

TRACE

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Spring

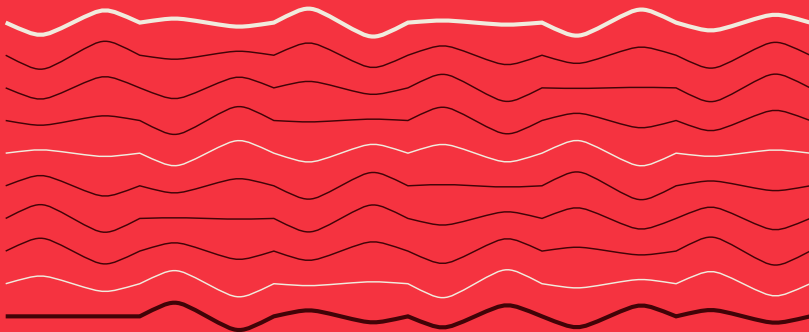
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JAMES BOYER MAY / EDITOR



TRACE

No. 60

Living Literature

Essays & Articles · Poetry · Reviews

Spring 1966

Edited by JAMES BOYER MAY

A CLEAN READING EDITION

Advertisements, subscription promotions, the front cover and blank leaves have been omitted. The poetry, fiction, essays, correspondence and reviews of the issue are given in full, in the order in which they are printed.

Where a poet uses the space of the page — indented lines, hanging steps, gaps within a line — that spacing is treated as part of the poem and kept as closely as a proportional typeface allows. Square brackets enclose conjectural readings where the scan is faded. Original spelling, punctuation, capitalization, paragraphing and verse lineation are kept.

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TOWARDS PRINT (A BIT OF PLAIN TALK)

by the Editor

TO DISCOVER THE REASON WHY this new 1966 Series does not open with an editorial article on the novel in today's worried world, please turn to Page six, where opens the largest Evolving Directory to little magazines and presses ever published. Rate of increase has soared nearly fifty percent since autumn.

TRACE, which actually is three magazines in one, has long since had to schedule contents a year in advance. The pages demanded for the Chronicle, however, cannot be determined until deadline. Each quarterly must be as up to date as time for final pressruns and mailings allows. Total paginations are limited by the maximum financial loss on North American circulation and pay to contributors, for which the Editor takes responsibility (physical production is assumed by the Publisher at a house loss, allowing only for costs of labor and materials).

To build readership, increasing N.A. receipts have been turned to diversified enlargement of The Creative Window and more articles, and — as of late — to other coverage, notably of cinema. Results have been verified by hundreds of letters. What pleases some does not always please some others, but the net 'vote' has been strongly affirmative.

Growth of TRACE has never been forced. Fed by interested individuals around the world, it enjoys a 'life' separate from those of the staff. At birth, it was a 'happening' — not pre-plotted and conceived by the Editor who has directed it since June, 1952. Towards Print had been his feature in the expiring MATRIX; the Directories also had begun there, and the Editor had been cooperating with Whipple McClay (he

died that year) whose GALLEY gave coverage comparable to that of THE INTERNATIONAL GUIDE (1960 & '61). The latter had to discontinue because of insufficient support for a book solely devoted to such bibliography. TRACE had kept the record from 1952 through 1959, picking it up again with No. 46 ('62) and crowding over a fourth of the pages of No. 47 with a complete Directory. Large percentage of space for bibliography reduced circulation to more general audience (not even yet rebuilt to that of the GUIDE's years) and No. 46, benefiting from broader contents appeal of preceding numbers, was the last to sell out within weeks of issue.

Now, and at a loss, we've come to offer in each department more than most periodicals centered on creative work or critical articles. Not a few readers have noticed and told others, but more are needed

ISSUE P. 2 · SCAN P. 8

FELIX SINGER:

SAROYAN AT 57

THE DARING YOUNG MAN AFTER THE FALL

*'My writing is careless, but all through it is
something that is good, that is mine alone, that no
other writer could ever achieve.'*

— William Saroyan (THE BICYCLE RIDER IN BEVERLY
HILLS — 1952)

YE, FOR BETTER AND FOR WORSE, the man is an original. Unique. A primitive. 'A good honkytonk pianist in prose,' somebody (Christopher Morley?) called him. The one and only exasperating, ingratiating ad lib solipsist. Like Polonius, he protests that he uses no art at all, madam; and like Polonius, he could use a lot more matter and a lot less elaborate cuteness; and like Polonius, he can be a god-awful bore. Yet millions of us have found him (exhaustibly) refreshing, enriching.

He was fifty-seven in August of last year, the Daring Young Man on the Flying Trapeze, and he's still swinging in fifty-seven different varieties of plays and prose and it's still and again and always the same old Saroyan sauce. (Almost. In recent years subtly different flavors . . .)

Saroyan writes about Saroyan. About Saroyan the child, the boy, the young man, and then about the middleaged Saroyan who writes about the younger Saroyan. Now and again a few digressions — e.g., gambling (Saroyan the Gambler), horse-racing (Saroyan the Bettor); the Saroyan house, bicycle, wife, children. Occasionally there are even a few non-Saroyans mentioned, most of them as romantic and naive and pseudo-naive and wise and silly as Saroyan.

Reminds you of Bach: essentially the same few simple themes over and endlessly over, subtly varied, contrasted,

rearranged. Except that Bach always knew what he was doing. With Saroyan it's an article of faith that he knows nothing, just does it, that knowing would impede the doing. Of course he'd kidding himself about this and knows that too; and in recent years has felt compelled to three-quarters admit it.

Still, he could not explain, no one really could, how in the hell he has managed to keep on and on this way, year after year, book after book. He broke into the bigtime at twenty-seven, in the midst of the Depression — a marvelously fresh spring of simple prose. All about being a boy selling papers on Fresno, California streetcorners (as late as November 1964 he's still writing about Willie peddling his Evening Heralds in 1917) and later the world's swiftest, most perceptive telegraph messenger. About the vineyards' tender grapes, about all his crazy, innocent (a favorite Saroyan word) Armenian relatives. And everything comes out more or less okay in the end, usually, because everybody is really more or less okay at heart, or at least well-intentioned. Clear and warm and funny and simple and fortified by that innocuously megalomaniacal pose: I am the greatest, most wonderful writer who ever lived and delighted to know it, aren't you?

He took that Image pose seriously, and he did not. It was and it remains the essence of his Weltanschauung that you take everything earnestly and ludicrously at the same time. The solemn and the ridiculous are all mixed, not really blended, into a cool, fruity punch. If your thirst is right for it, it goes down wondrous well, and mild occasional belches provide pleasant inner echoes for years.

Theatre of the Absurd? Like Huck Finn, Playwright Saroyan has 'been there before.' Was 'there' from his first play, has seldom been elsewhere. 'There' for Huck was the hypocritical, morally split 'civilization' he must flee by 'lighting out for the territory;' 'there' for Saroyan is his own

inner, constantly revisited, perpetually exotic, deliberately uncharted territory — a vantage point from which vistas of ‘civilized’ insanities become clearly apparent; and become bearable. Unlike most of the current wayout dramatists, he is not there for kicks or because it plays and pays well or because he thinks thoughts about gas chambers and H-bombs. He is there because no other place is possible for him. Child-dreamer confronts Real World: shall he hate, excoriate, ridicule, moralize, analyze, despair, withdraw? Those of the Saroyan temperament must laugh and weep, both together, simultaneously, which is an aching thing to feel, to do, to record, which is ineffectual, soul-rend(er)ing, crazy. Being a poet, he must in order to remain sane find Them — All of It — crazy, and believe it. Lacking versifying talent and being gabby, he does it through dialogue in plays and through involuted curlicues of fictionalized autobiography.

It was inevitable (so we stuffy think-types kept ‘prophesizing’) that the Daring Young Man would lose his artistic-philosophic maidenhead and fall foolish flat on his face. Okay, he did. WESLEY JACKSON was pretty awful and so was most of the stuff circa 1945-1950. You can’t forever babble like a carbonated brook about young authorprojections innocently on the make for sweet and pert and pret maidens, etc. etc.

After all, we pontificated, in time Young Man learns about money and debt, marriage and divorce, war and death. The man at the typewriter discovers that you can’t keep tapping it out of your child subconscious and flinging finished sheets to eager rich editors. In time the natural-born choirboy’s voice changes (for he was too intelligent and robust to remain castrato for life). He finds the pipes won’t produce the desired tones unless correct breathing and projection techniques are consciously mastered, unless (alas) age and wear and tear are made allowance for.

So he took his inevitable fall and it was painful to hear, and the silences between the books were also painful, but now he's back on wobbly feet. Black and blue, plenty sore in places, but wandering around. And singing.

Maybe TRACY'S TIGER (1951) was the first solid comeback artist. BICYCLE RIDER (1952) is the logical, comprehensive, and rather masterful summation-reprise of Saroyan 1934-1950. But it would have been much too tidy a development if he had just let it go at that and then started anew.

No, he is still stopping-starting, backtracking. The literary artist (Irwin Shaw recently took these words right out of my mouth) always indirectly reflecting in his work where he is at any given stage in his life. Saroyan is deathly allergic to precision, must not dare define any too precisely where he is, so he wanders all over his own timetrack — and sometimes ends up no place special.

But in his ambling rambling fashion he seems finally to have turned a corner. MAMA I LOVE YOU (1956) is part of the new repertoire so is PAPA YOU'RE CRAZY (1957) and various others — he still has to write fast, fast, much, much. Worthy of comment: that posterous, amazingly enough almost successful, exercise in writing a book about not having anything to write a book about — NO DYING (1963). And BOYS AND GIRLS TOGETHER (1963) might read like a pretty good, swift (another favorite Saroyan word), allusive novel, even if one knew nothing about the author.

Somehow the stuff still works on readers: the wine is less sweet and clear but it still breaks up the chunks of gray matter in the prefrontal lobes.

He's much the same — less sentimental, much more subdued, less certain, vaguely disturbed, subtly wiser — but he ain't no virgin anymore and knows it.

Still swinging: after thirty-odd years, though, you can hear the grunts and breathy sigh-wails of the overweight,

success-spoiled trapeze artist. Being Saroyan, he makes the wheezes part of the act.

Of course it is an act. A trapeze act. Always was. Down below: anxiety, agony, tragedy, death—quite possibly quite soon a final death for the race. Above it all (and doing it sometimes in the SATURDAY EVENING POST, yet, of all places!—amidst the four-color booty of savage huckster wars, amidst the Alsopian doom-analyses and hawk-screeches and the latest show biz tity-lations)—above it all: wisecracking, mumbling, muttering . . . and still and again and always—singing—of Goodness and Joy, of Love and Kids and the pebbles he found on a walk along the beach. The Daring Aging Soloist.

These capitalized abstractions remain very real and personal to William Saroyan, in spite of It All, in spite of Them. To joy and love and kids and pebbles he serves the ancient, indispensable fealty of the poet.

We owe the honkytonk pianist something for this fealty. We owe him so much. The sound is corny, often, yes; and gooey at times; and usually woozy and vague. But though you may not dig this riff or that one, you cannot put the cat down. Because there is, yes, there still is, that fealty, that instinctive, determined, muddleheaded, loving, crazy, beautiful lifelong allegiance.

ISSUE P. 5 · SCAN P. 11

LITTLE BOYS

When little boys
grow into larger strangers
who live in the next block
and drive noisy, dented,
sport cars which make
unseemly noises in the night —

When little boys
have grown like fat persimmons
on the autumn bough
before first frost
has sweetened them,
what strangers they become.

Kenneth L. Beaudoin

SCAN PP. 12-17, 121-128

THE CHRONICLE

THE CHRONICLE, 'An Evolving Directory' — six pages here and eight more at the back of the issue, some hundred and ninety-six magazines and presses. Both parts are omitted: a working address list rather than reading matter, superseded by THE INTERNATIONAL GUIDE TO LITERARY AND ART PERIODICALS.

One entry stops the eye. ARTISTS' WORKSHOP PRESS, 4825-27 John Lodge, Detroit: 'Ed. John Sinclair's mag, WORK, hampered by his fine and jail sentence for marijuana possession. Funds needed. FIRE MUSIC: a record. Send \$\$ to Magdalene Sinclair.' A trade directory passing the hat, three years before the ten-year sentence that made Sinclair a cause.

DASEIN is here, and APERTURE from Rochester offering Edmund Teske and John Brook; ALPHABET with a number 'misnumbered — is 11 — has article on Doukhobors'; ATLANTIS EDITIONS of Philadelphia with two books of poems; EAST SIDE REVIEW from Murray Hill Station in its first year, 'leading contemp. artists & writers, large format, interviews, plays, film, poetry.'

The names are listed in Trace_60_1966_chronicle_names.txt beside the transcript. — ED.

EDITORS (AND OTHERS) WRITE

TWO VIEWS OF A COMMON PROBLEM

(I)

A Letter to a Young Poet in Academia*

Dear Young Poet in Academia:

I wouldn't take the time to write you except for two reasons: your poems seem to me quite promising and your obvious distrust of English professors hits me at a time when I find it difficult to remain silent. During the past two days I have witnessed on TV the sorry spectacle of my colleagues' having to defend academic freedom on the campuses of North Carolina and watched the antics of representatives of the American Legion and Veterans of Foreign Wars, who wish to control our college speakers.

(Two years ago, the State Legislature, wishing to punish our university system because a number of professors were active in civil rights demonstrations, passed a law forbidding communists and pleaders of the Fifth Amendment to appear at state-supported institutions. During the controversy over this futile and feeble law, there arose a wave of anti-intellectualism in a state that has been traditionally liberal, a paradoxical situation in which the KKK and senators have joined forces to attack the state's best scholars and teachers.)

Thus you will understand why I read your disparagement and insinuations in the context of a deep-rooted anti-intellectualism which pervades much of America today; and if my letter becomes intemperate, you will know the reason. (I refer to your emphasis on the pedantic minds, 'medieval traditions, departmental infighting, and petty egos,' etc. of our universities.)

Many poets — almost all of the Beatniks — have helped intensify this distrust of American universities and the life of the intellect in our time. However, they are very anxious, I find, to give readings at colleges — for a fee — and to have their books published by university presses.

Well, I am one of those English professors (Ph.D. and all, I hesitate to say — and I've even taught graduate courses), but I do not habitually think of myself as a destroyer of creative talent or as an enemy of modern poetry — nor do I think of my friends and colleagues as such. (I'll admit that quite a few are simply indifferent.) I have published a few poems and novels of my own; no doubt they would be more clearly steeped in reality if I had made my living as a garbage collector or race tout. In addition, I have co-edited an anthology of poetry, founded and edited two poetry magazines — IMPETUS and SOUTHERN POETRY REVIEW — paying much of the costs out of my own pocket. I am poetry consultant for a university press, I direct a ten-college poetry circuit, and I review at least one book of poems every month. Moreover, through the university library and with my own collection, I spend hundreds of dollars on poetry every year. My own work may not be important, granted, but I do think that it is important that I have spent a great deal of time and money to help encourage many young or unestablished poets in America — including five who appear in the same issue of TRACE with your essay, and three of them, again, poor English professors.

** Reference is to an article by William Heyen in TRACE No. 56.*

And mine is not an isolated case: if it were I wouldn't attempt this apology for English profs. I could mention numerous others just as active as I am in the cause of contemporary poetry: Bill Taylor and Dick Langford at Stetson University have just started their own press and a new poetry series (William Van O'Connor's HIGH MEADOW was their first volume); Bill Corrington and Miller Williams are doing

extraordinary things with the press at Louisiana State University; Dr. Louis Rubin, head of the English Department at Hollins College, publishes the best poetry of his students, setting up their work on a hand press; Max Halperen and Sidney Knowles have helped me start a new poetry series this month with a first volume by Paul Ramsey, a young Ph.D. at Sewanee; and don't forget that Alan Swallow is an English professor. I could go on with this list, but it would only bore you. I mention here only the work of my close friends in the South — all of them English profs, a number of them teaching in graduate schools.

Let me ask you: When in the history of graduate schools anywhere has there been anything like this? When have youngish Ph.D.'s set up presses or gone to the expense of editing and financing poetry journals so that young poets like you might find an audience? I don't know of anything like it — except for *THE FUGITIVE* in the Twenties — nor do I know of a better time for the young poet to risk his talent on a college campus. To paraphrase Frost, I don't know where he is likely to go better.

I have a secret, young poet, that I would share with you. I have been up and down the length and breadth of America and I have never met a taxi driver who was teaching Yeats or a garbage collector who edited a little mag or an insurance agent who sponsored a poetry circuit or a Wall Street broker who put up money for a little mag. This may be a fearful thing for you to contemplate, but the survival of poetry in America, I think, depends pretty much on the English professors you disparage, plus the editors they have helped train.

Will graduate school hurt a poet? Certainly it's conceivable — but I don't think it will deter a true poet any more than poverty or obscurity or imprisonment. If you can point to a good poet who was castrated by the Ph.D. grind, then I suggest that working in an insurance office must kill

quite a few, too. Your master, Wallace Stevens, was careful to keep his poetry writing a secret from his business associates. (At least, you won't have that trouble!) T. S. Eliot managed to thrive in a bank, but I would wager that banks stifle more poets in a given year than do English departments. William Carlos Williams turned his practice into great poetry, but most of the doctors and dentists I know are as anti-intellectual as Goldwater and couldn't care less about poetry.

Let me admit frankly that there are English professors who are enemies of modern poetry — for that matter, any new ideas at all. Some of them are as bad as garbage collectors or insurance agents. Furthermore, you'll run into the scientific mind that got into literature by mistake, the passive verb counters, collators of texts, etc. But the worst are the ones who had creative ambitions and failed; they are likely to take out their frustrations on the young writer.

Yet, you'll soon recognize the pedants and the soured failures. You might even learn to count it a blessing that you live at a time when young poets in America can go off to college and study under men like Archibald MacLeish, John Ciardi, Kenneth Rexroth, Robert Penn Warren, and John Crowe Ransom.

You might take a little hope from the fine young poets today who managed to get a Ph.D. without losing their creative impulse, men like Hollis Summers and Louis Cox, for example. I don't think getting a Ph.D. hurt my friends Bill Taylor, Paul B. Newman, Paul Ramsey, or Robert Watson. All of them are turning out some pretty passable verse — in addition to helping a lot of young talents mature.

Let me get personal again, since yours is a personal essay. You mention being forced to read Chaucer and a book on light and dark imagery in Hawthorne. How do you know that being forced to encounter these books will not help your writing later? I had to read Chaucer, too, and I've just

published a novel (THE BALLAD OF THE FLIM-FLAM MAN) in which I could draw on my knowledge of Chaucer — as well as some Elizabethan pamphlets that I would never have read on my own hook. That book on light and dark imagery in Hawthorne is a good one; it was written by one of my graduate professors, Richard Fogle (no enemy of poetry, either). I not only read his book, but I went on to publish a study of the imagery in Fitzgerald's THE GREAT GATSBY. Now, my study may be of no consequence; yet, writing it and reading Fogle taught me something about the role of imagery that has been of enormous value to me in writing my own fiction and an occasional poem.

(Incidentally, I hope you'll be forced as part of the Ph.D. program to take a course in the history of the English language. You might hate it, as I did; nevertheless, it will be a great aid to your poetry later on.)

I don't know your friend who absolutely refused to take a course in criticism for fear it would force him to examine literature 'too methodically.' But I would say without any hesitation that his attitude is foolish. I go on the assumption that the true poet can't be stopped, either by farming stubborn acres like Frost or by writing a doctoral dissertation liked E. V. Cunningham. Furthermore, I think that a fine critical mind is essential to the whole creative process — though I am fully aware that these critical faculties can stymie the creative impulse or swamp it entirely, as happened with Coleridge.

Most important, I would say that what's wrong with a great deal of poetry today is that there is nowhere in evidence a critical mind behind it. Every poet should be able to examine the draft of his poem 'methodically' — after it has cooled off. Think of all the mindlessness that passes for poetry today! Wouldn't a course in criticism somewhere along the line have helped Ginsberg or Corso or Kerouac? You say it might kill their creative instincts? I'm sorry, but I

say, so much the better then.

Finally, I haven't read William Van O'Connor's essay in which he says that the young writer on campus who has a Ph.D. is 'king of the mountain.' You had better believe him, young friend; he is dead right. But he must have the Ph.D. or he will run into trouble with his colleagues, as Robert Frost did at Dartmouth or John Knowles did more recently at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

Perhaps this situation ought to be deplored, but there is no way of bucking it. A handful of lyrics or a popular novel don't carry much weight with the solid scholars in an English department, who, after all, make up the backbone of any good department. The thing to do is to prove to the footnote boys that you can succeed on their terms — then go on with your poems or novels. Believe me, they will let you alone; most of them will encourage you.

If Academia can sniff at your poetic talent, young poet, then let it. Because if it can, this means that you were nothing but a poetaster to begin with. It would be better to turn out a first-rate study of Wallace Stevens' poetry than to clutter up the literary landscape with third-rate poems. Lord knows, we have enough of those already.

Guy Owen

(II)

A Supplement to William Heyen's 'Academia and the Young Poet as Breadwinner'

Dear Editors:

William Heyen's fine essay succeeded admirably in its goal of finding 'in a personal discussion clues to the state of young poetic minds in this country.' The poetic minds more specifically in question were, of course, those of a number of young poets now seeking livelihood in Academia. As a young poet-academic 'in this country,' I find my own portrait uncomfortably close to the one Heyen has drawn of himself (I am only one year older, twenty-five, have an M.A., am

teaching, am faced with the necessity of returning to graduate school soon, am haunted by TV, etc.).

The essay had, however, a limitation which has been subtly irritating me since my first reading of it. In his portrayal of the state of mind of the young poet-academic, Heyen has appropriately ended his essay in a haze of questions about whether 'Academia will compound the difficulty we are having in achieving freedom and writing truly, or if it will relieve the difficulty.' Now, it was not Heyen's responsibility, since it was no part of his purpose, to find answers to these questions. However, since these same vague questions are being idly and earnestly worried over by thousands of young teacher-poets throughout the nation, it is, I think, time for at least some one of us to stop asking and fearing (while all the while, as in Heyen's confessed case, realizing the commitment to Academia has been made and will undoubtedly be honored) and finally get down to investigating the situation with the intention of finding some kind of answer or answers. Granted, as young poets, we are none of us in a position to look back from a distance to see whether our decision was the proper one (if, indeed, such a distant position would make us any more qualified to decide), we all have a quarter of a century, more or less, of life experience behind us, some graduate work, and almost all of us have some teaching experience. We do, then, have a sample to work from; and intelligent men should, like scientists, be able to make a fair judgment of the whole from an intense analysis of the sample. And, of course, we have our older colleagues to observe as well. So let's analyze what we ought by now to know, and see if we can come up with some of the answers.

The basic question raised by Heyen, along with the more specific one as to whether one ought to teach for a living while trying to make it as a writer, was whether one ought to work at all while trying to make it as a writer. This choice is

largely a false one, especially for the poet. America does not support poets. With rare exceptions (I don't know of any, personally, but I suppose they exist) the young writer and especially the young poet must find some sort of livelihood just to keep himself in typing paper and postage. Anyone who can make a decent living by writing, alone, would have a far different kind of choice to make. But the best choice — and this will be covered later — will not necessarily be to junk teaching, or any other side-job, in favor of 'just writing.'

But, all right, let's consider starving in a garret. First of all, almost everyone in our position (why this is so is irrelevant — it is so) has a family. And although many of us wouldn't mind missing a few meals, we don't want to — won't, in fact — ask our families to starve along with us. Let's face it: on an instructor's salary, with graduate school debts to pay, there's not a lot of gravy on the table anyway. Moreover, having lived on beans and macaroni and macaroni and beans for a part of my youth, I have always been hard to convince there are benefits in poverty. Poverty and starvation do not, contrary to a popular belief among certain would-be writers, stimulate the imagination and ensure the growth of genius. George Orwell has pointed out in *DOWN AND OUT IN PARIS AND LONDON*, the only thing that is in anyone's head when he is really hungry and miserable, is how hungry and miserable he is. 'You thought it would be quite simple; it is extraordinarily complicated. You thought it would be terrible; it is merely squalid and boring. It is the peculiar loveliness of poverty that you discover first; the shifts that it puts you to, the complicated meanness, the crust-wiping.' And when real hunger sets in: 'reduces one to an utterly spineless, brainless condition, more like the after-effects of influenza than anything else. It is . . . as though all one's blood had been pumped out and lukewarm water substituted. Complete inertia is my chief memory of hunger . . .' In fact, 'a man . . . is not a man any longer, only a belly with a few

accessory organs.’ The young writer today is not likely to face the depth of poverty faced by Orwell, but a modified poverty will lead only to a modified experience of the same kind.

Devotion to a family and job can supply the material the young writer needs. desperately needs if his work is to be meaningful. And if his ‘freedom,’ as earned through voluntary poverty, is chosen as an alternative to this, he will lose much that can be of great value to him. ‘Most of my poems,’ John Crowe Ransom has written, ‘are about familiar and familial situations.... My defense could only be the argument that such situations might be denoting precisely those patterns ... which had been ordained in our creation, and were therefore the ones likely to be standard and permanent.’ Cutting oneself off from this experience in order to devote oneself entirely to writing can easily lead to writing ‘a few lines / About some marble / Carved from a music’ — as Lee Malone has put it in his fine poem protesting the divorce of art from the ‘obvious life’ (found just below the Heyen article in TRACE No. 56). We need more writing involved with the problems of how to live with one’s wife and/or children and/or job and boss and perhaps could do without too many more works worrying about marbles and musics, drug addiction, and adolescent courtship.

Heyen notes that many of today’s writers are turning to the past and to their youth for their material. Yet, maybe this is not only a result, as he suggests, of the writer’s retreating from a world he feels to be too complex, but also a result of too many writers’ having been only writers for so long that they feel they have no place in the ‘real, present’ world except as writers, and yet have no desire to rewrite the poem or novel about the writer writing the poem or novel about the writers, etc.

One more argument in favor of a full-time job for the young writer. Work tends to lead to work. Most of us can write only a few hours a day. The rest of the time, if we are

devoting ourselves one hundred per cent to our craft, will be spent in semi-idleness. Idleness can lead to idleness until soon the writer who is devoting all his time to his work may well find he has 'less time to write' than the writer who holds down a full-time job. This is not true for all, but it certainly is true for many — and perhaps for most young writers. It proved true in my own experience, which includes a year 'devoted solely to my art.'

If one does choose to work at a full-time job rather than to escape to some vague 'artsville' or 'road,' how does teaching measure up as a 'second job?' Let's look at the graduate-school experience first.

The emphasis upon scholarship here may tend to dull one's creative instincts. The best scholarship always involves genuine creativity; but too much graduate work bears little resemblance to the 'best scholarship.' There is much drudgery and exhaustion, and the dust of the library shelves may settle on one's imagination. Too many graduate assignments are mere exercises in fact-finding or in confirming the prejudices of an instructor, rather than projects for which one can develop real enthusiasm. And the struggle for survival sometimes turns the student into a sniveling politician.

One frequently finds over-emphasis on criticism and little emphasis on the works themselves. Faced with such a situation, I've known students to give up reading original works almost entirely, devoting themselves to the devouring of anthologies of criticism — often at a profit gradewise. Such an approach can be deadly to creative writers (as well as to critics). To heavy an emphasis on critical faculties can hog-tie that part of creative force which lies on a different plane than that of analytical intelligence. On the other hand, devoting a reasonable amount of time to criticism can make us far more perceptive and accomplished as writers. There is no such creature as the great writer with an undeveloped

critical faculty (this includes the much misunderstood Dreiser and Wolfe). It simply remains up to the student-poet to make his own analysis, prudently and carefully, of the amount of criticism that's good for him as a writer.

Whatever the difficulties, the creative faculties can survive graduate school — and even may be benefited. For one thing, graduate school offers contact with a large number of first-rate minds, both among students and teachers — and many of these minds belong to other young writers. There are few places outside of Academia where one may associate with many who are in the same struggle. If you are in the right place at the right time, you will meet poets and writers who already have made it and who can, and will, help you.

In addition to which, the graduate student is surrounded by art and the study of art. Graduate schools have a way of becoming cultural centers (an abused phrase, but one that serves the purpose), attracting displays and the creations of works in every field. Indiana University, where I did my graduate work, is situated in the wilds of southern Indiana; yet it offered me opportunity to see a display of El Greco, an opera premier, ballet by outstanding professional companies, concerts by some of the world's finest musicians . . . to see and hear John Crowe Ransom, Allen Tate . . . etc. Those of us who like to live close to or in the country, but also want something of the intellectual and cultural life that once could be found only in cities, can be grateful that associations with universities are so potentially profitable artistically.

What about the Ph.D. dissertation itself, that agonizing conclusion to the grind? It takes too much writing time, especially if written after return to full-time teaching — as economics often demand. And the paper can be too much an exercise in the finding of facts of minute importance, in hair-splitting, in abasing oneself to satisfy and flatter the prejudices of every member of the committee. But if the

student is tough enough and stubborn enough (and picks his committee carefully), his dissertation can be a personal expression with nothing of prostitution about it. And the requirement can provide the impetus at last to get over the hurdle of a first complete sustained piece of writing with all the benefits of disciplined confidence, etc. that can accrue thereto.

Education, the knowledge of facts and opinions and of what is fact and what is opinion, is necessary for any kind of writer. Graduate school is one place where one can get a part of that education.

Teaching itself carries most of the benefits of graduate school, plus a few others — and it involves fewer of the handicaps. The work is exhausting; but the same can be said of most jobs — and, hard work or no teaching provides more free time than any other job I know of. That free time is, assuredly, to be spent ‘contributing to the world’s fund of knowledge;’ yet, most schools will accept creative endeavor under that title. Some won’t. There are English departments where the ‘publish or perish’ means: publish plenty of criticism and/or scholarship or get out — no creative work accepted on the publications list. The alternative is to avoid such schools and seek more congenial surroundings. Such are not hard to find. The question to ask oneself is simply: ‘Do I want to become a famous scholar-critic (or at least a department chairman) or do I want to be a serious creative writer making a living as a teacher?’ Of course, some people have managed to do both. Others of us doubt that we have the temperament.

There is also the advantage of having your work coincide with your field of interest. In the last quarter of last year, my entire teaching load consisted of the teaching of poetry — an introduction to poetry for freshmen and a survey of American poetry since Whitman for sophomores. I became saturated with poetry. And never has my own poetry improved so much

in so short a period. During three weeks toward the end of the quarter, I wrote a new poem every day — the highest production rate I had ever achieved.

I'll not waste my time answering the foolish notion held by some that Academia somehow exists separate from the 'real world' (the personal experiences related in Heyen's article should be enough to disprove this). If there is such a place as the 'real world,' the teacher lives as much in it as the garbage collector. The fact that the life of the average college teacher is lived on a somewhat higher intellectual plane than the life of the average garbage collector does not mean that it is not being lived at all — or even that it contains less of artistic interest.

Teaching is not the ultimate answer to the writer's search for the perfect conditions under which to write. But, let's face it — the perfect conditions have existed for no one (consider, for instance, Shakespeare's harried life). Teaching is a possible solution to some of the problems. For those of us who love teaching, it can be quite a palatable solution. And this, to be sure, is the greatest of all considerations. If the young poet has no interest in teaching, he will find Academia a veritable hell, and his work will suffer drastically. If he enjoys teaching, the irritations and handicaps that frustrate the poet-academic will be easily enough borne, and good writing will be no more devilishly difficult than under any dreamed-of condition.

Jerry L. Miller

CAN GOOD DOORS BE KEPT OPEN?

Dear Editors:

Any editor must know how some writers growl, bitterly, because they feel misprized and 'shut out.' Indeed, an editor worth his salt, and in whom human nature has not lost its common savor, must feel honest regret at such an accusation, and reexamine his own premises. Has he become dull to newness, indifferent to expressive humanity, with hardness of the arteries that indicates cliquishness, antidemocratic eliteness, cultural fascism?

Looking at American magazines, any knowing person must say of too many editors, 'Great are the panjandrums of privilege!' If the national government through, say, its National Council of the Arts, pours support into the arts, will this serve the grass roots, the true strugglers, the small voices on whom democracy depends? Or will money go, as so often in all programs at home and abroad, into the existing bastions of privilege?*

As I write this early in 1966, amid felt repression of 'consensus government,' I do frankly fear the literary-cultural establishment. Will the literary 'haves' grow fatter? And the 'have-nots' grow leaner, even [in] opportunity? Will the established literary quarterlies, usually contemptuous of the new voices of the many, bolt their doors even tighter? 'We accept nothing which is unsolicited.' And no new voice can possibly be 'adapted to our particular needs.' The cold printed rejection is evidence of indifference and noninvolvement and of contempt for the struggling writers. Will this spiritual failure, this antidemocratic bias, also characterize more and more little magazines?

I have been aware of TRACE, built with sacrifice as an effective instrument for grass-roots expression. Can there be more such periodicals? Can good doors be kept open? Can

we remember the warning in Jeffers' SHINE, PERISHING REPUBLIC? Or will we become more 'private' and our magazines more narrowly 'literary' and noninvolved? I hope that this is a lie: that the vast majority of intellectuals are irresponsible conformists, and willing to be moulded by an image-making government. But is it?

Pacificus

OF INDIVIDUALISM & THE WRITING SCENE

Dear Editors:

It is difficult to send you an over-all comment on any of your issues, as they are so chockfull of a number of things, including, of course, nuts. But, in No. 57, I especially appreciated Mary Graham Lund's REBELLION FOR HUMANITY'S SAKE. It helped greatly in coming to grips with the play, MARAT-SADE, itself.

To turn to another subject — quite related, however, since it too deals with our times, David Lee Pagari's THE ANDROGYNOUS POET led me once more into thought on this phenomenon, the obvious spread of homosexuality in our country. What became clear as I read the quoted poems was the terrible desire of these men to escape from the loud machinelike routine and attack of our age. The rebellion takes the form of wanting to be women — illogical, of course, as women are not exempt from our times. Actually, what one hears in these verses is the thump-thump-thump of competition, war, nuclear threat, too many people, no respect for the individual. . . .

** This question has been answered. Roger L. Stevens, Chairman of the National Council on the Arts, has announced that the selection of grantees for approximately fifty individual grants in a sum total of \$375,000 has been delegated to the National Institute of Arts and Letters, for the entire first year of operation.*

Personally, I have been astounded and dismayed by what has taken place in the world of books. I am referring not only

to poetry, but to any book that is not due to become a best-seller, or by its bigness and high-pricedness due to bring in a lot of money. In short, few or no reviews, and few or no stocks in the book stores. Something has got to be done about it. Have you any suggestions?

Helen Wolfert

SPERM SCORNE

Is this the price I pay
Staying virgin till wedding day
Married now five years or more
Not one child — while that whore
Struts proudly by my door
With four.

Booker T. Jackson

Y, Z

Growing old is the
accumulation
of experiences;
discretion,
a lubricant
to prevent
premature climax.
Death is the final orgasm.
It is better if you wait —
but not too long.

Vin Cassidy

THE HAND IN THE FIST

(A STUDY OF WILLIAM WYLER'S *THE COLLECTOR*)

by A. Fredric Franklyn

WE DO NOT LOVE INTELLIGENCE. WHEN it attracts us at all, we respect it, admire it. What else would our obedient little New World psyches do with a synaptical pastime freighted that much word-of-mouth reputation? Ban it? Ignore it? File a protest? Come out in the open and positively denounce it? No — apart from a sudden courage of one's lack of convictions, there isn't any realistic alternative but to put up with it. We must even join forces with it, rendering it staunchly false allegiance, as though we could be dedicated to anything so completely upsetting to decent creature habits as all this cortical activity. But most of the time it is repellent. Our more instinctual response is fear and resentment. We know that there is always an excess tax on anything that artificial in nature!

In Jud Kinberg's and John Kohn's production of John Fowles' novel, *THE COLLECTOR*, directed by William Wyler, there is a sequence in which Miranda Grey (Samantha Eggar) is interrogated by her kidnapper, Freddie Clegg (Terence Stamp). Freddie is harassing Miranda about a Picasso painting and J. D. Salinger's teen-age protagonist in his novel, *CATCHER IN THE RYE*. Miranda is trying desperately to curb her honest sense of intellectual outrage prompted by the entrenched stupidity which is the base from which Freddie (prototype after all) so glibly reproaches her literary and artistic canons.

What is at stake here is something more than any ordinary intellectual disagreement. Because she is dependent upon Freddie, Miranda is constrained to treat his

ravings with respect. Certainly she would not optionally discuss such relatively abstract issues with this kind of an individual in any ordinary context of events. However, in this cruelly artificial situation, she is compelled to deal with the appalling differences in their backgrounds, to try to communicate her own sense of intellectual wonder and appreciation to a human being whose provincial morality and meaner nature foredoom any possibility of that experience.

When her answers inevitably succeed in enraging and further alienating him, and Freddie leaves, locking her up again, Miranda cries 'What have I done? Oh, God, what have I done?' As if anything else she might have said, any other ideas or values she might have urged, could have achieved the understanding she has failed completely to get from him.

Away Freddie goes (for the time being), taking his hill of incomprehension and its concomitant and equal measure of frustrated hostility with him.

Perhaps the most discouraging aspect of this is that Freddie really has a point of view. This does not appear to advantage in his attack on Picasso's art, but there is much to be said for his more reasoned criticism of Salinger's slickly-dishonest New Yorker brand of facile tear-jerking. But the point is less a question of distinguishing between specific preferences in art and literature than a question of the why of our values: Why do we prefer this or that, raising it with our evaluation to an artistic eminence? Why do we reject this or that, artistically deflowering it with our judgment? Not: Why is Picasso a good painter and Salinger a bad writer? But: Why do we see them as good or bad? Why do we view their work with esteem or disfavor? What is the basis of that acceptance or rejection given to a creative work?

Freddie tells Miranda that intellectuals are all alike, all similarly dishonest: Some teacher tells them that a

particular creator is admirable and, wishing only to appear superior, like the teacher, they ape the fashion which he has modeled for them. Freddie suggests that this collective and careful dishonesty among intellectuals is the means by which, as a class, they delude themselves with a notion of superiority over less-cerebral human beings.

More than a little likely, the juxtaposition of Picasso and Salinger in the screen play was deliberate. At least, it is certainly apposite! Why not Picasso and Camus, for instance? Or Grandma Moses and Salinger?

Why not two artists or two writers, in the first place? Nothing, no other set of alternatives, could have so starkly illustrated the hopeless welter of confusion existing at the best of times, and with the best will on everybody's part, in the way of reaching artistic conclusions in any final sense. There simply are no absolute standards. The poet, Robert Duncan, has asserted that it is necessary 'to put the poem in jeopardy.' As with any really first-class diagnostician in medicine, or research physicist torn between need to create in his own field and an impulse to suppress the results of a labor which has brought so much fresh anguish into the world, it is finally necessary to put one's own neck on the chopping block and risk a result or an opinion or an original artistic choice. The miracle of human life derives from so many diverse, related, and unrelated origins. Its destined meaning, too, is abandoned in the questions of whole schools, psychological, sociological, economic, political, artistic, etc., of thought. Yet, past doubt, one sustaining element is to be found in its physiological, emotional, and cerebral tensions. Intellectually, we get our time precisely from the viciously innocent lack of finality in all things, about anything, all our questions, and all our so-called answers. And we get our 'life' (i.e., vitality) from a persistent need to search just as diligently as the search could be expected ever to have any real end.

At one point, Miranda impatiently assails her kidnaper: 'Why do you keep on using these stupid words — nasty, nice, proper, right? Why are you so worried about what's proper? You're like a little old maid who thinks marriage is dirty and everything except cups of weak tea in a stuffy old room is dirty. Why do you take all the life out of life? Why do you kill all the beauty?' (n.b.: This is quoted from the novel.) Clegg's answer ('I never had your advantages. That's why.') is illuminating. He can't know this, himself, but it is a painfully-directed confession that he has been intellectually and emotionally bludgeoned — frozen absolutely in the mold of a fin-de-siecle aunt and uncle, who raised him. He hasn't, in fact, got a prayer of perceiving the elements of life in any aspect. He's an ambulating and, on an amoebic level, decision-making vegetable. What Freddie Clegg has got to do — his little lot in this grand scheme of things — is to get through an unspecified number of days or years or decades, upon the completion of which, his body may return to the earth, there to fall back into its protean constituents. To speak of him as having shared in any respectable degree in 'the human condition' is to invite helpless laughter.

At another point, Miranda says to him: 'You know what you do? You know how the rain takes the colour out of everything? That's what you do to the English language. You blur it every time you open your mouth.' And again: 'I always seem to end up by talking down to you. I hate it. It's you. You always squirm one step lower than I can go.' (Freddie's charitable aside to the reader is: 'She went like that at me sometimes. Of course I forgave her, though it hurt at the time.')

But he is so far lost from any sense of what it might be to behave like a sentient, responsible, and decisive being that the first time he sees Miranda dressed for him in the clothes he has bought for her, he observes: 'For a moment I thought it wasn't her, it looked so different.' He simply cannot think

in terms of identities. Not even for himself. He isn't even as reasonably deranged as a solypist. He adds: 'Of course she made me feel all clumsy and awkward. I had the same feeling I did when I had watched an imago emerge, and then to have to kill it. I mean, the beauty confuses you, you don't know what you want to do any more, what you should do.' (n.b.: All italics in this paragraph are imposed.)

The point is that intellectual realization of any sort, and probably especially where the evaluation of any creative act is concerned, is a complex and painfully-ambiguous process. Fairness in the judgment presupposes equivalent background, for one thing. Yet that is rarely possible and hardly desirable, since otherwise only critics and practicing artists would read books or look at paintings or sculpture.

But some standard of awareness seems requisite even among the laity. Possibly there is no such thing in any absolute way. Perhaps no acceptance or rejection ever is really valid. And maybe no work of art ever is really completely objective, no matter how universal its intent. But accept and reject, we will . . . every time the artist commits himself to a fresh assault upon our sensibilities. And for those of us who feel a constraint to be at least fair, if not generous, in our judgments of these creative events, the issue is rarely simple, and never entirely without hazard.

The finality of Freddie's judgments frightens us. That they yet have certain applications, in the case of Salinger anyway, only makes the issue that much more dubious and upsetting. He reaches all his conclusions with the same appalling alacrity; both for Picasso, who is so difficult to judge, and for Salinger. These uninformed artistic pronouncements occur with the same rapidity for the complexities of non-representational and abstract art forms as they do for the elemental craft of surface literature.

This is only one of the amazing number of basic questions provoked by the theme of John Fowles' novel, and in the

screen play which Stanley Mann and John Kohn have made from it. Almost at any point in the picture the issues which are the substance of its theme tremble to the surface and spill over as fresh questions: Who is this Freddie Clegg? Where has he come from? What is his purpose with us, or ours with him? What has given him the idea that he can get away with such behavior? Can he? It won't do simply to point the finger and have him slain. This wounded, inarticulate, and dangerous creature is ours! We have created the monster. Our conduct has suggested his behavior. The monster is a homunculous out of our own de Sade crypts and Dada cellars.

At one juncture, Miranda argues with Freddie: 'Nobody can have everything he wants. Don't you see, you can't do this?' She is trying to make him understand that he can't force her to love him by kidnapping and detaining her. She is trying to tell him that his method is criminal. 'All right, you think I'm not normal keeping you here like this. Perhaps I'm not. But I can tell you there'd be a blooming lot more of this if more people had the money and the time to do it.' He has acquired the means for his own expensive project by winning an English football pool . . . some seventy-three thousand pounds. On an earlier occasion, Miranda tries to convince him that he can't possibly hope to succeed in keeping her with him indefinitely. 'The police are probably looking for me already,' she says. 'The whole of England is probably looking for me right now!'

Stubbornly unmoved, Freddie stands there looking down at his pressed ivy league suit, pencil tie, and neat black shoes. 'Yes, that's true,' he stolidly replies, looking up at her from out of his frozen and unreachable nature. 'But you see, nobody's looking for me.' Indeed, nobody has ever looked for him. He is the forgotten man; and in his absolute intellectual and emotional isolation from the larger social evolution, this is what we have permitted to become of him.

How much of his antilife and antisocial behavior are we responsible for? The truth is uncomfortably plainer than the comparatively-subtle issue of apportioning blame. The pragmatic reality is that we will be required, in fact, to answer for the whole of his behavior. Because we are his victims (in the limited sense that, even if we are not Miranda or the next girl he is going to kidnap, we are a parent, a lover, a friend, someone affected by his acts; and in the larger sense that it is our product, the sum of our art and laws and life, that he is rejecting). And just as surely, he has been our victim (in the sense that we have glibly ignored his isolation and retrogression, denying it any empirical importance).

What Freddie is missing is an identity. There can be no emotional conviction of responsibility in a human being where there has been no experience in the individual with a core of personal identity — only the less-than-urgent intellectual agreement to try to feel and act in a responsible manner. Freddie takes his impoverished sense of personal being only from his impulses. He is not to be mistaken, in this, for a rebel. He lacks the roots of rebellion. That is in itself an identity. In terms of their individualities, the distinction between those who support the status quo and those who consciously rebel against it, is qualitative. An important difference, certainly. But Freddie does not truly have the identity of either. He takes his nature only from the sources of chance causes (he falls in love at an early age with a girl he sees every day on a bus); from the coincidences of opportunity (he wins enough money in the football pool to act with his first real freedom from the immediate pressures of his circumstances which have, before this, always held him to a very narrowly proscribed work and home environment); and from random responses to stimuli (he merely obeys his instinct to use the means he has fortuitously acquired to compel another human being to take

him seriously and to pay attention to his naive ideas about life and art).

Well, if our evolution has been an insulated one of class rather than a healthy democratic one of species, so now is the hostility it has provoked just as bigoted and shortsighted. And we have become dedicated to issues of perquisites instead of to life. Our art is only half-alive because it reflects only a partial commitment. The one virtue in all of this is that it has forced a kind of underground art into existence. Untutored and unlettered, the less-sophisticated outsider is coming to his own artistic dilemmas. And his art is as much the judge of our own creative reach as ours is of anything else. A thing is not less existent because we do not perceive it or, perceiving it, do not acknowledge it or respond to it.

In another sequence, Miranda realizes: 'We're all dead here: your butterflies, me, everything.' She asks him: 'Is that what you love? Death?' Of course she's right. Death is so much more manageable; so much less threatening. Freddie is an emotional bankrupt. That is, he is if it's possible to become one without ever having had an account!

How much simpler, for instance, to love any of the world's geniuses in the abstract; to appreciate a composer like Beethoven, for example, in the recordings of his music rather than contending with the talent in its raw state: the man. His last period, his greatest musically, when he came to the quartets, was also the period of his final deafness and social isolation. His consequent embitteredness must have made Ludwig's company far more of a liability than a pleasure for his acquaintances toward the end of his unhappy life. How convenient just to listen to his music now, a century and a half after his death, without the pestiferous problem of any concern for his illness and depression.

Indeed Freddie loves death — which never humiliates him with any sort of embarrassing response for his timid feelings.

And which does not contradict his apprehensions of its nature or worth with any vital identity of its own. The living lepidoptera require a great deal more air and sky than the narrow space which Freddie gives to his dead specimens in his small flat collection cases. Here they hold still for any interpretation his insensitivity makes of their coloring and surrender to any definition his uncomprehending collector's instinct imposes on their fixed lifelessness.

On the surface, *THE COLLECTOR* is the story of a kidnapping. What director and writers have made of the vehicle is something considerably more poignant and pointed. They have made it a motion picture of ideas, taking a limited number of elements and making a maximum use of them. The film's basic statement, conveyed by confronting us in Freddie with the consequences of our own foolish and deliberate insulation, is a marvelous building block for these ideas and materials.

(Continued on Page 101)

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BACK TO QUALITY (TV TODAY—& TAD MOSEL)

Janet Overmyer

THAT TELEVISION HAS OFTEN FAILED to live up to its potentiality is common criticism of the U.S.A. medium which is especially applicable to the field of drama. Television drama, often hastily conceived and written, has with some justice been attacked for triteness, predictability, and superficiality.

This situation would not be so deplorable if TV drama were in infancy, but it should long ago have reached maturity; its infancy, which presented live shows with buckling scenery, inoperative props, unpredictable actors, and glimpses of intrusive cameras, was nevertheless exciting and productive because everyone was reaching high and experimenting—and because there was a showcase available for the experimenters. Playwrights had a choice of programs for which to write (sometimes maddeningly, for the viewer, overlapping in time) and a corps of fine writers emerged to write the plays for the fine actors who came out of those days.

‘Sure,’ the counter-argument runs, ‘there were some good shows. But for every MARTY, there were a lot of stinkers no one ever remembers.’

Ah, but there were giants on the television earth in that time. Writers such as Tad Mosel, Horton Foote, Paddy Chayevsky, Robert Alan Aurthur, Sumner Locke Elliot, Reginald Rose, Rod Serling. And others, many many others. To give mere mention to their names calls up memories of excitement, of excellence. They provided the shining peaks in what otherwise might have been a morass of mediocrity.

While there are good, even outstanding, writers in television today, such an over-all impressive lineup is

missing. While many reasons for this lack may be cited, one of the most telling is that the number of nonseries dramatic programs which would foster originality is presently well below the number of hen's teeth. If there is no showcase to start with, criticisms of such additional limitations as commercial interruptions and censorship are merely academic. When there is slight opportunity for quality to stand up and be recognized, talent betakes itself elsewhere. Of those writers named above, only the last two still write for TV with some degree of regularity; and both write for series.

Series writing commits the author's freedom of imagination because he is restricted to a pattern. No matter what his original story idea may be, he must adapt it to include Harrison Zilch and Beulah Burp, or he must make it otherwise fit the general series format: mystery, other world, espionage, or what have you. A play such as Tad Mosel's *THE WAITING PLACE*, which tells of the maturation of a teenage girl, could not be produced as written on television today. The teen-ager must be sent to visit a teacher, a doctor, a psychiatrist, a social worker, a lawyer, or the Zilches. She cannot stay at home and work out her problem because that would not fit the format. (And television would have forever lost this gem of a play — an unforgettable performance, with Kim Stanley in the leading role.)

Series writing also presents the limitation (mentioned by Tad Mosel to a playwriting class) that the leading character cannot change, since he must be in the same place doing the same thing in the same manner, week in and week out. This tends to render the format static.

Of course, some series writing is superb. Reginald Rose in *JUDGMENT EVE*, a 'Defenders' script, delineated vignettes of twelve jurors locked up in a hotel overnight, briefly distinguishing each by his attitude toward the trial, in addition to rendering revealing characterizations both of the accused and his wife — and with time left over for the

discussions of two lawyers — neatly managing all this within an hour minus time for commercials. Yet, on the whole, series writing so trims and flattens and standardizes that the climate which once encouraged the flowering of outstanding creativity, is enervated.

Examples of the heights TV drama has reached and could reach again are afforded by looking at some of the now-classic plays of Tad Mosel (chosen for the frankly biased reason that he is my favorite TV author). He adjusts to the physical limitations — the intimacy demanded by small screen, the relatively short time spans, the arbitrary act divisions — so well that they almost are made to seem not to exist.

Tad Mosel also bypasses the writing limitations frequently painfully obvious in the scripts of others. His characters are believable — partly because their behavior is adequately motivated. India in *THE LAWN PARTY* sees her love of beauty, which has led her to decorate her house and clothe herself attractively for her husband's pleasure, sour to an emphasis on superficial beauty which leads her to ugliness in her relations with others — even with her much-loved husband and daughter. Her behavior is a reaction against that of her mother, who whistled and yodeled when her husband read aloud from books, told her little daughter that her delight in the next-door lawn party was 'crazy,' and 'did everything she could to make life ugly for herself and everyone around her!'

Mosel's characters also are believable because they are not stereotyped villains and heroes, but three-dimensional human beings. The likable have weaknesses; the less likable have virtues. The husband in *THE HAVEN* seems, in contrast to his wife, to be nearly perfect. He is neatly groomed and soft spoken; she is sloppy and loud-mouthed. He reads Emerson and listens to symphonies; she cannot begin to understand either. But his wife, more perceptive and realistic than he sees flaws in her adored husband's

perfection. 'Did you ever try to make me understand?' she asks him. 'Did you ever try to make me see? Anything? . . . You're a real neat guy, Howie, but you're weak. You got no mind of your own. . . . Someone's always had to push you—for your own good.' When he starts to say that his wife was different when they first married, she contradicts him: 'Was either us any different? No. I was the same old slug, and you were the same—real neat guy.'

The selfishness of the elderly mother in *MY LOST SAINTS* (who falls from a window she is washing in the home in which her daughter is a maid, and, although not hurt, insists on remaining in bed for weeks and disrupting the household) is understandable when it is revealed that she is unaware she is pretending and has had a difficult life: her sons died in the war; she ran her farm alone after her husband's death until it was lost in a lawsuit; and she is afraid of the train trip which will bring her unwillingly to live with a brother she has not seen in twenty years. She is only seizing the chance to be coddled and secure one last time.

Tad Mosel avoids the syrupy, forced happy ending that often seems to be a TV requisite—where even the unhappy ending is beautifully unhappy. He also avoids the cynical people-are-no-damn-good conclusion. He shows his characters arriving at hard-won solutions dictated by their individual personalities; there is no let's-send-in-the-Marines-at-the-last-minute wrenching of the situation to leave the audience contented and unthinking. Again, he shows his characters settling down to cope as best they may with omnipresent difficulties. Both these types of endings have the ring of truth and give practical hope to the audience whose problems refuse to clear up in time for the closing commercial.

STAR IN THE SUMMER NIGHT ends with a has-been great singer returning, from financial necessity, to her job in a dingy club at half-pay, agreeing to forego temperament and

other prerogatives. *THE WAITING PLACE* concludes with the beginning maturation of the teen-age daughter, who, jarred by her father's assertion 'I'm not going to let you spoil everything,' accepts his pending marriage, dropping her childish actions, and discovers that make-believe companions are unsatisfactory. *THE HAVEN* ends as a mismatched husband and wife settle down to work at their marriage, destined always to remember the suicide of the husband's mistress with whom he was happy; their marriage will be no worse than hundreds of others — but this is not a happy thing to say for it. *THAT'S WHERE THE TOWN'S GOING* does have the traditionally happy ending — a wedding. However, this couple is ludicrously and tragically mismatched. The strong-willed bride's seemingly impractical and neurotic sister comprehends their incompatibility, having rejected this longed-for suitor because of his desire that she appear ridiculously dressed — a desire to which the bride has yielded. Now she is alone in the house and she cannot bear silence. She has rejected one unpleasant alternative only to be forced to another less unpleasant one which she must somehow live with.

Yet, since 'the least ugly daughter is the family beauty,' it is not sufficient merely to say that Mosel writes better than the others. His own special talent goes far beyond the avoidance of easy clichés of character and plot. In a medium in which mindless acceptance of homespun platitudes too often predominates, he gently leads audiences to often uncomfortable revelations about themselves without resorting to soapbox pedantry. *OTHER PEOPLE'S HOUSES* — where a woman is forced by circumstances to place her father in an old men's home — raises not only the problem of treatment of the elderly, but depicts the anguish involved in doing the painfully necessary. *THE OUT-OF-TOWNERS*, which tells of a man and woman who meet in a hotel during a convention, and who must not become permanently involved

because the man is married, forces a look at the ruses and desperations of the lonely in snatching at happiness. *ERNIE BERGER IS FIFTY* portrays the lost panic of the middle-aged man who is unnecessary to his business and his son and, he thinks, even to his wife. *THE HAVEN* shows a mismatched married couple striving for happiness.

Old age, painful necessity, loneliness, uselessness, marital unease — universal dilemmas, all. The characters who face these problems are ordinary but not trivial people, and their solutions are not trivial solutions. This concern with basic human difficulties gives a depth to Mosel's work which is lacking in plays dealing either with unimportances or with major, but bizarre, crises. (Do you really care who takes Mary to the dance? How many times have you found a dead body in your living room?)

With William Faulkner, Mosel might well assert that 'man will not merely endure: he will prevail.' He will not prevail untouched by his environment, but neither will he be beaten down by it. He will learn to know himself — the beginning of wisdom — and put this knowledge to the best use he can. Here is India, in *THE LAWN PARTY*, facing the collapse of her childish fantasies: 'Isn't it funny, Frank. Here I am again. In my bedroom window, looking out over the lawn party. Only this time it's my own, and I'm the one in flowered crepe de Chine. And it isn't very pretty any more.'

For Tad Mosel, in company with all major writers, is interested in what lies beneath the surface. Through accurate reflection of the human heart, obvious love and pity for humanity, uncriticizing understanding, he gives his plays the radiance of excellence and universality which ensure his place among the important dramatists.

This is not to say that if fifteen new original dramatic shows were launched in television, other writers of such stature would immediately pop up. But without the encouragement of a showcase for original scripts, TV will

forever have to make do with reruns of reruns and mediocrity.

AN EON'S EYE

The sea's soft hand
caresses shells becoming sand,
inanimate becoming land
to grow again in mineral
and nourishment of plant
and bird and beast
and then of man;
or by another route, the pearl;
or merely shell renewed;
or simply sand.

Mary Frances Hardwate

LONG LIVE PORFIRIO MONTEZ

Carl Schemmerling

President Ramos had been locked below decks in the gunboat for two nights and one day, and though they wouldn't let him set eyes on the sun and had taken his watch, it had to be after noon. The rotten air in his cabin was on the point of fermenting. It entered his lungs unwillingly, more a liquid than a gas, as if the Republic and God were conspiring to transmute the President into an amphibian or drown him in the world's atmosphere. The cabin itself was alive to the gunboat's engines; lay a finger on the scaling iron bulkhead, hot to the touch, and the skull vibrated. Ramos squirmed on the bunk and sweated oil, dozing a little, only to wake rigid with a mouthful of moans, such courage and dignity as he'd been managing to hang onto in jeopardy. If the four stinking steel walls were hell, his dreams were worse; better to stay awake than to pop up screaming and give the guards a laugh. 'Heeh. Goddamn,' Ramos said, squeezing his scalp, 'you can't even trust your own brain.' He sat up and spat a white curd on the deck, contemplating this bit of cleanliness. Like the island they were taking him to, some one of the thousands of bald low nameless isolations in the sea off the southernmost coast of the Republic, touched by explorers and executioners only, where shade would be as precious as fresh water if either existed at all, there to be bade formal farewell by loyal members of the Revolutionary Navy and left to die in a fashion the elements would cooperatively dictate.

Imaginative men, his enemies, he gave them credit — a sand dune in the ocean, a personal Elba — not murder, 'exile' — the tortuous dotted line that marks Ramos' illustrious passage since birth over the face of the Earth

ending there: X. Mark the chart. More glamorous than having him shot through the neck in a police basement and dumped into one of the swamps outside the capital. Or hanged in public, which had been President Ramos' selection for his predecessor, Cuixart, the general — the skinny monkey-armed bastard. Well, they were going to a lot of trouble and expense. Who could say why? To preserve the humanitarian image of that professor who was running things now? What a joke — that alligator behind his tiny, hungry blue eyes. Who did he think he was going to fool? Funny, once you were out of power, the minds of those who possessed it became suddenly peculiar again, power scared you again.

Look, hands, stop shaking, I'm going to get you a drink of water. The water fell from the encrusted tap like glycerin and tasted of rust. Ramos

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poured most of the cup over his head, then flopped on the bunk and removed his shoes to pinch viciously at the fungus inflaming his toes. His shoes were English and still had a shine. Enough to break a man's remaining heart, to see the shine left on those shoes. Ramos stretched back, determined to review his life, thus pass time profitably; but in place of vision organized by Christian education and demonstrative of natural law, kitchen midden of confusion. Desperate dancing. He dozed.

The door's clanking launched him to his feet and cracked his head against one of the bunk supports. So the Captain found him in the middle of the cabin rubbing his forehead in agony. A guard wearing a garrison cap too small for his huge rank head had preceded the Captain over the threshold, the magnificent stupidity of his expression a contrast to the automatic weapon he carried. Any violence occasioned by insane escape attempts, the Captain had figured, would fall on the oaf's head, not his own. 'Get out of my way, ox,' the Captain said, shoving the guard aside without glancing at him. 'Hey, President,' he said, 'what's the matter, man, you sick? Don't get sick now, we're almost there. Bernard,' he yelled at someone in the passageway, 'get that doctor down here to do his duty to the prisoner.' 'Forget it,' Ramos said, 'I'm not made of glass.' The Captain seemed not to have heard; bulking in the doorway, he peered around the cabin, his smile showing browned teeth in a porcine though amiable face. 'Mama, Jesus,' he whooshed, 'it's hot down here. We should have the new government install air conditioning, like the U.S.A.' A laugh from the passageway, no humor in it, erased the smile from the Captain's face. He fanned his breasts with the front of his shirt, and said to Ramos: 'I personally brought you your last meal, President.

You don't have long. We request some more photographs, too, if you don't mind gesturing behind him and stepping clear of the door.

A Negro in a pair of trousers torn off at the knees and roped on a belt drooling with sweat padded into the cabin and set several dishes on a tray on the bunk, then backed off and stood watching intently from the corner. 'Go ahead, eat, man,' the Captain cried, since Ramos made no move for the food. 'It's good. We fixed up something special. No poison, don't be afraid of that.' The humorless nervous laugh of before came into his stand beside the Captain, a tall mule-jawed boy in the uniform of the First Mate, who grinned at Ramos from his father's famous ugly mug. 'Well, I see the First Families are represented here,' Ramos said. The First Mate said: 'He doesn't want our meal, Captain Guzman? Too bad. I'll have the nigger shit on it and stuff it down his throat.' The Negro blinked and snickered. 'Get out of here, filth!' the Captain roared, directing his anger at the First Mate toward the terrified Negro. 'Be civil,'

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please, my boy,' he said smoothly, looking at Ramos. 'You see,' he said conversationally, 'this excellent lad, this First Mate of mine, does not enjoy his duty too much. It is his daddy's wish that he accompany us on our journey, perhaps in order to round out his education. He's very educated already, though. His grittiness is a result of taking him away from the intellectual stimulation of his classrooms and the pleasant shade of the verandas of home, so he forgets temporarily who you are. Only a lad, a snippet, eh? Sent to further the educational process under Guzman, eh?' 'Sent to see to it Guzman doesn't forget his own education,' the First Mate said, adding: 'My Captain.' Captain Guzman shrugged faintly for Ramos' benefit, sure of being understood. 'My boy,' he said, 'if you would be so kind to go above and see to the course of the ship, I would be ever so grateful to you and eternally loyal to your splendid family. Could you find it among your duties as First Mate on my ship to do me this insignificant favor?'

Ramos sat down on the bunk and perfunctorily sniffed the mess in one of the dishes: some kind of fishy-smelling stew. He could put up a good front in the presence of others, but a particle of that food would have tossed his stomach flopping on the deck. 'No napkin?' he asked the Captain. 'That's the President I knew,' Guzman appreciated, 'a gentleman of wit. A soldier. Guts, you know what I mean? We always respected you for that. Ah, Christ,' he said, beginning to fan his breasts again, 'this is a sweatbox,' feeling momentarily sorry for Ramos whom he remembered very clearly hundreds of yards distant and high up in the white marble balcony of the palace, a figure. In public, President Ramos had customarily appeared in hat and tails, a black cylinder protruding from the center of things; so the

man they'd hustled aboard ship had astonished Guzman by not being six feet tall, by being in fact a slump-shouldered article of misery in a stained shirt who could hardly pick up his feet. Well, at the moment, the prisoner was neither of these extremes — just a citizen, Guzman saw, doing his best not to die squealing like a rat. Commendable.

The doctor stuck a seamy molested face into the cabin, his mouth going slack with relief when he saw Ramos upright on the bunk, his head not bashed against the bulkhead nor wrists slashed on a sharpened belt buckle. Ramos started at the sight of him, as if the old soak had come to tailor his shroud, and said quickly: 'I don't need him. Get him out of here. All I want is a drink, I told you.' 'Why not,' Guzman said. 'Hey, Doctor, the President's life does not depend on you. Beat it, and have a man come down with a bottle of cocuy.' The doctor nodded, for a second resting the contracted intelligence of his eyes on Ramos, such thoughts as flickered there, veiled.

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Guzman took his bulk a silent turn around the rusty tank of the cabin, thinking, gliding to a halt before the guard. He shook the muzzle of the machine gun affectionately, as though it were a dog's, causing the guard to stiffen. 'Know what this brute's name is?' the Captain said. 'Michelangelo. Isn't that wonderful? An idiot ox like this? His papa must have been at the church magazines on the happy day of his birth. Eh, Michelangelo, my splendid Florentine, how long ago was that, how old are you?' Michelangelo grinned with gorgeous teeth. 'He doesn't know,' Guzman laughed. 'Higher mathematics not required by the job, evidently. What he asked Ramos, 'do you suppose he'd do if you bolted? Went for his throat, say?' Ramos shrugged irritably. 'Riddle me. What else would occur to him?' 'Man,' the Captain laughed, 'he'd love that, that'd make him the celebrity of the barracks all right. No, he'd batter you down with that piece of his. He's been told you're to be delivered alive. He may named Michelangelo and all, but I believe he can follow instructions. Like an ox. He must be well trained, this flower of the country, or they wouldn't trust him with this fine gun, would they? Belgian-made. We haven't many though your enemies imported more than you might suspect, President.' The Captain, still gripping the muzzle of the gun, gave a sharp experimental tug, and chuckled delightedly as Michelangelo implacably tightened on it. A blunt wave of fear had whitened Ramos' lips, the trembling which he suppressed by directing a sewer of murderous thoughts at the swinish Captain, his amusements, his armed imbecile; and as suddenly was swept by a rolling nausea which drowned most everything except the lurching ship and the huge sweltering thumps of the engines. 'Where have they put those goddam mother engines, next door?' 'That drink, Captain,' Ramos said

evenly, lifelong dissembler and politician that he was, 'what happened to that drink?'

'Who the hell can tell, on this ship,' the Captain said, throwing off his arms. 'Look here, man,' he said matter of factly, 'I do you a favor. You don't want your food, that's haw-kay with me. Don't eat it. Throw it in the sink. However, my friend, there is a little something.' He came over and sat down with Ramos, the tray between them tilting dangerously. 'They insist on a photograph of you eating your last meal. The photographer's waiting up there on deck, the guy who been taking your pictures all along; he has to take your picture eating your last meal, President. We are instructed to get it.' The Captain, poring over Ramos' face, close to Ramos', held a sad sour look. 'Ex-President Ram Coming Aboard Ship, Ex-President Ramos At His Final Repast, Ex-President . . . And so on and so forth. Insane, I agree, but what they want is no business of mine. Only to procure it. You understand me?'

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was whispering almost in Ramos' ear, lunch smells emanating from the stained teeth. Not fish stew. 'Force is very dreary, President. As two civilized men, let us carry out our tasks with a dignity they themselves lack. It would be infinitely better for both of us — for us both — if everything goes smoothly to the end.' The Captain had placed a heavy hand on Ramos' shoulder. Ramos glanced at him. How many Naval Captains had he reviled from the Presidential chair, spat on, broken, he'd never been enough concerned about to tally up. He would do so with great pleasure before he died, he thought. 'Just a spoonful of gravy,' Guzman urged. 'Hold it near your lips, and click-click, that's all. I would appreciate it immensely.' Why, the man was pleading; the residual taste of power on Ramos' tongue, once jaded with it, perceptibly straightened his back, and visions bloomed: Guzman in a clean uniform mounted against the rose — no, mauve — brocade of the Presidential Office, standing hat in hand at a discreet distance from the Presidential Desk, his oily flesh exuding rich anxiety — beautiful. Please, Pig, Captain Guzman was thinking, Cooperate, searching Ramos' eyes.

'Shit, why not,' Ramos answered. 'A favor in return for the drink, and a spectacle in a frame for the beloved leaders of my country. It is of no consequence to me.' 'Ah, good,' the Captain exhaled. He rose. Instructive, Ramos thought, that — measured against his, Ramos', death by desiccation or hunger or exposure or injury or despair or slobbering madness or a recipe thereof — the Captain places greater weight on chances of advancement or merely retention of his insignificant command under the eye of the First Mate . . . or

on maybe no more than his worm's pride of accomplishment. Human enough; the President would have done the same. 'Well, it's settled then,' Guzman concluded flatly, having watched his man's expression for sign of retraction. 'Bernard!' he cried; and a sailor who'd obviously been waiting in the passageway rolled into the cabin, the bottle in hand. 'Thank you for your promise, President,' the Captain said, his mind already on other matters. 'I admire a man who values promises to the end. The photographer will be down.' Guzman gave Ramos a flaccid salute. 'Stay here, ox,' he grunted at Michelangelo.

Ramos took a pull off the bottle, only about a quarter full; he gagged but swallowed, the stuff hitting his stomach in a lump. Michelangelo regarded him from under drooping lids, the gun barrel swaying languorously to the ship's roll. The light in the ceiling-grill glinted off the metal and off the visor of Michelangelo's absurdly-small cap, hot sparks behind Ramos' brow. Oh, ape, monkey, Ramos thought, and all at once exclaimed: 'Attention!' — springing up and yelling at the guard who had raised his gun, holding it like an ax — 'Attention! Attention! Attention!'

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The photographer showed, standing well back from the door in the passageway, experience cautioning him not to enter in the middle of the outburst. 'President,' he said, 'perhaps you had better sit down before it harms you.' Ramos stared at him, then said shakily: 'Only a bit of drink here, for the elite corps. Come in, come in,' he commanded brusquely, turning away. 'Join me for cocktails. We have cocktails around here; it's an established nautical custom.' 'Well, I'm glad to see you've recovered your humor, President,' the photographer said. He wore eyeglasses which somehow gave him a sympathetic but nervous owlshness, a modest intellectuality in contrast to the modest sensuality of his gut. He carried a Leica outfitted with a flash attachment and a pistol grip, and a leather case of auxiliary apparatus which he unslung from his neck and stashed carefully under the sink. As a young man, he'd spent a year in dry mountainous Spain, every precious moment of which was an increasingly rotten memory. 'Pah!' Ramos gasped, 'this coccy is lousy stuff. If cactus pissed, this would be it. Don't smell it before drinking is my technique. What is your name anyway?' 'Ramirez.' 'Well, Ramirez, no goblets provided by the management,' Ramos said, offering the photographer the bottle.

Ramirez declined courteously, asking: 'How do you feel, Ramos?' 'Full of hope, naturally. You know,' he said, taking another swallow and screwed up his face, 'when I was a nobody, a Party errand boy, the toilet-wash was my milk. I seldom had anything better. I was under the impression that only a country blessed with the century plant had recourse to drunkenness for its miseries. But now I've lost the stomach for it. Not enough to get anesthetized on, anyhow.' He lifted the bottle and scrutinized the photographer around its glass convexity. 'I know you from before, don't I?' he

asked. 'I'd been close to you many times,' Ramirez said, and cited a few instances and the name of the newspaper for which he worked, a weekly, noted for its nimble allegiance to whomever happened to be in power. 'Tell your editor I went to my grave with his syrupy pledges of undying loyalty ringing in my ears,' Ramos said. 'To him I used to prod the horse that did it with his mother. One doesn't have as good a memory for the cameramen as for the scribblers, Ramirez. But say, you must be on your way up, huh? This is a big assignment for you?' The photographer detected the wistfulness. 'So the job was presented to me, yes,' Ramirez said, 'but I could think of a pleasant one. Could you? Maybe next time. I'll put in a good word for you,' Ramos said, leaning his cheek against the bulkhead. The iron instantly drummed him erect again.

'All right, Mr. Gentleman of the Press,' he muttered, 'get on with it.'

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will you. What obscene pose is it to be? 'Just sit down, your tray on your lap, and start to take a bite.' 'Should I scratch my putrifying toes simultaneously? Or clutch my penis as a parting gesture to the enlightened citizenry?' But the photographer's eye had been replaced by the purplish bore of the camera, and Ramos felt his expression going involuntarily brazen. Then the flash crashed into his face. He swore and flung the spoon clattering into a corner. 'One more,' the photographer said. 'Son of a bitch, no!' Ramos bellowed, and the flash immortalized the bestial snarl. 'Stop it,' he wailed, sagging into the bunk, his face in his hands where, in the darkness, past effusions rioted. But the photographer had got his picture on the second try. 'That's all. I'm terribly sorry,' he said to the man huddled on the bunk; he yanked at his shirt where it was plastered to his belly, gazing at the President's skull glimmering under thin hair. 'That's all, honest to God,' Ramirez hissed loudly.

Ramos peered between his fingers. As Ramirez's camera hung limply at his side, he sat up and sullenly drained the bottle. Still, he wouldn't look at the photographer. 'I had to do that, President,' Ramirez said. 'In all sincerity, I apologize.' 'Forget it,' Ramos said. 'You're a puppet too, filled with hay.' He kicked the fallen tray aside, daintily avoiding the slop. 'Please accept a cigaret,' Ramirez said. Ramos said: 'No, smoke it yourself. I've given it up. My bronchi are rotten. I have a condition.' 'It's too close for smoking anyway,' Ramirez said, pocketing the pack of Spanish cigarettes.

'What do they want all these damn pictures for?' Ramos asked querulously. 'Not to preserve my image for the Professor's school children.' 'I don't know, President. I can't say.' 'No, sure, you can't say. Why don't they drag me around the square behind an armored vehicle? You can't say. You're all lunatics. Mother of Jesus,' Ramos demanded, 'doesn't anybody know why in hell they're doing what they're doing? Don't you have some kind of brain in your skull that isn't made of wheels and joints?' Ramirez remained silent. 'Listen, Ramirez,' Ramos said after a minute or two, 'sit down here next to me.' He patted the bunk. 'Can you talk at all?' he asked. 'That depends, President,' Ramirez said, glancing at the guard. Ramos asked: 'You're not a member of their Party, are you?' 'I'm not against them, Ramos,' Ramirez answered immediately. 'No. No, of course not,' Ramos said. He fixed the photographer narrowly, attempting with a grimace of controlled suffering, to excite generosity. 'You at least are a human being, Ramirez,' he murmured. 'I enjoy your company. I want you to know that. Tell me, my friend: What about the rest of them? Sanchez? Dead?' 'Shot. Last week, President.' 'Guimos?' 'Shot.' 'Porteman?' 'The exact whereabouts of Arturo Porteman, one-

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time bandit Minister of Resources, are not precisely known. I'm repeating the official releases, President. However, it's rumored he may have reached the border.' 'Of them all, the whole bloodsucking gang, leave it to the bastard Porteman to save his skin at the last,' Ramos said enviously. Ramirez said: 'It is anticipated Arturo Porteman will be tracked down like a mad dog and brought to revolutionary justice before too long. 'Hoho, don't bet on it,' Ramos said. 'That Porteman is a snake, a green root in the jungle. Believe me.' He made a wriggling motion with his arm, and suddenly insisted: 'Why this operatic elaboration for me, Ramirez? Answer!' 'That I can't say, President,' Ramirez replied, not even near being caught off guard. 'You should have more insight into such things than I.' Ramos grunted, and the photographer smiled wanly — a communication between professionals. 'What of my family, are they safe?' Ramos asked. Ramirez said: 'As far as I know, they are out of reach in Mexico City, since our Government's arm hardly extends so far afield. Don't discount ambitious youth for the future, though — Soviet success in these matters is strong wine.' Ramos laughed, slapping Ramirez jocularly on his moist and spindly knee. 'True, but they're safe,' he said. 'I planned it. They got the fox, but the den was empty.'

There was a young Mexican colonel, Ramirez had heard, who in the preceding few weeks had taken a special interest in the wellbeing of Mr. Ramos' lustrous blonde head. Was that in the President's plans, too? Not to be discounted. 'You should have included yourself in your plan,' Ramos,' Ramirez remarked. Ramos said: 'Oh, yes, that was astute of you — wise.' Nevertheless, he was trying to interpret the comment as compassion, or sarcasm, or hostility which would have wounded him. But it was only a statement of fact on

Ramirez's part — what he'd have done had he been in the President's shoes six months before: got out. 'Ramirez,' Ramos said, 'look here. You're a photographer — right — hovering on the fringe, peering through a glass. You know what you fellows used to remind me of? Insects. A mechanism instead of a face. How can you possibly comprehend the subtleties and the temptations and the fascination of high office? When you get in, you have the power, a telephone call will move a mountain, the swine in whose offices you used to cool your heels flutter like pigeons if you show your ass in the antechamber. You cruise down the boulevard in a new American Lincoln behind a cordon of glossy police — there is the populace on the curbs, some of them even waving the dirty handkerchiefs shouting President President. Their lives, you understand, are in your hands, breadcrumbs, and they know it. Airplanes zoom over the roof tops if you wave your pinky — a few airplanes anyway. After dark, man, there is the capital under your feet — what does our poet say?

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... "Like unto a feathered Aztec robe" ... something inept as that. Magnificent city; supreme, narcotic; a potful of diamonds. You sit down to dinner at the head of the table, a football field sparkling with crystal and gold-rimmed platters, crystal chandeliers dripping from the ceiling, orchestra playing, women like flowers sprinkled in the double row of tuxedos that you're feeding the best there is. It's fine, man. You can't know. I was born number six in my family. I inherited a job working for my brothers in my father's stinking cannery, assistant manager in charge of fishskins. Well, no, Photographer, better hang once than drown in fishskins every day; better to sell your sister on the streets and light fires in your friends' beards and become a General or the President of the country. The President of the country, he points to the manager of a cannery; the mucker is finished, you understand. He droops an eyelid at one of those orchids at his dinner table, that's what slithers in the silk sheets with him after the last brandy and cigar. Why shouldn't it be me? It has to be somebody. Why not Ramos? I fight good. I know how stupid and cowardly people are, where the little strings stick out of them that you have to pull. I can sign the papers and dedicate the statues and play chess with the ministries and prevent my greedy countrymen from slaughtering each other as well, and maybe a good sight better, as the next aspiring fellow. Ramos can move the country along like a liner in the straights. All right. Then it's him that's enriched by those hardwoods in the forest and those new wells in Hidalgo and those factories out in the slums. Then it's him that's the eagle perched on a mountain of gold and honey, enriched by life itself.'

Ramos heaved in a lungful of the present's foul air and shrugged. 'So, on one side is the Army, and on the other side

are the landowners, and on another side are the Communists, and on another side are the Yankees, sucking up or hacking away at each other through you — that's the way it was when you came into power, you threaded your way through that, and you can't make it disappear. Because that's politics the world over; always; forever. Every couple months, man, there's some new hammer raised up to crush you, and you put it down. Sometimes it's close. But when it's over, you and your friends have a drink, you send your families word to come home, and you say: "That wasn't so close! We had the traitors by the balls all along. Next time we don't let ourselves get so panicky. Are the Americans still sending money? Sure! We're all right!" Well well well well,' Ramos sighed, staring at his hands. Then, gripping them tightly and clamping his chin on the whitened knuckles: 'You don't want to let go. You stick in your claws and hang on to the finish. Luck goes the other way, some pimp of a butchering General loses his liver and finally

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stabs you between the shoulder blades, and all of a sudden you're at the end. Who would really have thought it could ever happen? You're inches out on the last twig of the tree, and good-bye, down you come, in a shower of bloody leaves.'

Ramos mused; the engines had stopped and Ramirez shifted on the bunk. But Ramos was unaware. 'Tell me, Ramirez,' he said, 'be frank with me. I have been frank with you. Was I a good President? What do you think the history books will say a hundred years from now? I'm not fooling myself — I won't be a hero, not great, not a Porfirio Montez. But will the books say, all things considered, Ramos was a good President? Ramirez — was I?' 'No worse than any of the rest of them,' emitted the photographer. God, it was true. He said hopelessly: 'The engines, President; I expect we're there. I will have to leave you.' He stood up and fought for breath in the cabin's heavy stench of splashed food and slop and sweat, his head swollen and toppling, his brain bludgeoned by inhuman heat and the leaden conviction that it's fortunate man dies. Ramirez fondled in the epic glacial futility of life. The ship, nodding, foundered in it. 'I have to leave you, President,' he muttered. Ramos was listening palely to silence; he thrust out a hand that pleaded skeletally with Ramirez to stay. Though he longed for sunlight, the photographer couldn't refuse.

'On your feet, Mis-ter Brigand President, let's go,' barked the First Mate. 'You,' he jerked at Ramirez, 'you got what you came for? Get on deck.' Altogether the dark young archangel of righteous justice, he shoved Ramos toward the passageway, motioning Michelangelo after him; along an instant in the dimness of the cabin, he wrung his hands in excited exuberant vindictiveness, his mind aglow with the ghostly cheering of patriots. The open hatch above the end of

the passageway poured a vertical white column of light into the steel corridor. Mounting the axis of the blaze were the feet and legs of the photographer, making each polished rung of the ladder a definite way station of ascension.

The intricate geometry of the ladder and the hard shower of light and the passageway's perspective struck Ramos with preternatural clarity, as if, now that his hour was at hand, there was suddenly an aspect of insistence in every corner of reality. His heart was a pillow, the lungs felt like sacks; he shuffled, but this vision flew to and fro like a sparrow, another matter entirely. Was this at last dying? It bore resemblance to opium. He was startled to hear his own voice saying: 'My shoes. I have forgotten my shoes.' 'So you did. Too bad,' said the First Mate. 'But never mind crowbait President, there won't be any place to walk to.' 'I need my shoes,' Ramos said incredulously, halting. 'Up!' the First Mate shrieked pointing at the ladder. Michelangelo prodded viciously for the ribs with

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the gun barrel. Ramos stumbled onto the deck, withering in the roar of sunlight that struck from above and from the crackling surface of the sea, feeling as though he walked naked on hot coals. Shoes! 'President Ramos, Enemy of the Country,' Captain Guzman intoned half-heartedly, 'this Execution is convened.' A glum snowman in a clean uniform expressly laundered for the occasion, Guzman was sorry to discover that the condemned seemed rubbery with fear — pathetic. But it often happened. He attempted to guide Ramos by the elbow toward the line of sailors arrayed near the gunwale, a small cluster of civilians near them wearing grave rapt faces, like spectators at a goring. 'My shoes,' Ramos groaned through clenched teeth. Guzman drew back — the poor clot was rigid, going mad — then saw the stockinged feet curling sluglike and convulsively. 'Where are this man's shoes?' he roared, and angrily silenced the First Mate in mid-answer to order the nearest sailor down to goddamn get President Ramos his shoes.

Ramos calmly sat down on the deck and laced, drawing the bows meticulously. Everyone craned forward to observe, sombre as New Guinea natives, except the First Mate who gazed pointedly, and he hoped icily, out to sea. 'Idiocy,' the Captain said as Ramos stood up. 'One cannot maroon a President in his stocking feet.' 'No,' Ramos said. Not in stocking feet, reflected Guzman, and abruptly wheeled and thundered at the crew: 'Wake up, swine, fall in you tailless shitheads, you think this is some sort of show for your benefit? You're just an audience here, is that it?' The First Mate bolted by, spurting his oboe voice, glad of the chance to abandon his injured pose, which had become awkward, hand raised to strike any bluishirt stupid enough to lag. The sun was shrinking to human proportions for Ramos, and some of the detaching clarity of the passageway was returning. What a bunch they were — no wonder the country

had never won a war — shouting, darting cockroaches, the rank of sailors twisting their heads right and left in an attempt to arrange themselves behind the pink-cheeked officer who supported the flag. The flag, at any rate, splashed briskly in the breeze. The breeze was laden with brine, sweet and cool as nature, as if some essence of the ocean were whispering in one's hair. Ramos seemed to be the only thing on deck that remained perfectly still. He felt he could close his eyes and reopen them transformed into some figment of the air, the ship far below, a tiny nail print on the watery globe; but when he opened them, there were Guzman and the rest, the flag fussing, the civilians gawking, the photographer among them, a movie camera instead of a head, a dwarf cyclops. What was his name, Ramirez. Ramirez, yes. The camera whirring, yet it could have been a hummingbird or the sound a submarine must make driving fathoms

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under water. Guzman had fumbled a piece of paper out of his breast pocket and begun to read — something toneless and filled with unspoken etceteras, therefore official. How fat the man was, it must be like living encased in jelly to be so fat . . . the funnel of the ship looming over his shoulder trailing seaweeds of rust. British ship, sold off after the 'x slaughter, the clever linear British making money wherever they turned this old scaly tub. Look at the sky: the color of a mackerel's throat, God complexion. Where it swept down onto the sea, Ramos saw the island, just left of the Captain's snowy belly. Still far away — no — small. A spine of dune grass, not a line of trees. Beyond the island was the sea's western dome. Guzman crumpled the paper into his pocket, observed the moment of solemnity, and asked: 'Do you have anything to say, Ramos?' 'What?' Ramos said. 'Any last words, you know, man,' Guzman said uncomfortably. Well, what? Ramos thought. Volumes raced, pointless, no words. Ramos said: 'The Devil strike the lot of you with cancer.' 'Jesus' may your courage or whatever it is stick to you, President,' Guzman said. He nodded approvingly. 'Adieu, Ramos,' and motioned to the First Mate. 'Take him off,' he said.

Michelangelo was already moving, and he thrust Ramos toward the accommodation ladder as before, followed by the prancing First Mate and also, by necessity, Ramirez and his camera. In the launch they clambered over one another, while it clunked hollowly against the ship's hull, until the First Mate was satisfied with the seating arrangement. He wanted the post amidships, between Ramos and the photographer; and there he assumed an unsteady admiral's stance when the launch was underweight, intent in the knowledge he was being engraved on yards of film. He

prudently took a seat before the launch grounded on the lee of the island and as it did, sang out: 'Off, Ramos, the end of the line. You're home. Here you are President again, draw up a constitution.' He waited for Ramirez's and the sailor's laughter. Nothing. 'Hurry up. What are you waiting for?' the First Mate snapped. Ramos slipped into the knee-deep cold sloshing water.

On the beach, he turned, arms dangling at his sides, and watched the launch retreat toward the ship behind the railing of which the crew was lined, the white-capped Captain in their midst, as motionless and withdrawn into another life as so many gulls on a breakwater. Ramirez, growing smaller, had lowered his camera; the man, now, peered backward searchingly. The guard had removed his tiny cap, laid the machine gun on his thighs, mesmerized by the green curls of water under the bow. A figure in the launch, the First Mate, sprang erect as if electrified and threw a fist in the air. Shouting something. Tenuous, high-pitched sand

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piper's cry. 'For the Republic! For the Revolution!' he'd shouted it again, and fallen sideways into the boat. The boat was hauled aboard; the ship eased ahead, then swung on its wake, growling over the widening expanse of water. Almost at once it began to disintegrate in the leaping glitter of the afternoon sea, and with its going went the last of the vividness — the lens that for a short time Ramos had had on things clouding. In the wind, the dune grass rustled apathetically. It would continue to live, desolation was its element. After a while, Ramos sank to his knees in the hot sand.

Ramirez dwelt on the dwindling scrap on the minute beach until it lost itself in dancing motes; then, ashamed of his sense of relief, he pondered the foam streaming behind the ship. The sea was huge — huge. He swore he must

exactly remember that scrap he'd helped it to engulf. Captain Guzman came up quietly behind him and eased his bulk on the rail. The Captain was back in his workaday uniform, stained by sweat and dirt. 'This coast of the glorious mainland along here,' he remarked conversationally, 'you know I used to run a guano boat among its close-lying islands. All desert, dry as a camel's balls. No tree, not a cloud a month. Birds and prehistoric birdshit. It'll be a pleasure to get out of the latitude, back to civilization.' 'Back to where?' Ramirez asked. 'Home,' Guzman said, 'civiliz . . .' He gave the photographer a penetrating look, threw back his head and laughed so uproariously, in such rich spirits, that Ramirez began to smile — then laugh, too. 'That's pretty damned funny, haw-kay,' Guzman said. 'Come on, Ramirez, my friend. I got a half a bottle of first-class Mexican brandy in my locker. Let's drink all of it, you and I. After this trip we probably won't meet again.' Guzman offered his arm. 'Haw-kay,' Ramirez said, taking it.

KEITH GUNDERSON

NUMBER ONE MAN ON THE SIT-DOWN POWER MOWERS AT LAKEWOOD CEMETERY

and McKinley was number one man on the sit-down power mowers at Lakewood Cemetery because he'd been there a long time and cared about mowing and knew more than modern science about his machine which was red and cared about mowing and was skilled at it and sometimes Em would ask him if he knew how to adjust his own blades and McKinley would always take him up on it shaking his head what a guy that Em and two or three others mowed with McKinley and they were McKinley's Boys and even Ernie who'd been there twelve years was one of McKinley's Boys instead of being Ernie because he didn't think that much

about grading and once he said he wasn't for competition and McKinley's Boys never lagged on their sections and sometimes got a run or two ahead and might have taken extra rests but instead had their blades set high so they couldn't cut much and everyone kept mowing as if usual because McKinley thought it better to keep in action and one year I got to be one of McKinley's Boys so he had to teach me to do things like not taking extra rests and keeping the blades even to the shape of the ground and not hitting gravestones and weaving in and out of the rows and not hitting gravestones but I wasn't good at it and got stuck in the rows and chipped MYRA P. SVENSON 1847-1912 and embarrassed McKinley so he farmed me out to the just flat sections where the tombstones weren't and Wittgenstein used to complain about his students and say they didn't know much philosophy and didn't care enough about everything but just to have heard him lecture is still a good calling card and when I revisit Lakewood and met the new guys I casually mentioned I'd mowed with McKinley and even Barney 'Oldfield' so-called because of his race-track speed with a stand-up was small potatoes compared to McKinley.

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KEITH GUNDERSON

OUT OF NEWPORT

and left the Newport harbor at one in the morning because the yellowtail were running big out near Catalina and it was very quiet when a humming place like a harbor goes quiet it is even more so and even our boat 'The Fury' was quiet and only moved hardly at all through the thin channel threading out to the ocean itself as we passed the red and green lights on the buoys their furry glow because of the mist hung over the sleeping gulls like colored dreams and finally after stopping to fill the bait tank with anchovies and herring and small squid we made it to the whole ocean where 'The Fury' became its name speeding towards the day's fishing grounds lifting spray into the faces of fishermen who stood at the railing talking and guessing at where exactly we were going this time and liking the spray while others slept on the tiny bunks inside since it would take at least three hours to get to wherever we would need to get in order to catch yellowtail and others were drinking coffee and playing cards while some dangled their hands in the bait tank wondering whether the yellows would take a jig today and if so what color and what feather but no one really caring too much whether they caught fish or not because of the lights and the spray and the talk and the whole ocean though often we would look at our flat fish sacks and imagine lumps in them.

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KEITH GUNDERSON

THE GYPSY MOTORCYCLE CLUB OF SOUTH MINNEAPOLIS

gathers
and gathers
by Lake Calhoun
where they rev and
rev where they rev
their cycles and
stare at people who
don't have them women
standing tough in a sort
of slant semi-gorgeous with
big tits the men out of matinee
movies part handsome good at scorn-
ing and loud laughing they meet to
discuss dues or the next long trip
but mostly just in order to be the
club with each other the cycles the
night and the cycles and often decide
on a short run just for the evening
to Hastings or Hudson or to Red Wing
and Back the men switch serious and
adjust things their goggles and belts
and women and straddle the cycles which
are lavished with lights like pinballs
a power moves in-to the cycles in
jerks like an orgasm in jerks
and then they gun off in
ones in twos in ones
and threes and twos
a black leather night
waits for them starry
with studs and a wind

moves by the gypsies
in the shape of their
scarves

ALFRED B. CAHEN

DYING, TWICE DAILY

To melt in a room
does not remake the room.
It is still cold.
To melt, to remember liquids :
it is not enough !
Sun up: all the madness.
From crag to crag I move
in timidities of light.
The blood bursts,
attracted to the candent.
Sunset grows, and the chain
is day upon day, and the link
of the wind to the sun is strong,
and the fused sky
cannot be broken.
Sun: up down, up down,
day-night-dawn,
milliseconds of truth.
Glass sun. The sun-god-bed booms
all my deaths.

RICHARD EMIL BRAUN

Moving

Like the grass,
in walking I
repeat myself horizontally
seeming to vertically.
Invisible locusts
singing
repeat themselves horizontally
and seem to vertically.
They, despite Nature,
are sung with
in tempo and tune
by conspicuous twin ducklings
who, lost on the pond,
swim rapidly in circles
calling alarm
in timbre so little broader
it could not be sorted
from the greater chorus
without the contrasting figures
they repeat in moving.

RICHARD EMIL BRAUN

LANDSCAPE

Some hills, pink
as grapefruit or blushing satin;
valleys white,
like sour-cream or demure plush;
more hills, yellow as yolks or yarn wigs.
Right, distant,
a village's tops are glimpsed, shapes
of turnips
and parsnips or tops for twirling:
but no villagers' visages.
This place must
be my home — not because of these
likenesses,
but since, if it were not, might not one
dweller be, perhaps, just curious?

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F. E. SANDELIUS

NOTES ON LOVE AND FREEDOM

35

The good old moon a white
Flat round of baleful reproach
Is entirely possible. I even
Felt the bright sunlight
To squeak one afternoon,
A long, hurt, blind afternoon.
I yet claim I can candidly
Name the daylight ordinarily
Of a clear bright-white-green-blue
Day on the earth to be a chord
Of all colors together
Sweet and great.
I tell you on such days
I usually perceive that chord
In the morning
And occasionally
In the afternoon.

HAROLD FLEMING

DREAMS DRUB OUR SOFT

Dreams drub our soft and drag us in the dark.
Caught like a child who runs, I scold my ghost
Tongue tempers with a touch to lunge across
The binding spine that stiffens till a cross
Is all I share when threadbare in the night
I cannot swat the stinging yellow jacket
Building a hive in my wife for the night.
Off-balance by myself I build a hill
To help my cross to stand out in the dark,
And bear a belly yellowed by the rub
Of too much trying, tying one good knot

We can tug dreams to light with in the dawn.
I set the breakfast table with a racket
To make sure my dead mother's dead and gone:
Only to find the fluff left of the floss
Can flip in flight tomorrow morning: night
Will wait till dark to come to find the time
Is ripe to rip the sheet and rub the moss
And this time screech two rocks beneath Tulick
Between two swimmers: one who has to knock
Two rocks together and she slides beneath
Brown water then no deeper down than sleep,
But in broad daylight with the surface lipping,
And two beneath brown water firmly sliding
To meet and make believe they can imagine
Mock motion without air to be like fishes
Slipping white thighs which can't help feel tickles,
And come up laughing with the gotten wishes
To lie upon the bank and hear those ripples.

STEFEN YACHEVIK

REFLECTIONS FROM DAMP

Reflections from damp,
and rapture fades the
cloud, raw as New York cellars;
What is extinct is rain.
Here is damp, to soon radiate
invisible.
Uncounted, unaccounted gaiety —
the rain has passed like
confidential verdant beams surge through
glass, the wire, and iron bars to
New York cellars,
yet not to hide the celibate, cloaked
corners, damp devises still the
flexible green blades to arch beneath
speculation.
New discovered sparrows
live now,
trilly shaking their jubilant bodies
for the dew-like grass.

ROBIN JOHNSON

THOUGH YOU WARNED ME, RILKE,

Yesterday was chrome yellow, love,
no doubt about it. For me the sun rose
gonging gold all over us, color of
love, oh lovely feel this dazzle knows,
strong shaft full-flooding me, lifting each sound
into the shimmer we are. And you, dear sun
light I may touch and feel, laughter chiming around
me, fall, spring, comet and flaring, you spin
into me, through me, brimming over cup-of-gold,
chalice of dew, spilled sherry of a starry night.
Hear the shields of trumpets cadence the old
bright armor from us, striking halos of light.
You visit me in yellow roses, prim-dressed,
you who fastened this burning coin within my breast.

KATHERINE GORMAN

HOT NIGHT

At windows on the treeless-thicket street
the multilingual prophets pore their siddurs :
at war with juke, relentless bop and heat,
a brassy band whacks dissonant salvation
while easy sirens, cackling nighthawks, shrill
their mock rejoicing at the sinners saved.
The ratty children hopscotch sweaty joys
and redolent of wine, the poor sad soak,
the boy, rave at the monkey on their backs :
womb-weary women lean on pockmarked sills
and cross themselves against the evil eye.
The shriving drums beat holy bedlam hell.
As old men scrabble news from blowfly cans
the strutting pigeons bow and multiply
and lovers in their private Arden woods,
light years away,
dream eye to eye and lip to lip.
The cracked-voiced jongleurs sing all sin away.

A truck removes the cat-prowled surpluses
for quick disposal in the jeweled sea
for silting other shores.
And where so lately glared the blinding sun,
the summer scent of dust on everything.
And nothing flowered, except invisibly.

SEAMUS FINN

MEMORIES, OPUS 1

I remember Bosch's kneeling man
Smiles upon his face
The flower emerging from his behind
As though that passageway were built
For a boutonniere
And Fragonard's women
Lavishly situated
Receiving an enema with the sort of joy
That would make a libertine angry for being
Deprived of her pleasure
I remember climbing the walls at dawn
In old Pompeii and slipping into houses
Lush with sexual paintings that seemed
Too animated not to be
And the lovers found in a lava grave
In blankless embrace
I remember Calcutta and sandstone women
Devilish and monstrous
With indentures for a womb so large
As to be impossible or wishful fancy
For the womb was a gigantic crevice
I remember all the galleries of the world
And I keep on remembering because I like
The reassurance that the suppressed
Cannot be

A. FREDRIC FRANKLYN

COUNT MIRACULOUS BURNS

The balled-fisted grasp
paraded
of demon-events
packaged in transparent plastic
is the arcane-tasting
sweetmeat
exalted
above iron, air and water
for the thick-necked marvelous
and their agents.
Cell by cell
the youth of skin explodes
into the grayer tones
of spines
and hernias;
asleep, dreaming under stones,
we are discovered, unearthed
and mounted
by longer-lived hypotheses
than our own.

A. FREDRIC FRANKLYN

THEN

these two-sweet lines,
like the juice
of ripe pears
in honey,
are spoken once
from brimming cups
that, fragmented
and long dry then,
are set aside.
So
the words echo
hollow
in the ribs
and skulls
of those
so briefly-alive
and now
mundane
dead.

A. FREDRIC FRANKLYN

THE ANDROMEDA DEEP

Long
before the lion death
appears
there is no imprint
i can leave on this age.
To oblige
the wormwood of yesterday,
we must behave
in the manner
of more distant tomorrows.
We
are the puppet guests
of unimaginable crises
and the dancing hosts
of spastic impulses.
The dispeptic chapters
of our psilanthropic
attitudes and postures
spill with false counsel
from trembling lips.

A. FREDRIC FRANKLYN

LONG

ago i came like confidence
with Perseus on my arm
thinking
to fill this alien sky
with aureorean light,
bearing the crown
of Oxford's stoney regard
and remembering fear
in rows of trenches.
We
enact the senseless frenzy
of bacteria;
our antics are fair game
for wonder-drug cynics.

TRACY THOMPSON

LIGHTNING RODS

I knew a coal miner recommended lightning rods;
He'd lived at sea and salty sailor'd been.
'Some salts,' he said, 'are better for the sod,'
And such corroborates that which I've seen.
'We had some rods aboard our ship, old tars,
And they could tell us when a storm was nigh;
Later, in our gardens, there were such lars
Who aided us, whether of low kind or high.'
I bought a lightning rod myself, soon after;
I put it in the garden, to protect the plants.
It is no panacea for assaults of salty water
But it warns against approach of elephants.
It is no cure-all, see I must repeat.
In all, I'd say, too trim, too tall, too neat.

TRACY THOMPSON

IRONIC VISION

Wry; twisted to one side; askew; distorted:
This lopsidedness, disharmony and dire unbalance
Is productive of
Ironie vision:
No sun's gold in't;
Not even a pure of nowhere; only
An impure of something, only
A fear of nothing, and
No clear of anything.
A few domestic fowl
Are overhead; a little consciousness
Allowed, before we go to bed.

GIGI LORD

HEADY TO SUN- PROMISE

Pale, the soft bloom
deepened
heady to sun- promise
long stalk stretching,
the green leaves
barely covering
the profusion of its silk
its heart hidden
by petal
on petal.
The bloom
died
the delicate covers
torn
by raping wind
its full-bodied
heart-core blown to bits.
So complex for
a first
flowering

the peony of
June,
too soon gone —
heady, — scattered.

GIGI LORD

FOR YOU — FROM ME

The morning, — fresh and cold
is mine. I can claim it
claim it, — being one
with it.
The new spring smells,
biting sharp, cleave me from what is,
from home and warm
and all the cares
of my loves,
— rooted deep.
— Goodbye I say
to all of you.
The world is mine
to love, love.
I'm on my way,
to be.
— There's no ground-hog shadow today.
No shadow.

DOROTHY ELLIN FLAX

THESE CASTABOUTS

Abraham's children with their shoulders chipped
Journey the earth
And, meditatively, regions beyond —
Above — below.
These castabouts forever castabout
The whys and wherefores of the accolade —
The blow, and so
The perennially displaced
Were the originals in outer space.

ALICE MACKENZIE SWAIM

ANGLE OF VISION

A tree, from underneath, may seem to be
an arched cathedral ceiling,
muralled in gold and green
on buttresses, patina'd dark with age;
a tree, that from the sky,
dims cipher-small,
ragged, untidy, bent,
like a stray sheep before the shears
have contoured it to meet conformity.
What casual winds might label barrier
and hindrance to the jet flow
of their flight,
looks sanctuary to the flickering birds
in the Utopia of its green shade.

JOSEPH H. KEMPF

SIXTEEN SOLEMN MONKS

Sixteen solemn monks with baggy arms
Shuffle slow and gray as winter's dawn
Off to fields with lowered heads and ears
That ring of Glorias and chapel praise.
Slow in their rage as snails

Or motes of dust falling in oil,
Like figures trapped on canvas,
Fixed, but somehow almost moving,
As if a sleeping artist roused himself
Each thousand years to change a leg.
Slow as the coming sun they go.
You'd almost think they thought
The world was watching there to catch
Them in the slightest impropriety —
To see one stub his sandaled toe,
Scratch his nose, or maybe steal
A hurried glance beyond the patient
Heel forever poised before him.
Not that we'd laugh, of course,
Or cluck our tongues, but just because
Such measured steps make us squirm,
Make us want to whip the mule,
Prod the snail, put wheels on ants
That heave their morsels by.
And so we stop, amazed, just to watch
Them come, and almost never go,
Sixteen solemn monks with baggy arms,
Slow in their rage as snails,
Slow as dawn's gathering fire:
Ah! — but it's jackrabbits men admire.

NORMA McLAIN STOOP

SCALE OF SLEEP MAJOR

Climbing . . .
Hanging from
Vaporous branches, with
Hands rounding over sound
That spreads ahead in arcs
Of dark . . . swinging, following lead of
Tides washing against ascending, descending emptiness
 . . . slower
Slower, now almost ready to drop from dream
No longer growing from night . . . not night . . .
Circles of light converging, breaking, forming . . .
Mind opens on a pillow,
Blinking to bloom as
Child (new-born and
Not yet
Named).

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MICHAEL LEBECK

SATIRES (II)

(Vergil) The Barmaid Tempts the Itinerant Poet

legi et ut potui emendavi

The barmaid who lost her head in a Greek bandana
now smartly moves her curves to her castanets,
drunk in her smoky dive that belly dancer
shakes her arms at the raucous clarinets.
SHE: Why tire yourself outside in the dust of summer?
You'll find it nicer to yield to my thirsty settee.
In my formal garden are many bowers . . .
around my couch in the shade of the bamboo tree
lie punchbowl, roses, flutes and guitar.
HE: Yes, what gargles sweetly within your grotto
must be a shepherd piping a bergamasque,
a raucous stream taps out the rapid staccato
of vapid wine as it pours from its pitchy cask.
Yes, there are wreaths of crocus and violet
and yellow roses mixed with the purple rose
and dewy lilies brought in willow baskets
by nymphs from where their virgin river flows.
Yes, Bacchus sends gourds, clustered grapes and
berries.
Little cheeses dried in bull rush trays
and waxen plums of Autumn come from Ceres.
Chestnuts and kiss-colored apples are Love's displays.
Yes, willow Priapus, guard her house with your blade,
because of your swollen groin I'm not afraid.

MICHAEL LEBECK

**SHE: YOU VAGRANT MULE, COME HERE, YOU'RE
TIRED AND SWEATY. PROFESSIONAL VIRGINS CALL
SUCH BEASTS 'MY SWEET.' CRICKETS BREAK THE
SHRUBS WITH HEAVY SINGING WHILE THE COOL
LIZARD HIDES IN HER BUSHY SEAT.**

Wine in novel crystal can wash out losses.

Be smart and rest in shadows the grapevines curl.

Tie up your heavy head with a crown of roses

snatched from the tender mouth of a well built girl.

Do you want your headstone wreathed with flowers by
young men who'll raise their eyebrows? Damn their bones!

Pour wine. Roll bones. Damn the morning after: What
good are fragrant wreaths to graceless bones!

HE: Live! says Death and tweaks my ear, I come.

Marti Kristen

WITH THE GUARD

Out ahead as I drove lay the sprawling fort.

It looked different than it had been then. That had been twenty years ago, when I had trained in it for infantry fighting in the South Pacific. Then, it had been a new camp, just opened, gleaming on the empty Texas plain with its new board barracks painted a flat yellow, its unfinished dirt streets and gravel motor pools — alone, on the hazy hot prairie. Now, there were large new red-brick and gray-stone buildings, paved streets, parks, swimming pools, and — just outside — a thriving city with bars and neon lights.

This was the first time I had been back.

I pulled into the wide covered gate of stone, with the divider in the center and little guardhouses on either side, and got out of the car. Inside the glass-paned guardhouse I saw a uniformed Military Policeman watching me.

I stood in the door.

‘Good morning,’ I said.

He nodded briefly.

He was a young man, lithe and slender, with smooth face and almost expressionless blue eyes. His sun-tan uniform was well pressed and creased, his boots polished, and on his head was a steel helmet painted white with the black letters ‘M P’ on it. At his side was a shiny leather holster slung on a shiny leather belt, while a shiny leather strap went up over his right shoulder. He was alone.

‘Is it possible to go into the fort?’ I asked.

‘What for?’ he said.

I hesitated. ‘Well, just to visit,’ I said.

‘What for?’

I looked away through the glass at the new brick structures and the paved streets and the high, wire fence surrounding the fort.

'I just want to visit,' I said. 'I was trained here — during the war. I just thought I'd like to see it again.'

He said nothing. He looked me up and down.

'You trained here?' he said. 'During the war?'

'Yes. I think that's what I said.'

'What war?'

I glanced at him. 'The Second World War,' I said. 'I don't think I look quite old enough to have made the Civil War.'

MARTI KRISTEN

'There was the Korean War,' he said coldly.

I said nothing.

'Why do you want to visit it?'

'I just want to see it again, because I was trained here then.'

'Why?'

I shuffled impatiently. 'Well, maybe you don't understand it, but I'd just like to visit it again after all this time. I often go back to places where I've been before.'

'What do you want to see here?' he said.

'I want to see the fort!' I said. 'Maybe the barrack I was stationed in then, the drill grounds. Hell, I don't know.'

'How do you know your barrack's still there?'

'I don't,' I said. 'I just want to see. Good God, man, I'm no spy. You can check me out if you want.'

He looked at me and said nothing.

'Look, guard,' I said, 'all I asked was whether I could visit the fort. If you don't want me to, say so. You can even take me before your commanding officer. But it's my understanding that military posts in this country in peace time are open generally to visits by civilians.'

He nodded toward the desk by the door.

'Sign the register,' he said. 'State exactly your reason for visiting the post.'

I signed it.

He came over and examined it, then looked up.

'You trained here then, eh?' he said. 'Armored force?'

'No,' I said. 'It was tank destroyer then.'

'It's armor now,' he said.

'I know,' I said. 'But that was twenty years ago. You were probably two or three years old.'

He looked at me and said nothing.

'You were with the tank destroyers then?' he said.

'In training,' I said. 'Infantry, later.'

'In that war?'

'That's what I'm intimating generally,' I said.

He said nothing.

I lighted a cigarette and looked at him. 'Am I permitted to visit it then?'

'When were you here?' he said.

'In 1942,' I said. 'Part of 1943. Forty-two plus twenty equals sixty-two, I believe.'

He was silent.

MARTI KRISTEN

'I was wounded in that war,' I said. 'Twice. Once on New Guinea and again on Leyte.'

He eyed me grimly. 'We're going to whip 'em this time,' he said.

'What do you mean? Who?'

'Them Commies,' he said.

I gazed at him. 'We weren't fighting the Communists then,' I said.

'And as I recall, we won the war.'

'Yeah,' he said, 'but we're going to whip 'em this time.'

I looked at him.

'What time?' I said.

'This time.'

I said nothing.

'All these half-assed little nations that are running after them —' he said. 'They're going to regret it. We're going to show them, and then they'll wish. Because we're going to whip 'em this time.'

For a moment I went on gazing at him.

Then I smiled. 'Yeah? Who is?' I asked.

'We are,' he said.

'You personally?'

'We are,' he said again.

I smiled again and shifted. 'You personally want to fight?' I asked.

'You anxious to get into a war?'

'We're going to whip 'em this time,' he said.

'I take it you've never been in one,' I said. 'You, personally.'

'We'll whip 'em,' he said.

'A war is a pretty grim thing,' I said. 'Especially for the individuals fighting it. A friend of mine had his knees shot up

by machine-gun fire. He doesn't walk much these days. Another bled to death in the grass because no one could get to him.'

The guard eyed me. 'Yeah?' he said. 'But we're going to win this one.'

'What one, man!' I shouted. 'We aren't at war!'

'This one,' he said calmly.

I drew my breath and looked at him again.

'I've been in a war,' I said. 'It was a war in which we were going to whip 'em too, once and for all. I happen to know, from experience, what war is like. Men get their guts blown out, their testicles turned to bloody paste, their brains splattered over walls. Don't talk to me about we're going to win this one! You personally could be one of the first ones thrown into it, and killed in the first five days, or hours, or minutes. Then it would be they who won it, if they did — not we. We don't win a war

MARTI KRISTEN

from six feet under!'

He eyed me coolly.

'All the same,' he said, 'we're going to whip 'em this time.'

'Idiot!' I seethed. 'Fool! Brainwashed!'

He glanced up calmly from the desk, a paper in his hand. 'Here's your pass,' he said. 'Good for twelve hours if you wanna stay that long.'

I stood there shaking.

'Don't you want it?' he said. 'Don't you want to visit the fort?'

'No!' I said. 'No! I don't!'

He shrugged. 'Well, it takes all kinds, I guess,' he said. 'I don't get it—'

'That's right!' I hissed. 'You don't!'

I flung myself out into the car.

I screeched around in a wide, backing curve. I pressed my foot on the gas and raced away.

'Hey —!' he yelled after me, waving the paper.
But I didn't look at him.
The fort dropped swiftly away behind.

Peter Barnes

A PAST AND PRESENT HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT'S GUIDE TO SOCIETY

There are many individual segments in society: [diagram of line segments] (line) segments The various segments combine to form a whole, giving society a shape and form: [diagrams of geometric forms: triangle, square, octagon, parallelogram] (geometric) forms For society to function efficiently, abrasive edges must be removed from individuals, with the result being: [diagram of a circle labeled "Society"] (a circle) The individuals must be strong in supporting the given order or: [diagram of an irregular shape labeled "Society" with text below: "Chaos will result"]

PETER BARNES

One, or a small group of individuals may attempt to repair society — put it on a strong course. Others will have different ideas causing: [illustration: starburst shape] Confusion Society, upon seeing the effect, will try to rid itself of diversity and work toward a common goal: [illustration: sun with rays] However, unity of purpose is not the whole answer since society (as we left it) can only maintain its current level: [illustration: ball rolling downhill] (for a ball can not roll uphill) Thus, even though everyone is unified, it is necessary for leaders to emerge — leading society forward and upward: [illustration: circle labeled "Society" + "Leaders" = arrowed shape labeled "Society"] (demonstrating Bernoulli's Principle) This shape: [illustration: horizontal line] may give the impression that leaders can pull society against its desires,

Peter Barnes

but when this happens, they find that society assumes a stall attitude: [diagram of an aircraft in a stall] (causing a tailspin) Or the individual segments will fail to support the leaders: [diagram of an aircraft nose diving] (provoking a nose dive) We have seen that the individual is important to society and must co-operate with others. The interaction that occurs is dependent upon the individual's view of himself and society. Ideally the individual should be at one with his fellow man: [box containing "all mankind and the individual"] But, possessing human frailties, he has moods in which he looks upon society as: [box containing "Thieves, Scoundrels" above a smaller box with "individual" and below "and worse."] Or, he will feel that life is passing him by: [diagram of a triangle labeled "society" and a square labeled "individual"]

PETER BARNES

or oppressed by his boss:

[Diagram: a triangle labeled "Boss" inverted over a rectangle labeled "individual"]

or that the social order is wrong:

[Diagram: a triangle labeled "the rich" inverted over a rectangle labeled "individual"]

At other times he may look with disdain on mankind:

[Diagram: an inverted triangle labeled "dolt peasants and lackeys" above a rectangle labeled "individual"]

In spite of these variations in mood, man does manage to live (more or less successfully) within the present social structure, and fulfill his necessary obligations in order that we may move forward in direct relationship to the individual responsibility exercised.

JAMES DOUGHERTY

**RABBIT RUN, CH. 1 THE GROUP,
CH. 2 ANOTHER COUNTRY, CH. 1
& 3, ETC. OR, WHO NEEDS
MULTIPLICATION TABLES?**

Between the desire and the spasm our Hero — that flagpole-sitter of sex — is required to hang fire for a chapter or so while his lyrical author bedecks with reverent purple the lady's orgasm (this selfless apostle to the frigid injects Dionysian ecstasies passim), then wiping the steam from his specs whets Hero a sociological sarcasm or rehearses his poignantly oral complex and checks if there's room for one last pleonasm or maybe a morsel from Krafft-Ebing's codex — and then Hero's allowed to let go. I. Einstadt

MALTHUSIAN

Sometimes the bullfrog in me ate, Croaking in basso profundo To Kwantse Tung — belly god; Sometimes the screech owl in me ate, Descending noiselessly on furry prey, While starving peasants searched the hills For dandelion, wild honey, locusts, snails . . . I asked, 'Why are there so many of you When there isn't enough food for all?' An old man leaning on his stick replied: 'Blessed Confucius preached that we be Fruitful as the mustard seed. Hence we multiplied.'

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MAUDE RUBIN

RAPE OF THE PURPLE NIGHTSHADE

Did Jack burst his bean-bag somewhere along Cabrillo Coast? Now the Giant stalks, marks off freeways and shopping-centers by a sea that foams with detergent suds; building these high-towered, narrow-celled giant steel-ribbed condominia where we say we live. (Where once the vaqueros' palominos galloped through cougar-colored hills, hoofs pounding earth like flamenco heels . . . where now on this giant parking-lot that thunder is reined, its echo held gasoline-powered.)

But look — over there by the stenciled arrow — there, white-on-black, pointing always LEFT TURN — see that flutter of feather and beak yanking and pulling a spear of weed, chewing and spewing a purple flower? What makes a smoggy-feathered sparrow disregard the White Man's Arrow pointing left to Cabrillo Center (STERILIZED BIRD-SEED ON PET SUPPLY COUNTERS AMONG SPRAY-CANS OF DOG-OFF AND CAT-B-GONE).

MAUDE RUBIN

AND YOU, MISS NIGHTSHADE —

purple petal and virgin stem —
what made your unpollened body's urge
push up through asphalt's hard-rolled crust?
Seeking some free-buzzing bee?
Now here on Cabrillo Parking Lot
torrid with August
you lie deflowered,
your poison lost on an urchin sparrow.
Juan Cabrillo, the history books
say you passed here once.
Wherever you are, old Juan, kneel down . . .
kneel down and thank the good South wind
that took you on.

GEORGE W. LINDEN

STANDING GROUND

'Without the mines of Larium
The Pincers of Themistocles . . .
(My lord, this room is warm today)
Ahem; could not have made the seas
Into a Grecian lake.
But then, of course, there were the pots —
Keats made one famous as you know —
And grapes which Greeks could trade or not
For hardy fighting men.
They needed troops instead of art;
For Persians poised upon the breach . . .
(Oh will this lecture ever last
To meet Thermopylae at ten?)
Speak not to me of maidens loth
Or marble men of yore,
Of courage or of iron deeds,
God-heroes of before,
But mark this man — how near the edge —
Regrips his facts to hold his pledge
'Mid pouting mouths and pleading eyes
Surrounded by a sea of thighs.

L. STANLEY CHENEY

AND WIND, THE FINAL POET

We dream,
painting posterity
the happy hunting ground
for poets proclaiming miracles
behind the paper walled security
of selected studies
while people perish
and history shrivels
in the emasculation of
a society that once dared
and now dreads

the nuances of existence
as men compromise
the courage of creativity
for the conditioned safety
of despair . . .
We dream,
conjuring posterity
to be paradise
and not the collective waste
of an effete evolution
where insects reign,
dust is truth,
and wind weeps the final poem.

PETER MEINKE

ENEMIES

There are no incompatible men:
soldiers, meeting by accident when
a truce is called, will drink their beer
and laugh and lie, and wink and leer.
Communism never chased a girl
around a table; capitalism never
caught her around the waist, in a swirl
of skirts and giggles. Nor will they ever:
when they're embraced, it's not the same
as clinging to a human frame;
the best idea is colder than
the coldest woman, the coldest man.
So, though you draft me and him, though
we meet as enemies over a trench,
I know in my heart that the stench
of death is the stench of ideas: I know
an idea is not so warm to touch
as a man, nor does it bleed so much.

ROBIN JOHNSON

‘UNSUCCESSFUL SUICIDES RARELY TRY AGAIN’

Caught hard within the net
I sought a watery grave
and wondered who soon would lyre
the last cold sonata for me.
Combers hit, sloshing me hard
on the lip of the night.
Then, tearing at rot-rolling spars,
I plugged my ears and invoked
every pagan vestigial power
for breath to burst the snare.
All love, ancestral pioneers pre-Jonah,
pre-Noah, who gilled me up onto this sand.

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JOEL WEISHAUS

EVEN THE DEAD HAVE POTENTIAL

even the dead have potential, tonight
pinned beneath diamondized kleig light
r e f r a c t i n g
crystalline streets shattered of substance,
she sleeps (shhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhh
in the cellar of many a heart
and the heart of many a fella
manipulating scintillating sticks of stone
— till she flew home —
an iridescent efflorescent bigtimebox(O)f
fice
under
kleig light
smiles spread on lips like warm mayonnaise:
blublack&yella rivers raise banks
and how can i ever thanks
for the memory of making me this night
by the light of the silvery kleig light
light
lights!! . . .

MAXWELL ANDERSON: 'NO CERTAIN ANSWER'

by Beatrice Levin

IN THE 1930'S, MAXWELL ANDERSON was considered America's first dramatist after Eugene O'Neill temporarily withdrew from the theatre. Anderson was a consistent liberal who believed that the function of the playwright, as of the poet, is to show man to be better than he thinks he is. In this view, he was greatly influenced by Greek tragic drama, having closely studied its exaltation of language, its cadence, and its noble characters. Anderson's plays were instruments of experimentation and rebellion against basic evils in the social structure. But he was more than a rebel; he was a humane human being with a happy sense of humor and a distinguished gift of fantasy.

In recent years, much has been written about Eugene O'Neill's contribution to American theatre. O'Neill's efforts to remove the relatively-rigid conventions of the drama and his daring to interpret the realities of modern life have been extensively explored. Much less attention has been paid to Anderson, whose plays actually give us more pleasure. Anderson's talent was his ability to characterize, to evoke real people with juice and spirit, people (on the stage) with whom we are eager to identify. While the outstanding emotion of Anderson's plays was affirmation, the affirmation of human dignity, the outstanding emotion of O'Neill's plays was gloom, despite his great-hearted ecstasy and his ill-concealed tenderness. And the latter's characters are hardly the kind of people we want for friends or even for an evening of bridge.

The characters in Anderson's plays own a gallantry that makes them richly human and vigorous. This is well shown

in SATURDAY'S CHILDREN (1927), centered on an ironic comedy of romantic youth; while the couple here did not cope intelligently with their problems, we liked them then — and if we see the play on television now, we like them again. They are warm and charming, reflecting the playwright's sense of humor. And in 1924, with Lawrence Stallings, Anderson had had his first dramatic success with an anti-romantic war play, WHAT PRICE GLORY. For the first time on American stages, the point was vividly taken that there is nothing ennobling about modern warfare. The authors asserted that the play was about 'war as it is,' and the soldiers talked as soldiers do the world over.

Maxwell Anderson, like liberals everywhere, was deeply affected by the conviction in April, 1920, of two obscure immigrants, Bartolomeo Vanzetti and Nicola Sacco, on thin perjured evidence, for the murder of two shoe-factory employees. For seven years, Sacco and Vanzetti languished in jail. In 1927, they were electrocuted, the world protesting to the last moment. Fired with indignation, Anderson, with Harold Hickerson, proved himself a man of timely theatre with GODS OF LIGHTNING, an impressive dramatization of the now-famous Sacco-Vanzetti case.

The victims of this injustice continued to haunt Anderson, and he began work on a second play about the case, this one entitled WINTERSET. Shakespearean in power, it is nonetheless truly modern in language and scope. To this day, the play is presented frequently by community theatres and college groups. Critics compare it to HAMLET; for Anderson's character, Mio, seeks to exonerate his dead father's name. The Mio-Miriamne romance is a moving Romeo-Juliet motif. Nowhere else in all Anderson's works is anger and grief so sharply delineated as in WINTERSET — where Mio, discovering the truth from a remorseful half-crazed Judge Gaunt, meets the real criminal, the gangster, Trock.

Anderson complained that experiment in the theatre was made difficult and expensive by the fact that a play had to find an audience at once or have no chance of finding one later. This remains the case to the present. A recent experiment, *HANG DOWN YOUR HEAD AND DIE*, was reviewed in the *TIMES*: It did, after one performance.

‘*WINTERSET*,’ wrote Anderson, ‘is largely in verse, and treats a contemporary tragic theme, which makes it more of an experiment than I could wish, for the great masters themselves never tried to make tragic poetry out of the stuff of their own times. To do so is to attempt to establish a new convention, one that may prove impossible of acceptance, but to which I was driven by the lively historical sense of our day.’

For thirty years, Anderson turned out one play every season. Some of his best-known works were: *NIGHT OVER TAOS*, the story of an old Mexican chieftain who makes a heroic stand against the forces of the new day; *BOTH YOUR HOUSES*, perhaps the first important American play to deal with crooked politics in federal government; *THE MASQUE OF KINGS*, a drama of the Mayerling tragedy; and a Dear Brutus fantasy, *THE STAR WAGON*.

As a protest drama, *HIGH TOR* ranks second only to *WINTERSET*. Here, despite the light fantasy and the shenanigans of trapping a couple of crooked politicians in a steam shovel, Anderson speaks out for protection of our natural resources against exploitation, and of limitations that must be set on the lust for profit which corrupts human spirit. Van, who owns the mountain, holds out against selling it until he begins to see that there are other frontiers — if not physical open West — the frontiers of the mind, of space, of science and research. All of this is implied in what I consider a great play of lasting value, certainly the best example among Anderson’s works holding both vision and protest. The poet’s nostalgia for the fine fair country with

shores and mountains undefiled, makes this beautifully moving. In contrast, the characters are greedy personified human hogs who would do anything for a satchel-full of greenbacks.

While JOAN OF LORRAINE could not hold a candle to Shaw's ST. JOAN or even to the French play, Anouilh's THE LARK, Anderson gave us some unforgettable poetry in ANNE OF THE THOUSAND DAYS and in the musical, LOST IN THE STARS, with a score by Kurt Weill. Another musical that still charms and delights is KNICKERBOCKER HOLIDAY.

Maxwell Anderson was early irritated by the power which producers held to accept or reject scripts; and in 1938 he joined with Robert Sherwood and other dramatists in organizing the Playwrights Company. He was even more irritated by the power of critics to make or break a play, although the New York Drama Critics twice presented him with their annual award. He spoke vitriolically against their quick murders of dramas regardless of their real worth. He asserted that it was the better part of a democratic process to let the audience make some decisions.

Though the quest of Mio in WINTERSET may not justly be regarded as a search for vengeance, this play treats a contemporary tragic theme and is truly a quest in the most noble sense. In his foreword to the published version, Anderson commented that the tragic poetry of our own times must be the stuff of great theatre in America. 'Our theatre has not yet produced anything worthy to endure — and endurance, though it may be a fallible test, is the only test of excellence.' He was in error, saying that nothing enduring and worthy had yet been done. A whole body of O'Neill's work had been produced and was enduring, of course; and now the American theatre had WINTERSET, and there would follow other plays written in verse with American themes and characters — from the flowing pen of Maxwell Anderson. Had he lived, he would have been seventy-six this year. He died

March 1, 1959, seventy years old.

A passage from *WINTERSET* which haunts audiences — with lines that have been called among the finest fragments of elegiac verse in modern dramatic literature — provides vivid reminder of Anderson's talents:

*On this star,
in this star-adventure, knowing not
what the fires mean to right and left, nor whether
a meaning was intended or presumed
man can stand up, and look out blind and say:
in all these turning lights I find no clue,
only a masterless night, and in my blood
no certain answer, yet is my mind my own,
yet is my heart a cry toward something dim
in distance, which is higher than I am
and makes me emperor of the endless dark
even in seeking.*

DAN GEORGAKAS : NOTES ON 1960s' MANNERISM

Limitation : To be applied only to poetry seeking to outlast the day

1. Yr — Aside from showing the poet is of Pound, yr for your like wd for would often does nothing except give the typography of experiment without the substance: how often is the abbrv. justified within the terms of the specific work: Eng. is a language of vwl s., even telegraphers use them: a main gripe here is that the poet becomes satisfied he has achieved 'style' or 'experiment' when he is really only indulging mannerism: similar offenders include askt and sd: reviving sound and voice in poetry does not mean reverting to dialect and shorthand: ruff, tuff, tho are a different category.

2. & — Apply the above observation altho & doesn't seem so objectionable: logician symbols are even briefer and more precise: but in the end & is and is &.

3. Contemporary crutch — He had a face like Humphrey Bogart is an excuse for someone who won't create a description: it's substitution of recall for creation: usually with a smug 'with it' flavor, a showing of credentials: will be meaningless to more than the poet images and in a few years . . . : particularly obnoxious when the c.c. is an in-group reference.

4. i (for I) — How often does it really make sense to use i in the context of the particular poem: usually all caps are dropped: why or why not?: main thing being that the poet knows and that the knowledge comes through in the poem.

5. Prose — Stringing out a sentence minus straight rational syntax: punctuation doesn't make a poem any more than the ;/(bit makes it new.

6. Bonus — Too many magazines: how many are edited?

postscript I have indulged all the above mannerisms at one time or another. Not interested in polemics. Seek clarification that we might advance our singing.

THE HAND IN THE FIST (CONTINUED FROM PAGE 27)

Not just art and literature, but the nature of the human condition is the concern here. About anything as fundamental as this, there are no final definitions; only speculation and insights. This is exactly the novel's and the screen play's success: that its audience has been confronted with some very basic questions about human life and potential which cannot easily be put aside.

At least structurally, the screen play surpasses the novel. The form of the latter is a full fifty percent anticlimactic; for, when Freddie concludes his first-person story, it is merely retold from Miranda's point of view with a daily journal she keeps in a pad he has given her. The device is sociologically and psychologically interesting enough, but necessarily involves a built-in literary limitation which the film version does not stumble over.

Like it or not, the original material is really only a very long short story or, at most, a novelette. Which makes an excellent source for a cinematic adaptation but, in terms of technique, a badly-contrived novel.

The film has its weaknesses. It is heir to the usual persistent attitudes of patronage in American pictures (actually this is an Anglo-American production). For one thing, motion-picture elements such as a title always are offensively belabored by Hollywood-oriented movie-makers. It's always assumed that no possible understanding may be expected from an audience for anything that isn't worked out for them to the last decimal. Predictably, there is a sequence in which Freddie shows Miranda his butterfly collection, after which, in the best of kindergarten tradition, she says to him: 'And now you've collected me.'

In the novel, when Freddie shows Miranda his collection, she asks: 'How many butterflies have you killed?' He replies: 'You can see.' And she says: 'No, I can't. I'm thinking of all the butterflies that would have come from these if you'd let them live. I'm thinking of all the living beauty you've ended.'

There are other minor weaknesses. The classic (and clichéd) device of cliff-hanging is not ignored. And this is inevitably misused in a non-sequitur fashion: Freddie has to bring Miranda up from the sound-proof cellar in which he has her imprisoned to the relatively insecure confines of the main house whenever she wishes to bathe. The very first time he is occupied in this hazardous maneuver a neighbor, Colonel Whitcomb (Maurice Dallimore), arrives.

Not even the added opportunity this coincidental visit suggests for cuteness is avoided: The first words from the neighbor's mouth are framed with a contrived ambiguity to suggest that in fact the law, in his person, has already caught up with Freddie.

An interesting aspect of this sequence is that, if its structural purpose is to excite suspense in the viewers, then it's presupposed that, at least by this time, the audience is in sympathy with Freddie's crime. (As indeed it is!) The implication necessarily is that the audience now fears that the law has caught up with Freddie. It's equally implied that the viewers hope he will manage to defeat justice . . . at least for a little while longer. This is the specific question of suspense raised by the sequence. The mechanics of the device demand that there be a definite placement of the audience's antipathy. The audience already, of course, has become acquainted with Freddie. On the surface of their attention, viewers may think they are opposed to Freddie's conduct. Actually he already has — quite unconsciously — become their hero! On the other hand, Col. Whitcomb is a brand new arrival. They know nothing of his purpose: only that it represents in some as-yet-undefined way a threat to

their hero's hopes. Something in the audience (i.e., their empathy) desires that Freddie triumph against this antagonist.

Col. Whitcomb says something to the effect that he wants to know just what Freddie has done in that old dungeon or crypt or whatever on the property he has just purchased. But his next words humorously reveal that he was only talking about the renovations Freddie has made: putting in electricity, etc. Because the neighborhood's committee for the preservation of monuments and landmarks will never approve. This is a contemptible resolution of the suspense, but the type of shabby trick-on-the-viewer technique employed all the time in American films. The character of the colonel and his visit exist also in the novel, but with nothing like this cheap, cute, and labored exposition.

This unimaginative and two-dimensional figure of the neighbor is — in the same cliché-ridden motion-picture tradition — dull-witted, effusive, and persistent. And the suspense which Wyler, Mann, and Kohn feel they can milk indefinitely is squeezed a little more while Miranda, tied to the water pipes in the bathroom upstairs, contrives with her foot to make the water in the tub run over until it pours out of the bathroom, onto the landing, and over to the hallway below. Through the agency of the blundering, well-intentioned, but conveniently-stupid neighbor, the situation is mined for a few added moments of suspense dividends. But Freddie finally gets him out of the house, and his crime remains undiscovered. The colonel is set up as a possible *deus ex machina*; and then this character is dropped without any organic use being made of him.

Photographically, also, the film has been saddled with the kind of burdensome clichés especially typical of too many American films. Samantha Eggar is viewed almost exclusively in soft focus throughout. And at the end, when she is dying of pneumonia, as much color as possible has

been washed out of the takes through the kind of lighting and makeup choices which tend to play a scene for the actress rather than permitting her to achieve her own moments.

In addition, both Stamp and Eggar clearly have been chosen more for certain physical qualities than for any other reason. And each has visible craft weaknesses. Stamp is still afflicted with the need common among amateurs to focus unintended and unused tension in the upper lip. Stamp also has a style of delivery which contents itself with a single facet: He works almost entirely, in his role of Freddie Clegg, from a base of petulance. Indeed, it's the particular physical quality for which he was selected to play the role.

Eggar's performance has its moments: The scene at the end, when she knows she is dying and begs him not to leave her alone, is as moving as anything else in the picture. She tries to hold Freddie's hand; and when he pulls it away from her after an instant, the look of isolation and the knowledge of death in her face is the most vivid moment of her performance. And she does not need the gimmicks of lighting and makeup here, no more than she needed the freckles and soft focus of the earlier sequences. But at other times her delivery is so unconvincing that she herself seems to be examining its lack of emphasis or belief. Wyler has imposed on the actress his own notion of the performance he desired instead of working with her to develop her choices. And perhaps he had to do this. Perhaps his heavy-handed direction has disguised an acting craft which would have appeared even more rudimentary without his tyranny.

For Wyler is an extremely didactic director. Although, if this is a weakness, it is only fair to say also that this is a source of great strength. His movie never even momentarily suffers from a lack of progression. There is very little, apart from the artificial sequence around the neighbor's visit, which does not work immediately for the thematic content

and directly toward the intended conclusion. For all the screen play's weaknesses, the finished product has scenes which soar over anything ordinarily attempted by American film producers. . .

Freddie uses chloroform during the original kidnapping. Miranda cannot forget this. She knows he may decide at any time to violate her in a physical way. There is a scene in which she tells him he must promise, if he does choose later on to take advantage of the situation, that he won't do it in a mean way. 'I mean don't knock me unconscious or chloroform me again or anything. I shan't struggle, I'll let you do what you like.' In any extremity, Miranda wishes to retain her awareness — i.e., her sense of personal identity. Her instincts, even in the face of pain, are on the side of life. She wishes to be conscious always of anything so important that is happening to her, good or bad. Freddie tells her once again that he has no intention of taking any advantage of her. 'Every right of privacy will be respected. . .'

But she knows him better than he knows himself. Eventually he does just as she feared he would. She discovers, on the evening he was supposed to have set her free, that he never intends to let her go. 'I'm already dead,' she says. 'I'm never going to get out of here alive, am I?' She is hysterical with the realization. It becomes necessary to chloroform her again. He does this because she has become hysterical, not because of any sexual intent. But when he has her subdued, Freddie cannot resist carrying Miranda up to his bedroom. At first he only wishes to see her lying in his bed. Then he only wishes to lie beside her dead (i.e., chloroformed) body momentarily. Finally, he must touch her; and the scene is cut at the point where he hugs her unconscious body in his arms. The implication is not subtle. Nor is it meant to be. Except for the puritanical film codes here and abroad, the scene could have borne some slight further development, since it happens to be crucial. . . .

When she awakens, Miranda is completely dressed and back in her own bed in the dungeon. Freddie makes a point of assuring her, formally, that: 'Every right of privacy was respected.' She believes him. Some members of the audience also may believe him because of the obsequious prudery which dictated the somewhat aborted cut in the previous scene.

In the novel, in fact, Freddie undresses her down to her underwear, and then proceeds to take pornographic photographs of her. 'It was my chance I had been waiting for. I got the old camera and took some photos, I would have taken more, only she started to move a bit. . . .

I started the developing and printing right away. They came out very nice. Not artistic, but interesting.

I never slept that night, I got in such a state.'

He is embarrassed; yet, he concludes philosophically: 'About what I did, undressing her, when I thought after, I saw it wasn't so bad; not many would have kept control of themselves, just taken photos, it was almost a point in my favour.' He actually believes this!

At this juncture, it is critical and positively damaging that Wyler, in the film, is hamstrung by our absurd sexual conventions. Freddie is lying. And that he is lying now is as significant as any other issue in the screen play; because his lie is the groundwork presently for the most painful and critical moment in the picture for the audience. Now he will be compelled to perceive his real nature, his unwillingness to accept a specific role and its inevitable responsibilities.

This and the later seduction sequence, much more than the scene when Miranda attempts to persuade him to her views of art and literature, betray Freddie's appalling lack of identity. He does not feel he has betrayed either Miranda or himself by taking advantage of her helpless condition, after she's chloroformed, to rape her, as Wyler is compelled to suggest with his 'Cecil Blount de Mille cut' here. But, as we

have seen in the earlier sequence, when she says she will not fight him if he wishes to take advantage of her, Freddie is actually disgusted at this offer of even passive cooperation. He becomes outraged, later, when Miranda finally offers an active participation in her own seduction.

Miranda understands at last that she is going to have to make an explicit commitment to purchase her freedom. She will have to give him some semblance of what he wants if she expects ever to get out of captivity. And then, too, she is a woman. The mechanism of surrender is a part of her nature. It waits within, ready to betray her own intent. Sooner or later it must become operative. She must inevitably want to make this surrender.

On one occasion, when she finishes her bath, Miranda comes downstairs in a negligee. As usual, she holds her arms out simply, waiting for Freddie to tie them with the leather thong he uses. After he does so, she asks if they cannot sit down together in the living room and talk for a while. She is the image of helpless and docile femininity. Freddie agrees. Miranda asks if there isn't something to drink. Freddie opens a bottle. He senses that there is some unspoken intent in her requests.

Finally, she tells him that she has learned to care for him and that she wants him. She sits in his lap. Her arms, with her wrists still tied together, go around his neck.

'Am I too heavy for you?' she asks. She kisses him, then holds out her wrists and asks him to untie them. He holds her again, but breaks away from her. He thinks he cannot bring himself to believe in the sincerity of her desire.

He is partly right, to the extent that the desire has come out of an inner defeat. Miranda certainly wouldn't have experienced this for someone like Freddie in any other context than this emotional and masochistic situation. But he is terribly wrong also, because the desire is absolutely real now, no matter what its base or cause!

Miranda herself may hardly know what her chemistry is actually doing to her. Possibly she may even still believe that the only imperative operating here is her desire for freedom. But she can believe this only in a surface way. She cannot help, beneath her rational notion of what is happening, realizing that the need is there. Her spirit has been broken. Not yet destroyed; but she is no longer, in any sense, free. Freddie can have no way of knowing or so much as suspecting the extent to which time and circumstance have worked for him—the degree to which he has succeeded in his original aim. He couldn't begin, in any case, to know what to do with his victory!

After her wrists are untied, Miranda disrobes. She stands before him completely naked, completely vulnerable. She asks if he thinks she would go this far if her feelings actually were insincere. She goes to him and kisses him again. 'Help me?' she says; and at last Freddie's frigid self-hatred begins to thaw. They are on the couch together. With anticipation and complete willingness, Miranda abandons Picasso, Salinger, her family, her past, everything—coming to terms finally with her nature. In the only way that this is possible, she has found her freedom. It is brutally unfair that the partner whom chance has washed up on the shores of her life is psychically sick beyond redemption....

Viciously, at the last minute, Freddie pulls away from her. He begins frantically to tuck in his clothes. His denouncement of her gift is scathing: 'I can get what you're offering from any slut in Piccadilly,' he shouts, in total rejection of the life she is offering.

He was perfectly willing to violate Miranda while she was unconscious (i.e., 'dead'), but he is shocked and outraged at the revelation that she is a healthy sexual being. All the references in the past to 'every right of privacy,' which he is so fanatical about 'respecting,' come to a head. He thinks sex is dirty because, between two willing partners, it is a

profound commitment to life . . . and life, he knows absolutely, is evil!

He ties her wrists again with his leather thong, quickly dragging her from the main house through the rain, back to the old crypt. As they leave the house, Miranda achieves all the truth that is left for her: 'I want to die,' she discovers.

Before he can return her to his cellar, Miranda finds an opportunity to brain him with a shovel. Freddie is momentarily at her mercy. If she hits him once more, she will be free. But the second blow probably will kill him. She cannot bring herself to do that. Even now, her instincts are too deeply committed to life.

He recovers sufficiently to drag her down to her dungeon and lock her in again. She begs him not to leave her. Her only impulse is to help him. When he leaves to drive to the hospital in town, she lies against the stone steps and barred door, grieving; not for herself, but what she has done to Freddie. 'I didn't mean to hurt him,' she cries. 'Don't let him die. Oh, God, I didn't mean it!'

106 When Freddie returns from the hospital three days later, quite recovered, Miranda, who has been soaked in the rain and left tied and without heat, dressed only in the flimsy negligee, has caught pneumonia and is already dying.

When she dies, Freddie is not abruptly found out by the local constabulary. Nor does he blunder into their hands. He begins planning his next kidnapping and selects his next victim. The triumph of this ending is one of good taste: It wastes no time belaboring the obvious, but makes its final statement effectively and quickly. We all know that Freddie Clegg will be caught sooner or later; if not when he kidnaps his next victim, then with the one after that or the one after that. Showing him actually apprehended, with a chase sequence and extraneous scenes at a police station and in a courtroom or with a policeman, smoking '38' special in hand, standing over the monster's body, would have been

ludicrously anticlimactic. That kind of audience patronage serves only to point up the little Hayes/Johnson Office morals — like *Crime Doesn't Pay* (we hope).

Freddie mourns Miranda for an entire afternoon: 'I sat there with her, thinking of all the good things that had happened.' But his vigil is brief and as insincere as when his nature had earlier demanded that he suspect Miranda's offer of herself. By the following morning he has buried her; and not just physically: He is already reasoning that she was not really worthwhile. The next time, he plans to select a girl who is less intellectual, more pliable: 'Someone I can teach,' he thinks. It is almost farcically ironic that the girl he begins stalking, at the end of the film, is a nurse!

The Hammer, Thor's Bolt

UNTIL HIS DEATH IN 1965, Johannes Bobrowski was generally regarded to be East Germany's finest living poet. Now that we have Ruth and Matthew Mead's inspired translation (*SHADOW LAND, Selected Poems* — 21s. or \$3.50 — DONALD CARROLL, London & ALAN SWALLOW, U.S.A.), we know why. He towers.

In Bobrowski we find a singing spare style totally unlike the pedestrian mawkish stuff most of us call 'poetry.' We find poems of unprecedented beauty and compassion (see the poem on the plight of the Jews, KAUNAS 1941). Everywhere we sense power and mystery, vast expanses of forests and steppes. In Bobrowski, the next logical step in modern poetry, all the lessons of symbolism learned, absorbed in the blood, and put to new and daring use. Work of the imagination, the hammer, Thor's bolt: Image of the hunter, conjuration, animal-headed, painted in the icy cave, in the rock.

Richard O'Connell

ALAN WATTS AND EXISTENCE

IT IS NO ACCIDENT THAT THE TWO most popular philosophies of our time are Existentialism and Zen. We may be more inclined to consider Zen a religion; but every religion, stripped of ritual, theology, and faith, rests on a philosophical basis. Oversimply, we can view Existentialism as the Western view, and Zen as the Eastern. Alan Watts has published over the years some eighteen books explaining the Eastern view, and often comparing it to the Western. Now, in *THE 'DEEP-IN' VIEW* (DUST — \$1.50, 26 pp.), he presents some off-the-cuff solutions to his problems of existence.

Watts gives several interesting reasons why he feels Christian theology cannot provide solutions—for any of us. And he points to the sickness in some of our subliminal assumptions about existence. These often seem so obvious that it is absurd even to question them. (But, as Camus has told us: 'The absurd is existence.') Watts' solution is not Zen or any other form of Buddhism, nor is it Taoism, Hinduism, or Confucianism—but a part of all these. That is: Despite the philosophical structure of Watts' thought, his is a religious solution. Though, not faith; at least, not faith as defined in Western terms. Rather, a sense of 'oneness' with nature, the universe. Yet, not a losing of oneself in the cosmos; ' . . . the real self of every man is the entire cosmos focused at this point and that point, this and that point being the place where we locate our bodies.' (Beware the man who speaks of 'the real self,' like 'the truth,' it's apt to be only a fragment of the whole, and rarely the better part.)

Watts also eschews the sense of (false) security attained by committing oneself to an organized religious ethic which too often amounts to resignation to the will and ideas of others. He much prefers flexibility and experimentation in life. And he asserts that it is ridiculous to place one's trust in

facts or laws; for they always can be interpreted in a variety of ways. 'You have to put your trust in people.' He denies the Western assumption that 'each individual is an independent source of action and thought.' As he brilliantly illustrates, this is tied in with the scapegoat syndrome and the idea that the way to alleviate trouble is to answer the question: 'Who started it?'

Now this is a game and it's nothing but a game, because the truth of the matter is that the trouble started with the whole group. The person who is alleged to have started the trouble couldn't be playing the part he's playing except in relation to the total situation, and the total situation is always what's responsible for the trouble that arises. It's a kind of field theory. It's a unified field. The whole environment and the organisms in it is one activity. When trouble starts up, the whole field is responsible. Fields crystallize at certain points within.

From time immemorial our ideas of political order have been that there must be a boss to rule things. . . . Our society is very funny. It plays games with itself. It says, 'We don't trust ourselves to be good, therefore, we appoint the police to keep us in order,' thinking naively that the police appointed by society aren't at just the same level of virtue or vice as the society itself. This is a way of kidding yourself; that there is order by appointing people to keep you in order. No law or law enforcement agency has any more value than the consent of the society as a whole to obey it.

Watts also makes pertinent observations on automation, worry, and the future. Probably few will agree totally with his ideas and attitudes — and some will consider many of his solutions closer to evasions — but it is a refreshing and stimulating conversation, as much a portrait of the man as of his philosophy.

Milton VanSickle

IN COLD BLOOD: Neither; Nor?

DEBATES IN REVIEWS OF TRUMAN CAPOTE'S well-publicized *IN COLD BLOOD* (RANDOM HOUSE — \$5.95) have mainly involved the validity of the author's and his publisher's claims in re innovation in a 'nonfictional novel.' These discussions — and comments on the unusualness of a prominent writer's real-life report on a nationally-described, brutal, seemingly-unmotivated quadruple murder case in Kansas in 1959 — have largely replaced analyses of value.

Despite the book's timeliness, novelists' 'reportages,' heavy with psychological and/or social and political insights, have been numerous. Rebecca West's recently-revised and reissued *THE MEANING OF TREASON*, an account of the World War II English traitors' trials in London, falls in this general category. Novelist Ernest Hemingway's narrations of bullfights in Spain and of his African hunts are not dissimilar in type.

But, in Capote's 'nonfiction novel,' his dramatic material and his story-telling technique weigh even more heavily than his novelist's perceptiveness.

Mr. Capote's murder case, the killing at inch range of a Mr. Clutter, a nationally-known agricultural expert, his wife, and their teen-age son and daughter on their model farm in Holcomb, Kansas, on November 15, 1959, is a prototype in current murder. Clutter-type murders in middle-class neighborhoods in the U.S.A., usually for little material gain or so badly planned that gain is minimal (in this case it was between forty and fifty dollars), fill the daily newspapers.

Hence the built-in interest of *IN COLD BLOOD*, in which a discerning novelist is expected to penetrate these crimes' hidden meanings. However, in spite of Mr. Capote's interesting research, his five years of personal interviews with detectives and people in the area and with the two murderers, Richard Hickock and Perry Smith, in prison (reported verbatim), what new personality motivations have been revealed? What factors which the nondramatized trial

court records did not indicate?

By weaving in and out of the minds of the two deprived ex-prison mates, Dick and Perry, and by his study of their behavior and environments—as well as by analyses of their hated-envied enemy victims, the respected Methodist Clutters (preceding and during the murders, and in the murderers' cases, during the five years until their hangings on April 14, 1965)—Capote produces a masterly crime tale. Nevertheless, the underlying behavior patterns which led to murder (though such patterns have only recently resulted in major crimes) researched here, are routine in real life and in fiction. Two lower-middle-class, nonskilled, unexceptional (except in an early-induced disregard for human life, in Perry) young men with no real chance for what they believe to be, and in fact is widely held to be, 'better living' (in reality, 'easy living'), resort to violence—i.e., murder. Typically, the two men's relations (Dick, male, brutal, seducer of teen-age girls; and his admirer, the more 'sensitive' Perry, a guitar-player, lover of recondite words, his legs stunted in an accident—and his petty-thief prison-priest friend who sees in him an artistic type superior to middle-class restraint in his treasure-hunting dreams) have homo-sexual implications.

A direct nonfiction investigation by an expert delving into the murders and into the murderers' minds, might have been of higher interest than a novelist's re-creation of the drama of personality and conflict. Certainly, the environmental and psychic elements in the U.S.A., which now lead persons of such well-known types, not (as in the recent past) to petty crime, drink and drugs, but to murder, needs trained research.

With all the extensive investigation and vivid detail—to this reviewer—no new elements have been added by Capote; and *IN COLD BLOOD*, an 'innovation' in crime reportage and/or in the crime novel, is certainly not a new kind of 'serious'

novel.

Norma Crandall

A POET AND CRITIC TRANSLATES

WHEN A POET TRANSLATES, HE LOOKS TO THE ORIGINAL WITH A CRITICAL EYE; AND THIS, BARRISS MILLS MANAGES IN A SPECIAL WAY: HE CHOOSES WISELY HIS MASTER COPY. SO HE BEGAN: FIRST, WITH THAT WRY POET, THEOKRITOS, IN AN EARLIER PURDUE UNIVERSITY STUDIES OF THE IDYLLS; THEN, TO CATULLUS (THE CARMINA OF CATULLUS—\$4.95— PURDUE U.S.), but a few centuries' step, and perhaps recreates the Greek landscape and language; and now, well along with Martial. He then plans to translate in modern verse that tired GREEK ANTHOLOGY.

What Mills manages is to find poets closest to the modern temper, and particularly to his own. His method is simple:

My own strategy has been, first, to translate as literally as possible, with special regard for the connotations of the Latin and the sequences and juxtapositions of ideas and images, and then to shape the results into idiomatic English having some rhythmic value . . . that it reflect as honestly as possible what seems to me the tone of the original. . . .

How well he succeeds in his aim is summarized in a letter from Dr. Stella Lange, Professor of Classics, Saint Mary's College, Notre Dame, Ind. In this perceptive evaluation of Oct. 8, 1965, Miss Lange finds the translation 'very accurate, as well as contemporary and idiomatic' — which she attributes to his use of 'free verse,' the best medium for rendering Greek or Latin. She agrees with Mills that he has caught the spirit better in some than in others, differing in viewpoint only in that she believes no one ought to try *ODI ET AMO* (carmina 85). Further, she feels the imitation of Sappho (51) as well as the direct love poem to Lesbia (5) are less successful because of the flatness of the prosaic rendering.

The difficulty with a scholar's view often is that the original cannot be transposed, translated or transliterated

without more loss than gain. Miss Lange does not believe this of Mills' CATULLUS, and she markedly praises the handling of the hendecasyllables, 'especially the satiric ones. I think he does surprisingly well even with the HYMN TO DIANA (34) and the first EPITHALAMIUM (61). . . . They are both in simple metre and the short lines of the original.

'But, I repeat, the translation is in general very accurate as well as fluent,' she closes. Her comment rounds out Mills' view that 'there will never be a "final" translation of Catullus, or anybody else.' But that is my justification for having undertaken another one.' The inclusion of the original Latin for some of the more profound and difficult passages allows the reader to test this skill; and the addition of Iola Mills' sketches accentuates the land- and seascape, the tone and feeling of Catullus.

Too, the introductory essay clearly sets forth the 'romantic' nature of the original, the personal and satiric lyric which is always disciplined no matter how ecstatic. But most important — and the reason Louis Zukofsky's transrendering of the CARMINA fails — is that Mills' version is readable, immediate, and speaks to our times: love gone wrong, nature not a consoler . . . friends who 'aren't.' Mills says: 'He chooses to live and write his poems in that busy center of all the ambiguous activity of his time, quarreling with his enemies, showering love or good-natured abuse on his friends, and pursuing his elusive Lesbia.' And he concludes : Reality is not forced into conformity with his own ideal of love and loyalty; he sees clearly enough what the world is like, and what people are like. But neither is that ideal sacrificed to reality, in pessimism and despair. Through humor and the double consciousness, both worlds exist, side by side, playing upon one another with an almost inexhaustible energy and freshness. Life is worth living, on its own dubious terms, because loyalty and charity are still possible, however rarely they may be attained. And poetry is

worth writing, on similar terms. We have warrant for that in the excitement we must always feel in reading the *CARMINA*. And Barriss Mills' translation carries this to us, just as his own poems celebrate the ancient's view. William Tillson

SEVEN

In front of my house a flower grows a cabbage in the trench
a girl's white body rolls in my arms

I have no house Christopher Perret

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HUMAN VOICE

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