

SNOWDEN

By the power
of complete non attachment
the frog floats
-Jaso

It doesn't take drive, strength, or determination. Poetry opens one's soul to thoughts and actions, odes and fragments, mechanisms of word and image, reason and unreason, archives in notebooks, free play, macro and microscripts, disjecta and essential histories, to working that comes like breathing. Perhaps it is a biological and metabolic strength determined in the drive of one's actual heart, but it has little to do with my conceived intent – the poem doesn't seem to care whether I'm determined to call it out or not, it waits for the poet to hear it, to assist in its appearance; the particular form of attention that, lying in ruins, while remembering the future life it will temporarily inhabit and house, a person can be.

A poem is how to practice time, finding the variant grooves, the feel unfolded before my eyes and ears. Akin to Larry Eigner's "the / constant ephemerals," between thinking and listening. Thoreau's breeze come through an oak still wearing its dry leaves, nothing either good or bad. A material, hybrid, incomplete, mutable, alterable form in infinite gradation.

In a community of blind people systems begin to break down: toilets back up, food deliveries become sporadic; there is no medical treatment for the sick and no proper way to bury the dead. Inevitably, social conventions begin to crumble as well, with one group of blind people taking control of the dwindling food supply and using it to exploit the others. Through it all, one does one's best to protect one's little band of blind charges, eventually leading them back into the horribly changed landscape of the city.

People learn to live in inexpressible filth, they commit acts of both unspeakable violence and amazing generosity that would have been unimaginable to them before their blindness. The very structure of society itself alters to suit the circumstances as once-civilized, urban dwellers become ragged nomads traveling by touch from building to building in search of food in a hell where those who went blind in the streets can never find their homes again, where people are reduced to eating chickens raw and packs of dogs roam the excrement-covered sidewalks scavenging from corpses.

There is nothing either good or bad, but thinking makes it so.

The air around the world has recently been declared to be as carcinogenic as second hand smoke. Sometimes the poem descends in pain.

It has a main beam that peaks when exactly on the source and falls off to smaller intensities more or less symmetrically on either side as the beam points further away from the source. The shape of this main beam for the portion where the intensity goes from 100% of the peak down to a bit below 50% of the peak (50% of the peak = half power) can be represented quite well by a Gaussian curve (also known as a normal curve or a bell-shaped curve) or almost as well by the function $(\sin(x)/x)^2$. When we go well below 50% of the

peak intensity, and especially in the range of 10% and below, there is a significant departure from the normal curve.

Spicer's radio shows minor beams (i.e., bumps in intensity) on both sides of the main beam which tend to be more or less symmetrical from one side to the other. The first of these bumps on each side tends to be the highest, with subsequent ones getting smaller the further out we go. These "bumps" on the main beam are called sidelobes (meaning minor lobes off to the side of the main lobe or main beam of the poem).

Oceans provide half of the oxygen we breathe, but overfishing, climate change and pollution are killing off our planet's spring of life.

Augmented reality focuses the meaningless manufacturer's predatory codification of language and images without the reader's actual participation. Texting scandals know little of the engineering behind the reader's inhibitions that selects what's important. No reader is cyber ready, or is meant to be.

Life would be meaningless without the reader.

I take poetry, which I do not hate, seriously and I practice it with integrity. I have not succumbed to MFA educational fads. I have not pandered and I have not bent to the selfish aims of a privileged few. If an idea is not in the interests of poetry as a whole, I have not practiced nor supported it. This, in turn, has made me be a consistent public critic of the ideological and market driven poetics and policies coming out of MFA programs and affiliated cultural institutions implemented by privileged hand-picked boards and celebrity judges. I don't expect such boards to deliver artistic judgements of merit and value any more than I expect them to practice fiscal responsibility or competent educational management.

On the eastern edge of Grand Canyon is a place known as the Confluence, where the Colorado and Little Colorado rivers merge into one. It is a beautiful and sacred area ~ as well as the potential site of a riverside retail and food complex complete with a gondola tramway.

"It is my church, it is where I say my prayers. It is where I give my offerings. It's where I commune with the holy ones, the gods that walk along the canyon," said Renae Yellowhorse, a spokesperson for Save the Confluence, a collective of Navajo families and supporters.

if I were to continue all day

clearer cut

people creating their own genders

not genres

to keep them from falling

eat my millet cornbread and

steamed beet

resist the scant remains

pass on
something to be consumed
without gluttony
can't afford that luxury
socks, underwear, velvet buttons
oiliness
near what pine trees?
the brown and red ivy

Sometimes the poem ascends from one side to the other.

don't woo editors and publishers
tonic and gin ushers
canned goods usurers
sure deeds of cannibals
their gods
flame of the floating
ballistics cannery
sure-shots heir
doggone lame free –
leaders ornery
hickory
hot balls

You and the confluence of other persons are the same person. Those who do not move, do not notice their chains. All the wonderful things that their body, mind and environment have to offer pass along the inherent antagonisms made for the opposite side of confinement, the getaway, the vicissitudes of the road, the wan bliss on the rim no monopolies may enter into. The American consumer dreams the virtuosity of the most peculiar history while art called “the real McCoy” is learned on the bodies of the poor.

The poem becomes the transformation of a work of art into life. Life's resilience in the face of mortality is a perpetual loop of possibilities. You would do well to pause and pay attention to it while you can.

sound mowers stone
shifts the point of the pen in its light

sends spill into each
cubicle shift of hours
a poem composed of
listen inside each
molecule each poor person's
revenue
particles of dust glint
in the sunlight
thumb of cross purposes
devourer of trees
a diary of time spent
sprawled on the floor
that extension cord over there
could survive
rib cage aches beneath

I would prefer to continue without stopping, to keep the listening ongoing in my thought, question when to break the words as I put fingers onto the keyboard. Decisions can't be made, aren't comparable to anything else. The choices I do make move the world out of my mind, its aberrations of sight and sense, the beautiful shape that interconnectedness upon which one might lounge.

Hell allows angels all the forms of the pleasures of speaking, softly, rapidly, screaming, murmuring, psalmodizing in an incredible variety of poetic breaths. Others murder ants, cure of ways warning: there is not enough flow after the fall. Melancholy standards ensue; the water stays in the pool too long.

Improvisations On A Sentence By Poe

"Indefiniteness is an element of the true music."
The grand concord of what
Does not stoop to definition. The seagull
Alone on the pier cawing its head off
Over no fish, no other seagull,
No ocean. As absolutely devoid of meaning
As a French horn.
It is not even an orchestra. Concord
Alone on a pier. The grand concord of what
Does not stoop to definition. No fish
No other seagull, no ocean—the true
Music.

Jack Spicer, *A Book of Music* (1958)

At present our artists prefer borrowed vessels and feeble imitation of ready-made alien forms. If their way is not always a very reputable one, it is at any rate easy, inexpensive and familiar. Because for them literary form is not truly alive. But what is this form-in-the-air worth? The end is revealed even before it has begun. The world in my heart shall rule over me – all takes place along the skin and in my mouth. It says nothing yet brings something. It is not up to you to choose it.

Apparently, “saying everything,” Walter Benjamin noted, is meant above all to destroy what has been said; or rather, once it has been destroyed, to turn it into an object. There are those who can voluntarily emit from their anus a variety of sounds without any unpleasant odor, to the effect that they appear to be singing from that region. There is nothing that would enable me to demonstrate how this is possible. Everyone is simply bending himself or herself between jobs and vocations impersonated by a walk-on actor whose arrogance is today the primary quality that the market demands from each person.

Why would a poet brand and sell himself or herself (i.e., be ruled by commercial values and competitive individualism, “what’s in it for me” draped over body and work in displays meant to displace the strengths drawn from inner resources of commonwealth citizenship) along with everything else?

The urine of the soul leaves a series of signs or traces. There is nothing either good or bad? Public squalor in the midst of private affluence, but thinking makes it so. What’s above may be *similar* to what’s below, but not being able or not wanting to tell the difference is to be either ignorant or immoral. That commercial thought may not be really explicit in people’s minds, but people act as though it were a sort of presupposition – it’s a typical masculine stupidity versus techniques of learning.

The problem is not new. Leo Tolstoy referred to it when he wrote: “I sit on a man’s back, choking him, and making him carry me, and yet assure myself and others that I am very sorry for him and wish to ease his lot by any means possible, except getting off his back.” The bigger the cushion the implicate order implies, the easier the pushing. Your full being is realized only in that participation. Everything moves, but thinking makes it so. You are either on the way up or on the way down. That’s not all. “Persons are love’s world,” says Emerson. Your next purchase in Ladies, Men’s or Children’s apparel overruns every partition. The world may be as sweet and sour as the plum; Mazel-Tov on your independence.

creak of pulleys hauling cement
from the street below
Giancarlo
the beautiful shape upon
which one might lounge
rock of alleys awning
meant rumor
treats hello joined angular
happenstance pummel

watches onerous weight
languor
cure of ways warning
others murder ants
hell allows angels to eat
melancholy standards
ensue ape
eight raspberry cheese
hatches liquor
warm urinal

Samuel Beckett, seventy-eight years ago, on the Irish modernist poet Denis Devlin: “The time is perhaps not altogether too green for the vile suggestion that art has nothing to do with clarity, does not dabble in the clear and does not make clear, any more than the light of day (or night) makes the subsolar, -lunar and -stellar excrement. Art is the sun, moon and stars of the mind, the whole mind. And the monacodologists who think of it in terms of enlightenment are what Nashe, surprised by a cordial humour, called the Harveys, ‘the sarpego and sciatica of the Seven Liberall Sciences.’”

Art is split open and pierced with two long slender rods, upon which it is suspended across the mouth of the pits, and turned from side to side till it is thoroughly broiled. The hickory tree gives, it is said, a much stronger heat than coals, and when completely kindled is almost without smoke. It doesn’t take drive, strength, or determination. It is the undeciphered part of human beings. It is only after a while that we can start and try to put words on it. “The ground under your feet is discolored by oil, and all the wagons, cars, implements, machinery, buildings, and the men, of course, are splotted and spotted with it. There seems to be no escape. The very air is full of smoke and oil” (Theodore Dreiser).

“There is nothing either good or bad, but thinking makes it so” (Shakespeare). In the making and appreciation of art human survival is married inextricably to the welfare of innumerable species of animal, insect, and plant. In his brilliant book *On Dialogue*, David Bohm writes: “Almost everything around us has been determined by thought – all the buildings, factories, farms, roads, schools, nations, science, technology, religion – whatever you care to mention... The point is: thought produces results, but thought says it didn’t do it. And that is a problem.”

Much thinking and too much art receives its impressions from a chloroformed world. The whole thing, from beginning to end, takes place in a spellbound backwash. But let us not be too hard on these artists, they are studying to be professors. Employed (when not enslaved) on a brutal ship, surely and blindly traveling through the interstellar coal sacks of its firmament in genesis, the fact of the matter is, we do not trust them. And why not? Signature samples used to facilitate commercial transactions is “part of the unstoppable drifting of political power toward governmentality,” to quote Giorgio Agamben. That, my friends or enemies, coincides with the social mask which guarantees recognition in the static lifelessness of

unrelieved viciousness, ala the university in ruins and Donald Trump's campaign for the presidency of a nation in which the plots of multiple popular and commercially successful entertainments (i.e., shows renewed for one or more seasons) tongue-in-cheek describe a post-apocalyptic and fragmented United States ruled by diverse (or not diverse at all) cadavers of the oligarchic class operative due to "the limits and the boundaries that separate (and at the same time hold together) the high and the low."

They have broken their hearts into parts

They have broken the parts into parts

That are nearly not hearts but my art

Of shattered dreams

Defending my devoutness

My hapless hope and my shame

My sandwiches, my spoons

My hairline, my beeline,

My everyday assumptions

I wonder why my dream feels like a person's scream

Making a beeline for a partial heart

Stymied by recent proposals for death-defying scientific

Economic injunctions

A long line of traitors
That looks like a beeline of incendiary marchers
Located above the neckline

I can't think anymore

I don't know anything
I'm always crying for help from my Daddy
Who doesn't appear except as wind twisting treetops
Whipping, weightless, famished

I don't care about the paycheck
The partial breakneck stutter
Goes beyond the personal, the inimical
Yet I am devoted to money
Looking around, I can't see these
Parts anymore – I see long money
Short money, the money of seasons, reasons
And hearts

Norman Fischer & Andrew Levy

All that we now consider “epic” in contemporary poetry, in poems and in the MFA business of poetry, is shot full of holes, nothing will remain of it but its propaganda. At the same time, the dead bodies from which poetry grows are not bankrupt but provide the most essential of feedback: an actual diversity of values free of the neoliberal economizing of potential. Long live the dead.

Theodor Adorno's *melancholy science*, which he relates to "the teaching of the good life" in *Minima Moralia – Reflections from Damaged Life*, philosophizes, "Domination is propagated by the dominated." Today, democracy's avant-garde advocates an egalitarian function in society, yet the rising dominion of neoliberal ideology institutionalized within it and other discourses diverges from the vision of the functional advocates and dysfunctional surrogates because it promotes consumerism in lieu of participatory democracy and legitimates the world view of the upper strata of society to the exclusion of alternative perspectives, and communities. A disproportionately large share of whom are African American, Asian, Hispanic, and Pacific Islander; and the multitude of first-generation college students in the United States. The class inequalities associated with consumerism, its social reproduction, is a discursive phenomenon.

As my friend Thom Donovan has written me, regarding a different matter, "With the proper arrangement, words may make things happen simply by their being together." They are not dead but in between art and life. "This is something with which I have absolutely nothing to do, something with which and by which I cannot in any way identify myself or take distance from: naked life, a purely biological datum" (Agamben).

Morton Feldman, reflecting upon the poetry of his friend, Frank O'Hara, wrote, "Who but the dead know what it means to be alive?" The sustainability of class inequalities is not a reasoned one. In 1957, Beckett wrote, "My work is a matter of fundamental sounds (no joke intended) made as fully as possible, and I accept responsibility for nothing else." You cannot grasp poetry unless you stumble over it.

There is nothing else. There is nothing either new or old, but thinking makes it so. The issueless predicament of existence is the beginning of the poem. In other words, the professionalization of poetry cannot withstand the retention of philosophy, the fecundity of the accidental, and the incomplete. Anyone who wants to move with the times is not allowed to be different.

Why are the writers of the left, so ideologically committed to democracy and participation, as oligarchic in their functioning as the self-consciously elitist and aristocratic writers of the right? Has no one noticed that those who are able to climb up the ladder will find ways to pull it up after them, or to selectively lower it down to allow their friends, allies and kin to scramble up? Those who adapt to new environments with the most agility and creativity, who try out novel ways of operating and get away with them, and sometimes are the most ethically challenged, are most rewarded with influence. "No matter how deep you go / there's not very much below the deceptive shimmer and glow / which is all for show..." Their addiction craves the data of market share. What's left exiles the remainder "into such enormous night / skies have no room for it" (Tennessee Williams, "The Diving Bell").

There is one more thing. And it comes from fellow Hoosier, Kurt Vonnegut:

"I like the fine arts all right, but I doubt that they are any finer than a lot of other human games. And I deny most bitterly that persons claiming to love the fine arts are necessarily fine people. The emperor Nero was a patron of the arts. So was Herman Goering. So were so many of the American economic robber barons who cut the guts out of what was left of the American dream after the Civil War."

....

“You may have been told at the great institution of higher learning that the arts are good for everybody—or at any rate have no harmful side effects. That isn’t true. One of the principal uses of the arts in this and many other modern countries is to confuse the uneducated and the powerless and the poor.

I am talking about *expensive* arts now, tremendously official arts—and not the little tunes and poems and pictures and stories which the downtrodden select or create for their own amusement.

I am talking about the arts which are supported by dictators and social climbers and multimillionaires.”
....

“Dear Friends—I have told you that the arts often play an insidious part in class warfare. ...

I think you should devote your lives to creating something which this planet has never had. The planet will die, if it doesn’t get it now.

You must create an America people. There never has been one. You must create one now. This is a matter of life or death.”

Oh, hell. You must read Vonnegut’s entire *If This Isn’t Nice What Is? (Much) Expanded Second Edition: The Graduation Speeches and Other Words to Live By*.

Planet Earth is under siege. August brought historic flooding in Louisiana, record temperatures across the country, and, even though wildfire season just began, over 350 square miles of California have already been charred this year alone. The Obama administration continues to help the fossil fuel industry contribute more to the causes of climate change by auctioning off our public lands and waters for drilling, fracking, and mining, sometimes for as little as \$2 per acre.

What interests me here is a face, a figure, a human being, a destiny. Planet Earth? You must create a Planet Earth. There used to be one, but it was lost. No one ever saw her again.

You must create one now.

You may have a problem with police. Poetry is discovered after they move on.

You can change your course, or you can watch her be thoroughly consigned to oblivion in writings of conscience.

We think we know something, and we are grateful.

We do not.

-----Original Message-----

From: Betsy Turocy [mailto:memorial@familie-turck.de]

Sent: Thursday, September 8, 2016 11:26 PM

To: Myrtis Couty <andrew.levy@nyc.rr.com>

Subject: ng and una

Literally by "the sweat of his brow." Exactly so it was when the MS. "Life of Byron" was burned: it was by Moore, and not by the relatives of Byron, (neither was it by aid of friends,) the money he had received was returned to the publisher who had advanced it. "The glorious privilege of being independent" was, indeed, essential

Nipping small errors in the bud (as per the above message sent to the "wrong" addressee) is the essence of good practice in horticulture which restores signals to near perfection at every stage, fulfilling the poems ontology in reproduction so that it may be enjoyed sensually.

What we read are not merely letters and words, but patterns of magnetic flux reversals, a number of which may be necessary to constitute a single syllable. Hence, poetry is a plural interdimensional being. You have likely never encountered it, all at once, face to face.

An attempt to do so would be a foolish and selfish act. One would be incapable of preparing for or responding to the consequences of such an action. Mortals are not interdimensional beings (typically) and would have no ability to comprehend one. And second, it would be an irritable reaching after fact and reason made manifest within the consumerist ethos, a further (failed) iteration of the culture's colonization of experience and material for the delectation of the divisive, 3-dimensional, few. Such ambitions closely resemble the plots of the video game adventuress, Lara Croft: Tomb Raider.

The poems that are to make up my books are waiting like tired people on the doorstep of the house of my mind. They are unclothed. I need to be a tailor and make warm clothes of words for them. After which, they and their readers may enter imagined and alternate worlds.

For ten or fifteen minutes Mary sat on the stone beneath the tree in the orchard and thought of the attitude of the town toward herself and her father. "It should have drawn us together," she told herself, and wondered if the approach of death would do what the cloud that had for years hung over them had not done. It did not at the moment seem to her cruel that the figure of death was soon to visit her father. In a way Death had become for her and for the time a lovely and gracious figure intent upon good. The hand of death was to open the door out of her father's house and into life. With the cruelty of youth she thought first of the adventurous possibilities of the new life. . . .

■ Sherwood Anderson, "Unlighted Lamps"

We have not learned to accept the way things are.

To do so would be to decompose truth itself, and truly to denigrate thought. Distance is manifest in delicacy and fragility of thinking: "...ethics must be possible even in the extreme posthistorical threshold in

which Western humanity seems to be stranded with a feeling of both joy and horror” (Giorgio Agamben, “Identity without the Person”). Let no-one represent you.

Gaston Bachelard, in *Water and Dreams*, claims that, “the imagination is a sound effects technician, who must amplify or subdue. Once the imagination masters dynamic correspondences, the images *truly speak*.” Poetry teaches us to hear the vast multiplicity of our inner voices (many of which are not human) and to see the plurality of our inner worlds (most of which obey laws, physical and moral, quite other than those of our common universe). Bachelard, along with Paul Valéry’s claim that a poem is, “that prolonged hesitation between sound and sense,” reminds me of Hannah Weiner’s imagination in *SPOKE*, the great work of late twentieth-century American clairvoyant poetry. When one vocalizes a sound, one gives it to one’s own voice, in order to give it *its own voice*. In *SPOKE*, it is Weiner’s courtesy to spare the reader the embarrassment of believing herself cleverer than the imagination, or author. She understood that the whole is the false. In her poetry the world’s own capacity to give voice is founded on the capacity of voice to shape a being in the air. In *SPOKE*, such beings appear on Weiner’s forehead or on the “discovered PAGE” her gift of clairvoyance conjures forth in seeing and hearing words.

o silent being o prose continue I was a trouble shooter
backwards anyway so I didnt miss my Wednesday afternoon nap
but lay down in the grass my aunt has a different philosophy
myname several people think we’re about the weigh in scale
is absolutely comfort white pants perfect and and dont hold
dont scream
before September
yourself together attheend

(*SPOKE*, 84)

Sometimes the poem moves sideways, a lateral resource center or little history that emanates from the wrong note in the roots of one’s hair, leave-taking and sad eyes, summer rain fresh on hot limbs, absorber of all breaths, the source of need, crickets, the cold water of a running brook, the boiling water of the kitchen pot, newspaper headlines. Cribbing Devlin, “let me be always in this state of grace.”

Does how one interprets a poem’s ontology and social-cultural historical particulars (its form & content) change who the interpreter is? What does it mean to interpret a poem? Doesn’t the weight specific aspects of one component or another is extended privilege interests reflected, somehow, in the form and content of the poem that the reader identifies with? Is that a personal bias? One’s subjectivity? Is it sensibility, taste, everything that contributes to personality, and character? Whether or not one is employed, has shelter, has clothing and food? If one’s neighborhood is being shelled by one’s government or one of several militias?

When the very structure of society itself alters to suit the circumstances as once-civilized, urban dwellers become ragged nomads traveling from building to building in search of food in a hell where those in the streets can never find their homes again, does poetry matter? Will it keep you alive?

What's at stake in a poem is one's soul, an immaterial, hybrid, incomplete, mutable, alterable form capable of infinite gradations in feeling and intelligence. It lives only for the length of one's actual physical life, but it can be felt and recognized, sometimes, through the work one has made.

Hannah Weiner did not hold herself together at the end. She died sitting in bed, book on her lap, glasses on her nose, alone. Her writing holds together an imagined world unique to her reader's experience of it.

Poetry affects the brain's semantic networks, which govern how words and concepts are stored in relation to each other. Neuroscientists think that words and concepts related to each other are neurologically connected, and poetry seems to broaden the network that gets activated when we look at an image, or hear a sound. Under semantic competition accounts of lexical retrieval in production, words compete to be selected on the basis of their meanings, and words that are more closely related compete more. Words that are further apart in the semantic network would be less likely to compete as a function of their distance. Semantic distances between and within categories alter reaction times on semantic network activation. Interestingly, the plasma levels of poetry (i.e., physical changes in the blood and brain) decrease or increase depending on the half-life of the poetic language on the reader's mind. Hence, some researchers find the poem is simply the starting point, a springboard to imagination in body and soul.

Eventually, scientists suggest, the imagination becomes "trapped" in material existence, i.e., in a person's plasma levels. The task is to raise the level in the plasma to restore the imagination as an alterable form. This process of mending seems akin, in my understanding, to the work of translation or the repair of manuscripts that have fallen into disrepair, or fragmentation. In a sense, the poem or "being" is fashioned by our ethical and poetic activity. It resonates with the paradoxical idea that the poem, like the person, comes only on the day after it has arrived.

We can only speculate over what an author meant, and how she was understood. For the time being, there are no certainties, not in one's immediate environment and not in the portion of the world that one knows. But what is this form-in-the-air worth? Poetry . . . is not the source of its own meaning. What we write is different from what we read. That is what *experimental* means, and what it is to be an experimental artist; as with improvising artists for whom composition, performance, and reading/listening are not separate realms of activity that have nothing to do with one another.

One of the most aspirational, ethical, and inspiring conceptions of experimentalism is articulated in George E. Lewis' authoritative, *A Power Stronger Than Itself – The AACM and American Experimental Music* (2008). To understand it, in its historical, musicological, philosophical, political, and sociological resonance one must read 599 pages, including the encyclopedic notes to the story Lewis weaves. I recommend the book to every poet on the planet, particularly American poets who wish to have a clearer understanding of the diversity of

ideas, people, and practices in their own culture's history. To be awake on a planet where at the present time "there are fifty million children who have been uprooted worldwide. Fifty million."

"Children make up a third of humanity. Yet, half of the refugees on the planet are children. When we hear politicians talk of 'refugees' with venom, keep in mind that one in two of those whom they pillory are children who have been thrust out of their lives of relative stability to lives of total uncertainty. Life on the run and in refugee camps will leave these children without the elements of human development – decent nutrition, shelter, education and leisure. They live lives at the edge, bare lives, lives of great distress and trauma. The world that is being produced is a world with large numbers of displaced people who have been denied social goods" (Vijay Prashad, author of 18 books, including *The Death of a Nation and the Future of the Arab Revolution*, University of California Press, 2016; *Alternet*, 9/20/16).

Experimentalism in the arts, as Lewis proposes, is not an abstract aestheticism divorced from a democratic commonwealth of free peoples and communities. Sadly, to this day, very few people are free.

The sun burns everyone, the words themselves, soft hands, but not equally. At the endpoint of industrialization, a lot of asses are getting burnt. You can't imagine the displacement.

The words themselves

The soft hand

Can you love the people and rule the land, yet remain unknown?

Do you want warm milk?

The quantum physical level?

With the decay
of each word, this departing

So that was love?

....

Why is it so many things turn to the right?

The theoretical world is going to shit the bed

but I suppose I should tell you we also have a
Land Rover

I'm afraid we're too late, and must prepare ourselves for
more invasions

....

URGENT NOTICE

Come out to vote on November 8th

Before you come to vote make sure you pay your

- parking tickets
- motor vehicle tickets
- overdue rent

AND MOST IMPORTANT ANY WARRANTS

Dr. Roslyn Fuller, research associate at Waterford Institute of Technology, reports that academia today is a “caste” system wherein traditional higher education is being unraveled, along with the public goods it once provided (Alternet; 9/20/16):

Amy Gutmann, president of the University of Pennsylvania, takes home over \$3 million a year – about 140 times what an adjunct teaching a back-breaking eight courses would earn. The average pay for public college presidents was \$428,000 in 2014. Some college sports coaches are paid as well, or even better: the 10 most highly paid college coaches in 2015 each earned more than Gutmann, with some bringing home more than \$7 million.

This wage gap is facilitated by severe limitations on the number of tenure-track positions – i.e. positions that come with more secure, long-term employment – that are offered to teaching staff. Like a bizarre game of musical chairs universities and colleges always need more teachers than they are prepared to offer long-term employment to. As a result, in an environment that is ostensibly about self-improvement, casual employment without the opportunity to advance has become the only option for many academics, while a small minority, who are able to literally and figuratively procure a chair are rewarded with pay packages that would, in some cases, have been viewed as absurdly generous only a few decades ago.

The first casualty would seem to be that non-tenure track staff are simply too exhausted from their heavy teaching loads to engage in any research at all. “We’ve figured out how to shut down intellectual vibrancy,” Aberle tells me, “It may not have been intentional, but it had the same effect as if it were. They are all struggling, so now they shut up. If you wanted to kill off intellectual life – left or right – this was the way to do it.”

“The more you speak out on average, the less chance you have of getting a tenured position,” Alex Kudera tells me, “There is a lot of hypocrisy surrounding the alleged free exchange of ideas. When you are working in education, you feel that you have to agree with everything that is being said, and you have to agree enthusiastically. It’s actually quite exhausting – more exhausting than the actual work.”

Is poetry as it is practiced today, experimental or otherwise, central to the meaning of a culture of resistance? Does it encourage forms of social consciousness via aesthetic communities that challenge the dominant ideology of racism, homophobia, anti-LGBT, of anti-environmentalism, denial of the science of climate change, anti-unionism, of elitist economic and political prejudice against working-class life, the impoverishment of educators and thereby of children's capacity to grow into healthy and intelligent adults, does it challenge education that claims to ameliorate class stratification but actually reinforces it, patriarchal assumptions about women's place in the dominant culture and within communities, the subversion of representative government and commonwealth citizenship as *the* crucial components in an egalitarian and inclusive democracy that works for everyone, employed and unemployed, rich and poor?

Snowden is being forced to live in exile and threatened with likely spending the rest of his life in prison if he ever comes back to the country he loves. Intelligence contractors, like Edward Snowden, are NOT protected by the Intelligence Community's whistleblower protections.

We must not do what is inevitable and irresistible. Are you writing poems about Parisian flowerpots in windowsills, espresso and warm croissants, your mother's brownies? Your grandfather's garden? If you are, good. How are you doing it, what's at stake? Compassionate simplicity? Compassionate resilience?

George Lipsitz, American Studies scholar, quoted on page 381 in Lewis' history of the AACM and black experimentalism, has said, "Struggles over meaning are inevitably struggles over resources."

Challenged and exhilarated by letting one's thought run further astream into what one does not know before, during, and after it is in the air or on the page, that while adjusting individual consciousness the truth-values of statements are of *central interest* to you, that sort of permission. Colin Kaepernick's protest tells us so much more than millions of poems manufactured in America today. Paraphrasing Steven Salaita, author of *Uncivil Rites: Palestine and the Limits of Academic Freedom*, no notion of poetry is viable if we don't explore how power functions through discourses of etiquette, propriety, and respectability.

To unsettle colleagues isn't to be a bad poet, citizen or an irredeemable quarterback, but to engage the potentialities of dissent granted in the Constitution of the United States. In "Six Ways to Unsettle Colleagues and Irritate Administrators," a painfully honest and useful article by Salaita at Jacobin Magazine, to irritate administrators "isn't to be hostile or dastardly, but to maintain a productive tension with management that either prevents or impedes the formation of a neoliberal consensus.... By unsettling one another, we inject creative and intellectual life into our relationships. We maintain a spirit of inquiry that values debate and analysis over discipline. We compel one another to identify the structures of power that govern our perceptions of bromides such as 'pragmatism' and the 'common good.'"

Handwork & mindwork come together.

Body/mind/spirit come into alignment. These things said over and over.

Tend to your business.

Andrew Levy, September 2016