>involve everyday in the play of children

>

>orchids & rocks

>

>Harry Kemp

>
>

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508. **Aldon Nielsen**

Re: Hello?

Thu 12 Feb 1998

At 05:15 PM 2/12/98 CST, you wrote:

>So what about KentJohnson's troubling post earlier today about his sabotaged
>project in latin america? Is this just gonna slip by in silence? Or are
>listpods so jealous and complacent that they want to see an important project
>go to pieces?

uh . . . there have been some responses already -- and I've asked Kent if he can provide us any more specific information so that we might be able to judge what further response is appropriate -- If somebody was attempting to disrupt a collaborative project by means of a poison pen letter, then that is to be condemned -- and perhaps some public revelations would be in order? Does anybody really think that the response of the jealous would be silence?

> What **is** the problem behind the Yasusada works anyway?

>That maybe those poems aren't the works of a nuclear holocaust survivor?

Who

>cares? The poems speak for themselves and contain an astonishing sympathetic,

>if not vulnerable, clarity.

At the risk of contradictory thinness -- IF the poems speak for themselves, and if no one should care whether or not the poems are the work of a nuclear holocaust survivor, then what is the purpose in presenting them in the guise of the work of a nuclear holocaust survivor? My reading of the Yasusada works is that the entire "package" is part of the work -- I think it does a disservice to the work to ignore what appears to be a primary feature of its shaping and presentation -- If this were of no importance, wouldn't the author simply have submitted the poems "themselves," without the surrounding apparatus, and let them meet whatever editorial fate was theirs to meet? The apparatus, and the response to it, is part OF the work, no?

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509. **Thomas Bell**

Re: Fri. night po wars, part VI

Thu 12 Feb 1998

Milner - Something of the nature of the forces that bring order out of chaos.....psychic creativeness is the capacity for making a symbol...the result is that whole areas of their experience become cut off from the integrative influence of reflective thinking. What they are in need of is a setting in which it is safe to indulge in reverie. tom bell

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510. **KENT JOHNSON**

Speculations on identity

Thu 12 Feb 1998

Before responding to Aldon's comments below, I would like to say that I am much less certain of my position regarding "intellectual property" than I have perhaps tried to appear to be. I will say that I still do not think Dale committed any weighty transgression by faithfully reprinting an already public discussion about his magazine in his magazine. But I also think Aldon, Kali Tal, and others have made very compelling arguments, and they make me want to think and reflect about the bigger complications. The issues are not easy.

I suppose my starting point for trying to work through the difficult problems involved (difficult because those problems, I think it's clear, are fully implicated in broader questions of power and history) would be an acknowledgment that the issues of "intellectual property", "copyright," "attribution," and attendant matters are (because historical) always conjunctural and best confronted with a tactical or strategic disposition. That would mean seeing these issues not as absolute and fixed givens (i.e. "I have no choice but to be on the same side of this as the Disney Corporation") but fluid and as categories open to various uses. I do not think, for example, that "intellectual property" and "copyright" need to be thought of as synonymous. Nor for that matter is there necessarily a one to one link between "intellectual property" and political "empowerment." Kali Tal very convincingly argues how these two categories can be seen as mutually dependent. But there are also ways in which conditions of collective empowerment might emerge as the result of a direct challenge and overturning of normative assumptions of individual "intellectual property" (as well as their accompanying legalistic reifications) -- where artistic expression is placed at the service of strategic dispersals of identity or provenance. In other words, I would reject the argument that "empirically verifiable" authorial claim is some kind of essential index of personal and political responsibility.

Which is all very intuitive and speculative in the grossest sense... But I do think we need to be careful about treating this identity/property attachment question as if it were a matter of _principle_. We cut off our expressive options if we do, cut ourselves off from thinking in the most various ways possible about how we might work (work as a mode of critical intervention and opposition) against deeply ritualized constructions of self and otherness. And there may be times, there may be "topics" inside which the pressing of otherness is such that conventional structures of authorship and reception are simply not felt to be capacious enough. But that's enough on that. I need to think more.

Now to answer Aldon. He said:

3) Kent's post is disturbing -- but I don't know how to respond, as the letter was "glossed and paraphrased" -- There's clearly nothing wrong with anybody who dislikes Kent or his work for any reason communicating their dislike to any other party (or their love and admiration, for that matter) -- It is entirely up to the recipient of any such communication to decide how to act upon it --

On the other hand, I take a very dim view of people actively trying to screw up the careers and works of others through "poison" pen, email, fax etc -- BUT, not knowing any of the people involved, and having only a paraphrased version of the representation of the recipient -- I simply don't know what has happened --

Kent, can you tell us anything more specific?

The letter from my contact in South America is a personal communication, so I don't feel I can simply offer it up verbatim. However, the "paraphrase" is a very accurate rendition of the message the post contains. Unfortunately, I cannot say anything more specific. I have my very strong suspicions about who some of the people might be that have written the poet I was to edit the anthology with, but in the end those can only stand as suspicions. I wrote what I did in the hope that those involved might feel compelled to come forward and explain to me why they feel I am unfit to undertake such a project. They have not, and I take their silence (because I _am_ certain that they know by now of this discussion) to be either a sign of moral cowardice disguised as arrogance, or else an indication that they may be reconsidering the ethical implications of what they have done. At this point, I have decided to not say anything more about it on the list unless they wish to come forward to discuss it. I will say once again, however, that what I personally suffer is the loss of a planned sabbatical and the pleasure of collaborating with someone I admire. And this is peanuts compared to those who are affected the most: the

poets and critics whose work richly deserves the exposure
this anthology would have helped provide.

>

>

> 4) I have recently come into possession of previously unknown Yasusada
> manuscripts -- Does anybody know who I should contact for permission to
> publish them?

I can tell you that no permission is required.

Kent

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511. **William Marsh**

Re: Hello?

Fri 13 Feb 1998

At 05:15 PM 2/12/98 CST, you wrote:

If it's true that some petty acts

>have prevented Kent from engaging another project then this sabotage
should be

>addressed.

i'd imagine that a few on this list are waiting to get some verification of its
truth, if that's possible / Kent's post seemed to a large extent an appeal to any
who might be responsible to come forward / if they're here, they probably
should / but the hasty lynching that other list members might be looking for
seems as heinous as the "sabotage" Kent has described

Or maybe we wanna go on yapping about baseball or the etiquette

>of email publication.

i believe Kent is himself one of the ones "yapping" about email publication, as
well as the questions the topic leads to about authorship and author constructs,
author rights, etc. -- big issues, like the related Yasusada affair, that at least one
list member hopes he'll continue to "yap" about

William Marsh

PaperBrainPress

Voice & Range Community Arts

National University



<http://www.dtai.com/~bmarsh>

snail: 1860 PB Dr. #4

San Diego, CA 92109

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512. **Brian Lucas**

Angle magazine

Fri 13 Feb 1998

For those interested, there is a new issue of Angle available. It includes poetry from: Barbara Guest, Jennifer Moxley, Andrew Joron, Elizabeth Robinson, Mark Salerno, Lee Ballentine, Jim Leftwich, Michael Basinski, John Lowther, Kristin Citrone, Jason Nelson, Peter Valente, Steve Carll, Norma Cole, Ken Stec, Marcella Durand

There are some copies of Angle #2 available also (work from Coolidge, BernadetteMayer, Yau,etc). Issue one is sold out for now--reprints soon.

Angle #4 is due in early Summer 1998 (work for Geoffrey O'Brien, Charles Borkhuis, Charles North, Dan Featherston, Rachel Levitsky,etc)

To order send checks (payable to Brian Lucas). Each issue is \$4 p.p. with hand colored covers.

Also available Angle Chapbooks. Dream of Curtains by Garrett Caples
Watertower by Patrick Monnin
Ganzfeld by Brian Lucas (soon)
(\$5 ea. p.p.)

You may subscribe for \$15 a year. This includes 3 issues of Angle, misc. broad-sides or a chapbook.

(I meant work BY Geoffrey...etc).

Thank you. Brian

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513. **Brian Lucas**

Angle again

Fri 13 Feb 1998

I forgot one important thing: MY ADDRESS IS
ANGLE
253 ROSE ST
SAN FRANCISCO, CA
94102

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514. **Harold Rhenisch**
Re: sublimating the ridiculous
Fri 13 Feb 1998

Maria,

I'm with you on the retention of copyright. I'd just like to share a quirky little thing about publication that's going on in Canada right now.

"Canadian Literature" magazine, which used to welcome poetry between its pages of academic abstracts, essays, and reviews, and even paid, which was very welcome, is now insisting on retaining all copyright and all moral rights, with no further consideration due the poet. To be fair, they will allow writers to re-publish their work, free of charge in most cases, but will bill the writers for enquiries. Mind you, that's not the point. The point is that publication in "Canadian Literature" is now deemed to be so prestigious that one would, presumably, be willing to abdicate copyright in order to get in.

Presumably, this loss of copyright and corollary publication is equal in value to the publication and \$25/page the magazine paid until now.

In other words, a poet is paying the magazine \$25 a page in order to transfer copyright to the magazine.

Surely, the lowly poetics list is cheaper than that.

cheers,

Harold


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515. **Michael Magee**
Re: ok, well maybe I am an experimental poet
Fri 13 Feb 1998

Josh sd: "I'm not ready to give up all the history and suggestivity of "experimentalism". The challenge is all the more interesting if one has to recuperate such terms from interminable numbness."

I agree with Josh, though, like him as I read him in his post, I see "experimental" as a useful tag with some nice associations, rather than as a method I want to place all my chips on. Writers who've been important to me have used it & believed in it for good reasons. Here's John Dewey: "The artist is born an experimenter because he has to express an intensely individualized experience through means and materials that belong to the common public world...Only because the artists operates experimentally does he open new fields of experience

and disclose new aspects and qualities in familiar scenes and objects." Now, Dewey presses on the "intensely individual" a bit harder than I would, but I take his basic point to be a good one: that the sense of experiment, of not knowing what your doing before you do it b/c the culture has not give you the terms by which you might do it, is basic to one's desire to change the language of the culture and, by consequence, the culture itself. Experiment, then, is the method by which, to steal a formulation of Nate Mackey's, "individual expression both reflects and redefines the collective, realigns, refracts it." That's a good thing, eh? -m.

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516. **Henry Gould**

Re: Why I'm an experimental poet

Fri 13 Feb 1998

On Thu, 12 Feb 1998 19:50:04 -0600 Thomas Bell said:

>I feel that the (action, process of) writing of poetry is what is of
>interest to me as a reader as well as a writer. I have a great deal
>of trouble with reification of "experiment" in relation to poetry.
>I don't see how it can be understood in any sense but "To experiment,
>v. to play, to do, to try..." In this action sense I think that to
>write any kind of poetry is to experiment (?to poetry?) if it is to be
>worthwhile no matter how traditional the forms used.
>tom bell

This makes sense. I went to a bilingual reading by a young Russian poet last night, Masha Aptek. Once again I was highly impressed with the Russian style, so diametrically opposed to "mainstream experimental" U.S. tentativeness, ambiguity, open-endedness. She sat in a chair and recited from memory, looking directly at the audience in a fluid milieu between speaking & chanting, the lines seeming (to a non-Russian speaker) unrhymed but strongly marked rhythmically. The impression is one of total control & intellectual authority (whereas often a poet in English can barely remember his or her own lines). Out of that armature of certainty the poem itself becomes a form of shared play.

What this kind of control allows is an imaginative open-endedness. The translated versions (which I could understand), revealed a fluid style, a kind of "clear dreaming", accessible, but built on intellectual leaps - both on the level of metaphors and in the construction of the whole poem.

I suppose many on this list will want to say (1) western poets are exploring incredible performance capabilities right now far beyond the old stumbling over the shuffled pages, and (2) the kind of traditional lyric described here is a thing of the past. I'd rather not get into a retread argument over these issues - just

want to second Tom Bell's remarks by suggesting that older techniques are not so easy to "master" & offer possibilities for such fluid imaginative compounds that short poems are; I would also point to Michael Heller's extremely subtle and discerning defense of the lyric as a finished-unfinishable, unaccountable "occult" magnetic object in last fall's CHICAGO REVIEW in connection with these "out of date" techniques. The idea that Dana Gioia & other popularizers are beyond the pale - all those denizens of the powerful poetry establishment here in whitish Mid America boring to one and all - well, I may agree with that thread in principle, but to harp on how distant we are from them sounds like a lot of old cows chewing the cud - I started getting interested in poetry around 1962 (10 yrs old) when I had to recite ee cummings' "in just- spring" out of an anthology we were using called A GIFT OF WATERMELON PICKLE - I had trouble reciting it because I couldn't stop giggling but I loved the poem - I'm sure that anthology came out of some bedeviled middle american poetry establishment - but still it got me interested for ever - that's Montale's SECOND LIFE OF ART and why waste our time scoffing mindlessly at those we don't like anymore - hurrah for the "french- influenced" short lyric - (something I can get my critical one-eyed public jailhouse teeth into - Heller's essay has fascinating angles on that whole thread too -) - Henry Gould

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517. **Billy Little** *hexperimental*

Fri 13 Feb 1998

experimental has always seemed a derogatory term that snoresville poets use to dismiss risktaking work, a way to say i don't understand without looking stupid, a snobbery, another bleeping ghetto. As far as Yasuda's work which i am unfamiliar with, why would people get their shorts in a knot over where he was when, aren't we all surviving the nuclear holocaust, and hasn't hoax been part of poetry way before Chatterton. As far as republication is concerned i'm with Spicer on this, i'm a receiver, poetry isn't property, it's love(or its shadow, the hword) acted out in language, i'd rather be represented by my own mistakes than some misconstrued(even if well intentioned) paraphrase. Of course i'm not a player in the publish and perish world, i don't write criticism, if i can't praise, i'll ignore(tempis fugit), if i can't ignore, i'll damm. until the river runs out of rimes, billy

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518. **Henry Gould**

Re: Fri. night po wars, part VI

Fri 13 Feb 1998

On Thu, 12 Feb 1998 22:48:03 -0600 Thomas Bell said:

>Milner -

> Something of the nature of the forces that bring order out of
>chaos.....psychic creativeness is the capacity for making a symbol...the
>result is that whole areas of their experience become cut off from the
>integrative influence of reflective thinking. What they are in need of is a
>setting in which it is safe to indulge in reverie.

This is exactly what I was talking about with reference to the Russian poet.
sounds very politically incorrect!!

- Henry Gould

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519. **louis stroffolino**

Re: Angle magazine

Fri 13 Feb 1998

Hello Brian Lucas. Yes, Garrett just sent me his chapbook. It looks very good. I'm looking forward to seeing the magazine. Thanks, Chris Stroffolino

On Thu, 12 Feb 1998, Brian Lucas wrote:

For those interested, there is a new issue of Angle available. It includes poetry from:

*Barbara Guest, Jennifer Moxley, Andrew Joron, Elizabeth Robinson,
Mark Salerno, Lee Ballentine, Jim Leftwich, Michael Basinski,
John Lowther, Kristin Citrone, Jason Nelson, Peter Valente,
Steve Carll, Norma Cole, Ken Stec, Marcella Durand*

There are some copies of Angle #2 available also (work from Coolidge, BernadetteMayer, Yau,etc).

Issue one is sold out for now--reprints soon.

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*Also available Angle Chapbooks. Dream of Curtains by Garrett Caples
Watertower by Patrick Monnin
Ganzfeld by Brian Lucas (soon)
(\$5 ea. p.p.)*

You may subscribe for \$15 a year. This includes 3 issues of Angle, misc. broadsides or a chapbook.

(I meant work BY Geoffrey...etc).

Thank you. Brian

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520. **Miekal And**
hexperimental

Fri 13 Feb 1998

"DESTROY ALL DOGMATIC VERBAL SYSTEMS."

consult

THE PLAGIARIST CODEX

<http://www.net22.com/qazingulaza/codex/codex.html>

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521. **Robert Hale**
Re: hexperimental

Fri 13 Feb 1998

You can add WS Burroughs to Spicer and others on the notion that language isn't property. This idea runs throughout his work, and specifically in a lecture he did at Naropa that was published in the 2 volume series.

or as WSB would say:

"DESTROY ALL DOGMATIC VERBAL SYSTEMS."

At 06:23 AM 2/13/98 -0700, you wrote:

>experimental has always seemed a derogatory term that snoresville poets
>use to dismiss risktaking work, a way to say i don't understand without
>looking stupid, a snobbery, another bleeping ghetto. As far as Yasuda's
>work which i am unfamiliar with, why would people get their shorts in a
>knot over where he was when, aren't we all surviving the nuclear holocaust,
>and hasn't hoax been part of poetry way before Chatterton. As far as
>republication is concerned i'm with Spicer on this, i'm a receiver, poetry
>isn't property, it's love(or its shadow, the hword) acted out in language,
>i'd rather be represented by my own mistakes than some misconstrued(even if
>well intentioned) paraphrase. Of course i'm not a player in the publish and
>perish world, i don't write criticism, if i can't praise, i'll

>ignore(tempis fugit), if i can't ignore, i'll damm.
>until the river runs out of rimes,
>billy
>
>

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522. **Christopher W. Alexander**

Re: Hello? Kitty

Fri 13 Feb 1998

Aldon writes:

> At the risk of contradictory thinness -- IF the poems speak for themselves,
> and if no one should care whether or not the poems are the work of a
> nuclear holocaust survivor, then what is the purpose in presenting them in
> the guise of the work of a nuclear holocaust survivor? My reading of the
> Yasusada works is that the entire "package" is part of the work --

I think this should be clear enough, right? it's certainly the allure of the project - that beyond some really beautiful poems, there's this tremendous edifice of thoroughly spurious authorship (and thoroughness is definitely part of the effect, here); more than that, masks on masks on masks, AY concealing Tosa Motokiyu, itself a name (a noun) obscuring other, apparently numerous figures, Ojiu Norinaga and Okura Kyojin, Kent Johnson, Javier Alvarez, who knows who else - and who knows who for sure? more than a deconstruction of authorship, the project casts a shadow over the stability of the subject itself - hence the proliferation of accusations that encompasses even commentators on the project, rumors that x person isn't real or isn't who s/he claims to be - spurious rumors about spurious selves, and all of the above dim in their origins, as these things go.

but there is the aspect - or possibly the spectre? - of this project, that it's portrayal cuts in both directions. I.e., yes, I think it's a very sophisticated - arguably the most sophisticated yet - action against our reliance on the subject as a stable, discrete entity, i.e. the molar subject (and one has only to be doing grad. school applications to see how far our use of phi. and theory has taken us from subjecting ourselves to these modes ha ha) - that is, "it's a very good schizo dream". And yes it can also be taken up as a poke at good old American anxiety over Hiroshima - a discomfort so well deserved - , not to mention a generalized anxiety over ethnicity (or the sometime academic game of Find the Subject Position) - etc. etc. But on the other hand, Double Flowering really is haunted by the subject in question - Araki Yasusada, Hiroshima survivor - , which isn't just a comment on our terror and our crime, but has to be read •as•

a question – an anxious question, and one I really can't answer – what does it mean to manufacture such a person? what does it mean that Araki Yasusada is manufactured?

And, unlike some of the folks who've commented publically (i.e., who've published comments) on the work, I don't think these matters are ultimately separable.

Bill Marsh wrotrtt:

> but the hasty lynching that other list members might be looking for seems
> as heinous as the "sabotage" Kent has described

I don't think anyone is calling for a hanging yet – but it's been well and thoroughly discussed that that dynamic does seem to be a part of the list functioning (another topic I'm not anxious to get back to). I would like more information, certainly, and perhaps I should be clear that my reaction in the previous post is based on what information I have – it isn't meant as a call to arms. Folks: no circling of wagons on my account, please.

best, Chris

..

Christopher W. Alexander etc. / nominative press collective

email: [REDACTED]

snail-mail: P.O. Box 522402 / Salt Lake City UT 84152-2402

press/zine site: <http://choengmon.lib.utah.edu/~calexand/nonce/>

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523. **William Burmeister Prod**

Re: Hello?

Fri 13 Feb 1998

On Feb 12, 5:15pm, Dale M Smith wrote:

> Subject: Hello?

> So what about KentJohnson's troubling post earlier today about his sabotaged
> project in latin america? Is this just gonna slip by in silence? Or are
> listpods so jealous and complacent that they want to see an important project
> go to pieces? This is a bit more than a "snafu". In fact, it confirms the
> sort of petty, self-serving and snivelling fealty I have come to expect from
> this 'community.' The Yasusada poems have contributed more to poetry than
> almost anything else in recent years. If it's true that some petty acts
> have prevented Kent from engaging another project then this sabotage
should
be

> addressed. Or maybe we wanna go on yapping about baseball or the etiquette
> of email publication. What **is** the problem behind the Yasusada works anyway?
> That maybe those poems aren't the works of a nuclear holocaust survivor? Who
> cares? The poems speak for themselves and contain an astonishing sympathetic,
> if not vulnerable, clarity. And Kent, to whatever extent he involved himself
> with that project, aided in bringing some real beauty to the world. Kent's
> post this morning demanded our attention and decency. Are there any thoughts?
>-- End of excerpt from Dale M Smith

Well (and others may also agree) I think that the best we can do here is offer Kent our support and encouragement and then of course decry what has taken place. The rest would perhaps be opinion and feelings that may or may not help Kent in the least. I mean, for my part, that my opinion regarding the judgement of Kent's South American collaborator may butt against Kent's respect for the same person. Since when did it become possible to please everyone(critic or not)? The letter seems vague and a bit hokey. I don't have enough information to say this perhaps, but why is it necessary for Kent to "settle" his "situation" with all of these wonderful secret friends of his here in the U.S. BEFORE entering into this collaboration? Who are this collaborator's friends anyway? 'nuff said.

I have of late appreciated Kent's postings for their spirit and freedom. He has written in total (I feel) honesty and (yes) vulnerability. (This due to David Bromige's proposal of which I am in total agreement--that it is still an active and necessary aspect of poetry). His overall generosity and calm is well noted on this list and he certainly doesn't deserve this crap.

Not feeling particularly well,

William Burmeister

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524. **Harold Rhenisch**
experiment and poetry wars
Fri 13 Feb 1998

>>Experiment, then, is
the method by which, to steal a formulation of Nate Mackey's, "individual
expression both reflects and redefines the collective, realigns, refracts
it." <<

That sounds a lot like the Great American Myth. It might be less relevant for that small part of a few people's lives still protected from its reach in remote corners of the globe. People well worth listening to.

Mind you, non-individual expression would do the same, wouldn't it? A group expression, too? And which collective?

Brecht saying:

"The time of our leaders is ending fast.
The great won't stay great..."???

or the collective of his opponents...

"Once upon a time
our leaders gave us orders
to go out and conquer
the small town of Danzig,

so we invaded Poland
and with our tanks and bombers
conquered all of Poland
in a few days..."???

Speaking of collectives, perhaps someone could help me out here, with an explanation of what was meant a few weeks back by the San Francisco poetry wars.

I got real grouchy about that for a few weeks, because I had not considered poetry a war, and have yet to see any evidence as to how a war is a terribly good thing. Blame it on too many stories told to me when I was a boy as my father tried to work out the horror of being bombed, starved, and shot at from 1939-1945, when he was 6-12 years old, and the greater horror of 50 million dead which led to that bombing, starving, and shooting. By all accounts, Korea was pretty bad, too, Ypres unbearable, Vietnam a disgusting display, and on and on and on.

My question is: what is so great about having a poetry war?

Heck, another question: is poetry a war?

I think I'm going to be hard to convince, given my prejudices against that kind of behaviour, but I'd love it if someone could clear the air for me a little.

Heinrich Boll said that it is easy to resist political totalitarianism, because we have a strong tradition of resistance and it is consequently easy to see where the line is drawn, but that it is supremely difficult to resist material consumption because we have no knowledge of where to start or what the line might

even look like. He went on to say that such resistance should be our political fight.

That doesn't sound like a war, though. That sounds like learning to see and speak. Pretty basic stuff.

So, why on earth a war, let alone a poetic civil war?

That's not going to help anyone see, and it's not going to help anyone speak. What possible constructive use would it serve?

Harold Rhenisch



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525. **henry gould**

Re: experiment and poetry wars

Fri 13 Feb 1998

The arguments over individualism, collectivism, community, tribalism, subjectivity, objectivity, standards, tradition, experiment in poetry seem to be inevitable since the individual/community question is a political one, a moral one, a spiritual one, inescapable. Shakespeare wrote King Lear as a meditation on the transition from a feudal corporate order to rapacious individualism; Melville wrote Moby Dick partly as a response to Lear - to the same basic issues in a new era. When I look back over the "criticism" war of the past few weeks, my own stance resembles that of Edmund, Lear's bastard : or Ishmael at the beginning of the voyage : one against all, all against all. (Reagan's invisible hand of capitalism.) That's what "provocation" and raised temperature becomes (war).

However, I maintain that pure tribalism is no better than pure individualism: it's full of just as much if not more illusory constructs of solidarity and righteousness. The individual who takes pride and responsibility in unique work makes a space for art in a democracy of equals. This may be an illusion too but I'd rather have a balance of illusions than one total illusion. And critics, so it follows, have a right to "measure" quality by their own language standards, moral standards, political standards, personal taste, etc. - FREE of ulterior commitments. It also follows that in a liberal democracy damned by private selfishness, artists have a right to band together under common ideals and create collective works of all kinds. (I don't have to like them.)

It seems to me that poetry, as a kind of unmarketable commodity or occult gift is in a special position to address a world in which the market - the monetary value - becomes the global measurement and the issue of how we govern ourselves & live together in civil society - i.e. what binds us together BEYOND utilitarian or prudent getting, spending and saving - becomes a very open question

again. The same question that tormented Shakespeare & Melville and... This is true whether you are a socialist, a social democrat, a liberal democrat, or a capitalist... (and it's not going to be "resolved" in list-chat, either)..."ye shall judge them by their works").

This is partly what I meant when I said poetry - I mean poetry as a perennial phenomenon - is not a subculture and should not be content or assume marginality (not that marginality is all bad or the reverse all good either...). - Henry Gould

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526. **KENT JOHNSON**

Letter from South America

Fri 13 Feb 1998

I'd like to thank the numerous folks who have expressed support both here and b-c. I want very much to not fall into the trap of playing the martyr on this issue (a real temptation), but I'll allow myself the sentimental luxury of saying that the expressions of solidarity mean much to me, and particularly the fact that a few have come from people I have fenced and quarrelled with on this space...

(OK, the hanky is now back in my pocket.)

I had said I would not say anything more about the issue. But I received another letter from the poet this morning which is rather stunning, and I am now considering translating it and making it public. The letter evocatively shows how utterly manipulative this whole thing has been, how badly the poet feels about the matter, and how shamefully those involved have taken advantage of the poet's difficult situation to further their own agendas. The letter again makes clear reference to unnamed people in the plural.

Unfortunately, the letter also makes clear that the project is now done for. The poet feels there is no way out for him, and though I wish he would change his mind, I am sympathetic to him. His letter is both poignant and disturbing. And there are few times in my life when I have felt as saddened and angry as I now feel.

I want to ask something very directly: A few weeks ago there was a long and interesting thread which involved strong criticisms of Marjorie Perloff for not giving enough space on her syllabus to neglected visual poets. It has struck me as strange that some key people involved in critiquing Perloff have said nothing about this current issue, which involves the deliberate sabotage of a project that meant, precisely, to bring attention to a large number of neglected visual poets. So let me ask the entire "visual poetry community": If what I have said about this affair is a candid and faithful representation of events (I am asking

you to simply consider that hypothetically for now), what is your position? What, if anything, do you know? Is there any light at all you could shed on the problem? If you are someone, for example, who has had a relationship with the poet in question (perhaps even published his work) will you please tell me that you _don't_ know anything about this?

A number of people have suggested that I directly ask the poet for the identities of those involved, since knowing their names would perhaps lead to a discussion that might facilitate resolution. But the truth is, I don't feel it appropriate to press the poet to "reveal names," for that could only further complicate his situation. It is going to be up to those who have disgraced themselves to come forward and explain. And as a matter of honor, I am going to persist until I get to the bottom of what has happened.

Kent

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527. **pritchpa**

Re: Hello?

Fri 13 Feb 1998

I want to voice public support for Kent Johnson in this bizarre and heinous predicament and suggest, if it would do any earthly good at all, that perhaps he - or we - organize a letter-writing campaign on his behalf. I doubt if a letter from me to anyone would carry much weight, but there are some on the list whose names do "carry weight" and who have already publicly voiced their support for Kent in the form of blurbs and lengthy defenses in articles. Although that could wind up backfiring - I really have no idea. Perhaps it's not appropriate at all - I guess only Kent would know.

But the sort of behavior being conducted against Kent - who certainly strikes me as a good egg - is really intolerable - and just downright childish.

Patrick Pritchett

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528. **Bob Grumman**

Re: Letter from South America

Fri 13 Feb 1998

As one of the "key people involved in critiquing Perloff" who has stayed out of the controversy regarding Kent Johnson's being knocked out of a project regarding South American visual poetry, I suppose I now have to declare myself on the situation. Otherwise, it would look like I was one of the people he says plotted against him, or was in some way involved. Frankly, for many reasons,

the main one having to do with my personal life and not poetry-related at all, I haven't wanted to get into another controversy just now. But, if I have to, I have to.

1. I was not involved in the anti-Kent plot, nor did I know anything about it till his letter to this group. (And I've been so busy I didn't read it till I saw a reference to it in another letter.) Nor have I learned anything about it except what he has written.
2. I'm in an awkward spot since I do know people who feel that Kent was exploiting the South American poet he speaks of. Whether they might have expressed their doubts about Kent to the poet, I don't know. I can't believe they would have done more than that. I myself have nothing against Kent, and nothing against his participation in the project he was setting up (and which I also know hardly a thing about). But I don't want to start taking sides and perhaps alienating good friends-- particularly when I have so little idea what's really going on.
3. It would be unfortunate if the project will never come to fruition because of this kind of personality clash, or whatever it is.
4. I wish Kent would learn to moderate his us/themism.

--Bob G.

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529. **Joe Amato/Kass Fleisher**

Re: Letter from South America

Fri 13 Feb 1998

well about the only thing that can pull me out of this bronchial state i've been in for a week solid now (another poet with a bug up his---) is to express support for kent johnson and to say that i find his situation, on the basis of what i know at this point, deplorable...

but while i'm here i'd like to add my name to the chorus of folks who've argued that, if nothing else, it would be nice if subscribers were contacted prior to having their posts published elsewhere... myself personally, please feel free to spit out anything i say here anyplace else---and if you can contact me first, thank you...

at the same time, i *do* want to go on record as saying that this medium presents us with possibilities and problems that are new in many ways, and that the issues at stake in copyright, reprint rights, intellectual property rights, etc etc etc are messy and difficult and part & parcel of the digital era, the challenges we face... that while, e.g, i support the national writers' union wrt

authors (freelancers say) getting paid for electronic reprint of their work, there are other, knottier issues to consider... i think mark amerika's column in the most recent _american book review_ hits on some of these issues, if from an enthusiastically pro-artistic pov (which i find myself sympathetic to generally)...

[insert six poems by t. s. eliot, and one by john ashbery]

i trust it's clear by these latter [brackets] what i mean to imply: that this medium permits us to do all manner of things quite easily that might in fact not make a red [cough] cent... or a few red cents... and who here is to say that this shouldn't be done? (just say so and i'll start typing up, between coughs, poem after poem and posting it to this list, just to prove my point; but it's been done here, no?---and what if THOSE posts were published in print with poems intact?)... anyway, i'd hate to see us merely duplicate print practices hereabouts (e.g., permission from the publisher for a single LINE of poetry) w/o stopping to consider other possibilities (in terms of social relations, material forms, even spiritual quests)... steven harnad, e.g., has argued long and hard and controversially for a more radically 'free' view of online scholarship (for a nice overview of these and related issues, see doug brent's piece in the august, 1996, _ejournal_, volume 6, number 3---you can get it @ <http://www.hanover.edu/philos/ejournal/archive/>)...

in any case, that we should be discussing such stuff indicates a change, a difference, of some significance... oh and some of you might wanna check out the site on copyright, fair use etc. that george washington u grad students have put up, at

<http://www.nmjc.cc.nm.us/copyrightbay>

and again---my main reason for jumping into the crosshairs to say that my heart is with kent at the moment, based on what i know...

best,

joe

email: [REDACTED]

url: <http://www.iit.edu/~amato>

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530. **rsillima**

Antimodernism and other institutions

Fri 13 Feb 1998

David Z wrote to "correct" me about the workshops at the West Chester Conference, but when I visited that site within the past hour what I find is that the web site still has the 1997 conference details up, not the 1998 affair which I

quoted direct from the brochure (I live about 10 miles from there, which is how I get on the list). Keeping last year's data up on the web site must be some of that spirit of innovation among the new formalists that Finnegans was mentioning. Or maybe the idea of recycling the same workshops year after year with the same roster of presenters moving from one to another. "Make it same as last year," or however Pound put that.

I didn't say that the psychoanalytic institutes weren't possibly even a gazillion times worse than, say, the worst university, I merely said that they functioned outside of the university system as such and that that is what helped to make Freud such a free floating signifier within the academy. Ditto Marx's relation to the academy.

And while I do think every college should have at least one (and preferably 3 or 4) professors whose "field" is lit, and esp. poetry, post 1945, they are not the ones responsible for the legitimation of poetry -- that lies with the poets and they are for the most part not in the universities but in various other places, coffee houses, art galleries, computer companies. Noah Lissafey, Mary Burger and Edmund Berrigan (and several thousand other folks for whom these folks are examples) are responsible for the legitimation of poetry today, not anyone on the faculties of Penn, Berkeley, Harvard, Buffalo, Naropa or wherever. [Yeah, I know this is an overstatement and that there are lots of good poets on campuses also, but I think it's important to stress the dynamic, which is what counts.]

Ron

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531. **Karen Kelley**
Re: Letter from South America
Fri 13 Feb 1998

Bob Grumman wrote:

>

> 2. I'm in an awkward spot since I do know people who feel that Kent was exploiting the South American poet

>

>

By publishing his work?

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532. **Bob Grumman**
Publication Announcements
Fri 13 Feb 1998

This is a multi-part message in MIME format.

Forgive the non-controversial interruption but I need to make the following announcement:

Recently my press, the Runaway Spoon Press published Number Poems, by Irving Weiss, a collection of visual and textual poems composed according to various concepts of numeration. Irving Weiss's Visual Voices: The Poem As a Print Object is now available in a second printing. Examples from both books can be seen at The Runaway Spoon Press Site at <http://www.interlog.com/~dal/rasp/>

--Bob G.

Bob Grumman



<http://www.geocities.com/SoHo/Cafe/1492>

Comprepoetica, the Poetry-Data-Collection Site

-----7BD55B0C415C--

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533. **KENT JOHNSON**
Incredible
Fri 13 Feb 1998

On Feb 13, Bob Grumman said:

As one of the "key people involved in critiquing Perloff" who has stayed out of the controversy regarding Kent Johnson's being knocked out of a project regarding South American visual poetry, I suppose I now have to declare myself on the situation. Otherwise, it would look like I was one of the people he says plotted against him, or was in some way involved.

Bob, I can see why you could take that paragraph as possibly implying that I suspected you had something to do with terminating this project. I did not mean to imply that, and I apologize for not phrasing things with more care. As you'll remember, we've posted back-channel in a friendly spirit, and I hadn't at all thought of you as someone who might have done something unethical. I was trying to say, rather, that the issues involved here are obviously of relevance to the concerns that informed that other discussion which people jumped into so eagerly and vociferously. And, yes, I was wondering why the premeditated squashing of a project promoting visual poetics was not attracting more commentary from the vispo scene. And I asked the questions I did because I

assumed (and rightly, as you have shown) that people in the vispo crowd know some things that I don't yet know but which I am determined to find out and clarify.

2. *I'm in an awkward spot since I do know people who feel that Kent was exploiting the South American poet he speaks of. Whether they might have expressed their doubts about Kent to the poet, I don't know. I can't believe they would have done more than that.*

Well, apparently various communications from at least two persons expressed "doubts" with a force sufficient to scuttle, practically overnight, a very fraternal intellectual and professional relationship.

I myself have nothing against Kent, and nothing against his participation in the project he was setting up (and which I also know hardly a thing about). But I don't want to start taking sides and perhaps alienating good friends-- particularly when I have so little idea what's really going on.

Exactly the point. What is going on? And to hear that there are people who feel that I was "exploiting" (!?) the person who had agreed to co-edit the anthology with me is absolutely mind-boggling. I will say to these people again: Why did none of you approach me with these concerns about my harmful motives? Why did none of you approach me to even inquire about the project and its aims? Do any of you know me? This is absolutely incredible. Who are you? Have the courage, for goodness sake, to come forward and tell me this and explain why you feel I was engaged in exploiting somebody. How could I have been exploiting a poet whose intellect and accomplishments far overshadow my own? If anyone truly thinks I was "exploiting" this poet because I had entered into a collaborative relationship with him, they betray nothing but the most shallow and embarrassing paternalism.

3. *It would be unfortunate if the project will never come to fruition because of this kind of personality clash, or whatever it is.*

Yes, it is unfortunate that the project has been ruined and will not come to fruition. But what "personality clash"? I don't believe I've ever even met any of those involved. Or am I wrong? Do me a favor, Bob, and I ask this sincerely: Tell your "good friends" that I would greatly appreciate it if they would be so decent as to introduce themselves to me.

4. *I wish Kent would learn to moderate his us/themism.*

No comment.

Kent

>

>
>

--Bob G.

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534. **Thomas Bell**

Re: Fri. night po wars, part VI

Sat 14 Feb 1998

oops, realized when reading this reply I failed to make the appropriate elisions and possibly altered the sense of the quote even though I think Henry has it right: tom bell

Better version: Milner - Something of the nature of the forces that bring order out of chaos.....(psychic creativeness) is the capacity for making a symbol. The result [of pressure to produce] is that whole areas of their experience become cut off from the integrative influence of reflective thinking. What they are in need of is a setting in which it is safe to indulge in reverie.

At 08:27 AM 2/13/98 EST, Henry Gould wrote:

>On Thu, 12 Feb 1998 22:48:03 -0600 Thomas Bell said:

>>Milner -

>> Something of the nature of the forces that bring order out of
>>chaos.....psychic creativeness is the capacity for making a symbol...the
>>result is that whole areas of their experience become cut off from the
>>integrative influence of reflective thinking. What they are in need of is a
>>setting in which it is safe to indulge in reverie.

>

>This is exactly what I was talking about with reference to the Russian poet.

>sounds very politically incorrect!!

>- Henry Gould

>

>

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535. **Thomas Bell**

Re: Hello? Kitty

Sat 14 Feb 1998

I think it is a supposition that what occurred had anything to do with the Yas jazz (something that does seem to get itself talked - or written - about ad infinitum). If I were to be thinking along this line I could think of a lot of reasons a person or group of people might want to do me dirty, reasons that have no connection with the "authorship" of any poem. tom bell

At 11:33 AM 2/13/98 MST7MDT, Christopher W. Alexander wrote:

>Aldon writes:

>> At the risk of contradictory thinness -- IF the poems speak for themselves,
>> and if no one should care whether or not the poems are the work of a
>> nuclear holocaust survivor, then what is the purpose in presenting them in
>> the guise of the work of a nuclear holocaust survivor? My reading of the
>> Yasusada works is that the entire "package" is part of the work --

>

>I think this should be clear enough, right? it's certainly the allure
>of the project - that beyond some really beautiful poems, there's
>this tremendous edifice of thoroughly spurious authorship (and
>thoroughness is definitely part of the effect, here); more than that,
>

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536. **Thomas Bell**

Re: Letter from South America

Sat 14 Feb 1998

Even though this is becoming one of those things I wrote about in a post a couple of days ago, I feel I need say a few things here.

1. I feel like I'm back in the climate of the late Joe McCarthy - turn in your friends and stand up and fight or you're a Red.
2. I need to say again and probably more directly what I said earlier, possibly to obliquely. I have in the past corresponded with the poor poet in question. One of the things he said and that I included in that earlier post was that he would be interested in joining this list but uncomfortable doing so because of his lack of confidence in his command of English. Please leave the poor man and his reputation out of this! He's uncomfortable with the shifting sands here. I am only posting this without clearing it with him beforehand because this has become so convoluted and so subject to misinterpretation that I don't think I could even explain it to someone who is confident in his/her understanding of English. In the best of worlds though I would think that this post of mine would most appropriately be cleared by him. I think the problems that seem to have arisen here are a reflection on earlier comments on this list regarding the legality/advisability of releasing/printing/posting material without prior consent.
3. I do support in principle protests against what apparently happened to Kent Johnson but really do need to know more about what did or did not happen.
4. I do not now nor have I ever had any contact with anyone who may have ever said, written, or emailed anything negative (or positive for that matter)

about Kent Johnson. I also never have or do I intend to say, write, or email anything about Kent Johnson to anyone.

5. This problem (along with the "Perloff/vispo poets" affair and other affairs) is beginning to become an issue of literary reputation or sensation. This is problematic for me as I think it obscures real and important issues that are at stake. In this instance I think the issue of fairness is being swamped by concerns with personality and literary reputation. I think a thoughtful reading of what was posted (and is in the archives) in the Perloff/vispo thing will reveal that what was/is at stake were some real issues related to quality, knowledge, and experience. It was not merely an imbroglio over personality and literary reputation. I would hope that the same is true of the Yaz affair.

Hope this doesn't entangle things further.
tom bell

At 04:24 PM 2/13/98 -0500, KENT JOHNSON wrote:

>I'd like to thank the numerous folks who have expressed support both
>here and b-c. I want very much to not fall into the trap of playing
>the martyr on this issue (a real temptation), but I'll allow myself
>the sentimental luxury of saying that the expressions of solidarity

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537. **KENT JOHNSON**

Reply to Tom Bell (sadder and sadder)

Sat 14 Feb 1998

On Feb, Friday 13, a day of very bad luck, Tom Bell said:

Even though this is becoming one of those things I wrote about in a post a couple of days ago, I feel I need say a few things here.

1. I feel like I'm back in the climate of the late Joe McCarthy - turn in your friends and stand up and fight or you're a Red.

Tom:

Are you implying that I am asking people to turn in their friends? When have I said this? What I have asked for, numerous times and very plainly, is that those who involved themselves in writing about me to my collaborator step forward _of their own accord_ and do me the simple courtesy of explaining their actions. In what sense does this have anything to do with McCarthyism?? Unless I am grossly misunderstanding your intent, you have got this very backwards: It seems that there have been, in some form and degree, a certain number of defamatory things said about me without my having the

opportunity to know what was said and who said it. It's this that is akin to the spirit of McCarthyism, and it is precisely why this is an issue of importance, one that goes beyond, as you would have it, matters of "personality."

>

> 2. I need to say again and probably more directly what I said earlier,
> possibly to obliquely. I have in the past corresponded with the poor
> poet in question. One of the things he said and that I included in that
> earlier post was that he would be interested in joining this list but
> uncomfortable doing so because of his lack of confidence in his command
> of English. Please leave the poor man and his reputation out of this!
> He's uncomfortable with the shifting sands here.

Could you please be yet less oblique here? What exactly does English have to do with this? That I have possibly misunderstood him? All of our communication has been in Spanish. Or are you saying that he has misunderstood the English of what was written to him by others about me? If this is the case, I ask again--please simply come forward back-channel and clarify what was lost in translation. And what is this about the "poor man" and "poor poet"? "Poor" how? Helpless? Childlike? What on earth do you mean? When you use modifiers like that you don't do much for (as you say) "his reputation," which you ask that I (I think you're talking about me) leave out of this. But anyway--where have I said anything that has compromised his reputation? Have I? You mention McCarthyism--reading your post I feel like I'm a character in 1984.

*I am only posting
this without clearing it with him beforehand because this has become
so convoluted and so subject to misinterpretation that I don't think I
could even explain it to someone who is confident in his/her understanding
of English.*

Tom: I speak fluent English and Spanish. How about if you post me back-channel and try to explain it to me? I will be very patient and listen intently. If you stumble, you can start over again as many times as you want. I have been waiting very patiently (well, sort of) for some one to explain it to me! It has been an interesting thing to be patient in a circumstance like this, when you're more or less looking like a goddamned fool two days before your tenure approval hearing and you start hearing that, well, this is all just a matter of personality--mainly a matter of the personality of someone who wanted to "exploit" a "poor" poet from South America.

*In the best of worlds though I would think that this post of mine would
most appropriately be cleared by him. I think the problems that seem to
have arisen here are a reflection on earlier comments on this list
regarding the legality/advisability of releasing/printing/posting
material without prior consent.*

Huh??

>

> 3. I do support in principle protests against what apparently happened
> to Kent Johnson but really do need to know more about what did or did
> not happen.

Hello Tom. Just what do you think I've been trying to do? Write me b-c if you want and let's see if we can't work together to help clear this up. I have two letters in my hand. They very clearly say (in Spanish) that persons known to the poet have sent him various communications "questioning" his relationship with me and placing him in an "embarrassing position." These letters also say other things, and they ain't pretty when you put it all together.

>

> 4. I do not now nor have I ever had any contact with anyone who may have
> ever said, written, or emailed anything negative (or positive for that
> matter) about Kent Johnson. I also never have or do I intend to say, write,
> or email anything about Kent Johnson to anyone.

Will you at least write about Kent Johnson _to_ Kent Johnson?

5. This problem (along with the "Perloff/vispo poets" affair and other affairs) is beginning to become an issue of literary reputation or sensation. This is problematic for me as I think it obscures real and important issues that are at stake. In this instance I think the issue of fairness is being swamped by concerns with personality and literary reputation. I think a thoughtful reading of what was posted (and is in the archives) in the Perloff/vispo thing will reveal that what was/is at stake were some real issues related to quality, knowledge, and experience. It was not merely an imbroglio over personality and literary reputation. I would hope that the same is true of the Yaz affair.

"the issue of fairness is being swamped by concerns with personality and literary reputation..." Tom, excuse my language, but, no forget it... Please Tom, are you jsut being mean spirited here or are you just having a temporary blackout? I am sorry, I jsut don't know what to say.

*Hope this doesn't entangle things further.
tom bell*

*At 04:24 PM 2/13/98 -0500, KENT JOHNSON wrote:
I'd like to thank the numerous folks who have expressed support both here and b-c. I want very much to not fall into the trap of playing the martyr on this issue (a real temptation), but I'll allow myself the sentimental luxury of saying that the expressions of solidarity*

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538. **KENT JOHNSON**

I mean sabbatical

Sat 14 Feb 1998

In my last post, substitute "sabbatical" for "tenure".

Tired.

Kent

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539. **Karen and Trevor**

hugh steinberg

Sat 14 Feb 1998

Hi Hugh-

Can you backchannel me?

(Sorry everyone.)

Karen McKevitt



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540. **Thomas Bell**

Re: Reply to Tom Bell (sadder and sadder)

Sat 14 Feb 1998

Yes, Kent I think you're right, this appears to have escalated and it's getting complicated and we're not communicating well. I can see where I contributed to the confusion in some ways. I agree that it is best we go off list regarding this and then come back soon with evidence we've cleared it up. At that point we can bring our ruminations back for the others if there is interest and need. tom bell

At 01:06 AM 2/14/98 -0500, KENT JOHNSON wrote:

>On Feb, Friday 13, a day of very bad luck, Tom Bell said:

>

>> Even though this is becoming one of those things I wrote about in a post

>> a couple of days ago, I feel I need say a few things here.

>>

>> 1. I feel like I'm back in the climate of the late Joe McCarthy - turn in

>> your friends and stand up and fight or you're a Red.

>

>Tom:

>

>Are you implying that I am asking people to turn in their friends?

>When have I said this? What I have asked for, numerous times and

>very plainly, is that those who involved themselves in writing

>about me to my collaborator step forward _of their own accord_ and

>do me the simple courtesy of explaining their actions. In what sense

>does this have anything to do with McCarthyism?? Unless I am grossly

>misunderstanding your intent, you have got this very backwards:

>It seems that there have been, in some form and degree, a certain

>number of defamatory things said about me without my having the

>opportunity to know what was said and who said it. It's this that is

>akin to the spirit of McCarthyism, and it is precisely why this is an

>issue of importance, one that goes beyond, as you would have it,

>matters of "personality."

>>

>> 2. I need to say again and probably more directly what I said earlier,

>> possibly to obliquely. I have in the past corresponded with the poor

>> poet in question. One of the things he said and that I included in that

>> earlier post was that he would be interested in joining this list but

>> uncomfortable doing so because of his lack of confidence in his command

>> of English. Please leave the poor man and his reputation out of this!

>> He's uncomfortable with the shifting sands here.

>

>Could you please be yet _less_ oblique here? What exactly does

>English have to do with this? That I have possibly misunderstood him?

>All of our communication has been in Spanish. Or are you saying that

>he has misunderstood the English of what was written to him by others

>about me? If this is the case, I ask again--please simply come

>forward back-channel and clarify what was lost in translation. And

>what is this about the "poor man" and "poor poet"? "Poor" how?

>Helpless? Childlike? What on earth do you mean? When you use

>modifiers like that you don't do much for (as you say) "his

>reputation," which you ask that I (I think you're talking about me)

>leave out of this. But anyway--where have I said anything that has

>compromised his reputation? Have I? You mention McCarthyism--reading

>your post I feel like I'm a character in _1984_.

>

>> I am only posting

>> this without clearing it with him beforehand because this has become

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>> could even explain it to someone who is confident in his/her understanding

>> of English.

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>Tom: I speak fluent English and Spanish. How about if you post me
>back-channel and try to explain it to me? I will be very patient and
>listen intently. If you stumble, you can start over again as many
>times as you want. I have been waiting very patiently (well, sort of)
>for some one to explain it to me! It has been an interesting thing to
>be patient in a circumstance like this, when you're more or less
>looking like a goddamned fool two days before your tenure approval
>hearing and you start hearing that, well, this is all just a matter
>of personality--mainly a matter of the personality of someone who
>wanted to "exploit" a "poor" poet from South America.

>

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>> most appropriately be cleared by him. I think the problems that seem to
>> have arisen here are a reflection on earlier comments on this list
>> regarding the legality/advisability of releasing/printing/posting
>> material without prior consent.

>

>Huh??

>>

>> 3. I do support in principle protests against what apparently happened
>> to Kent Johnson but really do need to know more about what did or did
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>(in Spanish) that persons known to the poet have sent him various
>communications "questioning" his relationship with me and placing him
>in an "embarrassing position." These letters also say other things,
>and they ain't pretty when you put it all together.

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>> ever said, written, or emailed anything negative (or positive for that
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>> issue of fairness is being swamped by concerns with personality and
>> literary reputation. I think a thoughtful reading of what was posted
>> (and is in the archives) in the Perloff/vispo thing will reveal that
>> what was/is at stake were some real issues related to quality, knowledge,
>> and experience. It was not merely an imbroglio over personality and
>> literary reputation. I would hope that the same is true of the Yaz
>> affair.

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>"the issue of fairness is being swamped by concerns with personality
>and literary reputation..." Tom, excuse my language, but, no forget
>it... Please Tom, are you jsut being mean spirited here or are you
>just having a temporary blackout? I am sorry, I jsut don't know what
>to say.

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>> Hope this doesn't entangle things further.

>> tom bell

>>

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>> >I'd like to thank the numerous folks who have expressed support both
>> >here and b-c. I want very much to not fall into the trap of playing
>> >the martyr on this issue (a real temptation), but I'll allow myself
>> >the sentimental luxury of saying that the expressions of solidarity

>>

>

>

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541. **Alan Myouka Sondheim**

SONG FOR EMPEROR JIMMU (see Nihong)

Sat 14 Feb 1998

-

SONG FOR EMPEROR JIMMU

Come on, my boys!

Come on, my boys!

Let the arrows hail!

Let the arrows hail!

"Let us smite them utterly!"

"Let us smite them utterly!"

Oh boys, let's go!
Oh boys, let's go!
Let us dance around the kami!
Let us dance around the jinja!
Let us traverse their scapula!
Let us traverse their scapula!

Oh boys, let's cut them utterly!
Oh boys, let's cut them utterly!
Let's cut them down and up!
Let's cut them up and down!
Oh boys, let the arrows hail!
Oh boys, let the stones pound away!
Oh boys, let's pound away the stone!

Now, ha ha!
Now, hai hai!
"Let us pound them utterly!"
"Let us cut them utterly!"
Let the birds fly away!
Let the beasts fly afield!
Let them fly utterly!
"Let us let them fly utterly!"

Smite them, boys!
Don't let them fly utterly!
Don't let them pound utterly!
Don't let them cut utterly!
Smite them, boys!
Don't let them dance utterly!
Utterly smite them!
Utterly smite them!

Don't let them pound!
Don't let them!
Don't let them pound!
Don't let them!
Utterly smite them!
Cut them!
Utterly smite them!
Cut them!
Don't let them fly utterly!

542. **Miekal And**
Happy Birthday Bern
Sat 14 Feb 1998

It is Bern Porter's birthday today. I believe he is 87.
a short excerpt from one who has been ranting the longest

...

The baiting of suckers
The banishing of believers
The beating of bare-asses
The bilking of swindlers
The breeding of monsters
The brining of sweets
The busting of influence

....

from
The Last Acts of Saint Fuck You
by Bern Porter
Xexoxial Editions, 1985

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543. **KENT JOHNSON**
Re: SONG FOR EMPEROR JIMMU (see Nihong)
Sat 14 Feb 1998

Alan's war chant below reminds me (among other things) that I had meant to say something about Rachel Levitsky's forward of the "Don't Bomb Iraq" open letter. Which was jsut to say, Rachel, thank you, and can you please be sure to forward to all of us again the second part that the co-signers promise, and could as many of us as possible distribute this over the networks at our places of work, etc?

-

SONG FOR EMPEROR JIMMU

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Come on, my boys!
Let the arrows hail!
Let the arrows hail!
"Let us smite them utterly!"

"Let us smite them utterly!"

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Don't let them dance utterly!
Utterly smite them!
Utterly smite them!

Don't let them pound!
Don't let them!
Don't let them pound!
Don't let them!
Utterly smite them!
Cut them!
Utterly smite them!
Cut them!
Don't let them fly utterly!

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544. **Michael Magee**

Re: experiment and poetry wars

Sat 14 Feb 1998

"From: Harold Rhenisch <[REDACTED]>

>>Experiment, then, is

the method by which, to steal a formulation of Nate Mackey's, "individual expression both reflects and redefines the collective, realigns, refracts it." <<

That sounds a lot like the Great American Myth. It might be less relevant for that small part of a few people's lives still protected from its reach in remote corners of the globe. People well worth listening to.

Mind you, non-individual expression would do the same, wouldn't it? A group expression, too? And which collective?"

Well, Mackey might say that if it sounds like the "Great American Myth" - and I'm guessing the myth you're talking about is the myth of some form of "rugged individualism," etc, though I must say its a rather tired critique of something as subtle as Mackey's formulation, a kind of catch-all - its only insofar as that myth(s) has been influenced by those formerly "remote corners of the globe" you mention, West Africa for instance. The individual *reflects* the collective every bit as much as she helps to realign it. Behind this formulation too is Mackey's interest in jazz, an Ellisonian model of that art form, where the soloist is placed in the paradoxical position of always playing "both with and against the group." Does "Great American" suffice as a tag for that equation? As a description of a particular kind of social dynamic I'm sure some of us could find equivalents in other "corners of the globe." -m.

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545. **Harold Rhenisch**

Re: experiment and poetry wars

Sat 14 Feb 1998

>>The individual *reflects* the collective every bit as much as she helps to realign it. Behind this formulation too is Mackey's interest in jazz, an Ellisonian model of that art form, where the soloist is placed in the paradoxical position of always playing "both with and against the group." Does "Great American" suffice as a tag for that equation? As a

description of a particular kind of social dynamic I'm sure some of us could find equivalents in other "corners of the globe." -m.<<

Sure it suffices. Sure, there are equivalents in other parts of the world. Nonetheless, since these are just descriptions of behaviour, why should such descriptions not be an American lens? It seems to me entirely logical that an American would have certain predisposed ways of seeing, based upon certain notions of the relationship of the individual to the group. Why not? Wouldn't a Hungarian? Besides, isn't the American myth culturally dominant throughout the world, anyway? Isn't that what Disneyland and Hollywood have been doing all these years? Isn't that what Clinton and Iraq are all about? When the terms of discourse are set by a certain lens, it is not surprising that they turn up complementary material, because other material will be outside of the lens, or grammar, set by the discourse. Am I missing something?

Harold
[REDACTED]

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546. **Laura Moriarty**

sublime non

Sat 14 Feb 1998

Asked Bill luoma to post this for me when I was off the list briefly but I don't think he got to it -

The sublime non is out with work by Albon, Grenier, Saidenberg (a book), Bromige, Benson & Sulzer, Jang, Cole, Hocquard, Howe, Schneider, Takagai, Vassilakis, Dunn (a site), Kim, Kaufman, Stroffolino, Selby, Loden, Tranter, Browne, Murray, Luoma(text and images), Harrison, Fuller, DuPlessis and Herndon(art). Long Notes section including work by Nate Mackey who I have been reading a lot lately and who I notice was just mentioned here. There are reviews and more are wanted. I seem recently to have had a sort of spelling flu so there are also no doubt mistakes. (Please e me and I will correct.)

<http://socrates.berkeley.edu/~moriarty/>

Contributors who have not done so should send bios.

I am no longer reachable at [REDACTED] - Please note new email -

Laura Moriarty
[REDACTED]

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547. **maz881**

New non

Sat 14 Feb 1998

Dr. Moriarty asked me to forward this to the list:

The sumblime non is up. Work by 26 writers. Visuals and reviews. Get it while it's hot!

Laura Moriarty

<http://socrates.berkeley.edu/~moriarty>

new email:



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548. **David R. Israel**

"you have a guest tonight"

Sun 15 Feb 1998

& in other news (vide Reuters, appended)

might best be construed as
a sort of operatic aria

////

| You Have a Guest Tonight
|
|
| you have a guest tonight
| been a long day of drivin'
| my Beduoin tractor down
| back alleyways -- hard though
|
| kinda hard it can be to navigate
| estrangement's track -- but if fate
| & necessity dictate coyness
| (a wry & unwonted shyness)
|
| I'm rough & ready -- not unlike
| Grecian gods afore who garbed
| as commoners might show up
| to slyly clink your ceramic cup
|
| thus too were hoary Pharoahs

| shown commonday modes of life
| in ritual training for high office
| obscurely wandering a year's time
|
| in low disguise -- have you got
| an extra futon? render Caesar
| a spare crouton? you've clipped
| the winning coupon! here am I

d.i. (2-15-97 9:50 a.m.)

////

Sunday February 15 7:20 AM EST

Saddam on the Move for Security Reasons

NEW YORK (Reuters) - Fearing an American air attack, Saddam Hussein has reverted to the furtive lifestyle he maintained in the Gulf War, moving from house to house and employing decoys and disguises, The New York Times reported Sunday. . . .

According to the Times, Hussein often sends out presidential convoys of cars as decoys, then dresses as a Beduoin and drives another car himself.

He also stays overnight at random ordinary Iraqi households, the Times said. The newspaper reported that his hosts will not know of the visit until a member of his Special Guard, his security force, knocks on their door to announce: "You have a guest tonight." . . .

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549. **rsillima**

Spahn, Kutik, Spandrift

Sun 15 Feb 1998

Nice to see a review of Ilya Kutik's Ode on Visiting the Belasoraish Spit on the Sea of Azov, a really wonderful work and wonderful translation, in the new issue of Non. No mention of Ilya's winning the gold for figure skating, tho.

Non, like Jacket and a few other venues hereabouts, is showing what the WWW can really do vis a vis alternative publishing. Totally great effort.

Warren Spahn pitched so long in the majors that his first manager (1942 Boston Braves) was also his last (1965 NY Mets), Casey Stengel. Close readers here will recall that Stengel was an early version of Jack Spandrift (and may indeed be Jack Spandrift, which would explain a lot). Spahn coached in Japan (!) and Mexico apparently before heading back to the mound in Mexico, which actually delayed his entrance in the Hall o' Fame by 3 years. The man did indeed lose 3

years to WW2 (and got a purple heart after being shrapneled on the Rhine), won 267 games before he pitched his first no-hitter (his second came at the age of 41) and did one thing no active pitcher will ever come close to: he hit 35 home runs. If you never saw his high leg kick (nor the righty cloned version Juan Marichal still says cut his career short), you have no idea how beautiful baseball as a sport can be. Spicer coulda told you,

Ron

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550. **Michael Magee**

Re: experiment and poetry wars

Sun 15 Feb 1998

I understand your point Harold, but I guess if you're missing someting its the fact that neither Hollywood or Disneyland has ever embraced anything even remotely resembling a model of cultural practice based on jazz ensemble collaboration and the endless improvisation of individual and collective identity. My God, I wish they would! -m.

According to Harold Rhenisch:

>

> >>The individual *reflects* the collective every bit as much as
> she helps to realign it. Behind this formulation too is Mackey's interest
> in jazz, an Ellisonian model of that art form, where the soloist is placed
> in the paradoxical position of always playing "both with and against the
> group." Does "Great American" suffice as a tag for that equation? As a
> description of a particular kind of social dynamic I'm sure some of us
> could find equivalents in other "corners of the globe." -m.<<

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> Sure it suffices. Sure, there are equivalents in other parts of the world.
> Nonetheless, since these are just descriptions of behaviour, why should
> such descriptions not be an American lens? It seems to me entirely logical
> that an American would have certain predisposed ways of seeing, based upon
> certain notions of the relationship of the individual to the group. Why
> not? Wouldn't a Hungarian? Besides, isn't the American myth culturally
> dominant throughout the world, anyway? Isn't that what Disneyland and
> Hollywood have been doing all these years? Isn't that what Clinton and Iraq
> are all about? When the terms of discourse are set by a certain lens, it is
> not surprising that they turn up complementary material, because other
> material will be outside of the lens, or grammar, set by the discourse. Am
> I missing something?

>

> Harold

> [REDACTED]

>

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551. **Matthew Kirschenbaum**
update from the Blake Archive

Sun 15 Feb 1998

The editors of the William Blake Archive <<http://www.iath.virginia.edu/blake/>> are pleased to announce the publication of an electronic edition of *Songs of Innocence and of Experience*, copy Z. It joins editions of three copies of *The Book of Thel* and two copies of *Visions of the Daughters of Albion*. In the coming week, these works will be joined by *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell*, copy D, *The Book of Urizen*, copy G, *America, a Prophecy*, copy E, and *Europe, a Prophecy*, copy B. All of these editions have newly edited texts and were scanned from 4x5 color transparencies made specifically for the Archive. They are all fully searchable for both text and images and are supported by the unique Inote and ImageSizer applications described in our previous updates.

Urizen copy G and *Songs* copy Z were produced in Blake's late printing and coloring styles, c. 1818 and c. 1826 respectively. *America* copy E is a monochrome copy from 1793; *Europe* copy B was color printed in 1794, and *Marriage* copy D was produced in 1795 on large paper and with some rudimentary color printing.

We will be adding second and third copies of most illuminated books in the coming months, with the goal of having the entire illuminated canon online later this year. In addition, work continues on the SGML edition of David V. Erdman's *Complete Poetry and Prose of William Blake*, which we anticipate releasing sometime this spring.

Joseph Viscomi, Morris Eaves, and Robert Essick

=====

===== Matthew G. Kirschenbaum

University of Virginia [REDACTED] or [REDACTED] Department of English

<http://www.iath.virginia.edu/~mgk3k/> The Blake Archive | IATH

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552. **Annie Finch**

Claustrophobic Convocation on Pattern

Sun 15 Feb 1998

As probably the only person on this list who has actually been to the West Chester conference--in fact, I've been each of the three years since it started--I can say that yes, Ron, there really is much to be gained from the sessions, particularly the panels, which often include graduate students doing refreshingly noncategorizable work. I'll be including some of these essays in a forthcoming collection, *New Formal Poetics*, which also includes essays by some on this list (and if you have something you think would be of interest on "form," send it along; there may still be room to squeeze something in, and Armand, I'll get back to you soon). In this book I am trying to bridge some of the abysses between those who care about "form" on both sides of the spectrum. In fact, West Chester may be the only conference devoted to poetry except for the Orono conference that is serious enough to include critical panels as well as readings--somebody correct me if I'm wrong. But there is no money of any kind, state or otherwise, for it, let alone open bars; all the workshop leaders are doing it for a pittance and many of them choose to do it for free because the conference has yet to break even. The fact that the organizers keep asking the same people over and over has a lot to do with their embarrassment over asking people they don't know to read or teach for the miniscule fees they can offer (the first year I was a workshop leader and taught 5 days, did a reading and a panel, for \$200 plus room and board--the only reason I didn't do it for free is because I was so in debt at the time. I think it's a little more now but I am almost positive that at least half the workshop leaders are still doing it for free, out of their sense of dedication). The reason all these people are willing to do this is only for love of imploding form (thanks, whoever brought that term in--was it Harold?); because they know this is the only place a poet could be among people who care/know about traditional prosody, with whom one can discuss scansion, new prosodic systems, metrical variation, linguistic theories of prosody, etc.. This stuff is complicated, believe it or not, and it's hard to find people who have the patience for it. The passion for "form" in this sense is an addiction like the exploration of any other fertile aesthetic avenue.

Nonetheless, involvement in this conference has been an intense strain for me as well, for various aesthetic and political reasons that will be all too clear to those on this list. There has been some change--Marilyn Nelson, for instance, is a wonderful addition to the faculty, for whose invitation I am happy to take initial credit. But it's been maddening. Every movement has its battles, but trying to radicalize and diversify new formalism ---aesthetically and politically--has really been an almost overwhelming challenge for those of us who have been involved in it (and no, don't hit that R key just yet; really, radicalizing

and diversifying new formalism is NOT an oxymoron. Just think about it a minute.). My own continued involvement is questionable right now. If those of us on the fringes can succeed in intensely altering the agenda of the conference in the next year or two, it could become a uniquely valuable forum for serious discussion of both traditional and exploratory poetics. I would like to see the conference adopt a solid commitment to multicultural poetic forms as well as to exploded form in all its senses, without giving up its initial commitment to traditional English-language prosodies. Are you laughing? Probably you should be, because that sounds like a ludicrous hope to me too. But what's a radical formalist to do nowadays? Where does our community lie? It's all form, after all. I'm going to go make some phone calls. If anyone on this list (talk is cheap, Ron) would like to be on a panel on exploratory form at West Chester this year (Philly area, June 10-13), please backchannel me ASAP (Ron??). If I can do something interesting this year, I might go to the conference again.

Annie

sense of process. But today I've discovered a deeper reason why I'm not an experimental poet.

West Chester University's 4th annual summer writers conference (June 10-13) focuses this year on "Exploring Form & Narrative" and offers a workshop on "Experimental Forms" taught by...Dana Gioia.

I'm not making this up.

Some of the other sessions to be taught: Meter (Timothy Steele), Rhyme (Charles Martin), the Sonnet (RS Gwynn), French Forms (Phillis Levin) and Blank Verse (Alfred Corn). There is also an "Introduction to Form" taught by Cynthia Zarin who, as the brochure says, has work that "appears frequently in The New Yorker."

There will also be a "celebration" of the Hudson Review (Louis Simpson, Daniel Hoffman, Frederick Morgan etc) and there's a call for critical papers on the poetry of Amy Clampitt, Literary Quarterlies, Translation and "individual authors or subjects relevant to the conference theme."

*More details including scholarship info at:
www.wcupa.edu/_ACADEMICS/sch_cas/poetry/*

Cost ranges between \$250-499 for the whole shebang, which includes a picnic and dance.

Now, I'm perfectly willing to concede that one could get real value from some of the sessions (Marilyn Nelson is teaching a master class, for

example), but the idea that this claustrophobic convocation on pattern represents the idea of "form" insults my intelligence as it should that of any poet born after Baudelaire and Blake. That it is being held at a state institution borders on theft of public resources.

So that is why I am not an experimental poet.

Ron Silliman

Annie Finch
<http://muohio.edu/~finchar>
Assistant Professor of English/Creative Writing
Miami University
Oxford, Ohio 45220

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553. **Michael J. Kelleher**
NYC Reading at HERE

Sun 15 Feb 1998

reading:

Mei-mei Berssenbrugge

and

Michael Kelleher

on

Saturday, February 21st, 2:30p.m.

at

HERE

145 Sixth Avenue (Between Spring and Broome)

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554. **Harriet Zinnes**
NYC Zinnes reading

Sun 15 Feb 1998

Harriet Zinnes will read from her 1995 poetry volume *My, Haven't the Flowers Been?* and from new poems on Wednesday, February 25, 6-7 pm at

Marymount Manhattan College, Writing Center, 221 East 71 Street, NYC 10021.
(No admission fee.)

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555. **Harold Rhenisch**
Re: experiment and poetry wars
Sun 15 Feb 1998

>>I understand your point Harold, but I guess if you're missing something
its

the fact that neither Hollywood or Disneyland has ever embraced anything
even remotely resembling a model of cultural practice based on jazz
ensemble collaboration and the endless improvisation of individual and
collective identity. My God, I wish they would! -m.<<

They pretend to, and the pretense becomes the message.

They'd be bound to screw it up somehow.

Still, I just meant to say that even jazz ensemble collaboration is an American
practice (no value judgement intended), but you're right, it's the positive side.

Best,

Harold


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556. **Harriet Zinnes**
NYC Zinnes reading
Sun 15 Feb 1998

15 February 1998

Harriet Zinnes will read from her 1995 poetry collection, *My, Haven't the Flowers Been?* and from new poems on Wednesday, February 25, 6-7 p m, at the Marymount Manhattan College, Writing Center, 221 East 71st Street, NYC 10021. (No admission fee.) The Writing Center is located on the second floor of the Library.

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557. **k. lederer**
Queries:
Sun 15 Feb 1998

Does anyone have addresses for the following poetry programs:

SUNY Buffalo
New School for Social Research
MFA program at UNLV
New College
???
Thanks!
Katy

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558. **k. lederer**

Re: Queries:

Sun 15 Feb 1998

Sorry--
Also:
Bard
St. Mary's of Moraga, CA...
Also: Does anyone out there have an address for ISHMAEL KLEIN in Paris?
Elsewhere?
It's an emergency.....!
Thanks again,
Katy L.

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559. **Richard Long**

Re: Civil Society, or Knot?

Sun 15 Feb 1998

At 9:34 PM -0500 2/15/98, Henry Gould wrote:

| *The head of the Knesset warned his fellow*
| *politicians: "words can kill".*

Or as the late James Berlin used to say: "Language is never innocent."

Richard Long

+-----+

Richard Long
Daemen College, Amherst, NY 14226
<http://www.daemen.edu/~rlong>

http://www.daemen.edu/~2River

██████████ * FAX ██████████

+-----+

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560. **Maryrose Larkin**

Re: Queries:

Sun 15 Feb 1998

In a message dated 2/15/98 4:04:29 PM Central Standard Time, ██████████ writes:

<<

Also:

Bard

>>

Milton Avery Graduate School of the Arts

PO Box 5000

Annandale-on-Hudson, NY 12504-5000

Telephone: ██████████

Fax: ██████████

E-mail: ██████████

hey I went to school there.

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561. **Thomas Bell**

Sadder and sadder to better to thank you and a reply

Sun 15 Feb 1998

As promised enclosing the results of bcng - it's basically a pyramid so you can read as much as you like - the first few paragraphs provide a summary and the convolutions go down so you can stop anywhere if you like. There are some important issues touched on here regarding what happened to Kent. tom bell

Return-Path: ██████████
From: "KENT JOHNSON" <██████████>
Organization: Highland Community College
To: Thomas Bell <██████████>
Date: Sun, 15 Feb 1998 11:26:07 -0500
Subject: Re: thank you and a reply
Priority: normal

Tom:

Thank you, and I would be extremely grateful if you would post the letter you suggest to the list. Thank you for your cool-headedness in writing me b-c, which forced me to stop and put things down in a more dispassionate manner. And, yes, of course, no hard feelings whatsoever--to the contrary, I am very appreciative of your help in assisting me to step back just a little bit so as to deal with the matter in the most responsible way possible.

*warmly,
Kent*

*Date: Sat, 14
Feb 1998 20:14:48 -0600
To: "KENT JOHNSON" <[REDACTED]>
From: Thomas Bell <[REDACTED]>
Subject: Re: thank you and a reply*

Kent,

Thanks for the response and what you have to say. It clears up a lot for me. I think your comments basically clear up the issues I raised and the information you supply - even though not complete - pretty much convinces me that Clemente may not be completely innocent (I suspend judgement on this issue and would go so far as to retract some of my posted statements on this aspect if you think that is appropriate). I also am now pretty convinced that there was more to the Yasusada aftermath than was/is apparent to an outside observer. I also think the information you give here lends more weight to your comments or feelings that there may well be some intentional vindictiveness towards you on the part of some or several people. I think you might want to share some of this with the list as a whole as without what you add here it was not clear to me that there was anything more than an accident which you over-responded to. You might want to consider supplying some of this to the list as it's possible other readers got the same impression that I got. But if do remember what I said about controversy following you into the future, the way this and other things have escalated quickly and heatedly, and the possibility that devious parties still are capable of some devious retribution. In other words, leaving aside for the moment your feelings, it might be best dropped. However, if you decide not to drop things you do have my support even though I am not sure this support has any real impact here.

I am extremely sympathetic to your feelings, and I think you have cleared up any reservations that I had. I hope that the same thing goes the other way and that we are at the very least

back to a relation with no hard feelings either way. And I do hope that the relationship is now on a positive basis. For me part this is true.

I do think we owe the list as a whole an explanation. I wouldn't have any problems making this exchange of posts public. Or sending in something like this:

>Kent and I have had an exchange of views backchannel about seeming conflicts and confusions. I am very sympathetic and supportive of Kent as he undergoes through what is obviously a very painful experience. He has given me some further information and me earlier questions and concerns about my perception have for the most part been dissipated.

I think what occurred (and still may be occurring) is a very sad commentary on the callous actions of some members of a profession that professes high ideals, ideals that I subscribe to having perhaps worn blinders in the past.

or do you have suggestions for a better way of phrasing it.

tom

*At 01:21 PM 2/14/98 -0500, KENT JOHNSON wrote:
Tom:*

I do appreciate your very thoughtful post, and I apologize if my response to you late last night seemed overly intemperate. You are right that this incident has affected me considerably. From one day to the next, a project that was developing in very promising ways, and in which I had already invested a considerable amount of thought and time, was brought to a halt. My anger and frustration stems, in great part, from not knowing exactly why and how this happened, and, increasingly, from my apparent powerlessness to discover anything more concrete than the disturbing suggestions that have been passed my way by Clemente.

I have brought this incident to the list's attention because I am certain that some people subscribed to it (or people with close connections to people subscribed to it) know more about this situation than I do. I had in past months written a few people about this project b-c and a few weeks back put a notice about the project on the wr-eye-tings list, asking for feedback and suggestions. With the exception of my colleagues here in Freeport, none of whom has any

connection to the poetry world, I have not mentioned this project to anyone who is not connected to the list, save two close friends and supporters of my work. My posts in the last 48 hours, though tinged with anger and a performative sort of bravado that often gets the best of me, were written because it seemed the most reasonable and expedient way, given the bizarre circumstances, of compelling those involved to approach me with an explanation. Certainly, if my qualifications for undertaking this project have been questioned in a manner that has effectively terminated my involvement in it, I deserve the courtesy of some kind of answer.

I had decided not to ask Padin for specific names or specific contents of the letters he received, thinking that my appeals would succeed in clarifying the matter. But I am not sure now that this will ever be the case, so I _have_ written Padin a very personal letter, asking tht he provide me with more specific information beyond the troubling allusions he makes in the letters that I have. I wrote this last night and have not yet heard back.

You raise the Yasusada issue and suggest that this may not have anything in the end to do with the problem. Perhaps you are right. But the fact is, Tom, that I do know for a fact that Padin's closest contact in the U.S. is extremely angry about the Yasusada work, to the point that he withdrew poems from Joe Nopora's BullHead only because Yasusada work is to be featured there. This person was one of those I had written about my project with Clemente, and I never had any response from him. Now, you could rightly say that this doesn't prove anything and you would be right, but the problem is that I can think of not a single other reason why anyone would attempt to "question" Padin about the wisdom of his association with me, for practically no one on this list (or in the poetry world, for that matter) truly knows me personally and would have any reason to think badly about my "personality". If I am forgetting something about some insult I have caused that you have heard about, please let me know without the need of mentioning names! The simple fact is that the Yasusada work has been extremely controversial, perhaps more publically controversial than any work of American poetry in recent years--For my association with it I have been called everything from an "orientalist" to a "racist." I don't think it is at all unreasonable of me, given the circumstances I have outlined, to suspect very strongly that that work has something to do with these extremely odd events. I am left with the question--what else could it be? It is absolutely clear to me that Padin was very excited about this project, both for himself and for the many poets and personal friends whose work it would have helped bring forward. What was suddenly said that could have brought such a sudden end to that enthusiasm?

I posed the Yasusada question very prominently--as an assumption, in fact-- to Padin right after his first letter announcing the severing of our collaboration, and he said _nothing_ in his most recent letter to contradict my assumption, a strong indication to me that this issue has entered into the matter. But perhaps I am wrong. In my most recent letter I have raised the issue again. We will see if he responds.

And I must respectfully disagree with your suggestion that Padin may be out of touch with the world of pobiz dog eat dog. I grew up in Uruguay (10 years) and went back to work there for another year, and the politics of culture there are as sophisticatedly shitty as anywhere else. In any case, clemente has been operating at an international level for many years, so he is certainly aware of the seamier side of things! In fact, Clemente mentions very specifically that extra-poetic considerations have been brought into the affair in ways that are now beyond his control. I am left with the burning question that no one has yet come forward to answer: what are these considerations? In what way have _I_ brought them into play in this bizarre situation?

Though I don't know if you speak Spanish, I am sending you separately my most recent letter to Clemente, wherein I beseech him to provide me with more speccific details. I would send you his last two letters to me, but I don't feel I can do that without his permission, even though I think those letters make it abundantly clear that this issue involves much more than an innocent cultural misunderstanding.

Please write me back, Tom. I am grateful for your taking the time to set down your thoughts, and I do agree with you that it is necessary now to pause for a bit and cool off. But I hope you can see that I am in a very frustrating situation, and I hope these rather spontaneous remarks in answer to your thoughts show that my frustrations are legitimate and important ones.

sincerely,

Kent

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562. **Charles Bernstein**
Civil Society, or Knot?

Sun 15 Feb 1998

I have received a number of complaints about the tone of some recent post on this list. Here is the most recent (I have chosen to withhold the name of the writer for reasons explained in the note):

>I would like to register my complaint about Dale Smith's continued
>abusiveness on the list, comments like today:

>

>>>In fact, it confirms the sort of petty, self-serving and snivelling
fealty I have >>>come to expect from this 'community.'

>

>This is far from the worst of his abusive behavior. I don't feel that the
>list is a safe place for me to register my discomfort at this rudeness,
>this incendiary behavior. ... I no longer feel it is a forum I can
participate in.

*I feel there should be a certain bottomline of politeness that is enforced.
Of course people are going to occasionally go off the deep end and cross
that line. But this unrelenting aggressiveness, name-calling, and
hostility should not be tolerated.*

Thanks and sorry to complain.

Perhaps as a member of this virtual assembly, if not yet community, it's time for me to note that the kind of post being cited here degrades the possibilities for free and open exchange on this list insofar as it may work to silence others. At a certain point, confronted with the charge that *this* community is at fault, it may be the case that we are at fault if no response is made to this, especially as in this case where it comes in a message trivializing the reasonable concerns of other members of this list that their work, as posted on this list or elsewhere, not be reprinted without their permission. I recognize, and moreover, appreciate, the need for boisterous and impolitic language in the kind of free and open exchanges on this list. I am not setting up a hard and fast rule on this issue and will not. However, as stated in the Poetics Welcome message, this is a moderated list and it will be moderated in keeping with the primary goals of the project. Other lists will of course establish different parameters. In this instance, all that I am asking for is consideration of these concerns.

Charles Bernstein

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563. **Henry Gould**

Re: Civil Society, or Knot?

Sun 15 Feb 1998

As one who has been pretty sarcastic on this list - and who has received slights in return - I recognize the temptation to use vituperation and satire in a creative way - to make a point, to provoke others, to add a certain kind of interest (interesting to some, probably just annoying to many). I've fallen for it many a time.

I have 2 responses to Charles' message. First, I would hate to see this list censored in any way. Second, I hope I will keep this word to the wise in mind and hope others will too. We should treat each other with respect.

Why am I responding to CB's message? I've been following world news, including articles on the level of abuse people are subjected to in political discourse in Israel at present. The head of the Knesset warned his fellow politicians: "words can kill". There is no reason this list has to imitate the worst in talk radio. Spandrift may be Eric Blarnes' hero, but he takes off his chaps & spurs to use the outhouse just like the rest of us.

Some people may find it hypocritical for me to be voicing these sentiments. Well, I've been thinking about it. Call me on it if I forget myself. At the same time, just as words can kill, it's also true that the truth hurts. Then again, however: "judge not lest ye be judged." - Henry Gould

oh say, I just happened to have a few sonnets on that subject here... --Pushkin! come back here, you bad, bad cat! gimme those...

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564. **Thomas Bell**

Re: Spahn, Kutik, Spandrift

Sun 15 Feb 1998

Actually the memory of Spahn's long pickoff move - the best there will ever be is what sticks in my mind - I can still see the graceful arm and quick whip snap that haunted runners for years. Actually it's a visceral memory, one that I rehearsed every evening for several years albeit from the starboard side (?is this the equivalent for port's opposite in this case).

Somewhat more seriously? On the other sport note, this is the second recent note here on Current Russian/slavic verse. I would appreciate info on

availability of current russian verse (particularly www refs). I asked this once several years ago here and got a wealth of responses, but I'm sure other things have appeared. I live in a small town with no close University library access and am often starved for current info in many areas. tom bell

p.s., Spahn also played a mean banjo with another manager, Cholley Grimm.

At 10:11 AM 2/15/98 -0600, [REDACTED] wrote:

>Nice to see a review of Ilya Kutik's Ode on Visiting the Belasoraish Spit on
>the Sea of Azov, a really wonderful work and wonderful translation, in the
>new issue of Non. No mention of Ilya's winning the gold for figure skating,
>tho.

>

>Non, like Jacket and a few other venues hereabouts, is showing what the
WWW

>can really do vis a vis alternative publishing. Totally great effort.

>

>Warren Spahn pitched so long in the majors that his first manager (1942
>Boston Braves) was also his last (1965 NY Mets), Casey Stengel. Close
>readers here will recall that Stengel was an early version of Jack Spandrift
>(and may indeed _be_ Jack Spandrift, which would explain a lot). Spahn
>coached in Japan (!) and Mexico apparently before heading back to the mound
>in Mexico, which actually delayed his entrance in the Hall o' Fame by 3
>years. The man did indeed lose 3 years to WW2 (and got a purple heart after
>being shrapneled on the Rhine), won 267 games before he pitched his first
>no-hitter (his second came at the age of 41) and did one thing no active
>pitcher will ever come close to: he hit 35 home runs. If you never saw his
>high leg kick (nor the righty cloned version Juan Marichal still says cut
>his career short), you have no idea how beautiful baseball as a sport can
>be. Spicer coulda told you,

>

>Ron

>

>

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565. **George Bowering**
Re: sublimating the ridiculous

Sun 15 Feb 1998

"Canadian Literature" magazine, which used to welcome poetry between its pages of academic abstracts, essays, and reviews, and even paid, which was very welcome, is now insisting on retaining all copyright and all moral rights, with no further consideration due the poet. To be fair, they will

allow writers to re-publish their work, free of charge in most cases, but will bill the writers for enquiries. Mind you, that's not the point. The point is that publication in "Canadian Literature" is now deemed to be so prestigious that one would, presumably, be willing to abdicate copyright in order to get in.

But of course it is not. The poetry published in the magazine is pretty bad stuff, mainly creative writing poems, short descriptive pieces that I cannot believe anyone but the authors reads.

George Bowering.

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

fax: [REDACTED]

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566. **Billy Little**
contagion

Mon 16 Feb 1998

I'm with Charles and that other who mentioned we should all wear high heels when we're responding. Keep in mind in these contagious times, spit carries the flu and the flu doesn't stop at you, take your pills before it spills into our brains and then our lovers brains and how far is the infants choochoo trains? i feel for Kent but at the same time my sympathy strains harder to reach the person being eligible for a sabbatical and another who's stretching 5-6000 a year, there's heartbreak and hartebrake. i want to see those whines distilled to songs, to blues perhaps, one day the list will have a sound track, we'll all write to the accompaniment of Carl Orff and feel humble or exalted, powerful seats of response. Bitterness does not further. Save your strength for new creation, stimulate me, the poet citizens responsibility, there's enough that brings us down already. Consolation is what we want for the Israelis and Palestinians, consolation we seek for the iraqis and the yanks, consolation we need to admit in own relations. Consolation not conflagration. If only there were a madison ave of the left, me and mayakovsky we'd be millionaires.

namaste

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567. **David R. Israel**
Re: Civil Society, or Knot?
Mon 16 Feb 1998

Tangent city here --

From: Richard Long <[REDACTED]>

At 9:34 PM -0500 2/15/98, Henry Gould wrote:

*The head of the Knesset warned his fellow
politicians: "words can kill".*

*Or as the late James Berlin used to say: "Language is never
innocent."*

does that mean, language is "always guilty"?

(whatever happend to a jury of its peers?)

d.i.

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568. **R M Daley**
Re: Queries:
Mon 16 Feb 1998

duh. katy i have the adresses of any department you'd want in three of those
schools you know - unlv, new college, buffalo -

come down and get 'em - we'll be up late tonight

love, r

On Sun, 15 Feb 1998, k. lederer wrote:

Does anyone have addresses for the following poetry programs:

SUNY Buffalo

New School for Social Research

MFA program at UNLV

New College

???

*Thanks!
Katy*

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569. **k. lederer**

Re: Queries:

Mon 16 Feb 1998

So thanks!

I've gotten all of the addresses besides:

St. Mary's of Morage, CA

The New School in NYC

And esp. ISHMAEL KLEIN in Paris--

(I'm looking for creative writing dept. addresses--no need to send phone numbers etc.)

With gratitude,

Katy

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570. **rsillima**

Banjo

Mon 16 Feb 1998

"Spahnie also played a mean banjo with another manager, Cholley Grimm."

How does this compare with Stan Musial's harmonica?

Ron

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571. **KENT JOHNSON**

Clarity

Mon 16 Feb 1998

For what it's worth, when I told Tom I'd be grateful to him for "posting the letter," I was referring to the proposed follow-up he had inserted into his b-c to me and not to our whole b-c exchange. In any case, the misunderstanding is not Tom's fault, whose kindness I appreciate-- I should have been clearer.

Ah, clarity.

Going off list for some time. I can be reached back-channel.

Kent

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572. **louis stroffolino**

EMERGENCY

Mon 16 Feb 1998

Does anybody have the exact quote for Eliot's

"bad poets borrow; good poets steal"

phrase handy (i can never find thee things).

I will be very grateful

in the words of Katy Lederer, "THIS IS AN EMERGENCY!"

thanks, chris

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573. **Alan Myouka Sondheim**

NOISE news #7 (fwd)

Mon 16 Feb 1998

-

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"The bit of noise, the small random element, transforms
one system or one order into another."

M. Serres

"Between the rationality for which the analysis speaks and
the law that history repeats there remains a gap,
infinitesimal to be sure,
but fundamental"

M. De Certeau

*

Welcome to NOISE News #7.

This issue contains the call for submissions to p e r f o r a t i o n s

17. The guest editor for this issue is Alan Sondheim.

As always, we are especially looking for form/content explorations which use emergent technologies such as hypertext, in vital and innovative ways, as well as essays and reviews. Also, we consider these issues as 'nodes' for research and ongoing activity, so they are occasionally updated or articles added. However we DO like to start compiling initial material as soon as possible.

Previous nodes may be viewed from the Public Domain page at: www.pd.org

The call for P18 on the theme of Post-Feminist Art, guest editor Monika Weiss, will be issued shortly.

For more information contact:

██████████,
██████████, or
██████████

Public Domain, Inc. will also be issuing a CD of sonic explorations at the end of March to be entitled VEIL. We'll put up a sample on the Performance page at some point. For more information: ██████████

----- ILLEGIBILITY

An assumption of this century, Foucault's analysis of divinatio notwithstanding, is that the world is becoming increasingly legible - that there are one or more readings of the world - either through the foreclosing of textuality (what is, can be said), or through an increased understanding aligned with progress and progressivity. If the world is an encoding, then decipherment continues to reduce the unknown, and this might even be measured in terms of bandwidth, tolerances, and so forth.

On the other hand, one might argue towards an essential and irreducible illegibility, that not everything is decipherable - that there may, perhaps, be unknown or unknowable signs - as well as phenomena masquerading as signs - as well as phenomena having no relation to the symbolic at all.

This is not an argument for a "horizon" of the illegible, but a seepage that occurs perhaps within as well as without the legible. (For example, it may not be the case that every culture can be traced or translated - even in part - into every other.) Perhaps every domain is inherently illegible; perhaps foundations are not always interpretable across the board (and there for are not foundations *sub specie aeternis*). Consider the illegibility and illiteracy of the world, and consider the following, somewhat practical, concerns. (Any other related concerns, of course, would do as well.)

0 Issues of identity, recognition, self-reflexivity / assertion: To what extent does identity depend on legibility? Can one "read" another culture (without or without literacy in that culture) in such a manner that anomie or the sensation

of exile do not occur? Can one "read" one's own culture in this manner? What is the phenomenology of anomie? Of exile?

1 Illiteracy - the inability to read and write. Every text is illegible. (But if one is literate in the language of a text, and the text is visually "clear," does that necessarily mean it is legible?) What is the post-Ivan Illich "take" on language, reading and writing?

2 Computer illiteracy - the inability to use computer technology. (Are computers legible all the way down? What constitutes legibility in this case?) What is the political economy of computer technology? Of computer-mediated-communication (CMC) in relation to this? (Think of the division between haves and have-nots for example. What - today - constitutes having? Is bandwidth a consideration?)

3 Dead Media (Bruce Sterling) - illegible remnants, archeologies. (What constitutes "media" in the first place?)

4 Infinite kanji - wandering across a Borgesian world in which universals do not exist, in which each signified (in the sense of reference in the world) possesses its own sign. Nothing and everything are simultaneously interpretable in writing. All signs are illegible and legible; all are strictly indexical, ikonic, blurring the distinction.

5 Illegibility of or on or off the Net: What constitutes Internet illegibility; what constitutes Net illiteracy? Do TCP/IP and other protocols play a role here? Since virtual subjectivity is largely textual (or entirely textual, if bit-mapping is considered as such), what would be an illegible subject? What sorts of reception theory apply here?

6 Are cultures translatable? Is habitus a discourse or discursive formation? What is the political economy of legibility, of illegibility?

7 What constitutes misrecognition? How does misrecognition play into the above? (Misrecognition: an alternative or alternative reading, a non-intended reading, a reading-degree-zero, an absent or absent-minded reading.)

8 Reading and writing "foreign" cultures or the cultures of one's own. Reading and writing on the Net.

9 And finally, to what extent is illegibility inherent in the world at large? And what constitutes this inherency?

general enquires to: [REDACTED]

technical: [REDACTED]

artist questionnaire: [REDACTED]

p e r f o r a t i o n s / F O R T ! / d a ? : [REDACTED], [REDACTED]

S P R A w l : [REDACTED]

Public Domain, Inc./perforations
POB 8899
Atlanta, GA
30306-0899

Public Domain, Inc. is a 501 (c) 3 organization devoted to exploring the nexus between art, theory, technology, and community.

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574. **Dale M Smith**

Some Composed Responses

Mon 16 Feb 1998

It's a shame, and damned distressing, to see what Kent is going through. I am thankful though for Tom Bell's recent posts that help shed some light on the affair and that will hopefully increase sympathy for Kent's unfortunate position. Unlike Kent, however, I seriously doubt that anyone will admit their guilt in this sabotage. But their silence can be revealing...

Mr. Bernstein, I'm sure you know those who backchanneled you did so not out of fear of making posts to a list with the likes of impolite me, but because they disagree with what I say and they detest my uncouth postal tones. This proves they lack a sense of humor and that posts in Cyberville must be drained of emotion in order to survive. The post in question actually **did** what I wanted it to do (a language act?): it facilitated discussion about Kent's doomed project. It was definitely an in-your-face, over-the-top statement. But it worked better than if I had written in polite measure, 'Oh, pretty please, someone help poor Kent Johnson...'

Ultimately, this is about dissent. I keep returning to this, but it's true. The high ideals of this community are often exposed as shams, as the Kent Johnson affair suggests. Those who oppose me dislike that I point out their hypocrisy. The only way to prevent me from doing that is to turn me off.

But I will consider your actually very generous post. And I will swallow my impulse to tell you to go screw yourself, out of respect for your role on this list, and out of respect for all you've done for this great art of poetry.

Dale Smith

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575. **Scott Pound**

Re: NYC Reading at HERE

Mon 16 Feb 1998

Go Michael!

Wish I could be (T)HERE!

Scott

reading:

Mei-mei Berssenbrugge

and

Michael Kelleher

on

Saturday, February 21st, 2:30p.m.

at

HERE

145 Sixth Avenue (Between Spring and Broome)

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576. **Henry Gould**

Re: Some Composed Responses

Mon 16 Feb 1998

On Mon, 16 Feb 1998 10:25:17 CST Dale M Smith said:

>

>Ultimately, this is about dissent. I keep returning to this, but it's true.

>The high ideals of this community are often exposed as shams, as the Kent

>Johnson affair suggests.

Dale, I don't see how the 2nd part of your last sentence is evidence of the assertion in the 1st part. My guess is that the large majority of people on this list are like me: they haven't followed the Yasusada "affair", they know neither Kent, the poet in South America, nor Kent's hidden antagonists, and they are in no position to take a position on this. This may indeed show the limitations of this "community" in terms of its ability to either support or oppose Kent; but nobody ever claimed, in a "shamful" way, that this was an advocacy organization. If what Kent says is true about people maliciously meddling in his own projects,

this is a shame. But if I were Kent I would be in close conversation with the South American guy to try and determine the exact nature of the accusations & qualms in order to lay them to rest, as well as garner letters of support & confidence in order to turn it around. If I were the South American guy I wouldn't give much weight to "Kent is all right" letters from people (like me) completely out of that loop. If there are people "in the loop" who want to support Kent, I presume they have already backchanneled him in this regard. What gives you the right to cast aspersions on the list for not jumping blindly on this particular bandwagon? Are you suggesting that because a few people on this list may be backstabbing jerks, then the whole list is to blame? It may be that Kent has been victimized by some "powerful" people in the "poetry world"; this is a possibility; in which case everybody's continued participation in that world on those terms shares some blame. But the case has to be made, first. - Henry Gould

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577. **Harold Rhenisch**
Re: sublimating the ridiculous

Mon 16 Feb 1998

>publication in "Canadian Literature" is now deemed to be so
>prestigious that one would, presumably, be willing to abdicate copyright
in
>order to get in.

| *But of course it is not.*

Exactly. Strange.

Harold Rhenisch

██████████

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578. **Thomas Bell**
Re: Banjo

Mon 16 Feb 1998

Isn't the real issue here which one accompanied Bob Uecker in the Beer Barrel Polka the night Billy Martin was arrested for brawling? That was a real experimental piece!

At 05:26 AM 2/16/98 -0600, ██████████ wrote:

>"Spahnie also played a mean banjo with another manager, Cholley Grimm."
>
>How does this compare with Stan Musial's harmonica?
>

>Ron

>

>

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579. **Jordan Davis**

Raworth / Gardner @ Poetry City 3/5 7pm

Mon 16 Feb 1998

SPEED RACER .. GOOD VIBES

Tom Raworth

reads

his poetry

at Poetry

City with Drew

Gardner March

5 @ 7 pm

free

buy a book and

relive the experience

Poetry City is

in New York City at

Teachers & Writers

in the Oswald Spengler Bldg

5 Union Square "Decline of the" West

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580. **Karen Kelley**

Re: Some Composed Responses

Mon 16 Feb 1998

Dale M Smith wrote:

>

>

> Mr. Bernstein, I'm sure you know those who backchanneled you did so not out

> of fear of making posts to a list with the likes of impolite me, but because

> they disagree with what I say and they detest my uncouth postal tones. This

> proves they lack a sense of humor and that posts in Cyberville must be

> drained of emotion in order to survive. The post in question actually *did*

> what I wanted it to do (a language act?): it facilitated discussion about
> Kent's doomed project.

A couple of thoughts on this: Dale excused himself in this post, complimented Charles Bernstein, and essentially dismissed the person who felt silenced by his post attitude. Rather a hierarchical response. I would encourage the person who posted to Charles to try to feel free to write to the list. I think incivility (and no matter how cleverly composed) is seen by 99.9% of the list as exactly what it is: lack of self control.

As regards the efficacy of Dale's post regarding Kent's issues: I think he is being self-serving in seeing his post as having facilitated conversation. My mail delivered responses that preceded his, and by that time I had already back-channelled Kent, as I imagine others had.

Again, though, I'd like to point out that most of the posts to the list come from a relatively small percentage of subscribers: perhaps we should try to be more welcoming of other thoughts/discourses. I'm sure there are plenty of people out there with thoughts they are reluctant to share because they are not consistent with the list's usual tone. Unfortunately, I imagine many of these people are women. Please, anyone who wants to speak up, do. You'll find most of the responses you receive to be gracious and well-considered (much of this does tend to occur back-channel, so the list isn't always a good indicator of response). I for one would love to see more "thought" (vs. composed exhortation).

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581. **david bromige**

Dale and the b-c's

Mon 16 Feb 1998

Dale, I'd like to say in front of the List that while I did b-c Charles B for clarification re-policy on pirate-publishing Listpostings, I did not urge him to debar you; not for that, nor for your uncouth postal tones, nor your views, although I have been in opposition to them.

Because I have been among those who have been addressed in uncouth terms by you, and whose views have been held in contempt by you, I feel it necessary to make this statement.

While I did say, on the List, that I was surprised you put up with a List composed largely of academics, a body of persons you are inclined to revile on a bad day, I was not "wishing you off the list" (as someone who likes you, said to me b-c). I note that your tone has modulated of late, and where there's life, there's hope. I don't think dissent is the problem; it's the rudeness and the prejudices. db 3

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582. **Jordan Davis**
GRaet expectAItons

Mon 16 Feb 1998

An assemblyman was strolling the grounds
Beside the northern building of the state senate
Walking past the antique roses looking at them
And smelling them. The bees and the beetles
Were the only other ones there this afternoon
So close to the end of the spring term.
Pulling a whitish pink just-opened bud close and drawing
The sour-deep rose scent into his face
He coughed and saw with his third eye
A pleasant scene of life in his district.

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583. **Karen Kelley**
Re: EMERGENCY

Mon 16 Feb 1998

chris stroffolino wrote:

>
> Does anybody have the exact quote for Eliot's
> "bad poets borrow; good poets steal"
> phrase handy (i can never find thee things).
>
> I will be very grateful
>
> in the words of Katy Lederer, "THIS IS AN EMERGENCY!"
>
> thanks, chris

Hi Chris,

I can't find the exact reference: but I think it's more to the effect of: Good poets borrow; great poets steal.

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584. **Henry Gould**

Re: EMERGENCY

Mon 16 Feb 1998

chris stroffolino wrote:

>

> Does anybody have the exact quote for Eliot's

> "bad poets borrow; good poets steal"

> phrase handy (i can never find thee things).

>

> I will be very grateful

>

The quote comes from Eliot's essay "Philip Massinger", and runs as follows:

"Immature poets imitate; mature poets steal; bad poets deface what they take, and good poets make it into something better, or at least different."

A great indie-critic comment. But then, Eliot was always promoting himself, even here: the anagram of his name is "stole it".

- Henry Gould

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585. **Robert Hale**

Lacan on Poetry

Mon 16 Feb 1998

Nick Piombino expressed interest in a post last week regarding the reputation of psychoanalysis among poets.

Lacan was questioned (I paraphrase throughout my note here from an issue of OCTOBER that featured a translation of a television broadcast that Lacan did in the Seventies) regarding one of his core ideas -- "the unconscious is structured like a language" -- What do you do with anything that doesn't get mixed up with words? What of psychic energy, or affect, or the drives?"

Lacan answered in line with tradition (Galileo, Newton) that energy is nothing other than the numerical value of a constant that allows physicists to do their work. The unconscious isn't something to be numerically expressed, but to be deciphered. You can't verify a so called "life force" (a crude metaphor for energy used by some) as anything other than representation.

Affect, Lacan continued, is a discharge of adrenalin that is also a discharge of thought, and therefore displaced, and therefore metonymic.

He went on to designate poetry, specifically Dante, as a prime example of this process, which begins with Plato and early Christian efforts at subsectioning

the passions of the soul on the model of the body, where sadness (depression) isn't merely a state of the soul, but something which is "located only in relation to thought, that is, in the duty to be well-spoken, to find one's way in dealing with the unconscious, with the structure."

In contrast, Lacan offers a reference to **gai savoir** (gay science) an expression the Provençal troubadours used to designate their poetry, as a happy-go-lucky enjoyment of deciphering -- happy without suspecting what reduces you to a dependence on language. The poet's moodiness (or whatever you want to call it) would be his or her relationship to the real via this dependence, the manifestation of ideas that are forceful enough for you to feel exiled from them.

Lacan concludes, borrowing from Heidegger: "Affect, therefore, befalls a body whose essence it is said is to dwell in language."

Heidegger wrote in his "Letter on Humanism": "Only from this dwelling 'has' he 'language' as the home that preserves the ecstatic for his essence. [...] Language is at once the house of Being and the home of human beings."

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586. **Dale M Smith**

Vizpo? Oh, no

Mon 16 Feb 1998

First I'd like to say that I welcome any and all voices to contribute to this space. If I am perceived as some sort of deterrent to free expression on this list, I apologize. In fact, I demand its opposite -- freedom in the sense that no one second-guesses themselves and that all contribute as they see fit to this floating arena. Free and frank expression has always been my priority. I think that if it's lacking here then it's for reason other than my posts. But obviously, others take a different view.

I'm curious as to why the Vizpo folks aren't saying more about the travesty that has taken place. Or, I should say **may** have taken place. Since the only way to prove Kent right in this is to have the perpetrators of the crime turn themselves in. Regardless, the really sad thing about this is that many poets in Latin America are going to be silenced in this country. They are the ones truly victimized by the halting of this project. Is there nothing to say? A few weeks ago Vizpo was all the rage. Where did all that enthusiasm go? Does this not interest anyone? A potentially valuable project is sunk now. What a drag. But Veezpo is safe in the USA...

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587. **Steve Tills**
Re: Vizpo? Oh, no
Mon 16 Feb 1998

Possibly many of them are actually busy writing, living, attending to infinite other interests?

Dale M Smith wrote:

First I'd like to say that I welcome any and all voices to contribute to this space. If I am perceived as some sort of deterrent to free expression on this list, I apologize. In fact, I demand its opposite -- freedom in the sense that no one second-guesses themselves and that all contribute as they see fit to this floating arena. Free and frank expression has always been my priority. I think that if it's lacking here then it's for reason other than my posts. But obviously, others take a different view.

*I'm curious as to why the Vizpo folks aren't saying more about the travesty that has taken place. Or, I should say *may* have taken place. Since the only way to prove Kent right in this is to have the perpetrators of the crime turn themselves in. Regardless, the really sad thing about this is that many poets in Latin America are going to be silenced in this country. They are the ones truly victimized by the halting of this project. Is there nothing to say? A few weeks ago Vizpo was all the rage. Where did all that enthusiasm go? Does this not interest anyone? A potentially valuable project is sunk now. What a drag. But Veezpo is safe in the USA...*

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588. **Joe Amato/Kass Fleisher**
news flash...
Mon 16 Feb 1998

watching the tube this afternoon, i was surprised to find jeopardy running the category

"gertrude stein says..."

1st clue: "a" this "is a" this "is a" this.

last clue: the city about which she said "there is no there there"

(approx.)

thought you all might wanna know...

best,

joe

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589. **Gwyn McVay**

Re: EMERGENCY

Mon 16 Feb 1998

A great indie-critic comment. But then, Eliot was always promoting himself, even here: the anagram of his name is "stole it".<<<

It's also "toilets," which influenced the famous Creedence Clearwater Revival lyric:

Don't go out tonight, it's bound to take your life
There's a bathroom on the right.

(also collected a really fabulous mondegreen: my friend D. Feingold, who is from Florida, heard Billy Bragg's line "Here comes Richard" as "Hey, country Jew.")

g mc.

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590. **david bromige**

a civil tongue

Mon 16 Feb 1998

"A civil tongue" proves a trojan horse :
Summerhayes' "snotty" is somewhat coarse.
Bowering had merely turned his nose up :
Summerhayes says that it dripped in his cup.

db 3

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591. **Joe Brennan**

Re: Lacan on Poetry

Mon 16 Feb 1998

In a message dated 98-02-16 16:53:46 EST, you write:

<< The unconscious isn't something to be numerically expressed, but to be deciphered. >>

"Hence my proposition that the analyst hystorizes from himself: a patent fact.... What hierarchy could confirm him as an analyst, give him the rubber stamp? A certificate tells me that I was born. I repudiate this certificate: I am not a poet, but a poem. A poem that is being written, even if it looks like a subject." J. Lacan, *The Four Fundamental Concepts of Psychoanalysis*, p.viii (Norton).

Joe Brennan

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592. **David Kellogg**

Re: Lacan on Poetry

Mon 16 Feb 1998

Joe Brennan quoted:

>"Hence my proposition that the analyst hystorizes from himself: a patent
>fact.... What hierarchy could confirm him as an analyst, give him the
rubber

>stamp? A certificate tells me that I was born. I repudiate this
certificate:

>I am not a poet, but a poem. A poem that is being written, even if it
looks

>like a subject." J. Lacan, The Four Fundamental Concepts of
Psychoanalysis,

>p.viii (Norton).

Hey, the last part of this is the epigraph to my article, "Desire Pronounced and/
Punctuated: Lacan and the Fate of the Poetic Subject," which appeared in
American Imago 52.4 (Winter 1995), an article that's pertinent to this thread
(tho it deals mainly with "official verse culture").

Also of interest: *Rhetoric and Culture in Lacan*, by Gilbert D. Chaitin (Cam-
bridge UP, 1996), the only book in English, as far as I know, to deal extensively
with Lacan's theory of poetry.

Cheers,

David

~~~~~  
~~~~~

David Kellogg Duke University

██████ Program in Writing and Rhetoric

██████ Durham, NC 27708

FAX ██████ <http://www.duke.edu/~kellogg/>

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593. **Tosh**

Re: Vizpo? Oh, no

Mon 16 Feb 1998

As a lurker and sometimes contributor to this list, I am deeply puzzled about
this Ken/South American/poet mafia stuff.

1) Wouldn't all this be cleared if Ken just wrote to his friend in South America, find out who is/are saying these bad things about him. Then after finding out write to these/the people/persons and asking what the problem is. I know this seems rather simplistic, but wouldn't that solve the problem more than having this moral outing of someone(s) who may subscribe to the list.

For all I know this South American Poet may be insane, Ken maybe insane, and the entire Poet Mafia maybe insane also. Or they can all be totally sane, and there is a conspiracy. But then again, instead of asking point blank for someone to come clean on the list, it is best just to communicate with the poet and see who is behind it.

And then third, why would a third party be concerned about another's project? I am sorry, but none of this makes sense to me.

Tosh Berman
TamTam Books

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594. **Joe Ahearn**

Re: Some Composed Responses

Mon 16 Feb 1998

Henry said:

It may be that Kent has been victimized by some "powerful" people in the "poetry world"; this is a possibility; in which case everybody's continued participation in that world on those terms shares some blame. But the case has to be made, first. - Henry Gould

I disagree. I and only I am to blame. I'm Spartacus!

Joe Ahearn



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595. **Don Summerhayes**

a civil tongue

Mon 16 Feb 1998

Aren't there enough people yet despising poems without Bowering's snotty remarks?

George Bowering wrote:

>
> >"Canadian Literature" magazine, which used to welcome poetry between its
> >pages of academic abstracts, essays, and reviews, and even paid, which was
> >very welcome, is now insisting on retaining all copyright and all moral
> >rights, with no further consideration due the poet. To be fair, they will
> >allow writers to re-publish their work, free of charge in most cases, but
> >will bill the writers for enquiries. Mind you, that's not the point. The
> >point is that publication in "Canadian Literature" is now deemed to be so
> >prestigious that one would, presumably, be willing to abdicate copyright in
> >order to get in.
>
> But of course it is not. The poetry published in the magazine is pretty bad
> stuff, mainly creative writing poems, short descriptive pieces that I
> cannot believe anyone but the authors reads.
>
> George Bowering.
>
> 2499 West 37th Ave.,
> Vancouver, B.C.,
> Canada V6M 1P4
>
> fax: [REDACTED]

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596. **simon**

Oklahoma query

Mon 16 Feb 1998

Sorry to bother the list with this rather off-topic request, but...

For help with a linguistic survey related to an article I and my colleague are doing

if anyone here is in or from Oklahoma, would you contact me please?

and

if anyone is presently at an academic institution in Oklahoma, would you contact me please.

thanks,

beth simon

assistant professor, linguistics and english

indiana university purdue university



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597. **Maria Damon**

Re: contagion

Mon 16 Feb 1998

terrific post

only

i can't wear those high heels anymore

hard on the knees and the feets at this advanced age

so i'll keep those heels metaphoric

and meanwhile relish the thot of bowering and bromige in stilettos as they
sit before their silver screens tap tap tapping...

At 10:09 PM -0700 2/15/98, Billy Little wrote:

>I'm with Charles and that other who mentioned we should all wear high heels

>when we're responding. Keep in mind in these contagious times, spit carries

>the flu and the flu doesn't stop at you, take your pills before it spills

>into our brains and then our lovers brains and how far is the infants

>choochoo trains?

>i feel for Kent but at the same time my sypathy strains harder to reach the

>person being eligible for a sabbatical and another who's stretching 5-6000

>a year, there's heartbreak and hartebrake. i want to see those whines

>distilled to songs, to blues perhaps, one day the list will have a sound

>track, we'll all write to the accompaniment of Carl Orff and feel humble or

>exalted, powerful seats of response. Bitterness does not further. Save your

>strength for new creation, stimulate me, the poet citizens responsibility,

>there's enough that brings us down already. Consolation is what we want for

>the Israelis and Palestinians, consolation we seek for the iraqis and the

>yanks, consolation we need to admit in own relations. Consolation not

>conflagration. If only there were a madison ave of the left, me and

>mayakovsky we'd be millionaires.

>

>namaste

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598. **henry**

Re: EMERGENCY

Mon 16 Feb 1998

On Mon, 16 Feb 1998 17:42:11 -0500 Gwyn McVay said:

>

>It's also "toilets," which influenced the famous Creedence Clearwater

>Revival lyric:

>

> Don't go out tonight, it's bound to take your life

> There's a bathroom on the right.

But is there a moon in the bathroom? Aye, there's the rub. - Hamlet on a roll

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599. **Mark Weiss**

Re: Lacan on Poetry

Mon 16 Feb 1998

One of the problems with the thought of Freud and those descended from him is that they accept as fact without question a set of assumptions for which there is no empirical evidence. The unconscious as a separate realm, for instance, is a necessary construct only for those who like Freud derive their theory of the psyche from Wagnerian romanticism, although it is a pretty idea. But there is no reason to suppose that it exists in nature (as opposed to the obvious existence of processes and impulses of which we are unconscious).

Here's a few more such:

the Oedipus "complex" and its universality

Freudian developmental theory

penis envy

the neutrality of the analyst.

At 05:46 PM 2/16/98 EST, you wrote:

>In a message dated 98-02-16 16:53:46 EST, you write:

>

><< The unconscious isn't something to be numerically

> expressed, but to be deciphered. >>

>

>"Hence my proposition that the analyst hystorizes from himself: a patent

>fact.... What hierarchy could confirm him as an analyst, give him the rubber

>stamp? A certificate tells me that I was born. I repudiate this

certificate:

>I am not a poet, but a poem. A poem that is being written, even if it looks

>like a subject." J. Lacan, The Four Fundamental Concepts of Psychoanalysis,
>p.viii (Norton).

>

>Joe Brennan

>

>

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600. **Harriet Zinnes**

Re: Oklahoma query

Mon 16 Feb 1998

16 February 1998

My two children, Clifford (now Harvard economist Dr. Clifford Zinnes) and Alice (now award-winning painter) were born in Norman, Oklahoma, while my husband, Dr. Irving Zinnes, was professor of physics at the University of Oklahoma. I suppose this is of no help at all to you, but I did have to tell you that my children are Sooners!

Best to you on whatever linguistic project you are on!

Harriet



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601. **David R. Israel**

Fenton on Hughes' Plath

Mon 16 Feb 1998

f.y.i.,

the current (March 5) issue of the NY Review of Books has James Fenton's take on Ted Hughes' book of poems on Sylvia Plath.

<http://www.nybooks.com/nyrev/index.html>

or more particularly:

<http://www.nybooks.com/nyrev/WWWfeatdisplay.cgi?1998030507R>

registration (sans fee) required, I believe.

d.i.

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602. **Daniel Zimmerman**

Re: Lacan on Poetry

Mon 16 Feb 1998

Robert Hale wrote, in part:

Lacan answered in line with tradition (Galileo, Newton) that energy is nothing other than the numerical value of a constant that allows physicists to do their work. The unconscious isn't something to be numerically expressed, but to be deciphered. You can't verify a so called "life force" (a crude metaphor for energy used by some) as anything other than representation.

Affect, Lacan continued, is a discharge of adrenalin that is also a discharge of thought, and therefore displaced, and therefore metonymic.

Joe Brennan wrote:

>

> In a message dated 98-02-16 16:53:46 EST, you write:

>

> << The unconscious isn't something to be numerically
> expressed, but to be deciphered. >>

>

> "Hence my proposition that the analyst hystorizes from himself: a patent
> fact.... What hierarchy could confirm him as an analyst, give him the rubber
> stamp? A certificate tells me that I was born. I repudiate this certificate:
> I am not a poet, but a poem. A poem that is being written, even if it looks
> like a subject." J. Lacan, The Four Fundamental Concepts of Psychoanalysis,
> p.viii (Norton).

>

> Joe Brennan

Talk about metonymic! But metonymic for what? For I? For another metonymy? Does Lacan perform an Indian Rope Trick here, hauling up the chain of signifiers behind him into a tiny cloud, which then burns off in the sunlight? Does the "poem" read itself, or does identity proceed automatically, metronomically? But that might imply a kind of not-yet- discovered quantity, as if the writing of the poem occurred by the accretion of a series of numbers not yet discovered as a series, no? With what sort of confidence does Lacan write off the possibility of a numerical character of the unconscious, yet call in the same breath for its de*cipher*ment, especially since he hees himself as subject in the process of "being written"? Who runs these 'numbers' down on Jacques Lacan? Who sits in on the renga?

Dan Zimmerman
neither analyst nor analysand

"no honey for me, nor the honeybee"
--Sappho

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603. **Joe Brennan**
Re: Lacan on Poetry
Mon 16 Feb 1998

In a message dated 98-02-16 20:20:50 EST, you write:

<< One of the problems with the thought of Freud and those descended from him

is that they accept as fact without question a set of assumptions for which there is no empirical evidence. The unconscious as a separate realm, for instance, is a necessary construct only for those who like Freud derive their theory of the psyche from Wagnerian romanticism, although it is a pretty idea. But there is no reason to suppose that it exists in nature (as opposed to the obvious existence of processes and impulses of which we are unconscious).

Here's a few more such:

the Oedipus "complex" and its universality

Freudian developmental theory

penis envy

the neutrality of the analyst.

It's always been my experience that those who have had no significant contact with psychoanalysis are those who, like Katy Lederer earlier, and Mark Weiss now, are most inclined to dismiss Freudian experience; and usually when this fact is pointed out, it tends to be dismissed as an unreasonable imposition. Yet the experience of analysis is where the empirical evidence is found that Mark Weiss claims doesn't exist. To say that J. Lacan and others "accept as fact without question a set of assumptions for which there is no empirical evidence.", is astonishingly smug; all, or nearly all analysts since Freud are/have been so stupid and so dishonest as to ignore both their professional and personal integrity so as to "perpetuate their theory of the psyche [derived] from Wagnerian romanticism". There have been many attempts --all of them futile, I believe -- to implicate Freud in the works of others, but I think that this is the least imaginative that I've heard or read. But then I belong to that school which teaches that one should know something before speaking about it, and then only speaking to that which is supported by one's experience.

It's not my intent to be Freud's defender on this list, although anyone who wants to chat about it can back-channel me at JBCM2.aol.com.

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604. **George Bowering**

Re: Banjo

Mon 16 Feb 1998

"Spahnie also played a mean banjo with another manager, Cholley Grimm."

How does this compare with Stan Musial's harmonica?

Ron

Hey, I happen to OWN an LP of Denny McLean or however you spell it, playing the organ.

George Bowering.

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

fax: [REDACTED]

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605. **George Bowering**

Re: Vizpo? Oh, no

Mon 16 Feb 1998

*Regardless, the really sad thing about this is that many poets
in Latin America are going to be silenced in this country.*

That's an interesting concept: "silencing" the "visual" poets. Hmmm.

George Bowering.

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

fax: [REDACTED]

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606. **George Bowering**

Re: Why I'm an experimental poet

Mon 16 Feb 1998

I dont see a problem in talking about experimental poetry, as long as what you are doing redembles the procedure in experiments you did in Chem classes in highschool. And as long as you remember that most experiments fail.

George Bowering.

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

fax: [REDACTED]

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607. **Kenneth Sherwood**

Announcing: LOCAL EFFECTS -- For Robert Creeley (RIF/T 06)

Tue 17 Feb 1998

Announcing
LOCAL EFFECTS
For ROBERT CREELEY

Local Effects (RIF/T 06) is available at
<http://writing.upenn.edu/epc/rift>.

Contributors include:

Robert Creeley and Charles Bernstein from LINEbreak,
Michael Basinski, Mike Boughn, Elizabeth Burns,
John Clarke, Peter Gizzi and Elizabeth Willis,
Loss Pequeno Glazier, Vincent S. Gregory, Jorge Guitart,
Jefferson Hansen, Steve McCaffery, Jim Pangborn,
Scott Pound, Kristin Prevallet, Kenneth Sherwood,
Juliana Spahr, Dennis Tedlock, and Mark Wallace

Thanks to all the past and present Buffalonians who contributed.

"Local Effects" marks the last regular-format issue of RIF/T. Beginning with RIF/T 07, the format will offer a more compact and more quickly circulated selection of texts. Submissions are being accepted for RIF/T 08, for release in May. Submissions of poetry for section 1; and hypertext fiction, reviews, interviews, and non-standard prose for section 2. are welcomed. Online exhibits from the EPC will be high-lighted in section 3.

HTML format texts are accepted with gratitude. Please submit via email to [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] simultaneously.

RIF/T 07 will be available in March, featuring work by:

Radio Free Altera, Jacques Debrot, Vanessa Grim,
Mark Lunt, Emily Lloyd, Henry Gould, Jeffrey Little,
Donald Lutton, Susan Schultz, Dennis Tedlock,
and Aviram Sachs reviewing Jerome Rothenberg's *Gematria*
and more.

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608. **maz881**

Re: Civil Society, or Knot

Tue 17 Feb 1998

Dear CharlesB & List,

I agree in general with the tenor of your message (and that of the whiner(s)) that people should not be "mean" to each other -- so yes indeed I think Norman Fischer's definition of emptiness on the non channel is in need of review:

"Three attitudes arise as a consequence of the appreciation of emptiness:

flexibility - since nothing is real, fixed, separate, or able to be possessed resistance is self-defeating

kindness - since everything is nothing but connection kindness is natural

humility - who is going to feel like he's master of all this talk?"

So . . . Bad Dale! (&! anyone! else! who! hasn't! reached! enlightenment!!) Go get empty! However, I would like to debuke the writer of the complaint for lacking a sense of humor. Dale's use of the word fealty was hilarious, if not accurate. Obviously [insert name of favorite early modernist explosive dude] would not last long on this list.

Bill Luoma

ps. Charles, I feel like my ability to exist freely and openly on this list is being hampered by Henry Gould's excessive posting. Could you have a word with him on my behalf?

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609. **Mark Weiss**

Re: Lacan on Poetry

Tue 17 Feb 1998

Yup, it is an unreasonable imposition to require as a qualification to discuss psychoanalysis that one have been an analyst or analysand, just as it would be unreasonable to limit the discussion of poetry to poets or christianity to christians.

I'm not sure, however, that I'm disqualified on that account. I was in psychoanalytic psychotherapy, couch and all, three times a week for three and a half years. I was myself a psychotherapist for 15 years, during which I had a lot of professional contact with those of the psychoanalytic persuasion, some of whom are friends, some not, and some are good therapists, perhaps despite their theoretical underpinnings. This involved extensive discussions of cases both in formal case conferences and in private consultations. But maybe I don't know enough. Maybe only the convinced know enough. By the way, that Lacan works within the framework of a rather strange mythology in no way invalidates his ideas about poetry, it merely renders the process by which he arrives at them somewhat more tortuous. One's allegiance to one's analyst or one's challenges to psychoanalytic theory are relevant to this list's purpose in that Freud's metaphoric system has been hugely influential on some poets and thinkers about poetry. Beyond that, I'm not sure that this is the forum for this discussion. Let's just not, those of us who try to question everything that comes before us in the form of language, exclude this one area and assume as fact what is merely speculative, in this case the existence of an entity in the mind called "the unconscious."

At 11:20 PM 2/16/98 EST, you wrote:

>In a message dated 98-02-16 20:20:50 EST, you write:

>

><< One of the problems with the thought of Freud and those descended from him

> is that they accept as fact without question a set of assumptions for which
> there is no empirical evidence. The unconscious as a separate realm, for
> instance, is a necessary construct only for those who like Freud derive
> their theory of the psyche from Wagnerian romanticism, although it is a
> pretty idea. But there is no reason to suppose that it exists in nature (as
> opposed to the obvious existence of processes and impulses of which we are
> unconscious).

> Here's a few more such:

> the Oedipus "complex" and its universality

> Freudian developmental theory

> penis envy

> the neutrality of the analyst.

>

>

>It's always been my experience that those who have had no significant contact
>with psychoanalysis are those who, like Katy Lederer earlier, and Mark Weiss
>now, are most inclined to dismiss Freudian experience; and usually when this
>fact is pointed out, it tends to be dismissed as an unreasonable imposition.

>Yet the experience of analysis is where the empirical evidence is found that
>Mark Weiss claims doesn't exist. To say that J. Lacan and others "accept as
>fact without question a set of assumptions for which there is no empirical
>evidence.", is astonishingly smug; all, or nearly all analysts since Freud
>are/have been so stupid and so dishonest as to ignore both their professional
>and personal integrity so as to "perpetuate their theory of the psyche
>[derived] from Wagnerian romanticism". There have been many attempts
--all of
>them futile, I believe -- to implicate Freud in the works of others, but I
>think that this is the least imaginative that I've heard or read. But then I
>belong to that school which teaches that one should know something before
>speaking about it, and then only speaking to that which is supported by one's
>experience.
>
>It's not my intent to be Freud's defender on this list, although anyone who
>wants to chat about it can back-channel me at JBCM2.aol.com.
>
>

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610. **Miekal And**
Re: ripblinkly broken skyword
Tue 17 Feb 1998

daniel:

these smell like neologisms, can I put them in the dictionary of neologisms?

miekal

Dict of Neo

olfactory division

<http://www.net22.com/neologisms/>

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611. **Miekal And**
Why poet funny, no?
Tue 17 Feb 1998

George Bowering wrote:

>

> I dont see a problem in talking about experimental poetry, as long as what
> you are doing redembles the procedure in experiments you did in Chem

> classes in highschool. And as long as you remember that most experiments
> fail.

its also experimentation that produced electricity, cathode rays, the computer
your typing on, the radio in the background, the food you eat, the toilet you shit
in & those newfangled aluminum baseball bats. Of course whether a poet ac-
knowledges experimentation in their work is no indication of whether the poem
fails. & besides the only experiments I ever did in Chem class was trying to
write poetry in the margins of my notebook without being discovered.

miekal

tapped & cooked down the first batch of maple syrup this spring, one month
sooner than ever before...el nino has the seasons in her control. its thru experi-
mentation that I taught myself how to make good syrup & every cookdown Ive
done has had a different set of conditions which were unpredictable, thus the
"scientific method"...

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612. **Miekal And**

**[FLASHFORWARD] Writing on the wall or where has the vispo rant
gone?**

Tue 17 Feb 1998

Dale M Smith wrote:

*I'm curious as to why the Vizpo folks aren't saying more about the travesty that
has taken place.*

some things are best approached backchannel. & what really can be said until
real facts are known. its interesting to me that because a number of us spoke
up in support of visual poetry, we've acquired some kinda marketing niche that
we occupy as heir & keeper.

Regardless, the really sad thing about this is that many poets
> in Latin America are going to be silenced in this country. They are the ones
> truly victimized by the halting of this project. Is there nothing to say?

I don't understand why anyone is being silenced, its quite easy to acquire work
from south american visual poets, for shows & publication, this was one per-
son's attempt via one south american contact who admittedly is very well
known & influential, but south american visual poetry is not a ship passing in
the night, it has a 50 year history with 100s of practitioners. (Check out Cesar
Espinosa's Corrosive Signs: Essays on Experimental Poetry (Damn there's that
word again) Visual, Concrete, Alternative, 1990. Translated by Harry Polkin-
horn.)

A

> few weeks ago Vizpo was all the rage. Where did all that enthusiasm go?

Does

> this not interest anyone? A potentially valuable project is sunk now. What

> a drag. But Veezpo is safe in the USA...

No one I know has an agenda for world domination by the american vispo mafia...there is certainly an interest in seeing visual poetry represented as an international movement that operates via networking outside of the normal publishing & academic channels, & expanding textuality beyond 2 dimensions....but a little freespirted consciousness raising doesnt represent a stronghold to be defended against all odds.

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613. **Pierre Joris**

Re: Fenton on Hughes' Plath

Tue 17 Feb 1998

Given that for poetic triteness & drivel, Fenton perfectly matches his buddy Hughes, the piece is the expected defense & illustration of Hughes greatness. Wish Fenton had remained the excellent journalist that he was in his early days -- in the realm of poetry & poetics, he can't write his way out of a paperbag.

Pierre

David R. Israel wrote:

*f.y.i.,
the current (March 5) issue of the NY Review of Books has James
Fenton's take on Ted Hughes' book of poems on Sylvia Plath.*

*http://www.nybooks.com/nyrev/index.html
or more particularly:
http://www.nybooks.com/nyrev/WWWfeatdisplay.cgi?1998030507R
registration (sans fee) required, I believe.*

d.i.

--

=====

pierre joris 6 madison place albany ny 12202

tel/fax [REDACTED] email: [REDACTED]

<http://www.albany.edu/~joris/>

"What often prevents us from giving ourselves over to
a single vice is that we have several of them."

— La Rochefoucauld

=====

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614. **Daniel Carter**
ripblinkly broken skyword
Tue 17 Feb 1998

{ } multiple pre(-)

ripblinkly broken up t' be reassymbowled 'n' arrowed 'n' narrowed 'n' broad-
henned t' view furl fer all t' sea 'n' shore unshoreagain akin but note the shame
aflame t' tame 'n' claim the game away off the canvas thus released libravery
chord renude

{ } intro-void (sorrowsborrows)

new workspace null-sweat phantasy alternate spell t' be un-(d' UR)

or on top t' twist off her awe on or nothin' worn nor sworn test her moaning ink-
call moist a nom frame-flamingly functioning recipient version virgin refresh-
ment flo-glyph favor-list illuminated simplicities his book among money as a
guyed elope ora chord-cable type as we glow (a)long aura short aversion of the
pleasant applaudcastle outgloat scent d' Sea-Associated Blushes standboy
vuoyed competitive spices if fuel a lie furl diffle lens a sound in/out utterways
node Haspro Nuns Sea Asian Nation Association born dare wit doubt accrue the
stimulus vent radiant transmissives after whitenesting sequentials detail as a
verveworthy co-math ink after white neat wing edit Sean did without visible au-
dible Oedipal nor edible plebpouradiation up here a pawn the screen appear
more numerous his kin 'n' ken his skin again reflexed thin blinked back off her
relief reprieve we all brief a riddle more essayly flora-sec

<http://www.inch.com/~abz/>

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615. **Sylvester Pollet**
Re: Oklahoma query
Tue 17 Feb 1998

Try George Economou at Univ. of O. He directs the Creative Writing program
there, or did recently. Also Rochelle Owens.

At 7:37 PM -0500 2/16/98, [REDACTED] wrote:

>Sorry to bother the list with this rather off-topic request, but...

>

>For help with a linguistic survey related to an article I and my

>colleague are doing
>
>if anyone here is in or from Oklahoma, would you contact me please?
>
>and
>
>if anyone is presently at an academic institution in Oklahoma,
>would you contact me please.
>
>thanks,
>
>beth simon
>assistant professor, linguistics and english
>indiana university purdue university
>[REDACTED]

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616. **Mark Prejsnar**

Re: news flash...

Tue 17 Feb 1998

Stein in popular culture exists as two quotes (one about Oakland, one about flowers); as being rather large and square-faced physically; and being a lesbian. Even the (commonsensepo, as it were) popularly-diffused noteriety of her "difficult" work has faded from mass culture. (About the latter, see Michael Davidson's wonderful new book, *Ghostlier Demarcations*..It doesn't really address the "material text" in quite the way it promises, and it has longeurs, but features a wonderful mind and lots of great bits; anyway it examines a WC Fields movie that included a rather clever and good parody of Stein's poetry...I guess the equivalent would be travesties of Clark Coolidge on Saturday Night Live. Stein has well and truely faded from official culture's mind compared to back then.)

On Mon, 16 Feb 1998, Joe Amato/Kass Fleisher wrote:

watching the tube this afternoon, i was surprised to find jeopardy running the category

"gertrude stein says..."

1st clue: "a" this "is a" this "is a" this.

last clue: the city about which she said "there is no there there"

(approx.)

thought you all might wanna know...

best,

joe

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617. **Joe Amato/Kass Fleisher**

Re: news flash...

Tue 17 Feb 1998

mark, which brings to mind the astaire-rogers musical (i think it's) _swing time_
(if memory serves me)_... whereupon receipt of a telegram being read aloud
with "... stop ... stop ... stop" prompts (i think it's) astaire (can't quite recall) to
say something like "sounds like a passage from gertrude stein"...

have to go back and check that...

best,

joe

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618. **Pierre Joris**

[Fwd: Martha Gellhorn obit]

Tue 17 Feb 1998

This is a multi-part message in MIME format.

Martha Gellhorn died 15 February; the link below is to the Manchester
Guardian obit.

Name: GELLHORN.TXT
GELLHORN.TXT Type: Plain Text (text/plain)
Encoding: 8bit

--

=====

pierre joris 6 madison place albany ny 12202
tel/fax [REDACTED] email: [REDACTED]
<http://www.albany.edu/~joris/>

"What often prevents us from giving ourselves over to
a single vice is that we have several of them."

— La Rochefoucauld

=====

by sarah.albany.edu (8.8.8/8.8.8) with ESMTP id JAA15521
for <[REDACTED]>; Tue, 17 Feb 1998 09:46:33 -0500 (EST)
by dub-img-8.compuserve.com (8.8.6/8.8.6/2.10) id JAA21132;
Tue, 17 Feb 1998 09:47:43 -0500 (EST)

Date: Tue, 17 Feb 1998 09:21:57 -0500

From: John Whiting <[REDACTED]>

Subject: Martha Gellhorn obit

To: *Charles Amirkhanian <[REDACTED]>, John Perry Barlow <[REDACTED]>,
Ann Basart <[REDACTED]>, Larry Bensky <[REDACTED]>,
*Jeffrey Blankfort <[REDACTED]>,
*Dave Foister <[REDACTED]>,
Peter Franck <[REDACTED]>, *Richard Friedman <[REDACTED]>,
**"Lyn Gerry" <[REDACTED]>,
*Maria Gilardin <[REDACTED]>,
DAVID LANCE GOINES <[REDACTED]>,
"Philip Gordon" <[REDACTED]>,
"Gray, Kathelin" <[REDACTED]>, Doug Henwood <[REDACTED]>,
**"Hallock Hoffman" <[REDACTED]>,
*Michael Hrebeniak <[REDACTED]>,
"Craig A. Johnson" <[REDACTED]>,
*Pierre Joris <[REDACTED]>, John Kenny <[REDACTED]>,
Zoe Klippert <[REDACTED]>, Hugh Macdonald <[REDACTED]>,
*Aubrey Meyer <[REDACTED]>,
Marc Millon <[REDACTED]>, *jack nessel <[REDACTED]>,
**"John Ohliger" <[REDACTED]>,
Andy Oram <[REDACTED]>, George Orick <[REDACTED]>,
*Nigel Osborne <[REDACTED]>,
*Michael P <[REDACTED]>, Ned Paynter <[REDACTED]>,
Alan Rich <[REDACTED]>,
Charles Shere <[REDACTED]>,
*Carl Stone <[REDACTED]>, Laura Weathered <[REDACTED]>,
John Whiting <[REDACTED]>

A reminder, if any is needed, of how the rules of the game have changed. Those who are reporting directly on today's obscenities are likely to be of an age closer to Gellhorn's than to that of the super-successful young turks who tell us what Sexy Spice is wearing this week.

#####

The [London] Guardian February 17 1998

OBITUARIES

Martha Gellhorn

A WITNESS TO OUR WORLD AT WAR

THE streetcars of her hometown of St Louis, Missouri, shaped the life of Martha Gellhorn, who has died aged 89. Her suffragette mother and doctor father had raised her to confidence and campaigning, and, as a child, she had freedoms her peers did not; she roamed the city alone on those cars, looking in on lives unlike her own. "One bends one's one twig and it stays bent," she drawled long after.

She was briefly collegiate at Bryn Mawr, she was a cub reporter surviving on a diet of doughnuts. Then at 21, in 1930, her life began with a steerage-class passage to Europe, \$75 and a suitcase. She went to Paris to become a foreign or, better still, a roving correspondent. Just like that.

Even for a girl who looked, as she once remarked, like the cartoon character Betty Boop - all batted eyelashes - and had limitless insouciance, it did not happen quite like that. Gellhorn sold any old writing she could and got a "very high-class education - standing room at ground level to watch history as it happened".

Her learning process involved European poverty and politics and an affair, later a short marriage, with the radical journalist Bertrand de Jouvenal, who, as a youth, had been the lover of a middle-aged Colette. She innocently took a room in a bawdy-house and knowingly bought absurd Parisian couture cheap at the end of the season. She was also introduced to her first Nazis, "scrubbed and parrot-brained". They didn't teach a girl any of that at Bryn Mawr.

The process also covered returning to - and crossing - America, walking in on an oil boom and on the great Russian film director Sergei Eisenstein, who was failing to film in Mexico, and writing her first novel. It took her on to the payroll of the Federal Relief Agency, for which she filed reports on the lives of the forgotten poor, which read like epic captions for Depression photographers: she was sacked for inspiring local revolutions.

It allowed her the naivety to cadge room and board from HG Wells in London, where she wrote a vivid eye-witness account of a southern lynching she later admitted that she had never seen; and to accept the offer of President Roosevelt and his wife, Eleanor - her mother's campaigning friend - to stay in the White House, which was pretty homey then. She put up there in Abraham Lincoln's bedroom and was fed regular meals during an awkward patch, when her furious moral righteousness made her otherwise unemployable.

There she finished *The Trouble I've Seen*, fiction based on her underclass investigations. It was published in 1936, with her portrait, blonde and elegant, on its dust jacket: this was a titillating combination and a success. She was immediately celebrated, but fled the hoopla by holidaying in Florida.

At a Key West bar called Sloppy Joe's, she ran into Ernest Hemingway, bulky in his "odiferous Basque shorts". Two big celebs in a small town. His books had been her models. She said so. He had seen her face on *Troubles*. All afternoon and evening, they drank Papa Dobles, two-and-a-half jiggers of white Bacardi rum, juice of two fresh limes, swirled in a rusty electric blender. It sounds like a Hollywood "meet- cute" - she walked into the bar in a black dress and high heels, with her terrific mother in tow. The Bacall and Bogart versions were merely re-makes. She seems to have thought she had found the partner her nerve deserved. Hemingway was hooked.

He was also married and off to cover the Spanish Civil War. She decided to join the fight and him (perhaps not in that order), this time with a rucksack and \$50, a letter of introduction from Collier's magazine, and a notion that the "correct response to a war against fascism was simply to be present on the right side". She thought that war correspondents reported the battlefield, and was surprised, but willing, when one suggested that a description of ordinary life in besieged Madrid was worth sending home.

Collier's printed the piece, put her name on their masthead, and there she was, a war correspondent and Hemingway's lover - and under his patronage, eating his tinned supplies and sharing his mattress on the road, yet still stubbornly independent. Her reports from Spain were more candid than his. The ration portion of dried salted cod weighed as heavily as the shells. She did not have to pretend to be an authority.

One editor at Collier's appreciated and trusted her copy and, for eight years after that, she could go where she wanted and write what she saw. "I had the chance to see the life of my time, which was war." The British unprepared for total war; the Czechoslovak army walking home after the German land-grab; the Finns democratic but frozen, fighting the Russians; the Chinese, in hunger and filth, out-enduring the Japanese invaders. Her base was a house outside Havana, which she had made over for Hemingway and herself. They married and settled in. They worked on fiction. But Gellhorn wanted to be in on the war at last breaking out in Europe, and a crazy Caribbean sea-hunt for U-boats (with a resulting, unpublished, extremely funny piece) was not enough. She was drinking daiquiris in a bar on the Mexican border when the newspaper boy hawked her the edition reporting Pearl Harbour.

Hemingway was having a fine time with his sporting Cuban buddies chasing phantom Nazi subs. He had already done global conflict. Gellhorn failed to persuade him to engage with the world at war a second time around. The marriage fractured. She reached London and followed the action in Europe and

North Africa as closely as she could with, or usually without, official permission, and with directions from friends in useful places. She advanced recklessly up through Italy with the Allies. Hemingway's telegram to her there read: "Are you a war correspondent or my wife in bed?"

This time, he eventually came after her. Their rivalry was not friendly anymore. She seems to have been Hemingway's personal bullshit-detector, especially when she coldly watched him holding court in a London hospital after a drunken accident. Gellhorn stowed away on a DDay hospital ship and went ashore at Normandy. Hemingway crossed the Channel as officially as possible, but did not land.

In a hotel in free Paris, Gellhorn was advised by her old buddy, the photographer Robert Capa, to demand a divorce. She did, then loosely attached herself to the 82nd Airborne through the bitter 1944-45 winter of the Battle of the Bulge, and also to its leader, the heroic General James Gavin. She was present when the chaotic mass of the Russian army swarmed up to the other Allies. She was in newly-liberated Dachau, at the apex of her anger, when peace was declared.

What the inmates told her there - that it had been useless to protest or weep about what happened to them was the antithesis of all she had believed in; she mistrusted Germany ever after. Her St Louis ancestry included both immigrant Germans and Jews.

About all of these places and people she wrote simply. An American prose style of Shaker plainness was laboured at by many of her contemporaries. To Gellhorn, it seems to have come naturally. She spoke that way. She believed real reporters did not take notes, but knew instinctively what remained forever important - trivia, the tone of the times. This might include a GI toasting himself a front-line cheese sandwich from K rations, or a Dutch slave labourer, recently freed, buying tulips in the ruins of a German city.

It seldom included any utterance, or even mention, of a politician. "All politicians are bores and liars and fakes. I talk to people," she said. To read her dispatches (collected as *The Face Of War* and *The View From The Ground*) is to be granted instant access to where she was, whenever it was.

The business in peace was to settle down. As a woman divorced on the grounds of abandonment, Gellhorn made some random gestures to pacification. These included acquiring a decrepit property in London, returning to Washington - only to find herself in solo outrage against McCarthyism - trying fiction and playwriting, and adopting a 15-month-old Italian orphan, Sandy. She brought him up, supporting their life together in cheap places like Mexico by journalism and writing potboilers for women's magazines - novellas differing from her own

taste in their happy endings. And from her own life too, for General Gavin had married a nice young girl.

Gellhorn's next love, David Gurewitsch (a protégé of Mrs Roosevelt) could barely cope with her. She was courted by Tom Matthews, a recently retired editor of Time magazine, with a Mt Rushmore profile and a sound mind, and they married. But he wanted an urbane life in Britain, and she missed the excitement, and even more the whole-soul engagement, of the fight against fascism. "I am a loner. I am not a team player," she said once - she could certainly be unsociable, abrupt and grand - and "The ideal is to live five blocks away from a man who makes you laugh and is wrapped up in his work". The marriage petered out after nine years.

And so, by the 1960s, she was wandering again, observing more of the 50-plus countries of her travels. She knew a lot about how people respond to place, especially when they respond by misbehaving: in that honestly funny book *Travels With Myself And Another*, she confessed how she misbehaved herself, how she was revolted by stench in west Africa and daunted by dengue fever going up river by canoe. She repeatedly fell in love with countries, affaires which led her to hang curtains in impossible shacks. Her long-lasting final devotion was to a cottage on the Welsh borders, which had demanding vegetables in the garden.

Her association with Collier's had lapsed with her editor's death in the 1940s: thereafter, she had often to give herself assignments, and pay her own expenses, to satisfy her curiosity. For one long period, she had a writer's block; for another, there was an editorial block against her copy - she was no longer a sexy novelty nor yet venerable, and the robustness of her New Deal attitude was out of fashion. Nevertheless, with help - which she remembered as rather minimal from the Guardian, she reached Vietnam in 1966 to report the war (of which she was ashamed) that confirmed America as a colonial power.

Her long perspective eventually became valued again, when she returned to Madrid at the time of Franco's death, or to Castro's Cuba, where she saw, in the splendour of the full-grown trees now filling the garden of her old home, "the years of my life made real". At 80, she took off to inquire into the US invasion of Panama, supple of spine and mind, stropky as ever. Granta took her up as a sibyl; its editors and writers longed to have lived as she had done.

Gellhorn stayed flexible, except, notably, in her attitude to Israeli-Palestinian relations; she saw Israel always as the defiant David of its founding battles. She planned to go snorkelling with Paul Theroux well into her eighties. When

surgery on her eyes went awry, she had the doctor professionally cursed by a Malagasy medicine man.

She dined with the BBC's John Simpson on his way to Bosnia. She saw off the East-West nuclear confrontation she most feared. She became part of the century's image bank. And to the end, this fierce pacifist reported drinking pitchers of red wine, or iced Scotch, with the children and the grandchildren of fighters she had known.

Veronica Horwell

Julia Pascal writes: I was writing a play set at the Nuremberg Trials. Martha Gellhorn had been there. I wrote to her London publishers, she called me and in the next post came an American edition of her report. I rang to thank her and suggest lunch. In her strong St Louis voice she rasped, "I loathe lunch. I drink".

In her Eaton Square flat, she took whisky on the rocks and offered me "a very good vodka someone gave me for Christmas". At 82, Gellhorn was sharper than almost anyone I had ever met. Slim, well made-up, elegant, she obviously cared about her appearance. She was quick to tell me mine needed improvement. "You ought to put your hair up," she said, examining my long hair with disapproval. "Looking good isn't just vanity. It's a public service."

The hair-up obsession was linked to her past. As a young woman, she was always chignoned, "until the Nazis ruined my ear". She had contracted an infection in Germany in 1933. Doctors in Nazi armbands botched her ear operation, so, with a huge bandage around her ear, without money or passport, she fled to Paris, ending up in the American Hospital. She never wore her hair up again.

We spoke about Nuremberg and I told her how watching hours of celluloid archive gave me the feeling that the trials only existed on film. "Don't forget I've been to Dachau," she replied. "I've seen Germany flooding with a mad stream of slave labourers. For me, the unreal people were the people on trial. I looked at them day after day and was forced to think about what crimes those men had committed." She talked of sleeping in a makeshift dormitory in a disused factory. "I came back from the trials and vomited night after night. It was impossible to hear all the testimony without a violent reaction. Then I thought, if this is what I feel hearing this, what was it like to live it?"

She spoke easily of the ageing process and blamed the onset of her arthritis on the British damp. Always spoilt by male attention, she noticed her "invisibility" with advancing age. "But," she announced, "there are advantages. Nobody is jealous once you get to 70 or 75, and then there is always the companionship of darling young men."

"Why do people talk of the horrors of old age? It's great. I feel like a fine old car with the parts gradually wearing out, but I'm not complaining. Those who find growing old terrible are people who haven't done what they wanted with their lives."

Martha Gellhorn, journalist, born November 8, 1908; died February 15, 1998

ENDS

-----130E8C3FAFCAEE37E9C80CFE--

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619. **Joe Brennan**

Re: Lacan on Poetry

Tue 17 Feb 1998

In a message dated 98-02-17 02:41:51 EST, you write:

<< up, it is an unreasonable imposition to require as a qualification to discuss psychoanalysis that one have been an analyst or analysand, just as it would be unreasonable to limit the discussion of poetry to poets or christianity to christians. I'm not sure, however, that I'm disqualified on that account. I was in psychoanalytic psychotherapy, couch and all, three times a week for three and a half years. I was myself a psychotherapist for 15 years, during which I had a lot of professional contact with those of the psychoanalytic persuasion, some of whom are friends, some not, and some are good therapists, perhaps despite their theoretical underpinnings. This involved extensive discussions of cases both in formal case conferences and in private consultations. >>

Nope, the issue is not who can comment on what; the issue is the

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620. **Harold Rhenisch**

Re: Fenton on Hughes' Plath

Tue 17 Feb 1998

>>Given that for poetic triteness & drivel, Fenton perfectly matches his buddy Hughes, the piece is the expected defense & illustration of Hughes greatness. Wish Fenton had remained the excellent journalist that he was in his early days -- in the realm of poetry & poetics, he can't write his way out of a paperbag.

Pierre<<

I too long for his erstwhile journalism, but you gave me a fine image here of Fenton with a paper bag on his head and someone scrawling poems on the

paper, maybe even gluing on Merz scraps, and sending him out to walk the streets.

Muchlike all one's friends signing a leg cast.

thanks for that,

Harold Rhenisch



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621. **Harold Rhenisch**

Re: Why poet funny, no?

Tue 17 Feb 1998

> I dont see a problem in talking about experimental poetry, as long as what
> you are doing redembles the procedure in experiments you did in Chem
> classes in highschool. And as long as you remember that most experiments
> fail.

My Chem teacher interrupted a lab in molecular modelling one day to show us how to make giraffes and elephants out of the spheres and sticks instead. I can't figure out if that is one of your failed experiments or not. Perhaps he only got into chemistry as the result of a failed experiment.

Harold

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622. **Christopher W. Alexander**

Re: Why poet funny, no?

Tue 17 Feb 1998

my high school physics teacher used to give a problem, something about shooting at a monkey or something - anyway, I don't remember the problem but afterwards we did use a pellet gun to shoot at a beanbag-monkey hung from the projection screen...

so you see, I think "experimental" is a perfectly acceptable term, now don't you? or possibly I'm just flashing back to my late-60s training with the Revolutionary Cells.

Chris

..

Christopher W. Alexander etc. / nominative press collective

email: [REDACTED]

snail-mail: P.O. Box 522402 / Salt Lake City UT 84152-2402

press/zine site: <http://choengmon.lib.utah.edu/~calexand/nonce/>

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623. **Christopher W. Alexander**

Re: Dale and the b-c's

Tue 17 Feb 1998

David Bromige the 3rd writes:

> I dont think _dissent_ is the problem;

> it's the rudeness and the prejudices.

¶ this is definitely a concern. possibly I lack a sense of humor (cf. my post on experimental physics) and so can't appreciate Dale's posts, but it does seem that Henry, for ex., is capable of existing here without gratuitously insulting other people.

now as to what Entity any single person is dissenting from, I'm a bit @ a loss. it's not as if this list is all that mono-logical to begin with (except for bad old Bowering), and I tend to understand Henry and Dale as other poets with other opinions, whom I dis-/agree with on a case-by-case basis - not as Heroic Outsiders come to turn the moneylenders out of the temple.

possibly if we stop thinking of ourselves as Important Individuals Who Are Making History we can talk a little bit about poetry or poetics or gameshows or anything without crap added (for extra flavor)? it was Albert Speer used to design his buildings to crumble elegantly (evidence of a Once Mighty Culture); me, I'd just like a little bigger place.

incidentally, I'm Spartacus.

Chris

..

Christopher W. Alexander etc. / nominative press collective

email: [REDACTED]

snail-mail: P.O. Box 522402 / Salt Lake City UT 84152-2402

press/zine site: <http://choengmon.lib.utah.edu/~calexand/nonce/>

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624. **Pierre Joris**

Re: Lacan on Poetry/oops

Tue 17 Feb 1998

Joe Brennan wrote:

In a message dated 98-02-17 02:41:51 EST, you write:

<< Yup, it is an unreasonable imposition to require as a qualification to discuss psychoanalysis that one have been an analyst or analysand, just as it would be unreasonable to limit the discussion of poetry to poets or christianity to christians. I'm not sure, however, that I'm disqualified on that account. I was in psychoanalytic psychotherapy, couch and all, three times a week for three and a half years. I was myself a psychotherapist for 15 years, during which I had a lot of professional contact with those of the psychoanalytic persuasion, some of whom are friends, some not, and some are good therapists, perhaps despite their theoretical underpinnings. This involved extensive discussions of cases both in formal case conferences and in private consultations. >>

sorry, I inadvertently hit the mouse key, which is built into the keyboard.

To resume:

Nope, the issue isn't who can discuss psychoanalysis, although this is the tree that everyone hides behind. I assume you must have some resentment for whatever failure you experienced in your days on the couch; ...

ahh, the cat is out of the bag: the old self-fulfilling prophecy: if there is criticism of the Freudian couch, then it is the patient who failed -- obviously it couldn't be the analyst or the analyst's system of beliefs -- and all criticism on the "patient's" part can then be construed as "resentment" which feeds it straight back into the psychoanalytic machinery -- three more years on the couch at so much an hour...

Pierre

Joe Brennan

--

=====

pierre joris 6 madison place albany ny 12202
tel/fax [REDACTED] email: [REDACTED]
<http://www.albany.edu/~joris/>

"What often prevents us from giving ourselves over to
a single vice is that we have several of them."

— La Rochefoucauld

=====

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625. **Joe Brennan**

Re: Lacan on Poetry/oops

Tue 17 Feb 1998

In a message dated 98-02-17 02:41:51 EST, you write:

<< Yup, it is an unreasonable imposition to require as a qualification to discuss psychoanalysis that one have been an analyst or analysand, just as it would be unreasonable to limit the discussion of poetry to poets or christianity to christians. I'm not sure, however, that I'm disqualified on that account. I was in psychoanalytic psychotherapy, couch and all, three times a week for three and a half years. I was myself a psychotherapist for 15 years, during which I had a lot of professional contact with those of the psychoanalytic persuasion, some of whom are friends, some not, and some are good therapists, perhaps despite their theoretical underpinnings. This involved extensive discussions of cases both in formal case conferences and in private consultations. >>

sorry, I inadvertently hit the mouse key, which is built into the keyboard.

To resume:

Nope, the issue isn't who can discuss psychoanalysis, although this is the tree that everyone hides behind. I assume you must have some resentment for whatever failure you experienced in your days on the couch; you must know, however, that not everyone who has been in analysis has had the same experience. In any event, I'm speaking of psychoanalysis from the Freudian/Lacanian perspective, and I'm objecting to the cavalier manner in which the Freud/Lacan paradigms are dismissed out of hand as having no value, and I'm objecting in particular to being told that I, and many, many others, are blindly following an unsupportable doctrine that has its roots in Wagner. Isn't it just as fair for me to suggest that had you chosen a different analyst, things might have worked out better for you? Since Lacan, with justification, inveighed against the brand of psychoanalysis being practiced within the U.S., wouldn't it also be fair to suggest that perhaps your experience isn't as heavily weighted as it might seem at first blush?

As a matter of fact, Mark, I'm not prohibiting anyone from saying anything; being censored isn't the same thing as being held intellectually accountable for one's remarks. Why should you think that your prejudices, and that's exactly what they are, should go unchallenged? Personally, I think that those who want to discuss Freud/Lacan/whoever should be able to do so without the bland dismissals and put-downs of the anti crowd, who continually declare the entire Freudian/Lacanian undertaking as bullshit, occasionally with snippets of other authors to buttress their acrimonious and anti-intellectual opinions, and they frequently do it with techniques more suitable to political machines; for example, Freudians/Lacanian are often accused of being intractable, intolerant, and rigid in both theory and debate by exactly those who capriciously reject Freud as having any current value -- just as you declared that the oedipal complex, penis envy, etc to be ipso facto null & void, or worse. End of discussion. I learned some time ago the intransigence of the anti's in this arena, and I have no illusion of changing anyone's mind about it. Thankfully, the Lacanian nets allow one to elaborate on one's thinking in a space that's relatively free of the air of intimidation and animosity that seems to dominate this one.

Joe Brennan

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626. **Mark Weiss**

Re: Oklahoma query

Tue 17 Feb 1998

George was until recently head of the English Dept. and is still a prof. at U of O--he and Rochelle know lots of sooners.

At 08:27 AM 2/17/98 -0500, you wrote:

>Try George Economou at Univ. of O. He directs the Creative Writing program
>there, or did recently. Also Rochelle Owens.

>

>

>At 7:37 PM -0500 2/16/98, [REDACTED] wrote:

>>Sorry to bother the list with this rather off-topic request, but...

>>

>>For help with a linguistic survey related to an article I and my
>>colleague are doing

>>

>>if anyone here is in or from Oklahoma, would you contact me please?

>>

>>and

>>

>> if anyone is presently at an academic institution in Oklahoma,
>> would you contact me please.
>>
>> thanks,
>>
>> beth simon
>> assistant professor, linguistics and english
>> indiana university purdue university
>> [REDACTED]
>
>

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627. **Joe Brennan**
Re: Vizpo? Oh, no

Tue 17 Feb 1998

Well George, in Latin America, to be silenced usually involves all five of the senses; you find this amusing, too? Hmmmmm.

Joe Brennan

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628. **MAYHEW**
Why I'm an experimental poet, part 57

Tue 17 Feb 1998

Zola wrote "The Experimental Novel" in which he described the novel as a scientific experiment. Does anyone know any older uses of the term applied to literature or poetry? I generally took the term as roughly synonymous with innovative. It has a nice sort of "let me tinker in my backyark and see what I come up with" connotation. How about "avant-garde"? Is this still a usable term?

Jonathan Mayhew
Department of Spanish and Portuguese
3062 Wescoe Hall
University of Kansas

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

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629. **k. lederer**

Queries of a different stripe--

Tue 17 Feb 1998

Sorry for clogging up the list with address queries--but it seems like a slow day--

I am looking for the current addresses of the following (have had mail returned to sender from these):

Ray DiPalma

Bill Howe

Stephen Paul-Miller

Chuck Alexander

Stacy Doris

Jessica Grim

Steve Benson

These addresses are on my mailing list for Explosive--

If any of the above are on the list--or if there is anyone else on the list who would like to be on the mailing list (I send off news of readings, invitations to subscribe, sometimes a free issue etc...) please back-channel--

Thanks!

Katy

PS: Issue number four should have reached most subscribers by now--please inform if not...

Issue number five--"Spectacular Emotion"--is shaping up beautifully, and will include work by:

Josh May, Juliana Spahr, Tan Lin, Martin Corless-Smith, Emily Wilson, Doug Powell, Pam Lu, and an incredible tape of sound-collage by Alex Cory--

To order an individual issue or to subscribe, send five dollars per issue to:

Katy Lederer

420 E Davenport #2

Iowa City, IA 52245

(Checks should be made payable to me...)

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630. **louis stroffolino**

RANSOM STROFFOLINO READING

Tue 17 Feb 1998

Hello I will be reading poetry in BROOKLYN NY (at the
FALL CAFE 307 Smith St. Carroll Gardens host Prageeta Sharma)
Sunday this coming 3PM.....

with JANE RANSOM.....

Ms. Ransom is the author of 2 books of poetry (most recently,
SCENE OF THE CRIME, Story Line Press), and a very strange
novel (that should be of interest to readers of Harryman etc)
(BYE BYE,NYU PRESS 1997). I think she'll read poetry.

If you can't come for me, come for her----

If you can't come for either of us, come for brooklyn.

I should probably not mention that she's the granddaughter
of a famous equilibrist.

for more information, call me [REDACTED]....

chris

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631. **Aldon Nielsen**

Re: curiouser and curiouser

Tue 17 Feb 1998

while I was away:

Kent made it clear that he does not yet know who wrote the letters:

Dale opined that the silence of the malefactors in listspace spoke volumes:

I think I'm finally beginning to appreciate their humor --

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632. **Mark Weiss**

Re: Lacan on Poetry/oops

Tue 17 Feb 1998

I could argue my points in detail (and they're not exactly novel), and I could illustrate them from practice. I should think that the burden of proof would rest with those who assert novel science. Be that as it may, I think, as I said before, that this is not the place for that discussion. Which leaves you free to assume that our disagreements are because of my neuroses or because my analysis was unsuccessful. Ad homina get you only so far. I'm glad you had a good time on the couch. You might have had an even better time in an office where the

therapist doesn't require his patients to become true believers. Quien sabe?
Hereafter I'm mum.

At 01:06 PM 2/17/98 EST, you wrote:

>In a message dated 98-02-17 02:41:51 EST, you write:

>

><< Yup, it is an unreasonable imposition to require as a qualification to
> discuss psychoanalysis that one have been an analyst or analysand, just as
> it would be unreasonable to limit the discussion of poetry to poets or
> christianity to christians. I'm not sure, however, that I'm disqualified on
> that account. I was in psychoanalytic psychotherapy, couch and all, three
> times a week for three and a half years. I was myself a psychotherapist for
> 15 years, during which I had a lot of professional contact with those of
> the psychoanalytic persuasion, some of whom are friends, some not, and
some
> are good therapists, perhaps despite their theoretical underpinnings. This
> involved extensive discussions of cases both in formal case conferences and
> in private consultations. >>

>

>

>sorry, I inadvertently hit the mouse key, which is built into the keyboard.

>

>

>To resume:

>

>Nope, the issue isn't who can discuss psychoanalysis, although this is the
>tree that everyone hides behind. I assume you must have some resentment
for

>whatever failure you experienced in your days on the couch; you must know,
>however, that not everyone who has been in analysis has had the same
>experience. In any event, I'm speaking of psychoanalysis from the
>Freudian/Lacanian perspective, and I'm objecting to the cavalier manner in
>which the Freud/Lacan paradigms are dismissed out of hand as having no
value,

>and I'm objecting in particular to being told that I, and many, many
others,

>are blindly following an unsupportable doctrine that has its roots in Wagner.

>Isn't it just as fair for me to suggest that had you chosen a different

>analyst, things might have worked out better for you? Since Lacan, with

>justification, inveighed against the brand of psychoanalysis being practiced

>within the U.S., wouldn't it also be fair to suggest that perhaps your

>experience isn't as heavily weighted as it might seem at first blush?

>

>As a matter of fact, Mark, I'm not prohibiting anyone from saying anything;
>being censored isn't the same thing as being held intellectually accountable
>for one's remarks. Why should you think that your prejudices, and that's
>exactly what they are, should go unchallenged? Personally, I think that

those

>who want to discuss Freud/Lacan/whoever should be able to do so without the
>bland dismissals and put-downs of the anti crowd, who continually declare the
>entire Freudian/Lacanian undertaking as bullshit, occasionally with snippets
>of other authors to buttress their acrimonious and anti-intellectual

opinions,

>and they frequently do it with techniques more suitable to political
machines;

>for example, Freudians/Lacanian are often accused of being intractable,
>intolerant, and rigid in both theory and debate by exactly those who
>capriciously reject Freud as having any current value -- just as you declared
>that the oedipal complex, penis envy, etc to be ipso facto null & void, or
>worse. End of discussion. I learned some time ago the intransigence of the
>anti's in this arena, and I have no illusion of changing anyone's mind about
>it. Thankfully, the Lacanian nets allow one to elaborate on one's
thinking in

>a space that's relatively free of the air of intimidation and animosity that
>seems to dominate this one.

>

>

>Joe Brennan

>

>

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633. **dbkk**

Dahlen/Gudath at SPT

Tue 17 Feb 1998

Small Press Traffic Presents:

Beverly Dahlen

Lauren Gudath

Friday, February 20, 7:30 p.m.

New College Theater

777 Valencia Street

San Francisco

\$5 (free to New College students)

Beverly Dahlen, a native Oregonian, has lived and worked in San Francisco for many years. Three volumes of her ongoing work *A Reading* have appeared, and excerpts from it continue to appear in periodicals (*Bombay Gin*, *Mirage #4/Period[ical]*, *The Iowa Review*). Two selections from Dahlen's work will be included in the anthology *Moving Borders*, edited by Mary Margaret Sloan, forthcoming from Talisman House. Dahlen has thought hard and long about literacy, language, perception and oppression and what is more, she has teased her thought, like Ann-Margret's hair in *Viva Las Vegas*, into an intoxicating poetry.

Lauren Gudath, born in Tampa in 1970, lives in San Francisco. *Wolves*, her long poem written in 1995, was published as a chapbook by Xurban press. Her work has appeared in *Superflux*, *Proliferation*, *Clamour* and *Idiom On-Line Journal*. She is a young poet whose careful, broken and bruised line extends a remarkable contention, like a blanket of starlight, over the materials of a woman's life.

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634. **Carolyn Koo**

No Roses Review

Tue 17 Feb 1998

Available soon: the final issue of *No Røses Review*, featuring:

Diane Beaty, Star Black, Sherry Brennan, Elaine Equi, Saundra Fleming, Graham Foust, Karen Garthe, Arpine Grenier, Paul Hoover, Caroline Knox, Maryrose Larkin, Lyn Lifshin, Rachel Loden, Brian Lucas, Joshua McKinney, Stephen Mounkhal, Fred Muratori, Beth Murray, Gale Nelson, Kathleen Ossip, Mary Ann Samyn, Sophia M. Starnes, Cynthia Tedesco, Gregory St. Thomasino, Martha Modena Vertreace, Liz Waldner, Rosmarie Waldrop translator, Michael Speier, and Susan Wheeler

Back issues also available:

#7 Nin Andrews, Bruce Andrews, Star Black, W.K. Buckley, Cheryl Burket, William Doreski, Pamela Erens, Renee Gladman, Arpine Grenier, Philip Kobylarz, Maryrose Larkin, John Latta, Rachel Loden, Elizabeth MacKiernan, Jennifer Martenson, Wendy McClure, Michelle Murphy, Eve Packer, Kelly Ritter, Mary Ann Samyn, Spencer Selby, giovanni singleton, Fiona Templeton, John Tritica

#6 Clayton Eshleman, Valerie Fox, Graham Foust, Barbara Guest, Lyn Hejinian, Ray Jordan, Mary Rising Higgins, Mickie Kennedy, Joel Lewis, Paul Long, Elizabeth MacKiernan, Sheila E. Murphy, Joe Napora, Gale Nelson, John Perlman,

Gala M. Pierce, Elizabeth Robinson, Leslie Scalapino, David R. Stockwell, David Trinidad, Martha Modena Vertreace, Susan Wheeler

#5 Beth Anderson, Laynie Browne, Joel Brouwer, W.K. Buckley, Wendy Jeanne Burch, Michael Chitwood, Albert Cook, Clark Coolidge, Karen Davies, Connie Deanovich, Edward Falco, Graham Foust, William L. Fox, Karen Garthe, Caroline Knox, Jessica Lowenthal, Davis McCombs, Michael Melcher, Fred Muratori, James Sacre, Christy Sheffield Sanford, Alfred Schwaid.

No Røses Review
150 Duane St. #8
Redwood City, CA 94062

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635. **Judy Roitman**

address query

Tue 17 Feb 1998

Anyone have Alan Davies' address? (e- or snail --- last I heard there was no e-) Someone gave me the snail mail address several months ago but I no longer can find it.

----- Judy Roitman
| "Whoppers Whoppers Whoppers! Math, University of Kansas | mem-
ory fails Lawrence, KS 66045 | these are the days." [REDACTED]
| fax: [REDACTED] | Larry Eigner, 1927-1996

----- Note new area code

<http://www.math.ukans.edu/~roitman/>

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636. **d powell**

Re: curiouser and curiouser

Tue 17 Feb 1998

Reply to: Re: curiouser and curiouser

Aldon Nielsen wrote:

>while I was away:

>

>Kent made it clear that he does not yet know who wrote the letters:

>

>Dale opined that the silence of the malefactors in listspace spoke volumes:

>

>I think I'm finally beginning to appreciate their humor --

Has anyone thought that perhaps the general silence of the list on these issues is really just a sign of apathy? I mean, yes I suppose I would think that this thing or that thing was horrible perhaps if it had been said to me or about me, etc. But I don't think that I would go kvetching about it on this list; I mean it's all just too dramatic. Nor do I think this is the place to be arguing about whether or not a poet is a good person. I don't give a damn about poetzes personal lives; if I did, I suppose there would be a lot of poets I wouldn't be reading. I'm waiting for all of this stuff to just blow away, so that maybe we can all talk poetics (instead of petty politics). As for all of the name calling and finger pointing, well for chrissakes, didn't y'all get your fill of it in kindlinggarten? I refuse to participate in any more parlour games until the adults come back. Nyah nyah nyah nyah...

Doug

=====

=====

D A Powell [REDACTED]

=====

=====

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637. **Judy Roitman**

Ken Irby

Tue 17 Feb 1998

It is with great pleasure that I announce that, as of Fall 1998, Kenneth Irby will be an associate professor with tenure at the University of Kansas.

Thanks to those of you on this list who helped in the effort (and if I can find your e-addresses I'll thank you personally).

Sometimes the good guys win.

----- Judy Roitman

"Whoppers Whoppers Whoppers! Math, University of Kansas	mem-
ory fails Lawrence, KS 66045	these are the days." [REDACTED]
fax: [REDACTED]	Larry Eigner, 1927-1996

----- Note new area code

<http://www.math.ukans.edu/~roitman/>

638. **Poetics List**

Adjunct Faculty Congress

Tue 17 Feb 1998

Andrew Levy asked that this announcement be posted:

The Doctoral Students' Council of the City University of
New York Graduate Center

Welcomes:

Second National Congress of Part-Time,
Adjunct, Non-Tenure-Track and GTA Faculty

"Our Time Has Come"

New York City

April 3,4,5 1998

The Second National Congress of Part-Time, Adjunct, Non-Tenure-Track and GTA Faculty will be held in New York on April 3, 4 and 5 1998. The Congress will open at the CUNY Graduate Center at 33 West 42 street. The Second National Congress is an event organized by faculty who are concerned about the current and future state of higher education. Plenary and workshop sessions facilitated by faculty and faculty organizers will address the key strategies, needs and visions of part time/ adjunct, GTA and non-tenured faculty over the three day working conference. This conference takes place at a time when faculty, both full and part time, at institutions of higher education are under an escalating assault. The current trend to degrade the profession through the creation and expansion of an increasingly polarized multi-tier system is academically indefensible and is in the worst interest of students, their parents and the increasingly exploited instructional work-force. The administrative and governing apparatus prioritizes profit-oriented research, endowments, infrastructure, and administration over and against education. The push to drive down faculty salaries, eliminate tenure and populate the university with a group of over-worked contingent laborers may advance the careers of some administrators, but it represents a betrayal of the university's educational mission. In order to combat the forces arrayed against students and faculty alike, we are coming together to educate and organize. This second congress is part of a growing movement of lower-tier faculty, students, and organizers to take an active role in the struggle to save higher education. This congress is envisioned as the continuation of an organized effort by lower-tier faculty to transform the institutions in which they teach. Please publicize this in appropriate forums.

CUNY Graduate Center / 33 West 42nd Street / New York, NY, 10036 Brecht
Forum/122 West 27th Street/ 10th Floor/New York, NY, 10001

Schedule:

Opening: Friday Plenary April 3 - 3-9

Workshops on Saturday from 9 - 5:30

(Party Saturday Night at The Brecht Forum)

Follow-up at the Brecht Forum on April 5 from 10 am to 3 pm.

There is no conference fee, but we ask that you register ASAP.

REGISTRATION- reply to: [REDACTED] (or see below).

REGISTRATION

Name:

Affiliation:

Phone #:

E-Mail:

Do you need accommodations information ?

Is there a workshop that you would be interested in (describe it):

Would you be interested in leading a workshop (describe it)?

Can your organization make a contribution to help defray the costs of this event?

\$50. \$100. \$250 other_____

Checks can be made out to: CUNY Graduate Center and mailed to:

The Adjunct Project

c/o Doctoral Students' Council

25 W. 43rd St., Rm. 400

New York, NY 10036

If you cannot register by e-mail mail registration to the above address. For further information, please call Eric at [REDACTED].

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639. **Dr. Joshua McKinney**

Re: No Roses Review

Tue 17 Feb 1998

Dear Ms. Koo,

Final issue? Does this mean that your magazine will soon be defunct? Should I offer my condolences, or are you moving on to bigger/better things?

Josh McKinney

At 03:33 PM 2/17/98 EST, you wrote:

>Available soon: the final issue of No Røses Review, featuring:

>

>Diane

Beaty, Star Black, Sherry Brennan, Elaine Equi, Sandra Fleming,
Graham

>Foust, Karen Garthe, Arpine Grenier, Paul Hoover, Caroline Knox,
Maryrose

>Larkin, Lyn Lifshin, Rachel Loden, Brian Lucas, Joshua McKinney,

>Stephen Mounkhal, Fred Muratori, Beth Murray, Gale Nelson,

>Kathleen

Ossip, Mary Ann Samyn, Sophia M. Starnes, Cynthia Tedesco,

>Gregory St.

Thomasino, Martha Modena Vertreace, Liz Waldner,

>Rosmarie Waldrop

translator, Michael Speier, and Susan Wheeler

>

>

>Back issues also

available:

>

>#7

>Nin Andrews, Bruce Andrews, Star Black, W.K. Buckley,
Cheryl Burket, William

>Doreski, Pamela Erens, Renee Gladman, Arpine
Grenier, Philip Kobylarz,

>Maryrose Larkin, John Latta, Rachel Loden,
Elizabeth MacKiernan, Jennifer

>Martenson, Wendy McClure, Michelle Murphy,
Eve Packer, Kelly Ritter, Mary Ann

>Samyn, Spencer Selby, giovanni
singleton, Fiona Templeton, John Tritica

>

>#6

>Clayton Eshleman, Valerie

Fox, Graham Foust, Barbara Guest, Lyn Hejinian, Ray

>Jordan, Mary Rising

Higgins, Mickie Kennedy, Joel Lewis, Paul Long, Elizabeth

>MacKiernan,
Sheila E. Murphy, Joe Napora, Gale Nelson, John Perlman, Gala M.
>Pierce,
Elizabeth Robinson, Leslie Scalapino, David R. Stockwell, David
>Trinidad,
Martha Modena Vertreace, Susan Wheeler
>
>#5
>Beth Anderson, Laynie Browne,
Joel Brouwer, W.K. Buckley, Wendy Jeanne Burch,
>Michael Chitwood, Albert
Cook, Clark Coolidge, Karen Davies,
>Connie Deanovich, Edward Falco, Graham
Foust, William L. Fox, Karen Garthe,
>Caroline Knox, Jessica Lowenthal,
Davis McCombs, Michael Melcher, Fred
>Muratori, James Sacre, Christy
Sheffield Sanford, Alfred Schwaid.
>
>
>No Røses Review
>150 Duane St.
#8
>Redwood City, CA 94062
>
>
>

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640. **Aldon Nielsen**

Re: Adjunct Faculty Congress

Tue 17 Feb 1998

would very much like to hear reports from this conference after it happens --
will be at a poetry conference in North Carolina that week myself, so can't at-
tend even as an observer --

If anybody from the list goes, could you post reports? or could somebody ask
Andrew to forward a report?

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641. **Aldon Nielsen**

Re: Ken Irby

Tue 17 Feb 1998

though I fear this means no more greyhound poems from Irby, I think this is some of the best news I've seen on the list in weeks -- Congrats. to him,,
are there any recent Irby chapbooks or broadsides? haven't seen anything new for a while.

Is his Max Douglas poem still in print?

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642. **Joe Brennan**

Re: Lacan on Poetry/oops

Tue 17 Feb 1998

In a message dated 98-02-17 15:21:26 EST, you write:

<< ould argue my points in detail (and they're not exactly novel), and I could illustrate them from practice. I should think that the burden of proof would rest with those who assert novel science. Be that as it may, I think, as I said before, that this is not the place for that discussion. Which leaves you free to assume that our disagreements are because of my neuroses or because my analysis was unsuccessful.

Ad homina get you only so far. I'm glad you had a good time on the couch.

You might have had an even better time in an office where the therapist doesn't require his patients to become true believers. Quien sabe?

Hereafter I'm mum.

>>

I think the burdern rests with whenever is doing the asserting, like you did when you offered your viewpoint. To be mum, as you say, now is the essence of defense, in psychoanalytic circles. One would almost think that you feel put upon -- Quien sabe?

Joe Brennan

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643. **Steve Tills**

Re: Ken Irby

Tue 17 Feb 1998

Hi Judy, and Ken,

That's absolutely fabulous news!

S. T.

Judy Roitman wrote:

It is with great pleasure that I announce that, as of Fall 1998, Kenneth Irby will be an associate professor with tenure at the University of Kansas.

Thanks to those of you on this list who helped in the effort (and if I can find your e-addresses I'll thank you personally).

Sometimes the good guys win.

Judy Roitman | "Whoppers Whoppers Whoppers!
Math, University of Kansas | memory fails
Lawrence, KS 66045 | these are the days."

fax: [REDACTED] | Larry Eigner, 1927-1996

Note new area code

<http://www.math.ukans.edu/~roitman/>

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644. **charssmith**

Re: Ken Irby

Tue 17 Feb 1998

In a message dated 98-02-17 17:31:09 EST, you write:

<< It is with great pleasure that I announce that, as of Fall 1998, Kenneth Irby will be an associate professor with tenure at the University of Kansas.
>>

Judy,

I'd heard that there was an effort being made in this direction, but that it was far from a sure shot. This is great news! Congratulations to Ken & send my best.

Aldon,

Think Ken will really give up the Dog? I'm pretty sure Max Douglas is long outta print, along with all the other early work. The last chapbook I'm aware of from Ken is a letterpress production, Antiphonal And Fall To Fall (Kavyayantra Press, 1994), printed by Patrick Tillery & never really distributed. Not exactly "new," huh? There are some more recent poems in various issues of

First Intensity, _House Organ_ & the most recent _Apex of the M_. Anyone know of others?

A "collected" Irby, or at least a "selected" is long overdue, but with ALL those unpublished poems, well ...

We've had this discussion before, haven't we?

all best,

Charles Smith

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645. **Aldon Nielsen**

Re: Ken Irby

Tue 17 Feb 1998

I haven't seen the antiphonal Irby of '94 -- anybody know if copies of that barely distributed chap. are still available?

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646. **charssmith**

Re: Ken Irby

Tue 17 Feb 1998

In a message dated 98-02-17 20:44:14 EST, you write:

<< I haven't seen the antiphonal Irby of '94 -- anybody know if copies of that barely distributed chap. are still available? >>

Aldon,

Ken may still have some copies. Otherwise, you'll need to track down Patrick Tillery. Somewhere in this mess I've got an address for him in Seattle that was good a couple of years ago. Let me know if no one else can help out better than this, & I'll see if I can't find it.

Charles

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647. **Pierre Joris**

Re: Ken Irby

Tue 17 Feb 1998

Yes, lawdie, lawd, félicitations sincères to ken -- for a long, long overdue due -- as for what is available of his work, besides what Charles mentione din terms of recent magazines, Ken recently told me that CALL STEPS, the 1992 gathering

of work from '77 to '79, is still available from Station Hill. One should also be able to find copies of NOTUS 10 which has a 30 page Irby section.

Someone should put out a largish SELECTED, or a collection of the 80s & 90s writings.

And if anyone on the list has an extra copy of Irby's CATALPA, I'd love to buy one (my copy walked some time ago & it's the toughest book to find!)

Pierre

--

=====

pierre joris 6 madison place albany ny 12202

tel/fax [REDACTED] email: [REDACTED]

http://www.albany.edu/~joris/

"What often prevents us from giving ourselves over to a single vice is that we have several of them."

— La Rochefoucauld

=====

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648. **Pierre Joris**

Re: Fenton on Hughes' Plath

Tue 17 Feb 1998

Michael McColl wrote:

While Hughes is not my favorite poet, "poetic triteness and drivel" doesn't accurately describe the poems on Plath. Venom seems to distort that judgment, IMHO.

I wouldn't waste venom on either of them. & I do think triteness and drivel describe the new Hughes book rather accurately. -- Pierre

Name a line or a poem, at least.

*On Tue, 17 Feb 1998 09:24:56 -0800 Harold Rhenisch said:
Given that for poetic triteness & drivel, Fenton perfectly matches his buddy Hughes, the piece is the expected defense & illustration of Hughes greatness. Wish Fenton had remained the excellent journalist that he was in his early days -- in the realm of poetry & poetics, he can't write his way out of a paperbag.*

Pierre<<

I too long for his erstwhile journalism, but you gave me a fine image here of Fenton with a paper bag on his head and someone scrawling poems on the

paper, maybe even gluing on Merz scraps, and sending him out to walk the streets.

Muchlike all one's friends signing a leg cast.

thanks for that,

Harold Rhenisch
[REDACTED]

--

=====

pierre joris 6 madison place albany ny 12202

tel/fax [REDACTED] email: [REDACTED]

http://www.albany.edu/~joris/

"What often prevents us from giving ourselves over to
a single vice is that we have several of them."

— La Rochefoucauld

=====

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649. **George Bowering**

Re: Vizpo? Oh, no

Tue 17 Feb 1998

*Well George, in Latin America, to be silenced usually involves all five of the
senses; you find this amusing, too? Hmmmmm.*

Joe Brennan

Dear Joe--

I did not find depredations against Latinamerican writers amusing; I found your probably accidental careless language amusing. In 1963-5 I was in Latinamerica, surrounded by poets and other writers who were being oppressed by the US-backed dictators. Where were you then? In 1967-71 I was delivering Norteamericano poetry books to the Cuban trade mission in Montreal. Were you helping out? In 1966 I got thumped by a USAmerican oilman in a restaurant in Calgary because I objected to his loudmouth denunciation of Cubans. Were you there to help me out? What I am saying is that though I was not carrying a rifle in the hilles of Nicaragua to resist the US--paid gunmen, I dont have to apologize for my sympathies. If you were there before I was, okay, I'll make an agreement with you. But careless language does not help the anti-USA liberation movement. By Cubanos I was proud to be called a fellow-traveller. Still am.

When the US set off bombs in the Cuban trade mission in Montreal, I am glad I was not in the building at the time, but that's because I like living.

George Bowering.

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

fax: [REDACTED]

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650. **Michael McColl**

Re: Fenton on Hughes' Plath

Tue 17 Feb 1998

While Hughes is not my favorite poet, "poetic triteness and drivel" doesn't accurately describe the poems on Plath. Venom seems to distort that judgment, IMHO. Name a line or a poem, at least.

On Tue, 17 Feb 1998 09:24:56 -0800 Harold Rhenisch said:

>>>Given that for poetic triteness & drivel, Fenton perfectly matches his
>buddy Hughes, the piece is the expected defense & illustration of Hughes
>greatness. Wish Fenton had remained the excellent journalist that he was
>in his early days -- in the realm of poetry & poetics, he can't write
>his way out of a paperbag.

>

>Pierre<<

>

>I too long for his erstwhile journalism, but you gave me a fine image here
>of Fenton with a paper bag on his head and someone scrawling poems on the
>paper, maybe even gluing on Merz scraps, and sending him out to walk the
>streets.

>

>Muchlike all one's friends signing a leg cast.

>

>thanks for that,

>

>Harold Rhenisch

> [REDACTED]

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651. **Michael McColl**
Re: Fenton on Hughes' Plath
Tue 17 Feb 1998

Well, I'm sorry you won't take your time. Now I doubt the worth of your judgment more generally, and will remember to discount other statements you make elsewhere. While that's not going to be a problem for you, it's nice when there is actual conversation and use of thought.

Mike McColl

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652. **Michael McColl**
Hughes on Plath
Wed 18 Feb 1998

Pierre Joris couldn't be bothered to explain to me why Hughes poetry on Plath is "drivel." Is this generally the view on this list? Is it a judgment of particular weaknesses in Hughes' poetry, or does Hughes write a kind of poetry which is assumed to be defunct or something? I haven't been on this listserv for long, and i'm sure there are all sorts of shared assumptions I know know thing about. Maybe there is someone who would take a minute, on the list or back of it, to say a word about this.

Mike McColl

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653. **Laurie Schneider/Crag Hill**
Vizpo, Oh no!
Wed 18 Feb 1998

Dale: Though visual poetry by its very constitution is silent, visual poets are not -- they may not be speaking up for the reasons Steve Tills suggests -- we are doing the work, we are working, we are Please don't construe slow motion toward e-mail as a lack of support for what sounds like a break-through project. Three other points: 1. Skeptical of much fast information in this information age, I cannot respond to an issue I know so little about. Less than ten e-mail postings does not firm footing make. Many listlings may be waiting for more of the story to surface. Rush to judgement has led to far too much bloodshed. 2. From what I remember of Padin's letter, the project is off-track but not permanently shelved -- in fact, from experience, projects that are worthwhile doing get done in the small press world even if they take years and years. Time in small press is not linear. I think this project, with or without Kent's intelligent collaboration, will see the light. 3. Latin America visual

poets have been oft-heard in the U.S. If you would like, I (along with Luigi-Bob Drake, Miekal And, Bob Grumman, and others) could work up a bibliography of work published in the 1990's (or as far back as you would like).

Best, Crag Hill

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654. **Kali Tal**

Ted, Sylvia and Robin Morgan

Wed 18 Feb 1998

POETICS folk, I'm forwarding this message for Kathe Pollit, the NATION writer. She's not a list member, so please respond to her directly--she's looking for the answer to a question.

Kali

Sender: [REDACTED]
Date: Tue, 17 Feb 1998 21:23:08 -0800 (PST)
From: katha Pollitt <[REDACTED]>
To: Multiple recipients of BAD <[REDACTED]>
Subject: Ted, Sylvia and Robin Morgan

Now I've read Hughes' Birthday Letters, which I think is not so hot as poetry and presents problems as autobiography as well. I noticed in Philip Larkin's letters, that Larkin thought Hughes "worthless" as a writer, but thought Plath gifted, though probably "unpleasant" as a person, which seems to be the case if it matters. This shows Larkin had much more good poetic sense than he is usually given credit for.

Query: does anyone have a DATE for that awful Robin Morgan poem "the Arraignment" -- which begins "I accuse/ Ted Hughes" of murdering Sylvia Plath? 1971? If anyone can help, I need to know ASAP-- by Wednesday Feb 18. After that it will be TOO LATE.

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655. **k. lederer**

Re: No Roses Review

Wed 18 Feb 1998

Dear Ms. Koo,

Would you be interested in a tarde with Explosive Magazine?

Explosive features work by new and emerging writers (with one or two more established figures per issue)--

#s 2, 3, and 4 are available featuring work by some of your contributors--

Some of the highlights: Eleni Sikelianos, Anselm berrigan, Lyn Hejinian, Leslie Scalapino, Mary Bruger, Bill Luoma, Lee Ann Brown, Alice Notley, Chris Strof-
folino and so on...

The issues sell for five dollars each and have hand-printed covers--

Please advise... I would love to see No Roses...

Thanks,
Katy L.

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656. **k. lederer**
Re: No Roses Review
Wed 18 Feb 1998

Oooopppsss,

Sorry for sending that to the list--

And sorry for the typos--it is so very late and dreary-gray today in Iowa City--

KL

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657. **dbuuck**
Announcing tripwire: a journal of poetics
Wed 18 Feb 1998

Issue 1 of tripwire (a journal of poetics) is now available.

tripwire is a new poetics journal edited by Yedda Morrison & David Buuck. Issue 1 contains an interview with Myung Mi Kim, along with work by Tan Lin, Sherry Brennan, Mark Wallace, Rodrigo Toscano, Eleni Sikelianos, Noah de Lissovoy, Elizabeth Robinson, Kathy Lou Schultz, Tim Davis, Thiagarajah Selvanithy, Elizabeth Treadwell, Jocelyn Saidenberg & Brian Strang, Sarah Anne Cox, Robert Hale, Dana Lomax, Sarah Rosenthal, and more.

\$6 for one issue (\$10 for two).

Submission deadline for issue 2 < Writing as Activism: The Aesthetics of Political Engagement - is July 15, 1998. In addition to poetics essays, we encourage submissions of translations, reviews, interviews, responses to other writers, and visual art (reproducible in b&w). Work cannot be returned without SASE.

Subscriptions, submissions & inquiries to:

tripwire
c/o Morrison & Buuck

722 Shotwell St. Apt 4
SF CA 94110
(email inquiries also OK)

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658. **Mark Baker**
Re: Hughes on Plath
Wed 18 Feb 1998

The "Aversive to A Generalised Discussion of Poetry" Achoo

Edward James Hughes ' '
defunct

 who used to
 think a midnightmoments-stinking
 fox

and croak onetwothreefourfive crowpoemsjustlikethat
 Gertrude

he was a handsome man
 and what Mike wants to know is
how do you like your driveling boy
MissUs Plath

Mark Baker

Michael McColl wrote:

>
> Pierre Joris couldn't be bothered to explain to me why Hughes
> poetry on Plath is "drivel." Is this generally the view on
> this list? Is it a judgment of particular weaknesses in
> Hughes' poetry, or does Hughes write a kind of poetry
> which is assumed to be defunct or something? I haven't been
> on this listserv for long, and i'm sure there are all sorts
> of shared assumptions I know know thing about. Maybe there is
> someone who would take a minute, on the list or back of it,
> to say a word about this.
>
> Mike McColl

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659. **Pierre Joris**

ej

Wed 18 Feb 1998

News just in that that wierdest of 20C German writers, Ernst Jünger, just died at nearly 103. Militarist, aesthete, great journalist, essayist, EJ's work is worth meditating at the end of this century. --
Pierre

--

=====

pierre joris 6 madison place albany ny 12202
tel/fax [REDACTED] email: [REDACTED]
<http://www.albany.edu/~joris/>

"What often prevents us from giving ourselves over to a single vice is that we have several of them."
— La Rochefoucauld

=====

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660. **Miekal And**

treeblood

Wed 18 Feb 1998

William Burmeister Prod wrote:

| *Will you ever make your maple syrup available through the mail to us little 'ole listmembers? I dearly love a good natual' one.*

william:

usually we sell a couple gallons to make back our expenses. (the rest is rationed very carefully to last til next year at this time). contact me back channel for details.

miekal

Dreamtime Village

<http://www.net22.com/dreamtime/index.shtml>

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661. **syvester pollet**

Re: Ken Irby

Wed 18 Feb 1998

At 9:22 PM -0500 2/17/98, [REDACTED] wrote:

>In a message dated 98-02-17 20:44:14 EST, you write:

>

><< I haven't seen the antiphonal Irby of '94 -- anybody know if copies of that
> barely distributed chap. are still available? >>

>

>Aldon,

>

>Ken may still have some copies. Otherwise, you'll need to track down Patrick
>Tillery. Somewhere in this mess I've got an address for him in Seattle that
>was good a couple of years ago. Let me know if no one else can help out bet-
ter

>than this, & I'll see if I can't find it.

>

>Charles

Tillery still has copies, but he left Seattle in January, or that was the plan. Write him at 1734 Brothers Lane NW, Poulsbo WA 98370--his parents' address, & he'll get the letter. I don't have an e-dress. Sylvester

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662. **robert drake**

Chiapas mail art show (forward)

Wed 18 Feb 1998

MAIL ART SHOW

CHIAPAS

The Primary Social Revolution of the III Millenium

The right of all peoples to fight with the weapons of ethical and

social justice to lead free and decent lives.

The Zapatista Army of National Liberation of Chiapas, Mexico, is fighting to overcome the social and economic inequalities forcing countless millions of human beings all over the world to live and die like animals in hunger and deprivation. "We are all Marcos" fighting with reason, truth, and for the justice of our cause to raise the standards of living for our people.

We are simply unable to exist as we do, struggling to improve our living conditions, unless our lives are valued according to basic human principles. "Others" also live and suffer as we do under a system that wields powers often unwanted by them. Our human nature, our human essence, enables us

to recognize that their "otherness" is ours, even if they fail to think like us.

The bloodless revolution in Chiapas launched by the people and their representatives and modified by world public opinion, through revolutionary announcements in all media, above all through the Internet, have made the humanitarian principles of The Primary Social Revolution of the III Millenium a model to follow.

Mediums: no restrictions, including street mail, e-mail, and fax.

Forms and types: no restrictions, but all submissions must be in two dimensions (no cartons or boxes, no artists' books, no sculptures, etc.).

All submissions will be exhibited and every artist will receive written

acknowledgment of his participation in the exhibit.

*After the exhibition, all works received will be turned over to the
Zapatista Army of National Liberation, Chiapas, Mexico.*

Deadline: July 30, 1998

Send to :

Clemente Padin

C.Correo Central 1211

11000 Montevideo

URUGUAY

Fax : + (598 2) 915 04 17

E- Mail : [REDACTED]

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663. **Miekal And**
Re: Kenneth Irby, where to begin?
Wed 18 Feb 1998

David Zauhar wrote:

>

> Another good place to start might be that collection of poems and workshop
> conversations edited by Lee Bartlett, called *Talking Poetry* (University
> of New Mexico, 1987). Irby has 5 poems and one of the more interesting
> discussions (in a book that includes discussions w/ Clark Coolidge,
> Theodore Enslin, William Everson and several others.
> Maria: I know for a fact that the Wilson Library at U of M has it,
> since I killed a snowy afternoon in there once by reading it. The call
> number, if I remember correctly, is PS/325/T3/1986

I think that interview with Clark Coolidge had more effect on my life as a writer than anything else I ran into in those years. I seem to remember that I wore my copy of it out...I believe there was a second volume which I never found.

Now David, exactly how many call numbers do you remember?

m

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664. **Pierre Joris**

Re: Fenton on Hughes' Plath

Wed 18 Feb 1998

Mike -- sorry, I certainly didn't want to sound dismissive in terms of your inquiry -- it truly is a thing of time -- and yesterday the mail brought 4 _new_ books I would much rather read than think about TH -- while also preparing for the arrival of Allen Fisher, to my mind one of the very best British poets writing right now (BTW -- read Fisher & you'll see immediately why I don't care for TH's poetry).

Briefly then, Ted Hughes, for me, is a very traditionalist, british establishment poet, whose language and imagery I find trite indeed in that they use the most cliched poetic topoi without in anyway renewing them; whose line is flat-footed and rhythmically dead (listen to it -- it just kind of drones, or at best gets a chummy story-in-the-pub quality to it -- old-boy-network à la English country-gentleman mitigated by a mytho-male-ish Iron Johnish swagger) . It is the old "lyric" -romantic tradition as if nothing had happened in poetry or the world for the last hundred years, except for Eliotian modernism (free verse) and the confessional exaltation of personal neurosis as dynamo & authority for legitimization of "truth in poetry". There's no sweep, no sense of language (it's that dreary old transparent mimetic medium), no excitement -- it is stifling official safe "verse" of exactly the kind required to become a poet laureate. The British cultural establishment needs such types & glorifies just such a minor poetry (as it did also glorify that other dullard, the librarian from Hull) -- just as every Brit generation needs its token tame Irish poet -- Shameless Hussy, I mean Seamus Heaney being this generation's 'official (Anglo)-Irish Poet. The problem is not so much the Hughes & Heaney's -- everyone obviously has the right to write as they seem fit -- but rather the fact that the cultural establishment (from the Crown on down via Poetry Societies and the publishers to the media and the school system) sets up the likes of H & H as the great, canonical, etc. poetry of the times, and that that setup has specific cultural-political agendas of the most reactionary kind. 'Nuff said for now.

Just let me add that if you would like a sense of what's new in English poetry, have a look at anthologies such as CONDUCTORS OF CHAOS ed. by Iain Sinclair, (Picador) THE NEW BRITISH POETRY ed. by Allnutt, aguiar, edwards and mottram, (Paladin) FUTURE EXILES --Fisher, Griffiths, Catling -- (Paladin) or OUT OF NOWHERE ed. o'sullivan & mulford (reality street editions).

Pierre

Michael McColl wrote:

Well, I'm sorry you won't take your time. Now I doubt the worth of your judgment more generally, and will remember to discount other statements you make elsewhere. While that's not going to be a problem for you, it's nice when there is actual conversation and use of thought.

Mike McColl

--

=====

pierre joris 6 madison place albany ny 12202
tel/fax [REDACTED] email: [REDACTED]
<http://www.albany.edu/~joris/>

"What often prevents us from giving ourselves over to a single vice is that we have several of them."

— La Rochefoucauld

=====

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665. **James Finnegan**

Re: Hughes' Crow

Wed 18 Feb 1998

Since Hughes is getting the treatment over the Birthday Letters poems, I would like to praise another his works: Those who haven't read Crow are really missing something. That book is a far cry from "trite & drivel"--dark, archetypal, those poems will hold up his rep well into the next century. There is also a fine tape of Hughes reading from Crow.

Finnegan

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666. **Pierre Joris**

Re: ej

Wed 18 Feb 1998

sorry -- for "great journalist" read "great diarist" -- his Journals are what I was thinking of -- Pierre

Pierre Joris wrote:

*News just in that that wierdest of 20C German writers, Ernst Jünger,
just died at nearly 103. Militarist, aesthete, great journalist,
essayist, EJ's work is worth meditating at the end of this century. --
Pierre*

--

=====

pierre joris 6 madison place albany ny 12202
tel/fax [REDACTED] email: [REDACTED]
<http://www.albany.edu/~joris/>

*"What often prevents us from giving ourselves over to
a single vice is that we have several of them."
— La Rochefoucauld*

=====

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667. **Pierre Joris**
Re: Ted, Sylvia & Phil
Wed 18 Feb 1998

*(In Larkin's defense, he was a jazz lover--that alone
should expunge most of one's life's sins.)*

Finnegan

James -- ahh, the librarian from Hull -- "jazz" for Larkin died in the thirties. he
thought bebop and after was barbaric, uncouth, unlistenable.

-- & re TH : I wld tend to include Hughes "Crow" in my admittedly sweeping
denigration of Hughes' work: "dark, archetypal" -- hmm, that's part of the prob-
lem, not part of the solution...

Pierre

--

=====

pierre joris 6 madison place albany ny 12202
tel/fax [REDACTED] email: [REDACTED]
<http://www.albany.edu/~joris/>

*"What often prevents us from giving ourselves over to
a single vice is that we have several of them."
— La Rochefoucauld*

=====

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668. **James Finnegan**

Re: Ted, Sylvia & Phil

Wed 18 Feb 1998

In a message dated 98-02-18 01:04:19 EST, Katha Pollitt writes:

<< Now I've read Hughes' Birthday Letters, which I think is not so hot as
>poetry and presents problems as autobiography as well. I noticed in
>Philip Larkin's letters, that Larkin thought Hughes "worthless" as a
>writer, but thought Plath gifted, though probably "unpleasant" as a
>person, which seems to be the case if it matters. This shows Larkin
>had much more good poetic sense than he is usually given credit for. >>

I find citing Larkin amusing in this case, since biographies of Larkin seem to indicate he could be expertly "unpleasant" himself. (In Larkin's defense, he was a jazz lover--that alone should expunge most of one's life's sins.)

Finnegan

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669. **Suzanne Burns**

Re: Fenton on Hughes' Plath

Wed 18 Feb 1998

Wouldn't "waste venom"? Meaning that they are beneath venom? That sounds like venom.

I've read the Hughes book and I've found some poems to be very moving and real (such as the poem about the rag rug) and others (such as the one that gushes on about astrology, quoted by Fenton) to be pretty bad. It doesn't have the brilliance of Crow, but it is a worthy book.

Why put all of this energy into bashing a poet you don't like, Pierre? So you don't like him-- big deal. You seemed to have decided that a long time ago. Are you sure you have really given the book a fair reading? Have you even read it?

Suzanne

I wouldn't waste venom on either of them. & I do think triteness and drivel describe the new Hughes book rather accurately. -- Pierre

Name a line or a poem, at least.

*On Tue, 17 Feb 1998 09:24:56 -0800 Harold Rhenisch said:
Given that for poetic triteness & drivel, Fenton perfectly matches his
buddy Hughes, the piece is the expected defense & illustration of Hughes
greatness. Wish Fenton had remained the excellent journalist that he was*

in his early days -- in the realm of poetry & poetics, he can't write his way out of a paperbag.

Pierre<<

I too long for his erstwhile journalism, but you gave me a fine image here of Fenton with a paper bag on his head and someone scrawling poems on the paper, maybe even gluing on Merz scraps, and sending him out to walk the streets.

Muchlike all one's friends signing a leg cast.

thanks for that,

Harold Rhenisch

██████████

--

=====

pierre joris 6 madison place albany ny 12202
tel/fax ██████████ email: ██████████
http://www.albany.edu/~joris/

"What often prevents us from giving ourselves over to a single vice is that we have several of them."
— La Rochefoucauld

=====

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670. **Herb Levy**
Re: Ted, Sylvia & Phil
Wed 18 Feb 1998

James Finnegan writes to the poetics-list:

In a message dated 98-02-18 01:04:19 EST, Katha Pollitt writes:

<< Now I've read Hughes' Birthday Letters, which I think is not so hot as poetry and presents problems as autobiography as well. I noticed in Philip Larkin's letters, that Larkin thought Hughes "worthless" as a writer, but thought Plath gifted, though probably "unpleasant" as a person, which seems to be the case if it matters. This shows Larkin had much more good poetic sense than he is usually given credit for. >>

I find citing Larkin amusing in this case, since biographies of Larkin seem to indicate he could be expertly "unpleasant"

himself. (In Larkin's defense, he was a jazz lover--that alone should expunge most of one's life's sins.)

Uh, Larkin was a jazz "lover" who hated virtually everything that sounded stylistically later than about the year 1950, or about half of jazz's recorded history, so I'm not sure how much of a defense that is.

Herb Levy



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671. **Suzanne Burns**

Re: Hughes on Plath

Wed 18 Feb 1998

On Wed, 18 Feb 1998, Michael McColl wrote:

Pierre Joris couldn't be bothered to explain to me why Hughes poetry on Plath is "drivel." Is this generally the view on this list? Is it a judgment of particular weaknesses in Hughes' poetry, or does Hughes write a kind of poetry which is assumed to be defunct or something? I haven't been on this listserv for long, and i'm sure there are all sorts of shared assumptions I know know thing about. Maybe there is someone who would take a minute, on the list or back of it, to say a word about this.

I've wondered about that too, Mike. There does seem to be a shared assumption here, which in itself doesn't bother me so much since I think this listserve does appeal to readers and poets with a strong shared interest in experimental poetry, language poetry, etc., and I subscribe to this list to hear what they have to say and to talk about they kind of poetry that doesn't always make it into the mainstream.

What does strike me as unfortunate is when people (anywhere, not just here) toss off judgements (twice even!) without any attempt to substantiate or even play with the idea. When people do that, I have to conclude that they are not interested in ideas-- not even their own ideas.

I've been in groups before-- we all have-- that went downhill when they became dominated by one poetic "agenda" and a received list of acceptable poets. I am wary of any marks of Cain or claims to demi-God status. Let's please just talk about poetry.

Suzanne

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672. **pritchpa**

Re: Dahlen query

Wed 18 Feb 1998

Looking for reviews or any longer critical pieces written on Beverly Dahlen. Backchannel please. Thanks.

Patrick Pritchett

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673. **louis stroffolino**

Re: Hughes' Crow

Wed 18 Feb 1998

Well, I kinda liked ONE Hughes poem there--
It was called "Crow tries the media"
(but i think hardcore hughes fans would
probably call it one of his slighter poems)
And his book on SHAKESPEARE, mostly UGH!
chris

On Wed, 18 Feb 1998, James Finnegan wrote:

*Since Hughes is getting the treatment over the
Birthday Letters poems, I would like to praise
another his works: Those who haven't read Crow
are really missing something. That book is a far
cry from "trite & drivel"--dark, archetypal, those
poems will hold up his rep well into the next century.
There is also a fine tape of Hughes reading from
Crow.*

Finnegan

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674. **groberts**

Re: Why I'm an experimental poet, part 57

Wed 18 Feb 1998

I have been unsubbed for the last two weeks, so pardon if this post is redundant. The earliest example of "experiment" applied to poetry that I know of is found at the beginning of Wordsworth's preface to the Lyrical Ballads (which btw is an innovative and intentionally oxymoronic title):

"The fist Volume of these poems has already been submitted to general perusal. It was published, as an experiment, which, I hoped, might be of some use to

ascertain, how far, by fitting to metrical arrangement a selection of the real language of men in a state of vivid sensation, that sort of pleasure and that quantity of pleasure may be imparted, which a Poet may rationally endeavour to impart."

The rest of the piece makes it clear that Wordsworth was thinking of the poems individually and as a group in terms of text which defies public expectation in order to find out what will happen, both to his poetry-making and to the expectations of poetry readers.

Gary R.

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675. **William Burmeister Prod**

Re: Why poet funny, no?

Wed 18 Feb 1998

miekal

tapped & cooked down the first batch of maple syrup this spring, one month sooner than ever before...el nino has the seasons in her control. its thru experimentation that I taught myself how to make good syrup & every cookdown Ive done has had a different set of conditions which were unpredictable, thus the "scientific method"...

-- End of excerpt from Miekal And

Interesting the gender here of el nino (really). I am reminded of a wonderfully humorous short piece by Octavio Paz in *Eagle or Sun?* called "My life with the wave." The influence of Breton over the earlier Paz being a little bit evident there.

Will you ever make your maple syrup available through the mail to us little 'ole listmembers? I dearly love a good natural' one.

rgds,

William Burmeister

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676. **MAYHEW**

Tis better to be vile than vile esteemd

Wed 18 Feb 1998

Who was it a few months ago that said that Hughes wrote some effective poems about nasty animals attacking other nasty animals? That seems to be the strength of his earlier work. Crow impressed me years ago with its fine

nastiness, though I haven't followed him in the last decade or so. The snippets I have seen quoted from the Plath book are quite vile.

That said, I much prefer Hughes to Larkin. I was quite surprised a few years ago when the revelations about Larkin's racism, sexism and general nastiness came out. I was not surprised at the revelations, but at the surprise they evoked in others. I had always read his poetry as the expression of a sort of snide British anti-intellectual xenophobic resentful postwar anti-modernist mindset. He condemned the three "Ps": "Picasso, Pound, Parker," who had ruined painting, poetry, and jazz, in his opinion.

Jonathan Mayhew
Department of Spanish and Portuguese
3062 Wescoe Hall
University of Kansas



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677. **Maria Damon**
Re: Adjunct Faculty Congress

Wed 18 Feb 1998

what's the NoCar poetry conference, aldon? anything you care to report about after the fact?

At 2:49 PM -0800 2/17/98, Aldon Nielsen wrote:

>would very much like to hear reports from this conference after it happens
>-- will be at a poetry conference in North Carolina that week myself, so
>can't attend even as an observer --
>
>If anybody from the list goes, could you post reports? or could somebody
>ask Andrew to forward a report?

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678. **Gary Sullivan**
HUGHES/PLATH

Wed 18 Feb 1998

ASK MRS. TED HUGHES

Dear Mrs. Hughes:

I met a man at his publication party last week and we fell in love. I'm sure he's the one because we want to be together every second and our feelings are more

intense than either of us has ever known before. My friends and my therapist say it can't be real love when it happens so fast. How do you know when it's really and truly love?

Confidently in San Francisco, CA

Dear Confident:

Who do you think you are?

A communion wafer? Blubbery Mary?

I shall take no bite of your body,

Bottle in which I live.

* * *

Dear Mrs. Ted Hughes:

I found a stash of erotic books under my daughter's bed. She's a junior in high school and a good student, but I find it incredibly upsetting that she's reading pornography. I believe that all pornography exploits women and our bodies. How do I confront her about this matter? What would you do in my shoes?

Seasick on the Censorship in Raleigh, NC

Dear Seasick:

Something else

* * *

Dear Mrs. Hughes:

How do I care for the book jackets on all my first editions? I'm embarrassed to take them to the book dealer, but I'm afraid to leave them unprotected. Can you help?

Under Cover in Camden, NJ

Dear Under Cover:

You are terrified

The world will go up in a shriek,

and your head with it,

Bossed, brazen, an antique shield,

A marvel to your great-grand-children.

Do not be afraid, it is not so.

* * *

Dear Mrs. Hughes:

Imagining killing someone doesn't make you a murderer, thinking about stealing something doesn't make you a thief, and so dreaming about the sweet

lucrative life as a highly paid commercial novelist even though you're committed to experimental literature surely does not make you a cheater. Does it?

Pumping out Pulp in Seattle, WA

Dear Pumping:

The spider-men have caught you,
Winding and twining their petty fetters,
Their bribes--
So many silks.
How they hate you.

* * *

Dear M.T.H.:

Can I still wear black to poetry readings?

Never Say Noir in Santa Fe, NM

Dear Never:

O vase of acid,
It is love you are full of. You know who you hate.
He is hugging his ball and chain down by the gate
That opens to the sea
Where it drives in, white and black,
Then spews it back.
Every day you fill him with soul-stuff, like a pitcher.
Your voice my ear-ring,
Flapping and sucking, blood-loving bat.
That is that. That is that.
You peer from the door,
Sad hag. "Every woman's a whore.
I can't communicate."

* * *

Dear Mrs. Ted:

Can you tell me *your* definition of plagiarism? I need to know because a member of my writing group and so-called former "friend" has accused me of plagiarizing her story. It's true that the plot, the language and, okay, much of the punctuation, in *my* story (which WAS published) does bear a striking resemblance to the (UNPUBLISHED) story she had submitted to our writing group for feedback. But what about her powerful influence on me? Couldn't I have read her story and admired it and simply been the victim of unconscious imitation? If anything, I feel she ought to be flattered. Never-the-less, she has persuaded the

other members of the group to kick me out (see the CONTROL she has over others' minds!?). I desperately want back in, but CERTAINLY not at the expense of my integrity. What do YOU think? Can a person be guilty of stealing something if they don't BELIEVE they stole it?

Kicked down but Climbing Back Up in Baton Rouge, LA

Dear Climber:

The world is blood-hot and personal.

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679. **Dale M Smith**
Re: Ted, Sylvia & Phil
Wed 18 Feb 1998

Pierre:

I'm not attentive to Hughes' work, so therefore haven't addressed this thread. But I do have a question for you. Why is "dark, archetypal" "part of the problem?" Are you referring specifically to Hughes' work or to larger problems of poetics? Not to say they don't exist, especially in poetry, but I can see why one might have trouble with archetypes. But the 'dahk' seems like an essential element of a lot of art. Or maybe I'm still spinning from the Cassavete's movie I saw last night. D.

To: [REDACTED]

(In Larkin's defense, he was a jazz lover--that alone should expunge most of one's life's sins.)

Finnegan

James -- ahh, the librarian from Hull -- "jazz" for Larkin died in the thirties. he thought bebop and after was barbaric, uncouth, unlistenable.

-- & re TH : I wld tend to include Hughes "Crow" in my admittedly sweeping denigration of Hughes' work: "dark, archetypal" -- hmm, that's part of the problem, not part of the solution...

Pierre

--

=====

pierre joris 6 madison place albany ny 12202
tel/fax [REDACTED] email: [REDACTED]
<http://www.albany.edu/^joris/>

"What often prevents us from giving ourselves over to

a single vice is that we have several of them."

La Rochefoucauld

=====

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680. **k. lederer**

Re: Hughes on Plath

Wed 18 Feb 1998

I like Louise Gluck.....

I remember reading The Wild Iris in Cody's when I was maybe twenty years old--it made me very happy.

Here at the Iowa City book store Prairie Lights they have her first four books in a beautiful hard-bound remaindered edition for five bucks....

I read it before bed...

Yesterday I purchased the blue covered-version of The Gertrude Stein Awards--I liked a lot of stuff in there too.

After I read some of it I opened up the Gluck again and found it no so incompatible--

They're both lovely...

Yeah...

Katy

On Wed, 18 Feb 1998, Suzanne Burns wrote:

On Wed, 18 Feb 1998, Michael McColl wrote:

Pierre Joris couldn't be bothered to explain to me why Hughes poetry on Plath is "drivel." Is this generally the view on this list? Is it a judgment of particular weaknesses in Hughes' poetry, or does Hughes write a kind of poetry which is assumed to be defunct or something? I haven't been on this listserv for long, and i'm sure there are all sorts of shared assumptions I know know thing about. Maybe there is someone who would take a minute, on the list or back of it, to say a word about this.

I've wondered about that too, Mike. There does seem to be a shared assumption here, which in itself doesn't bother me so much since I think

this listserve does appeal to readers and poets with a strong shared interest in experimental poetry, language poetry, etc., and I subscribe to this list to hear what they have to say and to talk about they kind of poetry that doesn't always make it into the mainstream.

What does strike me as unfortunate is when people (anywhere, not just here) toss off judgements (twice even!) without any attempt to substantiate or even play with the idea. When people do that, I have to conclude that they are not interested in ideas-- not even their own ideas.

I've been in groups before-- we all have-- that went downhill when they became dominated by one poetic "agenda" and a received list of acceptable poets. I am wary of any marks of Cain or claims to demi-God status. Let's please just talk about poetry.

Suzanne

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681. **Keston Sutherland**

venom context

Wed 18 Feb 1998

to lurch to Pierre's defence: P. is a member of the British Poets' list also, where a vocab. of anti-apologetic vituperation has steadily accrued re: Hughes, Heaney, Larkin; to a fellow BP member, his letter is unsurprising (even approaching a -form- letter). I'd go along with most of what he says. But I do think, or am itching to permit myself to think, that Larkin is starting to get an unproductively nasty press - that is, it's always easy to smack an idol down, sometimes even easy to do so -actually- rather than merely to gesture towards smacking in a fuss of reflex dismissal, but Larkin has become an ENEMY on dogmatic grounds (at least in England). Perhaps it is, in part, due to the awkward fact that Larkin was a clever and adept writer, that it is so commonly found to be worthwhile to make the customary dismissal; his validity as a genuine target for criticism, however, should rather -discourage- dismissal. Dismissal is readily made tactical, and such a tactic readily submits itself to 'communities' as a differential facility; but if what matters is more than mere USism, this facility is just a symptom of vanity. Many writes can be dismissed out of hand, I'd maintain. Larkin isn't quite one of them. Though I hate him as much as the next woman, naturally (nervous simpering).

k

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682. **Harold Rhenisch**

Re: Ted, Sylvia & Phil

Wed 18 Feb 1998

Pierre, you wrote:

>>"dark, archetypal" -- hmm, that's part of the problem, not part of the solution...<<

How so? Why can't it just be neutral? Works if it works. Fails if it fails.

I feel there's still an assumption you haven't explained. I'd rather hear it from you than guess at it.

best,

Harold



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683. **Maria Damon**

Re: Hughes on Plath

Wed 18 Feb 1998

At 10:05 AM -0500 2/18/98, Suzanne Burns wrote:

I've been in groups before-- we all have-- that went downhill when they became dominated by one poetic "agenda" and a received list of acceptable poets. I am wary of any marks of Cain or claims to demi-God status. Let's please just talk about poetry.

Suzanne

actually, if you read the welcome msg, you'll find that the listserv's agenda is not hidden at all; it is explicitly intended as a forum for discussion of innovative (i can't remember what the exact wording of the msg is, but along those lines) poetics, *not* for a generalized discussion of poetry across the board; tho these sometimes occur, they're by no means central. hence what you consider dismissive is an acknowledgement that hughes is not an important topic for this list. i too was puzzled by what seemed the narrowness of the list when i first joined, but then its purpose is explicitly NOT to be general.--md

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684. **Maria Damon**

Re: Ken Irby

Wed 18 Feb 1998

irby is a name i've heard (mostly from charSSmith--hi there) but not read. any suggestions on where to start, the most accessible (buyable-available) texts etc? tho i've not read him, i'm still thrilled that the good folks have won this round.--md

At 9:22 PM -0500 2/17/98, [REDACTED] wrote:

>In a message dated 98-02-17 20:44:14 EST, you write:

>

><< I haven't seen the antiphonal Irby of '94 -- anybody know if copies of that > barely distributed chap. are still available? >>

>

>Aldon,

>

>Ken may still have some copies. Otherwise, you'll need to track down Patrick >Tillery. Somewhere in this mess I've got an address for him in Seattle that >was good a couple of years ago. Let me know if no one else can help out better

>than this, & I'll see if I can't find it.

>

>Charles

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685. **Brian McHale**

Re: Dark, archetypal Ted

Wed 18 Feb 1998

I agree with Finnegan, a few rounds back: "Crow" still looks like a good book, maybe even, I don't know, an avant-garde one. But I also agree with Joris: "dark, archetypal" aren't the grounds for making a case for it. Instead, I'd make a case for its language -- raggedy odds and ends; strange diction; much of it reads like speech-balloons from comics. And that would be another grounds for admiring it: "Crow" has some of the adolescent energy of, say, Marvel Comics; same scatter-shot iconoclasm, same bad taste. It feels cheap, & I like that. I place it in the same category as, say, "Gunslinger" or Rothen berg's "Cokboy," its near-contemporaries. Or Kenneth Bernard's "Baboon in the Restaurant" -- has anyone read that? Hughes picked it for a poetry prize in England, and got a lot of grief for that. It was one of his last "tasteless" acts, and I admire him for having done it. Credit where credit's due. Brian

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686. **dbkk**

dead frog's legs touched by electrodes

Wed 18 Feb 1998

Date: Tue, 17 Feb 1998 23:05:26 EST

From: Michael McColl <[REDACTED]>

Subject: Re: Fenton on Hughes' Plath

While Hughes is not my favorite poet, "poetic triteness and drivel" doesn't accurately describe the poems on Plath. Venom seems to distort that judgment, IMHO. Name a line or a poem, at least.

I'm halfway through the book, and I would agree with Pierre that it is indeed quite trite, quite drivel. Amazingly so. Unlenting "I" and "you" autobiography overburdened with metaphor after metaphor, often more than one per line so that the lines sag like impossibly heavily ornamented Christmas tree boughs:

. . . She fed snapshots
Of you and she did not know what
Inflammable celluloid into my silent
Insatiable future, my blind-man's buff
Internal torch of search.

In the same poem (Visit) he brings up his good friend Lucas. Instead of just saying "my good friend Lucas," he goes on for five endless lines:

Lucas, my friend, one
Among those three or four who stay unchanged
Like a separate self,
A stone in the bed of the river
Under every change . . .

Personally, I think he should lose the stone in the river line.

I'm reading the book, which was a present, but I asked for it, so I have to take responsibility there--because I'm a great admirer of Plath and have read many books on her the past 15 years. I think she's a great writer and needs no defending--and if she does need defending, Jacqueline Rose has already done it wonderfully in her *The Haunting of Sylvia Plath*.

Hughs' attitude towards Plath is condescending, much about how squeaky clean American she is as opposed to his dark wildness. I'm sure people from other countries have good reason to scorn Americans, but his repeated lazy and trivial use of the word American is irritating.

Kevin (Killian) has read the whole book, and last weekend he was reading to me the part where Assia Gutman comes into the story--for those of you who don't know *The Story*, she's the one Hughs was having the affair with, an affair which

sparked Plath and Hughs' breakup. Kevin read to me how Plath and Hughs were puppets in Assia's dark karma, whatever. But definitely they were her puppets. Then I started reading the book and on page 7, Hughs writes of his relationship with Plath:

Nor did I know I was being auditioned
For the male lead in your drama,
Miming through the first easy movements
As if with eyes closed, feeling for the role.
As if a puppet were being tried on its strings,
Or a dead frog's legs touched by electrodes.

"He's a puppet again!" I shrieked. "This guy doesn't take responsibility for his actions."

Reading this book makes me more impressed with Plath--if she was living under the thumb of this kind of "drivel," she truly was a genius to break out of it, to get to a place way beyond this kind of stodgy confessionalism.

Dodie

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687. **Maryrose Larkin**

Re: Ken Irby

Wed 18 Feb 1998

Maria:

Call Steps is a good place to start, it is a compilation of earlier work,
available from
Station Hill Press

Maryrose Larkin

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688. **William Burmeister Prod**

Re: Ted, Sylvia & Phil

Wed 18 Feb 1998

> Why is "dark, archetypal" "part of the
> problem?" Are you referring specifically to Hughes' work or to larger
problems
> of poetics? Not to say they don't exist, especially in poetry, but I can
> see why one might have trouble with archetypes. But the 'dahk' seems like
> an essential element of a lot of art. Or maybe I'm still spinning from the
> Cassavete's movie I saw last night. D.

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>maybe even, I don't know, an avant-garde one. But I also agree with Joris:
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>make a case for its language -- raggedy odds and ends; strange diction; much
>of it reads like speech-balloons from comics. And that would be another
>grounds for admiring it: "Crow" has some of the adolescent energy of, say,
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>Restaurant" -- has anyone read that? Hughes picked it for a poetry prize in
>England, and got a lot of grief for that. It was one of his last "tasteless"
>acts, and I admire him for having done it. Credit where credit's due.
> Brian

Pierre wouldn't be afraid of the dark would he be?

Great post Brian! Truly I say to you that I have not found faith like this in all of Listserv land. Seriously though--I wouldn't have considered reading Hughes much (especially after seeing the stanzas posted here lately) save for the case that you make for "Crow" on this list.

William

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689. **Michael Franco**

GERRIT LANSING Greetings and Reading

Wed 18 Feb 1998

Dreamer of the purified fury and fabulous habit.

The Word of Mouth reading series will present a special evening at Waterston's books [Newbury at Exeter St, Boston]

GERRIT LANSING A 70th Birthday celebration

Wed. Feb 25th 1998

7pm

Free

Reading by Gerrit Lansing and readings from the field of his work by Joseph Torra, William Corbett, Raffael de Gruttula, Ange Mlinko, Michael Franco, Isabel Pinto Franco, Thorpe Feidt, Elie Yarden, Christopher Sawyer Laucanno, Patricia Pruitt, and other "special guests"

Any one on the list wishing to send greetings to Gerrit can do so via Email [] or on foot @ 34 Jason Street Arlingotn Ma. 02174-6409]

Gerrit's most recent edition is available from Talisman
all best

Michael Franco/Wom.

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690. **David Zauhar**
Kenneth Irby, where to begin?

Wed 18 Feb 1998

Another good place to start might be that collection of poems and workshop conversations edited by Lee Bartlett, called *Talking Poetry* (University of New Mexico, 1987). Irby has 5 poems and one of the more interesting discussions (in a book that includes discussions w/ Clark Coolidge, Theodore Enslin, William Everson and several others. Maria: I know for a fact that the Wilson Library at U of M has it, since I killed a snowy afternoon in there once by reading it. The call number, if I remember correctly, is PS/325/T3/1986

David Zauhar
University of Illinois at Chicago

"My religion makes no sense
and does not help me
therefore I pursue it."

--Anne Carson

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691. **Michael McColl**
Re: Fenton on Hughes' Plath

Wed 18 Feb 1998

Pierre--I do appreciate you taking the time to set out some of your thinking on this, and I'll make an effort to compare Hughes to the poet you mention liking better. There are some things in your message I'd like to take up for discussion that don't necessarily have to be thought about with relation to Hughes, and after I get enough sleep to *sort of* think, which is what I do at best anyway, I'll give it a shot.

Mike McColl

On Wed, 18 Feb 1998 09:22:29 -0400 Pierre Joris said:

Mike -- sorry, I certainly didn't want to sound dismissive in terms of your inquiry -- it truly is a thing of time -- and yesterday the mail brought 4 _new_ books I would much rather read than think about TH -- while also preparing for the arrival of Allen Fisher, to my mind one of the very best British poets writing right now (BTW -- read Fisher & you'll see immediately why I don't care for TH's poetry).

Briefly then, Ted Hughes, for me, is a very traditionalist, british establishment poet, whose language and imagery I find trite indeed in that they use the most cliched poetic topi without in anyway renewing them; whose line is flat-footed and rhythmically dead (listen to it -- it just kind of drones, or at best gets a chummy story-in-the-pub quality to it -- old-boy-network ¼ la English country-gentleman mitigated by a mytho-male-ish Iron Johnish swagger) . It is the old "lyric" -romantic tradition as if nothing had happened in poetry or the world for the last hundred years, except for Eliotian modernism (free verse) and the confessional exaltation of personal neurosis as dynamo & authority for legitimization of "truth in poetry". There's no sweep, no sense of language (it's that dreary old transparent mimetic medium), no excitement -- it is stifling official safe "verse" of exactly the kind required to become a poet laureate. The British cultural establishment needs such types & glorifies just such a minor poetry (as it did also glorify that other dullard, the librarian from Hull) -- just as every Brit generation needs its token tame Irish poet -- Shameless Hussy, I mean Seamus Heaney being this generation's 'official (Anglo)-Irish Poet. The problem is not so much the Hughes & Heaney's -- everyone obviously has the right to write as they seem fit -- but rather the fact that the cultural establishment (from the Crown on down via Poetry Societies and the publishers to the media and the school system) sets up the likes of H & H as the great, canonical, etc. poetry of the times, and that that setup has specific cultural-political agendas of the most reactionary kind. 'Nuff said for now.

Just let me add that if you would like a sense of what's new in English poetry, have a look at anthologies such as CONDUCTORS OF CHAOS ed. by Iain Sinclair, (Picador) THE NEW BRITISH POETRY ed. by Allnutt, aguiar, edwards and mottram, (Paladin) FUTURE EXILES --Fisher, Griffiths, Catling -- (Paladin) or OUT OF NOWHERE ed. o'sullivan & mulford (reality street editions).

Pierre

Michael McColl wrote:

Well, I'm sorry you won't take your time. Now I doubt the worth of your judgment more generally, and will remember to discount other statements you make elsewhere. While that's not going to be a problem for you, it's nice when there is actual conversation and use of thought.

Mike McColl

--

=====

pierre joris 6 madison place albany ny 12202
tel/fax [REDACTED] email: [REDACTED]
<http://www.albany.edu/~joris/>

"What often prevents us from giving ourselves over to
a single vice is that we have several of them."

La Rochefoucauld

=====

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692. **Michael McColl**

Re: dead frog's legs touched by electrodes

Wed 18 Feb 1998

I've only read the selection in the new yorker; maybe they culled some of the better ones, I don't know. But the phrase "unrelenting I and you autobiography" makes no sense to me. Why is autobiography anymore unrelenting than its absence? (Just trying to pick up on some assumptions that are evidently obvious to many here, and not for that reason anything wrong or sinister, just not exactly clear to me--asking for a bit of patience and a brief explanation where possible).

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693. **Judy Roitman**

Re: dead frog's legs touched by electrodes

Wed 18 Feb 1998

I've only read the selection in the new yorker; maybe they culled some of the better ones, I don't know. But the phrase "unrelenting I and you autobiography" makes no sense to me. Why is autobiography anymore unrelenting than its absence? (Just trying to pick up on some assumptions that are evidently obvious to many here, and not for that reason anything wrong or sinister, just not exactly clear to me--asking for a bit of patience and a brief explanation where possible).

"I and you" that's what (I suspect) appears as unrelenting.

Isn't that what autobiography is automatically about? inquiring minds want to know.

A: No.

----- Judy Roitman
| "Whoppers Whoppers Whoppers! Math, University of Kansas |
memory fails Lawrence, KS 66045 | these are the days."
[REDACTED] | fax: [REDACTED] | Larry Eigner,
1927-1996 ----- Note new area
code -----
http://www.math.ukans.edu/~roitman/

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694. **Fred Muratori**

Vile, Nasty Animals

Wed 18 Feb 1998

I think I was the one who mentioned the "nasty animals" in Hughes, so this revival of the thread gives me an opportunity to elaborate a bit. Hughes' nasty animal poems are relatively powerful because of the intensity with which they convey remoteness, the sheer distance between the object of the poem and what we like to think of as humanness (as laden with delusion and wishful thinking as that concept may be). This is what might account for their "darkness." To feel (however the mediating, romanticizing mechanisms of the poem transmit the feeling) that we are being exposed to the consciousness of a thing that exists only to kill, eat, and reproduce -- something that never needs to visit a therapist, take an aptitude test or decide how to vote -- either enforces our alienation from what are after all the core values of basic physical existence on the planet, or else prompts the possible realization that yeah, take our jobs, e-mail, and Subarus away and we'd be swooping down on tasty lil' bunnies all day, too. Incidentally, for some reason it seems that the British are especially good at writing poems that convey such alienating subject matter (or alienating artifices of conveyance) -- think of Craig Raine and the "Martian School," even that old street-wandering ersatz-Englishman TSE himself. Larkin, too -- that remoteness, again; that awful cold -- but this time it's inside permeating the "civilized" self and we can't just foist it off on the lowly critters. The first American poet I think of who matches this feeling is Stevens; in fact, I can't read *_Crow_* without thinking of "13 Ways..." True, I haven't read all of TH's Plath poems yet, other than the ones in the N'Yorker and elsewhere, but if they fall flat for me it's because they're largely domestic monologs of the kind that take up most of the poetry books and journals I see these days -- a notch more accomplished, yes -- but remove the strictly personal history, the mythology of Ted and Sylvia, and the voice too easily gets absorbed in the din of all the other voices who have been mumbling those unremarkable "here's what happened to me yesterday" poems/verse-diary-entries for decades. I respect Hughes as a

poet, but being Joe Human may just not be his strong suit. The man's more at home when he's feeding the pike in his aquarium.

-- Fred M.

Who was it a few months ago that said that Hughes wrote some effective poems about nasty animals attacking other nasty animals? That seems to be the strength of his earlier work. Crow impressed me years ago with its fine nastiness, though I haven't followed him in the last decade or so. The snippets I have seen quoted from the Plath book are quite vile.

That said, I much prefer Hughes to Larkin. I was quite surprised a few years ago when the revelations about Larkin's racism, sexism and general nastiness came out. I was not surprised at the revelations, but at the surprise they evoked in others. I had always read his poetry as the expression of a sort of snide British anti-intellectual xenophobic resentful postwar anti-modernist mindset. He condemned the three "Ps": "Picasso, Pound, Parker," who had ruined painting, poetry, and jazz, in his opinion.

Jonathan Mayhew
Department of Spanish and Portuguese
3062 Wescoe Hall
University of Kansas



Fred Muratori

()

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695. **Suzanne Burns**

Re: Hughes on Plath

Wed 18 Feb 1998

As I said, this forum's discussion of the more experimental branch of poetry was precisely why I subscribed. I'm interested in the subject just as much as you are.

AND I would like to suggest that it is possible to maintain this focus on innovative work without dismissing work outside of this concern in such an offhand and unsupported manner and without resorting to this "us against them" rhetoric, aesthetic dogmas or factionalism. Whatever this is about, it is not about poetry, experimental or otherwise.

None of us live in a vacuum. Most of us probably have a wide range of interests and influences as well as an interest in experimental poetry, and I have noticed that these have factored into past threads in a broadminded and productive way that does not presume one ruling point of view. A fresh look and an open mind is usual the starting point for innovation.

Suzanne

On Wed, 18 Feb 1998, Maria Damon wrote:

At 10:05 AM -0500 2/18/98, Suzanne Burns wrote:

I've been in groups before-- we all have-- that went downhill when they became dominated by one poetic "agenda" and a received list of acceptable poets. I am wary of any marks of Cain or claims to demi-God status. Let's please just talk about poetry.

Suzanne

*actually, if you read the welcome msg, you'll find that the listserv's agenda is not hidden at all; it is explicitly intended as a forum for discussion of innovative (i can't remember what the exact wording of the msg is, but along those lines) poetics, *not* for a generalized discussion of poetry across the board; tho these sometimes occur, they're by no means central. hence what you consider dismissive is an acknowledgement that hughes is not an important topic for this list. i too was puzzled by what seemed the narrowness of the list when i first joined, but then its purpose is explicitly NOT to be general.--md*

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696. **James Finnegan**
Re: Dark, archetypal Ted
Wed 18 Feb 1998

In a message dated 98-02-18 13:09:48 EST, you write:

<< "dark, archetypal" aren't the grounds for making a case for it. Instead, I'd make a case for its language -- raggedy odds and ends; strange diction; much of it reads like speech-balloons from comics. And that would be another

grounds for admiring it: "Crow" has some of the adolescent energy of, say, Marvel Comics >> Brian, I agree with what you've said in the main--& true, there's some startling humor in Crow. However, I do think that many of those Marvel comix characters are very dark & archetypal.

Finnegan

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697. **Robert Zamsky**
Re: Lacan on Poetry/oops

Wed 18 Feb 1998

Pierre Joris wrote

"ahh, the cat is out of the bag: the old self-fulfilling prophecy: if there is criticism of the Freudian couch, then it is the patient who failed -- obviously it couldn't be the analyst or the analyst's system of beliefs -- and all criticism on the "patient's" part can then be construed as "resentment" which feeds it straight back into the psychoanalytic machinery -- three more years on the couch at so much an hour..."

I think this misrepresents Joe Brennan's remarks. Yes, partly he is suggesting that the issue may be that of a resentment based on the patient's failure, but this is couched within Lacan's own disapproval of American psychoanalysis. As I read it, the failure Brennan is discussing is not the fault of the patient, but that of the particular framework in which the analysis took place. Further, I would say that Brennan's point here is demonstrated by Mr. Weiss's elision of psychoanalysis and psychotherapy.

Robert Zamsky

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698. **James Finnegan**
Re: Ted, Sylvia & Phil

Wed 18 Feb 1998

In a message dated 98-02-18 10:28:37 EST, you write:

<< Uh, Larkin was a jazz "lover" who hated virtually everything that sounded stylistically later than about the year 1950, or about half of jazz's recorded history, so I'm not sure how much of a defense that is. >> Herb & Pierre, you're right, he's going to hell afterall.

Finnegan

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699. **Charles Weigl**
Re: Hughes on Plath
Wed 18 Feb 1998

Maria Damon wrote:

> actually, if you read the welcome msg, you'll find that the listserv's
> agenda is not hidden at all; it is explicitly intended as a forum for
> discussion of innovative (i can't remember what the exact wording of > the
msg is, but along those lines) poetics, *not* for a generalized > discussion of
poetry across the board.

maria:

here's the full quote about the poetics list's "project" as stated in the welcome
message. i can't figure out why so many people can't seem to get their heads
around it...

"The definition of that project, while provisional, and while open to continual
redefinition by list participants, is nonetheless aversive to a generalized discus-
sion of poetry. Rather, our aim is to support, inform, and extend those direc-
tions in poetry that are committed to innovations, renovations, and investiga-
tions of form and/or/as content, to the questioning of received forms and styles,
and to the creation of the otherwise unimagined, untried, unexpected, improba-
ble, and impossible."

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700. **David Zauhar**
Re: Kenneth Irby, where to begin?
Wed 18 Feb 1998

On Wed, 18 Feb 1998, Miekal And wrote:

*I think that interview with Clark Coolidge had more effect on my life as
a writer than anything else I ran into in those years. I seem to
remember that I wore my copy of it out...I believe there was a second
volume which I never found.*

Now David, exactly how many call numbers do you remember?

m

How many call numbers? Well, every single one of them. That happen to be
printed on the title page of the book I'm holding in my hand, that is. If there's a
second volume, I never found it either. And if there isn't there should be.

DZauhar

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701. **Harold Rhenisch**
turf wars

Wed 18 Feb 1998

When Pierre wrote

*The problem is not so much
the Hughes & Heany's -- everyone obviously has the right to write as they
seem fit -- but rather the fact that the cultural establishment (from the
Crown on down via Poetry Societies and the publishers to the media and the
school system) sets up the likes of H & H as the great, canonical, etc.
poetry of the times, and that that setup has specific cultural-political
agendas of the most reactionary kind*

I take it that the current discussion or, rather, dismissal, of Hughes is a turf war. The argument appears to be more against Hughes' position of influence than it is against his poetry.

Sadly, from what I've seen on this list and others, many people, even language poets, enjoy turf wars and even the poetics list can stray into specific cultural-political agendas of the most reactionary kind.

This is about as bad for the poetics list as it is for Hughes. Maybe it's a personal question:

What takes precedence: political manoeuvring or poetics? There's nothing saying they have to be synonymous.

As for *the new british poetry*, a fine book, but as uneven as any big anthology could be. There's even some stuff in there that is sad and bad. I personally enjoy the poems written in various dialects.

Such as Merle Collins' (from _Callaloo_)

...Dat is what it feel like
to be part o' dis
Revolution reality
O' dis
wakin' up reality
o' dis
no more hidin' you passport
reality
no more
hangin' you head
an' shufflin' you foot
an' tryin' to hide
behin' de person
in front o' you

like little janet
behin' she mudder skirt...

I wish we had more of that, eh.

But then, I think we have a chance to make a new written language, and as long as we don't take the plunge to abandon conventional English, we're all just grinding our gears. Visual poetry, Language poetry, etc., are trying to do a similar thing, but they sure aren't the only ways.

I'm with Suzanne on this. Hughes is as good a place to start as any.

Harold Rhenisch



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702. **Henry Gould**

crow

Wed 18 Feb 1998

Crows play quite a part in poetry, don't they? I think they're in the early Russian folk epics a lot. Mandelstam played with the name of the town he was exiled in: Voronezh - as "voron"- "nozh" or raven knife, something like that. then there's Poe's famous poem. Cautantowwit or Raven was the chief god of the Narragansetts - ruler the land of the dead in the southwest. "as the crow flies".

Maybe one way to look at Hughes is as a poet who put on the mask of wildness, the primitive - to break out of British civilization - only to find experience - "ordinary" experience - more terrible than anything he played with in his imagination... he's never been humbled, never eaten crow - but maybe the crow ate him... (but I don't really know the story)

- Henry Gould

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703. **MAYHEW**

poetics seminar

Wed 18 Feb 1998

Anyone on the list living in Lawrence or environs please backchannel if we haven't been in contact yet. I am thinking of organizing a poetics seminar here through the Humanities center.

Jonathan Mayhew
Department of Spanish and Portuguese
3062 Wescoe Hall
University of Kansas



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704. **Bob Grumman**
Re: Vile, Nasty Animals
Wed 18 Feb 1998

Yes, I also believe Hughes's crow flew out of Stevens (which I don't intend as a knock on Hughes's crow, whom I esteem and have been influenced by); but the precise poem by Stevens that I believe the crow flew out of is the wonderful "No Possum, No Sop, No Taters." Stevens's bird was earlier in Frost, who got him from Hardy, who got him probably from Shelley, who probably got him from Wordsworth, who didn't invent him.

--Bob G.

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705. **George Bowering**
Re: Vizpo, Oh no!
Wed 18 Feb 1998

3. Latin America visual poets have been oft-heard in the U.S. If you would like, I (along with Luigi-Bob Drake, Miekal And, Bob Grumman, and others) could work up a bibliography of work published in the 1990's (or as far back as you would like).

Best, Crag Hill

I hope that you give space and honour to Pedro Xisto
George Bowering.

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

fax: 

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706. **David Zauhar**
Hughes, Plath, Polemics
Wed 18 Feb 1998

Harold R (I believe) wrote...

"I take it that the current discussion or, rather, dismissal, of Hughes is a turf war. The argument appears to be more against Hughes' position of influence than it is against his poetry."

I think the anti-Hughes contingent is making the point that the quality of Hughes' poetry is not commensurate with his position of influence. And I think that is a legitimate point to be made. Suzanne also raised some good points about the need for openness on the list (sorry I can't quote it precisely) but I would only point out that many of the people who are dismissing Hughes' recent work may have already read it with an open mind and came to a conclusion with which I may not agree. The fact that they phrase these rejections strongly... well, polemic has a long and honored tradition in literature, and I'm glad to see it's not dead. Walt Whitman, hero to many on this list I'm sure, was once reviewed by someone who said "Mr. Whitman is as acquainted with art as a hog is with mathematics." I don't agree, history has proved this critic wrong, but it's still a good line. Who knows. Perhaps as Finnigan says Ted Hughes will still be read in subsequent centuries. That doesn't mean occupants of the current one need to restrain themselves from making critiques of his verse and his person. And while Hughes isn't around these parts to defend himself, he obviously has supporters who can and will.

David Zauhar
University of Illinois at Chicago

"My religion makes no sense
and does not help me
therefore I pursue it."

--Anne Carson

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707. **charssmith** ***Irby Checklist***

Wed 18 Feb 1998

In a message dated 98-02-18 12:53:22 EST, Maria Damon writes:

<< irby is a name i've heard (mostly from charSSmith--hi there) but not read.
any suggestions on where to start, the most accessible (buyable-available) texts
etc? >>

aww Maria, you shdn't have gotten me started!

As Pierre wrote yesterday, the "most" (read "only") accessible Irby in book form is *_Call Steps_* (Station Hill/Tansy, 1992), available as always from SPD (██████████, <http://www.spdbooks.org/>). That volume gathers material from

1977-1979 & is a great place to start. The 2 poems in Apex of the M #6 (hi Kristen!) are knockouts --that should be readily findable. The chapbook Antiphonal & Fall to Fall (Kavyayantra, 1994) is the only book to gather work written since then & is practically unavailable. I think there may be new poems in the most recent First Intensity, but I just unearthed a resubscribe notice sent last summer, so I don't have that issue at hand. Used copies of Relation (Black Sparrow, 1970) occasionally show up. *Somebody* should reprint To Max Douglas (Tansy 1971, 1974), Archipelago (Tuumba, 1976), & Catalpa (Tansy, 1977) except that there are at least two unpublished mss. from the 70's, and reams (?) of poems from the 80's & 90's. There are also three very obscure early publications: Kansas/New Mexico (Formula Series Number One, Lawrence, 1965), Movements /Sequences (Duende #8, 1965), and The Flower Of Having Passed Through Paradise In A Dream (Matter, 1968).

Let me restate. The most recent full collection by Ken Irby gathers work through 1979. There are now two decades worth of work that remains largely inaccessible by a man who is repeatedly mentioned in conversation by many many different writers of various stripes as one of the most highly underrated, underpublished major (can I use that word?) poets in America today. "Marginal," "Underground," "Fugitive" hardly suffice. The situation won't change anytime in the near future.

I've spent most of today compiling the following list. There are the makings for at least three books or more in it. The four reading/reviews would make a great poetics book. (There are more early reviews in places like Kulchur, Poetry, & Caterpillar.) There are tapes at Naropa of a class Ken taught in the early 90's, on "The Elegiac" that are poorly organized but well worth listening to. There may be tapes of a Whitman seminar he taught at the New College in the mid/late 80's. I originally set out to just list recent pubs, but realized that there is *so* much out there forgotten in journals that really should be remembered --so, it's a tad compulsive, though not complete. Maybe someone will find it useful?

all best,
Charles Smith

the full penalty of the obligation
losing, *never* finding the Word?
so, finally <<the assumption about who's there>>
is the crux, and <<who cannot answer>>?

--Ken Irby, from

"[Reunion]"

_Call

Steps_

a checklist (incomplete) of recent (& not-so) Irby journal contributions:

First Intensity #1 (Summer 1993):

"doctor into the night life ..."

"some high new tangerine wax fancy"

"[a small classical flagstone landscape mystery, as wool to murex]"

First Intensity #2 (Fall 1994):

"Evangel of the Morning, bright messenger"

"[to almost midnight New Year's Eve in Glasgow]"

First Intensity #4 (Winter 1995):

"There is the bare and rich delight of coming back ..."

First Intensity #5 (Summer 1995):

"[from Three Sets of Three - III]"

First Intensity #6 (Winter 1996):

"[from Three Sets of Three - II]"

First Intensity #8 (Winter 1997):

"crow talk, woodpecker, brother clouds ..."

"Of curly beechbark oak, iron in the dust, of paper sculpted head"

"the dog-gazed onion in the palm"

House Organ #18 (spring 1997):

"[2 Feb92]"

House Organ #21 (Winter 1998):

"[transcontinental]"

Apex of the M #6 (Fall 1997):

"Homage to Kandinsky and Hartley - Composition / Improvisation,
Starting with a Profession by Hartley"

"Visitations"

Notus 10 (Spring 1992):

There's a small section edited, I believe, by Drew Gardner, most of
which is

culled from _Catalpa_ & _Call Steps_. In the back are essays on
Irby by

Stephen Ellis & Edward Schelb. Otherwise unpublished are:

"the events of mid-December 1665 in Smyrna"

"it doesn't seem enough and so it isn't enough"

"[trash]"

"midwinter days when the focus stays inside entirely ..."

"so you come again below the snow fume pallor ..."

"from [three sets of three]"

"[study]"

"a life into vegetables set in a half-shadowed deep window frame"

Notus 11 (Fall 1992):

- "[vistas, over Lammas]"
- Notus 13 (Fall 1993):
- "September Set (*For the Wanton Farmers*)" (5 poems)
- :that (1994):
- "The flecks of other colors on the worn crayola tips"
- "Moroni on the play - have you consulted?"
- "The antiphonal protagonists take pause"
- "[homage to Richard Lovelace]"
- "But the cocklight is of the light above ..."
- "I have a chair in the stair well ..."
- Conjunctions 7 (1985):
- "[exercitatio/praecipere]"
- reading/review of RD's _Groundwork I: Before the War_
- Conjunctions 11 (no date):
- "[still] call steps - three short odes"
- Conjunctions 12 (1988):
- reading/review of RD's _Groundwork II: In the Dark_
- Sulfur 34 (Spring 1994):
- "Some Notes on Zukofsky's _80 Flowers_ and Michelle J. Leggott's
Reading Zukofsky's '80 Flowers'"
- Jimmy & Lucy's House of "K" # 8 (January 1988):
- reprint of "Riding the Dog"
- "I have fetched Phoenix papers"_
- Talking Poetry_, Lee Bartlett, ed. (New Mexico, 1986):
- interviewed by Lee Bartlett
- Temblor 1 (1985):
- "A Set"
- Parnassus (1980):
- "america's largest open air museum" - a review of Jonathan
Williams' _Elite/Elate_ & _Portrait Photographs_
- Text 1 (Winter 1976-77): old, but never collected in book form:
- "now the Wolf Borealis"
- "*die Gottersprache, das Wechseln und das Werden*"
- "search the hills again"
- "*lightning steers all things*"
- "how *unlike* the backyard plants"
- "no amber in Early Bronze Age Ireland"
- "the Court of the Blue Sunflower, her eyes"
- "and if you drop that people of the past"
- "[Homage to Ernst Kantorowicz]"
- New World Journal 1.2/3 (Spring 1977):
- "rkt(h)o / kwetwer"

Io 23 (1976):

"29 April 1974" (journal entries from trip to Greece)
"[27 Nov 74 - NY - from Quasha's copy]"
"Eastern Kansas, borderland, Border"
""finding the Marmaton dangerous to cross"
"and no words tonight but these"
"or the disappearance of the Greenland settlements"
"on those outer banks where"
"he would not follow that line by dreams"
"the gray serenade waltz toward summer"
"and by the Fish Wives Steps"
"but Eastern strips"
"and not a sadness, not a crown's worth"
"at the well this time"
"dark as the broadaxe people's"

Credences 5/6 (March 1978):

review of Gerrit Lansing's _The Heavenly Tree Grows

Downward_

Credences 7 (Feb 1979):

The entire issue is dedicated to Irby, to celebrate the
publication of
Catalpa. Most of the poems printed there have found their
way into
print, except for some high school poems. There are useful
essays
(by Don Byrd, Mark Karlins, Tom Meyer, Jed Rasula, David
Bromige
& George Butterick among others) & a checklist by Bertholf.

Vort 1.3 (Summer 1973):

Also dedicated to Irby, after the publication of _To Max

Douglas_.

Interview w/ Barry Albert, pieces by Creeley, Moritz, Byrd
& others.

lift 14:

"Observations On, and Ruminations over, Kenneth Irby's _Call

Steps_

by Stephen Ellis

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708. **James Finnegan**

Re: the "project"

Wed 18 Feb 1998

In a message dated 98-02-18 14:57:03 EST, you write:

<< here's the full quote about the poetics list's "project" as stated in the welcome message. i can't figure out why so many people can't seem to get their heads around it...

"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." ---- Charles, I certainly understand the desire that the list not become unfocused. It has a defined mission. However, doesn't the list need some essential tension? Many of us are readers of "innovative, renovated, investigative" writing, but not wholly sold on it. You need us, need our resistance--otherwise why would the message specify "the otherwise, UNimagined, UNtried, UNexpected, IMprobable, and IMpossible"?

I think when somebody makes quick hamburger of a Sacred Cow of mainstream lit, they should be called on it. Asked to explain why? Without stopping to think, to elaborate on one's response, the list would be of no use to anyone, innovative or UNreformed.

Finnegan

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709. **Maria Damon**

Re: Dark, archetypal Ted

Wed 18 Feb 1998

At 1:07 PM -0500 2/18/98, Brian McHale wrote:

>I agree with Finnegan, a few rounds back: "Crow" still looks like a good book,
>maybe even, I don't know, an avant-garde one. But I also agree with Joris:
>"dark, archetypal" aren't the grounds for making a case for it. Instead, I'd
>make a case for its language -- raggedy odds and ends; strange diction; much
>of it reads like speech-balloons from comics. And that would be another
>grounds for admiring it: "Crow" has some of the adolescent energy of, say,
>Mar-
>vel Comics; same scatter-shot iconoclasm, same bad taste. It feels cheap,
>& I like that. I place it in the same category as, say, "Gunslinger" or

>Rothen

>berg's "Cokboy," its near-contemporaries. Or Kenneth Bernard's "Baboon in the

>Restaurant" -- has anyone read that? Hughes picked it for a poetry prize in

>England, and got a lot of grief for that. It was one of his last "tasteless"

>acts, and I admire him for having done it. Credit where credit's due.

>

Brian

one of the first books of poetry i purchased w/ my own allowance \$ as a teen was Crow. haven't looked at it for the last 20 years or so but this sounds about right.

always a sucker for a post-adolescent poet in a leather jacket,

maria d

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710. **Rebecca Weldon Sithiwong**

GANG OF FOUR

Wed 18 Feb 1998

I am reading through a week's worth of digests, a comment to Robert Hale on the number 4.

In Asian societies numerology is considered important to interpretation of events past, present and future. In general, odd numbers are considered of auspicious import and the even are not. In Lanna Tai artistic iconography, of which I can speak with some expertise, even-numbered elements are used when fashioning funerary items. Some believe that odd-numbered elements are related to the human couple and the child; the extra factor in the pair representing life which is auspicious in relation to death.

I am sure that one might be able to find many exceptions to this interpretation, but, in the Chinese context, where numerology is a national pastime, the use of an inauspicious number in the mass iconography of Maoist doctrine would not be an inconsequential phenomenon.

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711. **Schuchat Simon**

Re: venom context

Wed 18 Feb 1998

I've never been able to sustain much interest in Ted Hughes' poetry, but I do want to say that I quite like Larkin. If form is only an extension of content, then his non-PC views and his lyric style fit perfectly. Perhaps it is overreading, but I take him to be not so vehement in his reactionary curmudgeon pose, it's a role he seems to have chosen, and there is a certain wistfulness at having chosen

that role, e.g., in the poem about sex having been invented a little too late for him, or telling the girls in the library to pull up their socks. An interesting minor poet.

"relentless I you autobiography," perhaps what is grating for some is what happens when personal myth making becomes amplified by the mass media. the Diamond Sutra is better.

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712. **Maria Damon**

kirby

Wed 18 Feb 1998

thanks to all who called and wrote w/ suggestions on where to start w/ ken irby. will get cracking on it one of these daze (when i come up for air...)--md

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713. **Thomas Bell**

Re: Ted, Sylvia & Phil

Wed 18 Feb 1998

Darkness may be essential - my feeling is that Hughes tapped something here which his other (?more polished, more formal, niver?) poems don't touch.

?The dominant sense in [Rothenberg's] first book is of a 'dark traveler' who journeys from 'darkness to darkness' and shares the fate he ascribes to all of us when he says, 'We love and we die in dark rooms.' Yet in his dream the darkness is beyond the room and he is compelled to name it (_naming_ is a primary reative act) in order to open and enter it. He names it _Creation_, which, in fact, is what _White Sun Black Sun_ names. Though the book is dark, the darkness is also creative ground (hence possibility), and writing the book, Rothenberg has made good such possibility - _answered_ to it. So the darkness that surrounds us is aldso what Antin, in 'The first blasck', a deep image poem he wrote at this time, considered the origin. 'The sun and moon' he says are the ssigns of its clemancy."

I have lost the source of this quote. If anyone recognizes (or wrote) it please let me know.

tom bell

At 11:15 AM 2/18/98 CST, Dale M Smith wrote:

>Pierre:

>

>I'm not attentive to Hughes' work, so therefore haven't addressed this thread.

>But I do have a question for you. Why is "dark, archetypal" "part of the

>problem?" Are you referring specifically to Hughes' work or to larger problems

>of poetics? Not to say they don't exist, especially in poetry, but I can
>see why one might have trouble with archetypes. But the 'dahk' seems like
>an essential element of a lot of art. Or maybe I'm still spinning from the
>Cassavete's movie I saw last night. D.

>

>

>

>

>

>

>

>To: [REDACTED]

>

>> (In Larkin's defense, he was a jazz lover--that alone
>> should expunge most of one's life's sins.)

>>

>> Finnegan

>

> James -- ahh, the librarian from Hull -- "jazz" for Larkin died in the
>thirties. he thought bebop and after was barbaric, uncouth, unlistenable.

>

> -- & re TH : I wld tend to include Hughes "Crow" in my admittedly sweeping
>denigration of Hughes' work: "dark, archetypal" -- hmm, that's part of the
>problem, not part of the solution...

>

>Pierre

>--

>=====

>pierre joris 6 madison place albany ny 12202

>tel/fax [REDACTED] email: [REDACTED]

>http://www.albany.edu/^joris/

>-----

>"What often prevents us from giving ourselves over to
>a single vice is that we have several of them."

> La Rochefoucauld

>=====

>

>

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714. **R M Daley**
harry carey's death
Thu 19 Feb 1998

----- Forwarded message -----
Date: Wed, 18 Feb 1998 22:59:44 -0600 (CST)
From: "k. lederer" <[REDACTED]>
To: R M Daley <[REDACTED]>

Anything you want my pizza-woo-mannn!

PPPPPPPPPPPP IIIIIIII ZZZZZZZZZZZZ ZZZZZZZZZZZZ AAAAA
PPPPPPPPPPPP IIIIIIII ZZZZZZZZZZZZ ZZZZZZZZZZZZ AAAAAAAAAA
PPPP PPPPP IIIIIIII ZZZZ ZZZZ AAAAAAAAAAAA PPPP
PPPPP IIIIIIII ZZZZ ZZZZ AAAA AAAA PPPPPPPPPPP
IIIIIII ZZZZ ZZZZ AAAA AAAA PPpPPpPPpPPp IliIliIli
ZzZZ ZzZz AaaAaaAaaA PppP IiiiIiii ZzzZ Zzzz
aaaAaaAaaA ppll iii.i.o.o zz.z ze.z aqa. a,,a p;;
;;ii;,. z,>zz,,//z z//z/..//zz .>.a a6,, ..pi ..;..,,i >>'z/zz/z/
>z>./,,/z. @a,, a,,kt

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715. **david bromige**
tis better to be vile than vile esteem'd
Thu 19 Feb 1998

only where not to be receives reproach of being. bill.

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716. **Marjorie Perloff**
Re: Plath and Hughes
Thu 19 Feb 1998

As someone who has written quite a bit about Sylvia Plath (and reviewed a number of Hughes's books over the years), I'd like to throw my two cents into this debate.

Ted Hughes, let's remember, burned Sylvia Plath's journals and reordered her last poems so as to make her look more suicidal and depressed than she actually was (see my essay on this in POETIC LICENSE). It's uncanny how he represented her work and made himself look better. He also let out the most dangerous poems when he edited ARIEL.

Now Hughes comes along and gives us "his side of the story." What is his explanation of Plath's "failure"? Her father complex! Come on, now! How banal

can you get. And the poems I've seen reproduced in the papers (I haven't read the book yet) are embarrassingly banal and self-justifying. What is disturbing is not that Hughes, whose work has been going down hill for years) should have written these poems, but that the reviewers LOVE THEM! Call them "great works of art." It's very depressing. This is all just biographical drivel and will have no staying power. However, Hughes' poems do serve to remind us how talented Plath herself was. He only wishes he could write 1/10 as well.

Another point: I don't believe he wrote these poems "over the years." I think he wrote them just this last year or so in order to justify himself and cash in on her death yet again! And now he has succeeded.

Marjorie Perloff

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717. **Mark Baker**

Re: dead frog's legs touched by electrodes

Thu 19 Feb 1998

Are these lines, already too much for Dodie,--

*Lucas, my friend, one
Among those three or four who stay unchanged
Like a separate self,
A stone in the bed of the river
Under every change . . .*

--supposed to be irony? These are Hughes' friends? Had he met them at close of day, among grey 20th-century Yorkshire moors? Did they or did they not make a stone of the heart? It's not beauty, but it's terrible.

Mark Baker

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718. **Mark Weiss**

Re: Lacan on Poetry/oops

Thu 19 Feb 1998

Only a true believer can know the truth. Or maybe you boys never got over your transference neuroses. Or maybe this really is a matter of religion and should be left alone. I opt for all three. But please don't accuse those who disagree with you of derangement or ignorance. Any further comments please backchannel. I value the list for what it does well; I suspect this discussion is not one of those things.

At 02:50 PM 2/18/98 -0500, you wrote:

>Pierre Joris wrote

>

>"ahh, the cat is out of the bag: the old self-fulfilling prophecy: if
>there is criticism of the Freudian couch, then it is the patient who
>failed -- obviously it couldn't be the analyst or the analyst's system
>of beliefs -- and all criticism on the "patient's" part can then be
>construed as "resentment" which feeds it straight back into the
>psychoanalytic machinery -- three more years on the couch at so much an
>hour..."

>

>I think this misrepresents Joe Brennan's remarks. Yes, partly he is
>suggesting that the issue may be that of a resentment based on the
>patient's failure, but this is couched within Lacan's own disapproval of
>American psychoanalysis. As I read it, the failure Brennan is
>discussing is not the fault of the patient, but that of the particular
>framework in which the analysis took place. Further, I would say that
>Brennan's point here is demonstrated by Mr. Weiss's elision of
>psychoanalysis and psychotherapy.

>

>Robert Zamsky

>

>

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719. **David Israel**
Re: Ted, Sylvia & Phil

Thu 19 Feb 1998

To toss in me tuppence re: Pierre J.'s here discussed dictum anent Ted Hughes

--

<< . . . "dark, archetypal" -- hmm, that's part of the problem, not part of the solution. . . >>>

hmm, this utterance is prob. 1 part critique, 2 parts rhetorical flourish. (Of course the reliance on radical '60s-ish formula is not to be missed; -- not glossed over, rather, glossed.)

The exclusivity -- either you're (a) or (b) [no overlap] -- is bracing in its non-reconstructed [or non-deconstructed?] binarity. hmmm

cheerio what,

d.i.

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720. **Alan Myouka Sondheim**

NIKUKO RAGES (fwd)

Thu 19 Feb 1998

-

NIKUKO RAGES

IRC log started Wed Feb 18 13:17

*** Value of LOG set to ON

****# Nikuko (████████) has joined channel #freedom

*** ChanServ has changed the topic on channel #freedom to
FUCK ME BABY!!!!!!!!!!!!!! (KID420)

*** Mode change "+ntr" on channel #freedom by ChanServ

*** #freedom 887825853

*** On RAW_IRC from "% 352 *" do ^assign DOIT \$DOIT; ^timer \$TIME
crash \$7; ^assign TIME \${TIME+7} [SILENT] <0>

*** On RAW_IRC from "% 315 *" do on raw_irc -"% 352 *";
on raw_irc -"% 315 *";eval \$DOIT [SILENT] <0>

<^V^> Crashing Netcruizer Lamer: StarLite

<^V^> > will crash 48 users <

<^V^> > time required to avoid excess flood: 337 seconds <

*** StarLite: No such nick/channel

<^V^> Crashing Netcruizer Lamer: UniBoy21

<^V^> Crashing Netcruizer Lamer: SirVictor

*** CTCP FINGER reply from SirVictor: :idle 7 second(s)

<^V^> Crashing Netcruizer Lamer: Ghostoff159

<^V^> Crashing Netcruizer Lamer: Hueybot

*** Signoff: Nikuko (/<rad link?)

IRC Log ended *** Wed Feb 18 13:18

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721. **david bromige**

KEN IRBY HIS BOOKS

Thu 19 Feb 1998

RELATION must be the second, huh? The book that Black Sparrow did.
(1969?) They might have a few left. 24 W 10 th St, Santa Rosa, 95404.

CATALPA was considerably reviewed in an issue of CREDENCES, I think #7, I
think 1979, ed. Bertholf out of the library at suny buffalo. db3.

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722. **MAYHEW**

Hughes, Irby

Thu 19 Feb 1998

The most interesting aspect of Hughes work perhaps derives from D.H. Lawrence. His work has been going downhill for years, in inverse proportion to his status as official poet; the wildness turns to nastiness.

I feel deeply embarrassed that I have been living in Lawrence for a few years without even knowing that Irby was here, or having a full sense of who he is, which is only gradually dawning on me from the list and my own quick catch-up readings. This is symptomatic of something else, though I don't know exactly what. In my defense I can only say that I spend as little time in Kansas as humanly possible.

Jonathan Mayhew
Department of Spanish and Portuguese
3062 Wescoe Hall
University of Kansas



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723. **Billy Little**

baraka sez

Thu 19 Feb 1998

My own
poetic tradition is Fred Douglass, The Sorrow Songs, David Walker,
The Shouts and
The Hollers, Work Songs, Arwhoolies, Prison House moans, Tubman and
Nat Turner.
Vesey and Prosser and John Brown and Melville and Harper and Du
Bois, Twain, Truth
and Linda Brent and Box Brown. Whitman (except for his American
Destiny) Brecht,
Mayakovsky, Sembene Ousman, Lu Shun, Baldwin, Hansberry, Margaret
Walker Mao, Ho,
Guillen, Lorca, Roque Dalton, Otto Rene Castillo, Henry Dumas, Larry
Neal, Neruda,
Louis Armstrong, Babs Gonzalez, Dizzy Gillespie, Monk, Ellington,
Sassy and

Billie, The Ginsberg who proselytized for American speech, the
breath phrase and

Bop Prosody and the exposure of the Moloch of US imperialism,
Sterling Brown, Aime

Cesaire, Olson, The Black Church, Stevie Wonder, Smokey Robinson.

The life of the Blues, the music of resisting spirit. Niggers alive
and laughing.

The victory of the people. Revolutionary democracy, the rule of
workers, in

alliance with the farmers and democratic forces.

It is the John Coltrane Do Bana Coba Beneme Beneme Douglass DuBois
Sassy Billie

Return to the Source tradition of the burning expressions of Human
Desire. Both

Form and Content are Weapons of Self Consciousness and Revolution.

With what we declared by the time of the 60's Black Arts Movement.
An Art that is

Afro American. (i.e. democratic) Mass Oriented and Revolutionary.
This tradition

is the inspiration and method by which we revolutionaries approach Social
Transformation by the power of our form and content, their unity and
the intensity

of struggle. But we must create a new superstructure from those
traditions. One

controlled by the workers and farmers and democratic middleclasses.
international

network of institutions and organizations by which our entire
revolutionary

tradition can wage righteous war on the criminal rulers and their corrupt
oppressive rule. For it is this wailing, this defiance, this
resistance, this joy

in the overwhelming of evil by good, that is at the base of our
poetic traditions,

our history, our continuing lives.

from [The Conference on Contemporary Poetry, held April 24th - April 27th,
1997]

Social Change & Poetic Tradition

Amiri Baraka

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724. **Suzanne Burns**
Re: Plath and Hughes
Thu 19 Feb 1998

On Wed, 18 Feb 1998, Marjorie Perloff wrote:

poems do serve to remind us how talented Plath herself was. He only wishes he could write 1/10 as well.

I wholeheartedly agree with this. One thing I regret about this thread is that Plath has been lost somewhere in the margins. If this is a forum to talk about innovation, we might want to look at what she has achieved, rather than indulge in the usual, tired Hughes bashing.

Another point: I don't believe he wrote these poems "over the years." I think he wrote them just this last year or so in order to justify himself and cash in on her death yet again! And now he has succeeded.

How are you coming to this, Marjorie? Is it really unbelievable that Hughes, who was married to Plath for heavens sake, would write about her, however inadequately, over the years? I can't say anything about the majority of the poems-- nor can anyone-- but it should be noted that about eight or so have been published over the years. I believe one made it into his selected, published about ten years ago.

Suzanne

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725. **Judy Roitman**
Re: the "project"
Thu 19 Feb 1998

I find it interesting that so much of the defense of Hughes centers around issues of meaning and very little around whether he can, you should excuse the expression, write.

I finally got my NYR last night and turned to the Fenton piece. I was astonished at how often Hughes' line seemed flaccid, how dull his rhythms, how self-indulgent and predictable his language. I wondered --- if his long-dead wife had not been the famous poet Sylvia Plath, would people be interested in these poems? Occasionally something clean and focused came through, but this was not the predominant impression.

My shelves are stacked with books of poets I want to read and haven't gotten around to. Why should I or anyone else put time into reading someone we don't like?

When you think of all the wonderful poets with great integrity who are doing their damndest to manifest language/mind/world it is annoying, to say the least, that they are ignored and someone like Hughes is honored.

----- Judy Roitman
| "Whoppers Whoppers Whoppers! Math, University of Kansas | mem-
ory fails Lawrence, KS 66045 | these are the days." [REDACTED]
| fax: [REDACTED] | Larry Eigner, 1927-1996

----- Note new area code

<http://www.math.ukans.edu/~roitman/>

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726. **Billy Little**
waistland, put a cawk in it

Thu 19 Feb 1998

thank you Marjorie, thank you Judy for giving us succinct and unfudgy comment on this sad old colonial poet who's been enriching my server these past few weeks. he may be a profit to his publisher, but don't pour no bloody bever for this tiredsiass, try gelusil. hope we haven't put any potato chips on his picnic table.

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727. **Douglas**
Re: Irby Checklist

Thu 19 Feb 1998

For Ken Irby's poetry, you might also take a look at the selection in FROM THE OTHER SIDE OF THE CENTURY: A NEW AMERICAN POETRY..., which also lists all of his titles in the back.

D. Messerli

[REDACTED] wrote:

>
> In a message dated 98-02-18 12:53:22 EST, Maria Damon writes:
>
> << irby is a name i've heard (mostly from charSSmith--hi there) but not read.
> any suggestions on where to start, the most accessible (buyable-available)
> texts etc? >>
>

> aww Maria, you shdn't have gotten me started!
>
> As Pierre wrote yesterday, the "most" (read "only") accessible Irby in book
> form is _Call Steps_ (Station Hill/Tansy, 1992), available as always from SPD
> (██████████, <http://www.spdbooks.org/>). That volume gathers material
> from 1977-1979 & is a great place to start. The 2 poems in Apex of the M #6
> (hi Kristen!) are knockouts --that should be readily findable. The chapbook
> _Antiphonal & Fall to Fall_ (Kavyayantra, 1994) is the only book to gather
> work written since then & is practically unavailable. I think there may be new
> poems in the most recent First Intensity, but I just unearthed a resubscribe
> notice sent last summer, so I don't have that issue at hand. Used copies of
> _Relation_ (Black Sparrow, 1970) occasionally show up. *Somebody* should
> reprint _To Max Douglas_ (Tansy 1971, 1974), _Archipelago_ (Tuumba, 1976),
&
> _Catalpa_ (Tansy, 1977) except that there are at least two unpublished mss.
> from the 70's, and reams (?) of poems from the 80's & 90's. There are also
> three very obscure early publications: _Kansas/New Mexico_ (Formula Series
> Number One, Lawrence, 1965), _Movements /Sequences_ (Duende #8, 1965),
and The
> Flower Of Having Passed Through Paradise In A Dream_ (Matter, 1968).
>
> Let me restate. The most recent full collection by Ken Irby gathers work
> through 1979. There are now two decades worth of work that remains largely
> inaccessible by a man who is repeatedly mentioned in conversation by many
many
> different writers of various stripes as one of the most highly underrated,
> underpublished major (can I use that word?) poets in America today.
> "Marginal," "Underground," "Fugitive" hardly suffice. The situation won't
> change anytime in the near future.
>
> I've spent most of today compiling the following list. There are the makings
> for at least three books or more in it. The four reading/reviews would make a
> great poetics book. (There are more early reviews in places like Kulchur,
> Poetry, & Caterpillar.) There are tapes at Naropa of a class Ken taught in the
> early 90's, on "The Elegiac" that are poorly organized but well worth
> listening to. There may be tapes of a Whitman seminar he taught at the New
> College in the mid/late 80's. I originally set out to just list recent pubs,
> but realized that there is *so* much out there forgotten in journals that
> really should be remembered -- so, it's a tad compulsive, though not com-
plete.
> Maybe someone will find it useful?
>

> all best,
> Charles Smith
>
> the full penalty of the obligation
> losing, *never* finding the Word?
>
> so, finally <<the assumption about who's there>>
> *is* the crux, and <<who cannot answer>>?
>
> --Ken Irby, from
> "[Reunion]"
> _Call
> Steps_
>
> a checklist (incomplete) of recent (& not-so) Irby journal contributions:
>
> First Intensity #1 (Summer 1993):
> "doctor into the night life ..."
> "some high new tangerine wax fancy"
> "[a small classical flagstone landscape mystery, as wool to murex]"
> First Intensity #2 (Fall 1994):
> "Evangel of the Morning, bright messenger"
> "[to almost midnight New Year's Eve in Glasgow]"
> First Intensity #4 (Winter 1995):
> "There is the bare and rich delight of coming back ..."
> First Intensity #5 (Summer 1995):
> "[from Three Sets of Three - III]"
> First Intensity #6 (Winter 1996):
> "[from Three Sets of Three - II]"
> First Intensity #8 (Winter 1997):
> "crow talk, woodpecker, brother clouds ..."
> "Of curly beechbark oak, iron in the dust, of paper sculpted head"
> "the dog-gazed onion in the palm"
> House Organ #18 (spring 1997):
> "[2 Feb92]"
> House Organ #21 (Winter 1998):
> "[transcontinental]"
> Apex of the M #6 (Fall 1997):
> "Homage to Kandinsky and Hartley - Composition / Improvisation,
> Starting with a Profession by Hartley"
> "Visitations"
> Notus 10 (Spring 1992):

- > There's a small section edited, I believe, by Drew Gardner, most of
- > which is
- > culled from Catalpa & Call Steps. In the back are essays on
- > Irby by
- > Stephen Ellis & Edward Schelb. Otherwise unpublished are:
- > "the events of mid-December 1665 in Smyrna"
- > "it doesn't seem enough and so it isn't enough"
- > "[trash]"
- > "midwinter days when the focus stays inside entirely ..."
- > "so you come again below the snow fume pallor ..."
- > "from [three sets of three]"
- > "[study]"
- > "a life into vegetables set in a half-shadowed deep window frame"
- > Notus 11 (Fall 1992):
- > "[vistas, over Lammas]"
- > Notus 13 (Fall 1993):
- > "September Set (*For the Wanton Farmers*)" (5 poems)
- > :that (1994):
- > "The flecks of other colors on the worn crayola tips"
- > "Moroni on the play - have you consulted?"
- > "The antiphonal protagonists take pause"
- > "[homage to Richard Lovelace]"
- > "But the cocklight is of the light above ..."
- > "I have a chair in the stair well ..."
- > Conjunctions 7 (1985):
- > "[exercitatio/praecipere]"
- > reading/review of RD's Groundwork I: Before the War
- > Conjunctions 11 (no date):
- > "[still] call steps - three short odes"
- > Conjunctions 12 (1988):
- > reading/review of RD's Groundwork II: In the Dark
- > Sulfur 34 (Spring 1994):
- > "Some Notes on Zukofsky's '80 Flowers and Michelle J. Leggott's
- > Reading Zukofsky's '80 Flowers"
- > Jimmy & Lucy's House of "K" # 8 (January 1988):
- > reprint of "Riding the Dog"
- > "I have fetched Phoenix papers"
- > Talking Poetry, Lee Bartlett, ed. (New Mexico, 1986):
- > interviewed by Lee Bartlett
- > Temblor 1 (1985):
- > "A Set"
- > Parnassus (1980):

- > "america's largest open air museum" - a review of Jonathan
- > Williams' _Elite/Elate_ & _Portrait Photographs_
- > Text 1 (Winter 1976-77): old, but never collected in book form:
- > "now the Wolf Borealis"
- > "*die Gottersprache, das Wechseln und das Werden*"
- > "search the hills again"
- > "*lightning steers all things*"
- > "how *unlike* the backyard plants"
- > "no amber in Early Bronze Age Ireland"
- > "the Court of the Blue Sunflower, her eyes"
- > "and if you drop that people of the past"
- > "[Homage to Ernst Kantorowicz]"
- > New World Journal 1.2/3 (Spring 1977):
- > "rkt(h)o / kwetwer"
- > Io 23 (1976):
- > "29 April 1974" (journal entries from trip to Greece)
- > "[27 Nov 74 - NY - from Quasha's copy]"
- > "Eastern Kansas, borderland, Border"
- > ""finding the Marmaton dangerous to cross"
- > "and no words tonight but these"
- > "or the disappearance of the Greenland settlements"
- > "on those outer banks where"
- > "he would not follow that line by dreams"
- > "the gray serenade waltz toward summer"
- > "and by the Fish Wives Steps"
- > "but Eastern strips"
- > "and not a sadness, not a crown's worth"
- > "at the well this time"
- > "dark as the broadaxe people's"
- > Credences 5/6 (March 1978):
- > review of Gerrit Lansing's _The Heavenly Tree Grows
- > Downward_
- > Credences 7 (Feb 1979):
- > The entire issue is dedicated to Irby, to celebrate the
- > publication of
- > _Catalpa_. Most of the poems printed there have found their
- > way into
- > print, except for some high school poems. There are useful
- > essays
- > (by Don Byrd, Mark Karlins, Tom Meyer, Jed Rasula, David
- > Bromige
- > & George Butterick among others) & a checklist by Bertholf.

- > Vort 1.3 (Summer 1973):
- > Also dedicated to Irby, after the publication of *_To Max*
- > Douglas_.
- > Interview w/ Barry Albert, pieces by Creeley, Moritz, Byrd
- > & others.
- > lift 14:
- > "Observations On, and Ruminations over, Kenneth Irby's *_Call*
- > Steps_
- > by Stephen Ellis

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728. **Douglas Barbour**
Re: Hughes using Plath for?

Thu 19 Feb 1998

The Hughes thread has been very interesting & I have enjoyed it all. I'm not a great fan of his writing but as a teacher I have had to include it in courses on post 1945 poetry, & so his reputation is also part of what we all deal with when we read it. I reviewed the book for the local paper, so that review is more general than perhaps it would have been for a more knowledgeable audience, but for the moment I stand by it. However, I would add that the more I think about the poems, the more I have to add to Ron's comment that they're 'necrophilic,' that I think, in the way that they are collaborations with her poems, 'necromantic'...

The real problem, as I hint here, is that we can't read them for the writing when the story, the myth, is so prevalent & powerful...

Birthday Letters by Ted Hughes. Faber & Faber, 198 pp., \$25.00 Birthday Letters, the latest book from Britain's poet laureate, Ted Hughes, broke on the scene after no advance publicity and, according to a report on CBC's This Morning, sold 40,000 copies in its first week of publication. This did not happen because there has been a sudden upsurge of interest in poetry, of whatever kind, in Britain. It happened because these poems are clearly addressed to one of the most mythicized writers of the twentieth century, Sylvia Plath, from one of the central figures, along with her father, in that myth, the husband who has been demonized by Plath's supporters during the 35 years since she committed suicide (as Janet Malcolm points out in perhaps the finest study of this long relationship, *The Silent Woman*). Says Malcolm: "To the readers of her poetry and her biography, Sylvia Plath will always be young and in a rage over Hughes's unfaithfulness." It is the continuing fascination with Plath's work and death that fuels the immense interest in this book of poems. The question that arises, then, an impossible question, I suspect, is how to judge these poems as poems.

Certainly, I can't pretend to do so at this early point. But one of the reasons I can't is that Hughes has chosen so clearly to write these poems as autobiography, and to address them to a "you" who can be no other person than Plath. Moreover, they insist on foregrounding an "I" who assumes at least as much importance as the figure addressed. These poems emerge from a long tradition of lyric elegy, wherein the speaker always gets the last word, whether meditating on a single death or applying the lessons of that death to humanity in general, yet most of them are narratives of memory, little stories of a love affair destined to destruction. Readers of Plath's biographies will recognize many of these moments, seen suddenly from a different perspective. One of my problems with these poems is that, even though many ask unanswerable questions, and even though Hughes (or his persona) accepts a lot of blame for failing to comprehend his beloved's manic/melancholic desperation, they all move to such a firm closure there seems to be no room for further questioning on our parts. There are 88 poems here, so how exactly they are "Birthday Letters" is not clear. Since Hughes has maintained a dignified silence about his relation to Plath for so long, the obsessive, repetitive, and overwhelming length of this book both repels and compels. Plath's anger, energy, fear, and pain -- what he calls her "Panic" -- inform his every memory, and his anguish is like a sore tooth he simply can't stop probing with his tongue. The poems circle around their relationship from the period when they first met to the present day (after all he has lived so much longer without her than with her, but he has lived those years with her inheritance, both the children and the writing). What can he say? Hughes has always been a highly symbolic writer, engaged with the ancient mythic material of his birthplace, Yorkshire. In *Birthday Letters*, the very private mythology that finally overwhelmed Plath threatens to overwhelm him as well, and his only defence is to fight myth with myth. These poems are dark dreams, frightening faery tales, demented legends full of repeated themes and images, most of which can be found in Plath's poetry or his own earlier work. The Plath industry will have a field day deciphering them, but how well do they work as poems? It's hard to say. Hughes has always been a poet of analogy, and the similes, the dark symbols, proliferate here. Although the poems appear to speak with heartfelt honesty, they are, in fact, highly rhetorical arguments. Portents abound, but often they descend into mere portentousness, as in "Epiphany," wherein Hughes, with a clear allusion to one of his own most famous poems, "The Thought-Fox," refuses to buy a fox cub on the street and then wonders what would have happened if he "had paid that pound and turned back / To you, with that armful of fox --". If I had grasped that whatever comes with a fox is what tests a marriage and proves it a marriage -- I would not have failed the test. Would you have failed it? But I failed. Our marriage had failed. Yes, he takes blame here, but in such a strange manner, and this seems true of all the poems where he does so. One of the most startling is the only poem in which

the woman for whom he left Plath enters their home. He spends much of the poem explaining how "She fascinated you" and "Warily you cultivated her," thus making the argument that Plath was as responsible for her being there as he was, even if, at the end he admits that "I saw / The dreamer in her / Had fallen in love with me and she did not know it. / That moment the dreamer in me / Fell in love with her, and I knew it." The arguments are with Plath herself as much as with the readers. Still, I responded most fully to those moments when he comes down to earth. A line like "Our lives were still a raid on our own good luck" strikes home. And in an early poem, he shows that he is aware that all that he is doing is offering another version, not the 'true' or 'real' one. He has been reading her journals: Then, under the panic, the nightmare That came rolling to crush you: Your alternative -- the unthinkable Old despair and the new agony Melting into one familiar hell. And then he realizes: "You are ten years dead. It is only a story. / Your story. My story." This insight is important, but on the whole the poems keep forgetting its lesson and press their message unironically. The real horror here, as far as their writer is concerned, is that Plath's famous "Daddy," the father she sought and fought in her poems, was a real presence in their lives, somehow: "While I slept he snuggled / Shivering between us." The writer's failure, as he sees it, is that he finally could not protect her from that ghost, nor free her from the misapprehension that he was but another avatar of that fearful Daddy. That the speaker of these poems loved, loves, the woman addressed throughout is clear. What that love meant or means is not. There's another problem, though, one these references point to: are these Hughes's poems? Or are they somehow still Plath's? Many are so full of her imagery, her dark symbolism, if only because they are replies, that it's hard to read them as anything but collaborations with the (perhaps unwilling) dead. There are many off-putting moments, including the oddly inflected description of her "monkey-elegant fingers" and "the African-lipped, laughing, thickly / Crimson painted mouth." There is the mean-spirited attack on the hyena-critics, especially those who have defended Plath against him, who will undoubtedly be spending so much time on these poems in years to come. There are poems that simply seem to be travelogues from the marriage and add little to the ongoing argument the poet is having with both his dead love and himself. Nevertheless, although I originally felt that less would have been more in this case, and wished that the obsessive overindulgence of this book had been brought under control, I have to admit that whatever power it has derives from precisely its over the top sad, angry, self-explanatory, argumentative desire to return, over and over again, to the moments when their love and their mutual suffering threw such a strong light across their shadowed lives. But in saying this, I am responding more to the mythic gossip that has haunted contemporary poetic history since Plath's suicide than to any particular quality of

Hughes's poems. Still, whether or not Birthday Letters is good poetry, it is a fascinating book.

For what it's worth...

=====

Douglas Barbour
Department of English
University of Alberta
Edmonton Alberta T6G 2E5
[REDACTED] FAX: [REDACTED]
H: [REDACTED]

~~~~~

And all of the time you are seeing these things she  
sings 'not  
loudly but with authority'

Michael Palmer

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729. **Joe Amato/Kass Fleisher**

***Re: turf wars***

*Thu 19 Feb 1998*

---

well, i just felt obliged, pedantically speaking, in part b/c this list seems to me so contentious of late:

Q: Do you believe there's such a thing as "official verse culture"? A: Yes.

Q: Does this mean that all that passes for official verse culture is unappealing aesthetically, politically, etc?

A: No.

Q: How would you characterize official verse culture? A: In broad sweep, I'd point to the MLA-AWP interface. I'd have folks read the MLA Job List---to see how academic institutions assign value to creative writing when the chips are down and they need to hire someone---and I'd have them peruse AWP Chronicle---to note the way the literary is deployed and "contested" in articles and, well, contests.

Q: Does this mean that all MFA programs and all AWP activities are suspect? A: No.

Q: How would you characterize the MLA-AWP problem? A: In terms of an archaic reliance on older notions of "craft," "voice"; a certain anti-postmodern/anti-poststructural sentiment; and in general a resistance to newer pedagogies (Freirean, etc.).

Q: Does this mean that the state of contemporary poetry (and poetics) in North American postsecondary institutions is tenuous?

A: Yes.

Q: Can you offer any immediate proof of this? A: My most immediate proof would be anecdotal: the vast number of English professors I'm met who can't name even a half-dozen contemporary poets, and who have no working vocabulary for the specifically \*poetic\* status of their claims.

Q: Does this have anything at all to do with the general state of poetry in North America?

A: Yes.

Q: Does the general state of poetry in North America have anything to do with current publishing realities---mergers, acquisitions, and so forth? A: Yes.

Q: With the relative collapse of the small press distribution system? A: Yes.

Q: Will poetry wither on the North American cultural vine? A: No. People will continue to write it.

Q: What's your greatest fear then? A: That we continue to produce a public domain that is unresponsive---politically, aesthetically, socially---to the poetry (and art) of so many of its citizens. My concerns have to do with the cultural influence of a practice that I consider valuable---the influence it might have, as might other arts, in humanizing (or post-humanizing) our public practices.

Q: Doesn't this imply a rather ambitious social agenda on your part, esp. wrt the arts?

A: Yes.

Q: Does the educational system have anything to do with your agenda? A: Yes.

Q: Do electronic networking technologies provide hope for a more distributive, more diverse set of poetic practices?

A: Yes.

Q: Do electronic networking technologies augur a possible threat of social control?

A: Yes.

Q: What is your greatest fear re electronic technologies? A: That the social structures that currently enforce regulation and compliance to assorted norms

(incl. my professional home---academe) manage to seize control of these technologies to augment their power.

Q: Are electronic technologies new?

A: In some ways.

Q: Are electronic technologies simply a new version of an older way of thinking?

A: Sometimes.

///best,

joe

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730. **joel lewis**  
***hughes,plath & larkin***

Thu 19 Feb 1998

---

strikes me that recent firestorm over t hughes' poems represents the first time in years that mainstream poetry has been in the "news" (recent coverage of poetry has tended tp focus on slams & allen ginsberg/beatnickia. it also strikes me that hughes' reputation had been fairly dim in the US in recent years, in part (i believe) to the spate of plath bios that rarely portray him in a favorable light. in college in mid 70's, my professors wld proclaim hughes "the best poet writining english today" (the kind of pronouncement that new critic trained profs loved to make)-- none of my creative writing students have ever heard of him before the controversey (or Robert Lowell, for that matter). Nomatter how sorid the issue, mainstream poetry is a topic of controversey and conversation.

this issue also seems a boost for "old-school" essentialist feminism-- who nevr bought into recent french-influenced feminism --and who had made plath into a central icon -- haven't heard Robin Morgan's name evoked in a while!! --

re: Philip Larkin--i'll reccomend his "all what jazz" as a really hilarious book -- essentially the adventures of a mouldy fig (jazz term for a musical square) trying to make sense of albert ayler, eric doplphy and, even, charlie parker (who thought was too strident & had a lousy tone" he finally gave it up in early 70's.

joel lewis

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731. **jarnot**  
***sharma & shapiro reading***

Thu 19 Feb 1998

---

for those in the new york city area,

on friday night, february 20th there will be a poetry reading by

Prageeta Sharma

&

David Shapiro

at the School for Visual Arts Library:

380 2nd Avenue at 22nd Street,

2nd Floor

7:00 p.m.

David Shapiro has published numerous works of poetry, art and literary criticism, and translation since 1965. Currently a professor of Art History at the William Paterson College, his collected poetry includes *House (Blown Apart)* and *After a Lost Original*. Shapiro has produced a distinguished body of art criticism as well, including monographs on Jim Dine, Jasper Johns, Piet Mondrian, and Michael Goldberg, and he is co-editor of an anthology on aesthetics entitled *Uncontrollable Beauty* -- a book co-published by the School of Visual Arts and Allworth Press.

Prageeta Sharma, the publisher of Vimal Press, has had work published in *Agni* and *No Trees*. A graduate of Brown University's Creative Writing Program in 1995, she was also the recipient of the Academy of American Poets Prize that same year. Ms. Sharma currently lives in Brooklyn, where she is curator of the Fall Cafe reading series.

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732. **Judy Roitman**

**Re: Irby Checklist**

*Thu 19 Feb 1998*

---

Thank you Charles Smith for your hard work and wonderful checklist!

----- Judy Roitman  
| "Whoppers Whoppers Whoppers! Math, University of Kansas | mem-  
ory fails Lawrence, KS 66045 | these are the days." [REDACTED]  
| fax: [REDACTED] | Larry Eigner, 1927-1996

----- Note new area code

-----  
<http://www.math.ukans.edu/~roitman/>  
-----

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733. **louis stroffolino**

**Re: Plath and Hughes**

Thu 19 Feb 1998

---

Yes, Suzanne, I am all for a discussion of PLATH's poetry. Please let's start one. Chris

On Thu, 19 Feb 1998, Suzanne Burns wrote:

*On Wed, 18 Feb 1998, Marjorie Perloff wrote:*

*poems do serve to remind us how talented Plath herself was. He only wishes he could write 1/10 as well.*

*I wholeheartedly agree with this. One thing I regret about this thread is that Plath has been lost somewhere in the margins. If this is a forum to talk about innovation, we might want to look at what she has achieved, rather than indulge in the usual, tired Hughes bashing.*

*Another point: I don't believe he wrote these poems "over the years." I think he wrote them just this last year or so in order to justify himself and cash in on her death yet again! And now he has succeeded.*

*How are you coming to this, Marjorie? Is it really unbelievable that Hughes, who was married to Plath for heavens sake, would write about her, however inadequately, over the years? I can't say anything about the majority of the poems-- nor can anyone-- but it should be noted that about eight or so have been published over the years. I believe one made it into his selected, published about ten years ago.*

Suzanne

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734. **Maria Damon**

**Re: baraka sez**

Thu 19 Feb 1998

---

thank you billy little. this is a breath of fresh air. just saw baraka lasst week at northeastern u, it was marvelous, w/ his band , what is it, blue ark?, v inspiring.

At 8:00 AM -0700 2/19/98, Billy Little wrote:

> My own

> poetic tradition is Fred Douglass, The Sorrow Songs, David Walker,

>The Shouts and

> The Hollers, Work Songs, Arwhoolies, Prison House moans, Tubman and

>Nat Turner.  
> Vesey and Prosser and John Brown and Melville and Harper and Du  
>Bois, Twain, Truth  
> and Linda Brent and Box Brown. Whitman (except for his American  
>Destiny) Brecht,  
> Mayakovsky, Sembene Ousman, Lu Shun, Baldwin, Hansberry, Margaret  
>Walker Mao, Ho,  
> Guillen, Lorca, Roque Dalton, Otto Rene Castillo, Henry Dumas, Larry  
>Neal, Neruda,  
> Louis Armstrong, Babs Gonzalez, Dizzy Gillespie, Monk, Ellington,  
>Sassy and  
> Billie, The Ginsberg who proselytized for American speech, the  
>breath phrase and  
> Bop Prosody and the exposure of the Moloch of US imperialism,  
>Sterling Brown, Aime  
> Cesaire, Olson, The Black Church, Stevie Wonder, Smokey Robinson.  
>  
> The life of the Blues, the music of resisting spirit. Niggers alive  
>and laughing.  
> The victory of the people. Revolutionary democracy, the rule of  
>workers, in  
> alliance with the farmers and democratic forces.  
>  
> It is the John Coltrane Do Bana Coba Beneme Beneme Douglass DuBois  
>Sassy Billie  
> Return to the Source tradition of the burning expressions of Human  
>Desire. Both  
> Form and Content are Weapons of Self Consciousness and Revolution.  
>  
> With what we declared by the time of the 60's Black Arts Movement.  
>An Art that is  
> Afro American. (i.e. democratic) Mass Oriented and Revolutionary.  
>This tradition  
> is the inspiration and method by which we revolutionaries approach  
>Social  
> Transformation by the power of our form and content, their unity and  
>the intensity  
> of struggle. But we must create a new superstructure from those  
>traditions. One  
> controlled by the workers and farmers and democratic middleclasses.  
>international  
> network of institutions and organizations by which our entire

>revolutionary  
> tradition can wage righteous war on the criminal rulers and their  
>corrupt  
> oppressive rule. For it is this wailing, this defiance, this  
>resistance, this joy  
> in the overwhelming of evil by good, that is at the base of our  
>poetic traditions,  
> our history, our continuing lives.  
>  
>from [The Conference on Contemporary Poetry, held April 24th - April 27th,  
>1997]  
>  
>  
> Social Change & Poetic Tradition  
>  
> Amiri Baraka

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735. **Maria Damon**

***Re: dead frog's legs touched by electrodes***

*Thu 19 Feb 1998*

---

At 11:26 PM -0800 2/18/98, Mark Baker wrote:

>Are these lines, already too much for Dodie,--  
>  
>> Lucas, my friend, one  
>> Among those three or four who stay unchanged  
>> Like a separate self,  
>> A stone in the bed of the river  
>> Under every change . . .  
>  
>--supposed to be irony? These are Hughes'  
>friends? Had he met them at close of day,  
>among grey 20th-century Yorkshire moors?  
>Did they or did they not make a stone of  
>the heart? It's not beauty, but it's terrible.  
>  
>  
>Mark Baker

does this passage remind others of nights in high school spent translating ovid or some other classical poet? it strikes me as having the flavor of a clumsy translation of some classic rhetorical figure. i haven't followed the hughes story



in the news, but i'm wondering if the appearance of this book is related to or was catalyzed in some by the diana poem he produced; the themes are similar (the death of a beautiful young woman --hmm, why does poe come to mind). maybe that's just too cheap a shot, in which case i take it back; i do respect his early work, at least what i remember of it.

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### 736. **Maria Damon**

#### **Re: crow**

Thu 19 Feb 1998

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At 3:16 PM -0500 2/18/98, Henry Gould wrote:

>Crows play quite a part in poetry, don't they? I think they're in the  
>early Russian folk epics a lot. Mandelstam played with the name of the  
>town he was exiled in: Voronezh - as "voron"- "nozh" or raven knife, something  
>like that. then there's Poe's famous poem. Cautantowwit or Raven was  
>the chief god of the Narragansetts - ruler the land of the dead in the  
>southwest. "as the crow flies".

here on the cape, the crows are taking over. the place i'm staying used to be a bird sanctuary and filled w/ all kinds of incredible sounds. now it's mostly crows. i've had an onus against them since one of them ate some baby robins right outside my kitchen door a few years ago; the sight of that crow resting on the ground, beak slightly parted after the deed, and the sound of the parent robins shrieking wildly, has been pretty haunting.

>

>Maybe one way to look at Hughes is as a poet who put on the mask of  
>wildness, the primitive - to break out of British civilization - only  
>to find experience - "ordinary" experience - more terrible than anything  
>he played with in his imagination... he's never been humbled, never eaten  
>crow - but maybe the crow ate him... (but I don't really know the story)

>

>- Henry Gould

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### 737. **Suzanne Burns**

#### **Re: the "project"**

Thu 19 Feb 1998

---

On Thu, 19 Feb 1998, Judy Roitman wrote:

*My shelves are stacked with books of poets I want to read and haven't get*

*gotten around to. Why should I or anyone else put time into reading someone we don't like?*

Exactly. Why read someone you don't like, bash someone you haven't read, or waste bandwidth on subjects that don't interest you ....

And yet... 'scuse me for being mischievous because I'm really not into Hughes's work all that much and have many of the same issues with his writing that you have, but isn't it interesting how LONG this thread has been?

Jacqueline Rose's book about Plath opens with a quote from her journals in which she wonders why everybody is talking so much about that damned Eddie Fisher/ Debbie Reynolds thing.... wish I had the quote in front of me. It seems to apply. As for "necrophilia", well I have used that word before to describe a number of Plathies I've met....

Why does this fascinate? Why does everybody and their dog want to get their two-cents in?

Suzanne

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738. **dbkk**

***I and you***

Thu 19 Feb 1998

---

Date: Wed, 18 Feb 1998 14:09:05 EST  
From: Michael McColl <[REDACTED]>

*I've only read the selection in the new yorker; maybe they culled some of the better ones, I don't know. But the phrase "unrelenting I and you autobiography" makes no sense to me. Why is autobiography anymore unrelenting than its absence? (Just trying to pick up on some assumptions that are evidently obvious to many here, and not for that reason anything wrong or sinister, just not exactly clear to me--asking for a bit of patience and a brief explanation where possible).*

Date: Wed, 18 Feb 1998 13:20:39 -0600  
From: Judy Roitman <[REDACTED]>

*"I and you" that's what (I suspect) appears as unrelenting.*

*Isn't that what autobiography is automatically about? inquiring minds want to know.*

A: No.

Judy, thanks for answering Michael's query with such snappy brevity. Yes, it was the "I" "you" thing I was critiquing. Not to go on and on about my own work--but autobiography and exploring notions of the self are the central issues in my own writing. Obviously I'm rather opinionated on the topic. Also of central concern to me is the Dark and the Archetypal. The greatest challenge for me in writing *The Letters of Mina Harker* was how to reinvent (or to be more modest, work with) these tropes in a way that wasn't hokey--also in a way that delights in their hokey potential but goes beyond mere parody.

Dark and Archetypal can be just as dreadfully cliched as anything else, and I imagine that's what Pierre's critique is about--not that he's afraid of those realms. Look at some of the dreadful poetry coming out of Jungian psychology. "Let's march down into The Tunnel and smear some Blood on us." With Plath there is the sense that this stuff is really dangerous and she's always trying to keep in down and it keeps breaking out anyway--and that gives a lot of energy to her work. Risk.

And lots of fragmentation. None of this "I am Dark, Archetypal, and Unified." My problem with Hughes' autobiography in *The Birthday Letters* (since I'm not familiar with the rest of his work, and maybe he stretches more elsewhere) is that there is no questioning of the self, of simple issues like who is speaking, who is being spoken to, no sense of the self as a performance, no hint of the self as not being this unified entity. Plath comes across as schizy and unpredictable, but through Hughes' unified eye.

One of the great pleasures I get from reading Plath--and something I've learned a lot from reading her--is this notion of the self as a performance. One doesn't often get the sense of Sylvia Plath seeing the world outside her window--one gets the sense of these psychic fragments searching desperately for embodiment. Even the dreaded Daddy poem is marvelous as a performance. It confuses me why this poem isn't seen as a performance. This isn't Sylvia being honest, this is Sylvia "doing" rage.

Sorry to go on and on. You know how it is when fans start talking.

Dodie

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739. **k. lederer**

***Re: Plath and Hughes***

*Thu 19 Feb 1998*

---

Perhaps as a segue into Plath (from her diary, which is perhaps hard to find, but in libraries certainly...):

The Preface to *The Diary*, by Ted Hughes (my edition is The Dial Press, 1982):

....One can compare what was really going on in her to a process of alchemy. Her apprentice writings were like impurities thrown off from the various stages of the inner transformation, by-products of the internal work. One really can use these terms in her case..... But what did she want? In a different culture, perhaps, she would have been happier. There was something about her reminiscent of what one reads of Islamic fanatic lovers of God -- a craving to strip away everything from some ultimate intensity, some communion with spirit, or with reality, or simply with intensity itself. She showed something violent in this, something very primitive, perhaps very female, a readiness, even a need, to sacrifice everything to the new birth. With her, this was vividly formulated at every level of her being. The negative phase of it, logically, is suicide. But the positive phase (more familiar in religious terms) is the death of the old false self in the birth of the new and real one. And this is what she finally did achieve, after a long and painful labor.

ARIEL and the associated later poems give us the voice of that self. They are the proof that it arrived. All her other writings, except these journals, are the waste products of its gestation. Sylvia Plath was a person of many masks, both in her personal life and in her writings. Some were camouflage cliché facades, defensive mechanisms, involuntary. And some were deliberate poses, attempts to find the keys to one style or another. These were the visible faces of her lesser selves, her false or provisional selves, the minor roles of her inner drama. Though I spent every day with her for six years, and was rarely separated from her for more than two or three hours at a time, I never saw her show her real self to anybody--except, perhaps, in the last three months of her life.

Her real self had showed itself in her writing, just for a moment, three years earlier, and when I heard it--the self I had married, after all, and lived with and knew well--in that brief moment, three lines recited as she went through a doorway, I knew what I had always felt must happen and had now begun to happen, that her real self, being the real poet, would now speak for itself, and would throw off all those lesser and artificial selves that had monopolized the words up to that point, it was as if a dumb person suddenly spoke.

A real self, as we know, is a rare thing. The direct speech of a real self is rarer still. Where a real self exists it reveals itself, as a rule, only in the quality of the person's presence, or in actions....When a real self finds language, and manages to speak, it is surely a dazzling event--as ARIEL was.

{Then a paragraph positing that although the poems of ARIEL are the products of her real self, they don't truly represent the day-to-day dramas that led up to their composition...}

This is where her journals demonstrate their difference in kind from all her other writings. Here she set down her day to day struggle with her warring selves, for herself only. This is her autobiography, far from complete, but complex and accurate, where she strove to see herself honestly and fought her way through the unmaking and remaking of herself. And the Sylvia Plath we can divine here is the closest we can now get to the real person

in her daily life. The journals exist in an assortment of notebooks and bunches of loose sheets. This selection contains perhaps a third of the whole bulk, which is now in the Neilson Library at Smith College. Two more notebooks survived for a while, maroon-backed ledgers like the '57-'59 volume, and continued the record from late '59 to within three days of her death. The last of these contained entires for several months, and I destroyed it because I did not want her children to have read it (in those days I regarded forgetfulness as an essential part of survival). The other disappeared.

!!!

So, some thoughts:

1. Let's just speculate that the diary that Hughes destroyed said lots of nasty things about him and his philandering--would these new poems have even been possible? Would he have had the nerve to publish them in a such a way? How has Plath's Hughes-induced silence (the lost journals) allowed him to publish this volume?
2. Notice the way in which Hughes constructs a world in which he figures as a sort of absent father-figure: the description of the birthing and sloughing off of her selves (with Hughes simply standing by to witness); the excuse that Hughes profers of saving "her" children from the grief that her final journal may have caused; the incredible insistence that though he was present and by her side at all times, none of what happened to her was ultimately caused by this presence--and so on.
3. By writing such a shamefully blatant attempt to excuse himself from the scene of any number of "crimes of and against the Self" as he construes it here, doesn't he in some sense erase any legitimate connection between The Plath as we now see her and his own body of work? HE DESTROYED AN ENTIRE NOTEBOOK of her writing! He claims to have had no part in the "emergence" of this "real Self" of hers--who cares how many years these new works took him to write--if he insists on foregrounding Plath's suicide yet again (and to his own advantage) then yes, I think we should again begin to discuss HER work--

Regards,  
Katy

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740. **Mark Baker**

***Re: dead frog's legs touched by electrodes***

*Thu 19 Feb 1998*

---

Maria,

Is your "this passage" mine or Hughes' lines? If Hughes', then the "clumsy translation," or the incredible deafness in a poet laureate, is of Yeats--the stone in the changing stream. You read him in high school.

Mark Baker

---

Maria Damon wrote:

*At 11:26 PM -0800 2/18/98, Mark Baker wrote:  
Are these lines, already too much for Dodie,--*

*Lucas, my friend, one  
Among those three or four who stay unchanged  
Like a separate self,  
A stone in the bed of the river  
Under every change . . .*

*--supposed to be irony? These are Hughes'  
friends? Had he met them at close of day,  
among grey 20th-century Yorkshire moors?  
Did they or did they not make a stone of  
the heart? It's not beauty, but it's terrible.*

Mark Baker

*does this passage remind others of nights in high school spent translating  
ovid or some other classical poet? it strikes me as having the flavor of a  
clumsy translation of some classic rhetorical figure. i haven't followed  
the hughes story in the news, but i'm wondering if the appearance of this  
book is related to or was catalyzed in some by the diana poem he produced;  
the themes are similar (the death of a beautiful young woman --hmm, why  
does poe come to mind). maybe that's just too cheap a shot, in which case  
i take it back; i do respect his early work, at least what i remember of  
it.*

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741. **Aldon Nielsen**

**Re: Ted, Sylvia & Phil; Larkin's life sins**

Thu 19 Feb 1998

---

but Larkin was the moldiest of moldy figs -- which accounts for his frequent sins against most jazz -- a narrow love indeed

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742. **Laura Moriarty**  
***Bellamy, Burger, & Jarnot***

*Thu 19 Feb 1998*

---

New non - Blue Screen by Dodie Bellamy and Son of Replaement Killer by Mary Burger. Both in relation to movies. Check out some of that dark autobiographical Bellamy complexity in the flesh!

<http://socrates.berkeley.edu/~moriarty/>

Also short sweet poem by Lisa Jarnot - On the Sublime - with line dark metallic stapler in it -

Laura



<http://socrates.berkeley.edu/~moriarty/>

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743. **Mark Weiss**  
***Re: Plath and Hughes***

*Thu 19 Feb 1998*

---

Marjorie: I'm in general agreement, altho I'm far less taken with Plath's work than you. One question: how do you make someone who committed suicide "look more suicidal...than she actually was"?

At 11:06 PM 2/18/98 -0800, you wrote:

>As someone who has written quite a bit about Sylvia Plath (and reviewed a  
>number of Hughes's books over the years), I'd like to throw my two cents  
>into this debate.

>

>Ted Hughes, let's remember, burned Sylvia Plath's journals and reordered  
>her last poems so as to make her look more suicidal and depressed than she  
>actually was (see my essay on this in POETIC LICENSE). It's uncanny how  
>he re-presented her work and made himself look better. He also let out  
>the most dangerous poems when he edited ARIEL.

>

>Now Hughes comes along and gives us "his side of the story." What is his  
>explanation of Plath's "failure"? Her father complex! Come on, now! How  
>banal can you get. And the poems I've seen reproduced in the papers (I  
>haven't read the book yet) are embarrassingly banal and self-justifying.  
>What is disturbing is not that Hughes, whose work has been going down hill  
>for years) should have written these poems, but that the reviewers LOVE  
>THEM! Call them "great works of art." It's very depressing. This is all  
>just biographical drivel and will have no staying power. However, Hughes'

>poems do serve to remind us how talented Plath herself was. He only  
>wishes he could write 1/10 as well.  
>  
>Another point: I don't believe he wrote these poems "over the years." I  
>think he wrote them just this last year or so in order to justify himself  
>and cash in on her death yet again! And now he has succeeded.  
>  
>Marjorie Perloff  
>  
>

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744. **David Israel**

***Re: hi-gloss***

*Thu 19 Feb 1998*

---

Billy --

thanks for b.c. copying me on this; I generally / sometimes read Poetics in digest (as has been just now), so won't know (till the big computer deigns to send me, now, an unfinished update) what (if anything) has been further said in this thread.

To your point, though --

my description ("radical '60s-ish formula") was vague to the point of obscuring the intention -- which was merely as description, not as critique as such. That is, if I knew that it was, say, Angela Davis (??) / Eldridge Cleaver (??) who had minted that adage, I could more usefully have (mildly) more meaningfully have written, "Davis's adage" -- but that, still, would merely be a matter of description -- i.e., tagging the adage to its origins, for (at least) historical interest.

As for the meaningfulness of said adage --

if you're not part of the solution,  
you're part of the problem

its "binarity" (presumably a neologism there) is what I was (mildly, at most) calling into quasi-question.

Following (at least, say) Gautama's lead, one might infer that (from certain p.o.v.'s) nobody's ever a part of the solution who hasn't been (or, perhaps, isn't) also part of the problem. One must be within the muck to do anything with the muck, that is. But no doubt I write too broadly.

I'm no great admirer of George Will's, btw. Used to enjoy some of his columns abt. 15 years ago, but not since.



cheerz,  
d.i.

p.s.: Regarding "dark archetypal", -- well, okay, I've got a weakness for that stuff in poetry. I've been a tad more interested in other things from Hughes than what I've seen of the Plath poems so far; and will admit to having liked one or two poems of James Fenton's (and, more, some of his journalistic stuff -- which he does w/ great regularity for the NYRoB). Presumably Hughes is, to some degree, in debt to the (perhaps underappreciated?) Robert Graves, dark-arch-wise . . . ; anyway, give me dark-arch, or give me death. (hmm, maybe they're six o' one . . . ?)

>>> Billy Little <[REDACTED]> 02/19 11:02 AM >>>

(Of course the reliance on radical '60s-ish formula is not to be missed; -- not glossed over, rather, glossed.)doan no eggsacly vut u meen heer, mien heir, butt f u emadgin u kin dis dose ol fokes sow glibly u bin squah dancin vit george will 2 lung

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---

745. **Gwyn McVay**  
**Re: Plath and Hughes**

Thu 19 Feb 1998

---

Not too fond of that quote from his preface about "Islamic fanatic lovers of God" either. Maybe just hearing the phrase in a lot of other mouths right now.

Gwyn McVay

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746. **Mark Weiss**  
**Re: Plath and Hughes**

Thu 19 Feb 1998

---

I'm probably putting myself in harm's way here. I care little for Hughes' work, and not a lot for Plath's. But this aspect of her cult (not her poems) has always disturbed me: that she was not responsible for her suicide. The suicide of someone who is physically healthy, and who leaves children behind to come to terms with it, is a fairly strong statement. To strip Plath of responsibility for hers is to strip her of much of her dignity.

One further point before I go into hiding. Hughes' "in those days I regarded forgetfulness as an essential part of survival" reads to me as an admission that if he had been in his right mind at the time he would have found another way to protect his children from the destroyed journal. There certainly is no excuse for destroying anyone's work, but it's not hard to understand the impulse. Suicide

is the unanswerable argument, the ultimate weapon, the nastiest thing that one can do to one's survivors, and Hughes, with his many faults, had just been zapped.

It's worth remembering that a suicide's surviving family members have an astronomically higher likelihood of resorting to suicide themselves. Quite a legacy.

*2. Notice the way in which Hughes constructs a world in which he figures as a sort of absent father-figure: the description of the birthing and sloughing off of her selves (with Hughes simply standing by to witness); the excuse that Hughes proffers of saving "her" children from the grief that her final journal may have caused; the incredible insistence that though he was present and by her side at all times, none of what happened to her was ultimately caused by this presence--and so on.*

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747. **Joe Brennan**  
**Re: Lacan on Poetry**

Thu 19 Feb 1998

---

brennan's response to weiss

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748. **David Israel**  
**Re: Bellamy, Burger, & Jarnot / Loden (etc.)**

Thu 19 Feb 1998

---

Laura M. --

thanks for non (non-thanks); nice, too, therein, the Rachel Loden "Carnal Acknowledgements" -- whence this:

<< . . . Commentary: there is no suffering so great that human minds cannot transform it into some kind of spiritual stretching exercise or wretched experiment. And we want a Greek chorus the way we wanted somebody to watch us learn to walk, we want miles and miles of microfiche and jars of crumbling papyrus. . . . >>

d.i.

>>> Laura Moriarty <[REDACTED]> 02/19 2:52 PM >>>

New non - Blue Screen by Dodie Bellamy and Son of Replaement Killer by Mary Burger. Both in relation to movies. Check out some of that dark autobiographical Bellamy complexity in the flesh!

<http://socrates.berkeley.edu/~moriarty/>

Also short sweet poem by Lisa Jarnot - On the Sublime - with line dark metallic stapler in it -

Laura



<http://socrates.berkeley.edu/~moriarty/>

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749. **k. lederer**

**Re: Plath and Hughes**

Thu 19 Feb 1998

---

Mark,

I agree that there is no excuse for suicide--and most of what you say below as regards Plath's actual suicide--

What I'm trying to say is that Hughes' publishing of his "necro-erotic" work decades after the fact appears tasteless and somehow contrary to the terms he sets up for himself in the Preface quoted earlier--

More to the point, however, I was trying to say that I agreed with Chris that we should, perhaps, use this opportunity to discuss her work--or perhaps to discuss larger issues such as to what degree biography and poetry intersect and so on...not to discuss Hughes' "lameness" etc....

Also: I just thought that this Preface was terribly interesting--really provocative stuff--and probably hadn't been read by most people on this list and/or elsewhere--

Best,

Katy

On Thu, 19 Feb 1998, Mark Weiss wrote:

*I'm probably putting myself in harm's way here. I care little for Hughes' work, and not a lot for Plath's. But this aspect of her cult (not her poems) has always disturbed me: that she was not responsible for her suicide. The suicide of someone who is physically healthy, and who leaves children behind to come to terms with it, is a fairly strong statement. To strip Plath of responsibility for hers is to strip her of much of her dignity.*

*One further point before I go into hiding. Hughes' "in those days I regarded forgetfulness as an essential part of survival" reads to me as an admission that if he had been in his right mind at the time he would have found another way to protect his children from the destroyed journal. There certainly is no excuse for destroying anyone's work, but it's not hard to*

*understand the impulse. Suicide is the unanswerable argument, the ultimate weapon, the nastiest thing that one can do to one's survivors, and Hughes, with his many faults, had just been zapped.*

*It's worth remembering that a suicide's surviving family members have an astronomically higher likelihood of resorting to suicide themselves. Quite a legacy.*

*2. Notice the way in which Hughes constructs a world in which he figures as a sort of absent father-figure: the description of the birthing and sloughing off of her selves (with Hughes simply standing by to witness); the excuse that Hughes proffers of saving "her" children from the grief that her final journal may have caused; the incredible insistence that though he was present and by her side at all times, none of what happened to her was ultimately caused by this presence--and so on.*

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750. **k. lederer**

**Re: Plath and Hughes**

Thu 19 Feb 1998

Also:

How is Plath's suicide being figured in terms of gender here? The notion that she left behind children etc...

I can think of a number of male poets throughout history who have killed themselves in one way or another and been figured to be heroic--

Certainly they have not been admonished for "leaving children behind" etc in the same way that Plath has--

What if Plath had been the father? Hughes a cheating-on-spouse, non-writing mother? I suspect (it's obvious, really) that the discourse would be altogether different--

Regards,  
Katy L.

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751. **James Finnegan**

**Re: turf wars**

Thu 19 Feb 1998

Joe, you made many good points, but allow me to pick at a few of your Q&As:

Q: Do you believe there's such a thing as "official verse culture"? A: Yes.

----Yes, and all ages have had some vaguely definable "official verse culture," so I'm not certain this description hasn't become anything more than a stock response.

Q: How would you characterize official verse culture? A: In broad sweep, I'd point to the MLA-AWP interface. I'd have folks read the MLA Job List--to see how academic institutions assign value to creative writing when the chips are down and they need to hire someone---and I'd have them peruse AWP Chronicle---to note the way the literary is deployed and "contested" in articles and, well, contests.

Q: How would you characterize the MLA-AWP problem? A: In terms of an archaic reliance on older notions of "craft," "voice"; a certain anti-postmodern/anti-poststructural sentiment; and in general a resistance to newer pedagogies (Freirean, etc.).

----This close identification of MLA and AWP seems somewhat odd to me. MLA, judging from some of the conference propaganda I've seen, doesn't strike me as an organization deadset against post mo & post- structuralism. AWP's a rather different kind of outfit--one meant to serve students & their teachers in the college/univ.-based writing programs. AWP I don't think of as cause so much as it is manifestation of its constituency.

Q: Does this mean that the state of contemporary poetry (and poetics) in North American postsecondary institutions is tenuous?

A: Yes.

Q: Can you offer any immediate proof of this? A: My most immediate proof would be anecdotal: the vast number of English professors I'm met who can't name even a half-dozen contemporary poets, and who have no working vocabulary for the specifically \*poetic\* status of their claims.

Q: Does this have anything at all to do with the general state of poetry in North America?

A: Yes.

----I think it can be acknowledged that there is so such thing as a general readership for contemp poetry--not for the mainstream, not for the innovative, nor for the new formalists. That most English profs can't name 6 contemporary poets is sad. Then again, no profession/group could, other than we contemp poets, which gets into the circularity of no readers/no recognition.

Q: Does the general state of poetry in North America have anything to do with current publishing realities---mergers, acquisitions, and so forth? A: Yes.

---If any group was hurt by big biz events that began in 80s and have continued off & on since, it's been mainstream poets. Random House takes over Knopf, & some marginal mainstreamers (often worthy poets) get dropped. A Levine, Merwin, Hecht survive...but a Donald Finkel doesn't make the cut. The more innovative poets were never on the lists to begin with. I don't believe any unfeeling conglomerates went after The Figures or Telephone Books. Douglas Messerli can rest easy--no MBAs are plotting to take over Sun & Moon and force him to do cookbooks & self-helps.

Q: With the relative collapse of the small press distribution system? A: Yes.

Q: Will poetry wither on the North American cultural vine? A: No. People will continue to write it.

Again, it gets back to readers. Yes, we'll write it, but will it be read in sufficient quantities to support the likes of SPD? Perhaps, the new technologies you refer to may, in time, offer some relief to the distribution woes of small press. Perhaps will get an "Altermazon.com," so to speak. The new technologies relieving some of the overhead burdens and variable costs (inventory, brick & mortar, returns, catalog printing, etc.) borne by distributors.

Finnegan

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752. **Robin Morris**

**Re: Plath and Hughes**

Thu 19 Feb 1998

---

Interesting, that Orientalizing tendency apparent in the poems I read began early:

At 12:44 PM 2/19/98 -0600, you wrote:

>The Preface to The Diary, by Ted Hughes (my edition is The Dial Press, >1982):

>There

>was something about her reminiscent of what one reads of Islamic fanatic >lovers of God

and essentializing along the lines of gender which usually coincide with such Orientalizing also occurs:

*She showed something violent in this, something very  
primitive, perhaps very female, a readiness, even a need, to sacrifice  
everything to the new birth.*

Frankly, with a person who viewed me this way in my face non-stop for six years or whatever it was, I would have committed homicide, if not suicide.

Robin

\* \* \* \* \*

Robin A. Morris

Home page: <http://www-unix.oit.umass.edu/~ramorris>

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753. **David Israel**  
***poet-heroes & suicide***

Thu 19 Feb 1998

---

[was, Re: Plath and Hughes ]

Katy Kederer wrote,

<< . . . I can think of a number of male poets throughout history who have killed themselves in one way or another and been figured to be heroic-- . . . >>

heroic in / for suicide, do you mean? Could you name one? (I'm not aware of entertaining that idea abt. anybody, truth to tell.)

The legend of Li Po's (possible) drowning in river, looking for the moon, seems a romanticized myth (hinting at the suicide question maybe), but I don't know that he's considered heroic for that . . . who else? Not to put you on the spot, -- just that I can't think of such examples.

d.i.

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754. **Mark Weiss**  
***Re: Plath and Hughes***

Thu 19 Feb 1998

---

Katy: As to your two transmissions, I'm in total agreement with the first. As to your second, "How is Plath's suicide being figured in terms of gender here? The notion that she left behind children etc... I can think of a number of male poets throughout history who have killed themselves in one way or another and been figured to be heroic-- Certainly they have not been admonished for "leaving children behind" etc in the same way that Plath has-- What if Plath had been the father? Hughes a cheating-on-spouse, non-writing mother? I suspect (it's obvious, really) that the discourse would be altogether different--," it's not at all obvious to me that there's a gender difference of the kind you suggest here. First, self-destructive behavior is not the same as suicide, nor does it have the same impact on surviving children. I raised Paul Blackburn's son. Paul could be said to have killed himself with cigarettes and booze, but that was not his patent

intention, nor did Carlos feel abandoned therefor or given permission to do likewise. Second, in your hypothetical scenario (I guess) Plath cheats on Hughes who kills himself in response, public reaction would certainly be different for reasons that have a lot to do with gender as construed in our society, but I think in the following manner: a. killing oneself for love is unmanly (women aren't that important); b. killing oneself is more acceptable in women, especially if done in a non-violent way (which may be why suicide attempts are far more common in adolescent girls than in adolescent boys).

At 04:28 PM 2/19/98 -0600, you wrote:

>Mark,

>

>I agree that there is no excuse for suicide--and most of what you say

>below as regards Plath's actual suicide--

>

>What I'm trying to say is that Hughes' publishing of his "necro-erotic"

>work decades after the fact appears tasteless and somehow contrary to the

>terms he sets up for himself in the Preface quoted earlier--

>

>More to the point, however, I was trying to say that I agreed with Chris

>that we should, perhaps, use this opportunity to discuss her work--or

>perhaps to discuss larger issues such as to what degree biography and

>poetry intersect and so on...not to discuss Hughes' "lameness" etc....

>

>Also: I just thought that this Preface was terribly interesting--really

>provocative stuff--and probably hadn't been read by most people on this

>list and/or elsewhere--

>

>Best,

>Katy

>

>On Thu, 19 Feb 1998, Mark Weiss wrote:

>

>> I'm probably putting myself in harm's way here. I care little for Hughes'

>> work, and not a lot for Plath's. But this aspect of her cult (not her

>> poems) has always disturbed me: that she was not responsible for her

>> suicide. The suicide of someone who is physically healthy, and who leaves

>> children behind to come to terms with it, is a fairly strong statement. To

>> strip Plath of responsibility for hers is to strip her of much of her

dignity.

>>

>> One further point before I go into hiding. Hughes' "in those days I



>> regarded forgetfulness as an essential part of survival" reads to me as an  
>> admission that if he had been in his right mind at the time he would have  
>> found another way to protect his children from the destroyed journal. There  
>> certainly is no excuse for destroying anyone's work, but it's not hard to  
>> understand the impulse. Suicide is the unanswerable argument, the ultimate  
>> weapon, the nastiest thing that one can do to one's survivors, and Hughes,  
>> with his many faults, had just been zapped.  
>>  
>> It's worth remembering that a suicide's surviving family members have an  
>> astronomically higher likelihood of resorting to suicide themselves. Quite  
>> a legacy.  
>>  
>> >2. Notice the way in which Hughes constructs a world in which he figures  
as  
>> >a sort of absent father-figure: the description of the birthing and  
>> >sloughing off of her selves (with Hughes simply standing by to witness);  
>> >the excuse that Hughes proffers of saving "her" children from the grief  
>> >that her final journal may have caused; the incredible insistence that  
>> >though he was present and by her side at all times, none of what happened  
>> >to her was ultimately caused by this presence--and so on.  
>> >  
>> >  
>>  
>  
>

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755. **Peter Balestrieri**

***Tired?***

*Thu 19 Feb 1998*

---

Tired of all those super-slick poems that show you  
toys you can't afford, trips you can't take, and clothes  
you wouldn't be caught dead in?

Wish you could grab the poets by the lapels and scream,  
"Get real!!!"

Well here's good news! Because here's Peter Balestrieri.

The first poet to see things the way you do.  
Speak your language.

And give you what you want to know more about.  
Careers. Cash. And making your weekends count.

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756. **Joe Amato/Kass Fleisher**

***Re: turf wars***

*Thu 19 Feb 1998*

---

finnegan---more friendly would be james, yes?---james, thanx for picking up on my q & a, which i intend to be provocative... but which at the same time i posted b/c i was feeling pinched by certain discussions hereabouts...

"official verse culture": well though i think that it's important to call out power centers as such... i've been in far too many contexts where official verse culture---or its equivalent in fiction or nonfiction circles---has acted as a gag both on my aesthetic sensibility and on my capacity to express my discomfort... if you ain't been there, then perhaps, perhaps you don't know what i mean... but if you *\*have\** been there, as i suspect you have, then i probably don't have to say much more... "there" is where good and proper poetry is such & such, period... of course, to define the contours of official verse culture today might be difficult, but i believe it can be done... i think in fact jed rasula manages it in *\_the american poetry wax museum\_*, a book that---whatever the flaws r. kostelanetz has managed to find recently (his short review in the recent and final *\_poetic briefs\_* that i am extremely grateful to have rec'd)---is not afraid to call the more powerful political alliances ("institutional consolidations" is rasula's term as i recall) that have served to represent and legitimate poetry and poetic practice in north america... and of course a major actor in this representative practice has been the english dept...

awp and mla are in cahoots---so to speak (i'm somewhat less interested in motive than in effects)---in that awp "sanctions" writing programs that become in many cases the primary embodiment of the mla membership's understanding of creative writing... i.e., how said orientation manifests itself, not least in its job lists... that this is to personify the organizational is ok imho... but it's more than simply the job lists---it's also insofar as the way english profs, incl. creative writers, are educated about their own profession, their own professional and poetic practices (both to the extent that the poetic is professional, and to the extent that it isn't)... about how (e.g.) scholarship is to be conducted (this way and not that)... about how (e.g.) teachers come to think of their role in educating students... there have to be SOME historical and determinate reasons why i experience the english profession the way i do---and i'm not alone... sure, the post-modern/poststructural nexus has been endorsed now by mla, current backlash aside... just be sure to write it in sentences!... and when you're in the process of

elaborating on Major Cultural Happenings, just be sure to exclude poets and poetry...

on the avg, now... i'd hate to name recent books, but i will if asked... and when i rail against sentences, i'm not unaware that i'm in the process of trying to scribble same!...

in short: mla as a professional society is surely in large part responsible for the way its members come to their professional work (pmla being a prime outlet and example)... interesting to have a look at profession 97 in this regard--the poetry forum... which poets were chosen to speak, how these poets spoke, what trends in poetry they represented... and of course, what wasn't said, what wasn't represented...

digression: used to be that ncte represented an alternative to mla in that it was interested in talking pedagogy... now that cccc has dried-up as a job convention, though, it's clear that mla has wrested some control back of composition pedagogy... reason i mention this is to indicate the ways in which prof. organizations are situated in terms of professional practices... so it should come as no surprise that i point at mla in toto, though of course we poets who teach, most of us, are part of this totality... and though of course each of us may represent diverse motivations and such like... i take your point about awp and mla being different beasts, but again---strong affiliations persist...

as you suggest, one might observe that mainstream poets are hit hard by all of the publishing problems (e.g.) too, that 'we're all in this together' or some such... some would therefore argue that any talk of mainstream vs. alternative is divisive... but i'll defer to my observation in my first para---the one about my discomfort at having to swallow my... thoughts (which, if you know me, i'm none too good at) when it comes to talking about things poetic in the presence of certain educated souls... broad brush is necessary here, i think... sure, i've met many more mainstream poets i like, whose work i like and admire... that many have access to an awards network, say, that i \*might\* enjoy myself---that not a few often exude a pedigree that i'll never exude, much like many of the mla hot-shots whom 'we' regularly elect to office (have a close look at those bios sometime, if you haven't already)---is less important to me (REALLY) than that i read their work, but that many don't read the work of those i also admire, those who are not mainstream... and are often condescending in this regard...

there are many factions here of course and i don't wish to set up a binary... at the same time, i \*do\* think that it's damned important to talk about the general per- and reception of poetry and the arts in the u.s. (by non-poets, and non-artists) and why this per/reception continues in the face of the very realities that you and i both know, james, are choking the life out of certain aesthetic talents... nea cutbacks, yes, but perhaps more profoundly and as i just posted to

another list a week back, the fact that no less than three of my first-year writing students argued in class the other day that the best way to make for profound social transformation is to invest in the stock market---no shit... "we shouldn't be afraid to throw 50 million at theoretical physics," one student remarked, whereas his first response to funding artists as a social program was "why?---so they can paint?"... hey --- it's not just that i'm on a tech campus...

the reality is, i think, that though poets, mainstream and alternative, will continue to write poetry, public attitudes (both in and out of the educational institution) are making it damned difficult for many of us to continue to eek our contributions forth, and making it systemically difficult for the emergence of pathways that will permit such eeking to continue into the larger public domains... and when push comes to shove, those who advocate, implicitly and often explicitly, a more mainstream poetic (which again, is often anti-theoretical at its core)---which i have no problem at all placing under my AWP broad-brush (please: apologies to my allies and friends there, but i must be blunt)---are i think doing a disservice to those who don't "fit" that poetic, and perhaps---speculation here that i'll leave at that for now---vitiating a more urgent and critical public response to things poetic b/c of said advocacy...

my fullest response to this issue, as i've posted here before, at  
<http://www.iit.edu/~amato/moonlight.html>

the internet is one way to help along alternative practices, and i believe it can help (both formally and politically)... it can hurt too---it no doubt will, has... but it's gonna be a struggle, and i'm getting too old to believe that everything good in life MUST come hard...

i'm an ambitious guy, like i say... on the other hand, why not be?...

best, rambling///

joe

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757. **Susan Schultz**  
***Re: Plath and Hughes***  
*Thu 19 Feb 1998*

---

And as for "responsibility"--anyone want to say anything about bipolar disorder / unipolar disorder and the fact that they are often terminal illnesses? sms

On Thu, 19 Feb 1998, k. lederer wrote:

Also:

*How is Plath's suicide being figured in terms of gender here? The notion*

*that she left behind children etc...*

*I can think of a number of male poets throughout history who have killed themselves in one way or another and been figured to be heroic--*

*Certainly they have not been admonished for "leaving children behind" etc in the same way that Plath has--*

*What if Plath had been the father? Hughes a cheating-on-spouse, non-writing mother? I suspect (it's obvious, really) that the discourse would be altogether different--*

*Regards,  
Katy L.*

---

Susan M. Schultz  
Dept. of English  
1733 Donaghho Road  
University of Hawai'i-Manoa  
Honolulu, HI 96822  
<http://writing.upenn.edu/epc/authors/schultz>  
<http://writing.upenn.edu/epc/eazines/tinfish>

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758. **Joe Ahearn**

***Re: Tis better to be vile than vile esteemd***

*Thu 19 Feb 1998*

---

Speaking of nastiness on nastiness, my favorite poem by Hughes is called "The Love Pet." Despite what we may or may not say about the progressiveness of Hughes's language, that poem "feels" exactly like what my divorce was like. In fact, now that I think about it, NONE of the language associated with my divorce was particularly interesting... :) But animal nastiness--o yes, loads and loads and loads...

I guess interesting language is safely reserved for those among us not savagely at war with lawyers and bitter lovers.

And if Mr. Larkin didn't care for Charlie Parker, he was no kind of jazz fan. Charlie Parker's music is the great text of pleasure.

At 10:50 AM 2/18/98 -0600, you wrote:

>Who was it a few months ago that said that Hughes wrote some effective  
>poems about nasty animals attacking other nasty animals? That seems to be

>the strength of his earlier work. Crow impressed me years ago with its  
>fine nastiness, though I haven't followed him in the last decade or so.  
>The snippets I have seen quoted from the Plath book are quite vile.  
>  
>That said, I much prefer Hughes to Larkin. I was quite surprised a few  
>years ago when the revelations about Larkin's racism, sexism and general  
>nastiness came out. I was not surprised at the revelations, but at the  
>surprise they evoked in others. I had always read his poetry as the  
>expression of a sort of snide British anti-intellectual xenophobic  
>resentful postwar anti-modernist mindset. He condemned the three "Ps":  
>"Picasso, Pound, Parker," who had ruined painting, poetry, and jazz, in  
>his opinion.  
>  
>Jonathan Mayhew  
>Department of Spanish and Portuguese  
>3062 Wescoe Hall  
>University of Kansas  
>[REDACTED]  
>[REDACTED]  
>  
>

Joe Ahearn

[REDACTED]

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759. **Karen Kelley**  
***Re: Plath and Hughes***  
*Thu 19 Feb 1998*

---

k. lederer wrote:

>  
> Also:  
>  
> How is Plath's suicide being figured in terms of gender here? The notion  
> that she left behind children etc...  
>  
> I can think of a number of male poets throughout history who have killed  
> themselves in one way or another and been figured to be heroic--  
>  
> Certainly they have not been admonished for "leaving children behind" etc  
> in the same way that Plath has--

>

> What if Plath had been the father? Hughes a cheating-on-spouse,  
> non-writing mother? I suspect (it's obvious, really) that the discourse  
> would be altogether different--

>

> Regards,  
> Katy L.

The first male suicide who came to my mind was John Berryman (--I wonder if the list is generally pro or con Berryman?) There is a harrowing book about his life & suicide by John Haffenden--in the end you feel relieved Berryman's finally done away with himself, he was SO miserable. I never get that sense from Plath--she just always seems enraged.

But I do think Mark Weiss raises the most compelling reason not to suicide: all of the people I've ever know who have been continuously & hauntingly tempted by suicide are the children of suicides. Mom or Dad, it doesn't seem to matter. It's as if they've never had the option of seeing the act as inconceivable.

And thank you, Katy, for the image of Ted Hughes in a dowdy housedress!

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760. **Blaise Cirelli**

**Watten - FRAME**

*Thu 19 Feb 1998*

---

Awhile back, someone posted to the list that they were disappointed we didn't discuss specific books of poetry. That person (can't remember who it was) suggested discussing FRAME by Watten. Since, I only read a couple of his poems in an anthology, I wasn't very familiar with him.

I did get a chance to read FRAME and found it delightful. Watten is experimental and challenging. One of my fave poems was "Barnaby Jones." Don't know when it was written but assume it was in the 1980's when the TV show was popular. Watten, in the poem, compares Barnaby Jones and Dragnet--extremely inventive and funny. Who says experimental poetry can't have a sense of humor.

Thanks to you whoever recommended Watten.

Blaise Cirelli

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761. **Kevin Varrone**

**Philly Reading**

Thu 19 Feb 1998

---

To any and all in the Philadelphia area:

5 Corners Poetry Series Presents

Julia Blumenreich

&

Ron Silliman

Thursday, February 26th, 8 p.m.

@ george's 5st Cafe

(5th between Lombard & South Streets)

215/██████

Special post-reading musical guest

\*JAFFNA\*

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762. **Maria Damon**

**Re: hi-gloss**

Thu 19 Feb 1998

---

At 3:21 PM -0500 2/19/98, David Israel wrote:

>Billy --

>

>thanks for b.c. copying me on this; I generally / sometimes read Poetics in

>digest (as has been just now), so won't know (till the big computer deigns

>to send me, now, an unfinished update) what (if anything) has been further

>said in this thread.

>

>To your point, though --

>

>my description ("radical '60s-ish formula") was vague to the point of

>obscuring the intention -- which was merely as description, not as critique

>as such. That is, if I knew that it was, say, Angela Davis (??) / Eldridge

>Cleaver (??) who had minted that adage, I could more usefully have (mildly)

>more meaningfully have written, "Davis's adage" -- but that, still, would

>merely be a matter of description -- i.e., tagging the adage to its origins,

>for (at least) historical interest.

>

>As for the meaningfulness of said adage --

>



> if you're not part of the solution,  
> you're part of the problem  
>

i thot this was lenin?

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763. **Maria Damon**  
**Re: Plath and Hughes**

Thu 19 Feb 1998

---

At 12:29 PM -0800 2/19/98, Mark Weiss wrote:

>I'm probably putting myself in harm's way here. I care little for Hughes'  
>work, and not a lot for Plath's. But this aspect of her cult (not her  
>poems) has always disturbed me: that she was not responsible for her  
>suicide. The suicide of someone who is physically healthy, and who leaves  
>children behind to come to terms with it, is a fairly strong statement. To  
>strip Plath of responsibility for hers is to strip her of much of her dignity.  
>  
>One further point before I go into hiding. Hughes' "in those days I  
>regarded forgetfulness as an essential part of survival" reads to me as an  
>admission that if he had been in his right mind at the time he would have  
>found another way to protect his children from the destroyed journal. There  
>certainly is no excuse for destroying anyone's work, but it's not hard to  
>understand the impulse. Suicide is the unanswerable argument, the ultimate  
>weapon, the nastiest thing that one can do to one's survivors, and Hughes,  
>with his many faults, had just been zapped.  
>  
>It's worth remembering that a suicide's surviving family members have an  
>astronomically higher likelihood of resorting to suicide themselves. Quite  
>a legacy.  
>

yes to all of this, good points; fault-finding and fingerpointing in a complex situation like this is unsound; we may all start to sound like robin morgan...

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764. **Laurie Schneider/Crag Hill**  
**Re: POETICS Digest - 17 Feb 1998 to 18 Feb 1998**  
Fri 20 Feb 1998

---

DBuuck: I would be intersted in subscribing to tripwire. If possible send first issue and bill and I'll send a check.  
Crag Hill

1015 NW Clifford  
Pullman, WA 99163

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765. **Thomas Bell**

***Re: Plath and Hughes and Freud and Jung***

*Fri 20 Feb 1998*

---

If one were inclined to analyze writers it would appear that there might be material here for a Jungian approach rather than Freudian or Lacanian, esp. in view of his animal poetry (actually Hillman might be more fitting.? archetype, darkness, anima, animus, hmm. tom bell

At 12:44 PM 2/19/98 -0600, k. lederer wrote:

>Perhaps as a segue into Plath (from her diary, which is perhaps hard to  
>find, but in libraries certainly...):

>

>The Preface to The Diary, by Ted Hughes (my edition is The Dial Press,  
>1982):

>

>....One can compare what was really going on in her to a process  
>of alchemy.

>Her apprentice writings were like impurities thrown off from the  
>various stages of the inner transformation, by-products of the internal  
>work. One really can use these terms in her case..... But what did she

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766. **Rebecca Weldon Sithiwong**  
***Hughes***

*Fri 20 Feb 1998*

---

I am not a critic, so I will not discuss, in this context, the literary merits of Hughes' work. However, I simply cannot resist making an observation.

I consider his last publication in incredibly poor taste. If he had written a prose autobiography focusing upon his relationship with Sylvia Plath, I would have given him the benefit of the doubt, but, he seems to me a poet hiding behind poetry to use it for his defense. This seems to be unethical behaviour, the fact of which his guilt or innocence in the manipulation of Plath's life and work would not change.

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767. **Robert Hale**

***TROPE OF DARKNESS and adjectives***

*Fri 20 Feb 1998*

---

As per some recent posts, I recall a discussion of the use of the word "darkness" in a poetry workshop with Joel Lewis.

Someone in the group used the word in a poem and Joel brought up some problems associated with it, such as its 19th Century feel. In the case of the workshop, this word was working against a poem that was otherwise struggling to begin with, as workshop poems often are (you have to begin somewhere, but not, perhaps, with darkness, especially in a confessional poem).

Some tropes of "darkness" can be traced quite readily to Conrad -- to sight and its impossibility, as Marlow narrates in "The Heart of Darkness":

"that Kurtz who at the time I did not see -- you understand. He was just a word for me. I did not see the man in the name any more than you do. Do you see him? Do you see the story? Do you see anything?"

We're talking about referents with referentiality -- a dicey business for any level of poetry, workshop or, how shall I say, advanced (?) that is trying to make the reader see something. We're also inevitably talking about "the horror" :

that people lie to establish a condition of truth

and that there is a tension between the phrase and every translation compelled to resolve it.

What was Kurtz thinking? We'll never know. And let's not forget Conrad's obsession with "making the reader see" as he said in an oft-cited intro to one of his novels, *The Nigger of the Narcissus*.

So "darkness" and "horror", fields of referentiality obviously still relevant, but better pursued through other adjectives or none at all or perhaps ripe for repetition, chants and incantations, along with Kurtz, which is when you know, I suppose, what he was thinking when he repeated it twice with exclamation points.

Herodotus is a strange reference here. As you read his "Histories" notice the lack of adjectives. One of the West's earliest prose writers knew about these trappings and/or was perhaps merely following rules of grammar.

Try limiting yourself to one adjective every 500 words or so and see what happens. Let's not call it "experimental" poetry for obvious reasons.

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768. **George Bowering**

**Re: crow**

*Fri 20 Feb 1998*

---

| At 3:16 PM -0500 2/18/98, Henry Gould wrote:  
| Crows play quite a part in poetry, don't they?

Yup. The first one I think of is that Finnish poet with the formerly gapped teeth who named himself and his book after that pesky bird.

George Bowering.

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

fax: [REDACTED]

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769. **Tom Beckett**

**"stops"**

*Fri 20 Feb 1998*

---

What about conceiving a poem as a series of "stops"? (I'm currently writing one with that title.) The idea being that each line should be so constructed as to give the reader pause, each line in effect enacting a Brechtian interruption or occasion for a renewed meditation. I'm new to the list and hopeful that this might be a somewhat different spin on things.

Tom Beckett

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770. **Henry Gould**

**Re: Plath and Hughes**

*Fri 20 Feb 1998*

---

I have the feeling that analyzing the Plath/Hughes reality from either a male or female perspective is a kind of trap, an endless circle of dissection and blame. Far more interesting to look at how Plath's poetry radiates more skill, fascination, intensity, mana than Hughes - BECAUSE she echoes the patriarchal tradition in her work more closely and more scrupulously (from a standpoint of conflict). Hughes is unfaithful. Plath kills herself. Hughes destroys some of her notebooks. And we sit in judgement, archivists mourning the aborted manuscripts.

Even more interesting might be to think about the Plath/Hughes tragedy using a another lens - not feminism or masculinism but neutral, generic lit history: i.e., the fate of that generation of writers in English coming after the modernists & after WW 2 and the Holocaust. Where did poets "stand" after Pound Eliot Joyce et al created a complete "counter" tradition - which then became THE tradition? Basically the next generation was devoured by their forebears (psychologically overshadowed) - and they worked under the sign of self-destruction & loss of control (Berryman, Lowell, Plath, Sexton, Dylan Thomas, Delmore Schwartz, Crane, etc. etc...); they became the manic underside (still Establishment) of the new Pax Americana. So how is poetry in that poisoned atmosphere a kind of fatal gift or death-talisman that has to be acted out to the end? (supposedly) & how much of that do we both participate in and fail to see - while trying to measure out blame with teaspoons? Traditional Verse Culture self-destructed 2 generations ago and we're still working out the funeral arrangements.

- Henry Gould

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771. **Marcella Durand**

**Re: GANG OF FOUR**

*Fri 20 Feb 1998*

---

Since this discussion thread started (and my awareness of the number = four thus heightened), I've noticed that the best song on most of my = albums is the fourth one, and that most of the businesses that I deal = with (printers, xeroxers, printers again, etc...) are on the fourth = floor. Is that freaky or what?

-----

From: Rebecca Weldon Sithiwong

Sent: Wednesday, February 18, 1998 10:04 PM

To: [REDACTED]

Subject: GANG OF FOUR

I am reading through a week's worth of digests, a comment to Robert Hale = on the number 4.

In Asian societies numerology is considered important to interpretaion = of events past, present and future. In general, odd numbers are considered = of auspicious import and the even are not. In Lanna Tai artistic = iconography, of which I can speak with some expertise, even-numbered elements are = used

when fashioning funerary items. Some believe that odd-numbered elements = are related to the human couple and the child; the extra factor in the pair representing life which is auspicious in relation to death.

I am sure that one might be able to find many exceptions to this interpretation, but, in the Chinese context, where numerology is a = national pasttime, the use of an inauspicious number in the mass iconography of Maoist doctrine would not be an inconsequential phenomenon.

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772. **linda russo**

***Tender buttons query***

*Fri 20 Feb 1998*

---

an \_email\_ address for Jennifer Moxley?

also is SHE Tender Buttons? or is someone else??

clarity please

thank you

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773. **linda russo**

***Re: tender buttons q.***

*Fri 20 Feb 1998*

---

My apologies to Lee Ann Brown  
of tender buttons --

soon after i sent my query I found my answer

i'd still like an email for Jennifer Moxley though.

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774. **Gary Sullivan**

***Reply to Katy Lederer***

*Fri 20 Feb 1998*

---

Hi, Katy:

Could you please tell us who those male poets are who "killed themselves in one way or another and been figured to be heroic"? My own sense is that this simply isn't true, but realize it's just "a sense" I have.

When I'd read that Richard Brautigan committed suicide I was very upset, had just finished *\_So the Wind Won't Blow It All Away\_*, thought more would be

coming, couldn't understand why he'd did it. Keith Abbott's book on Brautigan, as I remember it, hardly cast Brautigan as a hero; my memory of Abbott's portrayal of Brautigan was that B. was a self-involved substance abuser, obsessed with fame, bitter over waning critical attention & audience in the U.S., his suicide (as cast by Abbott) as pointless, if inevitable (given Brautigan's increasingly negative frame of mind). Reading Lew Welch's letters (*I Remain*), it's baffling as to why, once he'd been set up in a cabin, seemingly had all the time in the world to write (time being a constant problem for Welch), he chose then to "give up." I certainly don't--& no one I've read or talked with does--cast his apparent suicide as "heroic." I'm not that well acquainted with Berryman's work, or whatever discourse surrounds it, but I've never heard or read anyone calling him a hero for leaping into the Mississippi. The only more-or-less contemporary instance I can think of is in the discourse surrounding d.a. levy's suicide--and there what you'll get are people who believe he was either driven to it by the local authorities (this was in Cleveland, in the 60s--levy, Jim Lowell & others were consistently hassled, jailed, & generally watched), or actually murdered by them. In that instance, the narrative seems to be less about the suicide itself than the constant hassles--people talk about his death in the way people talk about that of Lenny Bruce.

I have to admit that, while I'm a reader & admirer of Plath's poetry, I haven't read much of the secondary material, and am not sure how, say, a professional critic is likely to think and write about her suicide. I do know that a few of the people I've talked to about her see her as, if not quite "heroic," certainly as a kind of martyr--something I don't think helps anyone understand or (more importantly) appreciate her often extraordinary writing. But these people were young college kids (like me at the time), and more given to uncritical romanticism than they might be today.

Anyway, I'm not sure that this is, as you say, a "gender" issue, and if I'm going to buy that, I need something more substantial from your end than the assertion that it's "obvious." If what you say is true, it's definitely worth thinking about. Can you maybe elaborate on your earlier post?

Thanks, Katy.

Yours,

Gary Sullivan



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775. **Christopher W. Alexander**

**Re: Tired?**

*Fri 20 Feb 1998*

---

Hey, sign me up!

That's right, my life will be different  
since I've found new Peter Balestrieri.

With Peter Balestrieri, there's no need to worry  
anymore about niggling demands for payment,  
because all of your debts are consolidated into  
one easy-to-maintain account.

Peter Balestrieri helps you shop the smart way,  
allowing individual debts to accrue "a la carte" style  
for easy access. And with no more time wasted at  
the checkout counter searching for the right card,  
you'll be free to move More quality time at home.

You'll live just like a Rolling Stone.

Office blues got you down? Weekends seem to fly by?  
Gambling away your hard-won earnings?

You wouldn't trust your kids' nutrition to just anybody.

So why not give it a try?

I'm sure Peter Balestrieri has a program that can help •you•.

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776. **k. lederer**

**Re: poet-heroes & suicide**

*Fri 20 Feb 1998*

---

David,

You have put me on the spot--

I don't really want to bring some of these people up for some personal reasons--

But I will say that it seems quite obvious to me that depression, early death  
(due to suicidal behaviors like smoking too much, drinking too much etc), and  
unhealthy forms of poverty (not eating right) have been utterly romanticized in  
the world of poetry--

I guess the funny thing is that I don't know whether some of the following had  
children or not--in the great halls of liteary history it doesn't matter when it's a  
man--



Jack Kerouac (I know he treated a number of women incl. wives poorly in the name of his art), Celan, Milton (didn't die, but treated daughter like crap in the name of his art...), Burroughs, Hemmingway, Faulkner and so on. I think you know what I'm talking about--and I don't think what I'm saying is very shocking or original--that men's literary needs--their inspirational needs--are figured to be far more important than health or family--health and family are looked upon as constraints...

One thing to remember is that Ted Hughes was far more famous than Sylvia at the time of her death--she did not know for sure that her work would go down in history, so to speak, in the way it did--she was busy typing up Ted's poems to send off to magazines--

On Thu, 19 Feb 1998, David Israel wrote:

*[was, Re: Plath and Hughes ]*

*Katy Kederer wrote,*

*<< . . . I can think of a number of male poets throughout history who have killed themselves in one way or another and been figured to be heroic-- . . . >>*

*heroic in / for suicide, do you mean? Could you name one? (I'm not aware of entertaining that idea abt. anybody, truth to tell.)*

*The legend of Li Po's (possible) drowning in river, looking for the moon, seems a romanticized myth (hinting at the suicide question maybe), but I don't know that he's considered heroic for that . . . who else? Not to put you on the spot, -- just that I can't think of such examples.*

*d.i.*

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777. **Robert Hale**

***Re: poet-heroes & suicide***

*Fri 20 Feb 1998*

Empedocles, pre-Socratic philosopher (a poet really, because that's sort of the way those guys wrote, especially him, all reinforced by the fact that his work only survives in fragments quoted by others), supposedly threw himself into a volcano.

Otherwise (if we can even call the above, "heroic"), I can think of plenty of male poet suicides, but the "heroic part" is entirely interpretive.

At 06:44 PM 2/19/98 -0500, you wrote:

>[was, Re: Plath and Hughes ]

>

>Katy Kederer wrote,

>

><< . . . I can think of a number of male poets throughout history who have

>killed themselves in one way or another and been figured to be heroic-- . .

>. >>

>

>heroic in / for suicide, do you mean? Could you name one? (I'm not aware

>of entertaining that idea abt. anybody, truth to tell.)

>

>The legend of Li Po's (possible) drowning in river, looking for the moon,

>seems a romanticized myth (hinting at the suicide question maybe), but I

>don't know that he's considered heroic for that . . . who else? Not to put

>you on the spot, -- just that I can't think of such examples.

>

>d.i.

>

>

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778. **Judy Roitman**

**Re: "stops"**

Fri 20 Feb 1998

*What about conceiving a poem as a series of "stops"? (I'm currently writing one with that title.) The idea being that each line should be so constructed as to give the reader pause , each line in effect enacting a Brechtian interruption or occasion for a renewed meditation.*

*I'm new to the list and hopeful that this might be a somewhat different spin on things.*

*Tom Beckett*

Anne Carson went through a period of ending every line with a period. Whether it was the end of a sentence or not.

----- Judy Roitman  
| "Whoppers Whoppers Whoppers! Math, University of Kansas | mem-  
ory fails Lawrence, KS 66045 | these are the days." [REDACTED]  
| fax: [REDACTED] | Larry Eigner, 1927-1996

----- Note new area code

-----

<http://www.math.ukans.edu/~roitman/>

---

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779. **d powell**

**Re: Reply to Katy Lederer**

Fri 20 Feb 1998

---

Reply to: RE: Reply to Katy Lederer

Gary Sullivan wrote:

>Hi, Katy:

>

>Could you please tell us who those male poets are who "killed themselves in one

>way or another and been figured to be heroic"? My own sense is that this simply

>isn't true, but realize it's just "a sense" I have.

>

Butting in here--I'd include John Berryman and Hart Crane for starters. If we expand "killing oneself" to include reckless endangerment, Rimbaud is definitely an "heroic suicide" as would be Shelley.

These suicides are romanticized in a way that women's suicides are not.

Doug

=====

=====

D A Powell

=====

=====

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780. **Elizabeth Hatmaker**

**Re: poet-heroes & suicide**

Fri 20 Feb 1998

---

I think Katy's right and wonder what people's take, if any, is on Margeux (sorry--i'm a bad speller) Hemingway's death was. I honestly don't recall the coverage but wonder if her death was "blamed" on Papa? Or was it treated as a sort of greek-tragic "sins of the father" melodrama? Is this "blame" in the same way that Hughes's burning Plath's journal to "protect the children"? It may well have seemed a good idea at the time to do so, but it does pretty much make her out, in a very public way, to be a bad mom who wrote god knows what that the kids shouldn't see.

Someone mentioned depression/manic depression and certainly it seems reasonable to suggest that while Ted's infidelity might have been a catalyst, larger problems were already there. But here's something: Wasn't there another woman involved with Hughes who committed suicide? One wonders if Ted was sort of attracted to women who were depressed and self-destructive. The whole excitingness of the writer's energy and work and the interest in watching someone self-destruct. Like watching National Geographic specials.

I just started reading Radsula's Wax Museum and liken some of the Hughes and Plath. The whole wax museum-- with royalty next to the hall of horrors -- reality that Radsula likens to the US poetry "scene" seems fitting in thinking about the Hughes/Plath marriage and his new book of poems regarding her. That whole appeal of seeing the height of "goodness" (Sylvia's finding of her "true voice" in Ariel) and the depth of despair (the notebooks that had to be destroyed they were so painful). The *\_Birthday Poems\_* seem to celebrate and embody Plath with everything Radsula is talking about regarding how Americans perceive poetry. BTW, what are others thinking of Radsula's book?

e hatmaker

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781. **Judy Roitman**

***Re: poet-heroes & suicide***

*Fri 20 Feb 1998*

*But I will say that it seems quite obvious to me that depression, early death (due to suicidal behaviors like smoking too much, drinking too much etc), and unhealthy forms of poverty (not eating right) have been utterly romanticized in the world of poetry--*

*Jack Kerouac (I know he treated a number of women incl. wives poorly in the name of his art), Celan, Milton (didn't die, but treated daughter like crap in the name of his art...), Burroughs...*

*K. Lederer*

As in William? He lived to a ripe old age, drugs seemed to act as a preservative.

Killed his wife, but that's another issue.

----- Judy Roitman  
| "Whoppers Whoppers Whoppers! Math, University of Kansas | mem-  
ory fails Lawrence, KS 66045 | these are the days." [REDACTED]  
| fax: [REDACTED] | Larry Eigner, 1927-1996

----- Note new area code

-----  
http://www.math.ukans.edu/~roitman/  
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782. **Joe Amato/Kass Fleisher**

**Re: "stops"**

*Fri 20 Feb 1998*

---

in the interests of self-promotion (!): a piece of mine forthcoming in \_denver quarterly\_ (due out april i think) not only fleshes out in brief my problems with voice-craft-based approaches to writing instruction, but consists (part '1, take 2') of the sort of 'stop'-based discourse judy and tom refer to...

best,

joe

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783. **pritchpa**

**Re: poet-heroes & suicide**

*Fri 20 Feb 1998*

---

Then there are those who are moved to kill themselves for a mixture of political and personal motives. This is from today's NY Times - a review of Fouad Ajami's \_Dream Palace\_:

"The overriding theme here is disillusionment. Ajami devotes an 84-page chapter to Khalil Hawi, the influential Lebanese poet who committed suicide in Beirut on the very day of the Israeli invasion of Lebanon, June 6, 1982. Hawi, a man with whom Ajami clearly and strongly identifies, embodied the failed effort of the Arabic man of letters to create the ground for an Arab revival. "

Patrick Pritchett

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784. **Jordan Davis**

**stops**

*Fri 20 Feb 1998*

---

is the title of a terrific book of poems by Joel Sloman, whose reading at Poetry City on March 26 with Joan Retallack you should plan to attend.

Jordan Davis

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785. **Keston Sutherland**

***Re: Reply to Katy Lederer***

*Fri 20 Feb 1998*

---

perhaps a sniff of the Lucrece about women's suicides, malodourously?

Keston

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786. **Billy Little**

***suicide***

*Fri 20 Feb 1998*

---

1967 Berryman came to Buffalo, after his reading, at the party at Fiedler's house, he was loaded and seething, people were afraid to talk to him, i was naive, just beginning to discover Spicer myself, i asked him if he felt there was any resonances between his work and Spicer's, to him it was a contest, he asked me what i thought of the work of a few of his graduate students whose names undoubtedly have gone down in some history i haven't read. Plath was not of the Lowell generation, she was a student of his, she's a contemporary of Rich wasn't it Dorn: if you think you're part of the solution, you're the problem. alcoholism is only a more drawn out form of suicide and we could dance all night with that list.

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787. **david bromige**

***poet suicides***

*Fri 20 Feb 1998*

---

There's suicide (Plath, Sexton, Celan, Berryman) and "suicide" (Dylan Thomas, Jack Spicer, Malcolm Lowry--drinking oneself to death ; or risky behavior -- the version that Shelley, sailing into a storm, was crying out "more sail!" etc etc) and it does have something heroic about it. It appears to operate as an underlining of the poet's wholehearted dedication to his/her art. As a choice of the poetic of life as against the conformist demands of society. As if there is an authenticity to living out a fatal drive that is absent from the heavily negotiated life many of us elect to endure.

Of course, it's despicable, all that, "chickening out", breaking the hearts of spouses and friends and children. (Dylan Thomas left behind of kids a bunch. Who must be in their 40s by now. Anyone know how they are? They must be mentioned in the widow Caitlin's *\_Leftover Life to Kill\_* but I haven't read it.)

David

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788. **Gabriel Gudding**

**SYCAMORE REVIEW**

*Fri 20 Feb 1998*

---

"What do we mean by experimental? Precisely."

\_The Sycamore Review\_

is inviting submissions and subscribers to witness its new leaf.

It done found itself in the middle of an aesthetic turning.

Last issue features the work of Araki Yasusada, Bill Knott,

Catherine Bowman, Charles Webb,

Ron Padgett, Campbell McGrath,

Denise Duhamel, Dan Morris,

David Cameron (see his false translations  
from \_Les Fleurs Du Mal\_),

the criticism of

Mikhail Epstein, & interviews

w/ the aforementioned McGrath & Bowman

Subscriptions to \_Sycamore Review\_ are \$10.00 (\$12.00 foreign, U.S. funds) for two issues per year (Winter/Spring and Summer/Fall). Sample copies are available for \$7.00 eaach (\$8.00 foreign etc). Make checks payable to Purdue University. Write to

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If you would like to submit work, please address to attn of Gabe Gudding.

Gabe Gudding

Poetry Editor, Syc Rev

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789. **Miekal And**

**Re: "stops"**

*Fri 20 Feb 1998*

---

welcome to the list tom, its good to see you in cyberspace, have your crash helmet & flaming pen ready.

miekal

Tom Beckett wrote:

.

> I'm new to the list and hopeful that this might be a somewhat different spin  
> on things.

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790. **david bromige**

**p s to suicide**

*Fri 20 Feb 1998*

---

I apologize for using two message-spaces where I could have done this in one. . . I blame my slow "suicide" through martinis and painpills for this morning-after forgetfulness. (But then, blame the pain, which is the physical kind, one I keep trying to refuse, nothing of the "suffering artist" sort, although I know that too. But to \_that\_, I'm "adjusted". Don't understand poets who subscribe to religious dogma : dont want anything but poetry between me and my psychic pain). . .

But I should have added to my prior post on this topic, that in the heroic there is always a refusal of some kind. With innovators, for example, who refuse the recent conventions. There have been poets who, although their verbal gifts would have stood them in good stead in society, refused society, became recluses, devoted what life was theirs to their art. And the greatest refusal is of life itself. This always leaves the hero vulnerable (which is surely a meaning of Achilles' heel). The ground a hero stands on is, wretched mix of metaphor, but psychical sound, his or her blind spot. And suicides are vulnerable to the charge of utter selfishness. David

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791. **Gabriel Gudding**  
**Re: poet-heroes & suicide**

Fri 20 Feb 1998

---

Butting in also: Frank Stanford, b. 1949, did, in the words of T. Lux, stop his own clock -- "with three lead thuds" -- in 1978; "irreversible cliché." (See \_Sunday\_). He too was thirsty.

Gabe

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792. **Miekal And**  
**f stanford website?**

Fri 20 Feb 1998

---

Gabriel Gudding wrote:

>

> Butting in also: Frank Stanford, b. 1949, did, in the words of T. Lux,  
> stop his own clock -- "with three lead thuds" -- in 1978; "irreversible  
> cliché." (See \_Sunday\_). He too was thirsty.

>

> Gabe

I seem to remember that there was mention of a frank stanford website being put up, did that ever become cyberreal, or jus' another those occasions of reading poetics list in my dreams....

miekal

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793. **k. lederer**  
**Re: Reply to Katy Lederer**

Fri 20 Feb 1998

---

Gary,

Of course, on some level, everything is a "gender issue" in any society--

Perhaps my use of the word "obvious" was meant to include not only Plath's reputation and the ramifications of her biography on her reputation (as well as on Hughes') but also a number of larger issue facing female poets--

I am 25 right now--trying to think of ways to continue to write--it is no news that women writers must face different challenges than male writers--

There are familial pressures, societal pressures etc.--and these relams of a person's life often care little for "art" or the person in question as an "artist"--

Historically, of course, allowances have been made for the "artistic temperament" or "intellectual self-absorption" associated with writers--

But most of this discourse has been constructed around a male-identified writer--

I think it is more than obvious that Plath's legacy and what we are to make of it is made more complicated by the fact that she was a woman--a mother and a wife.

In many intellectual traditions (I am thinking of Rabbinical ones most specifically) women were forbidden to even learn to read and write--

This is not a legacy that disappears with even a few generations--

I find it strange that so many people on this list feel the need to deny the effect of such a legacy--

In recent posts I have heard people deny that the taking of a man's last name by a woman has any connection to the oppression of women, that it is not necessary to seek out women writers for publication if the editor is a man and fraternizes with men, that Sylvia Plath is not seen differently because of her gender--

Could someone please explain to me how it has come to be that such denials seem possible to make at this point in time?

Best regards,  
Katy L.

\*\*\*

On Fri, 20 Feb 1998, Gary Sullivan wrote:

*Hi, Katy:*

*Could you please tell us who those male poets are who "killed themselves in one way or another and been figured to be heroic"? My own sense is that this simply isn't true, but realize it's just "a sense" I have.*

*When I'd read that Richard Brautigan committed suicide I was very upset, had just finished So the Wind Won't Blow It All Away, thought more would be coming, couldn't understand why he'd did it. Keith Abbott's book on Brautigan, as I remember it, hardly cast Brautigan as a hero; my memory of Abbott's portrayal of Brautigan was that B. was a self-involved substance abuser, obsessed with fame, bitter over waning critical attention & audience in the U.S., his suicide (as cast by Abbott) as pointless, if inevitable (given Brautigan's increasingly negative frame of mind). Reading Lew Welch's letters (I Remain), it's baffling as to why, once he'd been set up in a cabin, seemingly had all the time in the world to write (time being a constant problem for Welch), he chose then to "give up." I certainly don't--& no one I've read or talked with does--cast his apparent suicide as "heroic." I'm not that well acquainted with Berryman's work, or whatever discourse surrounds it, but I've*

*never heard or read anyone calling him a hero for leaping into the Mississippi. The only more-or-less contemporary instance I can think of is in the discourse surrounding d.a. levy's suicide--and there what you'll get are people who believe he was either driven to it by the local authorities (this was in Cleveland, in the 60s--levy, Jim Lowell & others were consistently hassled, jailed, & generally watched), or actually murdered by them. In that instance, the narrative seems to be less about the suicide itself than the constant hassles--people talk about his death in the way people talk about that of Lenny Bruce.*

*I have to admit that, while I'm a reader & admirer of Plath's poetry, I haven't read much of the secondary material, and am not sure how, say, a professional critic is likely to think and write about her suicide. I do know that a few of the people I've talked to about her see her as, if not quite "heroic," certainly as a kind of martyr--something I don't think helps anyone understand or (more importantly) appreciate her often extraordinary writing. But these people were young college kids (like me at the time), and more given to uncritical romanticism than they might be today.*

*Anyway, I'm not sure that this is, as you say, a "gender" issue, and if I'm going to buy that, I need something more substantial from your end than the assertion that it's "obvious." If what you say is true, it's definitely worth thinking about. Can you maybe elaborate on your earlier post?*

*Thanks, Katy.*

*Yours,*

*Gary Sullivan*  


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794. **Miekal And**  
**pose / poise**

Fri 20 Feb 1998

---

emma:

whaddya know about vispo?

miekal and

age 40

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795. **Joe Amato/Kass Fleisher**

***Re: poet-heroes & suicide***

*Fri 20 Feb 1998*

---

well, you can tell i'm over the flu!...

i think "reception of suicide," if that's what we're talking about, is gendered, yes... but to me and more important is the history of women's lit. in general---to which i assume katy and others are making appeal, finally---and of the various conflicts women writers have faced that men have not faced... and of the (obvious, in my view) support structure that tends to put women at men's disposal in this regard... i wish sandra braman were here to talk about this, wrt douglas woolf (assuming sandra would want to talk about it, and generalize thence)... whether this leads to suicide or simply to depression and anxiety and and and is, to me, a finer distinction (not that i don't value life as such)... i would have thought that books like dale spender's *\_mothers of the novel\_* would have made this patently obvious...

ok, i'm using "obvious" too much!... but really---a careful look at the history of the novel, say, in the 18th and 19th centuries, based on the past twenty or so years of scholarship by (by & large) women, should confirm these realities...

re rasula: well i didn't really like kostelanetz's critique, though evidently, as i say, he lands on research errors in rasula's substantial appendices... but to spend the bulk of his little review picking on the appendices and not on the gist of jed's argument is a mistake, methinks... my review of jed's book, unabashedly positive, at

[http://muse.jhu.edu/journals/postmodern\\_culture/v006/6.3r\\_amato.html](http://muse.jhu.edu/journals/postmodern_culture/v006/6.3r_amato.html)

(you need access to project muse to get to pmc)

i feel like i'm advertising myself around here, apologies even as i hit SEND///

best,

joe

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796. **Mark Prejsnar**

***tabula rattled***

*Fri 20 Feb 1998*

---

Elizabeth,

\*Jed's name is spelled Rasula: you've added a "d".

\*But I'm glad you mentioned his book, *American Poetry Wax Museum*. Actually, people keep discovering it and starting a new thread here on the list about

it...That's how I first heard of it, then after reading it a talked it up here on a couple of different occasions.

\*As I said then, it's exceptionally good at analyzing the lines of interrelation and force in the whole culture of US poetry (of all types) over most of this ending century..It gets much strength from being written by a fine poet whose own work is not mainstream but who is interested in the whole universe of possible poetries, even stuff that's very conservative compared to him...

\*For instance, after reading Wax Museum, it's interesting to see his piece in a recent Chicago Review (dated Fall 1997), which I've just been reading: he reviews 10 books which he feels approach the idea of the \*book of poetry\* as a coherent form. His interests (and praise) stretch a bit wide for me: Jorie Graham?? I continue to resist the idea (suggested by many) that she's moving into an interesting space away from the conventional and mainstream; But anyway, Rasula's interests as a critic and commentator on the poetry scene gain from his apparent urge to see the best in any poet's work (or at least, to respond to whatever virtues they have, of whatever type..)

\*Generosity of spirit is always bracing..

Mark P.  
@lanta

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797. **Henry Gould**  
**query LVNG**

*Fri 20 Feb 1998*

---

Does anyone know if the Chicago mag LVNG is going to appear? Or when? You can backchannel - [REDACTED]. Thanks! - HG

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---

798. **Henry Gould**  
**Re: poet suicides**

*Fri 20 Feb 1998*

---

On Fri, 20 Feb 1998 11:47:56 -0800 david bromige said:

>There's suicide (Plath, Sexton, Celan, Berryman) and "suicide" (Dylan  
>Thomas, Jack Spicer, Malcolm Lowry--drinking oneself to death ; or risky  
>behavior -- the version that Shelley, sailing into a storm, was crying out  
>"more sail!" etc etc) and it does have something heroic about it. It  
>appears to operate as an underlining of the poet's wholehearted dedication  
>to his/her art. As a choice of the poetic of life as against the conformist  
>demands of society. As if there is an authenticity to living out a fatal

>drive that is absent from the heavily negotiated life many of us elect to  
>endure.

Self-destructive egotistical antisocial behavior is not considered heroic or poetic by the poets themselves in these cases. The behavior is just one of the perks. - Henry Gould

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799. **J. Kuszai**  
***several unrelated topics***

*Fri 20 Feb 1998*

---

in the interest of taking up only my 1/50th share in the days discussings, I'd like to bring up some things here.

1. as someone who has known people who have instigated unmotivated attacks on themselves often unto death--and however it is accomplished, the effect is finally the same--let me say simply that the romance and heroism of self-inflicted violence is purely a reader's fantasy here.

2. Several people responded to my call for work for my e-zine. I would like to reiterate that call for work for STUDENT PERIODICAL CLUB. Any kind of writing would be great, but I am going to put out a special call for essayistic, journalistic-type, critical expository prose, with an emphasis on culture and its manic inhabitants. The site is going to be based on an image map I stole from the Smithsonian. This will happen without you, but wouldn't it be better if you sent me something...

the front door is located at <http://www.acsu.buffalo.edu/~kuszai/spc>

3. I am preparing a poetics list survey. In order for it to be an accurate measure of the list, I would hope that there would be a strong reply to this survey when it goes out. In order to drum up some enthusiasm for this private marketing analysis of poetics list readership, I was thinking that there could be a sweepstakes. I will donate a complete set of Meow Press catalog items and all the available ephemera (approx 65 books) to the sweepstakes winner. Maybe we could have multiple prizes. Anyone willing to pledge something for the jackpot please contact me soon. [this survey is not being done under the auspices of official list management or my position as list manager-unlocker]

4. If there is anyone in San Diego area who would like to meet up or tell me what events are happening, I will be there for two weeks in early March. I'm happy to meet for coffee, etc., in the evenings when the archive at UCSD is closed.

bye-bye

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800. **Rachel Loden**

***Re: poet-heroes & suicide***

*Fri 20 Feb 1998*

---

Well, Mayakovsky--if you want monuments and statues, schools and metro stations named after you. But he's not Stalin's creature nor is Plath captive of those who'd crown her queen victim or, like Hughes, queen other (those wild aboriginal lips!). Have to say it's great to hear Dodie Bellamy and Marjorie Perloff and Katy Lederer talking about her poems \_as poems\_. The mawkishness of the suicide cult had kept me at arm's-length for decades (despite an early immersion). Just last year it seemed I could finally slough off some of the embarrassment and acknowledge a musical debt. Then, of course, Hughes comes along and deposits his giant, uh, egg.

But suicide romance and poetic lineage--there's this from Ginsberg, "Improvisation in Beijing" : "I write poetry because Russian poets Mayakovsky and Yesenin committed suicide, somebody else has to talk . . . "

Rachel Loden

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801. **sylvester pollet**

***poetics of suicide***

*Fri 20 Feb 1998*

---

Let's face it, suicide is the ultimate closed-form. It is not new, not innovative, not experimental, not revolutionary. It is stupid and depressing, and kills writers. Don't anybody do it.

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802. **raea100900**

***Re: Tender buttons query***

*Fri 20 Feb 1998*

---

I think Lee Ann Brown is/was Tender Buttons, so to speak.

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803. **Christopher W. Alexander**

**Re: "stops"**

*Fri 20 Feb 1998*

---

Tom Beckett writt:

> >What about conceiving a poem as a series of "stops"?

Judy Roitman wroth:

> Anne Carson went through a period of ending every line with a period.

> Whether it was the end of a sentence or not.

I'm reminded of Peter Inman's work, some of which can be thought of exactly as a series of stops, but structured by a unit much smaller than the line. See for instance *Vel* (a wonderful book), where. at. times. each. word. or at. most. a small. group. is. a. full. stop. the effect is better there than I'll bother to attempt here, because of the variety of utterances - i.e., sometimes, as above, you'll find a "normal" sentence or utterance thus divided, but it might be in a sea of single- and multiple-word fragments - or perhaps a better way of saying that is that P. Inman is Steinian not only in his attn. to language, but in that his work is more or less continuous with the world, departing from and returning to things and utterances as it finds them fit.

The period (mark and unit) punctuates the work more in the sense of "puncture" than score (or in the sense of "score" as notch, mark showing starting place, etc.); as a reader, one is asked relentlessly to re-begin, negotiating a full-stop usually reserved for line-breaks and ends of phrase, so much so that I would risk saying period is everything to the work, it's deliberate focus. The attention it requires is incredible - tension that comes from reading every single word ad literam. But happily one continues, because pulling across those periods is a text that moves between a richly "material" language and the things of the world (speech and its objects).

Anyone else familiar with this book? it's a favorite of mine.

Chris

..

Christopher W. Alexander etc. / nominative press collective

email: [REDACTED]

snail-mail: P.O. Box 522402 / Salt Lake City UT 84152-2402

press/zine site: <http://choengmon.lib.utah.edu/~calexand/nonce/>



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804. **Christopher W. Alexander**

***it's the water***

*Fri 20 Feb 1998*

---

btw, I've been thinking abt. the intersection of meanings in the word "material" (artistic, Marxian, "of import") as a node for poetry over the last decade; comparable maybe to the word "moment" in Williams (time, import) or – what other examples? Olson's "field" maybe, etc.

To what degree do folks here find their work (in the um "larger" sense) driven by such peculiarities or tics of vocabulary?

oh, "vocabulary": one always thinks Spicer with that word – surely he's worth mentioning in the context of posthumously romanticized self-destructiveness.

oh, and talk about "male artistic needs": Philemon, who would have himself hanged to visit Euripides in Hades, if only he could be sure E. would have retained his senses. I mean, like, what a jerk.

Chris

..

Christopher W. Alexander etc. / nominative press collective

email: [REDACTED]

snail-mail: P.O. Box 522402 / Salt Lake City UT 84152-2402

press/zine site: <http://choengmon.lib.utah.edu/~calexand/nonce/>

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805. **k. lederer**

***Re: Jorie Graham***

*Fri 20 Feb 1998*

---

As per your comment about Jorie Graham--

I think her work is interesting in that almost all of its "avant-gardeness" in the eyes of the mainstream emanates from its manner of punctuation and form--

In general at Iowa form is the dominating signifier of "experimentalism" or "avant-gardeness"--

That's why Plath is such an interesting case--

Her work, in my view, is incredibly "experimental" and "avant-garde" because her tone and general content were so emotionally innovative--

Graham is very old-school in terms of her content (as apart from her form in this example) as she is most influenced by the philosophical and aesthetic trajectories associated with W Stevens and various philosophers (from Plato to Nietzsche)--

The content of her work seems focused on temporal modulations of emotion, the textures of things as they are imbued with emotional intensities, intellectual hesitation and revision and so on...

Her formal characteristic might superficially resemble those of Scalapino, the recent Guest--even Alice Notley--but her intellectual interests do not coincide with these writers to any significant degree--

Plath, on the other hand, uses superficially "traditional forms," but within them we find a range of poetic innovations--

Best,  
Katy L.

\*\*\*

On Fri, 20 Feb 1998, Mark Prejsnar wrote:

*Elizabeth,*

*\*Jed's name is spelled Rasula: you've added a "d".*

*\*But I'm glad you mentioned his book, American Poetry Wax Museum. Actually, people keep discovering it and starting a new thread here on the list about it...That's how I first heard of it, then after reading it a talked it up here on a couple of different occasions.*

*\*As I said then, it's exceptionally good at analyzing the lines of interrelation and force in the whole culture of US poetry (of all types) over most of this ending century..It gets much strength from being written by a fine poet whose own work is not mainstream but who is interested in the whole universe of possible poetries, even stuff that's very conservative compared to him...*

*\*For instance, after reading Wax Museum, it's interesting to see his piece in a recent Chicago Review (dated Fall 1997), which I've just been reading: he reviews 10 books which he feels approach the idea of the \*book of poetry\* as a coherent form. His interests (and praise) stretch a bit wide for me: Jorie Graham?? I continue to resist the idea (suggested by many) that she's moving into an interesting space away from the conventional and mainstream; But anyway, Rasula's interests as a critic and commentator on the poetry scene gain from his apparent urge to see the best in any poet's work (or at least, to respond to whatever virtues they have, of whatever type..)*

*\*Generosity of spirit is always bracing..*

Mark P.  
@lanta

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806. **Mark Weiss**  
***poet-heroes, suicide and women's lot***  
*Fri 20 Feb 1998*

---

"alcoholism is only a more drawn out form of suicide and we could dance all night with that list."

"In many intellectual traditions (I am thinking of Rabbinical ones most specifically) women were forbidden to even learn to read and write--"

"the various conflicts women writers have faced that men have not faced... and of the (obvious, in my view) support structure that tends to put women at men's disposal in this regard"

If we generalize enough all distinctions get lost. Alcoholism is bad for mind and body, and \_sometimes\_ it's an act of slow suicide, but so is life. I mean, we're talking about different syndromes with different impacts on one's surroundings.

I thought that in the shtetl women were forbidden to study with the men, which meant in practice that they didn't learn biblical hebrew or talmudic aramaic. Literacy in the other available languages was pretty common in women, as they often conducted most of the business with the world beyond family and village. My grandmother, whose father was a blacksmith, grew up fluent in Yiddish, Russian and Polish, to which she added English when she emigrated, all of which she read voraciously, and I know for a fact that she wasn't unusual for her time and place. But I'm willing to be enlightened.

I've known several women writers whose husbands' work funded their literary careers and afforded them lots of time for writng. I don't know too many men who can say that.

Which is not to say that I don't realize that women's and men's lots are different and that most women have different and perhaps more obstacles to face. I merely mention these caveats in the interest of clarity, to which I am addicted, and to make trouble, which is also fun sometimes.

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807. **d powell**

**Re: enough about Graham**

Fri 20 Feb 1998

---

Reply to: RE: enough about Graham

Mark Prejsnar wrote:

*\*For instance, after reading Wax Museum, it's interesting to see his piece in a recent Chicago Review (dated Fall 1997), which I've just been reading: he reviews 10 books which he feels approach the idea of the \*book of poetry\* as a coherent form. His interests (and praise) stretch a bit wide for me: Jorie Graham?? I continue to resist the idea (suggested by many) that she's moving into an interesting space away from the conventional and mainstream*

Mark,

By "mainstream" do you mean "like everybody else"? In that case, Graham has never been "mainstream." If by "mainstream" you mean "popular," then I think she's actually moving into the "mainstream," not because she is stylistically or formally easy, but perhaps precisely because she is not. However, if you mean "mainstream" as a shorthand for "Iowa Writers' Workshop," just as a generation used "Iowa Writers' Workshop" as shorthand for a particular type of poem, I would argue that, IF indeed the workshop is the mainstream, then Graham has done much to make that stream a more interesting place to splash around in. While I was in Iowa, Graham brought an aesthetically diverse group of instructors to the program--Brenda Hillman, Killarney Clary, Heather McHugh, Bob Perelman, Robert Hass, Tom Sleigh. Moreover, the work that workshop students were producing is some of the finest poetry being published today, from Jeff Clark's recent book from Sun and Moon, to Reginald Sheppard's wonderful "Some Are Drowning," to Jessica Lowenthal's soon to be released chapbook from Burning Deck. When I applied to Iowa, David Bromige cautioned me that the program might pressure me to conform to a (I suppose "mainstream") aesthetic. But then, I read Graham's "The End of Beauty" and I realized that she was balancing some oppositional poetics in remarkable ways. Lyn Hejinian (who will be teaching at Iowa this fall) said that Graham had been "oddly supportive" of her work. And Cydney Chadwick reminded me that Graham had chosen a Nate Mackey poem, first published in *Avec*, for inclusion in *The Best American Poetry*. And so, I did go to Iowa, and my aesthetic was not pressured, it was in fact supported and nurtured by Graham and by the odd assemblage of faculty that came through there during those two years.

I think this list does a lot of "Jorie Bashing," holding Graham up as symbolic -- what? The Mainstream? I don't think so. Read her most recent book, *The*

Errancy. Then go read something that's truly from the "mainstream" (which, nowadays by the by, case anyone hasn't noticed, either looks a hell of a lot like Ashbery or a hell of a lot like Sharon Olds). With all due respect, Mark, hopefully, you will discern the difference.

=====

=====

D A Powell 

=====

=====

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808. **Keston Sutherland**

**Re: poetics of suicide**

Fri 20 Feb 1998

---

On Fri, 20 Feb 1998, sylvester pollet wrote:

*Let's face it, suicide is the ultimate closed-form. It is not new, not innovative, not experimental, not revolutionary. It is stupid and depressing, and kills writers. Don't anybody do it.*

no, best not slaughter oneself given the 'unrevolutionary', middle-of-the-road 'non-experimental' nature of doing so. Suicide isn't a "closed form", fer chris-sake, neither is it "stupid" - or perhaps my suicide is less -avant- than yours

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809. **Tom Beckett**

**Re: "stops"**

Fri 20 Feb 1998

---

Allow.me.to.try.again. What I'm trying to approach with my notion of "stops" is that which I think is most fundamental to any art--to make one look, but look again; to touch, but touch again; to perceive, but perceive again; to think, but think again, etc. (I'm as interested in intervening in my own habitual processes as I am in the processes of any potential auditor of my work.) And you are right, the size of the textual unit will vary. Inman is an excellent example. I'm of course interested in the materiality of language but I'm even more interested in an interesting response. Resist habits: there can be official unofficial verse culture too. To sort of para-phrase Nietzsche--"Every name in history is Elvis." Best wishes,

Tom Beckett

PS: thanks to all who've sent welcoming messages. Glad to be here.

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810. **Thomas Bell**

***Re: "stops"***

*Fri 20 Feb 1998*

---

Those with an interest in stops might want to look at "image" on the wr-eye-tings scratchpad. I was trying to explore "stop" in the sense of not being able to get out of a maze and the action or motion of a reader's eye (?attention?) as it moves to the edge of a page and onto the next one. Don't know if I succeeded.

tom bell

<http://www.burningpress.org/wreyeting/bell/imageintro.html>

To Bob:

"Attaching "Image" for scratchpad--3 pages, 1 gif. Hope this doesn't get too confusing. Or too frustrating - one of the things I am curious about here is how this 'maze' affects viewers frustration tolerance. It may also be that in other browsers it doesn't work."

At 04:46 PM 2/20/98 MST7MDT, Christopher W. Alexander wrote:

>Tom Beckett writt:

>> >What about conceiving a poem as a series of "stops"?

>

>Judy Roitman wroth:

>> Anne Carson went through a period of ending every line with a period.

>

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811. **rsillima**

***Most appalling quote of the week***

*Fri 20 Feb 1998*

---

Douglas,

If, as you say,

"I'm not a great fan of his [T Hughes'] writing but as a teacher I have had to include it in courses on post 1945 poetry...,"

you are guilty of malpractice.

Teach what you believe in, or don't bother. There's too much good poetry out there to ever be covered in one college career, let alone one course. To waste it on "official verse culture" is to simply contribute to the a-literacy and poetry-phobia that innundates us all.

Ron Silliman

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812. **Aviva Wesley Vogel**  
***Jorie Graham Experimental?***

*Fri 20 Feb 1998*

---

As I'm headed into the last two days before deadline to punch out a thesis on Jorie Graham, I stall some more and read my email...and find that the same quandary paralyzing my work is now played out in the conversation between Mark Prejsnar and Katy Lederer.

Jorie...let's see...where does she "fit"...is she carrying out the Romantic project, the Modernist project? Is she a neo-romantic-symbolist with postmodern convulsions? Yes, I would agree that she travels along the "Wallace Stevens" trajectory to a large degree, and it's certainly true that she struggles in the ontological oscillation that occurs between Plato's Ideals and the search for a Unified Field Theory (or Theory of Everything). Along with those metaphysical oscillations, her work lunges almost schizophrenically between the polarities many would call "mainstream" and "experimental."

It's very frustrating for me to deal with this thesis, because I'd started out thinking that I'd chosen a writer whose aesthetics couldn't be said to "foreground" language as a primary project, but who was finding (particularly in "Errancy") a "new way of looking," who was groping for a new language to create self/culture (à la Richard Rorty). Plus, I was attracted to her flirtations with the dialectic between classical platonic idealism and postmodern contingency and irony.

Reading Jorie Graham, to be very honest, has required a crash course in philosophy and physics---having failed to enjoy a "mainstream" liberal arts education, I really didn't know Plato's "cave" story; I had no idea what Heisenberg's Uncertainty Principle was; I'd heard the name Bergson but knew nothing of his metaphysics; and Voltaire? Montesquieu? Mark Rothko? Nietzsche? St. Thomas Aquinas? These were all names I'd heard, as if grasping the label were enough to "know," almost osmotically, what was being referred to, but truly---I had no clue as to what might have been the difference between Nietzsche's "will to power" and Bergson's "flux" and "élan vital" ideas. I couldn't distinguish between the idealism of Plato and the idealism now being generated in response to perspectives derived from "new physics" and quantum mechanics.

In that sense, my experience of Jorie Graham's work has been drastically altered. I've spent the bulk of my reading/research on delving into her allusions and into the disciplines that inform her work, rather than on considerations of her prosodic strategies, linguistic aesthetics, and "place" in the "field" of poetry.

I've been dismayed to discover that what "looked" as though it were reasonably avant-garde form on the page has revealed itself to be "postmodern" or "language"-oriented only in the sense that her "self" is somewhat diffuse; her syntax can get pretty elliptical and paratactic; her structures lean on cinematic techniques, montage and collage, and Conte's "serial" form (sometimes). But these are all techniques and responses that have been done and done and done during the entire twentieth-century, particularly by the Modernists. So...how could I possibly make a case that she was using some of the same strategies as, say, Lyn Hejinian or Kathleen Fraser? Not only was my thesis shot, but I was now drowning in the same polluted waters that everyone else was in their attempts to articulate language poetry, postmodern poetry, avant-garde poetry, or experimental poetry.

I finally decided that Graham was postmodernist in the sense that postmodernism is highly involved in comprehensively reviewing the entire Western Canon, especially in relationship to other canons and non-canonical writing, and that she was engaged in a huge re-evaluation project. If Graham was guilty of any "subversion," though, it was a sneaky kind of subversion, one that crept up on me, that crawled over me at night as I lay sweating, trying to figure out if she was a classical dualistic thinker struggling to embrace a more taoistic view of the universe, or a taoistic/ironic thinker who was longing for classical dualism. Was she trying to gear up for some kind of "quantum leap" into faith in an Ideal reality behind material phenomenon? Was she trying to engage in her own form of Pascal's "wager," seeking some certainty in these indeterminate waters of our current culture? Or was she mutating a quasi-platonism into an odd form of contingency-based, antimetaphysical faith?

I still don't know. Maybe, now that I have only 48 hours to actually write the paper (after all the reading and research I've done), I may "find" the answer in the process of writing...

And maybe not. I may have framed my questions too narrowly. I may be suffering from a highly-deficient lack of context. But somehow, I suspect that Jorie Graham is, in fact, an avant-garde writer of an unrecognizable style, and I damned well mean to find out a way to demonstrate it, if my hunch is born out over the next two days.

Wish me luck. If anyone has any opinions on the matter, and would like to throw some spice into the pot, I would be much obliged for the confusion.

Aviva Vogel

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813. **Emma Bernstein**

***Re: Plath and Hughes***

*Fri 20 Feb 1998*

---

to marjorie perloff,

i, who have read many works by plath, and the work in the paper by ted hughes, have to agree with you on every note. i think that ted hughes and his repetitive approach to excuses for plath's death has become an intoxicating journey. he has tried to measure up to the dismal beauty of Sylvia Plath, and he has not succeeded. It must make him feel horrible to be accused of being a murderer, which is what he is (only in the sense of killing her work), so that he felt he must justify himself. which is fine, but in such a vapid approach, it becomes a obvious mere reconciliation. i have heard so many reviews, front page articles, but nothing that he can say, or write, nobody that he can scapegoat, will take away from the selfish deed he did when he took the right to destroy some of Plath's last work, for his own self indulgence.

emma bernstein, age 12 1/2

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814. **Schuchat Simon**

***Re: poet suicides***

*Fri 20 Feb 1998*

---

I appreciate David Bromige's distinction between risktaking and "heroic suicide," and some others have noted the anti-social behavior aspect of poetic heroism. My question is, what about Osip Mandelstam? Wasn't his "anti-social behavior" (comparing Stalin's mustache to a cockroach, etc, in a poem) or, should we call it risk-taking?, also suicidal?

Joseph Brodsky, in his essay on Mandelstam, argues that Mandelstam's character as a poet would have led to his "doom" anywhere, not just in Stalin's Russia. Brodsky isn't criticising Mandelstam when he says this, he is making the point that Mandelstam was not fundamentally political, he was just a poet.

Mandelstam did try to reform his behavior, by the way, attempting to write a panegyric to Stalin, but it couldn't compensate for the cockroach metaphor.

Meanwhile, Osip left behind Nadzhevda (I'm sure I misspell, from memory), who doesn't seem to resent Osip for leaving her behind, but rather those persons and forces that put him in his position in the first place.

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815. **Aviva Wesley Vogel**

***Jorie, Idealism, Monistic Idealism, Plato, Buddhism...***

*Fri 20 Feb 1998*

---

I think, by the way, that the difference between a platonic idealism, say, and a buddhistic or quantum idealism, may be in this distinction:

Platonic "archetypes," like quantum "waves," represent an ideal potentiality--but in classical Greek idealism, the archetypes are somewhere "out there," in a transcendent, metaphysical realm. In what I'll call "quantum idealism," the archetypes, the "waves" that "exist" in "potentia" are not "out there," but in consciousness. Consciousness is the ground of being; it isn't the waves, nor the archetypes, that are "real," that unify our universe, but consciousness of both immanent phenomenon and transcendent possibility/contingency. Consciousness is the unifying field, or matrix, holding imminent/transcendent dualities as one reality.

In other words, it is neither the wave nor the particle, neither the archetypes nor the illusions on the cave wall, that are "real." These domains exists inside consciousness; nothing is outside consciousness. It is consciousness that "collapses the wave function" and results in perception of a particle.

So, the duality of Plato's thinking has been replaced by something else...that may someday turn out to be just as dualistic! I mean...could this "unified field theory of consciousness" eventually be seen as establishing yet another polarity...Consciousness vs. Everything Else? Or, Post Big-Bang Consciousness vs. Contemporaneous Big Bang Symmetry?

Help!!!! How the hell am I going to say anything about Jorie Graham's poetry when she's got me swimming around in the questions she's brought up? What poetry? I guess, in that sense, with my focus on her content, on that which her language refers to, that her poetry can be seen as transparent, rather than opaque. If experimental poetry is equated with opacity of language, then she's not cutting the mustard. On the other hand...what is she talking about? Her "position," so oddly uncertain, improbable, and contingent, could hardly be more opaque!!!! And there is the rub...Is she a wave? Is she a particle? Can I assume the role that "consciousness" might normally take and find some synthesis here? Hmmmm....

Aviva Vogel

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816. **Aviva Wesley Vogel**  
***Guardian Angel of the Swarm***  
*Fri 20 Feb 1998*

---

The Guardian Angel of the Swarm  
Jorie Graham

inclension of            (endogenous)  
crannies of            (exogenous)  
labyrinth                swarm  
teeming    unearthed    invagination    osciallation  
collision                suppression  
intubation              prefiguration  
matter is marbled, of two different styles.

\*\*

It is the upper floor it has no windows.  
It is a dark room decorated only  
by a stretched canvas, diversified by folds,  
as if it were a living dermis. Placed there, on the opaque canvas,  
folds, cords, springs represent  
an innate form of what we call knowledge.  
But when solicited by matter  
they move into action, trigger  
vibrations, oscillations--a correspondence, even a communication--  
between the two labyrinths,  
between the pleats of matter and the pleats of soul--  
(matter is marbled, of two different styles)---  
But the universe appears compressed by an active force  
that endows matter with a curvilinear or spinning movement,  
following an arc that ultimately has no tangent.  
And the infinite division of matter causes compressive force  
to return all portions of matter to the surrounding areas,  
to the neighboring parts that bathe and penetrate the given body---  
Dividing endlessly, the parts of matter form  
little vortices in a maelstrom, and in these  
are found even more vortices, even smaller,  
and even more are spinning in the concave  
intervals of the whirls that touch one another---

an infinitely porous, spongy or cavernous texture without emptiness---

\*\*

unfolding is thus not the contrary of folding,  
but follows the fold up to the following fold---  
particles turned into folds that contrary  
effort changes over and again---

\*\*

and every fold originates from a fold, plica  
ex plica...---an entre-deux, something  
"between" in the sense that a difference is being  
differentiated--

\*\*

and it is thus the world must be placed in the subject---  
in order that the subject be FOR the world---

this is the torsion that constitutes the fold---  
thus the soul is what has folds AND is full of folds---  
in order that the virtual be incarnate---

(thus the soul is what has folds and is full of folds)---

(the fold moves from inflection to inclusion)---

(infinite seriality may be the soul)---

(curvatures may be in it---)

why would something be folded, if it were  
not to be enveloped, wrapped, or put into  
something else?---

does what is folded exist only  
in something that envelops it?---

is it not exactly point-of-view that includes?---

and when inclusion is accomplished, is it not done  
so continuously

it includes the sense of a finished act that is not the site,  
not the place, not the point-of-view,

but what remains in point-of-view,

what OCCUPIES point-of-view---

necessarily a soul, a subject---

a power of envelopment AND development,  
folding when enveloped, unfolding when developed---  
an implication, an explication, a complication---  
a sort of city---  
the course of a given street and that of another---  
an infinite series of curvatures, of inflections---  
the entire world enclosed in the soul by point-of-view---  
Is something else needed?  
Is a realization in matter also required?  
We cannot be sure.  
The soul has no windows by which anything  
could come in or go out. It has no opening. It has no doorway.  
Everything is drawn out of it, nothing comes in.  
It is a cell. It resembles a sacristy more than an atom.  
All activity takes place on the inside.  
An inside without an outside.  
We decorate the inner walls.  
As its correlative, think of the independence of the facade.  
The facade is riddled with holes, although there is no void  
(a hole being only the site of a more rarefied matter)---

\*\*

Come now, let us go.

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817. **Henry Gould**

***Re: Jorie Graham***

*Fri 20 Feb 1998*

---

is Jorie Graham, in other words, a stealth bomb?  
- Henry Gould

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818. **Gwyn McVay**  
***Other stealth bombs?***

*Fri 20 Feb 1998*

---

This week's Washington City Paper. Very strange. Announces impending double bill of Brenda Hillman and James Tate. Describes both as "language poets," lowercase, no =.

Next: "Famed Dadaist Dana Gioia reads..."? "Discussion of the poems of working-class bard Robert Lowell..."?

baffled on the beltway

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819. **Henry Gould**  
***Re: "stops"***

*Fri 20 Feb 1998*

---

The problem stems from too short a present tense. It's just before spring now and it looks like an old season without a name, squeezing in between younger more well-known seasons, trying to imitate a young fall. Small modest birds investigate twigs on vestiges of old snow. Automobiles agree with this weather. They fit into the mold - metal fungi. Somewhere out there a crazy old man is rolling cans of baked beans all the way down the block.

- Henry Gould, SPRING IN HARLORN NINT, 1970

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820. **Poetics List Administration**  
***silly fact No. 215***

*Fri 20 Feb 1998*

---

The ten meg file comprised of the Poetics List digests from September-January, was more than 5000 pages long when opened by MSWord.

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821. **Joe Brennan**  
***Re: suicide***

*Fri 20 Feb 1998*

---

I think we're on the same page. My reaction is well yeah, most poets that I've met who attained any reputation were drunks, druggies and more than a few severely depressed. But isn't it enough that they do the work? Do they also have to be model citizens, correct in every way? Life for many people is nearly unbearable, and when ambitions are achieved and what's discovered is the

same emptiness they were so desperately trying to escape from, it's small wonder they're bitter. Of course this doesn't include everyone, but it includes enough of them that one can fairly view it as one of the risks of the profession, which is hard enough without having to live up to whatever bourgeoisie standards are in vogue. I'm trying to stay out of this one, but I agreed with the sensibility of your post and wanted to tell you that.

Joe Brennan

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822. **Henry Gould**

***Re: Jorie Graham Experimental?***

*Fri 20 Feb 1998*

---

keep working on it, Aviva. She's got a good set of ears. Her anagram is: Ham rragje io... which you could read as "I am rage" or "ham radio". - Henry Gould

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823. **Tom Beckett**

***Re: suicide***

*Fri 20 Feb 1998*

---

As (Uncle) Sam Beckett once wrote:

"Ever tried. Ever failed. No matter. Try again. Fail again. Fail better."

TomB

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824. **Henry Gould**

***Re: poet suicides***

*Fri 20 Feb 1998*

---

as I understand it this message about Mandelstam supports what I was saying earlier about the Plath/Hughes syndrome as an example of an unconscious scapegoating-martyrdom event in which a whole culture partakes. Mandelstam baited Stalin in the same way Plath baited Hughes (& Hughes took the bait). Drink the poison poem. You must change your life. - Edgar Poe a.k.a. "Eric Blarnes"

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825. **Henry Gould**

*plath/hughes etc.*

*Fri 20 Feb 1998*

---

some selections from TALISMAN (no, not the NJ mag - TALISMAN, Blake high school, Hopkins, MN, 1970):

What happens when a clown rapes a dancing girl is quite the obvious, a circus of sex. A circus of sex. A circus of sex. A fellow is a fellow but a gentleman is a circus of sex. A mirage is too clear but a genuine stiff upper lip is a circus of sex. A clean cut pokey is crude but a maiden in disguise is a circus of sex. Slice the bread, slice the bread! Butter the circus of sex. The proverbs stand alone in the ring of the circus of sex. - Steve Brooks (what ever happened to Steve Brooks? he started a polka-funk band in Minneapolis in the mid 70s. Played at the Walker Art Center. Fronted for Rendered Useless? Maybe. This poem explains: Clinton, Plath/Hughes, Lady Di.)

Man reaches out into space  
with his fingers of fire  
stretching outward and upward  
finally the fingers grasp something

and man stands on the moon  
up in the infinite kaleidoscope of space  
collecting dust worth almost more  
than a human life

and while man continues to reach out  
a ghetto baby cries, his stomach empty  
and reaches out for love  
the tiny fingers reach out and grasp  
nothing.

- Phil Martin

(what happened to Phil Martin? he's probably an accountant somewhere - maybe Bloomington)

Withdrawn from  
laughamminute world  
salesman at the door  
Mr. D.D. Thompson sells  
easywayout (?)  
surefire combined  
mass murder-suicide  
program  
ABCNBCBS blares



kick pet rabbits around  
the yard (to relax)  
- JAS. E. JUUL

(who the hell is J. Juul? a pseudonym? probably the REAL accountant)

The bushel was full,  
when the dawn saw its child,  
lost among the rushes,  
in the swamp.

The hut of the peasant was considered lowly,  
the store of the merchant quiet,  
and when the armies marched north,  
all was left behind.

The hills were flatted against a landscape of mellowed tones,  
and the cart was full of lettuce heads,  
serving the flies in the air like kings.

- Steve Brooks

(I don't know what ever happened to Steve Brooks, accordion player and Minneapolis pop star circa 70s. But note how via Steven Crane he has one-upped, by means of parody, both Ezra Pound and John Ashbery. And he's not even a poet.)

- Henry Gould, editor, TALISMAN (Hopkins, MN), 1970

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826. **Maria Damon**

***Re: poet-heroes, suicide and women's lot***

*Sat 21 Feb 1998*

---

whoa! mark weiss writes, among other thihngs"

I've known several women writers whose husbands' work funded their literary careers and afforded them lots of time for writng. I don't know too many men who can say that.

to which i reply:

i know lots of cases in which women worked to put their husbands thru law school, medical school, business school, etc, only to be dumped when hubby finished, got a job, and met some sexier, funner chick in med school law school, etc or on the job.

i'm with katie on this, but i've long since learned that POETIX isn't necessarily open to such discussions, so i just roll my eyes where youall can't see me.

md

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827. **Henry Gould**  
***Spring in Harlorn Nint***

Sat 21 Feb 1998

---

I walked to school on the first day of Spring. I felt the earth rotating. A dog barked pleasantly. I saw puddles in the ground. In a meadow turning green, I think it was part of a golf course, I saw eight or nine young girls laughing and dancing around. They were carrying a young sapling which was decorated with green, red and white ribbons and had a crown of pine branches on top. They carried the tree down a slope to the edge of a pond from which the ice had just melted. Then one of them took from a bag what looked like a burnt piece of wood and a paper Halloween skeleton. With great solemnity they tossed the wood and the skeleton into the pond and shook the young sapling over them. Then, giggling, they danced back over the hill and out of sight.

- Henry Gould, SPRING IN HARLORN NINT (1970)

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828. **Mark Weiss**  
***Re: poet-heroes, suicide and women's lot***

Sat 21 Feb 1998

---

As I said, I was trying to make trouble. But to be serious for a moment, as I also said, I'm under no illusion that the gender playing field is level. Life is usually not very fair, and is clearly less fair to women than to men. Just pointing out that broad generalizations do little justice to the more nuanced actuality. To quote the opening to the very brief message to which you are reacting, "If we generalize enough all distinctions get lost." Hopefully your eyes don't roll whenever someone in basic agreement suggests a mild modification.

At 11:18 PM 2/20/98 -0600, you wrote:

>whoa! mark weiss writes, among other thihngs"

>

>I've known several women writers whose husbands' work funded their literary

>careers and afforded them lots of time for writng. I don't know too many

>men who can say that.

>

>to which i reply:

>

>

>i know lots of cases in which women worked to put their husbands thru law

>school, medical school, business school, etc, only to be dumped when hubby

>finished, got a job, and met some sexier, funner chick in med school law  
>school, etc or on the job.  
>  
>i'm with katie on this, but i've long since learned that POETIX isn't  
>necessarily open to such discussions, so i just roll my eyes where youall  
>can't see me.  
>  
>md  
>  
>

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829. **David Israel**  
**"stops" & "nonstop"**

*Sat 21 Feb 1998*

---

Anent Tom Beckett's "stops"  
am reminded of the contra project  
of w s merwin removing all his punctuation  
(like he said pulling out the nails [or tacks?] that were  
holding the poem down to the page allowing it  
to lift off) a thing he started doing in the  
70s or thereabouts & then  
never stopped  
he allowed that reading such unpunctuate po  
"slowed" somewhat the reading  
usefully  
(syntax rendered  
in his particular use of that  
some modest puzzle to parse betimes)  
d.i.  
p.s.:  
last night Christopher Walken [sp?] in Bravo's "The Actor's Studio" interview  
allows a thing he does w/ a approach to a script is to cross out all affect stage  
direction & likewise all the punctuation

(e.g., write out one's lines sans suchlike)  
so one can read the text & figure it through oneself  
he also claimed he speaks w/o any punctuation  
the assertion proved incredible from the evidence

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830. **Don Wellman**

**Re: Guardian Angel of the Swarm**

Sat 21 Feb 1998

---

--the text of Jorie Graham's seems to need to be read against "A Thousand Plateaus" (Deleuze and Guattari). ... and that reading for me melds with two other threads. Psychoanalysis and poetry "rhizoming" into schizzoanalysis.

On suicide and depression, etc? This is simplistic: depression can drive one to seek an edge-experience. Some think of Plath's suicide as a muffed attempt to return again from the edge--well that is debatable ...

... alcoholism ... that is killing yourself slowly ... there is writing in the face of wanting to die (even if that wish is in denial) ... and all of this as I imagine it is "depressingly" normal in those stratas of society that produces self-identified poets. I have read William's "Desert Music" this way.

... still, the willful pursuit of an edge experience. I find it impossible to deny that this has value for poetry: Artaud, Rimbaud ... even engineers of formalism are often sadistic.

Don Wellman

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831. **Suzanne Burns**

**Re: Jorie Graham**

Sat 21 Feb 1998

---

On Fri, 20 Feb 1998, k. lederer wrote:

*That's why Plath is such an interesting case--*

*Her work, in my view, is incredibly "experimental" and "avant-garde"  
because her tone and general content were so emotionally innovative--*

I was looking at two of her poems "Whiteness I Remember" (an early horse poem which takes a very conventional, autobiographical approach) versus "Ariel" (back to the horse again, but with wildly experimental language, a much

more spare use of form, much more tension, and much more emotional depth and immediacy).

Quite a leap, in my opinion. Looking at the earlier work, you would never think it possible. Graham in my opinion doesn't change much emotionally-- she does, however, have a brilliant mind and I like the thought in her poems.

Suzanne

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832. **Tim Wood**

***Re: Rasula & Jorie Graham & Kostelanetz***

*Sat 21 Feb 1998*

---

> "The messianic temptation of oppositionality has proven too tempting,  
>apparently. But we should be motivated to wonder about this latest pride in  
>heresy. If countermeasures are intended, what purpose is served by making  
an  
>orthodoxy of the unorthodox? ...The fallacy of revolutionary thinking in the  
>literary milieu, suggests Wolfgang Iser, is the temptation 'to believe  
that by  
>negating something, you have already grasped its otherness... With pure  
>negation, the revolution remains dependent upon that which it negates, and  
the

Interesting... I'd like to sit in on dinner with you & Marcuse and watch the "discussion".

Tim

---

Tim Wood

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833. **Randy Prunty**

***Re: Jorie Graham Experimental?***

*Sat 21 Feb 1998*

---

My name is Randy Prunty and I joined this List in January. My Atlanta poetry comrade, Mark Prejsnar, got the List off on this Graham thread, which he probably knows I can't resist. Up until one year ago, I had never had an interest in poetry of any kind. I stumbled across some work by Jorie Graham and I was HOOKED! For about six months I read and reread everything I could get my hands on by her. At the same time, I was looking around to find other poets that had the same energy, tension, intellectual questing that Graham has - for

me. I had no luck (anybody wanta buy a bunch of "mainstream" books and journals?) until I found the world of experimental, non-mainstream, poetry. Now, I'm really hooked on poets like Coolidge, Bernstein (the elder, though I'd like to see some work by Bernstein age 12 1/2), and all these crazy poetry mags I find on Selby's list. So would you say that, for me, Jorie Graham was an intro to the avant-garde? A bridge? By the way, I only occasionally go back and read her works. And it seems odd to me that I find her "middle" books - End of Beauty, Region of Unlikeness, and Materialism- more interesting than her recent Errancy. That is, Errancy at least looks more experimental. And a note to Aviva. Except for the pressure of your deadline, it sounds like you are in a great place! I'm guessing that the process you are going through will turn out to be more "important" to you than the product of your thesis. I would love to hear how all this turns out for you.

Randy

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---

834. **Joe Amato/Kass Fleisher**

***Re: Plath and Hughes***

*Sat 21 Feb 1998*

---

nice post, emma b!...

happy to make yr acquaintance, randy!...

best,

joe

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---

835. **Joe Brennan**

***Re: poet-heroes & suicide***

*Sat 21 Feb 1998*

---

In a message dated 98-02-20 17:39:43 EST, you write:

<<

[http://muse.jhu.edu/journals/postmodern\\_culture/v006/6.3r\\_amato.html](http://muse.jhu.edu/journals/postmodern_culture/v006/6.3r_amato.html)

(you need access to project muse to get to pmc)

i feel like i'm advertising myself around here, apologies even as i hit SEND///

best,

joe

how does one get access to project muse -- & what is it?

Joe Brennan

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836. **Maria Damon**

***Re: Jorie Graham Experimental?***

*Sat 21 Feb 1998*

---

At 11:13 PM -0500 2/20/98, Henry Gould wrote:

>keep working on it, Aviva. She's got a good set of ears. Her anagram is:

>Ham rragje io... which you could read as "I am rage" or "ham radio".

>- Henry Gould

or nam yo ho rengo kyo

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837. **Maria Damon**

***Re: poet-heroines, suicide and women's lot***

*Sat 21 Feb 1998*

---

At 12:30 AM -0800 2/21/98, Mark Weiss wrote:

>As I said, I was trying to make trouble. But to be serious for a moment, as

>I also said, I'm under no illusion that the gender playing field is level.

>Life is usually not very fair, and is clearly less fair to women than to

>men. Just pointing out that broad generalizations do little justice to the

>more nuanced actuality. To quote the opening to the very brief message to

>which you are reacting, "If we generalize enough all distinctions get lost."

>Hopefully your eyes don't roll whenever someone in basic agreement suggests

>a mild modification.

>

mark: there was no indication in the post that you were in basic agreement.

phrases like "life is usually not very fair" are patronizing. assertions

such as "I've known several women writers whose husbands' work funded their literary

>careers and afforded them lots of time for writing. I don't know too many

>men who can say that" indicate such a degree of either ignorance or

>willful feminist-baiting that it's hard to know how to have a

>conversation. so let's give it a rest. i'm sorry i bit the bait.

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838. **Maria Damon**

***Re: Rasula & Jorie Graham & Kostelanetz***

*Sat 21 Feb 1998*

---

At 8:53 AM -0600 2/21/98, Tim Wood wrote:

>> "The messianic temptation of oppositionality has proven too tempting,  
>>apparently. But we should be motivated to wonder about this latest pride in  
>>heresy. If countermeasures are intended, what purpose is served by making  
an  
>>orthodoxy of the unorthodox? ...The fallacy of revolutionary thinking in the  
>>literary milieu, suggests Wolfgang Iser, is the temptation 'to believe  
>that by  
>>negating something, you have already grasped its otherness... With pure  
>>negation, the revolution remains dependent upon that which it negates, and  
>the  
>

...

this is one of the points (in a different, and, i think, more useful  
because more wide-ranging context) i appreciated about watten's ILS essay  
--its interrogation of "oppositionality" as a sufficient rationale for  
certain (claims about) "innovative" poetries, esp those that estrange the  
quotidien relationship of "meaning" to utterance.

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839. **Maria Damon**

***Re: Guardian Angel of the Swarm***

*Sat 21 Feb 1998*

---

on suicide: i read a very compelling and helpful argument that people are  
driven to suicide when their pain exceeds the resources they have for coping; i  
found this little rule of thumb helpful for demystifying the cult or the fear or the  
stigmatizing of suicides or depressives who have been drawn to suicide. that  
was in a book called "out of the nightmare" --can't remember the author. he  
also, as others have on the list, makes the important point that often suicides or  
attempted suicides occur in families either where there has been a suicide, or  
the early death of a parent.

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840. **Joe Amato/Kass Fleisher**

***Re: poet-heroes & suicide***

*Sat 21 Feb 1998*

---

joe b, "project muse" is what johns hopkins calls their consortium of online journals (speaking loosely, but i think this is a good way to describe same)... it costs something like (i think) \$50 a year to subscribe to their offerings (i don't know if that's institutional or individual---fortunately, even my relatively impoverished institution subs)... this was a controversial move on the part of \_postmodern culture\_, as detailed by joel felix (in detail) in the latest issue of the \_electronic book review\_ (ebr), which IS free... you can get to ebr6 at

<http://www.altx.com/ebr/ebr6/ebr6.htm>

for a full discussion by joel of the ins & outs of this controversy (and it's an ass-kicking issue all the way 'round---part 1 of 'image & narrative'---i'd encourage any and all around here to spend some time with it)... it's fair to say that many hands were (publicly & privately) wrung over this decision...

apologies if i've botched any of the details here... best to turn it over to joel f's piece...

best,

joe (a)

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841. **Don Byrd**

***Rasula & Jorie Graham & Kostelanetz***

*Sat 21 Feb 1998*

---

The following passage from Rasula's \_Wax Museum\_ does a great deal to explain his strategy in the book and in his on-going assault on a poetry establishment that persistently rewards safe mediocrity with canonization, academic jobs, literary prizes, and commercial publishing. In dealing with the anthologies of Weinberger, Messerli, and Hoover, whose tastes Rasula undoubtedly shares, he writes:

"The messianic temptation of oppositionality has proven too tempting, apparently. But we should be motivated to wonder about this latest pride in heresy. If countermeasures are intended, what purpose is served by making an orthodoxy of the unorthodox? ...The fallacy of revolutionary thinking in the literary milieu, suggests Wolfgang Iser, is the temptation 'to believe that by negating something, you have already grasped its otherness... With pure negation, the revolution remains dependent upon that which it negates, and the more radical the destruction, the more inevitably it must lead to self-destruction.' The

spectre of autonomous opposition summoned by these anthologies ends up serving the reactionary forces they oppose....

"It seems to me the truly seditious anthologist now should go poaching, retain the genealogical profile as a courtesy, but not rely on it for the crutch of indignation or heroic price. When the world of Associated Writing Programs has to contend to with an anthology that puts Jorie Graham and C.K Williams next to a swarm of language poets, then and only then will it be forced to confront its own ideological dispensation beginning to erode as if from within."

Rasula's practice is consistently seditious in this sense. In fact, he has made the American Poetry Wax Museum so attractive (and so effective is his sedition) that Richard Kostelanetz throws a little fit (in the recent *Poetics Briefs*) that he is not included. RK should perhaps be installed there on the list along with John Koethe, Ted Kooser, Greg Kuzma in some out of the way gallery, as real as life and as susceptible to melt-down from the heat of any real attention. (Incidentally, KR is simply wrong in his claim that Rasula failed to tabulate Paul Carroll's *The Young American Poets* (see p. 488), and one of the other anthologies that he mentions does not appear in the OCLC combined catalog, so it obviously escaped the attention of the Wax Museum).

db

--

\*\*\*\*\*  
Don Byrd (██████, ██████)  
Department of English  
State University of New York  
Albany, NY 12222  
██████ (work); ██████ (home); ██████ (fax)  
The Little Magazine (<http://www.albany.edu/~litmag/>)  
\*\*\*\*\*

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842. **Aviva Wesley Vogel**  
***Re: Jorie Graham Experimental?***  
*Sat 21 Feb 1998*

---

In a message dated 98-02-21 11:04:31 EST, you write:

<< And a note to Aviva. Except for the pressure of your deadline, it sounds like you are in a great place! I'm guessing that the process you are going through will turn out to be more "important" to you than the product of your thesis. I would love to hear how all this turns out for you.

Randy

>>

Randy, thanks for your encouragement. I'm not having much forward momentum with this thing, and I really must be done by tomorrow night. Here's the results thus far (oh pitiable chunk):

IS THERE A NEW WAY OF LOOKING?: (ON) (WITH) THE POETRY OF JORIE GRAHAM

Aviva Vogel

I stood gawking in the January snow with my four-year-old daughter. We'd just emerged from a dark house into pure sunshine. Excess energy bounced off the clean snow, the rusting jeep, silvered barn boards, sky deepening to cobalt, stands of black pine. I was dumbstruck by the ridiculous exuberance of this sassy January sun. Off to my right, about eight or nine chickens were puck-pucking and snatching at seed thrown in the snow. Across the road, pines drew light in.

Everything seemed to oscillate at incredibly high speeds, while I was dumbstruck. The chickens seemed to be crying out "yes, no! yes, no! yes, no!" at the speed of light, switching "on" and "off" in unfathomably rapid binary pulsations. I knew instantly that everything was swelling from and receding into an unbounded, infinite, invisible matrix. Even the snow, an old tire rim, my little girl in her periwinkle snowsuit, red clapboards on the house, a pony's swishing tail—all were calling out "I'm here! I'm not here! I'm here! I'm not here!" It was clear that I was just another "thing" vibrating in the snow and sunshine, an intermittent condensation or coagulation in the "atmosphere" of the matrix. I knew that nothing was "there"—that everything was "there"—that I was pulsing in and out of the matrix, too—all of us existing and not existing at tempos faster than I cared to imagine. I was caught up in a great, taunting game of warp-speed hide-and-seek.

Now it is 1998, twenty years later. I have never forgotten that incident, nor have I ever repeated it. Yet, somehow, when I read certain poems, I feel myself drawing (or drawn) near that moment/place again. I'm quite sure that Jorie Graham's poetry lures me because it seems to promise a possible reentry into that mysterious and clear domain of what I call the "on and off" of things. Graham seems compulsively preoccupied with this odd juxtaposition of the explicit and the implicit in the universe, with unconcealing some kind of schematic for the play of "what's here," along with its necessary complements—what's "potential"—and "what's not here". Graham's persistent meditation on the subject, from the first volume *Hybrids of Plants and Ghosts*, to her most recent, *The Errancy*, has undergone permutations in prosodic strategies and emotional

resilience, although she is unwaveringly engaged in "quarrying the emptiness for furling laws." (E13)

In "Notes on the Reality of the Self," (Materialism), the poem's speaker states, "Nothing is virtual." A little further on, she asks, "Is this body the one I know as me?" The slipping away of a recognizable, stable self is contrasted with the seeming reality of the "roiling" river that she is staring at. There it is, quite aggressively and vividly in front of the poem's "I", a river writhing with spring thaw, a river whose "long brown throat...is sucking up from some faraway melt..." And yet, the river is only "Expression pouring forth, all content no meaning." What kind of void (of purpose) is the speaker sensing? What insubstantiality, in spite of earlier claims that "Nothing is virtual", seeps into her mind, and what perspective on such oppositions will this poem take? Smelling "rot gasses" rising out of "dank leaves" on the riverbank, she says:

...I put my  
breath back out  
onto the scented immaterial. How the invisible  
roils. I see it from here and then  
I see it from here. Is there a new way of looking—  
valences and little hooks—inevitabilities, proba-  
bilities?

"Is there a new way of looking—"? This is a central question for Jorie Graham, as it is for me, and I find myself embroiled in strange and familiar waters while reading her poetry over these last few weeks. Disturbed, uncertain, flipping and spinning, I identify with the "filaments where leaf- matter accrued round a/ pattern, a law, slipping off, precariously, bit by bit,/ and flicks, and swiftesses suddenly more water than not." I find my own moments of "rightness snapping loose," as if I'd been swept up in some manic spring flood created by the great freezing and thawing, the coherence and disintegration, the amassing and loosening, of Jorie's restless mind.

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843. **Aviva Wesley Vogel**

**Re: Jorie Graham**

*Sat 21 Feb 1998*

---

Katy, I'm hoping to find more evidence of something entirely original in Graham's work than a shell of adopted formalities, but...I certainly see your point so far. I have my concerns, too, as much as I'm enamored of her themes and luscious language.

<< I think her work is interesting in that almost all of its "avant-gardeness" in the eyes of the mainstream emanates from its manner of punctuation and form--

In general at Iowa form is the dominating signifier of "experimentalism" or "avant-gardeness"-- >>

And I believe that she takes the trajectory into new domains, influenced by quantum mechanics/physics's Uncertainty Principle, Unified Field Theory efforts, etc. Most importantly, I think that she has absolutely rejected this idea of a progressive (linear) "trajectory". As she puts it in her title poem, "The Errancy":

...the populace...just very tired on its long red errancy/ down the freeways in the dusklight/ towards the little town on the hill -- the 'crystal- formation'? --/ how long ago was it we said that? do you remember?...and the distance we've traveled -- ...and how little we've found -- aren't we tired?/ aren't we going to close the elaborate folder/ which holds the papers in their cocoon of possibility...perpetual bloom...dread fatigue...

I'm not sure Graham is holding out for any global and/or contingent "supreme fiction," although she's obsessed with this holy grail quest...

<<Graham is very old-school in terms of her content (as apart from her form in this example) as she is most influenced by the philosophical and aesthetic trajectories associated with W Stevens and various philosophers (from Plato to Nietzsche)-->>

More later...company just burst in...dogs, loud voices, mass confusion, god how will i get this thesis done???

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844. **k. lederer**

***Re: Jorie Graham Experimental?***

*Sat 21 Feb 1998*

---

It seems to me that you are seconding some of the things Doug Powell said--that even if one doesn't "like" Graham's work, one has to admit that in the world of poetic politics--and what gets taught--she has done a lot to "bridge" the "gap" between "camps"--

This kind of bridging, of course, brings up some provocative questions--

I know Stein said something along the lines of "once you're assimilated into the wider culture ["popularized" so to speak] you are useless" (does anyone have the reference here? I would love to hear it...).

Being a student of Graham's I have had to think about this kind of thing a lot-- Stein, as someone pointed out recently here, was just a category on Jeopardy-- where does this leave her?

How much and in what ways do "experimental" or "fringe" writers want to be

accepted into the larger culture of poetry? The larger culture of America?

What kinds of "subversions" can remain subversive once "popularized" etc.

I think this really has to do with the individual poet--

Notley's *Descent*, for example, is not necessarily politically subversive (in the sense that it is about tyranny etc., it is ethical in a familiar way)--the aesthetics of it are also "strange" but, as Notley says in a note at the beginning of the book, the punctuation and form are meant to remind the reader that this is a spoken text--a medium to be "listened" to, not just read, again a perfectly "normal" impulse on Notley's part--

Scalapino's ontological explorations are of a different nature--perhaps the "findings" of her work are a little bit more difficult to swallow--perhaps the "experimental" nature of this work would suffer from popularity--perhaps.

And so on--

I notice that more and more (particularly female) writers from such "mainstream" environments as Iowa are writing "strangely" and, in some sense because of their pedigrees, are publishing their "strange" poems in mainstream journals (I am thinking here of Hillman and Claudia Keelan)--

For me the Graham issue--even the Stein issue--speaks more to pedigree and its effects on critical and cultural reception--not so much to the work itself--

Best,

Katy

\*\*\*

On Sat, 21 Feb 1998, Randy Prunty wrote:

*My name is Randy Prunty and I joined this List in January. My Atlanta poetry comrade, Mark Prejsnar, got the List off on this Graham thread, which he probably knows I can't resist.*

*Up until one year ago, I had never had an interest in poetry of any kind. I stumbled across some work by Jorie Graham and I was HOOKED! For about six months I read and reread everything I could get my hands on by her. At the same time, I was looking around to find other poets that had the same energy, tension, intellectual questing that Graham has - for me. I had no luck (anybody wanta buy a bunch of "mainstream" books and journals?) until I found the world of experimental, non-mainstream, poetry. Now, I'm really hooked on poets like Coolidge, Bernstein (the elder, though I'd like to see some work by Bernstein age 12 1/2), and all these crazy poetry mags I find on Selby's list. So would you say that, for me, Jorie Graham was an intro to the avant-garde? A bridge?*

*By the way, I only occasionally go back and read her works. And it seems odd*

*to me that I find her "middle" books - End of Beauty, Region of Unlikeness, and Materialism- more interesting than her recent Errancy. That is, Errancy at least looks more experimental.*

*And a note to Aviva. Except for the pressure of your deadline, it sounds like you are in a great place! I'm guessing that the process you are going through will turn out to be more "important" to you than the product of your thesis.*

*I would love to hear how all this turns out for you.*

Randy

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845. **Tom Beckett**  
***depression,suicide***

Sat 21 Feb 1998

Depression. Suicide. I've been following the conversation for the last few days and was trying to stay out of it but I can't. Here goes...I can put a face on this--my own. Depression is a fact of my life that I am trying to deal with. It is difficult to communicate how stifling, how oppressive, how overwhelming and crippling it can be if you've not experienced it. It goes well beyond "having a bad day" and involves patterns of obsessive thinking that one has to learn how to shut off if one is to survive. There are no easy fixes. A pill might help but it can ultimately only be part of the answer.

When I was a small child, I suffered a head trauma that caused epilepsy and that took away many aspects of my physical coordination. Before the trauma I could turn somersaults, afterwards not. Before I had normal fine motor skills, afterwards not,etc. The !950s were not great years in which to be epileptic, different, hyperactive, uncoordinated, unusually tall, and emotionally uncertain. I was beaten up regularly. Add in an authoritarian father who found me disappointing. It, I, was a problem. I was shunted to doctors, psychs, medicated (for 16 years), hooked to machines, sent to a "special school" (grades 3 to 5) that taught me nothing but that I was abnormal. Resources for kids with these kinds of problems are better now but in the 50s and early 60s it was a nightmare. I learned to be fearful. I learned to feel incompetent. I've always felt that I don't belong anywhere. It has made for difficulties (that damn word again).

More recently I've had years of pain from a back injury which is now better and last spring I was physically assaulted while doing an housing inspection at a low income housing project.

All of this is shorthand for things that could be gone on about at booklength. I'll resist the impulse. What I'm trying to suggest (beyond whining) is that there



are many layers to a person's depression. It occurs in context(s). I, for one, need better coping skills. I'm trying to get them.

Suicide is an unfortunate outcome. But I understand all too well how it can happen. We don't all have the same pain thresholds--or the same learning opportunities. I wish Walter Benjamin hadn't killed himself. (Imagine him surviving to live in NY and encounter a young Charles Bernstein in Central Park.) But I understand why he did. I might well have behaved similarly. To call suicide an act of cowardice is not helpful. In our "just do it" culture sometimes we need to extend a little more empathy--perhaps seeking clarification rather than dismissing out-of-hand what scares us . Enough. Tom Beckett

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846. **Keston Sutherland**

***Re: More appalling officiousness of the week***

*Sat 21 Feb 1998*

---

Ron says:

Teach what you believe in, or don't bother. There's too much good poetry out there to ever be covered in one college career, let alone one course. To waste it on "official verse culture" is to simply contribute to the a-literacy and poetry-phobia that innundates us all.

The more overt officiating here is precisely in your (Ron) imperative that teachers should act as if their pupils are so stupid that they can't make up their minds for themselves. "Malpractice" - that's just petulant. Never mind, you'll be smeared all over those syllabi soon enough sit tight

K

[↑ Contents](#)

847. **Jordan Davis**

***Building a bridge to the 21st c.***

*Sat 21 Feb 1998*

---

Whenever Jorie Graham is quoted to me it's always something about how tiring it is, doing all this observing, or the endlessness of keeping things going, the burden! Do I hafta? she seems always to be saying. (Rhymes with NAFTA)

It's possible she's been misrepresented to me -- there could be lots of joy, or even scrumptious emptiness there. David Lehman's poem "Big Hair" in a recent TLS indicates some emptiness .. somewhere ..

Hoping Mark Baker will versify these half-thoughts,  
Jordan



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848. **Karen Kelley**  
***Re: depression,suicide***

*Sat 21 Feb 1998*

---

Tom Beckett wrote:

>

>I learned to be fearful.

Well, your post is MOST courageous.

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849. **david bromige**  
***the suicide thread***

*Sat 21 Feb 1998*

---

Tom, bully for you. (I've known Tom fairly well for 12 years, folks, and all I knew of what he reveals today, was that he was tall and had back trouble!) In the USA of all places it is difficult to admit to depression, "Hey Dave howya doin?" "Great, just Great, Biff! And you?" "Couldnt be better!" Depression is often clinical, something's depriving you of your serotonin. We can argue chicken-&-egg re psych trauma brings that on, or that condition baffles others who react badly, causing pysch trauma. Kate Braverman titled her novel *Lithium for Medea*. I have friends who prefer even the downer side-effects of Lithium, to the swings of depression/hypomania. But letting it all hang out is therapeutic, and not just for oneself. I recall at my most unhappy, looking down from a 4th story window into a parkinglot, but being unable to jump. My recovery began there, I guess.

Recall these verses from "Trouble in Mind"?

"I'm gonna lay my head/ on that lonesome railroad line/ Let the 2:19/ Pacify my mind . . . I'm gonna lay my head/ On that lonesome railroad track,/ But when I hear that whistle blow/ I'm gonna pull it back."

I mourn those of my friends who got to the first verse one time more often than they got to the second. db3

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850. **Thomas Bell**

***Re: poet suicides***

*Sat 21 Feb 1998*

---

May be having an owly day, but all these suicides may have little to do with poetry, hard as this is for me to see. There are times that neurochemistry, genetics, and/or thorny people and sticky philosophical/ socioeconomic situations might play a role, no? tom bell (wrestling with sat am thorniness/orneriness)

At 10:18 AM 2/21/98 +0800, Schuchat Simon wrote:

>I appreciate David Bromige's distinction between risktaking and "heroic  
>suicide," and some others have noted the anti-social behavior aspect of  
>poetic heroism. My question is, what about Osip Mandelstam? Wasn't his  
>"anti-social behavior" (comparing Stalin's mustache to a cockroach, etc,  
>in a poem) or, should we call it risk-taking?, also suicidal?

>

>Joseph Brodsky, in his essay on Mandelstam, argues that Mandelstam's  
>character as a poet would have led to his "doom" anywhere, not just in  
>Stalin's Russia. Brodsky isn't criticising Mandelstam when he says this,  
>he is making the point that Mandelstam was not fundamentally political,  
>he was just a poet.

>

>Mandelstam did try to reform his behavior, by the way, attempting to  
>write a panegyric to Stalin, but it couldn't compensate for the cockroach  
>metaphor.

>

>Meanwhile, Osip left behind Nadzhevda (I'm sure I misspell, from memory),  
>who doesn't seem to resent Osip for leaving her behind, but rather those  
>persons and forces that put him in his position in the first place.

>

>

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851. **Joe Brennan**

***Re: depression,suicide***

*Sat 21 Feb 1998*

---

Tom: this is a gutsy post and hopefully will add a dimension to this discussion that will make some folks a litte more circumspect before they engage in blanket generalizations that diminish rather than expand the possibility of understanding.

Joe

In a message dated 98-02-21 15:53:22 EST, you write:

<< Depression. Suicide. I've been following the conversation for the last few days and was trying to stay out of it but I can't. Here goes...I can put a face on this--my own. Depression is a fact of my life that I am trying to deal with. It is difficult to communicate how stifling, how oppressive, how overwhelming and crippling it can be if you've not experienced it. I goes well beyond "having a bad day" and involves patterns of obsessive thinking that one has to learn how to shut off if one is to survive. There are no easy fixes. A pill might help but it can ultimately only be part of the answer.

When I was a small child, I suffered a head trauma that caused epilepsy and that took away many aspects of my physical coordination. Before the trauma I could turn somersaults, afterwards not. Before I had normal fine motor skills, afterwards not, etc. The 1950s were not great years in which to be epileptic, different, hyperactive, uncoordinated, unusually tall, and emotionally uncertain. I was beaten up regularly. Add in an authoritarian father who found me disappointing. It, I, was a problem. I was shunted to doctors, psychs, medicated (for 16 years), hooked to machines, sent to a "special school" (grades 3 to 5) that taught me nothing but that I was abnormal. Resources for kids with these kinds of problems are better now but in the 50s and early 60s it was a nightmare. I learned to be fearful. I learned to feel incompetent. I've always felt that I don't belong anywhere. It has made for difficulties (that damn word again).

More recently I've had years of pain from a back injury which is now better and last spring I was physically assaulted while doing an housing inspection at a low income housing project.

All of this is shorthand for things that could be gone on about at booklength. I'll resist the impulse. What I'm trying to suggest (beyond whining) is that there are many layers to a person's depression. It occurs in context(s). I, for one, need better coping skills. I'm trying to get them.

Suicide is an unfortunate outcome. But I understand all too well how it can happen. We don't all have the same pain thresholds--or the same learning opportunities. I wish Walter Benjamin hadn't killed himself. (Imagine him surviving to live in NY and encounter a young Charles Bernstein in Central Park.) But I understand why he did. I might well have behaved similarly. To call suicide an act of cowardice is not helpful. In our "just do it" culture sometimes we need to extend a little more empathy--perhaps seeking clarification rather than dismissing out-of-hand what scares us. Enough. Tom Beckett

----- Headers -----

Return-Path: <[REDACTED]>

Received: from relay20.mail.aol.com (relay20.mail.aol.com [172.31.106.66])

by air05.mail.aol.com (v39.9) with SMTP; Sat, 21 Feb 1998 15:53:22 -0500  
Received: from PEAR.EASE.LSOFT.COM (pear.ease.lsoft.com [206.241.12.19])  
by relay20.mail.aol.com (8.8.5/8.8.5/AOL-4.0.0)  
with ESMTP id PAA15833;  
Sat, 21 Feb 1998 15:53:12 -0500 (EST)  
Receiv >>

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852. **Joel Felix**

**Re: query LVNG and address query**

Sat 21 Feb 1998

---

LVNG 7 should be available in March, God and the US dollar willing.

On a related note : can anyone backchannel Christian Bok's email address to me?

xie xie

Joel Felix

*Does anyone know if the Chicago mag LVNG is going to appear? Or when?  
You can backchannel - [REDACTED]. Thanks! - HG*

[↑ Contents](#)

853. **Steve Tills**

**Re: depression,suicide**

Sat 21 Feb 1998

---

Dear Tom,

And it's also meant for THE DIFFICULTIES, also yours, one of the finest poetics publications there have been. Very warmest regards from an old friend, also one's who's battled, still battles D, S-obsessions, etc., Steve Tills

Tom Beckett wrote:

*Depression. Suicide. I've been following the conversation for the last few days and was trying to stay out of it but I can't. Here goes...I can put a face on this--my own. Depression is a fact of my life that I am trying to deal with. It is difficult to communicate how stifling, how oppressive, how overwhelming and crippling it can be if you've not experienced it. I goes well beyond "having a bad day" and involves patterns of obsessive thinking that one has to learn how to shut off if one is to survive. There are no easy fixes. A pill might help but it can ultimately only be part of the answer.*

*When I was a small child, I suffered a head trauma that caused epilepsy and that took away many aspects of my physical coordination. Before the trauma I could turn somersaults, afterwards not. Before I had normal fine motor skills, afterwards not, etc. The 1950s were not great years in which to be epileptic, different, hyperactive, uncoordinated, unusually tall, and emotionally uncertain. I was beaten up regularly. Add in an authoritarian father who found me disappointing. It, I, was a problem. I was shunted to doctors, psychs, medicated (for 16 years), hooked to machines, sent to a "special school" (grades 3 to 5) that taught me nothing but that I was abnormal. Resources for kids with these kinds of problems are better now but in the 50s and early 60s it was a nightmare. I learned to be fearful. I learned to feel incompetent. I've always felt that I don't belong anywhere. It has made for difficulties (that damn word again).*

*More recently I've had years of pain from a back injury which is now better and last spring I was physically assaulted while doing an housing inspection at a low income housing project.*

*All of this is shorthand for things that could be gone on about at booklength. I'll resist the impulse. What I'm trying to suggest (beyond whining) is that there are many layers to a person's depression. It occurs in context(s). I, for one, need better coping skills. I'm trying to get them.*

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854. **Douglas Barbour**

***Re: Hughes? Well...***

*Sat 21 Feb 1998*

---

Hm, Ron

That's a little hard, but...

Aside from the fact that many of the students in such a course expect to read such poets as have been, um, 'canonized,' there's the way such a course is structured to show what has been accepted in the two countries (the US & Britain). In our university, at least, such courses have different professors from year to year but much the same syllabus. I admit, I used anthologies & they have a restrictive function. I added a small collection by O'Hara, which was

available, for example. Besides, one can perhaps get students to see interesting differences when you place the kind of poetry you like against some of the examples of 'official verse culture' they have already been told is \*the\* form of poetry in the middle to late 20th century. In other courses, less historical & specifically geographical in coverage, I have taught \*only\* writers I love. But there's also what I learn from teaching poetry that comes from a 'tradition' not my own... Also, I represented my sense of Hughes's work in the sentence you take umbrage to perhaps too negatively: there are some Hughes poems I can teach with real pleasure...

In this context, I like what Mark said about Jed Rasula...

On the other hand, the more I think about the new book the less I like it, the more I find 'wrong' with the poems (usually, & happily, the more I think about a book the better it becomes). I am intrigued by the fact that I do continue to think about it even as I have that reaction (& sit down to read some Kathleen Fraser to clear my mind).

<<Douglas,

If, as you say,

"I'm not a great fan of his [T Hughes'] writing but as a teacher I have had to include it in courses on post 1945 poetry...,"

you are guilty of malpractice.

Teach what you believe in, or don't bother. There's too much good poetry out there to ever be covered in one college career, let alone one course. To waste it on "official verse culture" is to simply contribute to the a-literacy and poetry-phobia that inundates us all.

Ron Silliman>>

=====

Douglas Barbour  
Department of English  
University of Alberta  
Edmonton Alberta T6G 2E5

██████████ FAX: ██████████

H: ██████████

~~~~~  
~~~~~

And all of the time you are seeing these things she  
sings 'not

loudly but with authority'  
Michael Palmer

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855. **B. Taylor**  
***I was wondering...***  
*Sat 21 Feb 1998*

---

Has it occurred to anyone else that all the speculation re. Hughes/Plath (un-faithful hubby, what about the CHILDREN!?!?, what's the secret of their relationship?, who's the other woman?, etc) bears a strong resemblance to all the speculation on Bill-Hillary-Monica & co.?

Brigham

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856. **Henry Gould**  
***Re: depression,suicide***  
*Sat 21 Feb 1998*

---

Thank you to Tom Beckett. There seems to be a certain ecology of rightness when dealing with these realities. We sometimes forget that words & "posts" & "messages" are structured in the same way that larger media & culture phenomena are structured. The "Clinton-Diana-Plath/Hughes thing" is subject to "spinmeisters" at every level - our snap judgements are similar to snapshots on the cover of the tabloids, same structure, different venue.

I feel unable to judge the "morality" of suicide or weigh the Hughes/Plath sin on any scale. Suicide has struck too close to home. I think this must be true for many on the list. Nevertheless, the intrepid investigator will win the day, and the truth will out. It's a matter of finding the right path between censoring information, on the one hand, and making condescending snap judgements, on the other. - Henry Gould

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857. **Henry Gould**  
***query : Iraq***  
*Sat 21 Feb 1998*

---

My 16-yr-old son came up with a strategic solution(?) to the looming bombardment of Iraq. I thought it was a good idea & called the secret service about it (the only gov't agency that answered the phone with a human voice). I've read that Clinton & the war planners came to a decision almost a month ago. After the condescending performance in Ohio I doubt they are open to new ideas. If

anybody has any suggestions I'm interested. I'm waiting for a call now from "Agent Mooney" at the Providence office of the secret service. (This is not a Blarnes-type joke).

Here's Alex's idea. The US has painted itself into a corner. It's a no-win situation both militarily and diplomatically (not to mention morally). The effect on public opinion of massive bombardment - the effect on relations in the MidEast & elsewhere - EVEN IF SADDAM IS KILLED - are extremely negative. & he won't be killed, & the threat of retaliation will only be increased. This is the "worst case scenario" & it's fairly likely to BE the scenario. Alex says: the US should step back from an all-out bombardment. They should work with the inspectors & say: show us THIS palace; if you don't show us THIS particular palace, we will bombard it on such & such a date. This reduces civilian casualties & puts the onus on Hussein if he decides not to cooperate, leaves biotoxics on the site, puts civilians in harm's way, etc. It forces him to keep moving his stuff, if he really has any. Alex himself sees the weakness in this idea: basically, it will be unacceptable to Hussein, as an affront to Iraqi sovereignty. But even if Hussein refuses - it makes him look intransigent, and it reduces the threat of blanket bombardment. (Sadly, I'm cynical enough to think the Pentagon just wants to try out their latest weapons in a real-life situation - that's why this idea doesn't appeal to them.) All this is contingent on the outcome of Kofi Annan's attempt to resolve the crisis.

I'd be curious to know, IF people think this is a good idea, how to publicize it. No academic "chat" please. What a bizarre "democracy" we live in where it takes a high school student to force his father's generation to grapple with the realities being carried out (Vietnam-like) in their name... - Henry Gould, waiting to hear from Agent Mooney in a Pynchon volume of the X-files

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858. **Tom Beckett**  
*acker/scalapino*

*Sat 21 Feb 1998*

---

I wrote the following text for TapRoot Reviews a couple of years ago:  
>I think that DEFOE is a work of genius on the scale of FINNIGAN'S WAKE, THE MAKING OF AMERICANS, THE DISASTERS OF WAR and GUERNICA. But, while Scalapino's work deserves comparison to that of Joyce, Stein, Goya and Picasso, it is Kathy Acker's oeuvre I want to invoke here. The universe of Acker's fiction-built-from-fiction is abusive, apocalyptic and "in your face."The horror (whore-her) of her narratives derives from the ways in which sexuality and



violence are casually, causally and explicitly intertwined. Something related but different is happening in DEFOE.

>DEFOE effects a kind of dull affect, a resolute flattening of language horizonizing perception and consciousness, description and event. Fantasies, autobiography, commentary on current events, film and DEFOE itself merge with

dream narratives to produce a landscape less blatant but more terrifying than anything to be found in Acker's work. Scalapino's anger and passion are evident but mightily restrained. Her strategy of understatement pays off in a major way with DEFOE's overwhelming cumulative effect.

>Working out of received fictions, Kathy Acker's writing highlights our culture's essential disfunctions. Scalapino's enacts a backdoor move on the received through a poetic phenomenology of the perceived in which "the fiction is so transparent and separated that it doesn't exist."

>DEFOE is one of those rare works of art which will not be exhausted of its meaning. And Leslie Scalapino is that rarest of writers--one that is utterly awake.<

What do people think of my Acker/Scalapino connection? Is this something we can discuss. Best wishes, Tom Beckett

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859. **Thomas Bell**

***Re: Poetry and Depression***

*Sun 22 Feb 1998*

---

As a psychologist I think this kind of study is misleading - there are extraordinary levels of depression at present across the board - there are extraordinary levels among those who see the world as it is and not through rose colored glasses. There are depressions and depressions dysthymia, major, seasonal affective, bipolar II, pissydayness, etc) and what kind is measured is particularly important - there is an animal called creative depression (kind of like darkness before the storm, see for example, Rosen, David, *\_Transforming Depression\_* and Jung, Moore, Hillman)

->

"My condition is not unhappiness, but it is also not happiness, not indifference, not weakness, not fatigue, not another interest - so what is it then." Kafka, Diaries.

"I am surrounded for the first time in my life with people over twenty-five who were born in the year, or shortly after the year, when I had the experience of what is called medically, in America, a "depression of two weeks. I called it

melancholia, I called it acedia, which is the inactivity which results from a man seeing how enormously difficult it is for a man to do the right thing. In good English: sloth. I had a period of very black sloth." Ivan Illich in The Whole Earth, No. 90, 1997.

<-

Sorry, I think probably you are not guilty of the attitude I find myself railing at - the attitude that art and depression are aberrant and deserve each other. tom bell

Depression brings two choice points: recognition and seeking professional help. I have seen my share from both sides of the couch - see next post.

At 10:27 PM 2/21/98 -0800, Don Byrd wrote:

> I don't remember the details, but a few years ago, there was a widely  
>report study conducted at Iowa Writer's Workshop and perhaps elsewhere  
that  
>found extraordinary levels of depression among writers. Does any one remem-  
ber  
>this?

>

> Don

>--

>\*\*\*\*\*

> Don Byrd ( [REDACTED], [REDACTED] )  
> Department of English  
> State University of New York  
> Albany, NY 12222  
> [REDACTED] (work); [REDACTED] (home); [REDACTED] (fax)  
> The Little Magazine (<http://www.albany.edu/~litmag/>)

>\*\*\*\*\*

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860. **Thomas Bell**

**(no subject)**

Sun 22 Feb 1998

---

emptiness koans and the world grows empty.

Death

At the end of my life do I still want to bear the emptiness I've stored through the years.

For Ingeborg Bachmann the inscription on the third stone was illegible initially. When it was

revealed it said, "Kill your beloved!". To me it revealed, "Kill your baggage!"

The pink flamingo sign with burned out neon that guarded my route to work all those

years under Mr. Bodega's watchful sarcasm. The fears. The purple handbag my mother took

on Sundays along with the blame I placed on her all these years. The bravado I wear. The

green feel of the hopes that I wore when I played the lottery. The yellow passion flower Daisy

wore on the day she turned me down. At the end of my life do I still want to bear the

emptiness I've stored through the years.

#### The Day

The day is empty until I fill it. She turned 14 and wanted a life of her own. The tanager will fly. Tomorrow will be warmer. Tomorrow will be my birthday. The tanager will come back. Tomorrow she will see what life is like. The tanager won't return. Tomorrow I will return to that runoff in the spring slush on the hill near where my family lived 50 years ago. She will be president. Tomorrow there will be an answer. Tomorrow is the first day. The tanager is scarlet. Tomorrow is the last day of the sale. I will pack the snow so the runoff will course another way. Tomorrow we rest. Another tanager will replace it. She will be. The day is empty until I fill it.

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861. **louis stroffolino**

***Re: acker/scalapino***

*Sun 22 Feb 1998*

---

Tom, I wanted to reply to your "depression" and "suicide" post, and just say thank you, but since others already have I will anyway.

As for Acker and Scalapino. I like the comparison you establish in terms of "affect" and do find considerations of "emotional range" valuable aesthetic/ethical distinctions.

Reminds me of Garrett Kalleberg's comparison of myself and Pam Rehm, That being said, I do not prefer Scalapino to Acker

And do not prefer Acker to Scalapino.

OR, there are times when I prefer one and times when I prefer the other. The "flattening" vs. the "manic-depression."

One wonders if you would have agreed with your preference for Scalapino when you wrote the "depression" note.

Sometimes gaudy calls the subtle boring.

Sometimes subtle calls theatre gaudy.

Prolegomenon toward a poetics of MOODS?

Chris

On Sat, 21 Feb 1998, Tom Beckett wrote:

*I wrote the following text for TapRoot Reviews a couple of years ago:  
I think that DEFOE is a work of genius on the scale of FINNIGAN'S WAKE, THE MAKING OF AMERICANS, THE DISASTERS OF WAR and GUERNICA. But, while Scalapino's*

*work deserves comparison to that of Joyce, Stein, Goya and Picasso, it is Kathy Acker's oeuvre I want to invoke here. The universe of Acker's fiction-built-from-fiction is abusive, apocalyptic and "in your face."The horror (whore-her) of her narratives derives from the ways in which sexuality and violence are casually, causally and explicitly intertwined. Something related but different is happening in DEFOE.*

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*Working out of received fictions, Kathy Acker's writing highlights our culture's essential disfunctions. Scalapino's enacts a backdoor move on the received through a poetic phenomenology of the perceived in which "the fiction is so transparent and separated that it doesn't exist."*

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*What do people think of my Acker/Scalapino connection? Is this something we can discuss. Best wishes, Tom Beckett*

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862. **Don Byrd**  
**Poetry and Depression**  
Sun 22 Feb 1998

---

I don't remember the details, but a few years ago, there was a widely reported study conducted at Iowa Writer's Workshop and perhaps elsewhere that found extraordinary levels of depression among writers. Does any one remember this?

Don

--

\*\*\*\*\*

Don Byrd ([REDACTED], [REDACTED])  
Department of English  
State University of New York  
Albany, NY 12222  
[REDACTED] (work); [REDACTED] (home); [REDACTED] (fax)  
The Little Magazine (<http://www.albany.edu/~litmag/>)

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863. **George Bowering**  
**Re: Plath**  
Sun 22 Feb 1998

---

*On Fri, 20 Feb 1998, k. lederer wrote:*

*That's why Plath is such an interesting case--*

*Her work, in my view, is incredibly "experimental" and "avant-garde" because her tone and general content were so emotionally innovative--*

I agree with you. I don't believe it either.

George Bowering.

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

fax: [REDACTED]

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864. **Mark Baker**

***Re: Building a bridge to the 21st c.***

Sun 22 Feb 1998

---

My Emily Dickinson

A little post from Jordan,  
Poetics-list records,  
Took Half-a-crack at Graham,  
Then fled the Burden'd floor--

The crumbling was an instant--  
It left a Scrumptious mess,  
Observing it--so Tiring--  
We wished for Emptiness--

We grumbled--"Do we Hafta?"--  
Then Somewhere saw her Hairtip--  
And then endured the Endlessness  
Of Sweeping these Things up--

Mark Baker

---

Jordan Davis wrote:

>

> Whenever Jorie Graham is quoted to me it's always something about how  
> tiring it is, doing all this observing, or the endlessness of keeping  
> things going, the burden! Do I hafta? she seems always to be saying.

> (Rhymes with NAFTA)

>

> It's possible she's been misrepresented to me -- there could be lots of  
> joy, or even scrumptious emptiness there. David Lehman's poem "Big Hair"  
> in a recent TLS indicates some emptiness .. somewhere ..

>

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865. **Rebecca Weldon Sithiwong**

***Hughes2***

Sun 22 Feb 1998

---

*Has it occurred to anyone else that all the speculation re. Hughes/Plath  
(unfaithful hubby, what about the CHILDREN!?!?, what's the secret of their  
relationship?, who's the other woman?, etc) bears a strong resemblance to  
all the speculation on Bill-Hillary-Monica & co.?*

Brigham

Re: the above.

The life and work of Hughes and Plath is in the public domain where people may think of it or speculate upon it as they wish. It is true that the question of literary merit is not, in my mind, as pressing as examining the moral issues pertaining to Hughes' publication of his poems about his relationship with Plath.

I am not making a value judgement of Hughes as individual or poet, but rather, as practitioner of the poetry profession. We have no court of law, no malpractice guidelines or official code of ethics, but, that doesn't mean that we can do any damned thing we wish to do and call it poetry. I believe that the publication of Birthday Letters is unethical because it purports to illuminate a "dark" relationship between two poets for examination by the poetic community using poetry as an artifice, not as an integral tool in the quest for truth. The use of poetic form as apologia for a controversial relationship between two poets, whatever their respective qualities, is at issue here.

As for the matter of Plath's suicide, suicide has been the choice of many people. It may be strongly related to depression but it is equally related to questions of honor. Philandering?...a quaint term. Men and women often philander while retaining more or less loving relationships in marriage, in fact, I would suggest that suicide, in these cases, is the exception rather than the rule. The crux of the matter is whether Plath's suicide was related to her soul, her poetry, her honor all of which could possibly have been labeled as artifacts of depression by her husband, viz, the posthumous destruction of parts of her work.

The retroactive victimization of suicides also disturbs me; it grates on my belief in free will. Most poets contemplate the fact of suicide at some point in their life, many consider it seriously and some small number of poets perform it. The realm of truth is a noble battlefield, but not all survive it. For this reason, it is crucial that we understand the terms of engagement and honor those who have fallen nobly. I believe and dare to state in this cynical world that poetry is still a vocation of moral and ethical significance. Characterizing the Hughes/Plath controversy in the vein of the current soap opera in the White House connotes an insensitivity to these moral issues.

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866. **L.MacMahon and T.R.Healy**

***Re: Jorie Graham Experimental?***

*Sun 22 Feb 1998*

---

Dear Aviva,

I really enjoyed your post and would suggest that rather than trying to achieve a resolution to the question of where Jorie Graham fits that your thesis embraces the uncertainties which are raised. It seemed to me that your post was able to explore a wonderfully wide range of material as a consequence of being unable to settle on one position.

Two asides:

recently saw an ad in a newspaper: Mynah for sale, almost talking.

And my wife Louise asks why do we say that we are below par if unwell? Surely being below par is what golfers are striving for, i.e. it's a good thing.

all the best

Randolph Healy

At 21:11 20/02/98 EST, you wrote:

>As I'm headed into the last two days before deadline to punch out a thesis on  
>Jorie Graham, I stall some more and read my email...and find that the same  
>quandary paralyzing my work is now played out in the conversation between  
Mark

>Prejsnar and Katy Lederer.

>

>Jorie...let's see...where does she "fit"...is she carrying out the Romantic  
>project, the Modernist project? Is she a neo-romantic-symbolist with  
>postmodern convulsions? Yes, I would agree that she travels along the  
>"Wallace Stevens" trajectory to a large degree, and it's certainly true that  
>she struggles in the ontological oscillation that occurs between Plato's  
>Ideals and the search for a Unified Field Theory (or Theory of Everything).  
>Along with those metaphysical oscillations, her work lunges almost  
>schizophrenically between the polarities many would call "mainstream" and  
>"experimental."

>

>It's very frustrating for me to deal with this thesis, because I'd started out  
>thinking that I'd chosen a writer who's aesthetics couldn't be said to  
>"foreground" language as a primary project, but who was finding (particularly  
>in "Errancy") a "new way of looking," who was groping for a new language to  
>create self/culture (a la Richard Rorty). Plus, I was attracted to her  
>flirtations with the dialectic between classical platonic idealism and  
>postmodern contingency and irony.

>

>Reading Jorie Graham, to be very honest, has required a crash course in  
>philosophy and physics---having failed to enjoy a "mainstream" liberal arts  
>education, I really didn't know Plato's "cave" story; I had no idea what  
>Heisenberg's Uncertainty Principle was; I'd heard the name Bergson but knew



>nothing of his metaphysics; and Voltaire? Montescieu? Mark Rothko?  
>Nietzsche? St. Thomas Aquinas? These were all names I'd heard, as if  
>grasping the label were enough to "know," almost osmotically, what was being  
>referred to, but truly---I had no clue as to what might have been the  
>difference between Nietzsche's "will to power" and Bergson's "flux" and "elan  
>vital" ideas. I couldn't distinguish between the idealism of Plato and the  
>idealism now being generated in response to perspectives derived from "new  
>physics" and quantum mechanics.

>

>In that sense, my experience of Jorie Graham's work has been drastically  
>altered. I've spent the bulk of my reading/research on delving into her  
>allusions and into the disciplines that inform her work, rather than on  
>considerations of her prosodic strategies, linguistic aesthetics, and "place"  
>in the "field" of poetry. I've been dismayed to discover that what "looked"  
>as though it were reasonably avant-garde form on the page has revealed itself  
>to be "postmodern" or "language"-oriented only in the sense that her "self" is  
>somewhat diffuse; her syntax can get pretty elliptical and paratactic; her  
>structures lean on cinematic techniques, montage and collage, and Conte's  
>"serial" form (sometimes). But these are all techniques and responses that  
>have been done and done and done during the entire twentieth-century,  
>particularly by the Modernists. So...how could I possibly make a case that  
>she was using some of the same strategies as, say, Lyn Hejinian or Kathleen  
>Fraser? Not only was my thesis shot, but I was now drowning in the same  
>polluted waters that everyone else was in their attempts to articulate  
>language poetry, postmodern poetry, avant-garde poetry, or experimental  
>poetry.

>

>I finally decided that Graham was postmodernist in the sense that  
>postmodernism is highly involved in comprehensively reviewing the entire  
>Western Canon, especially in relationship to other canons and non-canonical  
>writing, and that she was engaged in a huge re-evaluation project. If Graham  
>was guilty of any "subversion," though, it was a sneaky kind of subversion,  
>one that crept up on me, that crawled over me at night as I lay sweating,  
>trying to figure out if she was a classical dualistic thinker struggling to  
>embrace a more taoistic view of the universe, or a taoistic/ironic thinker who  
>was longing for classical dualism. Was she trying to gear up for some kind of  
>"quantum leap" into faith in an Ideal reality behind material phenomenon?

Was

>she trying to engage in her own form of Pascal's "wager," seeking some  
>certainty in these indeterminate waters of our current culture? Or was she  
>mutating a quasi-platonism into an odd form of contingency-based,  
>antimetaphysical faith?

>

>I still don't know. Maybe, now that I have only 48 hours to actually write  
>the paper (after all the reading and research I've done), I may "find" the  
>answer in the process of writing...

>

>And maybe not. I may have framed my questions too narrowly. I may be  
>suffering from a highly-deficient lack of context. But somehow, I suspect  
>that Jorie Graham is, in fact, an avant-garde writer of an unrecognizable  
>style, and I damned well mean to find out a way to demonstrate it, if my hunch  
>is born out over the next two days.

>

>Wish me luck. If anyone has any opinions on the matter, and would like to  
>throw some spice into the pot, I would be much obliged for the confusion.

>

>Aviva Vogel

>

>

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867. **Daniel Zimmerman**

***Re: query : Iraq***

*Sun 22 Feb 1998*

---

Henry Gould wrote:

>

> My 16-yr-old son came up with a strategic solution(?) to the looming  
> bombardment of Iraq.

>

> Alex says: the US should step back from an all-out bombardment. They  
should

> work with the inspectors & say: show us THIS palace; if you don't show us  
> THIS particular palace, we will bombard it on such & such a date. This  
> reduces civilian casualties & puts the onus on Hussein if he decides not to  
> cooperate, leaves biotoxics on the site, puts civilians in harm's way, etc.

> It forces him to keep moving his stuff, if he really has any.

> Alex himself sees the weakness in this idea: basically, it will be unacceptable  
> to Hussein, as an affront to Iraqi sovereignty. But even if Hussein  
> refuses - it makes him look intransigent, and it reduces the threat of blanket  
> bombardment. (Sadly, I'm cynical enough to think the Pentagon just wants to  
> try out their latest weapons in a real-life situation - that's why this idea  
> doesn't appeal to them.) All this is contingent on the outcome of Kofi Annan's  
> attempt to resolve the crisis.

>

>

Henry,

Congratulations to Alex for his idea--a note of relative sanity in a crazy situation. Unfortunately, he has it right about the weakness, and it would also fail, I think, as a means of operant conditioning with a guy much smarter than your average rat.

Also unfortunately, Clinton's plan has the obvious flaw that if it hits any biological stockpiles, an awful lot of people live downwind: Iranians, Khazakhs, Uzbeks, Turkomen, Tadjiks, Afghans, Pakistanis, &c., and while bombing one palace or site at a time might ameliorate the damage from a full strike, selective strikes might also hold such a threat for those people that to forestall another they might unite to attack Iraq, as well as hit the US with 'terrorist' attacks [pot calls kettle black]. We might get away with saying 'it's Saddam's fault' once, but three or four times would certainly strain credulity.

The UN's recent increase on the limit of oil Iraq can sell seems a good way to avert a Versailles, but I doubt Saddam'll see it that way. I think the guy wants to precipitate Armageddon. I think he wants us to nuke a few sites, which would bring the Russians in; them 'n us could blow each other into the stone age, leaving pipsqueaks like Saddam [if he could survive] much stronger relative to the bigger, more ravaged countries. How do you keep anthrax from spreading? Nuke it. The guy plays hardball. We'd better hope our Bambino's pointing in the right direction with his bat.

Dan Zimmerman

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868. **Joe Ahearn**

***Re: Poetry and Depression***

*Sun 22 Feb 1998*

---

Yes, Don, I can confirm that I read a similar study, although I can't remember the numbers. What I do remember is that poets had the highest rates of depression when compared to other types of writers. (Of course, if they're all stuck in Iowa... )

My own experience, which is of course of no statistical value, bears out the general implications of the study. As a friend of mine, a fine poet and Plath scholar, once put it, "I don't know anyone interesting who hasn't had a breakdown." My shrink puts it somewhat differently. She says that creative people committed to their work have an unusually difficult time in this culture.

Although I am both a practicing poet and bipolar, I hesitate to make many claims for the vocation of poetry as a destroyer. It seems as often to save people as to gobble them up. In my own case, genetic inheritance seems more to the point.

jra

At 10:27 PM 2/21/98 -0800, you wrote:

> I don't remember the details, but a few years ago, there was a widely  
>report study conducted at Iowa Writer's Workshop and perhaps elsewhere  
that  
>found extraordinary levels of depression among writers. Does any one remem-  
ber  
>this?

>

> Don

>--

>\*\*\*\*\*

> Don Byrd ([REDACTED], [REDACTED])

> Department of English

> State University of New York

> Albany, NY 12222

> [REDACTED] (work); [REDACTED] (home); [REDACTED] (fax)

> The Little Magazine (<http://www.albany.edu/~litmag/>)

>\*\*\*\*\*

>

>

Joe Ahearn

[REDACTED]

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869. **rsillima**

***Temporary canons***

*Sun 22 Feb 1998*

---

Douglas,

I guess my comment may have sounded a little harsh, but the idea that this year's or even this decade's "canonical" poet will be read in, say, even 50 years is I think well up for debate.

I'm looking at my copy of *New Poetry*, edited by Harriet Monroe (founder, *Poetry*) and Alice Corbin Henderson, published by MacMillan in 1925. The poets who have 10 or more poems or 10 more pages include the following:

Maxwell Bodenheim  
Hilda Conkling  
Alice Corbin (ahem)  
Adelaide Crapsey  
Arthur Davison Ficke  
John Gould Fletcher  
Robert Frost  
Wilfrid (sic) Wilson Gibson  
Helen Hoyt  
Vachel Lindsay  
Amy Lowell  
Edgar Lee Masters (24 pages)  
Edna St. Vincent Millay  
Harriet Monroe (ahem ahem)  
Ezra Pound (18 pages)  
Edward Arlington Robinson  
Carl Sandburg (19 pages)  
Wallace Stevens (16 pages)  
Sara Teasdale  
Allen Upward  
William Carlos Williams (14 poems but just 8 pages)

Some of these folks are wonderful and will be read for centuries. Others have already become opaque names (Allen Upward's contribution is entirely composed of prose poems, most of which are just one sentence long).

My point here is that the idea that Hughes is, at best, a Fletcher, although I suspect he's really a Ficke or Gibson, "successful" conservative poets whose work was oddly anachronistic even 73 years ago (they were, so to speak, new formalists *avant la lettre*). If you don't "buy" the work, then it's very hard to turn him into a Frost and impossible to turn him into a Pound, Williams or Stevens. Masters? Maybe.

Given notably more token treatment in this anthology are (among many others): Conrad Aiken, Sherwood Anderson, Walter Conrad Arensberg, Rupert Brooke, Joseph Campbell (the same!), HD, TS Eliot, Thomas Hardy, Fenton Johnson (the one African American I recognize here), James Joyce, Alfred Kreymsbourg, Joyce Kilmer, DH Lawrence, Haniel Long, Wilfred Owen, John Reed, Rabindranath Tagore, Yvor Winters and William Bulter Yeats. Completely absent are ee cummings, Mina Loy, Marsden Hartley, Robinson Jeffers, Robert Penn Warren, Paul

Dunbar, James Weldon Johnson, Claude McKay, Jean Toomer, Langston Hughes, Countee Cullen, Archibald MacLeish, Kenneth Fearing, Stanley Kunitz, Robert Penn Warren and Hart Crane (just to thumb through Alfred Kreyenbourg's *Lyric America*, an anthology that attempts to cover a much broader range of time and was published five years later).

My point is that if one includes a Hughes, say, on the grounds that he represents some "important" force active in the contemporary lit scene, then one should be including a very broad range of such forces, including "popular" poetry and work that already tells us how such work fares over time (maybe include that peculiar adjunct to the Berkeley Renaissance, Rod McKuen, for example), you should absolutely be including works by such omnipresent publishers as Greg Kuzma and Lyn Lifshin (as Don Byrd's note points out), works from a wide range of different identarian modes and creating what is really a sociological (i.e. "historical" *avant la lettre*) reading of the work. Then it might make sense to include Hughes, Merwin, John Haines, whomever. After all, we are all examples of some social dimension acting through writing.

But if you're trying to introduce students to the reading and excitement of poetry, then you ought to focus on what YOU find exciting (and if it includes Hughes, then fine). But the idea that official verse culture represents an "important" force is flat out disproved by history again and again. Otherwise we'd all be studying Jones Very far more closely than we have. Or Randall Jarrell. Marjorie Perloff has written on this phenomenon quite wisely.

I don't blame Hughes for Plath's suicide -- nobody should ever lay that trip on any of the survivors, frankly -- but his work's likelihood to survive (that word again) in history as anything other than a sheer footnote really depends on her writing (some of which is tremendous) and the following that it has developed over the years. What is creepiest about *Birthday Letters* is not that Hughes knows this and now publically acknowledges same, but the way in which these poems (to paraphrase a very good review that appeared in the web mag *Feed* awhile back) compete with Plath, however badly.

Two other remarks:

Tom Beckett's comments to this list are among the most moving and important I've read here in my four years online. I've lived around people with serious cases of depression (my grandmother, who raised me, and a roommate and very good friend Eliot Helfer who jumped from the Golden Gate Bridge 20 years ago this month) and have seen just how difficult (that word!) everything in life becomes. Attempts to draw narrative lessons from such complex situations (as too many do with Plath) are as reductive and silly as the little morals CBS has been attaching to the winners and losers of each Olympic event these past two weeks.

Second, I can think of way too many examples of male writers -- including at least three who are household names on this list -- who've been subsidized entirely by the work and financing of their spouses up to and including the typing of manuscripts after coming home from a long day of work. This is at least as much a situation for writing and poetry as it has been so many other fields of endeavor. While there are an increasing number of couples where, say, the husband takes over the childrearing and daily chores and the woman has a career, or where the woman has inherited (or other) wealth and it's not an issue of slave labor as such, there certainly are other examples that just make you cringe.

Ron

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870. **Tom Beckett**  
*acker/scalapino cont.*

Sun 22 Feb 1998

---

Chris-- Thanks for yr posting. It's not so much a matter of preference as of strategy--trying to get an audience more familiar with A. to look closely at S. Mood is relevant in a discussion of A/S.(Although I do hope that my recent postings don't get me typecast as Mr. Moody--cousin to Agent Mooney!!--wonder what's going on with that.) I was trying to hint at larger structuring concerns & differing but related poetics. Both practice a kind of filmics of writing which I might like to try and write around later. Was really hoping though for input from the group. Maybe we could root around in their respective texts co-analyzing some passages or constellations of connections. Or perhaps a starting point might be discussion of their respective uses of repetition.

Ciao.

Tom Beckett

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871. **kim dawn**  
*Deadly girl: A Place to SLeep*

Sun 22 Feb 1998

---

Deadly girl: A Place to SLeep

that girl

that one

her she who lives inside me

she passively tried to slit her throat the other night  
a soft slice to in between clavicle and mouth  
an open gape smiling back  
they ran charcoal through her blood  
and it ran rampid  
drooling over the side down her throat  
the doctors humiliated her  
asking if it could really be so bad.  
the throat is yellow  
her hand reminises of the iv she tore from thereof  
colorful patch reminding her of and then  
beckoning  
this was not a call for help  
this was a call for sleep  
and now  
and now  
now now now now now now NOW  
NeX t  
step aside  
it is the demon she tried to  
the demon is liquid  
Puking tylenol is a speciality  
a delicacy.  
and then after all is said and done  
with blue mouth she beckons  
tired but starting to notice things like mist and dampness in the air  
more than anything she longs for sea for salt.  
unrefined.  
hey sick girl who're you trying to kid you manipulative you bitch you fraud  
and there are people happy for liquid chatter  
people watching the narrative unfold  
but if she ever if she ever  
comes into contact with you  
she will turn your blood yellow  
she is but a yellow stain  
wishing to the foamy alongside



more than anything  
loathing and rest-less-ness

books beckon her and  
her tired eyes crawl over  
amongst  
alongside  
rest-less-ness

she is but a player jealous of her role.

her melody is murder ('o pretty pretty pretty) and she dreams of  
guns and  
awaits clyde.

hey clyde lets go shoot'em up real good.

you sound sad sweetie  
let's have some ice cream watch tv  
reassure everyone you're ok

how long till the next

next Next next next next

she loves Too desperately  
She's afraid of gentle.  
afraid her teeth will rip open his skin.  
She wants inside too much  
her desire is frantic is inna frenzy.

to love.

to kill.

to love to kill.

to hate to love.

to rot inside.

throat being middle fluffy rosy daisy green stem veiny tubes here there liquids  
in/out gentle slicing tender me tender my slicing tender my\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_the delicate slice the glorious sleep the gentle  
the tender lamb the pretty sacrifice the desired numb. hey pretty girl who do  
you glorify your ugly so. it eats her away and away and away. Away.

-kim dawn

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872. **Karen Kelley**

**Re: acker/scalapino cont.**

Sun 22 Feb 1998

---

Tom Beckett wrote:

- > Was really hoping though for input from the group. Maybe we could root around in their
- > respective texts co-analyzing some passages or constellations of connections.
- > Or perhaps a starting point might be discussion of their respective uses of
- > repetition.
- >

Tom,

Please don't let this subject go by the boards: maybe the list is (as I know I, for one, am) going back for some rereading before jumping in.

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873. **Joseph Lease**

**Re: Iraq and depression**

Sun 22 Feb 1998

---

*(Btw, is it a legal war or is it A Presidential Police Action, like the last few illegal massacres? )*

db3

It's not a legal war: and this point--simple as it can be--needs to be articulated. One problem: to what extent does our current political culture (in some Bau-drillard meets Olson sense, our polis) allow for any real democracy? What would real democracy be like? And how do we subjects fit into our anti-polis--our language-worlds formed by liberal democratic assumptions? It feels horrible to ask about individual responsibility--to even try to ask--in the televised micro-second before the bombs.

Joseph

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874. **Jordan Davis**

**give me your martha, your billy, your jorie masses**

Sun 22 Feb 1998

---

Ah Mark Baker, give us s'more!  
You've made a soul impoverish'd of wit  
Laugh more openly in February (for my  
Light-sensors far more punishing than  
((And chocolate an antidepressant!))

April--an as-yet unanthologized cracker I)  
Than'd been thought likely by  
The woman of the moon. A toast, to you!  
Euphues  
(PS Only a few million more until moths  
Figure out about fire...)

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875. **Don Byrd**  
**Re: Poetry and Depression**  
Sun 22 Feb 1998

---

Thomas Bell Wrote:

*Sorry, I think probably you are not guilty of the attitude I find  
myself railing at - the attitude that art and depression are  
aberrant and deserve each other.*  
tom bell

At 10:27 PM 2/21/98 -0800, Don Byrd wrote:

*I don't remember the details, but a few years ago, there was a widely  
reported study conducted at Iowa Writer's Workshop and perhaps elsewhere that  
found extraordinary levels of depression among writers. Does any one remember  
this?*

Oh, no, I remember it and mention it only as evidence of a prevailing popular notion that art is aberrant. What I wonder about is the popular need to think this? Why was this minor study reported in my local newspaper?

It reminds me of another affair. Several years ago there were, if I remember the story correctly, several murders on one of the Florida university campuses. The head of the campus policed was quoted in *The Chronicle of Higher Education* as saying, "Security on a university campus is very difficult. All kinds of people hang around campuses--drug addicts, hippies, poets."

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\*\*\*\*\*

Don Byrd ([REDACTED], [REDACTED])  
Department of English  
State University of New York  
Albany, NY 12222  
[REDACTED] (work); [REDACTED] (home); [REDACTED] (fax)  
The Little Magazine (<http://www.albany.edu/~litmag/>)

\*\*\*\*\*

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876. **P.Standard Schaefer**

***Re: query : Iraq***

*Sun 22 Feb 1998*

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I think this is a rather good idea, except for one thing. Say we announce a date to bomb palace X. What if on that day Saddam has stuffed the place with six year-olds?

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877. **Lisa Samuels**

***Re: Poetry and Depression***

*Sun 22 Feb 1998*

---

don & joe, actually, i remember that study -- had a snippet of it up on my refrigerator in my last abode -- and it said that poets were much LESS likely to be depressed than writers of fiction or drama. i seem to recall something about the stress of representationalism, but perhaps that's a creative memory. lisa s.

Date: Sun, 22 Feb 1998 07:56:37 -0600

From: Joe Ahearn <[REDACTED]>

Yes, Don, I can confirm that I read a similar study, although I can't remember the numbers. What I do remember is that poets had the highest rates of depression when compared to other types of writers. (Of course, if they're all stuck in Iowa... )

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878. **Michael McColl**

***Re: Poetry and Depression***

*Sun 22 Feb 1998*

---

The Iowa study I recall concluded that there was a high incidence of manic depression among writers. Unless, in other words, they were bi-polar, they weren't likely to get much work done. It was in manic or near-manic states that they achieved.

Mike McColl

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879. **Annie Finch**  
**writers&depression, & Graham**  
*Sun 22 Feb 1998*

---

Don-- What I heard about that Iowa study was that though it did find an unusually high instance of psychological problems among writers, the most interesting finding was that the predominant problem among the fiction writers was schizophrenia, and among the poets, manic-depression.

Seen in this context, Graham's I-am-an-exhausted-participant-in-experience theme may be as key to her popularity as her crossover forms, background, etc.. Like Jordan, I find that this repeated stance seems gratuitous--I titled my review of Materialism "Unnecessary Burdens"--and moreover quite familiar, downright Romantic, in fact -"half in love with easeful Death" put that particular angst just as well, to my ear.

Annie

*Date: Sat, 21 Feb 1998 16:03:17 -0500*  
*From: Jordan Davis <[REDACTED]>*  
*Subject: Building a bridge to the 21st c.*

*Whenever Jorie Graham is quoted to me it's always something about how tiring it is, doing all this observing, or the endlessness of keeping things going, the burden! Do I hafta? she seems always to be saying.*  
*(Rhymes with NAFTA)*

*Subject: Poetry and Depression*

*I don't remember the details, but a few years ago, there was a widely report study conducted at Iowa Writer's Workshop and perhaps elsewhere that found extraordinary levels of depression among writers. Does any one remember this?*

*Don*

--

\*\*\*\*\*

*Don Byrd ([REDACTED], [REDACTED])*  
*Department of English*  
*State University of New York*  
*Albany, NY 12222*  
*[REDACTED] (work); [REDACTED] (home); [REDACTED] (fax)*  
*The Little Magazine (<http://www.albany.edu/~litmag/>)*

\*\*\*\*\*

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Annie Finch  
<http://muohio.edu/~finchar>  
Assistant Professor of English/Creative Writing  
Miami University  
Oxford, Ohio 45220

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880. **dbkk**  
**(no subject)**  
*Sun 22 Feb 1998*

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*Date: Fri, 20 Feb 1998 23:18:33 -0600*  
*From: Maria Damon <[REDACTED]>*  
*Subject: Re: poet-heroes, suicide and women's lot*

*i know lots of cases in which women worked to put their husbands thru law school, medical school, business school, etc, only to be dumped when hubby finished, got a job, and met some sexier, funner chick in med school law school, etc or on the job.*

*i'm with katie on this, but i've long since learned that POETIX isn't necessarily open to such discussions, so i just roll my eyes where youall can't see me.*

Ditto, ditto, ditto.

Your eyes may roll Maria, but mine spin around counterclockwise and send out sparks.

Dodie

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881. **david bromige**  
***Iraq and depression***  
*Sun 22 Feb 1998*

---

I find it depressing that the posts I've read re-Iraq while suggesting modulations of the Administration's policy contain no apostates, only mild heretics. Why is the Admin being taken at its word? I find it interesting that, after Gulf War I, the sales of American arms were over the top. This congeries of intellectuals might consider that these "Wars" are most importantly demonstrations of how new weaponry works under actual conditions, thus leading to a bonanza sale.

(Btw, is it a legal war or is it A Presidential Police Action, like the last few illegal massacres? )

db3

[↑ Contents](#)882. **Steve Tills*****Re: Poetry and Depression****Sun 22 Feb 1998*


---

Another cent or two: I in no way doubt that there's "a high incidence of manic depression among writers," but I think other clinical diagnoses play in here quite often, too, namely "personality disorders" like narcissism, which would dispose writers to attempt what Lacan would, I believe, call an attempt at fulfillment of "desire" for "a love that proves to be impossible once one has entered into the system of signs. (The 'union with the mother' is unachievable once the [m]other has been named.)" Hence, such desires cannot, ironically, be fulfilled by writing, perhaps less by attention garnered from recognition for one's "work," and even many quite "successful" writers become suicidal or endlessly wrestle with self-destructive obsessions and compulsions, impulses etc. I am, myself, especially interested in differentiating between writing produced by persons achieving a certain degree of "psychological maturity," whereby the writing is no longer a reaction, for better or for worse, to a perhaps misguided attempt to satisfy "desire" and is, rather, an optimally focused engagement with the materials and methods of signification. In addition, I have a suspicion, which I'm researching now and then, that Lacan's theory of "individuation" (the process whereby one achieves psychological maturity), being perhaps too heavily premised on the value of "difference" is problematical: "I would go so far as to say that even before slavery or class domination existed, men built an approach to women that would serve one day to introduce differences among us all" (Levi-Strauss); "Proponents of the degendering model have sometimes also held that 'female' virtues or qualities--nurturance, for instance--should be spread throughout society and replace aggression and competitiveness" (Nancy Chodorow) vs. "Others who argue for degendering have at times held that women [read all writers, say] need to acquire certain 'male' characteristics and modes of action--autonomy, independence, assertiveness--again assuming that such characteristics are acquired" (Chodorow) and, finally, "I will suggest that we have to understand this separation-individuation in relation to other aspects of development, that it has particular implications for women [read all writers, again], and that differentiation is not synonymous with difference or separateness"; further, "The argument here advances a reading of psychoanalysis that stresses the relational ego. It contrasts with certain prevalent (Lacan-influenced) feminist readings of psychoanalysis, in particular with the views advanced by French theorists of difference like Luce Irigaray and with the Freudian orthodoxy of Juliet Mitchell" (Chodorow).

Okay, smile, there's a lot of BS here, on my part, that is, and texts should not be reduced to the personality factors of a given writer, but I wanted to include this in the mix. Also, I find Lisa Samuels comment about poets being LESS likely to be depressed than writers of fiction and drama and this having something to do with the stress of Representation quite intriguing.

Steve Tills

Michael McColl wrote:

*The Iowa study I recall concluded that there was a high incidence of manic depression among writers. Unless, in other words, they were bi-polar, they weren't likely to get much work done. It was in manic or near-manic states that they achieved.*

Mike McColl

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883. **Tim Wood**  
**Re: Iraq and depression**  
Sun 22 Feb 1998

*I find it depressing that the posts I've read re-Iraq while suggesting modulations of the Administration's policy contain no apostates, only mild heretics. Why is the Admin being taken at its word? I find it interesting that, after Gulf War I, the sales of American arms were over the top. This congeries of intellectuals might consider that these "Wars" are most importantly demonstrations of how new weaponry works under actual conditions, thus leading to a bonanza sale.*

I like the suggestion of the son of Henry. It's actually the second time I've heard a similar idea floated. The prior time was by someone calling into Diane Ream's (NPR) talkshow. If memory serves, that caller got the short shrift by the powers that be that were featured. Which is a pity because it is a good approach, if you accept the administration's word. The problem is that the administration has done what is typical of U.S. administrations and painted themselves into a shortterm corner with some pretty thick painterly rhetoric. The painterly-ness of it so thick that few are positing any alternatives and those are relatively minor.

As far as potential arms sales being a motivator, that may be part of it, but the whole d\*mn situation is a result of bad long term U.S. policy that strives for hegemony in the region. Stormin' Norman's father led the American Force in the '50s that installed the Shahs, which was finally overthrown by a government that scarred the h\*ll out of the politicians here, who started pumping weapons into Iraq, etc., etc. It rings of one of those wonderfully quotable bible lines that goes something like the sins of the fathers will be visited on the children to the



third and fourth generation. Bigger lies trying to solve the problems from Big lies trying to solve the problems from medium size lies trying to solve...

Tim

---

Tim Wood

poetry is the shock of insight's drive-by

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884. **Don Wellman**

***Re: Poetry and Depression***

*Sun 22 Feb 1998*

---

Thank you Steve Tillis--your post today speaks volumes to what I had attempted to say in a post of

Sat, 21 Feb 1998 09:47:17 -0500, from which I quote now:

"... there is writing in the face of wanting to die (even if that wish is in denial) ... and all of this as I imagine it is "depressingly" normal in those stratas of society that produces self-identified poets. I have read Williams's "Desert Music" this way. ... still, the willful pursuit of an edge experience. I find it impossible to deny that this has value for poetry: Artaud, Rimbaud ... even engineers of formalism are often sadistic."

Sometimes the manic energy associated the pursuit of an edge experience comes out as poetry ... Some times as differently embodied actions ... It can be "depressing:" for me to see how this energy is cleaned up to make a presentable appearance ... that is what we are taught to do in what I call the strata of society that produces self-identified poets .... it may be obvious to the list maybe not, my critique of self-identified poets rhymes with Olson's critique of "lyric interference" ...

that is one way to get at the nub of it for me: how could someone who admired the beak of the ego so and was so often insecurely brash argue against lyric interference...?

I am speaking of familiarities.

None of this touches on the situation that Tom Beckett wrote of ... there are many admirable and heroic encounters for all of us with our different realities ... our "Difficulties"

My comments do touch on "will" and "desire" and "impulse"--all maybe relics of the 19th century to some on the list (referred to above as --"engineers of formalism") -but things in some of us that do seem to filter through the grid of

language webs (to vitalize my formalism here --grid and web two faces of an apparatus)

the problem with Jorie Grahm and it may be my problem too is how she seeks to harmonize a discordant complex ...

why I like language poetry is because of the ways in which it sheds an ironic light on the socio-material super structures ...

why I think Deleuze and Guattari have something to say is because of their embrace of disjunctions

i am learning to live with my "schizzes" not paper them over ...

... that allows me to take up a position of empathy when I "experiment" with words--as in what would someone know or feel if they were actually to read or hear this? ... how often do all of us only read or hear what we want to hear, what we are able to hear.

Yes I am posturing before Lacan's mirror now ..

Don Wellman

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## 885. **Poetics List**

### ***Irish Poetry Conference Announcement (fwr)***

*Sun 22 Feb 1998*

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*Date: Mon, 16 Feb 1998 14:05:13 +0000*

*From: Alex Davis <[REDACTED]>*

*Subject: New and Experimental Poetry*

>... Billy Mills and Catherine Walsh suggested I contact you with regard to the >Experimental Irish poetry conference/readings that, for the second time, >University College Cork is hosting. It's a fairly smallscale affair, but perhaps >you would be so kind as to put the details on the Buffalo Discussion List. > The dates are 13 March-14 March: an evening reception on the Friday; >readings and papers from 10.00 Saturday morning to 5.30 on the Saturday >evening in the Granary Theatre, University College, Cork. The poets reading >are: Trevor Joyce, Michael Smith, Geoffrey Squires and Augustus Young; >Billy Mills, Catherine Walsh, Randolph Healy and Maurice Scully. Papers are >being presented by John Goodby, Harry Gilonis and Alex Davis. Admission is >free; books and pamphlets will be available to purchase. Further details >can be obtained from Alex Davis, The Department of English, University >College, Cork, Ireland. Tel. 353 21 902185/353 21 902241; Fax. 353 21 >345122; email [REDACTED].

*Last year was very successful, and showed a very different side to recent Irish poetry than--as I am sure you are aware--is usually evident at conferences in Ireland and elsewhere.*

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886. **Joe Amato/Kass Fleisher**

***pmc...***

*Sun 22 Feb 1998*

---

matt kirschenbaum has helpfully alerted me to the fact that there is a full text-only archive of \_postmodern culture\_ available, at:

<http://jefferson.village.virginia.edu/pmc/text-only/back-contents.html>

for those w/o access to project muse, and who are looking for plain vanilla of text-only texts (which wrt my piece on rasula's book should do the trick)... if you \*do\* happen to check out my piece, be sure to check out as well ken sherwood's excellent review of jerry's and pierre's \_poems for the millennium\_ vol 1...

wanted also to say that i enjoyed other articles in the recent \_poetic briefs\_ too, esp. laura feldman's piece, "the room of hazel hall"...

best,

joe

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887. **Joe Brennan**

***Re: Iraq and depression***

*Sun 22 Feb 1998*

---

David: let's not forget that the issue is hegemony (read oil), and there are many such serendipitous opportunities as weapons' testing, refining logistical models and a new rational fofr funding increases. I think the answer to your question vis-a-vis the offical stance is due more to getting our news exclusively by the mainstream (official) media. No doubt there are many on the list who are fully aware of the West's need for such a continued projection of force in the Middle-east -- which is for me the larger issue. In this context, air strikes and the like provide an opportunity for the western alliance members to criticize US policy while accepting as a fait accompli the US's presence -- and there are other benefits of such actions as well. This current episode is an example of the high stake's negotiating that Iraq has been reduced to by the continued high death rate in Iraq that is directly related to the destruction of its infrastructure and its inability, due to the US-led embargo, to effect repairs -- & the inadequate levels of medicines, foods and drinking water, etc. I think you know all this but I always find it reassuring when I find another empathetic poet.

Joe

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888. **Joe Ahearn**

**Re: Poetry and Depression**

Sun 22 Feb 1998

---

*It  
was in manic or near-manic states that they achieved.*

This seems to me, as one captive to bipolar disorder, an incredibly optimistic (naive?) assessment.

jra

Joe Ahearn



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889. **Joe Ahearn**

**Re: Iraq and depression**

Sun 22 Feb 1998

---

I saw Madeline Albright on TV this morning. She stated unequivocally that the question of whether there is a war is not one for the citizenry to make. Nor would "their" opinions be heeded. This is a job for the real pros, I guess.

At 04:18 PM 2/22/98 +0000, you wrote:

>>(Btw, is it a legal war or is it A Presidential Police Action, like the  
>>last few illegal massacres? )

>>

>>db3

>

>

>It's not a legal war: and this point--simple as it can be--needs to be  
>articulated. One problem: to what extent does our current political  
>culture (in some Baudrillard meets Olson sense, our polis) allow for any  
>real democracy? What would real democracy be like? And how do we  
>subjects fit into our anti-polis--our language-worlds formed by liberal  
>democratic assumptions? It feels horrible to ask about individual  
>responsibility--to even try to ask--in the televised micro-second before  
>the bombs.

>

>Joseph

>

>

Joe Ahearn



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890. **Daniel Zimmerman**

***Re: Iraq and depression***

*Sun 22 Feb 1998*

---

Joseph Lease wrote:

>

> >(Btw, is it a legal war or is it A Presidential Police Action, like the

> >last few illegal massacres? )

> >

> >db3

>

> It's not a legal war: and this point--simple as it can be--needs to be  
> articulated. One problem: to what extent does our current political  
> culture (in some Baudrillard meets Olson sense, our polis) allow for any  
> real democracy? What would real democracy be like? And how do we  
> subjects fit into our anti-polis--our language-worlds formed by liberal  
> democratic assumptions? It feels horrible to ask about individual  
> responsibility--to even try to ask--in the televised micro-second before  
> the bombs.

>

> Joseph

Oh, of course it's "legal," if carried out under UN imprimatur and within the context of enforcing UN resolutions. It's certainly not "democratic," even if a majority of the UN or our allies support it, or a majority of "the American people," whoever they are.

Paul Virilio's the guru here: war gets faster & faster--the ground war phase of the Gulf War lasted 100 hours; present plans call for the entire next 'war' against Saddam to last for c. 96 hrs. of air barrage, with no ground troops at all.

The latest news I heard has Saddam agreeing with Kofi Annan to unlimited access inspections--no doubt after he's accomplished much or all of the covert actions his long stalling [call it 'defending the honor of the Iraqi people'] has made possible, & no doubt he'll pull the same move next time he needs to. This

parallels the long buildups on our side [call it 'restraint']--a hypnotic dance of cobras.

This all goes against the prime advantage of modern warfare: the option for instantaneous action [somewhat compromised on our side because of military downsizing and NATO foot-shuffling because of economic/trade considerations]. Saddam's strategy: slow everything down, give America a chance to develop a headache, then a conscience [he learned from Ho Chi Minh, though the conscience has taken a bit longer to develop--but hey, Saddam's no poet].

"Real democracy" would certainly not do well to depend on "the American people," 80% of whom apparently favor a land war to take Saddam out [too many action movies? too much NHL, NFL, NBA, WWF, KKK?]. In a country with millions of "top secrets" [some of which might bring all the houses down], real democracy is a pipe dream. Besides, as Lani Guinere pointed out, democracy has the utilitarian disadvantage that minorities tend almost always to lose. Thus, Bill Richardson & Madeline Albright can afford to "commend" protestors for "practicing democracy" with no fear of having to compromise with them, let alone capitulate to their demands.

"Real democracy" would begin with the repeal limited liability corporation laws, with political rather than merely economic internationalism, and with the legalization of everything which doesn't harm others, under the "unalienable right" of the pursuit of happiness, no matter how dumb the means of pursuit. Anyone have any ideas about implementation?

Dan Zimmerman

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891. **Karen Kelley**  
***Re: Poetry and Depression***

*Sun 22 Feb 1998*

---

Steve Tills wrote:

>

> I am, myself, especially interested in differentiating  
> between writing produced by persons achieving a certain degree of  
> "psychological maturity," whereby the writing is no longer a reaction,  
> for better or for worse, to a perhaps misguided attempt to satisfy  
> "desire" and is, rather, an optimally focused engagement with the  
> materials and methods of signification.

Uh oh, I find "desire," "materials," and "methods of signification" all intensely, um, desirable. Is "desire" seen as narcissistic? As too self-identified? Can the "I," desire, materials & methods of signification all live together without being

psychologically immature?--oops, I almost wrote "psychologically insecure."  
Freudian slip.

Karen

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892. **Michael McColl**

***Re: Poetry and Depression***

*Sun 22 Feb 1998*

---

On Sun, 22 Feb 1998 17:05:14 -0600 Joe Ahearn said:

>> It

>>was in manic or near-manic states that they achieved.

>>

>

>This seems to me, as one captive to bipolar disorder, an incredibly

>optimistic (naive?) assessment.

>

>jra

>

>

>

>Joe Ahearn

>

> 

>

>

>

Joe--just want to make clear that I'm merely paraphrasing the newspaper article, and that a couple of years after the fact. I think a book was published on this connection by the woman who did the Iowa study. I would guess that there is much more to her ideas than my summary suggested.

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893. **maz881**

***Re: poet-heroes, suicide and women's lot***

*Sun 22 Feb 1998*

---

weiss wrote: <<I've known several women writers whose husbands' work funded their literary careers and afforded them lots of time for writng. I don't know too many men who can say that.>>

hi mark w. i was almost one of those lazy boys like c. coolidge & m. palmer.  
wish i had made smarter economic choices. i might have gotten a lot more  
done. i'm 37 and i haven't even started a movement or anything.

Bill Luoma

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894. **Tom Beckett**  
***Re: Acker/Scalapino***

*Sun 22 Feb 1998*

---

Danny-- Yeah, the music of Reich and Glass is an excellent point of reference.  
Especially since they are process oriented musics in which the process is appar-  
ent, audible.

My guess is that CONSIDERING HOW EXAGGERATED MUSIC IS would be a  
good place to start. Others may have better suggestions.

Best wishes,

Tom Beckett

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895. **Joel Felix**  
***For Ronald Johnson***

*Sun 22 Feb 1998*

---

Dear Poetics:

Some of Ronald Johnson's friends on this list may know in advance that in No-  
vember he suffered a stroke that caused a fall down a flight of stairs, cracking 9  
ribs and puncturing a lung. Not long after it was revealed that he has two inop-  
erable lesions in his brain. Currently he is under constant care and confined to  
his house in Topeka.

For those that don't know his work, Ron completed his long ("don't call it an  
epic") poem Ark in recent years, (available from Living Batch Press), a work  
twenty years in the making, and which Robert Creeley has named one great  
work of this century.

I am told by Peter O'Leary that Ron is unable to write anymore but recieves  
mail gladly. His address is 1422 SW Tyler, Topeka KS 66612.

Thank you. Joel Felix

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896. **Mark Weiss**

***Suicide***

*Sun 22 Feb 1998*

---

Maybe because I've spent a lot of time doing so myself I have a hard time trusting people who haven't stared into the pit. They seem incomplete and shallow.

But here's what I know about a particular suicide, a poet friend. With no advance warning that anyone noticed one day while his wife and nine-year-old daughter were out buying groceries he sat down on their brand-new couch, put a gun in his mouth and shot his brains out. Talk about leaving a mess for others to clean up.

I've been haunted for years by the image of his daughter walking into the livingroom that afternoon.

I have no idea what was going on in my friend's head before he splattered it all over the wall. I do know from my own suicidal days and from my clinical work that many would-be suicides and suicide-attempters go into a kind of rational trance--in my case the mantra, standing at a high window, was, "I'm inside--I could be outside," or, when stepping into the street in front of a speeding car, "I bet it won't hit me." What was lost was the sense of consequence--"I'm going to die."

If the personal consequence of suicide is removed from the equation it becomes a dandy weapon, and in my own case and in the cases of most of those I saw clinically that's what it was--suicide as the final come-back, the last word. And it's usually directed pretty precisely--a suicide note often serves as a dedication, and my friend, knowing who was going to walk through the door, didn't need a note to make the dedication pretty clear.

Yeah, I'm being moralistic. At my darkest moments I step back from the window not because suicide is dystonic, but because I have a fair idea of what that kind of death would mean to those I love.

A lot of great writing has come out of the struggle to cope with despair. I think it was Ignatius Loyola who compared the dark night of the soul to having fallen to the bottom of a deep well. But then, he says, you can look up and see the stars.

I'm obviously not talking about the suicides of those with painful illnesses or with Hitler or Stalin at their heels.

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897. **George Bowering**

***Re: Iraq and depression***

*Sun 22 Feb 1998*

---

Oh. Bromige is so cynical in his regard of the US military/political nexus, and especially here about the Gulf Wars.

Remember that the US bombing people said that they were not making war on the Iraqi people, but on their political bosses.

Well, look.

Dont you see that the Iraqi people are now flourishing, while their political bosses are crawling in poverty and disease and misery.

You have to learn to trust the bombing people, David!

George Bowering.

2499 West 37th Ave.,

Vancouver, B.C.,

Canada V6M 1P4

fax: [REDACTED]

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898. **Rodrigo Toscano**

***Re: Iraq and depression***

*Sun 22 Feb 1998*

---

In response and agreement (and addition) to David Bromige's post.

I, for one, am such an apostate.

Feb. 23rds headline in Time magazine is appropriate: Wall Street Goes To War. The article notes: Like Presidential approval ratings, stock prices tend to inflate when the U.S. engages in armed conflict. Look no further than the tireless bull market that we enjoy today. It began in 1991 when the U.S. drove Saddam Hussein and his Iraqi army out of Kuwait. The first allied air raids came on January 17 of that year and sent the Dow Jones industrial average soaring 4.6% in a day. By mid-March the Dow had jumped 20%. The point is illustrated with a graphic chart which ties the Birth of the Bull Market to the day the bombing began. Yes, sir! The generals on Wall Street do love a war, the article continues. There's nothing like the smell of smart bombs in the morning < as long as they're ours < to arouse feelings of invincibility. And what better frame of mind for dialing ones broker and cheerfully picking up another 100 shares of Boeing or Lockheed Martin. With Saddam the Sequel possibly only days away ... it's no

shocker that the market has hit new highs for the first time in six months. With the massive collapse of capitalism in Asia reverberating in the board rooms of stock exchanges and corporate headquarters across the world, talk of a severe downturn is commonplace in Barrons, The Financial Times, The Far Eastern Economic Review, and the Wall Street Journal . Wall Street is betting heavily on war. Yes, Time continues, success in the Persian Gulf would vindicate all those market patriots bidding up share prices. ... stocks of defense contractors, oil producers and oil service companies would be good hedges. Remember, those generals on Wall Street wear suits, not battle fatigues. They don't really know a thing about war. They do know, however, how to profit from it. The Annual Report called The State of the Union concealed the \$6 trillion of debt in the United States and an arms budget that consumes 70 cents of every dollar. Clinton's boast of an entire new generation of weapons, the military arsenal of the 21st century, translates this way: smart weapons must be tested against a country with no defenses, and with a gross national product less than 1 percent that of the United States. Pentagon sources tell Time that U.S. warplanes patrolling the southern no-fly zone over the past three months have been practicing bombing runs on targets that top brass figured they might ... have to attack. Order of battle Time has the Order of Battle: The First Wave involves Tomahawk Cruise Missile attacks by night and attack by Air Force F-117 Nighthawks. Navy warships and subs armed with hundreds of precision missiles target sites ... F-117 stealth fighters zip out of Kuwait flying undetected into Iraq targeting communication centers ... with 2,000 lb. laser-guided bombs. The Second Wave includes The EA-6B Prowler, EF-111 Raven and the F-16CJ to jam ... radar .... making it safe for the bombers. The Third Wave will see Bomb Laden Air Force B-1 Bombers from Bahrain and missile-loaded B-52s from Diego Garcia aim for high value targets ... launching weapons from high altitudes. Refueling planes ... rendezvous with the B-52s. Wave Four involves Air Force F-15 Eagles and Navy F-14 Tomcats patrolling the sky while F/A 18 Hornets, F-16 Falcons and British Tornados roar to attack. Surveillance throughout the battle by ES-3A Shadow Jets ... vacuum up Iraqi Radio Transmissions. E-2 Hawkeyes scour the skies and ... direct the attack. Bomber squadrons will be launched from Incirlik Air base in Turkey and from bases in Italy, Portugal, Spain, and Germany. AWACS, aerial tankers, and support aircraft will depart from Saudi Arabia and 42 bomber squadrons from Kuwait's Al Jaber air base. The U.S.S. George Washington, U.S.S. Independence, launch destroyers in the Persian Gulf, bomber squadrons from Bahrain, armored brigades in Qatar, Air Refueling Tankers in Oman, and B-52 squadrons in Diego Garcia will amplify 28,000 troops. 300 war planes on naval carriers will coordinate saturation bombing around the clock for seven days. On the eve of what is shaping up as the biggest combat operation of his Presidency ... war is just around the corner. Time reports. No one expects the operation to be bloodless. The White House has

begun preparing Americans for unpleasant pictures from Baghdad and less-than perfect results from the battlefield. There were 40,000 bombing sorties during the Gulf War. More bombs fell on Iraq than in seven years of World War II. Massive devastation Nothing that we have seen or read could quite prepare us for the particular form of devastation that has befallen this country. The conflict has wrought near apocalyptic results upon the economic and social infrastructure. ... Most means of modern life support have been destroyed ... and Iraq has been rendered a country ... in a pre-industrial age.(U.N. Report, 1991.) Iraq has been devastated further by the seven-year embargo. UNICEF estimates one million Iraqi children dead from starvation and the FAO in 1997 reports 1.5 million Iraqis dying from hunger and untreated disease. There are no medicines or IV bags, syringes, insulin, asthma medication, antibiotics, standard medications, or sterile health facilities. The claim to be targeting biological weapons facilities in Iraq is absurd. These can made in a portable lab. Anthrax or bubonic plague bacteria are housed in small vials. The largest producer of biochemical weapons in the world, however, is the United States < which refuses to ban them. For years, this country supplied biochemical weapons to its client, Saddam Hussein, to use against Iran. The Israelis, who delivered them to Iran for use against Iraq, deployed toxic gases causing paralysis, vaginal bleeding, and catatonia in Palestinian victims during the intifada. The imminent aerial massacres prepared by U.S. rulers aim to terrorize the Arab masses, whose profound disaffection threatens U.S. client regimes throughout the region. This is the true face of U.S. imperialism.

Rodrigo Toscano

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899. **Tom Beckett**  
***Re: Iraq and depression***  
*Sun 22 Feb 1998*

---

Does anyone else hear "the energy crisis" and "the antichrist" as near homophones?

Tom B.

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900. **Don Byrd**  
***Re: Temporary canons***  
*Mon 23 Feb 1998*

---

Ron Silliman wrote:

*I'm looking at my copy of New Poetry, edited by Harriet Monroe (founder, Poetry) and Alice Corbin Henderson, published by MacMillan in 1925.*

\_In the American Tree\_ is an excellent anthology. I suspect, however, that in 75 years, Ron, if there is still such a thing as a literary history, your choices are likely to look fairly quaint. I wouldn't even begin to speculate who will be the Pounds and Williamses and who the Hilda Conklings and Arthur Davison Fickes in your TOC, but they will be there. All in all, Monroe and Henderson's editing seems to me quite remarkable. With the exception of the African-American poets (and, of course, the reason for their failure to include them was no doubt very different from their reasons for failing to include Cummings, Loy, Jeffers), they managed to include almost all of the poets who are still remembered from the period. I don't have information at hand, but at least some of those you mention as missing would have been very young in 1925. If I remember correctly Stanly Kunitz was born about 1910 and some of the others, I am fairly certain, were born after 1900.

Why am I arguing this? It amazes me how anxious every seems about their installation in the Wax Museum of American Poetry. If the only end of poetry is to be taught in Professor X's course or to be included in editor Y's anthology or even to win foundation Z's prize (do you want guilt money from the inventor of dynamite?), I am not sure I want any thing to do with it. If there is going to be a poetry that does not belong to the orthodoxy, we cannot make an orthodoxy of it. Are we supposed to be unorthodox until we are fifty and then expect the orthodox to disappear suddenly from the field?

There was a little book around in the 60s entitled \_Teaching as a Subversive Activity\_, I do not remember the author's name, and I am not sure that I ever read it, but the title has stuck with me. Willy-nilly, it does happen some times that you turn to be part of the establishment yourself, and then, of course, you have to be especially scrupulous about self-subversion. It would have never occurred to me to teach Hughes, but it seems to me that, if it can get such a violent reaction from you, Ron, I have probably been blind to ways in which I need to subvert myself.. db

--

\*\*\*\*\*

Don Byrd ( [REDACTED], [REDACTED] )

Department of English

State University of New York

Albany, NY 12222

[REDACTED] (work); [REDACTED] (home); [REDACTED] (fax)

The Little Magazine (<http://www.albany.edu/~litmag/>)

\*\*\*\*\*

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901. **k. lederer**

***Queries again...***

*Mon 23 Feb 1998*

---

Does anyone have the current mailing addresses for the following?

Pat Phillips

Dan Maclin (I know someone has this one!)

Anyway--please backchannel if you have addresses for these two or for any of the others I listed last week (I didn't get but one answer from that query...)

Thanks,  
Katy L.

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902. **Joe Ahearn**

***Re: Suicide***

*Mon 23 Feb 1998*

---

*. But then, he says, you can look  
up and see the stars.*

Or as Dante puts it at the end of the Inferno:

At last we emerged, and once again beheld the stars.

Joe Ahearn



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903. **david bromige**

***eliza mcgrand***

*Mon 23 Feb 1998*

---

Listfellows, do any of you know what became of Eliza? I have no response from the last e-ddress we had for her. Thanks in advance for any help. David

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904. **Tom Beckett**  
***back issue of The Difficulties***  
*Mon 23 Feb 1998*

---

I've available a limited number of  
\_\_Ron Silliman Issue of The Difficulties\_\_(1985)

&  
\_\_David Bromige Issue of The Difficulties\_\_(1987)

Back channel for more info. In some instances I can be persuaded to barter.

Tom Beckett

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905. **Henry Gould**  
***Re: query : Iraq***  
*Mon 23 Feb 1998*

---

*I think this is a rather good idea, except for one thing. Say we announce a date to bomb palace X. What if on that day Saddam has stuffed the place with six year-olds?*

Good point. As Saddam might say, "duh". What I liked about Alex's idea was it simply toned down the "total bombardment" scenario of the Pentagon. Let's hope diplomacy works. As I mentioned backchannel, the idea of promoting a US teenager's bombardment plan sounds too close to Pynchon for comfort (are you listening, Agent Mooney?) - Henry Gould

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906. **syvester pollet**  
***Re: eliza mcgrand***  
*Mon 23 Feb 1998*

---

At 10:56 PM -0800 2/22/98, david bromige wrote:

> Listfellows, do any of you know what became of Eliza? I have no  
>response from the last e-ddress we had for her. Thanks in advance for any  
>help. David

I don't know, David, but as I was reading the exchanges in Mike & Dale's Younger Poets 7 last night (one of them hers) I was reminded of her useful presence, & realized she must have gone walkabout. Reading that thing is a very odd experience indeed, and leaves me with feelings I haven't quite sorted out yet. I didn't realize that whole messages were printed, with headers, so e-mail addresses too. I'd rather have been left out, or had a poem in the issue, or something--a chance to choose, as Kali Tal explained it. Your posts contain quite

personal stuff. I guess it's a useful reminder: Little Brother is Watching You!  
best, Sylvester

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907. **W. Freind**

**Re: back issue of *The Difficulties***

Mon 23 Feb 1998

---

I'm interested in both. What's the price?

Bill

On Mon, 23 Feb 1998, Tom Beckett wrote:

*I've available a limited number of  
\_\_Ron Silliman Issue of The Difficulties\_\_ (1985)*

*&  
\_\_David Bromige Issue of The Difficulties\_\_ (1987)*

*Back channel for more info. In some instances I can be persuaded to barter.*

*Tom Beckett*

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908. **Mark Prejsnar**

**Re: enough about Graham**

Mon 23 Feb 1998

---

I apologize to Listpersons if some of this post seems odd....In a long time of using it, I've never seen my e-mail software do this, but my attempts to quote part of d powell's post seem to end in mangling it somehow (at least that's the way it's appearing to me right now)...

Anyway d powell seems to feel that 1. I'm interested in conducting what has recently been called "poetry wars" against Jorie Graham (taking her as symptomatic of some large sinister tendency I want to anathmatize); and 2. I'm suggesting her work as a teacher and administrator of writing programs is to be looked down on.

Neither's the case; so powell's long post ("enuff" about Graham indeed!) is not really rebutting things I said or intended...altho' I readily grant that some of them are felt by folk on the list. My point was more to praise Rasula than critique Graham. I'll repeat what I really said: I don't find her work very stimulating or interesting; and I don't think it is moving into the ambit of much of the contemporary work I like. (For instance, it would probably seem conservative



and formally unadventurous in *The Art of Practice*, or in *Antenym* or *Rhizome* or *Texture*..) There is a place for different types of poetry. Let a thousand poetix bloom. That's much the spirit of Rasula's work as a historian and analyst of poetry (as it is, in his more expansive moments, of C. Bernstein, who evinces a similar breadth and generosity of spirit (sometimes) toward poetic tendencies wildly at variance with his own). and I think in this Rasula and Charles are good models for us.

...Folks who haven't should definitely check out Wax Museum, and see what I was really talking about. And so, as DP says, "enough about Jorie Graham!!!"

Mark

On Fri, 20 Feb 1998, d powell wrote:

*Reply to: RE: enough about Graham*

Mark,

*By "mainstream" do you mean "like everybody else"? In that case, Graham has never been "mainstream." If by "mainstream" you mean "popular," then I think she's actually moving into the "mainstream," not because she is stylistically or formally easy, but perhaps precisely because she is not. However, if you mean "mainstream" as a shorthand for "Iowa Writers' Workshop," just as a generation used "Iowa Writers' Workshop" as shorthand for a particular type of poem, I would argue that, IF indeed the workshop is the mainstream, then Graham has done much to make that stream a more interesting place to splash around in. While I was in Iowa, Graham brought an aesthetically diverse group of instructors to the program--Brenda Hillman, Killarney Clary, Heather McHugh, Bob Perelman, Robert Hass, Tom Sleigh. Moreover, the work that workshop students were producing is some of the finest poetry being published today, from Jeff Clark's recent book from Sun and Moon, to Reginald Sheppard's wonderful "Some Are Drowning," to Jessica Lowenthal's soon to be released chapbook from Burning Deck.*

*When I applied to Iowa, David Bromige cautioned me that the program might pressure me to conform to a (I suppose "mainstream") aesthetic. But then, I read Graham's "The End of Beauty" and I realized that she was balancing some oppositional poetics in remarkable ways. Lyn Hejinian (who will be teaching at Iowa this fall) said that Graham had been "oddly supportive" of her work. And Cydney Chadwick reminded me that Graham had chosen a Nate Mackey poem, first published in *Avec*, for inclusion in *The Best American Poetry*. And so, I did go to Iowa, and my aesthetic was not pressured, it was in fact supported and nurtured by Graham and by the odd assemblage of faculty that came through there during those two years.*

*I think this list does a lot of "Jorie Bashing," holding Graham up as symbolic -- what? The Mainstream? I don't think so. Read her most recent book, *The Errancy*. Then go read something that's truly from the "mainstream" (which, nowadays by the by, case*

anyone hasn't noticed, either looks a hell of a lot like Ashbery or a hell of a lot like Sharon Olds). With all due respect, Mark, hopefully, you will discern the difference.

=====  
==  
D A Powell [REDACTED]  
=====  
==

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909. **Mark Wallace**  
***Doug Henwood's WALL STREET***  
Mon 23 Feb 1998

Those of you needing a time out from the Plath-Hughes wars might want to consider reading what seems to me the BEST new book of social criticism I've read in several years, Doug Henwood's WALL STREET. It's by no means an easy read, but it will teach you more about how the U.S. is run than any ten books on identity politics.

Among the propositions that he seems, pretty incontrovertibly, to prove:

1) The stock markets do not effectively raise capital for business      2) The stock markets are not a natural balance for the economy but an artificial, bloated, corrupting force whose participants base their actions on speculation, foolishness, lies, unconscious contradiction, and selfishness of grandly deluded proportions      2) The stock markets exist so that certain lucky individuals can often STEAL money from business      3) Wall Street and the stock-owning class contribute nothing of significance to American life, while taking most of the money created by others      4) The main fiscal goal of the U.S. government is to take money from the poor and redistribute it to the rich      5) In short, that the elimination of Wall Street would benefit EVERYBODY in the world except the 1-2% of the American and world population who are made rich by Wall Street      6) That the existence of large corporations is NOT the problem; rather, that having the ownership of large corporations in the hands of a hostile and self-proclaimed elite is a social mistake and a business mistake      7) That the scientific discipline of economics is not scientific, barely a discipline, and knows nothing about economics      8) That the possibility of socially owned banks and corporations, that is, a system of MARKET SOCIALISM, could very easily improve the economy of the world.

But hey, don't take my word for it. READ THE BOOK.

Mark Wallace

```

-----\|
||      ||      GWU:
||      http://gwis2.circ.gwu.edu/~mdw      ||      EPC:
||      http://writing.upenn.edu/epc/authors/wallace      ||

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910. **Mark Prejsnar**  
*Re: Other stealth bombs?*

Mon 23 Feb 1998

Gwyn,

yup, the relentlessly generalizing tendencies we're all capable of, can be frightening. Your post is wildly amusing and the parallels you suggest are quite apt.

More broadly (or more narrowly), I've made a vow to myself not to use the "L word" from now on, on the List, or in my critical and theoretical writings,...even insofar as possible in conversation!

And I don't mean "liberalism" (as a socialist I disagree with liberals about \*most\* things, but I have no trouble using that tangled and troubled word).

I made this vow sometime last week, when various posts to the list made it fairly clear that the L-word has become more a tool in the hands of folks who want to attack, than a helpful analytic generalization.

I figure it makes more sense to try to deal with Clark Coolidge or Susan Howe, or Silliman or Perelman or Armantrout or Hejinian or Hunt or....By name, and leave behind (or, *aufgehabung*, excuse my probably incorrect German spelling) the moment when they were somewhat simplistically grouped together under the L label....

Mark P.  
@lanta

On Fri, 20 Feb 1998, Gwyn McVay wrote:

*This week's Washington City Paper. Very strange. Announces impending double bill of Brenda Hillman and James Tate. Describes both as "language poets," lowercase, no =.*

*Next: "Famed Dadaist Dana Gioia reads..."? "Discussion of the poems of working-class bard Robert Lowell..."?*

*baffled on the beltway*

911. **daniel bouchard**  
***Re: Iraq and depression***  
*Mon 23 Feb 1998*

---

Reading Rodrigo the Apostate got my blood moving on this mundane Monday morning, just as a coworker dropped by to ask about my weekend and also express relief at this morning's headline: "Annan, Hussein reach a pact on inspections". Yes, that's good but does it herald true peace for Iraq? Didn't a Russian writer once say that if an arsenal is introduced into the Gulf in act one the arsenal must be unleashed by act three?

Or somewhat closer to home, that poet nut I love to love, wrote in Canto 74, the general principle of the West: "never inside the country to raise the standard of living/ but always abroad to increase the profits of usurers,/ dixit Lenin/ and gun sales lead to more gun sales/ they do not clutter the market for gunnery/ there is no saturation."

Nuts quoting nuts. No one is interested in what poets dixit, nevermind Pound or Lenin. "My weekend was fine. Yes, I hope this business with Iraq is over soon. Gee, those Arabs sure are nuts." Straying from conventional wisdom in the workplace is dangerous.

But after she left I read the lines under the head line. What I read in papers and magazines, like you, is my only way of knowing what is "going on" in the Gulf.

From the paper: "Secretary of State Madeleine K. Albright warned that the United States would not accept a 'phony diplomatic solution.'"

Albright always strikes me as a disgusting little booger, a true contemporary statesperson, mouthing whatever shit is appropriate to finish the job. My first reaction to this statement was to focus on "phony": phony is what is not initiated by the United States. Or: a diplomatic solution proposed by the US after four days of bombing Iraq would be "a genuine, real diplomatic solution".

I read on: "The White House has said throughout the crisis that it preferred a diplomatic solution." It is expected of the White House to say this. Anything less would be uncivilized. Then, after it has been said, the population is bombed. (Panama, East Timor, Cambodia, Iraq, Grenada: either by US forces or forces trained and armed by US forces).

This made me question what exactly a diplomatic solution entailed. After all, I have read "throughout the crisis" that the US was gearing up for an attack. Is an attack or the threat of an attack part of diplomacy? Remember the rumor that Iraq was plotting to assassinate ex-prez Bush? Our response to this rumor was to diplomatically bomb Baghdad and kill civilians.

I read on: "an official at the weapons inspection team told The Boston Globe yesterday that Iraq's pattern of obstructing inspections meant that even a diplomatic deal does not ensure that inspectors will be able to do their job" Nothing like a traditional American 96 hour saturation bombing campaign ensures the ability to do a job!

"There is always the question of the devil being in the details," Pickering said. Saddam Hussein "has tried to play cat and mouse for a very long time. .. ." A key detail not stated in the article is that the mouse is Iraq.

This post (of mine) brings me again to thinking about the Philly Talks, the Derksen/Silliman exchange: what it means to me "to write poetry in the world today." Too often it means paralysis, as opposed to writing anything that I could make sense of, or live with . . .

Wish I could write more this morning . . .

daniel bouchard

<<<<<<>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>

Daniel Bouchard

The MIT Press Journals

## Five Cambridge Center

Cambridge, MA 02142

██████████

phone: [REDACTED]

fax: [REDACTED]

>>>>>>><<<<<<<<<<<<<<<<

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912. **Gary Sullivan**

### Most Appalling Post of the Week

Mon 23 Feb 1998

Hi Doug & Ron:

For what it's worth: The best teacher I had at SF State was Michael Rubin. Unlike the other teachers I had there (who all would agree with what you say below) he brought in books for us to read that he claimed he HATED. One of them was Kathy Acker's *Great Expectations*, the most important book (for me) I read in college. Rubin was my favorite teacher; I was incredibly sad to hear he died of AIDS a couple of years after I graduated. He was, again, unique, in that he brought things to us he didn't necessarily support, & admitted that fact to us "God, I HATE this book! What do you people think?" I not only admired that he held the job of teaching, of exposing us to a wide spectrum of new writing, to be

more important than his own tastes, I discovered many of my now-favorite writers in his class. If I had had more teachers like Rubin, I might have stayed in school.

Gary

On Friday, February 20, 1998 8:57 PM, [REDACTED]

[SMTP:[REDACTED]] wrote:

> Douglas,  
>  
> If, as you say,  
>  
> "I'm not a great fan of his [T Hughes'] writing but as a teacher I have had  
> to  
> include it in courses on post 1945 poetry...,"  
>  
> you are guilty of malpractice.  
>  
> Teach what you believe in, or don't bother. There's too much good poetry out  
> there to ever be covered in one college career, let alone one course. To  
> waste  
> it on "official verse culture" is to simply contribute to the a-literacy and  
> poetry-phobia that innundates us all.  
>  
> Ron Silliman

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913. **Mark Prejsnar**

**Re: poet-heroes, suicide and women's lot**

Mon 23 Feb 1998

---

*i know lots of cases in which women worked to put their husbands thru law school, medical school, business school, etc, only to be dumped when hubby finished, got a job, and met some sexier, funner chick in med school law school, etc or on the job.*

*i'm with katie on this, but i've long since learned that POETIX isn't necessarily open to such discussions, so i just roll my eyes where youall can't see me.*

*md*

Maria's point is an important one and in my opinion it's important to make the list a place that *\*is\** open to such discussions.

I have also known instances like this, and while the exact gender reversal counterpart has without any question happened at some point or other, the scenario mostly has worked out (from what I can see) as she describes it. It clearly has to do with how men (and women) are socialized in sexist culture to understand their own needs, and how exactly they understand the commitment they've given to another person...

I also know of instances where some support comes to a woman poet from her male partner's income, Mark. But think about it for a minute: this is the classic situation still of a predominant number of households. Namely, the man is capable of making more in the job market than the woman. (But these days, the woman not working at all is likely to be characteristic *\*primarily\** of middle-class and up households; in the drastic economic straits of the last 15 years a large number of working-class families have had no choice but to have everyone work who can, sometimes more than one job..) And the skew toward the man earning more of the family's income has everything to do with the fact that women's wages and salaries are *\*\*still\*\** way depressed systematically and deliberately below men's...And gender discrimination in employment, and especially for well-earning jobs, is *\*still\** overwhelmingly dominant. The "feminization of poverty" is still, believe me, a very real and significant statistical bias in the shape of the economy.

If a few woman poets have been supported by the income of well-employed husbands, that is more an artefact of what's still a savagely anti-woman culture and anti-woman economy, than it is a benign fact.

Mark P.  
@lanta

On Fri, 20 Feb 1998, Maria Damon wrote:

*whoa! mark weiss writes, among other thihngs"*

*I've known several women writers whose husbands' work funded their literary careers and afforded them lots of time for writng. I don't know too many men who can say that.*

*to which i reply:*

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914. **Douglas Barbour**

***Re: Temporary canons***

*Mon 23 Feb 1998*

---

Ron

Well, that's a great demonstration from an anthology I confess I have not read (mea culpa). And I take your point. But we can't know at all who will last really, although we might just as well present the writers we find most interesting to us. But that interest may include questions of reception, & there the hughes/plath situation does have a reason to play in the class.

I usually teach Canadian poetry, & there I have a number of writers I like from a number of different 'traditions,' including our own George. But, despite the difficulties (of non-representation in the anthologies) I do get bpNichol in, or Daphne Marlatt, or...

I have only learned about some of the writers you mention since joining this list, & then begun tracking their work down. For that I'm more than a little grateful (but let's remember a half-year course, & the course description too).

Still, thanks for the list of names & pages: it does speak many more volumes than the one it was a contents page for...

=====  
=====

Douglas Barbour  
Department of English  
University of Alberta  
Edmonton Alberta T6G 2E5  
[REDACTED] FAX: [REDACTED]  
H: [REDACTED]

~~~~~  
~~~~~

And all of the time you are seeing these things she  
sings 'not  
loudly but with authority'

Michael Palmer

[↑ Contents](#)



915. **Mark Wallace**

***libraries with Amiri Baraka materials?***

Mon 23 Feb 1998

---

Could anybody with information about libraries with the completest collections of Amiri Baraka books and other materials please backchannel me with that information?

Thanks very much.

Mark Wallace

---

```
/-----\ |
||          || GWU:
|| http://gwis2.circ.gwu.edu/~mdw          || EPC:
|| http://writing.upenn.edu/epc/authors/wallace ||
```

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916. **David Kellogg**

***Re: Temporary canons/New Poetry redux***

Mon 23 Feb 1998

---

Ron,

First, an editorial note. Your edition of the New Poetry is the second (at least!). My copy, purchased for like \$5 at a huge used bookstore in Milwaukee, is the 1917 (first) edition. Its contents are slightly different. Also, I really don't see why the 1925 edition should be expected to contain any Kunitz, for example, since as I understand it his work went more or less unrecognized until his *Selected Poems* won the Pulitzer out of nowhere in 1959. He had published one book by 1925, and I think it was even reviewed, but still . . . Anyway, my basic feeling is that *The New Poetry* is a pretty interesting anthology, and the 1925 edition was probably determined in part by the 1917 edition (which was determined largely by what was published in *Poetry*).

Now on to my main point: a lot of us who teach decide on a syllabus for a multiple reasons. Your posts on this issue seem to me less than your finest, since the reasons you can think of are very few: teach what you love; teach what you think will last (Jesus, when did *that* come back?); teach "sociologically," by which you appear to mean teach as many poems and types of poetry as possible.

I believe my teaching to be sociological, but not in the sense described in your post. In my American lit 1915-1960 this semester, I am focusing on a few poets -- Stein, Williams, Eliot (through *The Waste Land*), and Riding -- although I'm

also using Cary Nelson's *\_Repression and Recovery\_*, various handouts etc.; and the poetry section is framed by the 1917 New Poets and the 1960 Allen. Now, my syllabus is determined by lots of things: the prose I'm teaching later, my choice to divide the class by genre, my sense of what Duke juniors and seniors know and what they don't, my awareness of the number of hours in the course overall, and the political and cultural points I hope to drive home as the semester develops. I have lots of goals: I want students to develop a particular sense of history, I want them to be able to apprehend poems in ways they haven't before, I want them to engage in a particular relation to other Duke English classes, I want them to like the poets I like, sure. My point is that teachers' relations to classrooms are overdetermined, and that you might not assume that you are able to judge from a distance -- even with an abundance of hypothetical information -- how other teachers might choose to get along.

But of course, you *\_know\_* all this.

Cheers,  
David

~~~~~  
~~~~~

David Kellogg Duke University  
[REDACTED] Program in Writing and Rhetoric  
[REDACTED] Durham, NC 27708  
FAX [REDACTED] <http://www.duke.edu/~kellogg/>

>My point is that if one includes a Hughes, say, on the grounds that he  
>represents some "important" force active in the contemporary lit scene,  
then  
>one should be including a very broad range of such forces, including  
>"popular" poetry and work that already tells us how such work fares over  
>time (maybe include that peculiar adjunct to the Berkeley Renaissance, Rod  
>McKuen, for example), you should absolutely be including works by such  
>omnipresent publishers as Greg Kuzma and Lyn Lifshin (as Don Byrd's note  
>points out), works from a wide range of different identarian modes and  
>creating what is really a sociological (i.e. "historical" avant la lettre)  
>reading of the work. Then it might make sense to include Hughes, Merwin,  
>John Haines, whomever. After all, we are all examples of some social  
>dimension acting through writing.  
>  
>But if you're trying to introduce students to the reading and excitement of  
>poetry, then you ought to focus on what YOU find exciting (and if it  
>includes Hughes, then fine). But the idea that official verse culture  
>represents an "important" force is flat out disproved by history again and  
>again. Otherwise we'd all be studying Jones Very far more closely than we

>have. Or Randall Jarrell. Marjorie Perloff has written on this phenomenon  
>quite wisely.  
>  
>I don't blame Hughes for Plath's suicide -- nobody should ever lay that  
trip  
>on any of the survivors, frankly -- but his work's likelihood to survive  
>(that word again) in history as anything other than a sheer footnote really  
>depends on her writing (some of which is tremendous) and the following that  
>it has developed over the years. What is creepiest about Birthday Letters  
is  
>not that Hughes knows this and now publically acknowledges same, but the  
way  
>in which these poems (to paraphrase a very good review that appeared in the  
>web mag Feed awhile back) compete with Plath, however badly.  
>  
>Two other remarks:  
>  
>Tom Beckett's comments to this list are among the most moving and impor-  
tant  
>I've read here in my four years online. I've lived around people with  
>serious cases of depression (my grandmother, who raised me, and a roommate  
>and very good friend Eliot Helfer who jumped from the Golden Gate Bridge 20  
>years ago this month) and have seen just how difficult (that word!)  
>everything in life becomes. Attempts to draw narrative lessons from such  
>complex situations (as too many do with Plath) are as reductive and silly  
as  
>the little morals CBS has been attaching to the winners and losers of each  
>Olympic event these past two weeks.  
>  
>Second, I can think of way too many examples of male writers -- including  
at  
>least three who are household names on this list -- who've been subsidized  
>entirely by the work and financing of their spouses up to and including the  
>typing of manuscripts after coming home from a long day of work. This is at  
>least as much a situation for writing and poetry as it has been so many  
>other fields of endeavor. While there are an increasing number of couples  
>where, say, the husband takes over the childrearing and daily chores and  
>the woman has a career, or where the woman has inherited (or other) wealth  
>and it's not an issue of slave labor as such, there certainly are other  
>examples that just make you cringe.  
>

>Ron

>

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917. **Annie Finch**

***Flicks at Ficke***

*Mon 23 Feb 1998*

---

Looking through my own copy of Monroe and Henderson's "The New Poetry," I find that the tensionless free verse of such contributors as Lee Wilson Dodd or Maxwell Bodenheim strikes me as even more (out)dated than do Ficke's George-Santayanaesque sonnets. Workshop Mcpoems avant la lettre?

The point I gain from such perusals is that work without [guts/chi/charisma/talent/ spirit/funk/kundalini/soul/heart/energy] (and even, sadly, some work that does bear noticeable traces of g/c/c/t/s/f/k/s/h/e) is likely to end up appearing a lifeless corpse made up only of whatever conventions it needed to adopt--and since any art needs to use conventions, this will happen to work of all schools equally, no matter how far "advanced" they may appear at birth. No set of artistic practices can guarantee success, or failure, and just because some strategies--perhaps even including oppositionality, and perhaps even originality--worked to harness g/c/c/t/s/f/k/s/h/e for some poets in the early 20th century does not mean those methods have any better odds of working in the present than any other approach.

Annie

Ron wrote: My point here is that the idea that Hughes is, at best, a Fletcher, although I suspect he's really a Ficke or Gibson, "successful" conservative poets whose work was oddly anachronistic even 73 years ago (they were, so to speak, new formalists avant la lettre).

---

---

Annie Finch

<http://muohio.edu/~finchar>

Assistant Professor of English/Creative Writing

Miami University

Oxford, Ohio 45220

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918. **Mark Prejsnar**  
**Re: Iraq and depression**  
Mon 23 Feb 1998

---

It's hard to parse out all the variables leading to the present war situation.

In the very dynamic movement against the last US aggression in the mideast (the "turkey shoot" one), we used the slogan No Blood for Oil. Now in the long run, I believe that US policy makers do indeed wish to dominate in that area in order to guarantee access to petroleum on acceptable political and economic terms.... But that's probably only one factor; as I think David's post implies, a major factor is the wish of the Pentagon to justify its existence, protect itself from further post-Cold War downsizing, and generally boost its P.R. in society at large and extend the grip of militarism on U.S. culture.

What it has nothing to do with, is the badness of the Bath'ist state. Saddam is a creature of US imperialism, strongly supported and armed in the most vocal and assertive way by the Reagan and Bush regimes...till he proved a not quite the puppet they assumed they had. Is he an appalling and evil ruler? Yes.. As appalling and evil as Reagan, as responsible for as many deaths thru criminal military action? No, of course not. And he certainly is not being opposed by the Pentagon because of any of his crimes!

The public involvement of poets against the U.S. war in Vietnam was a real instance of poets making a difference, and involving their work with the public sphere;....So this issue, and David's post, are I feel quite germane.

Mark P

On Sun, 22 Feb 1998, david bromige wrote:

*I find it depressing that the posts I've read re-Iraq while suggesting modulations of the Administration's policy contain no apostates, only mild heretics. Why is the Admin being taken at its word? I find it interesting that, after Gulf War I, the sales of American arms were over the top. This congeries of intellectuals might consider that these "Wars" are most importantly demonstrations of how new weaponry works under actual conditions, thus leading to a bonanza sale.*

*(Btw, is it a legal war or is it A Presidential Police Action, like the last few illegal massacres? )*

*db3*

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919. **Judy Roitman**  
**Re: Poetry and Depression**  
Mon 23 Feb 1998

---

*Sorry, I think probably you are not guilty of the attitude I find  
myself railing at - the attitude that art and depression are  
aberrant and deserve each other.  
tom bell*

Yes. The notion that what used to be called neurosis is a precondition for art is a particularly pernicious myth in our society, a way of marginalizing both art and human suffering.

----- Judy Roitman  
| "Whoppers Whoppers Whoppers! Math, University of Kansas | mem-  
ory fails Lawrence, KS 66045 | these are the days." [REDACTED]  
| fax: [REDACTED] | Larry Eigner, 1927-1996  
----- Note new area code

-----  
<http://www.math.ukans.edu/~roitman/>  
-----

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920. **Jeff Hansen**  
**(no subject)**  
Mon 23 Feb 1998

---

On the depression and poetry bit:

Kay Jamison published a book about seven years ago called TOUCHED WITH FIRE about mani-depressive illness and artistic creation. She makes a good case, from my point of view, that poets in particular have extraordinarily high levels of manic-depression and depression among them. While I find the book lacking in some of its aesthetic insights, I do find the statistics she brings to bear quite convincing.

In the end, I don't find the relationship between creativity and mental illness surprising. Nor do I find it disconcerting. While there are many people with mental illness who are not in the least creative, it seems that many creative people would be at the edge of what is considered "sane." Creativity always puts the creator at risk, and some people may be more inclined to take these risks. Or they may be oblivious to them.

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921. **r.drake**

***despe rate to see my name up in lites!***

*Mon 23 Feb 1998*

---

sylvester (or other)--

yr post reminded me ov the chip&dale thing; i wonder if you'd do me a favor? could you please either photocopy any pages frm younger poets 7 that are attributed to me and send me a copy? alternatively, could you count the number of words of mine that were quoted (like you, w/out my permission)? the reason is, i'll be preparing a bill for th publishers at th rate of \$10 per word (Note to other publishers --DON'T BE SCARED OFF!--: that's my standard fee for use of my work without permission; the rate drops to ONLY \$1 per word if you'll just send me a copy afterwords; folks who secure permissions previous to publication generally are charged at the Poets Union rate of "contributors' copy"). i'm not too keen on sending money to these clowns just to see a copy of my own work.

sorry to reopen a can ov worms...

luigi

burning press

sylvester pollet wrote:

*I don't know, David, but as I was reading the exchanges in Mike & Dale's Younger Poets 7 last night (one of them hers) I was reminded of her useful presence, & realized she must have gone walkabout. Reading that thing is a very odd experience indeed, and leaves me with feelings I haven't quite sorted out yet. I didn't realize that whole messages were printed, with headers, so e-mail addresses too. I'd rather have been left out, or had a poem in the issue, or something--a chance to choose, as Kali Tal explained it. Your posts contain quite personal stuff. I guess it's a useful reminder: Little Brother is Watching You! best, Sylvester*

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922. **David Columbia**

***Re: Doug Henwood's WALL STREET***

*Mon 23 Feb 1998*

---

As someone who spends a fair amount of time near "Wall Street" and "on" Wall Street, I would like to echo Mark's comments. Doug Henwood shouldn't be the only person saying what he does. I don't always agree with his suggested solutions (for example, I think the financial markets might be "used" in various non-capitalist ownership schemes), but he is basically the only person in the public sphere (well, except for maybe J. Hightower & several highly influential poets & academics) who is even hinting at the right questions...

today's tips: short msft split, leaps on 5yr corp instead, long on oxhp & aet, sepr looks good, brazil for se asia. all of these are lies.

--



David Columbia

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923. **Mark Prejsnar**

**Re: Doug Henwood's WALL STREET**

Mon 23 Feb 1998

I've been reading Henwood's book off and on for a couple of months. I would like to second Mark's recommendation. He is very right though: you have to be prepared to work at it a bit. But it is a great book. As subscribers for years to Henwood's newsletter Erika and I had been waiting impatiently for the book to be finished for some time...

His newsletter is called Left Business Observer, and it is both unique and brilliant. I strongly recommend it for people who think (correctly) that understanding the economy is an important part of coping with our day-to-day lives and struggles...

Mark P.  
@lanta

On Mon, 23 Feb 1998, Mark Wallace wrote:

*Those of you needing a time out from the Plath-Hughes wars might want to consider reading what seems to me the BEST new book of social criticism I've read in several years, Doug Henwood's WALL STREET. It's by no means an easy read, but it will teach you more about how the U.S. is run than any ten books on identity politics.*

*Among the propositions that he seems, pretty incontrovertibly, to prove:*

- 1) The stock markets do not effectively raise capital for business*
- 2) The stock markets are not a natural balance for the economy but an artificial, bloated, corrupting force whose participants base their actions on speculation, foolishness, lies, unconscious contradiction, and selfishness of grandly deluded proportions*
- 2) The stock markets exist so that certain lucky individuals can often STEAL money from business*
- 3) Wall Street and the stock-owning class contribute nothing of significance to American life, while taking most of the money created by others*
- 4) The main fiscal goal of the U.S. government is to take money*



*from the poor and redistribute it to the rich*

5) In short, that the elimination of Wall Street would benefit EVERYBODY in the world except the 1-2% of the American and world population who are made rich by Wall Street

6) That the existence of large corporations is NOT the problem; rather, that having the ownership of large corporations in the hands of a hostile and self-proclaimed elite is a social mistake and a business mistake

7) That the scientific discipline of economics is not scientific, barely a discipline, and knows nothing about economics

8) That the possibility of socially owned banks and corporations, that is, a system of MARKET SOCIALISM, could very easily improve the economy of the world.

*But hey, don't take my word for it. READ THE BOOK.*

*Mark Wallace*

GWU:  
<http://gwis2.circ.gwu.edu/~mdw>

EPC:  
<http://writing.upenn.edu/epc/authors/wallace>

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924. **Judy Roitman**  
*Re: Iraq and depression*

Mon 23 Feb 1998

Jon Carroll, a columnist for the SF Chronicle, has had two remarkable columns on Iraq recently.

The first can be found at

<http://www.sfgate.com/cgi-bin/article.cgi?file=/chronicle/archive/1998/02/06/DD65371.DTL>.

The second is at

<http://www.sfgate.com/cgi-bin/article.cgi?file=/chronicle/archive/1998/02/18/DD77976.DTL>.

Should you get a taste for reading him every day, his homepage can be found at <http://www.sfgate.com/columnists/carroll/>.

----- Judy Roitman  
| "Whoppers Whoppers Whoppers! Math, University of Kansas | mem-  
ory fails Lawrence, KS 66045 | these are the days." [REDACTED]  
| fax: [REDACTED] | Larry Eigner, 1927-1996

----- Note new area code

-----  
<http://www.math.ukans.edu/~roitman/>  
-----

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925. **Gary Sullivan**  
***"The world is blood-hot and personal"***

*Mon 23 Feb 1998*

---

Hi, Katy:

Thanks for taking the time to respond to my earlier question.

I wasn't trying to deny an obvious history of oppression nor of gendered readings. I'm open to discussions of both on this list (and elsewhere), and hope that my asking you for more information, specific to the issue at hand, wasn't seen as not being open. I was genuinely curious. Anyway, I'll have to defer to what you say about readings of Plath's suicide being gendered (though I really would appreciate specific references, here--I mean, they do help in understanding, in seeing what you're addressing). Again, what I get on that level is usually from other poets, in conversation, and none of those readings had taken Plath's being a mother into the equation. People in conversation (with me) have been much more critical of my friend Daniel Davidson's suicide than of Plath's--though, of course, this probably has to do with the fact that these people actually knew Dan, and were very hurt by what he did.

Thanks again, Katy.

Yours,

Gary

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926. **Mark Leahy**  
***scalapino, art and poetry***

*Mon 23 Feb 1998*

---

Hi Danny

I too found my way to 'experimental', 'Language', 'however you want to label it' writing through the study of visual arts; in particular Minimalism and Conceptualism; (this study also opened up minimalism in music to me); I also found that the Italian arte povera movement in some of the procedures and disjunctive practices they engaged in have helped me in my reading of poetry; -- the presentation of process and procedures, the use of sign systems; in coming to poetry, it is as though different readers learn to read the work in different ways, acquire different reading tools from other disciplines and as long as they are prepared to use them in ways not always specified in the first situation it can facilitate new reading; I think that studying artworks has allowed me to look for things other than meanings, to approach work not only interpretatively; I also became aware of the paratextual elements and their contribution to the work; good luck with reading Scalapino -- her permutations and repetitions will I think give pleasure

Mark Leahy

Mark Leahy

School of English

University of Leeds

LS2 9JT

United Kingdom

tel: 0044 (0)113 2334739

fax: 0044 (0)113 2334774

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927. **Joe Amato/Kass Fleisher**

***Re: Temporary canons/New Poetry redux***

*Mon 23 Feb 1998*

---

whoa, yeah, to pick up on david k's and don b's posts: \_teaching as a subversive activity\_, yeah, i think that was by---two guys, i think one was mark poster, am i right????... i recall it as a somewhat evangelical attempt to add mcluhan's insights to the humanities curriculum?... have i got the right book?...

i'll report back here later on same...

but this opens to the question of teaching, which david k addresses directly: and i wanted simply to add to what he sez that the issues he raises gets more complex in the face of different approaches to the classroom context in general...

[please STOP reading NOW if you're academically undisposed]

for one, there's the matter of how you teach students to \*write\* poetry... which i don't believe is entirely divorced, or should be, from how you teach them to

study it... there is something of a problem in having students---even more self-directed, grad or undergrad students working in collaborative groups (my tentative nod \*here\* toward a non-lecture based class)---compose historically-grounded essays on poetry (e.g.) w/o having thought through the poetic as it operates in said "essays"...

this is a HUGH ISSUE, esp. for me!... i am advocating, implicitly and explicitly, a more open approach to the matter of form than currently prevails in the (graduate and undergraduate) poetry \*study\* classroom... and in the creative writing classroom as well... i would like to see, in fact, more creative writers study theory, and more theorists study poetry and poetics... and have both study something else too...

and in fact to stitch this together with the post from annie finch (LARGE stitches): i think this will help answer to the (imnsho) artificial distinction, finally, twixt poetry and scholarship, and will help provide a more bracing understanding of form in both... b/c in fact it's in isolating one kind of writing from another that we end up with all sorts of unnecessary mystifications re the writing process...

and if said process IS necessarily mystified, btw (we be all writing zombies or some such), then it is mystified in all contexts, and all forms... which is not to disallow what folks THINK they're doing...

at the same time: this is not to deny, either, that we will or should continue to utilize the conceptual and cultural categories of "poetry" and "scholarship," to good and bad and in-between ends... but it seems to me we would all do well to enter more fully into the specifically poetic status of our discourses, and the claims we thereby (therethrough?) make... we've (academics now) managed to do this wrt "theory," "rhetoric," and so forth... but the metrical (i am being funny) realities of scholarship seem nigh transparent to most who study same... at least or esp. in terms of their presumed necessity to "critical" thinking (as opposed, in general, to "creative")...

to call out the advocacy i'm suggesting more directly, as a teacher of something called "technical writing" for 8 years now (and, he sez, as a former practicing engineer of 7 years): of what use is a standard research paper to a budding engineer?---i mean, wouldn't said engineer be as well off trying to compose a ditty for a change, however 'miserably' wrought?... one that attempts to get at, say, the emotional and ethical intensities and dispersions of technology?... or does anyone really think that writing up lab reports, over and over (and over), will make for a more 'fully-grounded' individual? (and a "better world"?)... or that endless rounds of undergrad essays that spew out the "original insights" of others, in mla format, is all that good a thing, ultimately?...

i am being harsh, intentionally so...

nothing against lab reports, mind you, or essays---but i'm questioning the ways we, as teachers, pigeonhole discursive dispersions, and act tacitly and not-so-tacitly to convince others that such dispersions are not only natural, but necessary... part of bottom-line thinking these days too (to pick up yet another thread---mark wallace's helpful nod toward wall street, the book, the movie, and the reality), but way beyond what i'll venture here... hey, i've gotta go teach!...

best,

joe

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928. **Tom Beckett**

***Re: back issue of The Difficulties***

*Mon 23 Feb 1998*

---

seven dollars apiece and moving fast.

1st come, 1st served.

Make check to Tom Beckett

131 N. Pearl Street

Kent, OH 44240

Thanks

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929. **David Zauhar**

***Stein in popculture, again***

*Mon 23 Feb 1998*

---

Last night on the X-files, just as I was leaving to catch my train to take my sorry ass back to chicago, agents mulder and scully were engaged in a dialog about getting their stories straight or possibly facing prison sentences, etc, and Mulder says to Scully something like, "because if we don't get it straight we're going to prison and your cellmate is going to be called Large Marge and she's going to read a lot of Gertrude Stein..." Stein also appeared in political news in Chicago about 3 weeks ago when Jesse Jackson was quoted as saying, re: the Clinton Sex Scandal that "there is no there there." (at least Jackson extended the typical use of that quotation to account for something besides Oakland).

David Zauhar

University of Illinois at Chicago

"My religion makes no sense  
and does not help me  
therefore I pursue it."

--Anne Carson

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930. **Mark Weiss**

***Re: poet-heroines, suicide and women's lot***

*Mon 23 Feb 1998*

---

Right you are. As I said in the sentence following the one that's raised the flurry, "Which is not to say that I don't realize that women's and men's lots are different and that most women have different and perhaps more obstacles to face." I expect I'll get in trouble for the "perhaps," but the point of the post, such as it was, is that over-generalizing serves no one's purposes.

At 10:09 AM 2/23/98 -0500, you wrote:

>> i know lots of cases in which women worked to put their husbands thru law  
>> school, medical school, business school, etc, only to be dumped when hubby  
>> finished, got a job, and met some sexier, funner chick in med school law  
>> school, etc or on the job.

>>

>> i'm with katie on this, but i've long since learned that POETIX isn't  
>> necessarily open to such discussions, so i just roll my eyes where youall  
>> can't see me.

>>

>> md

>>

>

>Maria's point is an important one and in my opinion it's important to make  
>the list a place that *\*is\** open to such discussions.

>

>I have also known instances like this, and while the exact gender reversal  
>counterpart has without any question happened at some point or other, the  
>scenario mostly has worked out (from what I can see) as she describes it.  
>It clearly has to do with how men (and women) are socialized in sexist  
>culture to understand their own needs, and how exactly they understand the  
>commitment they've given to another person...

>

>I also know of instances where some support comes to a woman poet from her  
>male partner's income, Mark. But think about it for a minute: this is the  
>classic situation still of a predominant number of households. Namely, the

>man is capable of making more in the job market than the woman. (But these  
>days, the woman not working at all is likely to be characteristic  
>\*primarily\* of middle-class and up households; in the drastic economic  
>straits of the last 15 years a large number of working-class families have  
>had no choice but to have everyone work who can, sometimes more than one  
>job..) And the skew toward the man earning more of the family's income has  
>everything to do with the fact that women's wages and salaries are  
>\*\*\*still\*\* way depressed systematically and deliberately below men's...And  
>gender discrimination in employment, and especially for well-earning jobs,  
>is \*still\* overwhelmingly dominant. The "feminization of poverty" is  
>still, believe me, a very real and significant statistical bias in the  
>shape of the economy.

>

>If a few woman poets have been supported by the income of well-employed  
>husbands, that is more an artefact of what's still a savagely  
>anti-woman culture and anti-woman economy, than it is a benign fact.

>

>

>Mark P.

>@lanta

>

>On Fri, 20 Feb 1998, Maria Damon wrote:

>

>> whoa! mark weiss writes, among other thihngs"

>>

>> I've known several women writers whose husbands' work funded their liter-  
ary

>> careers and afforded them lots of time for writng. I don't know too many

>> men who can say that.

>>

>> to which i reply:

>>

>>

>

>

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931. **Dale M Smith**

***despe rate to see my name up in lites!***

*Mon 23 Feb 1998*

---

I requested that copies be sent to all participants in Mike and Dale's email fi-  
asco. If those in question have not received issues by now let me know and I  
can follow up on it, will be glad to in fact. It was a gross undersight \*not\* to  
have sent those to you all in the first place. Sometimes the Pony Express runs  
slow. Promise to crack the whips a little louder if need be.

Dale, mailroom custodian,  
clowns, inc.

To: [REDACTED]

sylvester (or other)--

yr post reminded me ov the chip&dale thing; i wonder if you'd do me a favor?  
could you please either photocopy any pages frm younger poets 7 that are at-  
tributed to me and send me a copy? alternatively, could you count the number  
of words of mine that were quoted (like you, w/out my permission)? the reason  
is, i'll be preparing a bill for th publishers at th rate of \$10 per word (Note to  
other publishers --DON'T BE SCARED OFF!--: that's my standard fee for use of  
my work without permission; the rate drops to ONLY \$1 per word if you'll just  
send me a copy afterwards; folks who secure permissions previous to publica-  
tion generally are charged at the Poets Union rate of "contributors' copy"). i'm  
not too keen on sending money to these clowns just to see a copy of my own  
work.

sorry to reopen a can ov worms...

luigi

burning press

sylvester pollet wrote:

*I don't know, David, but as I was reading the exchanges in Mike &  
Dale's Younger Poets 7 last night (one of them hers) I was reminded of her  
useful presence, & realized she must have gone walkabout. Reading that  
thing is a very odd experience indeed, and leaves me with feelings I  
haven't quite sorted out yet. I didn't realize that whole messages were  
printed, with headers, so e-mail addresses too. I'd rather have been left  
out, or had a poem in the issue, or something--a chance to choose, as Kali  
Tal explained it. Your posts contain quite personal stuff. I guess it's a  
useful reminder: Little Brother is Watching You! best, Sylvester*

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932. **syvester pollet**

***Re: despe rate to see my name up in lites!***

*Mon 23 Feb 1998*

---

Luigi, et al. It is a can, & maybe I should have back-channelled DB. I don't want to broker deals, nor act as enforcer. Dale Smith offered copies to those quoted (after the controversy broke). I wrote asking for one, & just received it, the first time I'd seen an issue of the magazine. It's a good mag, lots of good writers in it--if I'd sent poetry I'd have been pleased to be in it. But not in this way, particularly on a day when I was short-tempered with Dodie Bellamy--my apologies to her. ( Of yours, I see a short post of 26 Sept.)

At 11:33 AM -0500 2/23/98, r.drake wrote:

>syvester (or other)--

>

>yr post reminded me ov the chip&dale thing; i wonder if you'd do me

>a favor? could you please either photocopy any pages frm younger

>poets 7 that are attributed to me and send me a copy? alternatively,

>could you count the number of words of mine that were quoted (like

>you, w/out my permission)? the reason is, i'll be preparing a bill

>for th publishers at th rate of \$10 per word (Note to other publishers

>--DON'T BE SCARED OFF!--: that's my standard fee for use of my work

>without permission; the rate drops to ONLY \$1 per word if you'll just

>send me a copy afterwords; folks who secure permissions previous to

>publication generally are charged at the Poets Union rate of

>"contributors' copy"). i'm not too keen on sending money to these

>clowns just to see a copy of my own work.

>

>sorry to reopen a can ov worms...

>

>luigi

>burning press

>

>

>syvester pollet wrote:

>

>> I don't know, David, but as I was reading the exchanges in Mike &

>>Dale's Younger Poets 7 last night (one of them hers) I was reminded of her

>>useful presence, & realized she must have gone walkabout. Reading that

>>thing is a very odd experience indeed, and leaves me with feelings I

>>haven't quite sorted out yet. I didn't realize that whole messages were

>>printed, with headers, so e-mail addresses too. I'd rather have been left

>>out, or had a poem in the issue, or something--a chance to choose, as Kali

>>Tal explained it. Your posts contain quite personal stuff. I guess it's a  
>>useful reminder: Little Brother is Watching You! best, Sylvester

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933. **Christopher W. Alexander**  
***business observer***

Mon 23 Feb 1998

---

for interested parties, sample articles and order info  
re the Left Business Observer is available online at  
[http://www.panix.com/~dhenwood/LBO\\_home.html](http://www.panix.com/~dhenwood/LBO_home.html)  
(there's also a brief promo for his book Wall Street).

Chris

..

Christopher W. Alexander etc. / nominative press collective

email: [REDACTED]

snail-mail: P.O. Box 522402 / Salt Lake City UT 84152-2402

press/zine site: <http://choengmon.lib.utah.edu/~calexand/nonce/>

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934. **Don Byrd**  
***Re: Doug Henwood's WALL STREET***

Mon 23 Feb 1998

---

Mark Wallace wrote:

*Those of you needing a time out from the Plath-Hughes wars might want to consider reading what seems to me the BEST new book of social criticism I've read in several years, Doug Henwood's WALL STREET. It's by no means an easy read, but it will teach you more about how the U.S. is run than any ten books on identity politics.*

I finally just got around to reading William Greider's *\_Secrets of the Temple: How the Federal Reserve Runs the Country\_*. Although it is ten years old now, it deals with a period that continues to be important: the Carter malaise through the Crash of 87 (and gives an excellent history of the Federal Reserve and U.S. banking from beginning). It is a readable and lively, very detailed, almost chatty, history. At any rate, it gives the day to day feel of the institutions, not much theory, but gives a very gritty picture of what happens when an administration follows blatantly contradictory policies (as Reagan did).

Thanks, Mark, for the recommendation. I intend to read Henwood forthwith.

DB

--

\*\*\*\*\*

Don Byrd ([REDACTED], [REDACTED])  
Department of English  
State University of New York  
Albany, NY 12222  
[REDACTED] (work); [REDACTED] (home); [REDACTED] (fax)  
The Little Magazine (<http://www.albany.edu/~litmag/>)

\*\*\*\*\*

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935. **Hilton Manfred Obenzinger**

***Re: Iraq and depression***

*Mon 23 Feb 1998*

---

Dear Listers,

I've been checking out discussions with interest for some time, so I'd like to say hello, and add just one comment to what people have been saying about the crisis in the Middle East, an area I've written about quite a bit. Remember one thing: Middle Eastern oil does not primarily go to the US but to Europe and Asia, particularly Japan. As much as Saddam Hussein is a dictator, one underlying aspect of the crisis is the fact that the US is asserting its dominance over Europe and Asia through its control of "our" oil. As the Asian economic collapse and French (as well as Russian) reluctance to go along with American-style globalization continue, the threat of war, besides all its other causes and uses, is very much a part of American foreign-economic policy in order to maintain the US as the force that will "open" Japan's markets to American capital. This is why, in my opinion, Clinton is willing to risk a region-wide explosion in the Middle East. The stakes are quite a bit larger than the region and the obvious hypocrisy of US policy in dealing with Israel, Turkey, etc.

Here at Stanford students have been roused and, since parents' day is coming up soon, they will be giving an earful of anti-war sentiments to certain well-known parents.

In any case, thanks for all the fascinating discussion.

Hilton Obenzinger

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936. **Keston Sutherland**

**Merry February**

Mon 23 Feb 1998

---

Sequestered hand-in-hand and throat to imp pax  
n's agreed avail, rimming the event-prefect. Her fair non-bogus  
affection is a loyal periphery, shattering  
crag upon crag, smeared in the pasture. 4.09:36. Scuttling with covert noble  
grimace #! re: best sex shredded into baloney, each (n) neat re-  
set wish glazed, sea-pondering. Soak that, brisk  
civet squirts from the brain per eye 1, 2. How can you pray  
flat-out, account shift +n sub-paltry in orbe as infernal  
sparks set under their (say) cystic joy pop up, flat-out.

Neither inirritant takes the crowd by storm, fury  
read-out smothered in attached putty, its snitch function bent  
like an oak under snow. How many adorations down  
load instant redress (pall) re: sector 1 concretized brick-ideality, do  
they just, ragged logo-tin at Omnes Vestigia hoedown (n). A trickle  
of joke blood, blent with pig's blood roams  
from dent to dent. The inner husk is trivial. Ah, just to clout the sniveling  
cosmos she'd pervade without it, post fey retort n  
to hell n on into gladder refuse <m re: standards of dearth, a big hit.

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937. **Laura Moriarty**

**Re: Acker/Scalapino**

Mon 23 Feb 1998

---

I wanted to thank Tom B., Steve T. and others for interesting and very unsenti-  
mental posts about depression - and to solicit them (you) for the upcoming  
headache and Scalapino nons -

The fact of pain - of physicality and all the specificities of gender, age etc that it  
implies - exists in any writing, but it is sometimes put aside with a sense of a  
neutral writer and reader - No one wants to whine or to tell an I-overcame-the  
pain story with inspiring music - (well most of us don't) - and yet we write with  
our bodies -

The degree to which thinking is embodied and this embodiment effects and  
shapes and allows for a text is discussable -

The clausal quality of Leslie's texts for example and her speech with its particu-  
lar breathing (breathiness), levelness and hesitations - her singing voice (which  
has been revealed to be amazing in her singing roles in K. Killian's plays) - are

all apparent in her work - and have as much to do (in a completely intended way) with her physicality as with her Buddhism - (floating world etc) - and poet-ics - It is a continuum -

I know that I'm not suggesting a new approach to poetics particularly - just urging toward one possible emphasis - theoretical but not forgetting the physical situation and state of the theorist -

PS -

There is and will be more anon today - an additional piece with small gif by Myung Kim - (who is fascinating in the interview of her in the new Tripwire) - revealing herself to be the foundational writer and teacher she has been to a lot of the new writing that is going on in the Bay Area - AND OTHERS -

about which more anon -

Laura



<http://socrates.berkeley.edu/~moriarty/>

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938. **MAYHEW**

### ***Stein in pop culture***

*Mon 23 Feb 1998*

---

Stein at one point was pop culture; she was able to sell a certain image of herself and her work. I have a copy of The Autobiography of Alice B. Toklas which was a Literary Guild Selection in the 1930s. My copy has the "rose is a rose is rose" logo on the front in circle form (four roses, actually, not three as is popularly misquoted.)

As for Jorie Graham, though I too am "aversive" to discussing her. I have an extremely capacious taste in poetry and I think I am in good company. Pound supported Frost early in his career; O'Hara thought Auden great and Spicer admired Yeats. The problem is when one living poet is lionized as THE poet to the exclusion of everyone else, by a culture that doesn't otherwise care about poetry. I remember when it was Robert Lowell; after he died it was James Merrill. On the other side of the Atlantic Larkin's death made Hughes "it," as in a game of tag. Graham seems to one of those names that is being proposed by "official verse culture" nowadays. I have tried to read her recently but without success--it takes me years sometimes to learn to read a poet so my initial impression of her style is probably not worth much.

Still trying to get my hands on Rasula's Wax Museum...

Jonathan Mayhew  
Department of Spanish and Portuguese  
University of Kansas

"There is nothing but what / thinking makes it / less tangible." (Creeley)

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939. **d powell**

***Re: Jorie Graham Experimental?***

*Mon 23 Feb 1998*

---

Reply to: Re: Jorie Graham Experimental?

k. lederer wrote:

>It seems to me that you are seconding some of the things Doug Powell  
>said--that even if one doesn't "like" Graham's work, one has to admit  
>that in the world of poetic politics--and what gets taught--she has done a  
>lot to "bridge" the "gap" between "camps"--  
>  
>This kind of bridging, of course, brings up some provocative questions--  
>  
>I know Stein said something along the lines of "once you're assimilated  
>into the wider culture ["popularized" so to speak] you are useless" (does  
>anyone have the reference here? I would love to hear it...).  
>  
>Being a student of Graham's I have had to think about this kind of thing a  
>lot--  
>  
>Stein, as someone pointed out recently here, was just a category on  
>Jeopardy--where does this leave her?  
>  
>How much and in what ways do "experimental" or "fringe" writers want to  
>be  
>accepted into the larger culture of poetry? The larger culture of America?  
>  
>What kinds of "subversions" can remain subversive once "popularized" etc.  
>  
>I think this really has to do with the individual poet--  
>  
>Notley's Descent, for example, is not necessarily politically subversive  
>(in the sense that it is about tyranny etc., it is ethical in a familiar

>way)--the aesthetics of it are also "strange" but, as Notley says in a  
>note at the beginning of the book, the punctuation and form are meant to  
>remind the reader that this is a spoken text--a medium to be "listened"  
>to, not just read, again a perfectly "normal" impulse on Notley's part--  
>  
>Scalapino's ontological explorations are of a different nature--perhaps  
>the "findings" of her work are a little bit more difficult to  
>swallow--perhaps the "experimental" nature of this work would suffer from  
>popularity--perhaps.  
>  
>And so on--  
>  
>I notice that more and more (particularly female) writers from such  
>"mainstream" environments as Iowa are writing "strangely" and, in some  
>sense because of their pedigrees, are publishing their "strange" poems in  
>mainstream journals (I am thinking here of Hillman and Claudia Keelan)--  
>  
>For me the Graham issue--even the Stein issue--speaks more to pedigree and  
>its effects on critical and cultural reception--not so much to the work  
>itself--  
>  
>Best,  
>Katy  
>

Katy,

Picking up on your thread as well as J Mayhew....Aside from how we feel about the work itself, poetry in modern times has also always been about the cult of personality. Oscar Wilde, Dylan Thomas, Allen Ginsberg, Rod McKuen, Maya Angelou and Charles Bukowski are wonderful examples of how a poet's popularity derives (at least in part) from extra-textual considerations, particularly the performative. For others--Stevie Smith, Ezra Pound, Margaret Randall, Sylvia Plath, etc.--Interest in their work has derived in part from interest in their love lives, their political lives, or their historical lives.

For Stein, widespread popularity did come in her lifetime--As Jonathan points out, The Autobiography of Alice B. Toklas was a Literary Guild Selection at the same time that her opera 4 Saints in Three Acts was enjoying an extremely successful run on Broadway, and she was solicited for work from magazines such as the Atlantic Monthly. When she and Alice returned to the US in the mid 1930s, they were celebrities, feted from coast to coast, culminating in a Hollywood party where Stein got to meet two of her idols: Charlie Chaplin and Dashiell Hammett. Did the success change her writing? Absolutely. Everybody's

Autobiography, the followup to Alice B. Toklas, was little more than fluff, a kind of literary "Jaws 2: The Revenge." Her prose became much more accessible, much more traditionally narrative. Nevertheless, of her later works, Brewsie and Willie and Wars I Have Seen, are wonderfully innovative, even while making concessions to the audience that had at last found her. If Stein had languished in obscurity, perhaps the writing of her later years would have been spectacularly abstract. However, we should be thankful that her popularity as a personality is perhaps what initially drove some to be interested in her work; I myself cannot imagine when I would have encountered her had I not encountered her first as a personality.

As for the quote, I don't know the source. I do know that in her lectures she states that "once something is known it is no longer worth thinking about." And as for the roses, there were actually seven: A rose is rose is rose is rose is a rose is rose is a rose. My friend Chris once pointed out that when one utters the entire sentence, it soon sounds as if one is repeating the word "Cicero." Kids, don't try this at home.

Doug

P.S. Katy, I just received the latest Explosive. It looks fabulous. Thanks for sending it; I'll see you in May. DP

=====

=====

D A Powell



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940. **Danny Huppatz**

**Re: Acker/Scalapino**

*Mon 23 Feb 1998*

---

Tom.

Kathy Acker was an early hero of mine. Back in the mid eighties I was at the end of high school & saw the documentary on her. I thought here is the most way-out writing I've ever heard (after years of Romantic poetry at school) so I eventually tracked down an Acker novel, the British ed. of "Blood & Guts In High School" (which also includes "Great Expectations" & "My Death, My Life". I faithfully read each & every word, one after the other, without understanding what was going on. I knew nothing of appropriation, never read Burroughs, etc - it was just weird. But I loved it. I didn't really start to understand Acker's work until I went to uni & studied art history. I came at her work via Minimal & Conceptual Art (LeWitt, Morris, Kosuth, etc) & also through music - Glass & Reich in particular.



When I think about repetition in Acker's work, those arpeggios of Philip Glass or the phase-shifting of Reich spring to mind. On one level, I see her work as compositions, & there is a certain rhythm that's generated by repetition of phrases or blocks of text.

Afraid I know little of Scalapino - any tips on starting points?

Danny Huppatz

██████████

Melbourne

-----

From: Tom Beckett[SMTP:██████████]

Sent: Monday, February 23, 1998 1:26 AM

To: ██████████

Subject: acker/scalapino cont.

Chris-- Thanks for yr posting. It's not so much a matter of preference as of strategy--trying to get an audience more familiar with A. to look closely at S. Mood is relevant in a discussion of A/S.(Although I do hope that my recent postings don't get me typecast as Mr. Moody--cousin to Agent Mooney!!--wonder what's going on with that.) I was trying to hint at larger structuring concerns & differing but related poetics. Both practice a kind of filmics of writing which I might like to try and write around later. Was really hoping though for input from the group. Maybe we could root around in their respective texts co-analyzing some passages or constellations of connections. Or perhaps a starting point might be discussion of their respective uses of repetition.

Ciao.

Tom Beckett

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941. **Schuchat Simon**

***Re: despe rate to see my name up in lites!***

*Mon 23 Feb 1998*

---

Okay Dale, I saw in one or another of the posts re this issue that something of mine was also quoted/cited, so if that is the case, please arrange for a copy to be sent to me at

Simon Schuchat

AIT Taipei - ECON

Department of State

Washington DC 20521-4170

if I misread and do not appear, I would still be interested in seeing the magazine.

Okey dokey,

Simon Schuchat

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942. **George Hartley**  
***George Hartley address & #***

*Mon 23 Feb 1998*

---

Hello Everyone,

This is George Hartley and I wanted to let people know that I'm back to the list and am now living in Lawrence, Kansas (yes, Irby's hometown!)

so new info:

1014 W. 5th St.

Lawrence, KS 66044



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943. **Aviva Wesley Vogel**  
***Re: writers&depression, & Graham***

*Mon 23 Feb 1998*

---

By the way...Jorie's well loved on the poetry listserv circuit...as you can see by this comment from Annie Finch, the formalist pole of the Poets of Artifice, the Langpo Disciples of Charles Bernstein, Ron Silliman, and all...

Annette'll know what I mean...Don't you, Annette?

In a message dated 98-02-22 15:17:47 EST, you write:

<<

Seen in this context, Graham's I-am-an-exhausted-participant-in-experience theme may be as key to her popularity as her crossover forms, background, etc.. Like Jordan, I find that this repeated stance seems gratuitous--I titled my review of Materialism "Unnecessary Burdens"--and moreover quite familiar, downright Romantic, in fact -"half in love with easeful Death" put that particular angst just as well, to my ear.

>>

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944. **Safdie Joseph**

**Re: WALL STREET, Iraq, etc.**

Mon 23 Feb 1998

---

I was just curious . . . reading the many passionate posts today about either the Iraq situation and/or Wall Street via Henwood and Grieder . . . whether folks on the list feel these concerns are NOT addressable through poetry.

That's what I thought last week about "dark and archtypal" -- that is, I thought a majority of people here would sneer at the idea that poems would actually have subject matter of ANY kind (let alone something so intellectually spurious as archetypes).

I saw Jeff Derksen give a reading last week in Seattle, partly because I admired his piece in *\_Philly Talks\_ #3*. He was introduced as someone whose work was very much "in language" and yet also very much "in the world" -- which I agreed with. I continue to think that a worthy goal is to somehow incorporate these concerns (inequitable economic systems, globalization, arms merchants, etc.) into the work -- certainly not by any obvious means, but, if you will, alchemical ones -- which reminds me that one of Pound's cantos refers to the Iraq situation at the time of John Foster Dulles! (I'll find the exact quote if anyone's interested).

And a query on something completely different: has anyone on the list seen the recent movie by Peter Greenaway regarding, uh, writing on flesh? (Kim Dawn's post -- welcome back, Kim! -- reminded me of it, but somehow I'm blanking out on the title -- *\_Pillow Book?*) Anyway, I rented it over the weekend and was totally knocked out -- wondered if anyone else shared this reaction.

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945. **Pierre Joris**

**Re: three unrelated queries and a note on poetic depression**

Mon 23 Feb 1998

---

Stephen Cope wrote:

*Some information I'm looking for, if anyone has anything to hand:*

*1) I'm looking for books (preferably in English, although if there's something good in French I'll take that too), dealing specifically with the influence of Islamic poetic forms on the Medieval lyric in the West (a la the tradition of courtly love), and, more broadly, with the influence of Arabic culture on the European Renaissance. This is clearly a broad query, so feel free to backchannel.*

Well, it cld be oif interest to others on the list, so I'll post it for general consumption.

A good place to start is Maria Rosa Menocal's *\_Shards of Love\_* (Duke, 1994) and her *\_The Arabic Role in Medieval Literary History: A Forgotten Heritage\_*, also from Duke UP. The bibliographies in those two will provide you with enough reading for a while. But much much work is still needed in that area: present topical dislike of Arabs is not new & western scholarship has spent centuries *\_denying\_* any and all influence. A good example is the etymology of troubadour -- given by euro-american philologists as going back to a hypothetical latin root "trobar" -- to find, they say. Ask an Arabist knowledgeable in medieval Arabic (hispanic medieval, that is) & s/he'll say immediately oh, troubadour is the same word as Arabic for "song".

Then, if Dante is of interest in that matter, there is a fair amount of scholarship on his work's relations to Arabic poetry.

Pierre

--

=====

pierre joris 6 madison place albany ny 12202  
tel/fax [REDACTED] email: [REDACTED]  
<http://www.albany.edu/~joris/>

-----

"What often prevents us from giving ourselves over to a single vice is that we have several of them."

— La Rochefoucauld

=====

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946. **Stephen Cope**

***three unrelated queries and a note on poetic depression***

*Mon 23 Feb 1998*

---

Some information I'm looking for, if anyone has anything to hand:

1) I'm looking for books (preferably in English, although if there's something good in French I'll take that too), dealing specifically with the influence of Islamic poetic forms on the Medieval lyric in the West (a la the tradition of courtly love), and, more broadly, with the influence of Arabic culture on the European Renaissance. This is clearly a broad query, so feel free to backchannel.

2) I'm also looking for any discussions of epistolary poetics that I might be pointed to, especially those that might deal with contemporary work (books on the Romantic and Augustan epistle appear to be a dime a dozen).

3) Might anyone know where (if it is indeed her?) Gayatri Spivak discusses "epistemic violence"? I can't seem to locate that one, and my books aren't ready to hand.

A note on poetic depression: having quickly gone through the barrage of messages that appeared on the subject over the weekend, I flipped on the tube to find that - I believe it was Dateline - was running a story on manic depression (this was Sunday evening). I caught only the end of the spot, where the requisite guest expert was in the midst of suggesting that had Lithium etc. been around for 500 or so years, there would likely have been no Van Gogh, no Byron, no Poe. (I believe a similar argument appears in Kramer's infamous prozac book, where if I remember correctly he appears intrigued, and genuinely excited, by what a world without such creative madness might look like and be like to live in).

In any case, it would seem a comparative, cross-cultural study of depression, if one doesn't already exist, is long overdue. I'm aware of a few things along these lines undertaken w/ regard to schizophrenia, or to psych-analysis in general, and have been struck by what Catherine Clement offers by way of such comparison in *\_Syncope\_*:

"In the art of Western psychiatric diagnosis, the psychotic is described as being "cut off from reality," closed in him-or herself. Psychoanalysts have often reversed the terms of the relationship between reality and the subject. It is not true, they say, that psychotics are "cut off from reality": on the contrary, they are invaded by too much reality, and no longer know how to distinguish between themselves and the world. It is very clear that psychotic states, especially deliriums with mystical themes, are considered in the West to be part of pathology. This really needs to be explained: in India, it is the other way around. Invasion by reality is the norm."

I'm wary of Clement's binarisms (and her melodramatic romanticizations), but I think her point should be well taken. Like psychosis, I'd imagine that what's referred to as depression in the psychiatric establishment (an establishment which in this country at least appears to have no sense of relativism), might be regarded elsewhere as a viable cognitive mode. This is clearly an oversimplification, but it's perhaps the failure of the presently reigning cultural systems to account for such viability that has led to the present state of things. (The presently reigning cultural systems, of course, don't see art as viable practice either).

Thanks in advance re: queries.

Stephen Cope

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947. **Steve Shoemaker**

**Re: Doug Henwood's WALL STREET**

*Mon 23 Feb 1998*

---

For a long time now I've been meaning to read a book on Wall Street that's s'posed to be very good, can't remember who it's by, but it's called Den of Thieves, and i think it concentrates on the bad ol' eighties. steve

At 11:36 AM 2/23/98 -0500, you wrote:

>As someone who spends a fair amount of time near "Wall Street" and "on"  
>Wall Street, I would like to echo Mark's comments. Doug Henwood shouldn't  
>be the only person saying what he does. I don't always agree with his  
>suggested solutions (for example, I think the financial markets might be  
>"used" in various non-capitalist ownership schemes), but he is basically  
>the only person in the public sphere (well, except for maybe J. Hightower  
>& several highly influential poets & academics) who is even hinting at the  
>right questions...

>

>today's tips: short msft split, leaps on 5yr corp instead, long on oxhp &  
>aet, sepr looks good, brazil for se asia. all of these are lies.

>

>--

>

>David Columbia

>

>

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948. **Erin Moure**

**Re: Iraq**

*Mon 23 Feb 1998*

---

Well, this one moves me to speak. Personally, I'm an apostate of the Rodrigo Toscano school; the contradictions in the whole Iraq scenario, and the moralism proposed by the greatest rogue state of all (and please reread Rodrigo's post of a couple of days ago), make me want to leave the planet (no, this is not the suicide thread... yet...). I have no doubt that the Pentagonistic Thinkers wd bomb a palace filled with Iraqi six-year olds. But how about a palace filled with Americans (over 6 years old will do). I propose the Poetics List hold a conference in such a Location...

Told this to a friend (my fellow Montrealer on the List), and he dismissed my conniving, saying: oh they'll bomb poets any day. I think that, more to the point, no one would put themselves in the position I suggest.

Which makes me think of the film *Bent*, and the scene in the railcar where the main character beats his lover to death to save his own life at that moment, because he's been told to do it, and he knows the consequence of refusing to do so is death. But... at what point do you say No to dehumanization? And accept that by saying No, you invite your own demise? Like the people who set themselves on fire to protest the Vietnam war (an image that springs to mind).

OK, I'll be quiet now... as quiet as a Canadian...

E

-----  
Date: Mon, 23 Feb 1998 08:00:16 EST  
From: Henry Gould <[REDACTED]>  
Subject: Re: query : Iraq

*I think this is a rather good idea, except for one thing. Say we announce a date to bomb palace X. What if on that day Saddam has stuffed the place with six year-olds?*

*Good point. As Saddam might say, "duh". What I liked about Alex's idea was it simply toned down the "total bombardment" scenario of the Pentagon. Let's hope diplomacy works. As I mentioned backchannel, the idea of promoting a US teenager's bombardment plan sounds too close to Pynchon for comfort (are you listening, Agent Mooney?) - Henry Gould*

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949. **groberts**

### ***Palm at the end of the Desert Storm***

Tue 24 Feb 1998

Over the past few days, I have been reading Michael Palmer's sequence "Seven Poems Within a Matrix for War" from AT PASSAGES. On the whole, I like the sequence, except for occasional maudlin lines ("Weathering so/ the wheel of days.//Gaia the bag lady/in sadness below."). I have been especially intrigued by these poems in the context of the entire book because they place Palmer's familiar tricks, turns, and patterns in into the representational anaesthetics delivered to CNN watchers seven years ago:

From the screen poured  
images toward me.

The images effected a hole  
in the approximate center of my body.

I experienced no discomfort  
to my somewhat surprise.

This is funny because the pretentious diction just barely disguises the violent "image" of penetration and is so obviously not the result of the shock of surprise. The incessant broadcasting of the American bombing raids have not generated a vivid representation of the body's anger but rather the eviscerated representation of language's power to distance the body from its outrage.

In the poem that I like best, "Construction of the Museum," Palmer discloses "in the hole caused by bombs/which are smart" the incriminating remnants of our warfare--"colored fragments" and a severed hand, "the writing hand." The end of the poem is, to me anyway, a convincing retread of the "Ozymandis" theme as well as of the idea that the preservation of language as poem is an act of violence:

We never say the word desert  
nor does the sand pass through the fingers

of this hand we forget  
is ours

We might say, Memory has made its selection,  
and think of the body now as an altered body

framed by flaming wells or walls

What a noise the words make  
writing themselves

The somewhat surprise of the last pair of lines is not parodic but precisely understated, and therefore seems to me like a witty closure which reinforces the institutional authority of the title. In passages such as this one, I think the self-reflexivity is neither obligatory nor gratuitous, since it humorously forces (well aware of the meanings of force) a number of questions about planned and unplanned word-play: how are poems which are making a noise about violence complicit in that precedent violence? If the procedures of addition and subtraction, erasure and naming, repetition and revision, impersonality and affect equally available to propagandists and poets, then what might an experimental deconstructive war poetry look like? When do the syllogisms of postmodern poetry resemble the logics of postmodern war? Is the severed writing hand the trace of the weapon and/or its target? I can't say that I know enough about either poetry or war to answer these questions, but I am grateful to Palmer for helping me formulate a provisional start. Anyone familiar with this sequence or other responses to Operation Desert Storm? Palmer: "Yet the after is still the storm"

Gary R.

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950. **Susan Clark**  
***missing person***

*Tue 24 Feb 1998*

---

Hello, if anyone knows where I can find Eric Wirth, or if he's on this list, please contact me backchannel (I'm set to nomail for a while). I have only an old NYC post office box.

thanks, Susan

Susan Clark  
RADDLE MOON

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951. **Tom Beckett**  
***Silliman Difficulties***

*Tue 24 Feb 1998*

---

Sorry but can't accept any more orders for the Silliman Issue. Still a few Bromige numbers.

Best,

Tom Beckett

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952. **rsillima**  
***The Pillow Book***

*Tue 24 Feb 1998*

---

Joe,

I found The Pillow Book to be about erotic obsession but curiously very un- (even anti-) erotic. Came away dissatisfied, feeling Greenway never was able to focus on whatever it was he was trying to get across.

I do like Doug Henwood and tried to get him to do a column for Socialist Review back around 86-87 only to be outvoted by my colleagues who felt him to be too "popular" in his style (this was quite a bit before he ever appeared in anything but his newsletter). I do have a friend, though (he's on this list but I won't out him), who says that he uses Henwood and The Nation as his investment strategy -- whichever companies they criticize, he invests in. He claims to have made a lot of money this way.

Ron

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953. **Tom Beckett**  
**Re: Acker/Scalapino**  
*Tue 24 Feb 1998*

---

Hi Laura M--

Thanks for yr posting.

New to the list I'm wondering--what's a non?

Best,

Tom B

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954. **Don Wellman**  
**Re: three unrelated queries and a note on poetic depression**  
*Tue 24 Feb 1998*

---

Emilio García Gómez, Poemas Arábigoandaluces (1930) based on an anthology by Ibn Sa'id (1243)--was important to GarciaLorca. There is a charming English version, "Poems of Arab Andalusia," translated by Cola Franzen City Lights Books. Garcia Gomez's Codex is probably the authoratative source on Arabic-Poetry in Andalusia and parts of it have been translated--Franzen might help. Back channel me for her snail mail address.

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955. **Burt Kimmelman**  
**Re: The Pillow Book**  
*Tue 24 Feb 1998*

---

i loved the pillow book movie but too felt at a distance from it, yet i'm told that reading the book the pillow book is essential if one is to get anything real out of the flick.

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956. **Alan Myouka Sondheim**  
**Forwarded mail.... NIKUKO EDUCATES**  
*Tue 24 Feb 1998*

---

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

Date: Wed, 25 Feb 1998 00:51:32 +0900 (JST)

From: Nikuko ([REDACTED])

To: [REDACTED]

Resent-Date: Wed, 25 Feb 1998 00:52:29 +0900 (JST)

Resent-From: Alan Myouka Sondheim <[REDACTED]>

Resent-To: [REDACTED]  
Resent-Subject: Resent mail....

## NIKUKO EDUCATES

(text from julian beck, the life of the theater, the relation of the artist to the struggle of the people, city lights, 1972)

IRC log started Tue Feb 24 10:37

\*\*\* Value of LOG set to ON

<hyd> hey all

<MI> i usually call her at work..and give her an ear full

(Middnite/#CyberSex) lol Oxx

#<#Nikuko#># you burn the texts

<lookin4luv> Hello i'm Looking for some loving from some chicks

..... sorry guys!!!i am bi

\*\*\*# tomx has joined channel #cybersex

[#E/X#] #You have new email!# (Mail Waiting: 7)

(Middnite/#CyberSex) WooHoo

[#E/X#] #Mail:# From L-Soft list server at Purdue University

Your removal from the FOP-L list

#<#Nikuko#># this is what the masters have finally told me

(Frawg/#cybersex) lol mi

<MI> <<<not a flower sender

\*\*\*# FMulder has joined channel #cybersex

\*\*\*# kelly19 has joined channel #cybersex

(Frawg/#cybersex) HAHA SURPRISE HER!

\*\*\*# good-looker has joined channel #cybersex

\*\*\*# GrOOOvY has joined channel #cybersex

#<#Nikuko#># this is what the greatest of their greatness

<MI> nope

(Oxxman/#cybersex) flowers are a rip off

\*\*\*# Sharon20 (Pssy.Lckr)has joined channel #cybersex

#<#Nikuko#># has whispered what the failing light

\*\*\*# Kostya has joined channel #cybersex

#<#Nikuko#># hesitatingly points out

#<#Nikuko#># leap

(Oxxman/#cybersex) give the gift that dies

#<#Nikuko#># we are the fire behind you

\*\*\*# GuyStud has joined channel #cybersex

<stonedagain> any horny women in here wanna chat

#<#Nikuko#># self immolation

(Middnite/#CyberSex) send her fake flowers...she can keep em

<MI> when they is in season..ill go pick em and hand deliver

<earthenv> hello, Sharon20  
#<#Nikuko#># the burning bodies of the dmaned  
#<#Nikuko#># KULCHUR  
#\*\*\*# Haylo has joined channel #cybersex  
\*\*\* FMulder has left channel #cybersex  
#<#Nikuko#># the torch  
\*\*\* Sharon20 has left channel #cybersex  
<MI> but i dont buy em  
(Frawg/#cybersex) here comes haylo  
#<#Nikuko#># the twilight of those gods  
#\*\*\*# makwa has joined channel #cybersex  
(Frawg/#cybersex) oh shit here she is stop talkin bout her  
\*\*\* Mode change "+o Haylo" on channel #cybersex by SynFul  
(Oxxman/#cybersex) nikuko...what are you babbling about?  
(Middnite/#CyberSex) awww...how romantic:)  
\*\*\* Nikuko has left channel #cybersex  
\*\*\* Signoff: Nikuko (bad, Bad, REAL BAD link?)  
IRC Log ended \*\*\* Tue Feb 24 10:39

---

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957. **Joe Amato/Kass Fleisher**  
***Re: Temporary canons/New Poetry redux***  
*Tue 24 Feb 1998*

---

well, for what it's worth, i arose this morning (aroseisaroseisarose...) realizing that i had at least mis-identified one of the two authors of \_teaching as a subversive activity\_... not mark poster (sorry mark if you're anywhere within earshot) but neil postman, SHEESH...

for reference' sake: neil postman & charles weingartner, \_teaching as a subversive activity\_, dell, 1969 (still in print i believe, i've got an old delta copy on hand)... postman & weingartner also collaborated on \_the soft revolution: a student handbook for turning schools around\_ and \_linguistics: a revolution in teaching\_...

ahh, the 60s---i can get nostalgic too...

best,

joe

---

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958. **Jacques Debrot**

***Re: Lazer/experiment/tradition***

*Tue 24 Feb 1998*

---

apropos recent threads about the canon, experimentalism, the renovation of more traditional forms/structures within the context of innovative writing, etc., a question I wondered if it would be feasible to ask -- as a kind of thought experiment -- is whether someone could write linear free verse for the SAME REASONS that the Language poets didn't. this might not seem possible, but something very much like this does happen in the visual arts -- there are artists after all who paint for the same reason that, say, the Conceptualists didn't paint at all. all of which leads me to Hank Lazer's very eccentric book *\*Double Space\**. as the title suggests it's really 2 books -- a collection of somewhat traditional poems opens at the front, an "opposing" collection of enormously intelligent & innovative poems begins at the back & the two books meet in the middle. the subtitle is *\*Poems 1971-1989\** & it might just be that the material collected here merely reflects Lazer's evolving aesthetic, except: 1. there is no real evidence of a transitional or middle period, & 2. more importantly, the question I'm begging is why publish such widely divergent types of poems in the same book? I'd be anxious to hear from someone else about this who knows Lazer's work. is the intention to bridge the 2 modes of writing in some way (as the blurb by Ignatow suggests)? or is the desired effect really radically discontinuous (as Howe reads it)? & is it possible then to write & *\*frame\** traditional -- even conventional -- forms in ways that are radically disruptive -- here again an example from the visual arts -- Picabia's "bad" paintings -- might be analogous -- though this isn't, I don't think, Lazer's intention exactly.

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959. **Sylvester Pollet**

***Tagliabue Reading***

*Tue 24 Feb 1998*

---

John Tagliabue will read from his new book (not yet released) at 101 Neville Hall, Univ. of Maine, Orono ME, Thurs. Feb. 26, 7 p.m. (free).

The book is *New and Selected Poems: 1942-1997*, National Poetry Foundation, pub. date April. It will be available direct from NPF, or to the trade through University Press of New England.

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960. **david bromige**

***Blake's "London"***

*Tue 24 Feb 1998*

---

I agree with Chris that the marriage hearse causes the harlot. I disagree that one cannot read syphilis and gonorrhea at work here. Marriage turns out to be a hearse; husband visits harlot; harlot (by him or a hundred others) conceives; husband carries VD back to the marriage; harlot's child is born victim of VD, which can manifest itself in infants as an eye-condition. I would argue (with Dante, though obviously he wasn't discussing Blake), that one reads at the literal level first. But this level yields in turn to metaphorical, analogical and analogical readings (flying by seat of old pair of pants here, so I look forward to correction re Dante's advice on how to read). Society is fucked up thanks to mind-forged manacles. Throw off yr shackles, throw off yr chains, drag out yr landlord, beat out his brains. When a man has married a wife/ He finds out whether/ Her knees and elbows are only/ Glued together (Blake). Cursed society that makes a woman so, blame it on patriny. Next. db3

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961. **david bromige**

***oops on Blake's "London"***

*Tue 24 Feb 1998*

---

Apologies. I should have posted this to the List whence Chris's message came, the "Dawn McCarra Bass" List out of Virginia. David

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962. **Christopher W. Alexander**

***(Fwd) call for subs***

*Tue 24 Feb 1998*

---

rec'd the following call for submissions  
and thought folks might be interested;  
I don't know anything abt. the periodical,  
its eds. or style - this just showed up  
in my box...

Chris

----- Forwarded Message Follows -----

From: [REDACTED]  
Date: Mon, 23 Feb 1998 17:52:27 -0600  
To: [REDACTED]  
Subject: poetry, baby

please post, announce, circulate

DOGGEREL rag announces its 3rd annual INSPECTOR J. LEE POETRY CONTEST

100 BUCK GRAND PRIZE

Winners and others will be published in DOGGEREL 6: the magazine with a beaten edge. No restrictions on matter or style.

Send one dollar per poem entrance fee to:

Inspector J. Lee Poetry Contest

Green Swamp Press

1010 Mamie St.

Hattiesburg, MS 39401

DEADLINE JULY 15, 1998

..

Christopher W. Alexander etc. / nominative press collective

email: [REDACTED]

snail-mail: P.O. Box 522402 / Salt Lake City UT 84152-2402

press/zine site: <http://choengmon.lib.utah.edu/~calexand/nonce/>

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963. **pritchpa**

***Re: Lazer/experiment/tradition***

*Tue 24 Feb 1998*

---

Jacques - this is a very intriguing line of thought you've opened up. I've only recently begun to read *\_Doublespace\_* so I can hardly claim any real familiarity with Hank Lazer's work. I would venture to say, though, that his intention in publishing his earlier, traditional work in the same volume as his later, more innovative stuff is partly to trace the outline of a kind of aesthetic autobiography in which the reader is compelled to ask your very question as to whether or not the book is a bridge, or a way of framing discontinuities.

The gap between these two approaches - aptly symbolized by the curious blank page in the center of the book - may be filled in, perhaps, only by a shuttling back and forth between the two sections. The whole book, in other words, not only begs aporia, but expresses a certain level of comfort in dwelling in it. If looked at this way, then a transitional layer of writing may not really be necessary. And what would such a transition look like? That might be interesting. But it very well might not. I see its lack as a refusal to mediate a certain anxiety about how - and where - these two aesthetics connect - or don't.

I also see the binding together of this disparate material as a gesture of generosity to Lazer's own beginnings as a poet, and to those whom he revered, or learned from, in that line, such as Louis Simpson. The project as a whole exhibits a willingness to embrace the disparate in such a way that the anxiety about how they relate recedes, or is subsumed by, that gesture. Or by the absence of a mediating gesture. I'm not sure this is what Lazer intended and I'm far from feeling sure if this holds any water. I've spent more time in the back of the book, among the marvelous legal poems, than in the front - though I did read a lovely poem about a golf swing there.

Patrick Pritchett

-----

From: Jacques Debrot

To: [REDACTED]

Subject: Re: Lazer/experiment/tradition

Date: Tuesday, February 24, 1998 11:14AM

all of which leads me to Hank Lazer's very eccentric book *\*Double Space\**. as the title suggests it's really 2 books -- a collection of somewhat traditional poems opens at the front, an "opposing" collection of enormously intelligent & innovative poems begins at the back & the two books meet in the middle. the subtitle is *\*Poems1971-1989\** & it might just be that the material collected here merely reflects Lazer's evolving aesthetic, except: 1. there is no real evidence of a transitional or middle period, & 2. more importantly, the question I'm begging is why publish such widely divergent types of poems in the same book? I'd be anxious to hear from someone else about this who knows Lazer's work. is the intention to bridge the 2 modes of writing in some way (as the blurb by Ignatow suggests)? or is the desired effect really radically discontinuous (as Howe reads it)? & is it possible then to write & *\*frame\** traditional -- even conventional -- forms in ways that are radically disruptive -- here again an example from the visual arts -- Picabia's "bad" paintings -- might be analogous -- though this isn't, I don't think, Lazer's intention exactly.

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964. **MAYHEW**

***Lazer/experiment/tradition***

*Tue 24 Feb 1998*

---

I don't know Lazer's book, but I think (in principle) that any form can be used with any intention. The aesthetic "meaning" of a form is not inherent formally, but is ascribed to it at a particular historical juncture. A certain kind of "free verse" became identified with normal "workshop" MFA writing at a particular



time and thus mutated in its aesthetic significance. I'm not sure if this answers the question.

Jonathan Mayhew  
Department of Spanish and Portuguese  
University of Kansas

██████████

██████████

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965. **Harold Rhenisch**

*good-bye*

*Tue 24 Feb 1998*

---

Life carries on beyond the barricades.

Bye now.

Harold Rhenisch

██████████

██████████

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966. **Laura Moriarty**

*Smith & Pritchett*

*Tue 24 Feb 1998*

---

New non - response to Luoma's Buber by Rod Smith - and some sublimity by Patrick Pritchett -

Laura

██████████

<http://socrates.berkeley.edu/~moriarty/>

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967. **Burt Hatlen**

*Robert Duncan at the MLA*

*Tue 24 Feb 1998*

---

I'm thinking of trying to organize a panel on Robert Duncan and/or on George Oppen (two SF poets) for the MLA convention in San Francisco next December. If anyone is interested in participating in such an enterprise, please let me know ASAP.

Burton Hatlen

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968. **shemurph**  
***Address Request***

*Tue 24 Feb 1998*

---

Would someone backchannel me Garrett Caples' e-mail address? Thanks. I've misplaced it.

Sheila Murphy  
[REDACTED]

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969. **Joe Amato/Kass Fleisher**  
***disturbing news...***

*Tue 24 Feb 1998*

---

culled from a friend's forward... thought this might be of interest to many on this list... i understand that jones has been publishing poetry in germany... anybody know anything about this?...

joe

*Posted at 6:49 a.m. PST Monday, February 23, 1998*

*Husband of novelist kills self in police standoff*

*LEXINGTON, Ky. (AP) -- Just days after her new novel won national acclaim, author Gayl Jones and her husband barricaded themselves in their family home, and he slit his throat as police stormed in.*

*Bob Jones, 51, died late Friday at the University of Kentucky Hospital, the same night police broke into his home after a three-hour standoff to serve a 14-year-old warrant on a Michigan weapons charge.*

*His 48-year-old wife was being held for observation at Eastern State Hospital.*

*The couple, who are black, have both accused authorities of racism -- she in resigning from the University of Michigan faculty in 1983, and he in ranting letters recently to a prosecutor.*

*Newsweek last week featured a glowing full-page review of Gayl Jones' new novel, ``The Healing," which the magazine called a ``major literary event."*

*Though praised by such literary figures as Maya Angelou and John Updike, and a protege of author Toni Morrison, Ms. Jones had not published a novel in many years.*

*Newsweek said that in 1983, ``when she seemed poised to become a major voice in American fiction, she disappeared, moving to Europe in self-imposed exile."*

*The couple disappeared shortly after Bob Jones, who then went by the name Bob Higgins, was arrested for brandishing a gun and fighting with participants at a gay-rights rally in Ann Arbor, Mich., Newsweek said.*

*In Kentucky, Fayette County Attorney Margaret Kannensohn said Saturday that she had been receiving ``diatribes" from Bob Jones for the past several months -- repeated accusations that the University of Kentucky's Markey Cancer Center had kidnapped and murdered his mother-in-law.*

*Gayl Jones' first novel, ``Corregidora," published in 1975, was about a blues singer who was consumed by hatred of the 19th-century slave master who fathered her grandmother and mother.*

*Her second book, ``Eva's Man," published by Beacon Press, is billed as ``a gripping portrait of a woman tormented by sexual abuse and emotional silence."*

*``Her work is known for its violence and violent conflicts between men and women," said Karen Chandler, an assistant professor of American and African-American literature at the University of Louisville. ``It was very important, because in traditional African-American literature there had been a resistance to writing about violence and sexuality because of the stereotypes."*

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## 970. **Poetics List**

### **Chloroform (announcement)**

Tue 24 Feb 1998

---

Chloroform: An Aesthetics of Critical Writing, a journal of poetics (research and document) from the University at Buffalo's Poetics Program, is now available through Small Press Distribution (██████) and is listed at the EPC.

Editorial info:

Chloroform 1997

Nick Lawrence & Alisa Messer, editors

70 Cottage Street

Buffalo, NY 14201

\$10

7x10, 300 pages

Contents of the 1997 edition are as follows:

"Accidents Would Happen": an interview with Fiona Templeton

Afterword, for Chloroform, by Fiona Templeton

Corpsed Genres, by Jena Osman

Notes in Response to \_YOU: The City\_, by Abby C.

Après <<Vous>>, by Amy Nestor

The Eye that Lost Sight of You, by Lisa Lucenti

An Installation Just South of Your Ear, by Abby C

Creating the Question, by Beth Gerwin

How I Use the Dictionary, interviews conducted by Jena Osman

Read red rd, by William Howe

Performance and/as Theory, by Scott Pound

"These Things Happen, All the Time": an interview with Paul Auster

Paul Celan in Translation, by Benjamin Friedlander

Through But Not Of, by Sheri Weinstein

He Do the Valise in Voices (Knot), by Charles Bernstein

>From \_Michael Palmer\_, by Nick Lawrence & Benjamin Friedlander

Read My Lips, by Michael Basinski

\_Broken English\_, a review by Michael Stancliff

Thoughts on Johanna Drucker, a review essay by Cynthia Kimball

Doomsday, by Carla Billitteri

"How Poignant That Sounds, Even as You Read Back the Transcript":

an interview with Bruce Andrews

"Raiding the Vernacular": a roundtable discussion on Bruce Andrews

Home, Haunt, Page, by Loss Pequeo Glazier

Hypertext as Metaphor, by Martin Spinelli

Scribblings in the Guise of the Ghost, by Ken Sherwood

Garden Lore, by Ted Pearson

A History of Poetics at Buffalo: 1960-1990, a timeline

by Cynthia Kimball & Taylor Brady

"To Step Onto the Aquarian Land": a letter from Jack Clarke

Selected Bibliography of Buffalo Publications: 1960-1996,

compiled by Kristin Prevallet

A Non-Definitive Glossary of Terms

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971. **Rachel Levitsky**  
***Re: Poetry and Depression***  
*Tue 24 Feb 1998*

---

Hello

I've been out of the list immersed in my thesis on Ashbery, whose poetry actually comforts me and makes me happy but I can't resist this.

Being raised by a clinically depressed father who used to tell me I'd grow up to be depressed and for such a long time I was, I consider overcoming depression to be the most important thing I've done with my life and critical to my becoming a poet at the age of 31. That journey, which required me confronting so much sadness and crying nearly everyday (and much talk therapy) for several years, a fact which made many think I should go on anti-depressants. I didn't. I consider the crying to have been such a gift, which actually helped me feel quite alive and one day this past summer I realized the weight had actually lifted.

One of the critical moments was, 14 years ago, reading "A woman is talking to death" by Judy Grahn, a poem in which the poet calls herself to task for her own acts of omission in loving women who needed her. We can't love everyone in need but how often do we deny our community, not realizing that community can save our lives?

I live, temporarily, in Boulder, presumably a happy blissful place, with so many lonely people and a 'community' that seems vacuous to me and quite unwilling to confront any unpleasanties. I often wonder if despite the fanaticism over physical health, people here don't die just as quickly of heart-ache. I find American Buddhism easily distorts its notion of overcoming suffering as ironing out struggle and difficulty. To speak your mind here means being considered 'negative.' I don't mean to be romantic but how I miss nutty New Yorkers who will have a decent conversation at the drop of a hot dog.

Action and involvement with people, caring about something seems so crucial and just what we aren't supposed to do in our materialist culture. Activism and the friends I have met doing activism, people who by definition have my back--has also saved my life.

tired thoughts,  
RAchel levitsky

P.S. Another thing that my depressed father used to say to me is that those of us who are depressed know that it is the most dreaded fact of our lives, that we would never chose it. I agree with him.

Don Byrd wrote:

>  
> I don't remember the details, but a few years ago, there was a widely  
> report study conducted at Iowa Writer's Workshop and perhaps elsewhere  
that  
> found extraordinary levels of depression among writers. Does any one re-  
member  
> this?  
>  
> Don  
> --  
> \*\*\*\*\*  
> Don Byrd ([REDACTED], [REDACTED])  
> Department of English  
> State University of New York  
> Albany, NY 12222  
> [REDACTED] (work); [REDACTED] (home); [REDACTED] (fax)  
> The Little Magazine (<http://www.albany.edu/~litmag/>)  
> \*\*\*\*\*

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972. **charssmith**

***Re: Palm at the end of the Desert Storm***

*Tue 24 Feb 1998*

---

In a message dated 98-02-24 04:33:03 EST, you write:

<< other responses to Operation  
Desert Storm? >>

Gary,

Thanks for yr reading of Michael Palmer, & reminding me of those poems. You might want to take a look at Norma Cole's *\_Mars\_* (Listening Chamber). I seem to remember a series written during/around ODS.

Charles Smith

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973. **Don Byrd**

***Re: GERRIT LANSING Greetings and Reading***

*Tue 24 Feb 1998*

---

Michael, I will be there...

Don

Michael Franco wrote:

*Dreamer of the purified fury and fabulous habit.*

*The Word of Mouth reading series will present a special evening at Waterston's books [Newbury at Exeter St, Boston]*

*GERRIT LANSING A 70th Birthday celebration*

*Wed. Feb 25th 1998*

*7pm*

*Free*

*Reading by Gerrit Lansing and readings from the field of his work by Joseph Torra, William Corbett, Raffael de Gruttula, Ange Mlinko, Michael Franco, Isabel Pinto Franco, Thorpe Feidt, Elie Yarden, Christopher Sawyer Laucanno, Patricia Pruitt, and other "special guests"*

*Any one on the list wishing to send greetings to Gerrit can do so via Email [REDACTED] or on foot @ 34 Jason Street Arlingotn Ma. 02174-6409]*

*Gerrit's most recent edition is available from Talisman all best*

*Michael Franco/Wom.*

--

\*\*\*\*\*

Don Byrd ([REDACTED], [REDACTED])

Department of English

State University of New York

Albany, NY 12222

[REDACTED] (work); [REDACTED] (home); [REDACTED] (fax)

The Little Magazine (<http://www.albany.edu/~litmag/>)

\*\*\*\*\*

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974. **William Burmeister Prod**

**Re: The Pillow Book**

Tue 24 Feb 1998

---

On Feb 24, 6:18am, [REDACTED] wrote:

> Subject: The Pillow Book

> Joe,

>

> I found The Pillow Book to be about erotic obsession but curiously very un-  
> (even anti-) erotic. Came away dissatisfied, feeling Greenway never was able  
> to focus on whatever it was he was trying to get across.

>

In the short space of your reply to Joe, i realize that it is probably all too easy for me to misinterpret what you mean by focus here, but seems to me that he (Greenway) may well in fact be quite successful in getting his ideas across by avoiding any notion of focus. I am thinking, in this case, of Coolidge's *The Book of During* and how with the same worn out subject matter, Coolidge is able to look at it somewhat anew by looking askew of it (that is not to say automatically or as stream of consciousness though). There is (I believe) something fiercely erotic about the tangential approach.

Best,

William Burmeister

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975. **pritchpa**

***Re: Palm at the end of the Desert Storm***

*Tue 24 Feb 1998*

---

Gary -

thanks for that very thoughtful post on Palmer. I'm reminded of his work in *Sun* which also engages in some of the themes you talk about.

If you can find it, you might want to look at Lindsay Hill's book *Kill Series* which was written in direct response to the Gulf War. It was published by Arundel Press in a very limited and expensive edition. Some of the poems I believe may have appeared in issues of *Sulfur* or *Caliban*. His extraordinary long poem "Socket" - which I know for sure ran in *Caliban* a few years back - also deals to some extent with the larger cultural issues raised by the war (Randolph Bourne: "War is the health of the state").

Lindsay may know whether any remaining copies of *Kill Series* are still available. Backchannel me if you want his number or address.

Patrick Pritchett

-----

From: [REDACTED]

To: [REDACTED]



Subject: Palm at the end of the Desert Storm

Date: Monday, February 23, 1998 11:21PM

Anyone familiar with this sequence or other responses to Operation Desert Storm? Palmer: "Yet the after is still the storm"

Gary R.

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976. **Tom Beckett**

***Vaudeville without Organs***

*Tue 24 Feb 1998*

---

Vaudeville without Organs was the legendary performance art group comprised of Jessica Grim, John Byrum and myself.

A few years back the three of us were co-coordinators of the Earwitness reading series in Cleveland. VWO was born during a late night talk fest with Bruce Andrews at John Byrum's house.

Jessica's stage name was LaGrim and she could be a pretty stern presence. John and I both have less stable personalities (at least that's my theory) so we had dual names. John went by Da Mike/Da Spare ("Where Da Mike goes, Da Spare comes"). I was known as Shecky-Sheena (aging jokemeister and Princess of Power).

Originally VWO was conceptualized as the first L= poetry slam team. We were on the cusp of a world tour but dissolved the group when we couldn't agree on matching jackets.

Tom Beckett

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977. **Tom Beckett**

***scalapino/acker musicked***

*Tue 24 Feb 1998*

---

Danny--

The audible processes of Glass and Reich might compare pretty well to Scalapino's work. However, maybe the better analogue with Acker's work is John Zorn's collage style pieces built from recognizable and sometimes not so recognizable samples.

Hope this coming weekend to get at S/A more better.

Best,

Tom B

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978. **Aldon Nielsen**  
***Re: the times of the hero***

*Tue 24 Feb 1998*

---

how odd to realize that we must read the NY TIMES book review at about the same time each week --

getting ready finally to get lower limit back on its feet -- by now I will have completely forgotten which poems in the ms. you gave me may or may not be available, and you (you busy guy) have probably written more --

want to just send me a couple you'd like to see in eternal xerox??

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979. **George Hartley**  
***Re: Stein in pop culture***

*Tue 24 Feb 1998*

---

Hey Jonathan, I saved this email from the buffalo list without even knowing it was yours! What time on Wed sounds good to you? Valerie would like to come along, too, but might not be available until 5 or 6 or so.

Talk to you soon,  
George

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980. **George Hartley**  
***oops!***

*Tue 24 Feb 1998*

---

sorry to all. I think I sent a personal note to Jonathan Mayhew out on this list. I forgot about that feature!

George (Hartley)

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981. **Aldon Nielsen**  
***Re: the times of the hero***

*Tue 24 Feb 1998*

---

Now I've done it too -- That message was meant for Patrick Pritchett --  
apologies to all list recipients --

(and apologies to anybody else who has sent mss. to any of the multiplying addresses for lower limit speech -- I am getting the mail forwarded to me from all those places, and hope to be back in the mails soon)

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982. **Aldon Nielsen**  
***disturbing news***

*Tue 24 Feb 1998*

---

have just gotten to page A13 of the NY Times for 2/24 (news carrier couldn't get through the floods to our door, so I'm catching up this evening) --

There's a report here out of Lexington, Kentucky, that Gayle Jones, whose novel *The Healing* was just released, was in the hospital following an episode in which her husband filled their cottage with natural gas and threatened to blow them both up. The paper says that the husband killed himself, and that Gayle Jones is being held at least temporarily in a Mental Health hospital because of fears that she might harm herself.

Does anybody have any updates on this?

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983. **Karen Kelley**  
***Re: The Pillow Book***

*Tue 24 Feb 1998*

---

Burt Kimmelman [REDACTED] wrote:

>

> i loved the pillow book movie but too felt at a distance from it, yet

> i'm told that reading the book the pillow book is essential if one is

> to get anything real out of the flick.

*The Pillow Book* of Sei Shonagon is an absolutely gorgeous book--in the way that Greenaway makes a gorgeous (visual) movie (I've not seen "Pillow Book," but one of my favorite movies [be warned: it's harrowing] is "The Cook, The Thief, His Wife & Her Lover"). What I love about Greenaway is the sense that he loves literature for all it has to offer as literature & films for all they have to offer as films. I think he tries to make his visuals as resonant \*cinematically\* as images are resonant \*literarily\* in books. In other words: I think he has true sensitivity & respect for books, and is trying to get at their magic through his film work--without being simplistic & simply reproducing the book. Aw, whatever...just check out his movies!

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Franz Mon  
b.p. Nichol  
Clemente Padin  
Decio Pignatari  
Antonio Riserio  
Aram Saroyan  
Kurt Schwitters  
Gino Severini  
Takahashi Shohachiro  
Mary Ellen Solt  
Vagn Steen  
Salette Tavares  
Arrigo Lora Totino  
Ivo Vroom  
Emmett Williams  
Pedro Xisto  
Louis Zukofsky

C O N T E M P O R A R Y

Bruce Andrews  
Connie Beckley  
Susan Bee  
Laurel Beckman  
Felix Bernstein  
Charles Bernstein  
Jake Berry  
John Cayley  
Cheryl Donegan  
Johanna Drucker  
Elson Froes  
Loss PequeNo Glazier  
Kenneth Goldsmith  
Kenneth Goldsmith & Joan La Barbara  
Neil Hennessy  
Dick Higgins  
Peter Jaeger  
Alison Knowles  
Bill Luoma  
Juliet Ann Martin  
Poem by Nari  
Janan Platt  
John Reeves

Dirk Rowntree  
Blair Seagram  
Spencer Selby  
Linda Smukler  
Alan Sondheim  
Ward Tietz  
Nico Vassilakis  
Ron Wakkary  
Darren Wershler-Henry  
Doc Wright  
Jody Zellen  
Komninos Zervos  
Janet Zweig

REAL AUDIO SOUND POETRY

Guillaume Apollinaire  
Jaap Blonk  
William S. Burroughs  
John Cage  
Henri Chopin  
Jean Cocteau  
Andrew Dickinson  
Kelli Dipple  
Marcel Duchamp  
Brion Gysin  
Wyndham Lewis  
Jackson Mac Low  
Charles Manson  
F.T. Marinetti  
David Moss  
John Reeves  
John Reeves & John Bone  
Kurt Schwitters  
Cecil Taylor  
Gregory Whitehead

PAPERS

Laurel Beckman  
Sergio Bessa  
Roland Greene  
Roland Greene & Harvard Students  
Peter Jaeger



Joan Retallack is the author of five books of poetry. *How to Do Things with Words* is forthcoming from Sun & Moon. *Afterimages* was published in 1995 by Wesleyan University Press. Her *Musicage/John Cage in Conversation with Joan Retallack* (Wesleyan, 1996) was chosen for the 1996 America Award in Belles-Lettres. In 1994, her book *Errata Suite* was the recipient of a Columbia Book Award selected by Robert Creeley. Retallack is on the faculty at the University of Maryland and is an associate of the Institute for Writing and Thinking at Bard College. She is currently completing a book of interrelated essays entitled *The Poethical Wager*.

Author of several books of poetry, including *Noon, Given, New Math* and *Nu-men*, Cole Swensen is also a translator, most recently of *Natural Gaits* by Pierre Alferi and *L'Art Poetic* by Olivier Cadiot. Formerly of Marin County, she now lives and works in Colorado where she teaches at the University of Denver. Swensen's immersion into French theory, Wittgensteinian paradox, grand opera, and contemporary visual art have deepened her own writing and poetry, which now brims with richness like a pitcher of creme brûlée.

New College Theater  
777 Valencia Street  
\$5

-----

Saturday, February 28, 7:30 p.m.

More Blue Notes from the Know Ledge / or / The Poethics of the Improbable

A talk by Joan Retallack

<sup>3</sup>Silence itself is nothing more or less than what lies outside the radius of interest and comprehension at any given time. We hear, that is, with culturally attuned ears. This century's *formal* investigations into experiences of silence have meant opening up previously inaccessible or unacknowledged or forbidden territory, where the very act of attending entails a radical figure/ground shift.<sup>2</sup> (from Retallack, *Re:Thinking:Literary:Feminism*:<sup>2</sup>)

New College Theater  
777 Valencia Street  
\$5

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987. **Steve Tills**  
***Re: Poetry and Depression***  
*Wed 25 Feb 1998*

---

Rachel,



I once heard it this way: Buddhism goes up, focusing on the spirit. Depth Psychology goes down (into the body, I think), focusing on the soul. Both are cool, I guess, and could complement each other, I guess, but they don't substitute for each other. Make sense to you, too? Steve Tills

Rachel Levitsky wrote:

*Hello*

*I've been out of the list immersed in my thesis on Ashbery, whose poetry actually comforts me and makes me happy but I can't resist this.*

*Being raised by a clinically depressed father who used to tell me I'd grow up to be depressed and for such a long time I was, I consider overcoming depression to be the most important thing I've done with my life and critical to my becoming a poet at the age of 31. That journey, which required me confronting so much sadness and crying nearly everyday (and much talk therapy) for several years, a fact which made many think I should go on anti-depressants. I didn't. I consider the crying to have been such a gift, which actually helped me feel quite alive and one day this past summer I realized the weight had actually lifted.*

*One of the critical moments was, 14 years ago, reading "A woman is talking to death" by Judy Grahn, a poem in which the poet calls herself to task for her own acts of omission in loving women who needed her. We can't love everyone in need but how often do we deny our community, not realizing that community can save our lives?*

*I live, temporarily, in Boulder, presumably a happy blissful place, with so many lonely people and a 'community' that seems vacuous to me and quite unwilling to confront any unpleasanties. I often wonder if despite the fanaticism over physical health, people here don't die just as quickly of heart-ache. I find American Buddhism easily distorts its notion of overcoming suffering as ironing out struggle and difficulty. To speak your mind here means being considered 'negative.' I don't mean to be romantic but how I miss nutty New Yorkers who will have a decent conversation at the drop of a hot dog.*

*Action and involvement with people, caring about something seems so crucial and just what we aren't supposed to do in our materialist culture. Activism and the friends I have met doing activism, people who by definition have my back--has also saved my life.*

*tired thoughts,  
RAchel levitsky*

*P.S. Another thing that my depressed father used to say to me is that those of us who are depressed know that it is the most dreaded fact of our lives, that we would never chose it. I agree with him.*

Don Byrd wrote:

*I don't remember the details, but a few years ago, there was a widely report study conducted at Iowa Writer's Workshop and perhaps elsewhere that found extraordinary levels of depression among writers. Does any one remember this?*

Don

--

\*\*\*\*\*

Don Byrd ([REDACTED], [REDACTED])

Department of English

State University of New York

Albany, NY 12222

[REDACTED] (work); [REDACTED] (home); [REDACTED] (fax)

The Little Magazine (<http://www.albany.edu/~litmag/>)

\*\*\*\*\*

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988. **Susan Schultz**

***Re: Poetry and Depression***

*Wed 25 Feb 1998*

To add a bit to this tangled thread: I recommend Andrew Solomon's article, "Anatomy of Melancholy," in the Jan. 12 *New Yorker* (before they stopped doing anything except Clinton and sex). I've read a lot of these depression/bipolar memoirs, having suffered repeatedly from the black dog myself in younger days (before the dinosaur elavil and I became buddies), and this is, to my mind, one of the best (and shortest) in the genre. The essay is informative both on the emotional and medical levels, as well as (dare I say it) being at times witty--

Susan

---

Susan M. Schultz

Dept. of English

1733 Donaghho Road

University of Hawai'i-Manoa

Honolulu, HI 96822

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

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

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989. **Tom Beckett**

***pillow book***

*Wed 25 Feb 1998*

---

— Alan Davies' book SEI SHONAGON (hole books, 1995) is worth remembering in the context of this discussion. I don't know if it is still available. SS is 185 three-line stanzas of haiku-like meditations. Thoughtful, gorgeous, haunting. A couple of sample, out-of-sequence, stanzas:

We wear on the outside  
what we can't countenance within  
until it wears us out  
\*\*\*

So often nothing happens  
and then when something does  
noone notices  
\*\*\*

If a gust of wind disturbs a flower  
and a flower a gust of wind  
and then how not one lover another  
\*\*\*

Exchanging body parts in verse  
or in those letters out of time  
to keep what is yours mine

Tom Beckett

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990. **Annie Finch**

***Graham review***

*Wed 25 Feb 1998*

---

I wouldn't get too bent out of shape due to my comments, Aviva—I am hardly representative of the "poetry listserv circuit," nor of any "Langpo Disciples"(!), as will be abundantly clear from the review excerpted below; I imagine my perspective on Graham is likely to be very different from theirs. A couple of people have asked how they could see the review, "Unnecessary Burdens," and I'll post it on my website by next week for any who are interested. In the meantime, since I regret descending into a too-hasty synopsis of my ideas from the review, here is the gist of the comments on Materialism therein:

Annie

Aviva wrote:

By the way...Jorie's well loved on the poetry listserv circuit...as you can see by this comment from Annie Finch, the formalist pole of the Poets of Artifice, the Langpo Disciples of Charles Bernstein, Ron Silliman, and all... Annette'll know what I mean...Don't you, Annette?

<fontfamily><param>Palatino</param>Excerpts from "Unnecessary Burdens"(review of L. Gluck, J. Graham, J. Cooper) published in North American Review in 1995:

Here are three new books by ambitious and influential poets who suffer under burdens. It may be a poet's responsibility to suffer no more than is absolutely necessary, but deciding how much suffering is necessary is, alas, probably not up to the poet. The burdens in these books are common ones, important ones in our culture. If they sometimes seem self-imposed, they may be all the more tragic because of that unnecessariness. If the suffering sometimes seems willful, in the tradition of the Romantic poetic ideal or even the belated Romanticism of Confessionalism, these poets may be all the more generous in offering themselves as examples to us all in this post-Romantic age, so that we might all better understand our own willful suffering.

[here follows a review of Louise Gluck's *The Wild Iris*]

Though the wordy, dramatic musings of Jorie Graham's fifth book, <underline>Materialism,</underline> seem at first far removed in inspiration from Gluck's ascetic lyricism, Graham's work in this book is fueled by a similar self-limiting situation. Graham's chosen burden is not religious but philosophical: these poems are obsessed with the supposedly universal difficulty of perceiving and communicating about reality. . .

[paragraph describing book in general]

The irony of [Graham's] book is that the poems, despite their angst over the impossibility of communication, contain many fine moments of effective narrative and lyric writing that do just what they fret about being unable to do. In a typical sequence in "Young Maples in Wind," the speaker goes into a long digression addressed to the reader, asking "do you taste/salt now if/I say to you the air is <italic>salt</italic>," and proposing that "we,/together,/make a listening here . . .," before proceeding to a magnificent closing lyrical address to the maple leaves: "and you, green face-mournful, tormented, self-swallowing, graven,/navel-and-theory face, what is it you turn towards, green history-face,/ what is your migration from?" Some might argue that, in workshop jargon, Graham "earns" her lyric ending through the self-conscious doubt and questioning about her rights and power as a writer that precedes it; it is, on the other hand, equally possible that the philosophy dilutes and distracts from the passages of concise and powerful poetry that this book contains.

Graham's lack of faith in language's ability to communicate jibes strangely with her overall style, an extended and ambitious version of the unstructured free verse of the 1980s "workshop" lyric. Graham's aims are, of course, much more ambitious than those of the typical lyric. She grapples not only with fundamental metaphysical questions, but with political and historical themes such as the Holocaust, abortion, and political persecution. The fragmentary, meandering, apparently transparent style allows her to approach and back away from these themes, to question and doubt her ability to write about them, and occasionally to pounce directly on them in moments of wonderful writing. But there is something paradoxical about the use of the workshop style-with its idiomatic diction and syntax, its lack of conspicuous rhythm or rhetoric, and its attendant illusion of "naturalness"-as a vehicle for meditations on the artificiality and difficulty of writing. We seem to be being asked to believe that the speaker's idiom itself is pure and untainted language, that somehow it is an honest, ingenuous, and direct representation of her thinking.

Of course it is not. It is not that Graham's meditations are not generous and valuable, for they are; it is impossible not to admire the speaker's openness to emotional experience and the untiring vigilance of her thoughts. But the apparent belief in some fundamental level of uncrafted language lends the poetry an insistent flatness of effect that might benefit (and does, in occasional narrative poems) from the distance provided by an authorial mask or persona. As it is, Graham's most interesting poems sometimes form Robert Browningsque dramatic monologues in spite of themselves, as the speaker's own theoretically hidden personality peeks out from behind the language's not-so-transparent-after-all surface. A poem called "Notes on the Reality of the Self" that includes phrases about acting from Constantin Stanislavsky uses this fact to excellent effect; it is a charming poem that shows Graham's too-seldom-tapped gift for comedy.

It may be that for all her efforts to tackle the abstract language of Western metaphysics on its own terms, Jorie Graham's best writing is, after all, the poetry that addresses other issues than philosophy and allows itself to engage, as best it can, with the world and its manifest aspects. This book's stories and descriptions are what stick in the mind. There is the teenage boy waving a gun, "as if trying to sharpen himself for entry," "acid, /rare, in support of progress, /looking for what he's missed," "tentacular, spitting seed, him the stalk of/the day, scattering seed, planting it deep-" and the terrified subway passengers in the wake of the trauma: "wet branches? what was I wearing?/and then much later, like a dream, desolate, things being talked about." There are the staunch and sad little girls in the concentration camp. There is the tragicomic moment when the speaker is reading Anna Karenina and stumbles on the objectification of the heroine: "Vronski's eyes/ fall suddenly on

her so that her being seen is/ born. I tried to see past her. But her black waist/  
blocked the whole view,/black hourglass the stillness would use to enter,/   
swirling, breathless/yet in itself nothing." There is the narrative of finding a  
monarch butterfly-almost a sentimental story, grounded in the tradition of nine-  
teenth-century women's literature- that essentially comprises "Subjectivity."  
There is the lyric address to the maples quoted above, and other equally gor-  
geous closing passages, like the address to dust: "oh, but tell me, morning dust,  
dust of the green in things, <underline>on </underline>things, dust of water/  
whirling up off the matter, mist, hoarfrost, dust over the /iddlehead . . ." Such  
beautiful and captivating writing is the kind of poetry that matters to many  
readers; to find it right now, Graham's readers have to push through much less  
"poetic" terrain. Obviously this is part of the point, but just how essential a part  
of the point may be open to question.

</fontfamily>

---

---

---

Annie Finch

<http://muohio.edu/~finchar>

Assistant Professor of English/Creative Writing

Miami University

Oxford, Ohio 45220

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991. **Mark Prejsnar**  
*slaughter under the palms*

Wed 25 Feb 1998

---

In addition to what others have pointed to (poetry related to Operation Desert  
Turkey Shoot)....

The wonderful piece Erica Hunt reads on Live at the Ear seems (complexly) re-  
lated. I don't remember its title....

Mark Prejsnar

@lanta

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992. **Judy Roitman**

**Re: disturbing news**

Wed 25 Feb 1998

*have just gotten to page A13 of the NY Times for 2/24 (news carrier couldn't get through the floods to our door, so I'm catching up this evening) --*

*There's a report here out of Lexington, Kentucky, that Gayle Jones, whose novel The Healing was just released, was in the hospital following an episode in which her husband filled their cottage with natural gas and threatened to blow them both up. The paper says that the husband killed himself, and that Gayle Jones is being held at least temporarily in a Mental Health hospital because of fears that she might harm herself.*

*Does anybody have any updates on this?*

It was also in Newsweek, which had a glowing review in the previous issue of her new book.

----- Judy Roitman  
| "Whoppers Whoppers Whoppers! Math, University of Kansas | mem-  
ory fails Lawrence, KS 66045 | these are the days." [REDACTED]  
| fax: [REDACTED] | Larry Eigner, 1927-1996  
----- Note new area code

-----  
<http://www.math.ukans.edu/~roitman/>  
-----

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993. **Judy Roitman**

**Re: Poetry and Depression**

Wed 25 Feb 1998

*I once heard it this way: Buddhism goes up, focusing on the spirit. Depth Psychology goes down (into the body, I think), focusing on the soul. Both are cool, I guess, and could complement each other, I guess, but they don't substitute for each other. Make sense to you, too? Steve Tills*

Hi Steve. Forget what you've heard.

Cheers.

----- Judy Roitman  
| "Whoppers Whoppers Whoppers! Math, University of Kansas |

memory fails Lawrence, KS 66045 | these are the days."  
[redacted] | fax: [redacted] | Larry Eigner,  
1927-1996 ----- Note new area  
code -----  
http://www.math.ukans.edu/~roitman/  
-----

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994. **sylvester pollet**

**Henny Youngman**

Wed 25 Feb 1998

---

We've lost a great poet. Henny Youngman died yesterday (at 91 or 92, two different news reports.)

DICHTEN=CONDENSARE, Pound said,( incidentally, using the equal sign long before L=A=etc.), and Youngman was a master.

"And for my nephew Marvin, who was always asking me to mention him in my Will, 'Hi, Marvin!' "

It's up to us now. Sylvester.

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995. **MAYHEW**

**Youngman and a query**

Wed 25 Feb 1998

---

Does anyone know German? Does "dichten" really mean "condensare"? My dictionary has "verdichten" for "to condense." Dicht apparently means thick, and Die Dichte is a noun meaning density, but I suspect that the connection between "dichten"( to write poetry) and these words is tenuous at best. Can anyone confirm or disconfirm?

On a different note, does anyone have bibliography of secondary sources on Coolidge (the poet not the president). Please back-channel.

Jonathan Mayhew  
Department of Spanish and Portuguese  
University of Kansas  
[redacted]  
[redacted]

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996. **Annie Finch**

***ALERT - Petition to save Endangered Species!***

*Wed 25 Feb 1998*

---

>X-From\_: [REDACTED] Wed Feb 18 06:34:57 1998  
>X-Sender: [REDACTED]  
>Date: Wed, 18 Feb 1998 05:25:29 -0800  
>From: Debby Ortman <[REDACTED]>  
>Subject: ALERT - Petition to save Endangered Species!  
>Mime-Version: 1.0  
>To: unlisted-recipients;; (no To-header on input)  
>  
>\* START \* PETITION TO SAVE ENDANGERED SPECIES \* KEEP IT ALIVE!  
>\* \* PLEASE SIGN AND FORWARD BY APRIL 15th, 1998 \* URGENT! \* \*  
>  
>We're experiencing the greatest rate of extinction since the  
>dinosaurs - up to 50,000 species a year. In the U.S., we  
>have lost over 500 plants and animals since the signing of  
>the Declaration of Independence; 250 of these species have  
>disappeared in the last 15 years. This massive loss of life  
>threatens our own existence, by depriving us of potential  
>cures to deadly diseases and decimating local economies. For  
>example, in the Pacific Northwest, the fishing industry has  
>lost approximately \$1 billion in the last ten years due to  
>the decline in salmon.  
>  
>The U.S. Congress is now considering two radically different  
>bills to reauthorize the Endangered Species Act. Kempthorne's  
>Extinction bill (S.1180) rolls back 25 years of conservation  
>efforts, sacrificing protections for endangered species to  
>benefit industry. Miller (H.R. 2351) strikes a reasonable  
>compromise, balancing wildlife needs with landowners, while  
>working for the recovery of species.  
>  
>Congress could vote on these bills as early as the end of  
>February, 1998. Please keep our endangered species alive  
>by signing the below petition and forwarding to family,  
>friends, and lists interested in preserving our environment.  
>  
>\* HOW TO SIGN THIS PETITION \* \* \* \* \*  
>  
>Copy this entire email (from \* START \* to \* END \*) into a

>new email. After the last signature below, enter a new line,  
>with the next number. Please list your name, city, state  
>and zip code. Forward to your family, friends, coworkers,  
>and relevant lists. Please cc: your message to  
><[REDACTED]>.

>

>\* PETITION TO CONGRESS \* \* \* \* \*

>

>Dear Member of Congress:

>

>We are currently faced with the greatest rate of extinction  
>worldwide since the disappearance of dinosaurs 65 million  
>years ago, losing up to 50,000 species a year. Since 1973,  
>the Endangered Species Act (ESA) has halted the potential  
>extinction of dozens of animals, including the bald eagle,  
>the gray wolf and the California sea otter.

>

>Senator Kempthorne's (R-ID) and Chafee (R-RI) are pushing  
>forward a bill, S.1180, that protects the interests of  
>industry at the expense of endangered species. At the same  
>time, Rep. Miller (D-CA) has introduced a moderate bill,  
>H.R. 2351, that strikes a balance between wildlife and  
>landowners without sacrificing protection and recovery  
>for endangered species.

>

>Please vote against S.1180 and support H.R. 2351.

>

>\* SIGNED \*

>

>1) Christopher Chatto, Santa Barbara, CA 93101

>2) Chris Mullin, Quincy, MA 02169

>3) Elizabeth Hitchcock, Washington DC 20003

>4) Richard Trilsch, Washington, DC 20003

>5) Adam Ruben, Boston, MA 02111

>6) Mark Ferrulo, Tallahassee, FL 32303

>7) Debbie Ortman, Duluth, MN 55811

8) Annie Finch, Cincinnati, OH 45220

>

>\* FOR MORE INFORMATION \* \* \* \* \*

>

><http://www.pirg.org/>

>-The State Public Interest Research Groups (PIRGs)

>  
> [REDACTED]  
>-general email address for inquiries  
>  
><http://www.pirg.org/enviro/esa/>  
>-The PIRG's endangered species pages, including fact sheets  
>on Kempthorne's Extinction Bill (S.1180), Miller's Recovery  
>Bill (H.R. 2351), and what else you can do.  
>  
><http://www.pirg.org/enviro/esa/petition/>  
>-A web-based version of this petition, and detailed  
>instructions on how to sign an email petition.  
>  
>\* \* PLEASE SIGN AND FORWARD BY APRIL 15th, 1998 \* URGENT! \* \*  
>\* PETITION TO SAVE ENDANGERED SPECIES \* KEEP IT ALIVE! \* END \*  
>-=+=-+=-+=-+=-+=-+=-+=-+=-+=-+=-+=-+=-+=-+=-+=-+=-+=-+=-+  
=+=-+=-+=-+=-+=-+  
>Christopher Chatto, Internet Organizer e-mail: [REDACTED]  
>The State Public Interest Research Groups <http://www.pirg.org>  
>1129 State St #10, Santa Barbara CA 93101 805(p)9630949(f)9658939  
>

---

---

Annie Finch  
<http://muohio.edu/~finchar>  
Assistant Professor of English/Creative Writing  
Miami University  
Oxford, Ohio 45220

[↑ Contents](#)

997. **George Thompson**  
***Re: Youngman and a query***  
*Wed 25 Feb 1998*

---

These seem to be two separate verbs:

1. dichten = to thicken, to tighten, to condense.
2. dichten = to make poetry.

dichten (1) is related to Eng 'thick' [= Germ 'dick', etc.] and Eng. 'tight',  
whereas dichten (2) seems to be a borrowing from Latin, as in Horace's 'dictare  
carmina.'

The next question is whether Pound meant 'dichten' = 'condensare' as a pun or as an etymology....

George Thompson

*Does anyone know German? Does "dichten" really mean "condensare"? My dictionary has "verdichten" for "to condense." Dicht apparently means thick, and Die Dichte is a noun meaning density, but I suspect that the connection between "dichten"( to write poetry) and these words is tenuous at best. Can anyone confirm or disconfirm?*

*On a different note, does anyone have bibliography of secondary sources on Coolidge (the poet not the president). Please back-channel.*

*Jonathan Mayhew  
Department of Spanish and Portuguese  
University of Kansas*



[↑ Contents](#)

998. **Tom Beckett**  
**Re: Henny Youngman**  
*Wed 25 Feb 1998*

---

Yup. Henny was great. He'll be missed.  
As to Pound, he may have used the = sign befor L=etc, but did he mean it?  
Best,  
Tom B.

[↑ Contents](#)

999. **Randy Prunty**  
**Re: dichten**  
*Wed 25 Feb 1998*

---

to Jonathan, et al

the altavista online translator says that dichten means "seal". It doesn't sound like that's where you are heading, but I thought you might find this interesting.

for those of you that don't know of this translation site:

<http://babelfish.altavista.digital.com/cgi-bin/translate?>

Randy

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1000. **David R. Israel**

***poets-in-residence***

*Wed 25 Feb 1998*

---

The appended item appeared in "News of the Weird". Am not sure what "questions it raises," but meseems it's fodder for anecdote.

cheers, d.i.

///

\* Peter Sansom began work on January 19 at his new, two-day-a-week job with the big Marks & Spencer department store in London. For the next six months under a government grant program run by the Poetry Society, he will work for about \$1,500 per month as the store's Poet in Residence. He said he hopes generally to raise employees' and customers' level of awareness of poetry. A lesser-known Poet in Residence, at London's Botanical Gardens, said she has already had an impact on that organization, as witnessed by her telephone message recording: "Sarah Maguire can't get to the phone/So please leave a message after the tone."

=====

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1001. **Steve Tills**  
**Re: Poetry and Depression**

Wed 25 Feb 1998

Hi Judy,

Well, ok, :-)

Judy Roitman wrote:

*I once heard it this way: Buddhism goes up, focusing on the spirit. Depth Psychology goes down (into the body, I think), focusing on the soul. Both are cool, I guess, and could complement each other, I guess, but they don't substitute for each other. Make sense to you, too? Steve Tills*

*Hi Steve. Forget what you've heard.*

*Cheers.*

-----  
Judy Roitman | "Whoppers Whoppers Whoppers!  
Math, University of Kansas | memory fails  
Lawrence, KS 66045 | these are the days."  
[REDACTED] |  
fax: [REDACTED] | Larry Eigner, 1927-1996  
-----

*Note new area code*

*http://www.math.ukans.edu/~roitman/*  
-----

[↑ Contents](#)

1002. **Pritchett, Patrick**  
**Re: Youngman and a query**

Wed 25 Feb 1998

Jonathan -

Dichten = writing, and specifically poetry. See title of Goethe's autobio "Wahrheit und Dichten" usu. translated as "Poetry and Truth." So Pound's famous formula simply means that the art of poetry consists of the act of condensing or compacting language - less is more, if you will.

Patrick Pritchett

-----

From: MAYHEW

To: [REDACTED]

Subject: Youngman and a query

Date: Wednesday, February 25, 1998 10:03AM

Does anyone know German? Does "dichten" really mean "condensare"? My dictionary has "verdichten" for "to condense." Dicht apparently means thick, and Die Dichte is a noun meaning density, but I suspect that the connection between "dichten" (to write poetry) and these words is tenuous at best. Can anyone confirm or disconfirm?

On a different note, does anyone have bibliography of secondary sources on

Coolidge (the poet not the president). Please back-channel.

Jonathan Mayhew

Department of Spanish and Portuguese

University of Kansas

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

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1003. **Dale M Smith**

***Youngman and a query***

*Wed 25 Feb 1998*

---

I think the big P. took that word from a particular Germ/Eng dictionary and stresses this in the ABC's near the front. I can't remember the translator and not knowing German can't confirm equivalent 'meanings' for the two words. Chances are you're right and it means something slightly different. Anyway, I think there's some space devoted to this in that brick of a bio A Serious Character.

To: [REDACTED]

Does anyone know German? Does "dichten" really mean "condensare"? My dictionary has "verdichten" for "to condense." Dicht apparently means thick, and Die Dichte is a noun meaning density, but I suspect that the connection between "dichten" (to write poetry) and these words is tenuous at best. Can anyone confirm or disconfirm?

On a different note, does anyone have bibliography of secondary sources on Coolidge (the poet not the president). Please back-channel.

Jonathan Mayhew  
Department of Spanish and Portuguese  
University of Kansas

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

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1004. **MAYHEW**  
***dichten condensare***

Wed 25 Feb 1998

---

It was actually a German - Italian dictionary. Pound attributes the discovery of this folk (faux) etymology to Basil Bunting. I was playing around with a translation program from German to English. I wrote the German sentence "Ich dicte die Dichtung," trying to say I write poetry and it gave me "I seal the seal" as the English translation. When I tried to say "I write condensed poetry" it gave me "I seal the thick seal." (dichten also means to seal, as in sealing with wax). I find this altavista translation program hilarious, since it isn't very sophisticated or attentive to context. I am thinking of putting some Lorca in in Spanish and seeing the translation it comes up with.

Jonathan Mayhew  
Department of Spanish and Portuguese  
University of Kansas

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

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1005. **Henry Gould**  
***Re: Youngman and a query***

Wed 25 Feb 1998

---

On Wed, 25 Feb 1998 13:07:34 -0400 George Thompson said:

>1. dichten = to thicken, to tighten, to condense.

>

>2. dichten = to make poetry.

>

>dichten (1) is related to Eng 'thick' [= Germ 'dick', etc.] and Eng.

>'tight', whereas dichten (2) seems to be a borrowing from Latin, as in

>Horace's 'dictare carmina.'

>

>The next question is whether Pound meant 'dichten' = 'condensare' as a pun

>or as an etymology....



I always read it as an explanatory metaphor.

"Heavy with time."

I'm reading a book on the physics of time (time's arrow); the 1st essay in 1st paragraph says that the General Theory of Relativity shows that gravity IS time; gravity is the expression of variable time flows.

Spiralling into the heaviness of sounds...(under the dead litter...)

condensation = precipitation.

- Henry Gould

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1006. **Michael Magee**

***Re: Henny Youngman***

*Wed 25 Feb 1998*

---

Thought I'd post this poem of mine in which Youngman appears, as a kind of homage. I liked his rapid-fire aesthetic very much and recently downloaded hundreds of his jokes off the web. -m.

POEM BEGINNING WITH A LINE OF O'HARA'S

Rome is gorgeous...like the Catskills. There is no sense  
in trying to get there other than by traveling  
north on the New York State Thruway,  
and no sense denying that the Pope  
is none other than Henny Youngman.  
That he has no wife, according to the vow,  
makes the joke that much funnier.  
In the audience, a man dressed vaguely  
like a Hell's angel grows more and more  
anxious. His tank-top reads, \*I Live  
Every Day in FEAR\*. Yes, he does.  
He peels his fingernails and eats the pieces.  
It is impossible to discourage his belief  
that, behind the scenes, Youngman has been conspiring  
to get Senator Kennedy elected president.  
The fact that Youngman isn't even Catholic  
makes it that much more nefarious. When  
you ask him he says, "ZOG, my friend,"  
which stands for, "Zionist Occupation Government, my friend."  
Rome is gorgeous. His beard is like the gray  
and red streaked rusted shingles of the ruined  
cottages you happen upon, hidden in the wooded nooks  
of the Piazza San Pietro, except it is made of hair.

If you ask him, he will pose just as Moses did  
for Michelangelo, fingering his beard and scratching  
his belly, "guardian of the tomb." He is a descendant  
of the Lost Tribe of Israel, the tribe whose existence  
Pope Youngman vehemently denies, out of fear  
of its gorgeousness. "It is more gorgeous than Rome,"  
he thinks to himself, but to the audience, he tells  
a joke about how ugly it is. The old couples  
come from an afternoon of meringue lessons, the young  
families who have brought their children after  
a swim in the pool, they all laugh at this joke,  
a bit anxiously. It is Easter and they have come  
to receive his blessing, not expecting such levity.  
Their Pope begins, "In nomine Patri, et Fillii,  
et Spiritu Sancti," and they respond, "Amen."  
Their Pope continues, "I had a nightmare last night.  
I dreamed Dolly Parton was my mother and I  
was a bottle baby," and they say nothing.  
It is all gorgeous. The way the lake glitters,  
the tall loud speakers between the pines, the lanterns  
strung across the Arco delle Campane. The man believes  
that as they empty into the square they all study him,  
amazed by how his gut-sweat has stained  
into his tank-top an image of the Virgin Mary.  
The publicity is awful, he shivers in contempt  
at the complication of what he has devised, to lumber  
into the gardens, ahead of the New York State Police  
whom he has already told, "The one I will kiss  
is Youngman. Arrest him and lead him away under guard."

[↑ Contents](#)

1007. **Pritchett, Patrick**  
***Re: Youngman and a query***  
*Wed 25 Feb 1998*

---

oops - that should be "Wahrheit und Dichtung."  
PP

[↑ Contents](#)

1008. **Mark Prejsnar**

***Re: poets-in-residence***

*Wed 25 Feb 1998*

---

This figures....

When our culture wants an example of something really \*weird\* it thinks of (all together now) \*poetry\*!!! (and poets)

Mark  
@lanta

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1009. **Mark Prejsnar**

***Re: Pound and a quandry***

*Wed 25 Feb 1998*

---

>

> The next question is whether Pound meant 'dichten' = 'condensare' as a pun

> or as an etymology....

>

> George Thompson

>

Errr....\*both\*, I always thought..??

"autodidact" or no (and he \*did\* put information together in a slightly odd way, from time to time, to be sure) the old guy knew a thing or two..

[↑ Contents](#)

1010. **Gwyn McVay**

***Re: Youngman and a query***

*Wed 25 Feb 1998*

---

Pound wasn't exactly Mr. Linguist, as has been noted with regard to his work from the Chinese (he believed one could understand kanji by basically staring at them until they made sense--I could never do those random-dot 3-d pictures either) and from Sextus Propertius with his "frigidaire."

bests

"white" "bitter" "offspring of life"

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1011. **syvester pollet**  
***Re: dichten condensare***  
*Wed 25 Feb 1998*

---

Now we're really on to something. Seal as sea-critter. And in French, What the phoque!

Put that Lorca up if you do it. Sylvester

At 1:37 PM -0600 2/25/98, MAYHEW wrote:

>It was actually a German - Italian dictionary. Pound attributes the  
>discovery of this folk (faux) etymology to Basil Bunting. I was playing  
>around with a translation program from German to English. I wrote the  
>German sentence "Ich dicte die Dichtung," trying to say I write poetry  
>and it gave me "I seal the seal" as the English translation. When I tried  
>to say "I write condensed poetry" it gave me "I seal the thick seal."  
>(dichten also means to seal, as in sealing with wax). I find this  
>altavista translation program hilarious, since it isn't very sophisticated  
>or attentive to context. I am thinking of putting some Lorca in in  
>Spanish and seeing the translation it comes up with.

>

>

>

>Jonathan Mayhew

>Department of Spanish and Portuguese

>University of Kansas

> [REDACTED]

> [REDACTED]

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1012. **Steve Tills**  
***Farmer, Bromige, Gizzi at Cinnabar, March 9th***  
*Wed 25 Feb 1998*

---

Would like to announce the following reading at the Cinnabar Theatre on March 9th, 7:30 p.m.

STEVE FARMER, DAVID BROMIGE, and PETER GIZZI will read poetry and discuss The Troubadors.

The Cinnabar is located in Petaluma (approximately 40 minutes north of San Francisco), at 3333 North Petaluma Blvd. The Cinnabar Series website at <http://www.vom.com/stills> provides a detailed map of Petaluma and additional information, including previews of the featured readers' poetries.

-----

## Upcoming Poets/Panel

March 9th, a Reading and Symposium with  
Steve Farmer, David Bromige, and Peter Gizzi

The Troubadors at the Millenium:

a reading and panel investigation of current poetic practices and the  
apparent weaving-in of practices of the past.

Three poets read and talk about their and each other's work as it  
relates to, and calls back to, the work of the French Troubadors of the

11th and 12th centuries.

An Open discussion will follow.

Steve Farmer was born and raised in San Diego, California. He received a BA in Writing from UCSD and moved to the Bay Area in 1981. There he completed an MA in English at Sonoma State University, studying under poet David Bromige. He is the author of *Coracle* (working notes of february, 1987), *Tone Ward* (Coincidence, 1988), *World of Shields* (w.n.f., 1993), *Standing Water* (hic jacet, 1995), and the long poem *Medieval*, which has appeared with other work over the years in publications such as *AVEC*, *Lyric &*, *Mirage Period(ical)*, *Poetics Journal*, *Big Allis*, and the collections *I am a Child: Poetry after Bruce*

*Andrews* and *Robert Duncan* (Tailspin Press), *The Poetry Calendar for the Millenium* (Sun and Moon Press), and *Writing from the NEW Coast* (o·blêk anthology). He has worked and taught in the restaurant industry for most of his life and is currently Executive Chef of *Venezia* in Berkeley.

David Bromige has been around for a long time. An original troubador, with interesting scars sustained in falls from ladders pushed off from balconies (usually

by the ladies themselves), his lifetimes of romantic egotism have soured him on the

cult of personality and he refers readers to his recent poems found in *Tinfish*, *The Dickens*,

*Boo*, *Crayon*, *Antenym*, *Lower Limit Speech*, *Letters*, *Volt*, *EPR*, *Poetzine*, *Non*, *Rhizome*,

*Capilano Review*, *Cuisinart*, *Mirage*, and *3300*, if they want to deduce anything

further about him. All of his books have been burned by the Papists.

Peter Gizzi is the author of several fine books of poetry, including *Artificial Heart* (Burning Deck, 1998), from which he'll be reading; *Hours of the Book* (Zasterle, 1994); *Periplum* (AVEC, 1992); *Music for Films* (Paradigm Press, 1992); *Creeley Madrigal* (The Materials Press, 1991) and the chapbooks *Ledger*

Domain (Timoleon, 1995) and New Picnic Time (Meow, 1995). He co-founded o·blêk / A Journal of Language Arts in

1986 and co-edited with Connell McGrath the o·blêk anthology of younger experimental poets, Writing from the NEW Coast (The Garlic Press, 1993). He's also the editor of the international literary anthology Exact Change Yearbook (1995), and he has an edition of Jack Spicer's lectures on poetics, The House that Jack Built, forthcoming from Wesleyan University Press (1998). In 1994, Peter received the Lavan Younger Poets Award from the Academy of American Poets. He holds a B.A.

in Classical Literature (New York University), an M.F.A. from Brown University (1991), and a Ph.D from the University of Buffalo. An assistant professor at UCSC, he lives in Santa Cruz with his wife, the poet Liz Wallis.

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1013. **david bromige**  
***Dichten Condensare***

*Wed 25 Feb 1998*

---

Dichten Condensare was my voice teacher the year I spent in Florence. His father was German, a blond Lutheran from Luebeck, introspective and stern, a mathematician in musical matters; and his mother was Italian, raven-haired in her youth, passionate, extraverted, always bursting into extravagant gusts of Verdi. Both sets of characteristics were at war for Dichten's soul, and some do say one set won out when it enlisted the help of the Devil (Teufel). Certainly Dichten came to a sticky end, drowned in a wetland area trying to remove an illegal dwelling so that he could landfill it and build a music studio; but not before he had passed the Condensare name along to his son, whose mother, Brita Bunting, had been a mistress of Ezra Pound. Hope this helps.

The Altavista program sounds like another such program I heard of that fed "Out of sight, out of mind" into a russian-speaking computer, and got back "Invisible lunatic." David

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1014. **laura and jeff**  
***hello***

*Wed 25 Feb 1998*

---

i am new. i am (ta-da!!) a poet. (anyone interested in reading something i've written can order order the pamphlet \_what would we do without us\_ from me for \$1 (us) postage paid (we sell them for \$.50 in person). my snail addy is 240 1/2 s market st #3 wooster ohio 44691 usa. the pamphlet is a sampling of five

poets: ryan scot barker, elizabeth jackson, eric swanger (e.j.s.), davey vest, and myself. it was published by earth books, which is myself and ryan.) lets see: i am currently living in wooster ohio with my wife laura weiser, who is a painter. we are moving to morgantown west virginia in may. exciting!!! i am working on a long poem called la vie / the polemics. i am 22 (23 in april). i ain't ne'er been to no college. i am currently reading herodotus, and re-reading the ten vols. of the complete corr. of olson/creely. and (as always) tons of poetry. i prefer cats to dogs. anarchism to fascism. veganism to meat eating. plastic to paper (easier to recycle in wooster). juice to soda. hardcore punk, classical, and jazz to country. being drug-free to doing drugs. tea to coffee. anywhere to ohio. persistant living self-education to ineffectual dead acadamia (no offence). the light side of the force to the dark side of the force. heh. =) really, jeffrey daniel miller (jeff.)

-----

There are no hierarchies, no infinite, no such many as mass,  
there are only  
eyes in all heads  
to be looked out of

-charles olson, from "letter 6" (of the maximus  
poems)

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1015. **david bromige**  
***Dichten Condensare, chap.II***  
*Wed 25 Feb 1998*

---

Inquiries have started to come in as to Dichten's having an Italian surname. His grandfather, though from Luebeck, was the son of an Italian sailor, Antonio Condesare, who hailed from Naples, and who married Frieda Mann of Luebeck. The second 'n' in his name got added during the family's Luebeck years. The name of Dichten's Italian mother was Ingrid Rossellini, the outside-of-legitimation daughter of Isabella Bergman, a Swedish housemaid in the well-to-do Milanese household of the Rossellini family, whose son, Roberto, invented the first, clumsy and awkward computer-translation program, EierAnsikt, during his years in Friesing-am-Isar, and whose favorite riddle was "Is a bell a berg, man?" Returning to Milan for a grand vacancy, he made real the fact that he had most of his life been at love with the white-haired person of clean-limbed ascendancy yet dubious paternity. Propositioning her, he then with her to Luebeck fled, expending the remainder of his diurnals with his Baltic companion not a hurl of a rock from the water-body that bears the name of her type till this instant. Their offspring, christened Dichten, on account of his born having-been with musical ears and tightly-sealed eyes, during his wanderjahre found himself in Florence,

where his acoustics were so great he decided to stop behind. The rest is Chapter I. Although perhaps it would not have been supererogatory to say that indeed, yes, he enjoyed punctually 24 years of amazing celebrity as a performer on the soft-loud keyboard thing-that-goes-in-the-drawing-room, and also as a chanting-person of his own homemades. Then came the swamp. To this sixty-second unit, I can attend his thorax in my kopf Der Margarita Song warbling. Then comes the Moral. Life is not brief enough. David

[↑ Contents](#)

## 1016. **George Thompson**

### **Re: Dichten Condensare**

Wed 25 Feb 1998

David Bromige zaid:

*Dichten Condensare was my voice teacher the year I spent in Florence. His father was German, a blond Lutheran from Luebeck, introspective and stern, a mathematician in musical matters; and his mother was Italian, raven-haired in her youth, passionate, extraverted, always bursting into extravagant gusts of Verdi. Both sets of characteristics were at war for Dichten's soul, and some do say one set won out when it enlisted the help of the Devil (Teufel). Certainly Dichten came to a sticky end, drowned in a wetland area trying to remove an illegal dwelling so that he could landfill it and build a music studio; but not before he had passed the Condensare name along to his son, whose mother, Brita Bunting, had been a mistress of Ezra Pound. Hope this helps.*

Well, thiz may explain why Ez wuz zo muzical. He muzt have gotten hiz muzical ear from hiz miztrezz, jutz az you have gotten yourz. I mean, not from YOUR miztrezz. I mean from HIZ. Indirectly. Zecond hand.

My [non-z but phonologically cloze]-key doezn't work, I don't know why. Thank God for z'z.

George Thompzon [I alzo had thiz teacher, Condensare. Ztrange man he wuz]

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## 1017. **david bromige**

### **ep's frigidaire**

Wed 25 Feb 1998

Well though Gwyn, "frigidaire" is deliberate in a way I can comprehend, a chosen anachronism (with which device "Sextus Propertius," as you know, teems); whereas the "drawing-the-sorts" "method" whereby he downloaded Chinese poetry from Chinese written characters I cannot. Yet by both methods he made



fine poetry, don't you think? "Outweariers of Apollo will, dum de dum; we have kept our erasers in order." Too old to look anything up, David

[↑ Contents](#)

1018. **Don Wellman**

**Re: Youngman and a query**

*Wed 25 Feb 1998*

---

..it was Bunting who made the serendipitous connection between "dichten" and "condensare" and Pound credits him.

Don Wellman

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1019. **Safdie Joseph**

**Re: Query**

*Wed 25 Feb 1998*

---

Could someone please back-channel me Anselm Hollo's e-address?

(or Anselm, if you're lurking, could you?)

Thanks in advance!

[↑ Contents](#)

1020. **Schuchat Simon**

**Re: ep's frigidaire**

*Thu 26 Feb 1998*

---

You know, EP just claimed that he could divine the meaning of Chinese characters by looking at them. He did the translations in Cathay using Fenellosa's notebooks from his studies with a Japanese teacher, with each character copied, glossed, phoneticized, etc. There was relatively little information on the grammar or the paratatic syntax and that he had to come up with on his own. He had a native speaker assisting him when he did the Confucian Odes while residing at St. E's, though he reportedly quarrelled with her alot. He also drew on Jesuit latin versions for his other Confucian translations, as well as French versions. But its a great story that he could figure out what the signs meant just by looking, and as David points out, he made great poetry out of them, however he got there.

viz Bunting's note in the collected poems, "to assume a mistranslation would be gratuitous"

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1021. **Dean A. Brink**

***Interpoetics - Call for submissions***

Thu 26 Feb 1998

---

Call for submissions

\_Interpoetics\_ seeks poetry, translations, research articles and reviews. Emphasis is on poetry from Japan, China, Iran, Vietnam, Korea, Cambodian, and all parts of Asia, the Americas, Africa, and Europe. We are especially interested in experimental, historical and hypertextual poetry of all varieties.

Submit poetry to Ali Zarrin (██████).

Submit queries regarding articles, reviews and translations to Dean Brink (██████).

\_Interpoetics\_ is at:

<http://www.w-link.net/~dean/interpoetics/index.html>

A sampling of what is forthcoming:

Poetry by T. Begley, Susan Doe, Eric Elshtain, Timothy Liu, Hoa Nyugen, P. Piper.

Gregory Lee (Hong Kong University), Selected Translations of Duoduo (part 2),

and excerpts from his book \_Troubadours, Trumpeters, Troubled Makers: Lyricism, Nationalism and Hybridity in China and Its Others\_ (Duke University Press, 1996) in which Duoduo's poems are addressed

John Kehlen (University of Chicago), New Translation of \_A Hundred Stanzas by Three Poets at Minase\_ a Renga Sequence by Sougi, Shouhaku, and Souchou

James O'Brien (University of Wisconsin, Madison), translations of poems by Kitahara Hakushu

Hsiuling Lin (University of Chicago) on Henry Gaudier-Brzeska and Pound's Aesthetics of Chinese Characters

Ali Zarrin (University of Colorado at Denver), Selected Ghazals of Hafez

Kitagawa Fuyuhiko: translations by William O. Gardner (Stanford) and Dean Brink

(University of Chicago)

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1022. **Michel Delville**

***Pound: dichten = condensare?***

Thu 26 Feb 1998

---

The German verb "dichten" does not mean "to condense" but to "block" the holes or openings in an object in order to prevent air, gas, or liquid getting in or out. I guess "to seal" would be the nearest English equivalent. The idea, however, is not to achieve "poetic density" but rather to preserve a sense of unity or wholeness. More fragments to shore against our ruins?

<From: MAYHEW <[REDACTED]>: <Does anyone know German? Does "dichten" really mean "condensare"? My <dictionary has "verdichten" for "to condense." Dicht apparently means <thick, and Die Dichte is a noun meaning density, but I suspect that the <connection between "dichten"( to write poetry) and these words is tenuous <at best. Can anyone confirm or disconfirm?

-----  
Michel Delville  
English Department  
University of Liège  
3 Place Cockerill  
4000 Liège  
BELGIUM  
fax: ++ 32 4 366 57 21  
e-mail: [REDACTED]

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1023. **Tom Beckett**

***pound***

Thu 26 Feb 1998

---

After his time at St. Elizabeth's Pound was something of a broken man and was reportedly very bitter. He is rumoured to have spent his final days wandering the streets of Rapallo talking to himself. One passerby thought he said "I was dicked and conned--and sorry."

Tom B.

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1024. **henry**

***Re: Pound: dichten = condensare?***

Thu 26 Feb 1998

---

On Thu, 26 Feb 1998 10:35:40 +0100 Michel Delville said:

>The German verb "dichten" does not mean "to condense" but to "block" the

>holes or openings in an object in order to prevent air, gas, or liquid  
>getting in or out. I guess "to seal" would be the nearest English  
>equivalent. The idea, however, is not to achieve "poetic density" but  
>rather to preserve a sense of unity or wholeness. More fragments to shore  
>against our ruins?

Could you explain this interesting concept a little further? Are you saying that Pound's idea - behind this expression *dichten* = *condensare* - is to preserve unity or wholeness?

It seems to me, and as some others have already pointed out, the basic point Pound is making here is: "to write poetry is to condense", i.e. to sharpen, shorten, achieve precision and depth through brevity. Perhaps this is assuming too many a priori Poundian sentiments. Are you suggesting that Pound may also have been playing with this other meaning of "*dichten*" - to set a seal? I think the image of "setting a seal" was extremely important to Pound - he was always aiming for the effect of a visual emblem on a number of levels - a Renaissance, iconic imagism. I'm not sure how your focus on achieving unity & wholeness relates to the word "*condensare*", but I can understand the sense of an author "setting a seal" on a work - the overall, pervasive, unique signature - the "total" icon. His father worked for the mint; Pound made Pound notes cohere as heavy crystal; with all the arch-reactionary elements of authorial "totality" set up against the non-visual, ultra-verbal splurge of Joyce or Stein.

...but what were you saying? I mean, how does the whole equation imply preserving unity or wholeness? Is it that the process of condensation leads finally to "setting the seal"? - Henry Gould

[↑ Contents](#)

1025. **Pat Boran**

***Re: poets-in-residence***

*Thu 26 Feb 1998*

---

Re David R Israel's earlier posting:

Ok, maybe it is a bit weird that Peter Samson is poet-in-residence in Marks and Spenser's store, but here on this side of the Atlantic (i.e. the other side to most of you people) we thought the States invented all this stuff and that's why we're falling over ourselves now to put poets in hospitals, libraries, lingerie departments, what have you. Even as I write, I'm in the old National Ballroom, Dublin (Ireland) where I'm writer-in-residence for Dublin Corporation, and a couple of weeks back I did a short, experimental stint in a Nissan car plant. The idea came from the News department of RTE, our national TV broadcaster, no doubt spurred on by the appointment of a poet in residence to the BBC News department in London a couple of weeks back. As far as I can make out (initial novelty

aside), it's all about reminding people that poetry doesn't have a natural home, per se. Still, I must admit that a recent circular to British and Irish poets about availability for workshops/residencies did make me sit up. Among the locations that might be ticked by the interested scribe were zoos and nuclear power stations!

PAT BORAN



[↑ Contents](#)

1026. **Tom Beckett**  
***Re: poets-in-residence***  
*Thu 26 Feb 1998*

---

Dear Pat--

Do you suppose Guinness might have room for a token yank poet or two?  
All best,  
Tom Beckett

[↑ Contents](#)

1027. **Tom Beckett**  
***query***  
*Thu 26 Feb 1998*

---

Does anyone know what became of Dave Chirot's project of a magazine issue devoted to responses to Bob Grenier's work?

Tom Beckett

[↑ Contents](#)

1028. **Hilton Manfred Obenzinger**  
***Re: poets-in-residence***  
*Thu 26 Feb 1998*

---

I don't know about the earlier posting, but the idea of poets in car plants and lingerie departments sounds terrific.

Hilton Obenzinger

On Thu, 26 Feb 1998, Pat Boran wrote:

*Re David R Israel's earlier posting:*

*Ok, maybe it is a bit weird that Peter Samson is poet-in-residence in Marks and Spenser's store, but here on this side of the Atlantic (i.e. the other side to most of you people) we thought the States invented all this stuff*

*and that's why we're falling over ourselves now to put poets in hospitals, libraries, lingerie departments, what have you. Even as I write, I'm in the old National Ballroom, Dublin (Ireland) where I'm writer-in-residence for Dublin Corporation, and a couple of weeks back I did a short, experimental stint in a Nissan car plant. The idea came from the News department of RTE, our national TV broadcaster, no doubt spurred on by the appointment of a poet in residence to the BBC News department in London a couple of weeks back. As far as I can make out (initial novelty aside), it's all about reminding people that poetry doesn't have a natural home, per se. Still, I must admit that a recent circular to British and Irish poets about availability for workshops/residencies did make me sit up. Among the locations that might be ticked by the interested scribe were zoos and nuclear power stations!*

PAT BORAN



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1029. **William Burmeister Prod**  
**Re: Pound: dichten = condensare?**

Thu 26 Feb 1998

---

Content-Description: Text

On Feb 26, 10:35am, Michel Delville wrote:

> Subject: Pound: dichten = condensare?

>

> [ text/plain

> Encoded with "quoted-printable" ] :

The German verb "dichten" does not mean "to condense" but to "block" the

> holes or openings in an object in order to prevent air, gas, or liquid

> getting in or out. I guess "to seal" would be the nearest English

> equivalent. The idea, however, is not to achieve "poetic density" but

> rather to preserve a sense of unity or wholeness. More fragments to shore

> against our ruins?

-----  
Michel Delville  
English Department  
University of Liège  
3 Place Cockerill  
4000 Liège  
BELGIUM  
fax: ++ 32 4 366 57 21  
e-mail: 

-- End of excerpt from Michel Delville

Methinks this post doth me confusare. Btw -- it's more fragments to civilize the wholesome.

Wilhelm Dichtenhausennichtenschiessenundfrumpf

[↑ Contents](#)

1030. **david bromige**  
***Dicht-ung- = condensare***

Thu 26 Feb 1998

---

Lets not get sidetracked here -- as I recall, Ep's Bunting-derived edict was Dichtung=condensare. tr. perhaps as "Poetry=to condense." No? Pound \_did\_ say "dicht\*en\*"? Has anyone looked this up? Lazy Dave

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1031. **MAYHEW**  
***take my poetics, please***

Thu 26 Feb 1998

---

"Basil Bunting, fumbling about with a German-Italian dictionary, found that this idea of poetry as concentration is as old as the German language itself. Dichten is the German verb corresponding to the noun Dichtung meaning poetry, and the lexicographer has rendered it by the Italian verb meaning to condense."

This is the quote from the ABC of reading that got all of this started. It's on page 36 of the edition I have.

Thanks to all those who answered my original query; I suspect that dicht meaning thick or dense comes from the same root as the English \*thick\* and that the dicht of Dichtung (poesie) is completely unrelated. It makes a nice story though!

Jonathan Mayhew  
"No layoff / from this/ condensery" (LN)  
Department of Spanish and Portuguese  
University of Kansas

██████

██████████

[↑ Contents](#)

1032. **Aldon Nielsen**

**current reading**

Thu 26 Feb 1998

---

have just been reading Andrew Levy's *\_Continuous Discontinuous\_*, from Potes & Poets, which I would press upon each of you with great enthusiasm -- contains both *wahrheit* and *dichtung* in considerable measure, along with a dash of *methode* -- for condensare fans, there is the section titled "Songs and Improvisations," which really is, as Rock Reporters keep saying, a "self-titled" album

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1033. **Christina Fairbank Chirot**

**Re: Dicht-ung- = condensare**

Thu 26 Feb 1998

---

Pound attributed this formula ( a mathematical poem a la Bob Grumman?)

to Basil Bunting--see ABC of Reading

--

but all the joking aside, it did have quite a complicated effect, examining as Jenny Penberthy has done, the correspondences and influences among Pound, Zukofsky and Lorine Niedecker--who after all wrote of her

"Condensary"--

other writers flowing from this in spiralling ways and varying ways and waves--Corman, Eigner, Grenier--

escritura en libertad

dave baptiste chirot

[↑ Contents](#)

1034. **Sylvester Pollet**

**Re: Dicht-ung- = condensare**

Thu 26 Feb 1998

---

At 10:56 AM -0800 2/26/98, david bromige wrote:

> Lets not get sidetracked here -- as I recall, Ep's

>Bunting-derived edict was *Dichtung*=condensare. tr. perhaps as "Poetry=to

>condense." No? Pound *\_did\_* say "*dicht\*en\**"? Has anyone looked this up? Lazy

>Dave

David: I didn't have the book & was going on memory, but it's in ABC of Reading, 36, beginning of Chap 4, where ep says first "*Dichten*=condensare," then



goes on to say "Basil Bunting, fumbling about with a German-Italian dictionary, found that this idea of poetry as concentration is as old almost as the German language. 'Dichten' is the German verb corresponding to the noun 'Dichtung' meaning poetry, and the lexicographer has rendered it by the Italian verb meaning 'to condense'." But I enjoyed your version, swamps, sopranos, and all! best, Sylvester

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### 1035. **Poetics List Administration**

#### **Re: Pound: dichten = condensare?**

Thu 26 Feb 1998

---

Hey.

Ah, Ezra! Somehow, all roads seem to lead (however circuitous) back to EP.

Another implication of "condensare" is to think of soup --or stock, at least. We (or I, anyways) cook stock "down" to instill it with all the yummy goodness of its initial ingredients --to condense all the "meaning" of the stuff we began with into the stuff we're left with. From "mere" language into poetry. (What was it Pound said about poetry being "language instilled with meaning to the highest degree"?)

(Ah! My first post.)

But I may be mistaken.

michael/

\*\*\*\*\* \*Brevis esse

labouro / Obscuro fio\*

(I labour to be brief / and become obscure)

+Horace.



[↑ Contents](#)

### 1036. **Joe Amato/Kass Fleisher**

#### **Re: current reading**

Thu 26 Feb 1998

---

to second aldon's recommendation of my pal andrew levy's \_continuous discontinuous\_ ---some kinda writing, check it out...

the book also includes, to dredge up an old thread, one of my favorite back-cover blurbs, by none other than our very own rod smith:

"Andrew Levy is a Buddha."

((hey rod, please don't bother explaining it!///

best,

joe

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1037. **Joe Amato/Kass Fleisher**  
***disturbing news***

Thu 26 Feb 1998

---

partial update...

joe

-----

*Posted at 1:13 p.m. PST Tuesday, February 24, 1998*

*Kentucky author Gayl Jones released from hospital*

*Reuters*

*LEXINGTON, Ky. - Author Gayl Jones was released from a mental hospital Tuesday where she had been held since a standoff last week with police that ended with her husband slitting his own throat.*

*Jones, 48, the author of the acclaimed new novel ``The Healing," had been under observation at Eastern State Hospital in Lexington since Friday night.*

*She and her husband, Bob Jones, 51, barricaded themselves inside their modest clapboard home and filled it with natural gas, threatening to ignite an explosion when police knocked on the door to serve an old arrest warrant against him.*

*The officers burst in, and Bob Jones sliced open his throat and died later at a hospital.*

*``She was never charged with anything," Fayette County Attorney Margaret Kannensohn said.*

*A protege of Nobel Prize-winner Toni Morrison, Jones was taken to the psychiatric hospital because she made statements suggesting she might be suicidal, authorities said.*

*Her husband was prosecuted twice in 1997 for sending "terroristic" threats and harassing messages to state officials in*

*which he charged his wife's mother had been "kidnapped and murdered" by the cancer ward of a local hospital. Neither case resulted in a conviction after he agreed to stop.*

*Deputy county attorney Lee Turpin, who prosecuted Jones, said his wife would accompany him to court but never said anything. ``She never even looked up," Turpin said.*

*In rare speaking engagements, Jones has mentioned reclusive author J.D. Salinger as a model for her desire to be judged solely for her work, which includes five novels. Previous to "The Healing," Jones' last-published novel was ``Eva's Man" in 1987.*

*Recently, another round of threatening letters and calls from Bob Jones to local officials came to the attention of Turpin, who then read a glowing Newsweek magazine review of Gayl Jones' latest fictional work and noticed the mention of her husband's original name, Bob Higgins.*

*A search of records found Higgins had a 14-year-old outstanding warrant from Ann Arbor, Michigan, in which he was charged with brandishing a shotgun during a demonstration by homosexuals at the University of Michigan, where his wife formerly taught. Jones reportedly was virulently anti-homosexual after he was raped while he was in detention.*

*Police were sent to serve the warrant at the Jones' home where the standoff and subsequent suicide occurred.*

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1038. **Maria Damon**  
***Re: depression,suicide***  
*Thu 26 Feb 1998*

thanks, tom, indeed. i've assumed that many of us have been speaking with more than academic knowledge and/or investment in the topic; you are the first to say so openly.

At 6:46 PM -0500 2/21/98, Joe Brennan wrote:

>Tom: this is a gutsy post and hopefully will add a dimension to this  
>discussion that will make some folks a litte more circumspect before they  
>engage in blanket generalizations that diminish rather than expand the  
>possibility of understanding.  
>  
>Joe  
>

>  
>  
>In a message dated 98-02-21 15:53:22 EST, you write:  
>  
><<  
> Depression. Suicide. I've been following the conversation for the last few  
> days and was trying to stay out of it but I can't. Here goes...I can put a  
> face on this--my own. Depression is a fact of my life that I am trying to  
> deal with. It is difficult to communicate how stifling, how oppressive, how  
> overwhelming and crippling it can be if you've not experienced it. I goes  
> well beyond "having a bad day" and involves patterns of obsessive thinking  
> that one has to learn how to shut off if one is to survive. There are no  
>easy  
> fixes. A pill might help but it can ultimately only be part of the answer.  
>  
> When I was a small child, I suffered a head trauma that caused epilepsy and  
> that took away many aspects of my physical coordination. Before the trauma  
I  
> could turn somersaults, afterwards not. Before I had normal fine motor  
> skills, afterwards not,etc. The !950s were not great years in which to be  
> epileptic, different, hyperactive, uncoordinated, unusually tall, and  
> emotionally uncertain. I was beaten up regularly. Add in an authoritarian  
> father who found me disappointing. It, I, was a problem. I was shunted to  
> doctors, psychs, medicated (for 16 years), hooked to machines, sent to a  
> "special school" (grades 3 to 5) that taught me nothing but that I was  
> abnormal. Resources for kids with these kinds of problems are better now  
but  
> in the 50s and early 60s it was a nightmare. I learned to be fearful. I  
> learned to feel incompetent. I've always felt that I don't belong anywhere.  
> It has made for difficulties (that damn word again).  
>  
> More recently I've had years of pain from a back injury which is now better  
> and last spring I was physically assaulted while doing an housing inspection  
> at a low income housing project.  
>  
> All of this is shorthand for things that could be gone on about at  
>booklength.  
> I'll resist the impulse. What I'm trying to suggest (beyond whining) is that  
> there are many layers to a person's depression. It occurs in context(s). I,  
> for one, need better coping skills. I'm trying to get them.  
>  
> Suicide is an unfortunate outcome. But I understand all too well how it can

> happen. We don't all have the same pain thresholds--or the same learning  
> opportunities. I wish Walter Benjamin hadn't killed himself. (Imagine him  
> surviving to  
> live in NY and encounter a young Charles Bernstein in Central Park.) But I  
> understand why he did. I might well have behaved similarly. To call suicide  
> an act of cowardice is not helpful. In our "just do it" culture sometimes we  
> need to extend a little more empathy--perhaps seeking clarification rather  
> than dismissing out-of-hand what scares us . Enough. Tom Beckett  
>  
>  
> ----- Headers -----  
> Return-Path: <[REDACTED]>  
> Received: from relay20.mail.aol.com (relay20.mail.aol.com [172.31.106.66])  
> by air05.mail.aol.com (v39.9) with SMTP; Sat, 21 Feb 1998 15:53:22 -0500  
> Received: from PEAR.EASE.LSOFT.COM (pear.ease.lsoft.com  
[206.241.12.19])  
> by relay20.mail.aol.com (8.8.5/8.8.5/AOL-4.0.0)  
> with ESMTP id PAA15833;  
> Sat, 21 Feb 1998 15:53:12 -0500 (EST)  
> Receiv >>

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1039. **Maria Damon**  
**Re: The Pillow Book**

Thu 26 Feb 1998

---

At 9:13 AM -0500 2/24/98, Burt Kimmelman [REDACTED] wrote:

>i loved the pillow book movie but too felt at a distance from it, yet  
>i'm told that reading the book the pillow book is essential if one is  
>to get anything real out of the flick.

the book has long been a fave of mine, but didn't see the movie. the book is great to teach, but the movie seems obsessed w/ the erotic aspects of the book, which are there but much subdued.

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1040. **henry gould**  
**condens.**

Thu 26 Feb 1998

---

Great quote from Horace by Michael Young: I labor to be brief / and become obscure !!! what a marvelous comeback at Pound! & somewhere in the back of my head drifting where I can't find it is some quote from Virgil or the bible or

something about the vanity of poets always struggling to make the obvious stylishly obscure... - Henry Gould

[↑ Contents](#)

1041. **Maria Damon**

***Re: three unrelated queries and a note on poetic depression***

*Thu 26 Feb 1998*

---

there is also a doctoral student in medieval lit at U Toronto, Karla Mallette, a dear friend, now living in san francisco, whose dissertation concerns medieval Sicily as a meetingplace and site of bardic and social contestation btw. italian and arabic poetry. i take it from your queries that you're hard at work on Mackey's epistolary trilogy, Stephen! so am i, will backchannel for more kibbitzing.

md

At 11:56 PM -0400 2/23/98, Pierre Joris wrote:

>Stephen Cope wrote:

>

>> Some information I'm looking for, if anyone has anything to hand:

>>

>> 1) I'm looking for books (preferably in English, although if there's  
>> something good in French I'll take that too), dealing specifically with the  
>> influence of Islamic poetic forms on the Medieval lyric in the West (a la  
>> the tradition of courtly love), and, more broadly, with the influence of  
>> Arabic culture on the European Renaissance. This is clearly a broad query,  
>> so feel free to backchannel.

>

>Well, it cld be oif interest to others on the list, so I'll post it for  
>general consumption.

>

>A good place to start is Maria Rosa Menocal's *\_Shards of Love\_* (Duke, 1994)  
>and her *\_The Arabic Role in Medieval Literary History: A Forgotten  
Heritage\_*,

>also from Duke UP. The bibliographies in those two will provide you with  
>enough reading for a while. But much much work is still needed in that area:  
>present topical dislike of Arabs is not new & western scholarship has spent  
>centuries *\_denying\_* any and all influence. A good example is the etymology of  
>troubadour -- given by euro-american philologists as going back to a  
>hypothetical latin root "trobar" -- to find, they say. Ask an Arabist  
>knowledgeable in medieval Arabic (hispanic medieval, that is) & s/he'll say  
>immediately oh, troubadour is the same word as Arabic for "song".

>  
> Then, if Dante is of interest in that matter, there is a fair amount of  
> scholarship on his work's relations to Arabic poetry.  
>  
> Pierre  
>  
>--  
>=====

>pierre joris 6 madison place albany ny 12202  
>tel/fax [REDACTED] email:[REDACTED]  
>http://www.albany.edu/~joris/  
>-----

>"What often prevents us from giving ourselves over to  
>a single vice is that we have several of them."  
> — La Rochefoucauld  
>=====

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## 1042. **Miekal And**

**+db**

*Fri 27 Feb 1998*

---

Just got my 12 year old copy of the difficulties db issue & I want to say to tom b that it is a very likeable representation of david's rather large & humorlavish world. I especially enjoyed the annotated bibliography in which david fills the unknowing in on the thinking behind the books, books which I have never seen, & well there just arent any David B book in the LaFarge library out here, in fact there is not a book by anyone on this list in the LaFarge library, can you believe that? So even after reading thru snippets of most of the writings glowing with chumness, what stays with me the most was that picture on the front cover, David looking like a doublebreasted oxford citation. Is that really David B? I mean, Ive read a lifetime of db via this list in the last year, & according to his writing he cant look that way.

Looks aside, I was intrigued also by the piece which bromige intersects bruce andrews...each word commafied in a grand scrolling word movie. & revealed that David is a collaborators collaborator, a genre that interests me at this point in my writinglife far more than solo shtuff. My only hope is that someday David knocks on my door inspired to twist words with me.

miekal

tom, something very very satisfying about works dedicated to a single author, is there anyone doing now what difficulties was doing then, is difficulties still?

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1043. **Miekal And**  
***today's pangram***

*Fri 27 Feb 1998*

---

today's pangram is by texas word alchemist Michael Helsem  
Literature: True-lie art.

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1044. **Miekal And**  
***read anagram***

*Fri 27 Feb 1998*

---

please substitute anagram for pangram in my previous post. so sorry.

[↑ Contents](#)

1045. **Douglas**  
***new Sun & Moon Press titles***

*Fri 27 Feb 1998*

---

Dear Friends,

I'd like to announce the publication of three new  
Sun & Moon Press titles. As usual, subscribers to  
this Poetics List receive a 20% discount if they  
order from my E-mail or my post.

E-mail [REDACTED]

of Post: Sun & Moon Press  
6026 Wilshire Boulevard  
Los Angeles, CA 90036

THE LITTLE DOOR SLIDES BACK, by Jeff Clark

This is the 1996 winner of the National Poetry Series  
(selected by Ray DiPalma). Jeff's book is an amazing  
first book of poetry -- an amazing book under any cir-  
cumstances. This is the book many of you have been waiting  
for!

Tonight he wails in the tub like a baby --

"Shave it!"

"I will wade into the Pacific and kiss my mother!"



\$10.95 (paper)

EUREKA, A PROSE POEM, by Edgar Allan Poe

The newest selection from the Green Integer series of belles-lettres works, this brings back into print (in a single-volume edition) one of Poe's major works. It is a very strange piece, indeed, as Poe takes on the the scientific world in attempts to prove metaphysical possibilities.

\$10.95 (paper)

POEMS, by Sappho

A new translation (based on the earlier Anchor edition) by Willis Barnstone for the great Lesbian (truly a "Lesbian," from Lesbia) poet. We all know Mary Barnard's great translator, but unfortunately hers was based on a corrupted text, in which the original editor had added (in Greek) missing lines and texts. This is one of the best editions of the true Sappho work available.

\$10.95 (paper)

We'll have more books very soon. And watch in May for our exciting new bi-annual journal of International Poetry: MR KNIFE, MISS FORK. New poems by major international poets, commentary, and short reviews!!

Early subscriptions may be obtained from Sun & Moon for a 20% discount from the price of \$20.00 price (that's \$16.00 for two issues).

Douglas Messerli

Publisher

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1046. **Burt Kimmelman**

***Re: The Pillow Book***

*Fri 27 Feb 1998*

---

maria,

and all,

the pillow book movie is most obviously "obsessed" or perhaps "concerned with" textuality as a force in the world. does this obsession square with the book?

burt

[↑ Contents](#)

1047. **TBeck131**

**Re: +db**

*Fri 27 Feb 1998*

---

Miekal--

You are right, there is something especially satisfying about focussing in on a single author, single topic. It becomes possible to present multiple views of what you have on hand and to show connections to wider concerns. I tried to use The Difficulties as a way to, on one hand, shorten the response to an author's work & on the other hand, to advocate innovative practice more generally. I'd love to do that sort of editorial work again but the money commitment is beyond my ability at this point. I'm amazed that I was able to do it before without grants, etc., just through pure hustle.

Currently, I know that Rod Smith should have the Bruce Andrews AERIAL out before too long. If it is as good as the Watten Issue it will be spectacular. Rod's work as an editor and poet is getting better and better all the time. Talisman may still be doing some special author issues. I haven't read that mag for a year or two so am not sure what Foster's up to. Otherwise I don't know what is going on. There have been rumors for a couple of years about a special issue of new mag called BURL being devoted to Bob Grenier--who is long overdue for such attention. If I could find a sugardaddy I'd do it myself.

The Bromige cover is a good likeness of DB. He's a remarkable artist and an even more extraordinary human being. It's a privelege being on the same planet.

Lunch time over. Gotta run. More some other time.

Best, Tom Beckett

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1048. **Peter Balestrieri**

**Please SEND for ME Now!**

*Fri 27 Feb 1998*

---

Please SEND for ME Now!

Every poem I write provides sensuous proof that enduring American poetry can please the eye and challenge the mind. If you are satisfied with your free poem, just \$1000.00 delivers a full year (a total of seven poems) of the country's most intriguing poet in vibrant color and brilliant detail. Mail the attached postcard today! Savor the one publication that celebrates the poetry you truly love.

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1049. **Laura Moriarty**

**Re: +db +lc +je**

*Fri 27 Feb 1998*

---

Miekal -

non will be doing various single author issues - The first will be on Leslie Scalapino and next on Jerry Estrin -

Ed Foster has done single author Talismans and Rod Smith Aerials - and of course the new J MacLow Crayon - Such issues are fascinating and useful, but I would note that there are few about women -

i. e. Has anyone done a Susan Howe or is one planned?

Laura



<http://socrates.berkeley.edu/~moriarty/>

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1050. **Joe Amato/Kass Fleisher**

**begging yr pardons...**

*Fri 27 Feb 1998*

---

i regret having to burden the list with something that is specifically to do with moi, but i couldn't think of a quicker way... so herewith the 'works cited' (as it were) of my online piece (the one i've mentioned hereabouts before)... i'll be adding to this piece only a bit, methinks, twixt now and four weeks from now... and if anyone out there has any problems/objections with my having repro'd some of your work, or work under your imprint, please to let me know... excerpts from poetry appear with \*\*\* (i realize i won't reach everyone by posting this list, but what the hell---i'm using this work b/c i LIKE it, and would be only too happy to 'feature' other work if asked)...

if my online piece, or some version thereof, is published in print, i suspect i may not reproduce the poetry, as i suspect the publishers will have much to say as to what permissions i'll have to seek---in writing of course... but IF i seek same, those affected will thereby be contacted formally...

note the media slippage here---and i WILL be reading much of the poetry aloud during my presentation...

anyway, apologies for the interrupt, and thanx to all for bearing with me... all remarks &/or curses backchannel, please...

yr humble & obedient servant,

joe

nb: work again at

<http://www.iit.edu/~amato/moonlight.html>

(you'll have to follow the links)

-----

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1051. **Maria Damon**

***YO kristin prevallet, or, address query***

*Fri 27 Feb 1998*

---

i gave it away in the subject line. anybody got kristin's e-address? I need it pronto! thanks in advance --md

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1052. **Keston Sutherland**

***bit/scrap***

*Fri 27 Feb 1998*

---

A RAINBOW KISS

Heaved up over the dead extra-solemn  
gnat at her stashed  
day  
break's end on her  
rifer diet of, say, (approx.) a mode set of pretty flinchless  
ups and downs smacked  
into a glad adherence, alle  
grissimo, a drawn-out twitch; you part  
person part colour  
code grayed  
into her guess  
and yours, in glareless mothlight. By no means  
shaping a pact, and not repressed. Glutted. Each day gags  
ring, thunderous. Big Trouble in Little China. I can barely sleep or I sleep in  
her best hell's charade, to win each way. Downs

says about fairly, I'd  
say or thereabouts just  
what's meant, help me out here maybe it's a glister in  
surance return, falling (down) and fondling her tendered  
fear in the shades  
of brilliance she pervades through soap reflux.

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1053. **Steve Tills**

**Re: +db**

Fri 27 Feb 1998

---

Miekal,

Actually, he's handsomer.

Miekal And wrote:

*Just got my 12 year old copy of the difficulties db issue & I want to say to tom b that it is a very likeable representation of david's rather large & humorlavish world. I especially enjoyed the annotated bibiography in which david fills the unknowing in on the thinking behind the books, books which I have never seen, & well there just arent any David B book in the LaFarge library out here, in fact there is not a book by anyone on this list in the LaFarge library, can you believe that? So even after reading thru snippets of most of the writings glowing with chumness, what stays with me the most was that picture on the front cover, David looking like a doublebreasted oxford citation. Is that really David B? I mean, Ive read a lifetime of db via this list in the last year, & according to his writing he cant look that way.*

*Looks aside, I was intrigued also by the piece which bromige intersects bruce andrews...each word commafied in a grand scrolling word movie. & revealed that David is a collaborators collaborator, a genre that interests me at this point in my writinglife far more than solo shtuff. My only hope is that someday David knocks on my door inspired to twist words with me.*

*miekal*

*tom, something very very satisfying about works dedicated to a single author, is there anyone doing now what difficulties was doing then, is difficulties still?*

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1054. **Miekal And**  
***tomorrow's anagram***

*Fri 27 Feb 1998*

---

dave baptiste chirot wrote:

a parable?

a bar leap\*

---

\*it is my feeling that much of the visual poetry distributed thru mailart channels & thru international vispo contacts function in a similar graffitiographic manner in relation to the "well behaved visual poetry" ... or for years while living in madison would poster my works on telephone poles & buildingsides or festival of the swamps traces spray painted on sidewalks come to mind, what there is left of it.

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1055. **Christina Fairbank Chirot**  
***Re: today's anagram***

*Fri 27 Feb 1998*

---

how about:    literature =

irate luter

(looter . . . )

in "The 14th Ward" section of Black Spring Henry Miller writes:

"What is not in the open street is false, derived, that is to say

literature"

Some of the greatest visual poetry of our times--tagging  
(graffiti) is steadily and heavily being criminalized--

while well behaved visual poetry becomes part of literature  
courses in elite halls--

a parable?

--dave baptiste chirot

On Fri, 27 Feb 1998, Miekal And wrote:

*today's pangram is by texas word alchemist Michael Helsem*

*Literature: True-lie art.*

1056. **Miekal And**  
**Authorized**

Fri 27 Feb 1998

---

"tell me that the term single authors is not refering to marital status"

TB

wrote:

*I would challenge everyone on this list who has not had the experience of editing/publishing a magazine or running a reading series to begin to do so sometime within the next year. It could be frightening.*

tom you get the frisky listmember of the year award for this much needed challenge. if after a year of going thru the paces of this list you are still able to muster such challenges you are truly a great soul.

I  
think  
there  
is  
something  
important  
not  
being  
said  
here  
re  
single  
authors  
issues,  
the  
magnificent  
idea  
that  
it  
is.  
  
the  
choruses  
of who  
yet  
has  
not

earned  
such  
status  
all  
seem  
to be  
of a  
school  
whose  
name  
remains  
unmentioned  
&  
somehow  
they  
are  
all  
american  
&  
they  
seem  
to  
be  
names  
of  
those  
who  
are  
quite  
established  
  
this  
genre  
is  
exciting  
to me  
because  
i  
feel  
invited  
into their  
life, thots,

& writing  
simultaneously  
in a way  
that is  
not  
possible  
when  
reading  
a book  
of texts.

some  
people  
I would  
like  
to see  
such  
assemblages  
prepared  
for  
include  
people  
like

tenatively, a convenience  
christopher dewdney  
elizabeth was  
bern porter  
chris cheek  
cesar figieurado (dont have spelling in front of me)  
dick higgins  
alison knowles  
hannah weiner  
bernadette mayer  
p inman  
rea nikonova  
crag hill  
abraham lincoln gillespie (minus the interview)  
henry flynt  
bob cobbing  
diter rot  
steve mccaffrey  
our Mr B

& I  
think  
Tom  
that  
this challenge  
is appropriate  
placed,  
accurately  
framed  
& indisputably  
the task  
ahead  
of us  
as  
participants  
in culture  
of writing  
writing  
forward  
M And

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1057. **Michael Heller**  
***Re: Pound and ideograms***

*Fri 27 Feb 1998*

---

Pound made the claim that Gaudier-Brzeska could 'read' the ideograms (p46 of the G-B memoir and other places). Did he make that claim for himself? Where?

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1058. **TBeck131**  
***Re: +db +lc +je***

*Fri 27 Feb 1998*

---

I did a Susan Howe Difficulties and Ed Foster has done a Susan Howe Talisman.  
Tom B.

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1059. **CharSmith**

**Re: Susan Howe**

*Fri 27 Feb 1998*

---

In a message dated 98-02-27 15:38:05 EST, Laura Moriarty writes:

<< i. e. Has anyone done a Susan Howe or is one planned? >>

Tom Beckett himself did a GREAT Susan Howe issue! #3.2, 1989

2 interviews, one conducted by Tom, the other by Janet Ruth Falon

& writings on her work by: Stephen Ratcliffe, Janet Rodney, Paul Metcalf, Maureen Owen, Joel Lewis, Stephen-Paul Martin, Bruce Andrews, Peter Quar-temain, Charles Bernstein, Bruce Campbell, Linda Reinfeld & Denis Barone.

whaddya want to bet Tom doesn't have any more?

& there's also the Talisman issue (#4, 1990), but you already know that, don't you? ( Ed Foster's also done issues on Notley, Waldrop, Scalapino & Waldman)

& a new one wd indeed be most welcome!

enjoying yr non(s)

all best,

Charles Smith

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1060. **ScoutEW**

**Re: today's anagram/tagstagtags**

*Fri 27 Feb 1998*

---

Tagging is great, on the Amtrack north from Manhattan to Albany just around the beginning of the Bronx are some great tags, visual and poetic, yet at the same time criminal? -poetry on walls, colorful, often moving (on trains) blurred, short and to the point(like Creeley) , criminal (?) -In the parking lot of Buffalo's Albright -Knox art gallery I watched someone tag one of the moving trucks all white and clean with a sparkling new message, As the security guard chased that person down Elmwood Ave, I remember ( watching, hiding behind the bus stop) thinking the tag was better than anything inside-cherrio folks-J michel basquiat would have liked that.

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1061. **TBeck131**  
**single author issues**  
Fri 27 Feb 1998

---

Back to Laura M.'s comment about focussing on female writers. I agree absolutely. My experience though was that I contacted a number of women writers and I didn't have success in getting them to participate in a project--with the exception of Susan Howe. Finally I ran out of gas and could no longer sustain the project. I deeply regret though not doing anything on Hejinian, Scalapino, DuPlessis, Ward and several others. If I ever have the resources and opportunity I will remedy that.

Tom B.

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1062. **Steve Tills**  
**Re: single author issues**  
Fri 27 Feb 1998

---

Tom,

Yes, very much agree with Laura Moriarty's point!

Also, do you in fact have any of the Susan Howe issues left, and if so I'd like to get one, indeed. Steve Tills

TBeck131 wrote:

*Back to Laura M.'s comment about focussing on female writers. I agree absolutely. My experience though was that I contacted a number of women writers and I didn't have success in getting them to participate in a project--with the exception of Susan Howe. Finally I ran out of gas and could no longer sustain the project. I deeply regret though not doing anything on Hejinian, Scalapino, DuPlessis, Ward and several others. If I ever have the resources and opportunity I will remedy that.*

*Tom B.*

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1063. **CharSSmith**  
**Re: single author issues**  
Fri 27 Feb 1998

---

others I've enjoyed that come to mind:

Paper Air: issues on John Taggart, Jackson MacLow & Bernstein's "Artifice"

Ironwood: 2 issues on George Oppen, one on Duncan, one on Dickinson/Spicer

Credences: one on Irby, another on Metcalf/Duncan  
old issues of Vort, if findable, were two-author issues  
Acts: one on Spicer, another on Celan  
& of course, Sagetrieb  
that's all for now,  
Charles

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1064. **Michael J. Kelleher**

***Re: single author issues***

*Fri 27 Feb 1998*

---

my new e-broadside a l y r i c m a i l e r is doing all single author features of recent work mostly by the younger set. it can be viewed at

<http://writing.upenn.edu/~mjk/hotpotato>.

issue number one features work by Dan Machlin. planned and upcoming features include Heather Fuller, Ben Friedlander, Eleni Sikelianos, Garrett Kalleberg, Carrie Toccie, Heather Ramsdell, Laird Hunt and Stephen Mounkhal.

mk

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1065. **TBeck131**

***Re: single author issues***

*Fri 27 Feb 1998*

---

I shdn't have used the phrase "single author issues" since what we were discussing was mags devoted to critical takes on the work of a single author. I do think such mags have a singular role to play and that we all could profit from having a few more of them around.

Poets need more venues. I've been writing for over 20 years and have never had the opportunity to publish a full length book and not for lack of trying. This is not a unique situation.

I would challenge everyone on this list who has not had the experience of editing/publishing a magazine or running a reading series to begin to do so sometime within the next year. It could be frightening. tom beckett

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1066. **robert drake**

**Re: today's anagram/tagstagstags**

Fri 27 Feb 1998

---

karl young wrote convincingly on tagging in th context of vispo (& also mailart and book art) in his postface to bob harrison & nicholas frank's \_context: a survey of recent visual poetry\_ (1995; hermetic gallery, milwaukee)...

*Tagging is great, on the Amtrack north from Manhattan to Albany  
just around the beginning of the Bronx are some great tags, visual and  
poetic, yet at the same time criminal?  
-poetry on walls, colorful, often moving (on trains) blurred, short and to the  
point(like Creeley) , criminal (?)  
-In the parking lot of Buffalo's Albright -Knox art gallery I watched someone  
tag one of the moving trucks all white and clean with a sparkling new message,  
As the security guard chased that person down Elmwood Ave, I remember (  
watching, hiding behind the bus stop) thinking the tag was better than  
anything inside-cherrio folks-J michel basquiat would have liked that.*

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1067. **CharSSmith**

**Re: single author issues, ps**

Fri 27 Feb 1998

---

oops!

Kevin Killian's Mirage issue on John Weiners

& Paul Mariah's Manroot issue dedicated to Spicer

Laura's point is well taken. Talisman is just abt the only mag one can point to doing features on women. Pretty amazing that no one has done an issue on Lyn Hejinian yet. There was a fine issue of Jimmy & Lucy's House of "K" dedicated to a survey of Tuumba titles & included an interview w/ her. Can't think of anything else.

Pretty sad too that of \*that\* <<u=n=a=m=e=d>> g=r=o=u=p, there isn't yet a collection of her essays.

Charles

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1068. **Schuchat Simon**

**Re: single author issues**

Fri 27 Feb 1998

---

I have an old Caterpillar, #12, July 1970, devoted to only 2 authors, Jack Spicer and Robin Blaser -- truly great! A model for the genre.

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1069. **Karen Kelley**

***Pillow Book***

*Fri 27 Feb 1998*

---

Kind of peripherally: I've been reading Claude Simon's *\_Tryptich\_* (which is amazing) and the density of cross-cutting images & naratives, the pure luscious accretion, keeps reminding me of both Greenaway & Shonagon.

A thought serendipitously addressed by this quote attached to a message received early this morning:

Contemporary trends of thought imagine that art is like a fountain, whereas it is a sponge. They have decided that art should gush forth, whereas it should absorb and become saturated. They think it can be broken down into methods of depiction, whereas it is composed of organs of perception.

> > Boris Pasternak

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1070. **Gabriel Gudding**

***Re: single author issues & SYC REV***

*Fri 27 Feb 1998*

---

On Fri, 27 Feb 1998, TBeck131 wrote:

| *Poets need more venues.*

In humane response to the above outcry for MORE VENUES, we at *\_Sycamore\_* wish to offer our services. *\_Sycamore Review\_* is in its tenth year of publication, and, yes, Tom Beckett, it IS hell out there; but don't abandon all hope: we're here. And we're here for YOU. We have since our last post received some, like, undeniably great submissions.

Please!: had trouble finding the understanding editors? good alive fun venues? Cheesed off at the impersonal rejection slip? the unfriendly mega-rejection? Well, then: send US your work.

Last issue: Araki Yasusada (yes, we know he's an hoax -- that's, like, the *\_point\_*), Bill Knott, David Cameron, Denise Duhamel, Campbell McGrath, Catherine Bowman, Dan Morris, Pat Moran, Charles Webb, a great essay by Mikhail Epstein, and two interviews with no cussing.

Next issue: Richard Kostelanetz, Mark Halliday, Caroline Knox, Brenda Coultas, David Cameron, Bill Knott, and THERE'S STILL SOME ROOM LEFT. Deadline for this next issue: April second.

Please submit print material only. No email submissions: we get confused.

We're accepting submissions for, what, poetry, sudden fiction, essays, and stuff that cannot be identified.

Sycamore Review: We're, Like, There When You Need Us.

Gabriel Gudding, Poetry Editor  
Sycamore Review  
Heavilon Hall  
Purdue University  
W. Lafayette IN 47907

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---

1071. **Tosh**  
***Printers?***

*Fri 27 Feb 1998*

---

Hello List:

Can anyone on this list recommend a good book printer. I imagine there are horror stories as well as pure happiness tales. Please back channel the info, unless you think the list would find it interesting.

Thanks!

Tosh

-----

Tosh Berman  
TamTam Books

-----

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---

1072. **Karen Kelley**  
***sp?***

*Fri 27 Feb 1998*

---

Oops, triptych. Thought it looked funny.

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---

1073. **David Zauhar**  
***You Too Can Edit a LitMag (or can you?)***

*Fri 27 Feb 1998*

---

| TB wrote:

*I would challenge everyone on this list who has not had the experience of editing/publishing a magazine or running a reading series to begin to do so sometime within the next year. It could be frightening.*

This might be the type of question where the answer is, "if you have to ask, you'll never know," but what are some of the many ways one can go about setting up a magazine? I'm talking about the material questions here: How much does it cost? How cheaply can it be done? How do you handle the printing? The distribution? The rejection notices? How do you choose a name, for instance? Do you get institutional funding, or do you go it alone? Etc...

Along these lines, I'm about halfway through Michael Cuddihy's memoir, *Try Ironwood*, about his late lamented magazine. It's great, but these questions have gone unasked in that book (I get the feeling he had access to money besides the NEA grants -- not that he was living on easy street given his illnesses, of course, but money didn't seem to be a problem for the mag).

So Poetix folks: I know full well some of you HAVE your own mags and have been dying since this thread has started to talk about them. Here's your chance: Any how-to advice? Horror stories? Success stories? etc etc.

David Zauhar  
University of Illinois at Chicago

So often nothing happens  
and then when something does  
noone notices.

--Alan Davies

(Thanks to Tom Beckett for this week's signature. Coming next week: Bern Porter)

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1074. **Laura Moriarty**  
**Re: single author issues**  
*Fri 27 Feb 1998*

---

Tom -

I stand corrected about the Difficulties - and yes do you have more of those Susan Howes? and I am aware it is very difficult to get people to write critically -

Also - just wanted to mention there is an old Maps (#5) of Louis Zukofsky that is a favorite of mine -

Laura

  
<http://socrates.berkeley.edu/~moriarty/>

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1075. **Steven Marks**

***Re: Printers?***

*Fri 27 Feb 1998*

---

Tosh and other interested parties,

With the company I used to work for, we used Bookcrafters in, I think, Michigan. You can find their ads in any writing type magazine. I think they are also listed in the resources section of Bookwire. We never had any problems with them. They are at the higher end of the range in price from what I remember, but the knowledge that the job is going to be done on time and right probably makes the extra \$\$ worth it.

Steven

On Fri, 27 Feb 1998, Tosh wrote:

*Hello List:*

*Can anyone on this list recommend a good book printer. I imagine there are horror stories as well as pure happiness tales. Please back channel the info, unless you think the list would find it interesting.*

*Thanks!*

*Tosh*

-----  
*Tosh Berman*  
*TamTam Books*  
-----

---

Steven Marks

<http://members.aol.com/swmarks/welcome.html>

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1076. **Steven Marks**

**Re: You Too Can Edit a LitMag (or can you?)**

Fri 27 Feb 1998

---

David, I published four issues of a magazine called "Angry" about 8 or 9 years ago. If you don't count the hours of free labor I put in, I broke even. I did this by buying a second-hand copy machine so I had control of the means of production. My print runs could be whatever size I wanted. My subscription policy was that I sent it out to 200 friends, relatives, acquaintances, etc. and asked them to send me \$4 for the issue if they liked it. Every issue, about 10% of my "subscribers" sent me money, sometimes more than I asked for. It was time that did me in.

Steven

On Fri, 27 Feb 1998, David Zauhar wrote:

*TB wrote:*

*I would challenge everyone on this list who has not had the experience of editing/publishing a magazine or running a reading series to begin to do so sometime within the next year. It could be frightening.*

*This might be the type of question where the answer is, "if you have to ask, you'll never know," but what are some of the many ways one can go about setting up a magazine? I'm talking about the material questions here: How much does it cost? How cheaply can it be done? How do you handle the printing? The distribution? The rejection notices? How do you choose a name, for instance? Do you get institutional funding, or do you go it alone? Etc...*

*Along these lines, I'm about halfway through Michael Cuddihy's memoir, Try Ironwood, about his late lamented magazine. It's great, but these questions have gone unasked in that book (I get the feeling he had access to money besides the NEA grants -- not that he was living on easy street given his illnesses, of course, but money didn't seem to be a problem for the mag).*

*So Poetix folks: I know full well some of you HAVE your own mags and have been dying since this thread has started to talk about them. Here's your chance: Any how-to advice? Horror stories? Success stories? etc etc.*

*David Zauhar  
University of Illinois at Chicago*

*So often nothing happens  
and then when something does  
noone notices.*

--Alan Davies

*(Thanks to Tom Beckett for this week's signature. Coming next week: Bern  
Porter)*

---

Steven Marks

<http://members.aol.com/swmarks/welcome.html>

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1077. **TBeck131**  
***again with the single author issues already***

Sat 28 Feb 1998

---

I'm sure my enthusiasm for this list will ebb and fade. Nonetheless my challenge was serious . I truly believe that all writers should edit and publish a magazine at some point in their career. And that the magazine should be as focused and considered as possible--it should be the evidence of the need that brought it forth. Magazines, reading series, talks and the like are the foundation blocks of the larger social project that a writing practice is--we all need to take responsibility for keeping these kinds of scenes renewed and alive. Doing a mag will teach you things you can't learn any other way. Why not do what you can do, start what you can start sooner rather than later? If you think the "old guys" are getting all the attention then develop a context to attend to the work of that special thirty something, or neglected whomever. Only connect. I'll stop here. I'm starting to irritate myself.

Tom Beckett

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1078. **Joel Kuszai**  
***Re: single author issues***

Sat 28 Feb 1998

---

*I would challenge everyone on this list who has not had the experience of editing/publishing a magazine or running a reading series to begin to do so sometime within the next year. It could be frightening.*

tom beckett

"everyone should be have their own band!"

"yeah that'd be wicked!"

"then there'd be one big show and everyone in the world would play!"

"yeah"

(my memory of a particularly lovely section of the first Sebadoh record, c. 1988 or 89)

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1079. **Michel Delville**

***Pound's Dichtung***

*Sat 28 Feb 1998*

---

On Thu, 26 Feb 1998 10:35:40 +0100 Michel Delville said:

>>The German verb "dichten" does not mean "to condense" but to "block" the  
>>holes or openings in an object in order to prevent air, gas, or liquid  
>>getting in or out. I guess "to seal" would be the nearest English  
>>equivalent. The idea, however, is not to achieve "poetic density" but  
>>rather to preserve a sense of unity or wholeness. More fragments to shore  
>>against our ruins?

*saying that Pound's idea - behind this expression dichten = condensare -  
is to preserve unity or wholeness?*

*point Pound is making here is: "to write poetry is to condense", i.e.  
to sharpen, shorten, achieve precision and depth through brevity.  
Perhaps this is assuming too many a priori Poundian sentiments.*

*Are you suggesting that Pound may also have been playing with  
this other meaning of "dichten" - to set a seal? I think the image  
of "setting a seal" was extremely important to Pound - he was always  
aiming for the effect of a visual emblem on a number of levels - a  
Renaissance, iconic imagism. I'm not sure how your  
focus on achieving unity & wholeness relates to the word "condensare",  
but I can understand the sense of an author "setting a seal" on a work -  
the overall, pervasive, unique signature - the "total" icon. His father  
worked for the mint; Pound made Pound notes cohere as heavy crystal;  
with all the arch-reactionary elements of authorial "totality" set  
up against the non-visual, ultra-verbal splurge of Joyce or Stein.*

*...but what were you saying? I mean, how does the whole equation imply  
preserving unity or wholeness? Is it that the process of condensation  
leads finally to "setting the seal"? - Henry Gould*

I don't think it does, at least in the context of Pound's ABC of Reading -- I was merely trying to answer Jeremy's query by pointing out that the verb "dichten"



does not mean "to condense" but to "seal a gap" or "to plug the leaks" in something, at least in contemporary German. Also, the words "dichten" and "Dichtung" indeed seem etymologically unrelated.

I just thought that the idea of poetry as an act of "sealing" in this sense (which is clearly not what Pound meant in the aforementioned quote) adds an ironic, albeit retrospective, twist to Pound's poetic project and his commitment to poetry as a craft, and eventually as a means of redeeming culture and history. Now I concur that any such speculation -- based as it is on Pound's third-hand knowledge of German and my second-hand knowledge of ABC of Reading -- is ultimately sterile and self-undermining. My apologies to those of you who took my comments seriously.

Jedem Dichter seine Dichtung is what I say.

-----  
Michel Delville  
English Department  
University of Liège  
3 Place Cockerill  
4000 Liège  
BELGIUM  
fax: ++ 32 4 366 57 21  
e-mail: [REDACTED]

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1080. **Bob Grumman**  
***Re: single author issues***  
*Sat 28 Feb 1998*

---

This is a multi-part message in MIME format.

Just a reminder that Comprepoetica is still in business. At Comprepoetica those of you interested in individual poets (and one critic) can read brief biographies of more than forty of them, many on this list. I hope eventually to have the equivalent of a magazine issue devoted to each of Comprepoetica author: bio, selection of poems, critical discussion--but the site doesn't seem to be generating much interest. All I need is data for bios, and/or sample poems and/or a discussions of a poet's work by the poet or someone else. So send me something! And get those poets you'd like to read about to send me something! Comprepoetica's URL should be below.

--Bob G.

Bob Grumman

http://www.geocities.com/SoHo/Cafe/1492

Comprepoetica, the Poetry-Data-Collection Site

-----1B9321EFD8A--

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1081. **George Thompson**

***Re: Pound's Dichtung***

*Sat 28 Feb 1998*

---

To follow up on Michel Delville's post:

>

>I don't think it does, at least in the context of Pound's ABC of Reading --

>I was merely trying to answer Jeremy's query by pointing out that the verb

>"dichten" does not mean "to condense" but to "seal a gap" or "to plug the

>leaks" in something, at least in contemporary German. Also, the words

>"dichten" and "Dichtung" indeed seem etymologically unrelated.

But in fact 'dichten' does have the meaning 'tighten, thicken' and by extension it does mean 'condensare.' Somebody cited the form 'verdichten' already: this verb means 'to compress, condense.' That is, quite literally, 'dichten' by extension: ver + dichten. Also, if you look at Kluge's *\_Etymologisches Woerterbuch der Deutschen Sprache\_*, the article on 'dichten' will show the historical development of this word, which is transparently related to English 'thicken, tighten.'

At some point [Kluge cites the 9th century] there is evidence of borrowing of the Latin verb 'dictare' to dictate, compose, poetry [again, Horace: dictare carmina]. And the two separate verbs, with exact same phonetic shape but quite different meaning, begin to influence each other.

In fact, besides, 'Dichtung' [poem], there is also a second form, 'Dichtung' [sealing, packing].

The point is that Pound, with his poetic ear, picked up on this semantic association and played with it, rather perceptively I think, even if not fully aware of the history of these words.

George Thompson

>

>I just thought that the idea of poetry as an act of "sealing" in this sense

>(which is clearly not what Pound meant in the aforementioned quote) adds an

>ironic, albeit retrospective, twist to Pound's poetic project and his

>commitment to poetry as a craft, and eventually as a means of redeeming

>culture and history. Now I concur that any such speculation -- based as it

>is on Pound's third-hand knowledge of German and my second-hand

knowledge

>of ABC of Reading -- is ultimately sterile and self-undermining. My

>apologies to those of you who took my comments seriously.

>

>Jedem Dichter seine Dichtung is what I say.

>

>-----

>Michel Delville

>English Department

>University of Liège

>3 Place Cockerill

>4000 Liège

>BELGIUM

>fax: ++ 32 4 366 57 21

>e-mail: [REDACTED]

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1082. **Brian Clements**

***Re: Printers?***

*Sat 28 Feb 1998*

---

The list \_would\_ find it interesting...

~~~~~

On Fri, 27 Feb 1998, Tosh wrote:

Hello List:

Can anyone on this list recommend a good book printer. I imagine there are horror stories as well as pure happiness tales. Please back channel the info, unless you think the list would find it interesting.

Thanks!

Tosh

Tosh Berman

TamTam Books

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1083. **TBeck131**
more on mags,etc.
Sat 28 Feb 1998

A couple of years ago I destroyed most of my writing(the bulk of what constituted 15 and more years of work). Stupid? Perhaps. A practice suicide? Maybe. I was at the end of my tether, rabid with self-directed loathing. I'd convinced myself that I remained the failing little boy of yore and that time was running out. It's still sometimes hard not to feel this way although I'm learning tricks to turn around these patterns of negativity.

My larger point is that this act of destruction was a sad necessity in terms of clearing the deck. All those MSS (slaved over, patronized, rejected, vilified) were like a noose around my neck. Cutting them away reawakened in me a dormant sense of just how enormous a responsibility is the practice of writing. I resolved to begin again, perhaps fail again; but, like Uncle Sam, to "fail better".

The list has revolutionary potential insofar as we spin off from it and do the hard work in the big and nasty outside world. I wasn't an English major. I live in a college town but am not an academic. I do Public Health work in which I am constantly up against many of life's harder realities. Much as I love theorizing I think the real point of all art is change. Multidimensional change.

Do something--a mag or reading series, talks (whatever you can do to expand the appetite for radical thought). Make the list an epicenter. Become a retro-virus. Infect the body politic.

"I've got another/Jones for Jesus."

Tom Beckett

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1084. **Miekal And**
this is the hour of the web
Sat 28 Feb 1998

Repeatedly, with this discussion of honoring & widening the path to those who have done the work & made now possible, (whether were speaking language, visual/verbal, or poetry poetry) the looming omission seems to be that access to such authors is taken for granted. I don't believe I'm the only person interested in meeting all of an author's lifework that does not have access to libraries that carry this work, who cannot afford to buy it, or who uses literature in less academic, more playful ways. My interest is less in marking critical recognition & or canonizing our favorites. What I am interested in is how, (for example) David B's life & words enter my daily life, whether its feedings the goats, planting trees, or teaching interns about permaculture. My belief is that in order for

poetry to live it has to function simultaneously with/ & as an essence of community.

For many communities such as Dreamtime Village, the web has made what failed in the 60s possible in the 90s. & my overriding critique of many such sustainable communities then as now is that they are culturally stale, that they are afraid to make the leaps that allow the exciting & breathtaking culturework going on, that we in this list take for granted as being something larger than us, when in many ways it really is a phenomena of the personalities on this list. If I wanted to turn a newbie showing up at dreamtime onto the world of newlit, I would invite them to take part in this list a long time before I would have them tackle Louie's A. (Rest assured that in the end, after access to real people was achieved, I would expand it to introducing them to books & publishing & readings, etc.).

When I was coming of age in the late 70s I got excited about & addicted to this very questionable lifestyle by Kostelanetz & Rothenberg anthologies & by L=A=N=G=U=A=G=E mag, & even was so daring as to think they would publish my writing & tho my submissions were repeated rejected, I felt thru those pages that it was a circuit of ideas & designs that somehow included me in a very personal way. & meeting many of those characters later on confirmed that indeed we shared similar motivations & longterm goals even if our styles were very very different.

Miekal

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1085. **Miekal And** **Re: Critical issues**

Sat 28 Feb 1998

Laura Moriarty wrote:

I try to send printouts of non to the not-netted (though of course some texts and images are web-only knowable) - As an archivist I know that such hard copies collected at the various archives will be of lasting importance -

I detect a strategy here, & would like to know more. Are you saying that the same archives that collect small press & bookart are also interested in a hard-copy version of webworks? How are they being catalogued? Are you binding actual volumes or are you handing them looseleaf xeroxes. Do you think such works get treated equal to published volumes or is it treated as ephemera, like say an author's letters?

Relatedly -

Recently got some stats for non that suggest much readership - many hits form all over the world and want to thank people for checking in -

When I compare how many hits we get on various sites to how many people have read a Xexoxial book, I have to console myself that ehy are really 2 different mediums. There is of course the question of how many of those "hits" actually consume content.

I've always thought that it's good to give something to the writing community esp if you expect anything back - run a series, publish a magazine etc - It feeds the work -

I think the days of poets being supported by a critical & publishing that is separate from their own life's work have largely come to pass. Of the 100s of writers/artists Im in contact with, I really dont know one that isnt participant in at least some of the other furniture of creating poetic culture, whether it be publishing, distributing, bookstores, working in archives & libraries, radio, reading series, collaborations, teaching & promotion.

I also think (on another thread) that it's hard for anyone to really imagine David Bromige's true glamour if they haven't experienced it in person -

You know, I invited David to come show me his goat milking tricks for just that reason.

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1086. **Miekal And** ***The Critical Issue***

Sat 28 Feb 1998

TBeck131 wrote:

What are all of us willing to do?
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1087. **rsillima**

Department Stores & Poets

Sat 28 Feb 1998

Yo, Hilton,

While poets have been using libraries and coffee houses in which to write for centuries, I do believe it may have been the late Dan Davidson who was the first to employ the department store for this purpose. Dan would go to Nordstrom in San Francisco, find a place to sit and work. He claimed that he enjoyed the ambience of the live piano.

Ron Silliman

Date: Thu, 26 Feb 1998 08:46:27 -0800

From: Hilton Manfred Obenzinger <[REDACTED]>

Subject: Re: poets-in-residence

I don't know about the earlier posting, but the idea of poets in car plants and lingerie departments sounds terrific.

Hilton Obenzinger

On Thu, 26 Feb 1998, Pat Boran wrote:

> Re David R Israel's earlier posting:
>
> Ok, maybe it is a bit weird that Peter Samson is poet-in-residence in
Marks
> and Spenser's store, but here on this side of the Atlantic (i.e. the other
> side to most of you people) we thought the States invented all this stuff
> and that's why we're falling over ourselves now to put poets in hospitals,
> libraries, lingerie departments, what have you. Even as I write, I'm in
the
> old National Ballroom, Dublin (Ireland) where I'm writer-in-residence for
> Dublin Corporation, and a couple of weeks back I did a short, experimental
> stint in a Nissan car plant. The idea came from the News department of
RTE,
> our national TV broadcaster, no doubt spurred on by the appointment of a
poet
> in residence to the BBC News department in London a couple of weeks back.
> As far as I can make out (initial novelty aside), it's all about reminding
> people that poetry doesn't have a natural home, per se. Still, I must
admit
> that a recent circular to British and Irish poets about availability for
> workshops/residencies did make me sit up. Among the locations that might
> be ticked by the interested scribe were zoos and nuclear power stations!
>
> PAT BORAN
> [REDACTED]
>

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1088. **Douglas**

Re: Printers?

Sat 28 Feb 1998

Bookcrafters -- as almost any small publisher
will tell you -- are crooks. And they do sloppy
jobs. Never use them.

D

Steven Marks wrote:

>
> Tosh and other interested parties,
>

> With the company I used to work for, we used Bookcrafters in, I think,
> Michigan. You can find their ads in any writing type magazine. I think
> they are also listed in the resources section of Bookwire. We never had
> any problems with them. They are at the higher end of the range in price
> from what I remember, but the knowledge that the job is going to be done
> on time and right probably makes the extra \$\$ worth it.
>
> Steven
>
> On Fri, 27 Feb 1998, Tosh wrote:
>
> > Hello List:
> >
> > Can anyone on this list recommend a good book printer. I imagine there
are
> > horror stories as well as pure happiness tales. Please back channel the
> > info, unless you think the list would find it interesting.
> >
> > Thanks!
> >
> > Tosh
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> > -----
> > Tosh Berman
> > TamTam Books
> > -----
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>
> _____
> Steven Marks
>
> <http://members.aol.com/swmarks/welcome.html>
> _____

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1089. **rsillima**
Critical issues
Sat 28 Feb 1998

IN ADDITION TO the names that have already been mentioned, there have never been any critical issues of magazines devoted to:

Rae Armantrout
Fanny Howe
Carla Harryman
Kathleen Fraser
Joanne Kyger
Beverly Dahlen
Hannah Weiner
Bernadette Mayer
Maureen Owen
Ann Lauterbach
Rosemarie Waldrop
Barbara Guest
Tina Darragh
Laura Moriarty

Every single one of whom has produced more than enough great writing to warrant same.

The only conceivable "excuse" is the number of great male writers likewise neglected. (Although if I start to think about male writers of color, like Lorenzo Thomas, Nate Mackey, Cecil Giscombe, or Kofi Natambu, I'll probably start to rant all over again....)

Ron

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1090. **Joel Kuszai**
Re: Critical issues
Sat 28 Feb 1998

A few weeks ago (it seems) Loss Glazier proposed to the graduate students "here" in Buffalo (this message delivered to my time zone via the glory of tel-net) that it might be a productive addition to one's graduate work to do the requisite labor involved for the creation of EPC author pages where many of the poets one might want to see represented are not (mostly women). His list was about two times as long as Ron's and probably not everyone on it is in line for such a collection of critical appreciation. This electronic space makes for a different set of possibilities. I would recommend that where once Talisman did a S.H. issue, or an Alice Notley Issue (and I really can't believe that for some of the writers listed below there aren't qualifying feschrits, but that just goes to show i guess...) NOW we might think of clustering critical interests around volunteeristic/careeristic editors who would do the labor of assembling the texts. As Loss pointed out (here/there) the actual markup for this activity would be relatively easy and done at the EPC home office, so no real html experience

would be required. Joseph Conte did something of a similar service when he sent out requests for Dictionary of Literary Biography entries on contemporary poets. It seems that the EPC equivalent could be simple sites providing a similar function.anyhow-that's my 2sense

On Sat, 28 Feb 1998 [REDACTED] wrote:

IN ADDITION TO the names that have already been mentioned, there have never been any critical issues of magazines devoted to:

*Rae Armantrout
Fanny Howe
Carla Harryman
Kathleen Fraser
Joanne Kyger
Beverly Dahlen
Hannah Weiner
Bernadette Mayer
Maureen Owen
Ann Lauterbach
Rosemarie Waldrop
Barbara Guest
Tina Darragh
Laura Moriarty*

Every single one of whom has produced more than enough great writing to warrant same.

The only conceivable "excuse" is the number of great male writers likewise neglected. (Although if I start to think about male writers of color, like Lorenzo Thomas, Nate Mackey, Cecil Giscombe, or Kofi Natambu, I'll probably start to rant all over again....)

Ron

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1091. **Eryque Gleason**
National Adjunct Congress in NYC (fwd)

Sat 28 Feb 1998

hi all. i haven't been reading this list lately, so i don't know if this announcement has been posted yet. my apologies if it has. eryque

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

Date: Tue, 17 Feb 1998 22:39:16 EST

From: [REDACTED]

To: [REDACTED]

Subject: National Adjunct Congress in NYC

*The Doctoral Students' Council of the City University of
New York Graduate Center
Welcomes:*

*Second National Congress of Part-Time,
Adjunct, Non-Tenure-Track and GTA Faculty*

*"Our Time Has Come"
New York City
April 3,4,5 1998*

*The Second National Congress of Part-Time, Adjunct,
Non-Tenure-Track and GTA Faculty will be held in New York on April 3, 4
and 5 1998. The Congress will open at the CUNY Graduate Center at 33 West
42 street. The Second National Congress is an event organized by faculty
who are concerned about the current and future state of higher education.
Plenary and workshop sessions facilitated by faculty and faculty organizers
will address the key strategies, needs and visions of part time/ adjunct,
GTA and non-tenured faculty over the three day working conference.*

*This conference takes place at a time when faculty, both full and
part time, at institutions of higher education are under an escalating
assault. The current trend to degrade the profession through the creation
and expansion of an increasingly polarized multi-tier system is
academically indefensible and is in the worst interest of students, their
parents and the increasingly exploited instructional work-force. The
administrative and governing apparatus prioritizes profit-oriented
research, endowments, infrastructure, and administration over and against
education. The push to drive down faculty salaries, eliminate tenure and
populate the university with a group of over-worked contingent laborers may
advance the careers of some administrators, but it represents a betrayal of
the university's educational mission.*

*In order to combat the forces arrayed against students and faculty
alike, we are coming together to educate and organize. This second congress
is part of a growing movement of lower-tier faculty, students, and
organizers to take an active role in the struggle to save higher education.*

*This congress is envisioned as the continuation of an organized
effort by lower-tier faculty to transform the institutions in which they
teach.*

Please publicize this in appropriate forums.

*CUNY Graduate Center / 33 West 42nd Street / New York, NY, 10036
Brecht Forum/122 West 27th Street/ 10th Floor/New York, NY, 10001*

Schedule:

Opening: Friday Plenary April 3 - 3-9

Workshops on Saturday from 9 - 5:30

(Party Saturday Night at The Brecht Forum)

Follow-up at the Brecht Forum on April 5 from 10 am to 3 pm.

There is no conference fee, but we ask that you register ASAP.

REGISTRATION- reply to: [REDACTED] (or see below).

REGISTRATION

Name:

Affiliation:

Phone #:

E-Mail:

Do you need accommodations information ?

Is there a workshop that you would be interested in (describe it):

Would you be interested in leading a workshop (describe it)?

Can your organization make a contribution to help defray the costs of this event?

\$50. \$100. \$250 other_____

*Checks can be made out to: CUNY Graduate Center and mailed to:
The Adjunct Project
c/o Doctoral Students' Council
25 W. 43rd St., Rm. 400
New York, NY 10036*

*If you cannot register by e-mail mail registration to the above address.
For further information, please call Eric at [REDACTED].*

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1092. **Michael J. Kelleher**

Re: You Too Can Edit a LitMag (or can you?)

Sat 28 Feb 1998

David Zauhar wrote:

So Poetix folks: I know full well some of you HAVE your own mags and have been dying since this thread has started to talk about them. Here's your chance: Any how-to advice? Horror stories? Success stories? etc etc.

David,

I'm interested in e-publications as a means to distribute quickly and broadly the work of contemporaries. Many university servers offer students/faculty a significant amount of free server space with their accounts and most pay-servers do the same. Usually something in the 'hood of five mb's. This is enough space to do at least a year's worth of text-only pubs, and if you use netscape communicator you don't even have to know how to write html to publish a zine. So, it's very cheap, very easy and very quick - I spent less than 10 hours designing, finishing and distributing the first issue. One click to the poetics list and you have a distribution of nearly six hundred interested readers.

I'd be interested also to hear other's thoughts on e-publication. Especially regarding publication or "previously published" status of texts as regards print mag editing as well as reading poetry on line, printing out e-pubs etc. Are people likely to read on-line or to print them out and read them on paper? How do "materialists" feel about such a disembodied space for poetry?

Truly,

Mike

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1093. **Maria Damon**

Re: more on mags, etc.

Sat 28 Feb 1998

At 10:12 AM -0500 2/28/98, TBeck131 wrote:

>A couple of years ago I destroyed most of my writing(the bulk of what
>constituted 15 and more years of work). Stupid? Perhaps. A practice
>suicide? Maybe. I was at the end of my tether, rabid with self-directed
>loathing. I'd convinced myself that I remained the failing little boy of yore
>and that time was running out. It's still sometimes hard not to feel this way
>although I'm learning tricks to turn around these patterns of negativity.
>

>My larger point is that this act of destruction was a sad necessity in terms
>of clearing the deck. All those MSS (slaved over, patronized, rejected,
>vilified) were like a noose around my neck. Cutting them away reawakened in
>me a dormant sense of just how enormous a responsibility is the practice of
>writing. I resolved to begin again, perhaps fail again; but, like Uncle Sam,
>to "fail better".

>

>The list has revolutionary potential insofar as we spin off from it and do the
>hard work in the big and nasty outside world. I wasn't an English major. I
>live in a college town but am not an academic. I do Public Health work in
>which I am constantly up against many of life's harder realities. Much as I
>love theorizing I think the real point of all art is change. Multidimensional
>change.

>

>Do something--a mag or reading series, talks (whatever you can do to expand
>the appetite for radical thought). Make the list an epicenter. Become a
>retrovirus. Infect the body politic.

>

>"I've got another/Jones for Jesus."

>

>Tom Beckett

your words are inspiring. i know i don't have the energy to do a mag by myself,
and barely the energy to do speakers, but there are other ways of participating
which i do. i'm grateful for your voice on the list. as for destroying one's work,
i've done that too, and you're right: even though in the long run the work out-
lives the person, in the larger metaphysical world i think, if one *can* make the
choice, it's okay to choose one's life over one's work.

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1094. **Bob Grumman**

Re: Critical issues

Sat 28 Feb 1998

This is a multi-part message in MIME format.

Joel, could you tell us a little more about Joseph Conte's Dictionary of Literary
Biography entries on contemporary poets? I don't remember his post about
that. If he's doing what I'm doing, maybe he and I could pool efforts. I, too,
hope to use my site's bios in a dictionary.

--Bob G.

Bob Grumman

██████████ http://www.geocities.com/SoHo/Cafe/1492

Comprepoetica, the Poetry-Data-Collection Site

-----152F7B473060--

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1095. **Mark Weiss**

Re: Printers?

Sat 28 Feb 1998

I'll second that emotion. Recently they gave me an estimate that was 10% below McNaughton & Gunn, which I use. I had them send me samples--they were awful (always ask for samples of the work of a printer who's new to you). All printers have problems, make mistakes. M & G is as good as any short-run company, and better than many. They screwed up the page back-up on one of Junction's books. My standards are pretty high. They trashed the whole print run and did it over at their expense. McNaughton & Gunn, ██████████. Ask for Lori Potter, tell her I sent you--never hurts to grease the wheels. Turn around, by the way, is 4-5 weeks.

At 08:57 AM 2/28/98 -0800, you wrote:

>Bookcrafters -- as almost any small publisher
>will tell you -- are crooks. And they do sloppy
>jobs. Never use them.

>

>D

>

>Steven Marks wrote:

>>

>> Tosh and other interested parties,

>>

>> With the company I used to work for, we used Bookcrafters in, I think,

>> Michigan. You can find their ads in any writing type magazine. I think

>> they are also listed in the resources section of Bookwire. We never had

>> any problems with them. They are at the higher end of the range in price

>> from what I remember, but the knowledge that the job is going to be done

>> on time and right probably makes the extra \$\$ worth it.

>>

>> Steven

>>

>> On Fri, 27 Feb 1998, Tosh wrote:

>>

>> > Hello List:

>> >
>> > Can anyone on this list recommend a good book printer. I imagine
there are
>> > horror stories as well as pure happiness tales. Please back channel the
>> > info, unless you think the list would find it interesting.
>> >
>> > Thanks!
>> >
>> > Tosh
>> >
>> > -----
>> > Tosh Berman
>> > TamTam Books
>> > -----
>> >
>>
>>

>> Steven Marks
>>
>> <http://members.aol.com/swmarks/welcome.html>
>> _____
>
>

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1096. **Judy Roitman**

Ko Un

Sat 28 Feb 1998

I've been asked, on very short notice, to write a book review on a short collection of poems (in English translation) by the Korean poet Ko Un.

The introductory material and translator's notes have a lot to say about his life and Zen practice, but very little about how his work fits into contemporary Korean poetry, or what the range of contemporary Korean poetics is. Ko Un himself states his poetics, but they seem much more revolutionary than his poems as they appear in translation. Only 108 (a significant Buddhist number) poems appear in the collection, but he is apparently much more prolific than that, and I have no idea how typical these poems are of his work.

If anyone can help me fill in some of the gaps mentioned in the above paragraph I will be very grateful.

Unfortunately, the review is due in a few days.

Thanks.

----- Judy Roitman
| "Whoppers Whoppers Whoppers! Math, University of Kansas | mem-
ory fails Lawrence, KS 66045 | these are the days." [REDACTED]
| fax: [REDACTED] | Larry Eigner, 1927-1996
----- Note new area code

http://www.math.ukans.edu/~roitman/

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1097. **louis stroffolino**

QUERIES

Sat 28 Feb 1998

-
1. Does anybody know if Keith Tuma is still on this list?
More importantly, does anybody have his email address?
Backchannel me, thanks.....
 2. Does anybody have access to the WEB and could print out some of
John Tranter's magazine published in the form of a web-site....
I am particularly looking for the HANS MAGNUS ENZENSBERGER poem
he announced was to be published there. Since I do not have
web access, and even if i did, cannot download and print off
my email (and i cannot read POEMS on computer screen in a way
that does them justice), I would
DEEPLY appreciate the assistance of anybody
who could do this for me (will send you my book or something
as payment). Thanks, in advance....
CHRIS STROFFOLINO

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1098. **Hilton Manfred Obenzinger**

Re: Department Stores & Poets

Sat 28 Feb 1998

Rob,

There's often a blur between the coffee house, the department store, and the mall, such as at the Nordstrom's at Stonestown in SF, and with the piano there's a certain dreamy ambience that's melancholy, soothing, filled with muffled anxiety (the appropriate state of commodity exchange alpha brain, I suppose) that I found conducive to writing, even when I had commercial jobs, so I can appreciate what Dan Davidson enjoyed. Other great places are airports,

train stations. Of course, there's always hotel lobbies -- and if you get dressed up, bring a brief case, you can sit for hours as if you're waiting for a meeting with no one bothering you.

Pat Boran I think is talking about poets actually getting paid to hang out at Nordstrom's -- an even more thrilling notion (if no strings attached) -- an idea that might get implemented in "socialist" Britain or Ireland. Imagine having a little space in Boeing or the Chicago commodities exchange or the Luxor in Las Vegas, some notebooks, a computer -- hell, I could finally write a poem of microwave electronics and Boolean Algebra at Hewlet-Packard, and I'm running out to their personnel department to offer my services right now!

Take care,

Hilton Obenzinger

On Sat, 28 Feb 1998 [REDACTED] wrote:

Yo, Hilton,

While poets have been using libraries and coffee houses in which to write for centuries, I do believe it may have been the late Dan Davidson who was the first to employ the department store for this purpose. Dan would go to Nordstrom in San Francisco, find a place to sit and work. He claimed that he enjoyed the ambience of the live piano.

Ron Silliman

Date: Thu, 26 Feb 1998 08:46:27 -0800

From: Hilton Manfred Obenzinger <[REDACTED]>

Subject: Re: poets-in-residence

I don't know about the earlier posting, but the idea of poets in car plants and lingerie departments sounds terrific.

Hilton Obenzinger

On Thu, 26 Feb 1998, Pat Boran wrote:

Re David R Israel's earlier posting:

Ok, maybe it is a bit weird that Peter Samson is poet-in-residence in Marks

and Spenser's store, but here on this side of the Atlantic (i.e. the other side to most of you people) we thought the States invented all this stuff and that's why we're falling over ourselves now to put poets in hospitals, libraries, lingerie departments, what have you. Even as I write, I'm in the

old National Ballroom, Dublin (Ireland) where I'm writer-in-residence for Dublin Corporation, and a couple of weeks back I did a short, experimental stint in a Nissan car plant. The idea came from the News department of RTE, our national TV broadcaster, no doubt spurred on by the appointed of a poet in residence to the BBC News department in London a couple of weeks back. As far as I can make out (initial novelty aside), it's all about reminding people that poetry doesn't have a natural home, per se. Still, I must admit that a recent circular to British and Irish poets about availability for workshops/residencies did make me sit up. Among the locations that might be ticked by the interested scribe were zoos and nuclear power stations!

PAT BORAN



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1099. **Hilton Manfred Obenzinger**

Re: Department Stores & Poets

Sat 28 Feb 1998

Oops -- hit the wrong key and wrote "Rob" instead of "Ron." Sorry.

Hilton

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1100. **Laura Moriarty**

Re: Critical issues

Sat 28 Feb 1998

To which (Ron's list) one could add

Dodie Bellamy

Rachel Blau DuPlessis

Diane Ward

Nicole Brossard

Norma Cole

For myself I would be very happy to see esp the older writers on these lists to get the decades overdue attention that not only their work deserves but that their teaching and actual influence warrants -

It seems a good use of the internet that such projects can be done relatively quickly and cheaply - though you can spend your life coding and corresponding -

I try to send printouts of non to the not-netted (though of course some texts and images are web-only knowable) - As an archivist I know that such hard copies collected at the various archives will be of lasting importance -

Relatedly -

Recently got some stats for non that suggest much readership - many hits from all over the world and want to thank people for checking in -

I've always thought that it's good to give something to the writing community esp if you expect anything back - run a series, publish a magazine etc - It feeds the work -

I also think (on another thread) that it's hard for anyone to really imagine David Bromige's true glamour if they haven't experienced it in person -

Laura



<http://socrates.berkeley.edu/~moriarty/>

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1101. **TBeck131**

Re: Critical issues

Sat 28 Feb 1998

Personally I'm nervous about people becoming too web-oriented. There's value in being able to read a mag in a coffee shop or on an exercycle or in the bath. And having only recently gotten wired I'm all too conscious of what it is to be without the technology. I do prefer the material book or mag. I can't stick a desktop in my pocket.

I absolutely agree with all the lists of deserving subjects of critical issues. What I'd like to see though is people coming forward with lists of critical issues they are willing to start taking on. Everyone knows what hasn't been done. What are all of us willing to do?

Tom B.

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1102. **Steve Tills**
Re: The Critical Issue
Sat 28 Feb 1998

Willing to do us are all of what?

S.

Miekal And wrote:

TBeck131 wrote:

[illegible]

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1103. **Joe Ahearn**
call for submissions
Sat 28 Feb 1998

In reply to Tom B and others:

VEER/

New Verse

Call for submissions

The first issue of VEER magazine will be distributed internationally via the World Wide Web in late 1998. VEER exists to provide both a forum and a showcase for heterodox literary practice. To that end, VEER's editors encourage submissions of innovative, finely articulated, culturally conscious texts.

We are especially interested in writers seeking to extend, transform, or transcend Marxist, Language, and "postmodern" traditions. We're just as interested in what comes next as you are. We want radical, risky work.

VEER accepts submissions of any length. We do not accept fiction, book reviews, or work that has previously appeared in either serial or book form. VEER encourages multiple submissions. Please submit work as follows:

e'mail:


(ASCII text or MS Word attachments)

Include the word VEER in your Subject: field.

U.S. Mail:

VEER
c/o Rancho Loco Press
1920 Abrams Parkway #382
Dallas TX 75214-3915
(SASE required)

To be added to our mailing list, send e'mail to
. Include the single word LIST in your Subject:
field.

VEER is a Rancho Loco Press production.

Please
circulate this flyer.

By no means an orderly Dantescan
rising / but as the winds veer

At 12:40 AM 2/28/98 EST, you wrote:

>I'm sure my enthusiasm for this list will ebb and fade. Nonetheless my
>challenge was serious . I truly believe that all writers should edit and
>publish a magazine at some point in their career. And that the magazine
>should be as focused and considered as possible--it should be the evidence of
>the need that brought it forth. Magazines, reading series, talks and the like
>are the foundation blocks of the larger social project that a writing practice
>is--we all need to take responsibility for keeping these kinds of scenes
>renewed and alive. Doing a mag will teach you things you can't learn any
other

>way. Why not do what you can do, start what you can start sooner rather than
>later? If you think the "old guys" are getting all the attention then develop
>a context to attend to the work of that special thirty something, or neglected
>whomever. Only connect. I'll stop here. I'm starting to irritate myself.

>

>Tom Beckett

>

>

Joe Ahearn



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1104. **Joel Kuszai**

critical issues/what do we do

Sat 28 Feb 1998

ok. it is like 70 degrees here and I'm sitting in a coffee shop and there are birds flying over head, swooping down on the crumbs scattered throughout. i don't mean to be an "advocate" for the biggest real estate boom since (pick colonial expansion of your choice). I certainly don't think that the web is going to replace anything. on the other hand, with the publishing racket the way it is, I don't see how there is any choice. Use it while it is free. And while I used to complain about questions of access, etc., Miekal And has pretty much demonstrated that the web offers more than may be immediately clear. The biggest expense I encounter as a publisher is MAILING COSTS. I recently packaged up a package for Steve Evans and Jen Moxley who are now in France. It was going to cost me about ten dollars to send it over the slow boat to france. It had about 5 chapbooks and a tape of her reading in buffalo last spring. The same with Manuel Brito, who I wanted to send a similar mp luv pak, as he will often do the same for me. I asked the people at the USPS for the cheapest rate and it was still out of my range. I have to wait until after my trip to california as I just

couldn't do it. In U.S. there is 4thclass bookrate which is never a sure-thing even while I accept that it will be slow.

Bill Gates just gave half-a-mill to the Buffalo public libraries , to put internet-ready computers in every branch in poor neighborhoods. What we can do is develop our own sites as facilities of community outreach. Most academics are also teachers and most poets are closet missionaries, so the impetus to go out and develop a means of helping kids write the most bareass minimum of code (or develop templates which eliminate the need for extensive rewriting each time) kills off the computer access problem. Also--Taylor Brady at the Small pPress Collective in buffalo has promised that the first issue of SPC will be available as a PDF file, which means that "formatted texts" such as mags, etc., don't have to be read on line, they can be printed and taken outside into the glare of sunshine, read while fishing on the pier, etc. For the past two semesters I have experimented with teaching skeletal html to my freshman comp students. When I first started teaching comp, I did a similar thing with e-mail and there was initial resistance then (about 5 years ago). Now, kids come into class with the most outrageous internet handles and as veterans of their own flame wars. Many of them have web pages and as a teacher I encourage them to develop their sites as extensions of their own writing (and I think it was Lyn Hejinian who once wrote that small press publishing was an "extension of one's own writing") to some degree of success. Therefore, I think we have a certain degree of responsibility to make our work available to that group of readers (read target audience). I was living in San Francisco during one of the great poetry wars there and had no idea what was going on, so physical proximity to events means nothing.

The Dictionary of Literary Biography is a giant reference book series published by Gale (I think) in Detroit. Joseph C's editing of that now two volume update of the contempoary author series has been going on for three or four years and is nearing completion.Are you out there Joe? But that is a library reference tool being created there, not a public web document. My points in bringing it up was to show one model for editorial activity: collecting and organizing the material from a variety of writer-sources. A web editor could be much the same thing. The essays in the DLB are generally definitive overviews of the poet's career as a writer, book by book. Take a look at it if you have a Univ. Library near you... (and that's the point)

I do share Tom's nervousness about people becoming too web oriented. As far as Miekal's recognition that "hits" do not constitute "consumption of content" (I forget his exact phrase) the same could be said for all the glossy journals piling up in attics across the land...at least mainstream books are pulped at the end of the tax year, remaindered for change. On the other hand, part of the intervention offered by web-stuffs can be the reminder to "go outside" (which is a

problem that most libraries have). Sometimes when I'm walking around I realize that I can't even read a book outdoors. It's like, er, "look up!"

On Sat, 28 Feb 1998, TBeck131 wrote:

Personally I'm nervous about people becoming too web-oriented. There's value in being able to read a mag in a coffee shop or on an exercycle or in the bath. And having only recently gotten wired I'm all too conscious of what it is to be without the technology. I do prefer the material book or mag. I can't stick a desktop in my pocket.

I absolutely agree with all the lists of deserving subjects of critical issues. What I'd like to see though is people coming forward with lists of critical issues they are willing to start taking on. Everyone knows what hasn't been done. What are all of us willing to do?

Tom B.

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1105. **TBeck131**

smack

Sat 28 Feb 1998

In terms of risk, a poem functions in our wider culture like an unsolicited kiss.

Tom B.

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1106. **TBeck131**

Re: this is the hour of the web

Sat 28 Feb 1998

I've been reading and re-reading Miekal's and Joel's recent postings. And I'm fascinated by the possibilities that the web would seem to present for collective actions. I need more education in these matters and look forward hearing what others have to say.

Tom B.

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1107. **syvester pollet**

Re: You Too Can Edit a LitMag (or can you?)

Sat 28 Feb 1998

*I'd be interested also to hear other's thoughts on e-publiation.
Especially regarding publication or "previously published" status of*

texts as regards print mag editing as well as reading poetry on line, printing out e-pubs etc. Are people likely to read on-line or to print them out and read them on paper? How do "materialists" feel about such a disembodied space for poetry?

Tom, Mike, others: I love the word "e-publiation" above--it sort of captures "not quite publication" for me, which is one of the problems. Granted the times are transitional, but Journals, etc. still insist on work not previously published, while the centers of power like grant agencies or tenure review boards don't count cyber as pub. So it's a situation where one might shoot oneself in both feet with one shot, isn't it? Clearly, this will change rapidly, as publication (paper publication) costs continue to rise & the websites become differentiated. I tend to not get around to sending work to net mags, for some reason. For visual or hypertext, obviously, things would be very different. But that's all one problem, & not really mine. I publish a series of broadsides, generally the work of one writer at a time. They are on good paper, photo-offset, but then I spend a huge amount of time hand-stamping a colophon, and hand-numbering. Why? Not to get theoretical-- or repeat William Morris & Co.--because it adds something. People respond to them differently. They save them. They reread them. Maybe that's antithetical to certain purposes, to Fluxus, for example, but I don't care. If I had more character, I might do them in handset type, though I would lose much. I've found a compromise that works for me, for now. The net, in my brief experience, fosters a skim&delete mentality, and that's not what I turn to poetry for. If anyone wants a sample, I'll send the two latest, #32 Nathaniel Tarn/Some Smalls & Dogs Dreaming, and #33 Jerome Rothenberg/At the Grave of Nakahara Chuya. Or you could subscribe for a year, 8 issues, for \$10. Next two, going to press Monday, are by Kathleen Fraser & Kusaya Eiichi (trans. D.W. Wright). Although you couldn't guess from these names, I also publish unknowns. I like Tom Beckett's call, and suggest the postcard-poem form for anyone--you can photocopy on card-stock pretty inexpensively. Sylvester Pollet/ Backwoods Broadsides/ RR 5 Box 3630 Ellsworth ME 04605 for subs or back-channel address for free sample.

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1108. **sylvester pollet**

Re: You Too Can Edit a LitMag (or can you?)

Sat 28 Feb 1998

Typing too fast--that's Kasuya Eiichi. some of his prose-poems trans. D.W. Wright appeared in the last Sulfur. I have six different ones. S.

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1109. **Bob Grumman**

Re: critical issues/what do we do

Sat 28 Feb 1998

Now I remember The Dictionary of Literary Biography that Joseph C mentioned. It's a good resource understandably limited in whom it covers.

--Bob G.

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1110. **Aldon Nielsen**

shingle author tissues

Sat 28 Feb 1998

while we're on this subject -- if a library near you has them, it would be worth your while to look at the old issues of Vort, edited many years ago by Barry Alpert -- special issues on Bromige, Irby, Kelly, Dorn etc -- didn't last long (and always asked the same question in the interview segment) -- but was a strong model for much that has come after

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1111. **Michael J. Kelleher**

e-(name of topic here)

Sat 28 Feb 1998

sylvester pollet wrote:

I love the word "e-publiation" above--it sort of captures "not quite publication" for me, which is one of the problems.

Yes. I asked because a number of the authors I plan to publish have asked me the question: does e-publication count? I think and hope the answer to be becoming "yes."

The possibilities for poetic dissemination on the Web are incredible - that one can mail to 600 or more potential readers in an instant speaks well for the future of poetry publication - and it would seem as the goal of publication (I think) should be to both give (as in a gift) poetry to an audience and to give (as in a gift) an audience to the poet(ry), that web publication can (potentially) accomplish this end at least as well as print.

(Though, as Laura and others have stated, archiving too is important. E-chiving is in fact happening at the epc, where Loss frequently copies entire sites for the e-chive.)

Further digression: it seems to me in light of what I just said, and in light of the fact that I read too much Marshall McLuhan last fall, that the status of poetry

as a genre is (at least potentially) enriched by e-publication in that e-published poetry as medium is neither literal nor oral nor print, yet it shares aspects of all three in that it is alphabetic/visual (literal), performative/ephemeral (oral), and can be converted into visico-material format (print). A poetic hat trick, as it were.

Finally, as to e-po's ability to subvert authority, imagine: e-zines by the billions jamming the mailboxes of administrative assistants, receptionists, mailroom operators, everyone up the chain of corporate being reading poetry on the job instead of working!

Poetry readers of the world, unite!

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1112. **Steven Marks**

Re: Printers?

Sat 28 Feb 1998

I'll go with everybody else on this, I guess. It was about five years ago that I last dealt with Bookcrafters. Maybe we just got lucky. But definitely ask for samples and for the names of other customers.

Steven

On Sat, 28 Feb 1998, Mark Weiss wrote:

I'll second that emotion. Recently they gave me an estimate that was 10% below McNaughton & Gunn, which I use. I had them send me samples--they were awful (always ask for samples of the work of a printer who's new to you). All printers have problems, make mistakes. M & G is as good as any short-run company, and better than many. They screwed up the page back-up on one of Junction's books. My standards are pretty high. They trashed the whole print run and did it over at their expense. McNaughton & Gunn, [REDACTED]. Ask for Lori Potter, tell her I sent you--never hurts to grease the wheels. Turn around, by the way, is 4-5 weeks.

*At 08:57 AM 2/28/98 -0800, you wrote:
Bookcrafters -- as almost any small publisher
will tell you -- are crooks. And they do sloppy
jobs. Never use them.*

D

Steven Marks wrote:

Tosh and other interested parties,

With the company I used to work for, we used Bookcrafters in, I think,

Michigan. You can find their ads in any writing type magazine. I think they are also listed in the resources section of Bookwire. We never had any problems with them. They are at the higher end of the range in price from what I remember, but the knowledge that the job is going to be done on time and right probably makes the extra \$\$ worth it.

Steven

On Fri, 27 Feb 1998, Tosh wrote:

Hello List:

Can anyone on this list recommend a good book printer. I imagine there are horror stories as well as pure happiness tales. Please back channel the info, unless you think the list would find it interesting.

Thanks!

Tosh

Tosh Berman
TamTam Books

Steven Marks

<http://members.aol.com/swmarks/welcome.html>

Steven Marks

<http://members.aol.com/swmarks/welcome.html>

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1113. **Dean Taciuch**
web and various ways
Sat 28 Feb 1998

Ways of getting the word, the work "out there." Thanks to TomB for adding several new vectors to the group recently. Tom, perhaps I should backchannel this, but actually I think it relates to the recent threads about finding venues, etc.

Years ago, back in the 80s, I was in an Intro to Poetry course at Kent State, taught by a wonderful prof, Jacob Leed--he took us to the Kent State Library Rare Book room, back issues of Black Mountain Review, fantastic stuff--it wasn't until I left Kent that I realized what a treasure that was --I though all University libraries had such collections.

Anyway, Leed brought a local poet to class one day, mainly I suspect because he was interested--Tom Beckett. We, undergrads all, probably didn't appreciate the poetry, didn't "get it," but we were exposed, as we were in the library and in the better courses, to work we didn't understand. If we understood it going in, after all, what would the point be?

So, Tom, a belated hey, thanks! and to all, even if you aren't in academia, there may be opportunities to reach into the classroom. . .the Internet is clearly one of these ways. In my Junior-level Humanities class, I had the students put there final projects online. It didn't work out as well as had hoped, but when I got my student comments this semester, several students remarked that learning to use the Internet was a valuable part of the course. I thought it had failed, we spent too much time learning the basics, but it seems it was useful.

Dean

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1114. **Scott Pound**
Re: Authorized
Sat 28 Feb 1998

Meikal:

There's a McCaff issue of _Open Letter_ but it's pretty dated: fall 1987 (ouch, the year I graduated high school). It includes the only checklist/biblio of Steve's work that I know of (compiled by bpNichol).

Essex Studios and Tailspin Press are producing a catalogue of Steve's vispo (most of it never published) to commemorate his first ever performance of Carnival:Panel 2, which happened at Cornershop in Buffalo on Oct. 25, 1997.

Open Letter is available from Frank Davey (██████).

The catalogue when it's done can be ordered from Bill Howe () or me ()

Scott Pound

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