

# L=A=N=G=U=A=G=E

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## READING STEIN

*(We asked a number of writers to respond to the three short selections from Gertrude Stein's Tender Buttons (1914) quoted below -- to give their sense of the ways of reading this text -- what it means, how it means, & in what ways it might seem relevant to their own concerns in writing. What follows are the Stein selections and the replies of Michael Davidson, Larry Eigner, Bob Perelman, Steve McCaffery, Peter Seaton, Rae Armantrout, Dick Higgins, Jackson MacLow, Carl Andre, and Robert Grenier.)*

from TENDER BUTTONS

A CARAFE, THAT IS A BLIND GLASS

A kind in glass and a cousin, a spectacle and nothing strange a single hurt color and an arrangement in a system to pointing. All this and not ordinary, not unordered in not resembling. The difference is spreading.

GLAZED GLITTER

Nickel, what is nickel, it is originally rid of a cover.

The change in that is that red weakens an hour. The change has come. There is no search. But there is, there is that hope and that interpretation and sometime, surely any is unwelcome, sometime there is breath and there will be a sinecure and charming very charming is that clean and cleansing. Certainly glittering is handsome and convincing.

There is no gratitude in mercy and in medicine. There can be breakages in Japanese. That is no programme. That is no color chosen. It was chosen yesterday, that showed spitting and perhaps washing and polishing. It certainly showed no obligation and perhaps if borrowing is not natural there is some use in giving.



## ROASTBEEF

In the inside there is sleeping, in the outside there is reddening, in the morning there is meaning, in the evening there is feeling. In the evening there is feeling. In feeling anything is resting, in feeling anything is mounting, in feeling there is resignation, in feeling there is recognition, in feeling there is recurrence and entirely mistaken there is pinching. All the standards have streamers and all the curtains have bed linen and all the yellow has discrimination and all the circle has circling. This makes sand.

Very well. Certainly the length is thinner and the rest, the round rest has a longer summer. To shine, why not shine, to shine, to station, to enlarge, to hurry the measure all this means nothing if there is singing, if there is singing then there is the resumption.

The change the dirt, not to change dirt means that there is no beefsteak and not to have that is no obstruction, it is so easy to exchange meaning, it is so easy to see the difference. The difference is that a plain resource is not entangled with thickness and it does not mean that thickness shows such cutting, it does mean that a meadow is useful and a cow absurd. It does not mean that there are tears, it does not mean that exudation is cumbersome, it means no more than a memory, a choice and a reestablishment, it means more than any escape from a surrounding extra. All the time that there is use there is use and any time there is a surface there is a surface, and every time there is an exception there is an exception and every time there is a division there is a dividing. Any time there is a surface there is a surface and every time there is a suggestion there is a suggestion and every time there is silence there is silence and every time that is languid there is that there then and not oftener, not always, not particular, tender and changing and external and central and surrounded and singular and simple and the same and the surface and the circle and the shine and the succor and the white and the same and the better and the red and the same and the centre and the yellow and the tender and the better, and altogether. ...

(GERTRUDE STEIN)

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## ON READING STEIN

Stein has been haunted by two antithetical criticisms. One proposes that her writing is all play, that it derives strictly out of her early researches with William James and motor automatism and was later invigorated by Cubist formalism. The other proposes that Stein



is a kind of hermetic Symbolist who encodes sexual and biographical information in complex little verbal machines which contextualize their own environments. Both views operate on either side of a referential paradigm; one wants her to mean nothing and the other wants her to mean intrinsically. But what makes *TENDER BUTTONS* so vital is not the strategies by which meaning is avoided or encoded but how each piece points at possibilities for meaning. Unlike the Symbolist who creates beautiful detachable artifacts, Stein's prose is firmly tied to the world--but it is a world constantly under construction, a world in which the equation of word and thing can no longer be taken for granted. "The difference is spreading" not only foreshadows deconstructive thought; it recognizes that between one term (a carafe) and a possible substitute (a blind glass) exists a barrier, not an equal sign, and it is this difference which supports all signification. Stein interrogates this barrier in order to break open the imperial Sign and leave "a system to pointing," a language that no longer needs to contain the world in order to live in it.

What's the good of all this? Obviously we know what a carafe is or nickel or roast beef, but Stein doesn't much care whether these things are self-evident. She *does* care that we've come to regard writing as the discovery of concrete counters for feelings, objects and places, that human memory is valorized over human mind in the act of creation. "A name is adequate or it is not. If it is adequate then why go on calling it..." she writes, inveighing against the noun's authoritarian stasis. What she wants is movement, a shifting of words among other words--not to erase their ability to refer but to make that act as polymorphous and perverse as any sexual play. *TENDER BUTTONS* as a title suggests words binding the fabric of language together but also the sexual (clitoral) excitation potential in all linguistic play.

Each of the pieces in *TENDER BUTTONS* seems, at some level, to refer to Stein's decontextualizing strategies. "A Carafe, That is a Blind Glass," is "about" the difference between a term and its multifarious substitutes ("a blind glass," a "kind in glass," a "spectacle") or its attendant qualities ("a single hurt color," a "difference...spreading"). The unitary object is dispersed among words in "an arrangement in a system." The objects themselves are commonplace--as common as the carafes, bowls and guitars of Cubist still lifes--but Stein's disjunctive prose removes them from their commonality and accentuates the gap between object and description. "(It) is so easy to exchange meaning," she says under the heading "Roast Beef," "it is so easy to see the difference." What links roastbeef to such remarks is the idea of transformation and change present in foods and language alike. Roastbeef exists as the sum of many processes, some of which involve cooking, preparing, eating and digesting; it is the least permanent of things, and yet for the creator of literary still lifes, it is expected to



stand in an eternal brown glaze on the verge of being carved. Stein's carving exposes the fallacy in a whimsical rhetoric of permanence: "in the inside there is sleeping, in the outside there is reddening, in the morning there is meaning, in the evening there is feeling." Without knowing what is "outside" or how meaning relates to "morning" or "evening" to "feeling," we are at sea, but by creating a larger grid of specious comparisons and fake equations, Stein undercuts all logical continuity. The logic is entirely her own, and the shifts of prediction and assertion (the very stuff of reasonable discourse) serve to expose the mutability which lies at the heart of consumption, whether of food or or language.

What this implies for the act of reading is that there are no longer any privileged semantic centers by which we can reach through the language to a self-sufficient, permanent world of objects, food-stuffs or rooms. We must learn to read *writing*, not read *meanings*; we must learn to interrogate the spaces around words as much as the words themselves; we must discover language as an active "exchange" of meaning rather than a static paradigm of rules and features. The question is not "what" she means but "how." If such activity is difficult it is only because our habits of reading have been based on a passive acceptance of the criterion of adequacy; Stein undermines the model with the simplest of language only so that we may read for the first time--again.

MICHAEL DAVIDSON

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A CARAFE ... GLAZED GLITTER ROASTBEEF

(through a glass darkly)

Ok murky in after all end, unpredictable day, with rain shine any degree night, the sun kin warm and hot. Enough stone or other jugs lineup of whatever is In Through Out That's light as much as known Differences evanesce Like, where and/or what on the equator might be french or spanish Longitude and latitude, yep yep sure Americana

But could someone mobile with us sleep downstairs, in case of some needs? The amount of variety, seen small, or a knockout maybe in fact. Going deep and strong suddenly three times, though not any more in a while. Mystery on occasion frightens, hurts what you don't know. Sleep came and nothing in square feet changed and later morning is too again there.

And however long the new days all. Every new second minute at



least. But the more there is the less you have in common, knowledge of pieces, experience taken in. Bit by bit or in what or how many dimensions. Is there any further inch to a holograph of a spread? Lightning's fast in bed or anyplace. Monuments mixed in haystacks lost.

Nothing is too dull.

LARRY EIGNER

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Writing is intentional denotation (you *choose words*) and reading mirrors that, is read as denotation and intention (mix of the words / what the author is 'trying to say', technique composition context). Of course, strict denotation is a myth: ambiguities/extracurricular meanings can attach to any word(s) read. But it's a myth reinvented at every word ("If not, why use words" -- Zukofsky): "breakages" mean breakages, "Japanese," ditto.

The (A) point of Tender Buttons is the play between what the pieces are said to mean (the objects, the titles, Stein's theories, Paris Impressionist through Cubist still life) and how the words exist and interact is saying what they do say.

She insists on an (intuitive) identity between her portraits & the objects, arising from avoidance of memory, breaking through crust of habit to actual perception, seeing something continually for the first time. And it's done with *words*: "I became more and more excited about how words which were the words *that made whatever I looked at look like itself* were not the words that had in them any quality of description." (Portraits and Repetition; my italics)

She's proving that she's seeing it by a continual athleticism, leaping free of the gravity of the familiar. Yet "words that make what I looked at look like itself were always words that to me very exactly related themselves to that thing..." (P's & R's)

So, related (a kind, a cousin), but at a necessary distance (not resembling), breathing room for the object to *exist* (the difference). Anomaly needed to keep us awake (a kind *in* glass, not of; a system *to* pointing). In A Carafe I see her saying she sees and seeing to it that she says so.

But this sounds like systems of more or less stretched metaphor. Occasionally, yes, "the round rest has a longer summer" (round, resting on a platter, roast, summer, opulence, flavor) - I can hook up my intuition with what I guess was hers. But often there's no 'very exact [outward] relation' I can see. First 2 phrases of Roastbeef, yes, rest of paragraph, no. Rocking along on the sound, patterning, slides into



lecture against memory: mounting, resignation, recognition, recurrence, mistake, pinch, wake up.

In places I wonder if she hears/sees/thinks/ the word just before or as she writes - or only after. Does she 'mean it', or is it just *prattle* (singsong, babyish joy in denotation [standards, steamers, curtains, bed linen], grammar becoming a 'weak force').

But "it is so easy to exchange meaning, it is so easy to see the difference" and on through the rest of the excerpt is definitely not babytalk, is exemplary in its variety of use, surface, suggestion.

Can't pin down what puts her on the interesting side of language's openness. At best her words displace all others. From Cups: "The best slam is utter."

BOB PERELMAN

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## TRANSLATIONAL RESPONSE TO A STEIN SINGLE

### a carafe that is a blind glass

she types clarity  
relations to a scene  
a seen in  
zero

queer ones in the pain  
of pattern  
wheeled directions to  
a fullness  
that negated more to  
more what chaos enters in

no one same article  
unlike a wide.

STEVE MC CAFFERY

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## WHOLE HALVES

Bisection, leaving one half hanging over, the drapes are clean, You look as if you need the third from the bottom, the keyhole, nicely in a row. That brings up heat, McCartney's words are blue. It's sort of molded into a mountain. South socks all metal by air sideways, the



trim set back from the teeth, the white trim, beginning to stand there. What's back is clear, gently crumpled without creases. White line leads to ferrous flair to private stuff side by side and side by side side by side invitation to an address. Lines rise. Pillow's overtime. Questions: round blue orange white yellow thin and horny. Once top on another without looking very far up. If they stay up, moving in up, and the board leads line a tongue right this way. And then the tongue two three four. Stripes are everywhere, some hanging down or looking up face down or up and left open ready to be lit: answer. The face got a new invention. Buttons no longer don't make any noise. Because what's switched also's identified. And instead of going straight on a round surface straight means the French word for alright. Right at the middle you get wet. Then people save you. Green spots connection. New buttons never have to curl over one another. The old rigidity, the old holes the fading tension aware of its collaboration, the new tension, uncovers the covers. What's a head no longer needs what's ahead because more and more buttons are right to be pressed, propulsion hovers on exhibit. It's stacked, easier to lose the thought of finding, insulatable craft against the checks. The rivers that run to the sea oh boy, use the floor as a step out the door. What's discolored indicates the presence of routine, suddenly the hard weight of the sun becomes mold, mold molding the frame, frame framing the water, water drying up. And ancient actress sees at once. To occupy, having an erection nothing is the same nothing is the name nothing is the frame. Pursuit is as temporal as openings and closings buttons relieved pacify. No one seems to know the right hand way to go, going down, which leaves the middle and the left facing the trees and the hills and the local stuff and the cagey touch flame away from glass. To be here now means how can no one respond to buttons. They all have to be accounted for. When you work in countries the next step is staying home, using buttons, could be in the air like the old Chinese pool hall. Nobody's outside without a shirt not moving lips without saying speed. Before there was even a black hole a table right beside it. A chair. A pair of re-routings means inside. Outside's very tangible, actual, substantive, understood, outside's very material, always there to be reached trying to be touched. Adhesives as well as collections and bone as well as plastic and current as well as fastening and sewing, the next step's stamping. The next step's diffuse. Solid. Volume descends to Richard's only throne. Division of the aspect into verb as seeing progressive form point-action verbs indicate is waking up is working out. Think of it as a as: my whole life has change. In between the round ups everything happens. Billy the Kid counts peas. Rock forms. PVC does not burn. But as we entered the harbor some kind stuck, made sticking sounds. Three bars equals ten dollars. Three buttons means one is missing. That means make it tighter and only maybe somebody'll have



to wait. One more thing, light. Looking closer or closely looking used to mean less light. To be precise include everything. Listening used to mean use your head. Then Picasso said even here means a lot of work. Even here being hear, you mean there Alice said. Here here refers to there, permission prohibition, love marriage, button unbutton, press release release press. To be precise precision excludes almost everything, what's left, under the light, clean dirty, includes everything. In the north in the potato country roads are there when you're there or when you're here. Here roads are here wherever you are.

PETER SEATON

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### ON FROM TENDER BUTTONS

Thinking aloud about a mystery is how I first conceived of writing. Then I understood that was just me. Her work is not a sort of solving. Here all colors, chosen, shine readily. The exudation is not cumbersome. But simply as the first act of creation was to separate light from darkness, she plays a cousin against not resembling, not ordinary against nothing strange, the same against the difference that is spreading, circling against dividing and singular against a memory. Both kinds shine convincingly when she's singing. Rid to red to reddening. An exception and a reestablishment at once - "better, and altogether" now.

RAE ARMANTROUT

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### THREE RESPONSES TO STEIN'S TENDER BUTTONS

#### A Carafe, That Is a Blind Glass

I'm not that kind, kind though I may be. It was hard for me-- hard of heart, heart of glass (breaks too easy). My cousin wears spectacles!-- wow!-- but there's nothing strange in her being hurt. I said I was kind, but was I? I can arrange it systematically, so she can point or be pointed to. Pointless, all this ordinarily unordered-- what does it resemble? Differences. From the differences we get the spreading.

#### Glazed Glitter

Nickle, she says. And nickle she probably means. Formerly



elegant bicycles were plated-- covered over-- with nickle.

A nickle bag-- red on the cover-- rid of its cover. Red for a week or an hour. It says "change has come," but who has searched for it? I haven't noticed that yet. There is no welcoming in me today; I haven't been a where of my bread's breath, of my breath's bread. A sinecure, charming-- whom should I charm? Cleans or clean's-- what? They're different, quite different. (Like me.)

There is no gratitude in mercy or medicine, it says. But there is *me* at the start of each; I do not want to be so self-conscious. Color chosen-- yesterday, washing and polishing. Today too. It was on the program, on the docket. Dick it (if only)-- then Dock it. I am studying to be to PhD, to change from Dick to Dock. Chosen is not Japan-- my Career isn't either. That is not souilly Japanese. Watching and polishing (Wendish or Polish?), baking-- "A bun is the lowest form of wheat," they say. I don't doubt it.

Plate me baby, and I'll Dick you well.

### Roastbeef

Inside there is sleeping; reddenning and reading and rhythma-  
tic-- Moses.

Certainly she is thinner than the rest. A good figure is a luxury, and good figuring more so. She has rescued the baby from the readings at the Smile.

The Sir has a face. And a place. Of grace. And there it is theirs, and theirs among the theres, inner and outer and outer and inner, inner of inner and inner of outer, in her, without her. About her, without her. Better and redder, and tender to tend her. Bend her, unwinder-- don't bind her. But find her sublimer.

Lime and lemon, lemon and lime. 'Tis thyme,

DICK HIGGINS

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### READING A SELECTION FROM TENDER BUTTONS

I start reading "A CARAFE, THAT IS A BLIND GLASS," I go from word to word, seeing the shapes of the printed words, hearing the sounds inwardly, noting rhymes, assonances, alliterations. Where an image is suggested, I see it inwardly. I hear the alliteration "kind," "cousin," "color," with the near-alliteration "glass." The rhyme in "strange" & "arrangement." The alliteration of s's: "spectacle," "strange," "single," "system," "spreading." The assonance of short i's that binds the three sentences ("system," "this," "difference") as does



the ending of each sentence with an "ing" (which is reinforced by the short e's in "resembling" & "spreading"). There are also the 2nd sentence's rhymes ("ordinary," "unordered") & the alliterative sequence "spectacle," "pointing," "spreading." The three sentences are a bound system of sounds.

But can I specify anything beyond the sounds? To use a phrase I first heard from Spencer Holst, it gives "the sensation of meaning," but can I connect the meanings of the words as readily as I find their sounds connected?

Beyond the obvious fact that the carafe is made of glass, I can see only certain connections of meanings: "a blind glass," "a kind in glass" (I didn't notice consciously the "blind"- "kind" rhyme before), & then "a spectacle" (something seen or to be seen, but also "spectacles" are "glasses"). Then "nothing strange," "not ordinary," "not unordered," "not resembling," & "difference" form a meaning sequence. Another sequence of meanings: "blind," "spectacle" (with the intervening "glass"'s causing the ambiguity of "spectacle" which might not have been as apparent without them), & "color," that seems to carry over to "arrangement," "pointing," "not unordered," "not resembling," & even to "spreading." The sequence "kind" (with its two meanings), "cousin," "nothing strange" seems opposed to "not ordinary," "not resembling," & "The difference is spreading.": a meaning movement from near-sameness to greater & greater difference.

"A single hurt color" is the most emotional phrase, altho "blind glass" with its implied oxymoron (glass is usually transparent--at least we first think of transparency when we hear the word "glass"-- & when it is made into spectacle lenses, it helps people to see better) is perhaps even more so. Maybe the "single hurt color" is the blackness of blindness. The whole poem suddenly seems to be about seeing!

But what of the "carafe" that starts it all? Why is it "a blind glass"? Ordinarily a carafe is one of the least "blind"--that is, the most transparent--of glass containers. It usually contains plain water. The OED defines it as "a glass water-bottle for the table, bedroom, etc." Its Romance forms (F. *carafe*, It. *caraffa*, Neapol. *carrafa* (a measure of liquids), Sp. & Pg. *garrafa*, Sicil. *carabba*) are related by some authorities to the Pers. *garābah*, a large flagon, & the Arabic *gharafa*, to draw or lift water.

Why, then, is this carafe a blind glass?

Is the whole poem then a "pointing" from the ordinary transparent carafe ("nothing strange") to one "not ordinary"--one that is "blind"--an orderly ("not unordered") movement "spreading" from transparency & clarity thru the "single hurt color" to the implied darkness & opacity of blindness, a movement condensed & made explicit in the title?

JACKSON MAC LOW.



## WRITING ON A THEME BY STEIN

In the  
morning there is  
feeling

A kind in  
color and  
not unordered

nothing strange

All this  
is spreading

glass

an arrangement

not resembling

time that is languid  
tender and changing

and the same

and the same and

tender

CARL ANDRE

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## TENDER BUTTONS

Undergoing *sight* (& by 'sight' thinking feeling looking remembering even inventing imagining certainly tasting surely listening hearing talking) meaning potentially all human process, as almost academic ('art-school') exercise undertaken for the species' joy in it, less talking & listening than looking to know that words can do it, making nomenclature consort of nature (1911, in Spain) in the perfect understanding that *that seen* makes a name, this time (accommodating strangeness of verbiage in process of gaining exact usage), only because (mutton flies into the sundown upwind upstream already) all time/everything is. Artist never fell.

Sad story, now, apparently. Real im Traum, 'before the War.' Today, a hearkening back, as longing, not the reality of the word, not the faith that makes composition of the world, riding on that everything, permission given. She could say anything.

Now some further difficulty of access, as the nature of human experi-



ence slips away from the ad-men as makers of language unconvinced, in the last resort, of any *necessity*.

Before I die.  
Before I die.  
Before I die.  
Before I die.

(Robt. Creeley, Pieces)

--resolve echoes. Names repeat.

But it's the same imperative, that one might undertake now in the absence of conviction, that anything was, that a word might mean anything, that she addressed with certainty: "...looking at anything until something that was not the (conventional) name of that thing but was in a way that actual thing would come to be written." ("Poetry And Grammar")

"TENDER" says entire activity of the artist's portraiture (subtitle: "portraits of objects, food, rooms")--not 'studies' of objects etc. nor 'still lives,' but (*portray*: 'to draw forth, reveal'; from root, 'to drag, move') dramatic engagements with things-given-the-sort-of-attention-that-humans-get often in motion, 'alive,' as well--so you get a verbal-formal offering, that stretches out to move through circles of light (attention) in which "beginning again and again" transforms into a "continuous present" in which words one-one-one actively engage as single-frame sequence ("...this our period was undoubtedly the period of the cinema and series production") something all right, tendered, right in front of you. "BUTTONS" just means everyday domestic objects (which are??) nudged--'on the button.'

Ok, 'tender' because new-born--& all right, word-buds, tenderly regarded.

What poetry *does* (see "Poetry And Grammar"): realization of new nomina-tives--(not neologism but) whole text, in process, "replaces" worn-out, now-merely-conventional name offered up (in title, commonly) to be melted down in crucible of language process attention forging other access to the ongoing of what's what.

T.B., as *early* 'phenomenological investigation,' is interpretative/as it is revelatory--the whole storm of passion, discernment, definition, feeling//carried by language//brought to the 'budding' of the thing--three together, through time, make the name.

It's not 'snapshots' (moves; don't copy nature), & it's not 'the pathetic fallacy' (though it includes much of the artist's process). And it ain't 'abstract.'



(In this context, for L=A=N=G=U=A=G=E, I want to say I think it's at best a 'creative misreading' of Stein to take her work as a whole as a primary instance of 'language-oriented writing.' Not only her somewhat less arduous later work (Autobiography of A.B.T., Brewsie And Willie), but The Making of Americans (a history of her family & compendium of sketches of every possible kind of human being), Lucy Church Amiably (an 'engraving' or romantic portrait of life in the French countryside) & her long poem "Stanzas in Meditation" (written shortly before the Autobiography of A.B.T. &, if anything, a prototype of confessional poetry) all are intent to make new ways to say something--show her thinking language not as object-in-itself, but as composition functioning in the composition of the world. With the exception of some verbal experiment, with Williams & Pound, Stein's basic concern as a writer was to confront the imperative MAKE IT NEW however possible--'IT' being, equally/simultaneously, sentience, world & language as relation between these. T.B., specifically, exists as such confrontation--& to take it as a variously interesting arrangement of words, alone, is to perpetuate the initial journalist-parody response to the work as 'nonsense.')

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But can it be done, as a *task*. Was 1911, or... Even now... "It's a mild, mild day, Starbuck" etc... So quiet, in America... 1977 rhymes with 1911 (*is* it, already, 1978...) Seemingly timeless lull on the brink, this time, of the extinction of something other than the Pequod as American westward-expanding enterprise (or craters in the Whiteheads' lawns)... Beautiful fall day, clear even to the horizon...though the reign of conventional names, reiteration of terminology as fixed interpretation of that not happening, appears to cover the globe several times over, 'ruling' air & land & waves... What a moment, nonetheless... Yet again, that chance to (two by two, alpha & beta, assess & elephants) call the roll, look to words to show & tell the present orders of...

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"...Think of all that early poetry, think of Homer, think of Chaucer, think of the Bible and you will see what I mean you will really realize that they were drunk with nouns, to name to know how to name earth sea and sky and all that was in them was enough to make them live and love in names, and that is what poetry is it is a state of knowing and feeling a name. I know that now but I have only come to that knowledge by long writing." ("P. & G.," 1934) ...

ROBERT GRENIER

(Grenier's piece will continue in the next issue with a reading of the Stein text)



## BENJAMIN OBSCURA

(What follows is an excerpt from a much longer text on Walter Benjamin by Ron Silliman. The complete text is forthcoming in two places -- the first issue of Renegade, c/o S. Fraccaro, Box 578, Canal St. Sta., New York, NY 10013, \$2.95, and Problematic Photography, edited by C. Loeffler, La Mamelie Press, Box 3123, San Francisco, CA 94119).

Benjamin's characterization of the photograph ... functions also to note the role of the camera in a crucial step toward the fetishized realism which embodies the capitalist mode of thought ... the hand in the process of pictorial reproduction is stripped of its gestural content. The loss of the gestural is a topic I have gone into in some depth elsewhere as it pertains to the history of poetry, a portion of which is worth repeating here:

"What happens when a language moves toward and passes into a capitalist stage of development is an anaesthetic transformation of the perceived tangibility of the word, with corresponding increases in its descriptive and narrative capacities, preconditions for the invention of 'realism,' the optical illusion of reality in capitalist thought. These developments are tied directly to the nature of reference in language, which under capitalism is transformed (deformed) into referentiality.

In its primary form, reference takes the character of a gesture and an object, such as the picking up of a stone to be used as a tool. Both gesture and object carry their own integrities and are not confused: a sequence of gestures is distinct from the objects which may be involved, as distinct as the labor process is from its resultant commodities. A sequence of gestures forms a discourse, not a description."

The obliteration of the gestural through the elaboration of technology occurs across the entire range of cultural phenomena in the capitalist period. It is the principle affective transformation of the new material basis of production. Guttenberg's moveable type erased gesturality from the graphemic dimension of books. That this in turn functions to alienate the producer from his or her product is tangible even to authors who compose on the typewriter: to see one's text in a new typeface (inevitably asserting different spatio-visual values) is almost as radical a shock as first seeing oneself on film or videotape, or initially hearing one's voice remarkably *other* on a tape recorder. In a parallel manner, the constantly evolving and always unique objects of master craftsmen were replaced by the uniform (hence infinitely reproducible) objects of mass production (where, as Benjamin was to



discover, the gestural is replaced by its antithesis: style).

(Benjamin:) "Even the most perfect reproduction of a work of art is lacking in one element: its presence in time and space, its unique existence at the place where it happens to be ... the quality of its presence is always depreciated ... One might subsume the eliminated element in the term 'aura' and go on to say: that which withers in the age of mechanical reproduction is the aura of the work of art ... Experience of the aura ... rests on the transposition of a response common in human relationships to the relationship between the inanimate or natural object and man ... To perceive the aura of an object we look at means to invest it with the ability to look at us in return."

Appearance, which is specifically an object *in relation* to an observer, is in each instance the privileged notion. Under the name of aura what appears is the Other, a shock, the recognition and acknowledgement of its absolute integrity freed from any dependency on the presence of Self. This liberty presents itself as 'distance' and 'the experience which has left traces of the practiced hand.' It does not (cannot) occur abstractly, that is: in the absence of the concrete object itself *as presence*. This is how it escapes both memory and reproduction. The affective presence of a photograph of a massacre, a Rembrandt or an orchid is first of all that of a (gray) rectangle of a certain size, which is almost never that of the event or object portrayed.

What is radically new in the age of technical reproduction is just this value placed on the possession of entities deprived of their integrity and otherness, personal experience reduced to vicarious consumption (which of course follows and parallels exactly that which befell literature during the rise and brief reign of the novel). But to lose the Other is, in the same instant, to abandon one's sense of Self, to be rendered numb and passive on a level not previously possible in history. In "The Work of Art," Benjamin necessarily defines aura by exposing its 'decay,' its very existence revealed in this place of a lack, and goes further to implicate as the origin of this erosion not merely industrial imperialism, but that which made capitalism itself (and even capital) possible, the constituting myth of western civilization, *Identity*.....

(Benjamin:) "To pry an object from its shell, to destroy its aura, is the mark of a perception whose 'sense of the universal equality of things' has increased to such a degree that it extracts it even from a unique object by means of reproduction."

A 'sense of the universal equality of things,' identity, destroys aura, accomplishing this by the removal of the object from its constituting context. This is also its advantage, since concealed within it is the



whole of the scientific method and project... Each of the five fundamental axioms of Euclidean geometry, which served for centuries as the model for science itself, is in some sense a statement of identity, of which the first is "Things equal to the same thing are equal to each other" (if  $A = B$  and  $B = C$ , then  $A = C$ , etc.). Thus identity begets substitution, exchange, reproduction. This principle extends itself into the economic sphere via the *universal equivalent* of money... What Benjamin saw emerging from the iodized silver plates of Daguerre ... was the decisive moment in which the social basis of reality was transformed. Where previously the manufactured objects of the world submitted themselves to the fetishizing and mutational laws of identity and exchange solely through an economic process, they now did so on a new level, that of information. Each such product must not only carry on a second life as a commodity, but a third one as an image or 'datum.' ... It is in the loss of aura, the shock of Other which carries with it the recognition of Self, that modern humanity affectively confronts the myth of Identity, that within which even capitalism is inscribed. Benjamin is the first to say it, yet he is unable to speak its name.

RON SILLIMAN

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## STATEMENT

Over the past three years I have found myself preoccupied with two formal issues of poetics, *intention* and *address*, which seem to be central to a primary question of my need to create poems. Though I term these issues formal, implying an objective investigation, the making of poetry (in fact the reading of it) has become a very self-oriented experience. More than saying I engage in the process of writing for *myself*, it seems I have worked toward a ritualization of the act to the point where it *functions* in a very specific domain. Writing is now for me a means of modulating and organizing phenomenal and circumstantial information from all points of experience, a process I refer to as 'tuning' myself. As I grow older and seemingly remove myself from unity with any singular, or even plural, socio-cultural environment, I seem more 'on my own' in a vast environment of internalized experience. My approach to poetics has become the search for responses and behavioral modes relative to this experience, to surviving it as well as conditioning myself to it. Constantly the effort seems to be away from any formalization of ideas or structure or definitive process and towards a rejuvenating line of 'basics', that mythical point where each process is fresh and new and wholly responsive to indigenous conditions.



I came into the field of alternative forms and 'language-oriented writing' through a process of invention and then, taken with the ideas as well as the camaraderie of others similarly set adrift, found myself processing through an increasingly narrow channel of thought. By choosing to work solely within the perimeters of these somewhat technical issues I entered an environment controlled more by theory and imposed regulations than one open to all the motivations of a self oriented process. These imposed constraints became antithetical to the idea of poetics as opening, the field becoming increasingly closed by criteria and philosophy. This is surely a phenomena which has plagued other artists in other times.

An awakening to these dissatisfactory conditions several years ago led me to the formation of questions concerning address, to whom or to what is the writing process oriented, and intention, for what reasons does it occur and what function does it potentially serve. I'm trying now to deal with a poetics that actively conditions my self/environment and serves as a tuning process and a means of mediating personal experiences. Obviously, such an internalized approach disavows allegiance to any code of poetic behavior and repudiates any sort of cultural standards. What it may do, however, is become an organic means of response to a larger domain of life/experience, and some of the resolutions may (but need not) be useful to other beings in the flow.

In a sense, I am trying to cope with the urge of poetry as opposed to the structure of it. This urge seems to lie within the rooted and individual beginnings of the activity, centered on a meditative, self-encoded embrace of those issues and inclinations . find within my own humanness. The intention therefore becomes the opening of experience toward a continual address of the self.

CRAIG WATSON

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## NOTES ON GENRE

The state of resistance -- "Swamp Fox" -- "Robin Hood" -- refusal to participate in the codes, while remaining concerned to decipher substance (siphon away the substantiality, which can always be induced to form another substance). This resistance is not *outlaw* from the outset; it doesn't define itself as a preliminary deviation. Its line of advance propels it across the axis of the law, lexis, as a praxis which at precisely that juncture of abrasive contact discovers itself to be *not parallel* to the law [*outlaw* means being parallel to the



stages of the law, but practising its distinctions point by point in relation to the lexical code-line]. This angle of interpenetration can, with skill, be repeated indefinitely (this is how Robin Hood managed to dwell in the same forest all the time, even after the king's men knew he was in there, waiting). This activity can compose a writing, a script in which texts are caught straggling from the train of their genre (train of thought) and be either pillaged or, if independent-minded and strong enough, induced to join the *outside* [i.e., not "outlaw" because that is to continue in the referential procedures of the lexicon, those-who-make-the-law; "outlaw" is just an excitable way of relating to the law; being "outside" however means comprehending law as gesture].

#### GENRE:

γέννᾱ	<i>of persons, in a family</i>
γενέθλη	<i>race, stock, family</i>
γενέσιος	<i>a day kept in memory of the dead</i>
γένεσις	<i>origin, source, productive cause</i>
γενέτης	<i>begetter, father, ancestor</i>
γέννα	<i>(offspring) descent, birth</i>
γενναῖος	<i>suitable to one's descent or birth</i>
γεννᾶω	<i>beget, engender, bring forth</i>
γέννημα	<i>to that which is produced or born</i>
γένος	<i>race, family, stock</i>

[Robin Hood's ploy was γελο-ωμῖλῖα, "fellowship in laughing"]

genre is folk-memory deified

Now we see genre distinctions practised as a kind of racism. The "characteristics" are learned (& what is worse, taught), strict demarcations are observed to a crippling extent [readers of novels can't read poetry, readers of poetry can't read philosophy, readers of discursive workaday prose can't read anything for very long, etc.] All of this snaps back from the praxis into the shadow of an attitude: "poet" "novelist" "dramatist" "painter" "sculptor" "critic", i.e., submission to the sociological demand that everyone identify themselves in the form of a racial obsession.

#### [THE RACISM OF LITERARY FORM]

The important (or functional) distinctions are not, after all, generic, but are decisions relating to inclusion/exclusion. To willingly accept a genre as part of one's identity is to respond to this racism as a code that must be accepted in order for any creating to occur. It is, in other words, to cover the "private parts" in the presence of the lawd.



## CODE WORDS

Roland Barthes, Image-Music-Text (1977; Hill and Wang, N.Y.; \$4.95)

We can imagine *writing* that does not prepare the ego for the terrors and routines of a society it takes for granted.

Author dies, writing begins. The subject loses authority, disappears, is *unmade* into a network of relationships, stretching indefinitely. Subject is *deconstructed*, lost, "diminishing like a figurine at the far end of the literary stage"; deconstituted as writing ranges over the surface. A *floating* or cutting across replaces the barriers of nomenclature and identification. Normalization gives way to *signifiance*, an eroticism, a multi-dimensional tissue or weave of signs by which any apparent subject is produced. Writing, as *infinite* association, explodes the definitions, endistances origins (or Origin), rejects closure, *exempts* meaning. The vise of the signified is unhinged; simplistic notions of truth are relativized.

Subject becomes simply "the instance writing," is hollowed out by the operation of the linguistic system. System, here, is an *empty* process that some self always seeks to stuff & upholster. In one discipline after another, we have this recognition of the importance of *system* or *code* (rather than the romantic primacy of the individual or the self-sufficient particular). This may be the watershed of the last few decades. The motifs are system / code / frame / structure / constraint / rules: "language being system" & "the system as culture". "It is language which speaks, not the author."

Where code pertains -- meaning as use -- rules are dominant. Not like 'X determines Y' or 'Y is superstructure to base X' but where X follows rules of a social code or paradigm -- as if to 'follow the rules' meant the unseating of the sovereign subject as an entity which precedes the activity. Time is flattened out, in the here and now, of conformative / performative language. As if *aura* were that coding, that practiced hand, that *apprenticeship*.

Writing -- a *surplus*, not a reduction; an active & continuous constructing rather than a represented content & culture. The older literature of the signified finds itself constantly tempted into commodification. The signifier, on the other hand, marks the *Text*. Its self-demonstration is a performative, a speech act whose content is *depleted* by its own utterance and activity; it "artfully does nothing but turn itself inside out, like a glove"; a *perpetual signifier*, modelled on a permanent revolution. Flustering the image, acknowledging the materiality of language, not letting the subject idealize or mystify the whole process. "Did he wish to express himself, he ought



at least to know that the inner 'thing' he thinks to 'translate' is itself only a ready-formed dictionary, its words only explainable through other words, and so on indefinitely."

Yet, beyond code: Language is *disseminated* through the text, that "methodological field," climaxing in *play*, not anchored by but in fact shattering the demands of our seemingly-liberating-but-actually-repressive genres of expression. Beyond the rule-governed transpositions is the self-differentiation of language, away from the universalized, commodity-like qualities so often trumpeted. Distinguishable, even deviant writing, rather than something malleable or blind or something that could be processed or theatricalized (like the self?). Beyond the anchoring of pointing, vertical depth, is a horizontal richness that cannot be diffracted or identified with. Ambiguity is ceaselessly produced and not swallowed up. An *excess*, a *supplement*. Here writing can innovate, as scandal, not destroying code but playing off it, *deferring*, showing the limits. In these cases, writing is clearly produced by the central activity of reading, capturing both the code-like aspects (with the investment of value) but also the yearning singularity of the phonemes bursting off page, tape, or lips. Reading becomes the first *production*, rather than consumption -- not a relay of an author's vain transcriptions of a representational content. Reading *operates* the text, is a rewriting, a new inscription. The text erases "the distance between writing and reading, in no way by intensifying the projection of the reader into the work [hypnosis of the reader by illusions of transparency] but by joining them" in a single practice.

Discourse as tyranny, as The Law, The Letter: all instrumentalisms: disorient them. Lift their burden with that drifting, wavering signifier, playing its symbolic attachments in a much more open, impertinent unrepressed style. 'This is new for me.' A multiplication of points of attention, authorless, into an unsituation. *Dispersion*: the ejaculation of polysemy, "efflorescence of the signifier," may come as far as asemy. Silencing the voice of those *paper authors* who remember their lines & straitjacket the play. The activity is *accenting, folding, creasing*, a *stereographic plurality* disrupting "the peace of nominations" that the "spasm of the signified ... normally brings the subject voluptuously back into."

Make the present relative. Offer a *historicism*, where words are evitable, arbitrary, not determined: a relative autonomy for language. A code is required; the whole is digital, not an illusory analogue, nor identity, equality, interchangeability. Texts (tests) like these will do the *denaturalizing*; they problematize reality. Naturally language is unmotivated. See it this way. Take away the mythic & fetishized character of the words and sentences, their fatedness:



otherwise, how natural & spontaneous & disintellectualized & ahistorical & essentialist it tends to seem.

Read through system/culture, rather than just stare through language to wind up trapped in system/culture, in semantic artifice. Transparency is a future political achievement, not a normal condition we can subscribe to in literature. Writing must look toward a radically transformed society that would provide the code (and the ideal communication system, and counter-communication system) needed to fully comprehend it. *Utopia*. Take nothing for granted, leave nothing intact, move outside, heterogenize, wake up the patient from stupefaction, desocialize the ego (so that eventually we might be resocialized). Indeed, explode ourselves ("*jouissance*") into the text -- "airy, light, spaced, open, uncentred, noble and free"

BRUCE ANDREWS

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## WAVE

Bernard Welt, Wave (1977; Jawbone, c/o Doug Lang, 1545 18th St., NW, Washington, D.C. 20036; \$2)

Bernard Welt's poems tell what goes on in the head attuned and committed to paying attention to itself in all the forms customary language takes, as clearly these grow more arbitrary and various. The lines, stanzas, poems, sentences are as relentlessly and casually formal in their occupation as any. Here it seems second nature, virtually *de rerum natura* / the way things are --

These are voices in the mind that are no less for that in the body. Their tone and import take from all the gestures of moment that happen in the inward-looking roving mind the gist of their curb ("this pleasant, slightly confused murmuring"). BW gets a positive rush of courage out of sinking feelings, while the whole turmoil comes across in the blankest verse, direct as it is erring, voluble as it is laconic, glib as it is searching.

Wave is a long poem of some more than 13 pages, dedicated to Diane Ward, much of it virtually prose and the whole more loosely structured than other BW work I've seen. Its sections are discrete but not numbered and there is no interruption. The tone is of a voice deliberately talking on, such that no distinction need be made between figurative and literal speech. The conversation is as literary as in Conrad, and there is no joke about talk.

Part of the project of Wave appears to be to say something given



that it is difficult. The difficulties are various, and named when possible-- "You have nothing to talk about, / and no way to say it"; "The words fly off into the air, / one by one, slowly, like / thought balloons, escaping analysis / into their immediate constituent units"; "You will say the same thing over and over again, but in different ways." There is no difference between puzzling over and celebrating here. The poem has the air of a disquisition on being here, or is it relationship, or address, but leans not on prepared terms, strategies, syntaxes, known ideas, but hurdles them. It is of and in movement, with a consciously rhetorical resistance against though amid the kind of stasis bred of getting anything down-- "the matter / becoming an end in itself, / the individual waves / obscuring the sea, / and then you're lost: lost because you have found one place to be safer than others, and it is, but what has happened / to the motion. Absorbed / into the lines. / You have to support / what you can't avoid, / and that becomes automatic, so that it's as much a rule for those who use it to make things easy, freeze the motion, as those who learn to ride the wave, though the latter course is fraught with obstacles, 'monsters,' even; still, there is no reason to be proud of this because you have only done what you had to."

Along with the unwillingness to assume or grant the rightness of any given topic or form runs the assertion not only that any given perception or act is adequate and inevitable but also that each is, perhaps however one happens to see it, a casual paradigm. The indirection of the poem's investigations and the distracting imbalance of its resolutions, which is egged on to generate another momentum, paradoxically challenge and confirm this almost matter-of-fact fatality-- the energy offsets romantic and classical attitudes, which are both felt deeply and problematically. Evidently the poem was written with 2 hands. Reading it, dialectical faculties are called into debate and deconstructed. The poem is heartfelt, with that innate music, enough that the consequence is a sort of dance, albeit tentative and ceremonious like two contemporary friends meeting on purpose together who don't know each other yet-- Although you might say there is nothing to fear, casualness, generosity, even a show of vulnerability seem requisite as much to indicate one's autonomy and separateness as to elicit sympathy and response. The poem is less incantatory of the image of such discourse than of its issue in what one may take it that it needs to be, as though the voices barraging one from inside the head might be recognized as just as worthy of trust as the whisper in one's ear from an ideal friend, as though the focused deflection of all aural experience through the conch shell were actually the ocean's chosen form of address to me, whether arbitrary indeed or reiterative or intended for this moment all along. I myself find this rather upsetting. BW persistently raises the stakes of the poem high as possible



without losing them from our mutual view, challenges ideals of action, perception, and utterance and what can be said of them, however ironically, sparing no direct reference to the weaknesses noticed in coping with them.

STEVE BENSON

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RAWORTH

from LOGARHYTHMS

Tom Raworth, Logbook (1976; Poltroon Press, 2315 Carleton, Berkeley, CA; \$7.50)

And I am busily sweeping up the last few words in a country without an ear, whose artists are busy filling in the colours they've been allocated in the giant painting-by-numbers picture of themselves, because they think an interview with the man (now a physicist in Moscow) who was the boy on the Odessa Steps makes a connection.

The connection is that imagined between something whose claim to meaning is what it was recognized for, and the subject of an expropriation, a resistance to the fading away of a subject in which the past is regulated by future needs. For the boy on the Odessa Steps was part of a diction which no longer obtains, and the physicist in Moscow will prevent our realizing the history of that. Thus the tense in which *Logbook* is written is the post-prophetical present--it will not be depleted by 'culture.' And by that I mean what culture is recognized as being (culture at the cognitive level):

"He planted that word twenty years ago so that its weight is now exactly right"--that's the message of 'culture,' the real, cold, science.

For Raworth the word is not an implantation, a seclusion of meaning away from processes of renovation (there are a great number of novels and poems officially retired) but a disclosure, in a work of dehiscence--the discharge of mature contents. The proper meaning of maturity as of something instant, and not a state which you finally reach and then persist in.

If we think we understand this text it is not by way of consolation for the monopoly of 'literature'; 'literature' borrows its own meaning from a global repertoire and gives them only a limited territory in which they can work. This demarcation is political, like a red line on the map



ignored by the elements: "For this is the battle: between the vegetables and the rocks. And we are the disputed territory--we, and the water we come from and are." In fact we are the subjects of a repertoire such that we can exclude ourselves from parts of it or force ourselves not to: "Until finally writing becomes the only thing that is not a petroleum by-product, or a neat capsule available without prescription." Writing is the excessive production from which more meanings escape than can be contained and given a place, and if 'culture' can afford to be more and more intolerant, or restfully ignorant of its subversion by writing, that is because the massive extension of criticism has actually imposed on 'literature' a greater scope than it knew it already had, persuading us of its competence through an ability to account for an unprecedented number of the strange materials from which it borrows--when it omits everything which it is not in order to be systematic.

It's the front room, and the queen's picture flickers into a limp book called Jimi Hendrix because all books are dead & we live where the edges overlap.

There are other complicities of meaning some of which rely on complete subterfuge as they must to remain so fragile they can withstand the brutal coherence of civility. That maladaptation of ourselves whom writing may effectively put back into circulation is civility in the belief we are consenting members of the constituency of the book. So then it is important to traduce the accredited image of the book, and *Logbook* seems to be the record of an expedition whose parade of 'culture' might be directly provoking, and the representative value of its language could only be instated by force:

Around us was the countryside of Whimsy where, huddled around leaping orange fires, the natives let their cigarettes dangle unlit in their mouths, thinking only petrol or butane could light them.

This refers to a colonial discourse like that of *Voyage au Bout de la Nuit* where the Europeans have power through a monopoly on money and language. We ought to note that forty years ago the question of agency was still an effective anxiety, and that now the honest intervention has to be whimsical. The only way in which the natives can know the rules is through being guilty of a breach; this is the position which writing can refuse to occupy, and it does so if it is contrary. The adroitness is a condition necessary for the act of restitution in which disobedience to the laws of consistency is freed from its social stigma of worthlessness and restored to an expressive capacity....

Intermittent form is the basis of a text which is the presence of history, exactly like a log-book: not wholly irregular but punctuated by



a regularity which is transitory, "slightly charred by the slow still silent instant." It has an essential readiness which is measured not by coherent size but the sudden insistence of its distracted parts--"a form can be used once only." Our understanding of the text is the activation of these diverging parts, the instant in which their mutual pressure is sufficient to open the text for us.

ROD MENGHAM

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## STYLE

It is said that one can tell during a conversation that lasts no longer than a summer shower whether or not a person is cultivated. Often it does not take even so long, for a raucous tone of voice and grossly ungrammatical or vulgar expressions brand a person at once as beyond the pale of polite society. As one goes forth one is weighed in the balance and if found wanting he is quietly dropped by refined and cultured people, and nearly always he is left wondering why with his diamonds and his motors and his money he yet cannot find entree into the inner circles. An honest heart may beat beneath the ragged coat, a brilliant intellect may rise above the bright checkered suit and yellow tie, the man in the shabby suit may be a famous writer, the woman in the untidy blouse may be an artist of great promise, but as a general rule the chances are against it and such people are dull, flat, stale and unprofitable both to themselves and to other people. In the end, coherence is always a quality of thought rather than a manner of expression. The confused mind cannot produce coherent prose. A well-proportioned letter is the product of well-balanced mind. The utterance of the single word "Charles!" may signify: "Hello, Charles! are you here? I am surprised to see you." Language, however, is not confined to the utterance of single words. To express our thoughts we must put words together in accordance with certain fixed rules. Otherwise we should fail to express ourselves clearly and acceptably, and we may even succeed in saying the opposite of what we mean. Since language is the expression of thought, the rules of grammar agree, in the main, with the laws of thought. Even in matters of divided usage, it is seldom difficult to determine which of two forms is preferred by careful writers. Everything is taken care of in the most orderly fashion: terms are defined, possible ambiguities eliminated, implications and assumptions explained, proofs adduced, and examples provided. On the whole it is safe for the writer to leave semantic theory unexplored. We favor the standards of the more precise stylists if only because we cannot be more permissive without risking their disapproval, whereas those who do not object to less exacting usage are not likely to be offended by the correct usage. A good expository sentence does not call attention to itself, although Strunk comments that an occasional loose sentence has its virtues. No one who speaks and writes can expect his audience to respond to connotations that arise from his own purely personal experience. Some people associate colors with numbers, but orange is not a connotation of "four". The trouble with Humpty Dumpty's stipulative definitions, if they can be dignified by such a word, is that they are entirely capricious and absurd. For sentences must measure up to standards: it is always fair to ask of a sentence, "How *good* is it"? Among the qualities that contribute to an effective



impression, the five most essential are clearness, correctness, conciseness, courtesy, and character. For style is ingratiation; negative ideas, as a rule, should not be developed at length. And constructions to be shunned include those that are vague, abstract, equivocal, slanted, misleading, exaggerated, understated, loose, abbreviated, oversimplified, obvious, irrelevant, oblique, figurative, redundant, empty, impossible, or obscure. It would be a curious state of affairs if only those who seldom think about the words they use, who read little and who "cannot be bothered" with distinctions should be the only ones with full powers over vocabulary and syntax. Even on the grounds of free democratic choice the hands-off attitude about language receives no support. These assumptions further suggest that the desire for correctness, the very idea of better or worse in speech, is a hangover from aristocratic and oppressive times. ...the young foreigner who apologizes for the fact that the chocolates he has bought as a gift are *molten* is told with a smile that that is not English: the right word is *melted*. --We talk to our fellows in the phrases we learn from them, which seem to mean less and less as they grow worn with use. The quiet cynicism of our everyday demeanor is open and shameless, we callously anticipate objections founded on the well-known vacuity of our seeming emotions, and assure our friends that we are "truly" grieved or "sincerely" rejoiced at their hap--as if joy or grief that really exists were some rare and precious brand of joy or grief. A sentence says you know what I mean, dear do I well I guess I do. Grammar does not mean that they are to limit themselves. More and more grammar is not a thing. Grammar does not make me hesitate about prepositions. I am a grammarian I do not hesitate I rearrange prepositions.

(Sources include Follett's *Modern American Usage*, Kitttridge's *Advanced English Grammar*, Stein's *How to Write*, Modern Language Association's *In-House Style Sheet*, Hagar's *the English of Business*, Martin and Ohmann's *Logic and Rhetoric of Exposition*, Raleigh's *Style*, and Eichler's *Book of Etiquette*.)

CHARLES BERNSTEIN & SUSAN B. LAUFER

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