

# THE YOUNG HATE US {1}: CAN POETRY BE MATTER?

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(BRIEFER) HISTORY OF THE PAGE.

White space of the page as mimetic, abstract or temporal. Pages bury easily under text, if there's a lot of it. Prose as the means of textual reification. Prose means. Reification.

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We've Been Contemporaries For 140 Years (And You Don't Even Know My Name), or, A (Brief) History Of The Contemporary Page.

History Of The Activated Page. Poetry not as something on it but significantly about it.

"When the blank space signifies, the page is activated. The page is now poet's white bedding or open field. Field of action."

Mallarmé activates the blanks, creates the page as an arena for action, the typewriter creates the page-as-grid which creates the page of much concrete poetry (poetry of the page *par excellence*), Olson takes the gridded typewriter page as a notational base for the page as vocal/mental score, post-Olson 'Nam-era poetics then make the blank of the page again a silence infrangible-upon by the vicious Real which poets are no longer trying to keep out of the poem. The non-poetic noise of the social the environment the crowd *crowd in* or *crowd out* and become indistinguishable from the poetic, much the way that, say, prose created the fogs of London.

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What one does, then, when one is drawing one's poetry, is that one engages the problem of art, not the problem of one's art, as far as one can, through a process of diagnostic attrition. Especially *agnostic*. Not the production biography of what if I were to write [ an/a ]? Address oneself to the problem not of one's art, but of one art.

Electrical feedback loops & short circuits provide light and info. Imperfectly synonymous terms: *recursive questioning* and/or ... *negative iteration*. The problem for poets now is that they can do anything they want to do. Principle of Plenitude. Crisis of Plenitude. No such thing as writer's block.

Recursive questioning or negative iteration: feedback loops consuming the feedback as they turn. Block out a sequence of refusals - negate, eliminate - determine what the work *will not* do, manoeuvre it towards its final form.

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Proposing the iron rigours of Great Poetry as afternoon days at the Rocky Balboa Masterworks Gym; the totally pumped steroidal bottom-line economics of Great Art.

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Bad poetry vs Good poetry. In a time when most marks are for coiffe, in a time when armpit deodorant is an obligation, in a time when dinosaurs walk the earth, when accountants run universal edification factories, clean copy is mistaken for good writing, and a certain lack of tidiness looks stylish.

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Poets as sales managers. "Do it well enough and you get to work in the New York office. Do it perfectly 20 years later and there might be some vending machines for you to re-stock in East St Louis." (A. Peter)

Visual poets. "I think we should all produce work with the urgency of outsider artists, panting and jerking off to our kinky private obsessions. Sophistication is conformist, deadening. Let's get rid of it." (D. Bellamy)

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Crowd = numbers and statistics  
Community = real human relations

Who Addresses the Crowd Speaks to No Community.

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Don't mind if I. "Capitalism begins when you open the dictionary"  
(S. McCaffery)

Meaning is commerce, they say. Meaning is always on sale. Meaning is our product, we mean. We are full of it. We are words. Meaning is our business, and business is slow. We mean it. Yes, poets trade in meaning and affect, as painters trade in objects.

A trades grammar: Painters' products are referred-to using the countable *a*. Yes, that's a real Signac. Certainly, that looks like a Motherwell. A Webb.

Product of poets is an uncountable significance, an effusion, a puss, a creamcheese, a foie gras from the poet's metrically disciplined guts. The poet is, by this grammar, a paste-maker.

Production-line intestinal poetics. Daily poem. Pasta knowledge milk cheese garbage news research.

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All the issues. Every question ever asked by any poet, good, bad, forgotten, stupid, fish, irrelevant, French, yellow, rotten. Gives blush to cold cheek. Every issue at issue. Meaning *tissue*. O, you mean palimpsest: you.

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It might be even simpler.

Poetry might just be language, which is:  
vocabulary  
plus  
a set of rules to run it through  
which equals  
language  
which equals  
poetry  
which makes them

indistinguishable  
and makes

\*

An object rendered aesthetic is functionally no different than a work of art,  
someone said. Someone coughed. Some him at his watch but it wasn't in his  
language.

*Happy Birthday.* I stuff thee full of such watches.

Language looked at with a certain misrecognition ----->poetry.

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Every and word and was and once and a and poem and. Every word was  
once sad.

You and can and tear and something and apart and by and pinning and it  
and together and.

What and you and do and not and understand and you and do and not and  
possess and.

Literature and as and a and total and social and process and.

Can and modernism and eventually and become and antiquity and.

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Tradition As Delta.

Axis of Ambiguity  
Axis of Authenticity  
Black Hats  
White Hats  
Them  
Us

Good Guys  
Bad Guys  
The Moderns  
The Formalists  
Mainstream  
Slipstream  
Official  
Orificial  
Oppositional  
Insiders  
Outsiders

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Cultural afterlife as dollar store. Not about novelty.

For two cents, the use of arbitrary material restrictions in poetry forcefully condition new linguistic possibilities.

For three cents, production-side, material devices/determinants break habituated patterns of language-use.

For four cents, consumption-side, the formal restrictions can alter habituated patterns of cognition and emotion, patterning (inner) lives.

Buy One Get One Free: devices foreground the material conditioning of *structures of feeling*, the girders of the mega-bridge of meaning poetry-lovers daily negotiate, the nonarbitrary social effects of meaning-production.

Arial-shot: "Capitalism restricts our life options, why shouldn't poetry, too?"  
(J. Derksen)

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(Changing the world, one subjectivity at a time.)

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Dawn of the Dead.  
Syllabus of the Dead.  
Day of the Dead.  
Moment of the Dead.  
Scrapbook of the Dead.  
Tax Credit of the Dead.  
Debts of a Dead Dad.  
Will of the Dead.  
Children of the Dead.

In other words, resniffing an old critical sweatsock, does the social moment of the poem freeze-frame at initial writing first publication first rejection slip or travel a yellow post-it note road of increasing recognition towards the undead media castle of dissemination, sporific ecstasy of diaspora, geoduckesque joy, achieving at last dreamed-of immortality as a culturally indelible transcendent cliché?

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And then there's the *bloody* (i.e. material) *problem of nothing*, which is nothing like saying nothing is problematic. Making nothing is a material problem; it matters. (A nihilist bass-line.)

A clear, material device as arbiter, or determinant, or a blatant address to material conditions of meaning-manufacture, grants *something* to a poetry of the nothing.

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Take your positions.

North of Heartbreak.  
North of Boston.  
North of Intention.  
North of South.  
North of the Beaufort Sea.  
North of the USA.

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A modest to high degree of alienation serves the poet.  
A modest to high degree of vagueness serves poetics.

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Even More Possibilities vs Psychedelic Absorptive Plurality:  
poem as hand-grenade

head-grenade prickly pear  
human document  
humument  
notation of mind's movements  
testament  
testimony  
witness statement  
rearticulation  
dearticulation  
description  
de-description (V. Sera)  
trinket  
puzzle  
score of voice  
yawp  
inkmarks  
pixels  
chart of the changing weathers of temperament  
advance of the broken arm.

poem in

funerary toast.

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*verse form.*

*nonce form.*

*phatic form.*

*Phatic form* is something I just invented. This is what *phatic form* is. It's not *nonce form*, nor nerdification-of classic venerated now inconsequent except in *détournement verse form*. *Phatic form* describes the many open



quote, “poems”, close quote, that stand in for poems, just as prose may stand in for news among advertisements, may be ads for news not present; i.e. sign *News!* without having anything news. Similarly *phatic form* poetry represents Poetry. Its main order of signification is Look at Me I Am A Poem Keeping the Poetical Soulfires Burning. Only duty of a *phatic form* poem is to say POEM as often as possible without saying “poem” too often because that would be meta, or harsh the mellow. Whole books, whole careers, whole schools wheeze POEM dust.

*phatic oeuvre.*

See also *lyric floater.*

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What? A. Safe. Way. To? Write!

In an age of accumulation by dispossession, of neoliberal terror, of ransack and pillage. Of apocalyptic horizons.

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If *truth* is salmonella rye a culture of accountants, business people, customs officials, micro managers, metre maids, economic fundamentalists it’s because tables of cultural know-know demand content to fill the forms and the distributors await product. Cultural placement of things is pre-directed at its inspection before the product is shipped off to enter the culture, which means, of course, when crossing the frontier from production-side to consumption-side certain duties apply.

Duties: a poem must, a poem must also, a poem must then, a poem has to not only show what a war is like but show the conviction of death.

A poem must work for a living.

A poem must also be valid.

A poem must then speak for itself.

A poem has to be a poem.

A poem needs to move fast.

A poem needs to include a man’s contradictions.

A poem should be palpable and mute.

A poem must have the properties we know poems to possess.

A poem should be but not be mean.  
A poem should palpitate.  
A poem has to have enough money for a train ticket.  
A poem has to go where it will.  
A poem must sing out of itself and carry magic.

A poem must make its own world and therefore its own world trade organisation and therefore maintain low international labour standards in order to keep cultural economy in boom *and/or* avert market collapse.

The right truck carries the right goods along the right track. The eager truth officer carries the right instruments - necessitating itemisation, listing, fact-finding, check-listing of must have poetic qualities: 100% AUTHENTIC.

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If you know what the poet's job is you should ask who the poet's boss is.

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Writing was not implicit in language, writing was implicit in *mark-making*; the capacity of one substance to alter the surface of another. The toddler who flings Spaghetti-Os at the white wall is performing a primary act of writing. Writing is graphemic. Writing is not language. Writing came first.

Did ancient poetry-lovers really get it together to build Stonehenge before they discovered that gull shit sticks to boulders, that berry juice stains fingers?

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The problem of intelligence is what people have, how to use what people have. Intelligence, will, power. A fiercely demanding discraft of universe makes us will-powerful in intelligence-use.

Intellect as sausage machine - *literaturwurst* (D. Roth).

Our defined problem being : intelligence, use of. Intelligence, application

of. Appetite. Intelligence as trash-compactor. Solid cubes of impeccable correctness, stable in relation to the facts of the world, "the world" a square frame the cube fits through to plop back into The Real World.

The problem, also, of intelligence as lawnmower. Appearance of process + result = copious clippings unprocessed but well gone-over. Some minds are as three lawnmowers roaring at once on three different terraces.

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Always just past what's masterable, just past what's knowable therefore exchangeable. Always wire the poem to make your own brain explode. Confound mastery as you acquire it. Learn more than you can. Cram. Outwit yourself. Take the rational principles of a financialised daily life many air miles too far.

Burst the pipes of everyday reason.

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incomprehensibility ≠ absurdity  
ambiguity ≠ lack of commitment

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IN: Yeah, sure, all that - but can you light a match?

OUT: I have in the past, and operate under the assumption that I could again if called to.

IN: The plastic cigarette lighter is to gradeschool arson as the pocket calculator is to gradeschool arithmetic.

OUT: But a single, well placed match could be forever.

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Art only remains interesting as long as the possibility remains that all artists are quacks.

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Belief in the value of the work of art (i.e. the poem) is part of the full reality of the work of art (P. Bourdieu). This is what art functionally is: a system of value and valuation. No further slimy essence. Poetry is and can only be texts that are read as poetry, or weird splooges of ink viewed as traces of poetry's passage. Quality? None. Only value.

"Belief in *quality as essence of or as properties of*, lingers in precisely the same way that a residual superstition always lingers in atheists."

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"Genre" isn't the issue, except the poetic risks becoming merely *the operations of genre* when readers' and writers' fulfilled expectations are too specific. When the poetic experience, the particular magic of poetry, the poetry buzz, yellow mellow whatsoever, is too recognisable - if not articulable - poets start writing Poetry. Readers then come to expect a certain kind of bump from it and believe there's an *it* to bump. Poetry becomes: Meet Me At The Genre.

Poetry-readers should not be enticed to recognise the poetic so easily. When they do, poetry becomes one of many fine luxury goods - organic red wine or unsweetened apricot jam. Poetry loses its criticality, loses its vital otherness. Loses social pertinence. Loses its power.

Might as well take the copper wiring and the 60W lightbulbs, this place is going to be torn down anyway.

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Mere discourse? Mere spectacle? Mere affect? No: the bricks must meet the karate fist.

"You can crush us, you can bruise us, you can Guattari and Deleuze us but oh no: history." (P. Simonon)

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Poetry now as a triangulation of *music* and *contemporary art* and *social critique*.

*Music* not so much as sound, but as structure, architecture and temporality.

*Contemporary art* not so much as visuality, but as concept, practice, mood, and value.

*Social critique* as the core of any significant poetics today.

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Poetry against metaphor. Metaphor is: let's make dividends in the boom economy of our moist embraces. Visual poetry. Against metaphor. Against description.

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Get (the) Real, Schools of Poetics: A Relational Diagram.

Reality in poem.

Reality of poem.

Reality. | Poem.

Reality-poem.

Reality—> poem.

Reality, poem.

Reality/poem.

Reality. Poem.

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"It's beautiful, but where are you going to put it?" (J. Cage's mom.)

Dr Kate Gorey, Department of English Department of Poetry Department of Drama Department of Want Ads. All contingent, impermanent, convenient, sociological fictions. Fictions unrelated to the structuralist /

formalist character of mark making. Of writing. Transdisciplinary writing and visual writing jettison institutional suitcases full of lead and feathers.

What except habit could make [ it ] not poetry? English 101? Suitcases.

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Psychedelic. Cementitious.

Visual poetry, unhooked from the instrumentality of design or the discursive histories of contemporary art. Most visual poets aren't making images, they're making visually over-coded texts that push the student loan debt Poetry Master back into pre-school.

**A. B. C. D. E. F. G. H. I. J. K. L. M. N. O. P. Q. R. S. T. U. V. X. Y. Z.**

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The needs of art and poetry now: no return to disciplinary boundary, or generic specificity, or media purity. Now open poetry to basic questions that affect all communication, and (therefore) all art-making.

“What appears as eclectic from one point of view can be seen as rigorously logical from another... practice is not defined in relation to a given medium ... but rather in relation to the logical operations on a set of cultural terms, for which any medium - photography, books, lines on walls, mirrors, or sculpture itself - might be used.” (R. Krauss)