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An abstract of
A dissertation submitted to the Faculty of the
James T. Laney School of Graduate Studies of Emory University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy in English
2016

Abstract

Sounding Print Culture, 1953-1968

By Lisa Chinn

The over-reliance on the eye as a central tool of analysis in the textual scholar's toolbox has left much of our literary history to stagnate in the dark corners of the archive. My project, "Sounding Print Culture, 1953-1968," brings together studies in print culture and sound studies, a subfield in media studies, so that we may *hear* the archive anew. My project argues that as forms of print technology changed, so too did a conception of the printed page as a strictly visual representation of the sonic experience of poetry. I argue that poetry published in—and the publishers of—little magazines after 1945 perceived the printed poem as a sonic experience. Because of this midcentury communal synesthesia, scholars have overlooked the importance of this fifteen-year period in twentieth-century literary history. Highlighting this history through a deeper investigation into print and sound technologies should change the way we read this era.

My work illuminates how in the post-war period, the little magazine (defined as a magazine with a small, coterie audience that published poetry, short stories, and essays) evolved into a distinctly fraught site of tension. On the one hand, the poetics published in the magazines I examine between 1953 and 1968 promote a sonicity that cannot be captured by the print medium, making the little magazine a site of a failed poetic ideology. On the other hand, the little magazines capture for scholars the tension between a medium that cannot fulfill an author's poetic promise and a poetics that necessitates a new medium. As such, this postwar period cultivated two distinct types of little magazine that attempted to capture a new sonic poetics. Mimeograph little magazines proliferated so much that the era is now termed the "mimeograph revolution," which were published alongside a highly stylized, intricately composed little magazine that would include seven-inch records inscribed with poetry, prose, and musical compositions. The tense interplay between the mimeographed and highly stylized little magazine shows the "identity crisis" of poetry that relied on print for dissemination, yet yearned for a sonic form.

“Sounding Print Culture, 1953-1968”

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I want to thank Craig Womack for his continued support and generous comments on all of my work. His continual guidance and intellectual support has been the cornerstone of my intellectual growth at Emory. Thank you, Craig, for the conversations, both academic and musical, that have guided this work.

Many thanks to committee members Walter Kalaidjian, Todd Cronan, and Kevin Young. Your continued, long-term conversations and collegial spirit with my work have made this journey richer than I could have ever imagined.

To the many mentors (you know who you are!) who have enriched my time at Emory: I have grown into a new depth and breadth of knowledge I never knew could exist.

To Ella and Nina: for your constant companionship. You will never know how much you helped make this journey possible.

To my parents, Jim and Sharon, for your love and constant support. You are a constant inspiration in how you raised your three daughters and how you've supported every one of our endeavors.

This dissertation is dedicated to the love of my life, Jacob Rump. You have always seen my potential long before I accomplish the seemingly unthinkable. Your constant support, unwavering steadfastness, and belief that the intellectual life is the best-lived life have been the inspiration for this dissertation and for the life we live together.

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Chapter 1

Against Ephemerality: What the Little Magazine Can Tell Us about Sound

In his 1995 seminal work *Picture Theory*, W.J.T Mitchell connected emerging discourses of visual culture to literary studies. Contemplating the future of scholarship in cultural and literary studies he predicts that the "problem of the twenty-first century is the problem of the image."[1] This visually and semiotically based problem has certainly found its way into twentieth-century scholarship. Since the problem of the image is a topic of myriad conference panels, journal articles, journals, and monographs, one would think that Mitchell's seminal work had been written yesterday. The institutional sedimentation of discourses of the image has made it a common trope in the humanities writ large. His prophecy, revealing the potency of studies of visual culture on twenty-first-century scholarship, has seemingly been fulfilled. The very prevalence of such discourse reveals the importance of the image in literary history.

But one wonders if studies of visual culture would have created such a dominant narrative of twentieth- and twenty-first century scholarship if not for the parallel emergence of studies in visual culture alongside studies in textual culture in the 1990s. Indeed, as W.J.T. Mitchell was writing his seminal work, Jerome McGann had already published *The Textual Condition*, which makes the case for analyzing the socio-cultural conditions out of which a text is created. In this monograph, McGann asserts the importance of textual writing and production (the *context* out of which a text is created) rather than the more common method of reading and interpretation of the text alone (a method expounded by the New Critics, giving the text autonomy from the context in which it was created). In other words, McGann privileges the physical and material artifacts that are often left out of reading and interpreting a text, and thus the text emerges out of a socio-cultural situation.[2] Mitchell, coming from an art historical background, responds to the death of the "linguistic turn" through an interpretation of contemporary culture as turning towards the "pictorial," a turning towards the visual representation. Thus, the "pictorial turn" has supplanted the "linguistic turn" in aesthetic and phenomenological terms.

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[1] Mitchell, WJT. *Picture Theory*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995. 2. Print.

Mitchell and McGann approach their material objects differently; however, the two have influenced analytical possibilities of the text, whether written or pictorial, into the twenty-first century. Visual studies may indeed be the problem for scholars of contemporary culture, literature, and media. In literary studies, scholars privilege the author whose works confront the image (for instance, William Blake), and in textual studies, the material object is analyzed through methods of visual exegesis: one goes to the archive to find a poem in multiple draft forms to provide a more thorough analysis of a poet's process.[3] The visual lends itself to academic research as a tangible, durable, concrete reality: the photo, the painting, the visual artwork are material objects that exist in space and time. They take up space in one's basement. They are preserved in archival acid-free boxes, awaiting the historian, the literary scholar, the archeologist to pluck them from obscurity. They "are epistemic objects; they are the recognizable sites and subjects of interpretation across the disciplines and beyond, evidential structures in the long human history of clues."[4] Visual media imparts durability through the march of time. But for whom is the image now a problem, given the almost over-determined interpretative moves that literary scholars have relied upon for two decades?

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[2] McGann, Jerome. *The Textual Condition*. Princeton: Princeton U P, 1991. Print.

[3] One could thank George Bornstein for his brilliant work *Material Modernisms: The Politics of the Page* (2006), which encourages the textual reading that I have loosely outlined above.

Theories of the visual after Mitchell and McGann often attend only to the visual without responding to the complex nexus of visual, verbal, and sonic elements that may construct or influence a text. And although Mitchell acknowledges that "all media are mixed media,"[5] he continually elides all but image and text as two interstices bound to one another, which limits the potential of a text like *Picture Theory*. But there is a difference between the *privileging* of vision and the *totality* of vision.[6] What is missing from literary analysis is a broader account of the material influences and their relation to poetic movements, communities, and historical moments. Studies of material and textual culture, in other words, have for long enough forgotten the power and primacy of sound, in all of its various forms, in literature.

There is a common narrative, promoted by visual and sonic scholars alike: the visual gives history and the archive stability; the sonic does not or cannot provide durable, stable, or tangible artifacts for scholarly analysis. But with the growth of multimedia in the twentieth century, archival and historical analysis is forced to confront the sonic through its reproduction. And, we can thank Jerome McGann for his methods by which the "sonic turn" has been made possible. For if he had not influenced scholarly discourse to examine the socio-cultural underpinnings of textual production (and reproduction, as I argue), then we would not have a way for understanding how sound, as reproduced and conceptualized, influenced twentieth-century material culture. Yet, the same scholars who influenced a move towards the visual have been necessary for understanding the "sonic turn" in media and literary studies today. The phonograph, film, and records may certainly provide the stability required for scholarly analysis. Yet, there are also objects within the traditional archive that provide a place where poetry and sound collide. What this chapter proposes, then, is to show the influence of the sonic—and its relation to the visual and material culture—in twentieth-century American literature.

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[4] Gitelman, Lisa. *Paper Knowledge: Toward a Media History of Documents.* Durham: Duke U P, 2014. 1. Print.
[5] Mitchell, WJT. *Picture Theory*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995. 5. Print.
[6] Sterne, Jonathan. *The Audible Past*. Durham: Duke U P, 2003. 4. Print.

This chapter will follow the history of American literature through a specific type of literary object that has seen substantial material analysis in literary circles: the little magazine. The little magazine is a specific medium of publication through which literature, especially poetry, has flourished in the twentieth century. The little magazine is a periodical defined by its low cost of operation, its distribution to a small, coterie audience (small print runs), and its avant-garde or experimental poetry and prose published and promoted in this particular print genre. Although no one definition truly captures the multivalences of the print medium, we may follow Ian Hamilton's capacious definition to ground the study of the publication form: "The little magazine is one which exists, indeed thrives, outside the usual business structure of magazine production and distribution; it is independent, amateur and idealistic—it doesn't (or, shall we say, feels that it shouldn't) need to print anything it doesn't want to print."[7] Such spirit of independence makes it a perfect literary medium for experimentation in twentieth-century culture and experimentation with multimedia because of its ties to the avant-garde.[8] Indeed, the little magazine is the birthplace of modernism: T.S. Eliot's *The Wasteland* was published in *The Dial*,[9] James Joyce's *Ulysses* was published incrementally in *The Little Review*,[10] and Marianne Moore and Ezra Pound were leaders in editing various little magazines throughout the twentieth century.[11] And while some poets have preferred publication by other means, William Carlos Williams professed that it "is something I have always fostered; for without it, I myself would have been early silenced. To me it is one magazine, not several. It is a continuous magazine, the only one I know with an absolute freedom of editorial policy and a succession of proprietorships that follows a democratic rule."[12] Williams's construction of the little magazine as one continuous whole tells us that, no matter the editorial intention of a particular little magazine, the form itself designates experimentation. Rather than claiming each individual little magazine as its own entity, Williams stresses the historical import of the medium itself. He also uses the voice as metaphor to speak to the little magazine's importance: the little magazine gave him a voice with liberating editorial policies that follow structurally from the form itself. The little magazine, as a form, allowed William Carlos Williams to voice a stable, connected, "tangible duration" for publishing poetry. The little magazine, then, is a form that has given a voice to the vanguard poets of the twentieth century and has flourished as a form for disseminating the twentieth-century avant-garde.

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[7] Hamilton, Ian. *The Little Magazines: A Study of Six Editors*. New York: Weidenfeld and Nicholson, 1976. 7-8. Print.

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[8] In Jed Rasula's brilliant piece "Contemporary Avant-Garde?" in *Lana Turner Journal*, Issue 7, he makes the claim that "when poetry has been functionally avant-garde, it's been part of a multimedia endeavor" (online).

[9] In *The Dial*, November 1922.

[10] In *The Little Review*, Vol. 4, No. 11, March 1918 to Vol. 7, No. 3, December 1920.

[11] There were many, but to name a few: Moore was editor of *The Dial*, and Pound edited *Poetry*, *Blast*, *The Egoist*, and *The Little Review*, among many other smaller-run magazines.

[12] Anderson*,* Elliott and *Kinzie*, Mary. *The* Little Magazine *in America: A Modern Documentary History*. Yonkers: Pushcart, 1978. 53. Print.

As the early twentieth-century little magazine has faired well in current studies of textual and print culture, the mid-century little magazine has not yet had the same fanfair. While the reasons for this paucity of scholarship on mid-century little magazine are complex and intertwined with copyright laws, the rise of modernism as a scholarly subject, and the accessibility of mid-century countercultural archives, one of the main reasons is that the poetry and poetics of sound which influence the mid-century magazine have not been fully fleshed out. In eliding the influence of sound (as mechanically reproduced, as conceptualized, and as a metaphor for the poetry in the little magazines themselves) in these texts, scholars have elided critical analysis of the mid-century little magazine altogether. This elision has been brought on by this emphasis on the visual that has created a particular reading of the text as inherently tied to the visual. The little magazine, as constructed through material culture has relied on discourses of the visual to make claims about the importance of the early twentieth century little magazine, an importance that is elided in mid-century little magazines because they do not follow the logic of the visual in material culture. It is easy to see how the little magazine has been informed by material that is visual in nature: we look at a physical object, a text, and see the ink on the page. We can physically see the binding, the materials used to construct the form. Why, then, do we need to *listen* to the text? And while I start with the material stuff of the little magazine, my emphasis throughout this dissertation remains on the sonic as the central material, metaphorical, and theoretical undercurrent that allows us to understand mid-century poetic communities. In the following pages, I describe the little magazine and its social material function in more detail.

I read the little magazine through the archival, theoretical, and, ultimately, historical situations that have prevented the mid-century magazine the same level of rigorous analysis of the early-century little magazines, ultimately arguing that the complex relationship between textual, material, and visual cultural studies have not, to this point, accounted for the little magazine's relationship to sound. This relationship is bound up in an archival ideology led by a notion of the "ephemeral text." The context of the "ephemeral text" is decoupled from the archival object itself. What I mean by this is that the archival object, the mid-century little magazine, described by collectors, curators, and archivists, is organized as a part of a set of documents known as "ephemera." As a consequence of this description, mid-century little magazines are organized and described as "ehpemera" in the very classification system used by archival institutions. This one-word descriptor has also been used in the discourse of sound. Thus, my underlying question in this chapter comes from this archival description and from academic conceptions of sound: what does it mean to describe both the little magazine and sound as "ephemeral"? How has this one-word description linked the little magazine to studies in sound, unbeknownst to either party? These questions are central to my argument that the mid-century little magazine has had little discussion in scholarly discourse because the very material conception is sonically based.

I start with a historical reading of the little magazine through the twentieth century to show how scholarly analysis has codified a particular reading of the little magazine's material and social contributions. While reading this history, my aim is to trouble the easy relationship between the visual, material, and social to show that the little magazine at mid-century functions as a sonic artifact in response to the editors' and poets' emphasis on sonic poetry. I start with the little magazine because, as Robert Scholes avers, "modernism started in the magazines."[13] But not only did modernism *start* in the magazines, the little magazines of the early twentieth century became the medium through which later experimental poetry movements were born, expounded upon, and developed. Thus, the little magazine became the literary medium most welcoming to experimentation, building literary communities along the way. And because sound studies is in its infancy in influencing literary studies, much work has yet to be done in constructing a coherent narrative, theory, or methodology for analyzing sound in literary material culture. My work, then, is to construct this coherent narrative and theory to show how sound as both foundational for generating poetics as well as technological reproduction is central to the mid-century poetry and poetic movements. On a secondary level, I show how the rise of the term "ephemera" in archival and sound studies has shaped the discourse of the little magazine in order to de-materialize the little magazine. This term has often been used to describe sound as a "fleeting" or "ephemeral" essence that cannot be "captured" or "reproduced" in the same way as a text-based object. Such conceptions of "ephemera" demonstrate an analogical connection which may not be intentionally linked, but which have become linked through the prevalence of the word in archival and sound studies. We may investigate how the word operated in archival studies and how it is used in sound studies to map connections in the discourse of the two, leading to a particular type of archival material, the little magazine, and how archival studies discusses the little magazine as ephemeral. A single word has come to represent 1) a type of historically significant material object that carries poetry and prose between its covers and 2) a phenomenon that may not always be captured and reproduced and only sometimes has a coherent structure. Perhaps paradoxically, the discourse of ephemera ties 1) how scholars conceptualize sound to 2) how mid-century poets conceptualize the little magazine in an analogical formulation, which I delineate below.

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[13] Scholes, Robert and Clifford Wulfman. *Modernism in the Magazines*. New Haven: Yale U P, 2010. 1. Print.

The Little Magazine: History, Origins, Materiality

The little magazine, although its origins lie in eighteenth-century periodical culture,[14] emerged as a successor of the late nineteenth-century "ephemeral bibelot," a material form that could be likened to today's chapbook.[15] Such a tradition emerged alongside other, more popular forms of literary production, like the novel, and was part of the larger print revolution. Unlike the novel, the magazine had never garnered the attention of the reading public and had a much smaller audience from its inception. This type of coterie community marked the little magazine as a form utilized by small poetic groups that would attract the attention of twentieth-century scholars because smaller audiences meant more freedom to experiment and test the boundaries of poetic form and function.

Etymologically, the word "magazine" is derived from the French "*magasin*," meaning "store," a place for imported goods, shelved and organized to sell to consumer.[16] The word "magazine" (rather than say "chapbook") helps us to think about circulation, buying and selling of goods. This process of movement, of circulation, is inherent in the definitions of "magazine" in the Oxford English Dictionary. Following two definitions regarding magazine's use as a storehouse, we finally arrive at the more typical definition: "A periodical publication containing articles by various writers."[17] Add "little" to the word "magazine" and we have a direct confrontation between "regular" magazines and "little" magazines in what Robert Scholes calls "handsome little Davids confronting ugly big Goliaths."[18] The purpose of the little magazine can be read in its designation as a "little magazine": it directly sets itself apart from the emerging consumer culture in which magazines were bound. However, the tradition of the anti-consumer, artistic medium starts even before the designation "little magazine."

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[14] Indeed, such periodicals such as Samuel Johnson's "The Tattler," "The Spectator, and "The Rambler," are early manifestations of the little magazine of today. We can all thank Samuel Johnson, yet again, for the cultural artifact that is the little magazine.

[15] A small book or pamphlet of up to 40 pages containing poetry.

[16] Scholes, Robert and Clifford Wulfman. *Modernism in the Magazines*. New Haven: Yale U P, 2010. 46. Print.

This object of rarity was defined by its craftsmanship and artistic whimsy, much like the "artists' book"[19] of today. Indeed, famed early-century bibliographer Frederick Winthrop Faxon characterized the "ephemeral bibelots" created between 1892 to 1903 as a medium that purposefully functioned in two ways: they set themselves against mass-market magazines of the same decade and celebrated their rarity through their careful, detailed craftsmanship. Rather than rely on circulation and advertising for their existence, as did mass-market magazines, the ephemeral bibelot challenged the burgeoning mass-market economy by relying on traditional economic qualities, like artistry and craftsmanship. Artists positioned their crafted bibelots as unique works bound to a traditional sense of the creation of an artwork, which contested, by the very practices of the ephemeral bibelot creators, mass-market techniques relying on mechanical reproduction.

The moniker "ephemeral" in "ephemeral bibelot" has more to do with the rarity of the object qua art object rather than with anything inherent *within* the bounds of the bibelot itself. In other words, the object is ephemeral due to external, socio-economic factors rather than any internal “ephemerality” of the actual text that exists between the covers: the paratextual elements give it its ephemerality. Robert Scholes frames the evolution from ephemeral bibelot to little magazine through evolving dissemination practices and which, according to Scholes, affected its “ephemerality”: “These early ‘ephemeral bibelots’ were the now-forgotten precursor of the ‘little magazines’ that are more familiar to us, which kept some of their artsy flavor, to be sure, but also aspired to greater visibility and durability than the first generation of this kind of periodical.”[20] Scholes’s “progressive” narrative from scarcity and ephemerality [ie, the “ephemeral bibelot”] to substantiality [ie, the little magazine] is important. Indeed, using such a term as “visibility” already alludes to a type of substantiality reliant on the visual to segue from “ephemerality” to “durability.”

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[17] "Magazine." Oxford English Dictionary.
[18] Ibid., 56.
[19] For further information and delineation of the "artists' books," see any number of Johnanna Drucker's writing on the subject.

Ephemerality in Scholes’s case it seems has more to do with scarcity or rarity of a literary object than with the ontological status of the object itself. When we think about the material object, there is nothing inherently ephemeral about it; rather, the artist gives the object ephemeral status. In other words, the artist intends for the object to be ephemeral because it is “one of a kind.” Thus, the question, as we will see later, of the status of the material object is constituted by language, by discourse, in the intention of the author, as well as by the object in and of itself. But this historical discourse outlined by Scholes has a chiasmic structure: the authorial intent moves forward with the art object in time while the study of the art object happens retroactively. In providing an accurate historical narrative, the intention of the author and the intention of the scholar overlap, the former from inception and the latter from contemporary discourse. The question of the word "ephemerality" hovers above the discourse of the twentieth-century little magazine. In archival and scholarly research, "ephemera" designates that which is fleeting and unanalyzable through current modes of scholarship.

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[20] Scholes, Robert and Clifford Wulfman. *Modernism in the Magazines*. New Haven: Yale U P, 2010. 32. Print.

But before I go further with my analysis of the ways in which ephemerality functions, perhaps I should ask: what is "ephemerality" and why does it matter for little magazines and the larger claim that I make? "Ephemera," according to the OED, has two definitions. The first describes a subclass of insect (which is surprisingly fruitful for understanding modern usage) that "in its imago or winged form lives only for a day."[21] Why go to the taxonomy of insects for discussing mid-century print culture? It seems the insect grounds the definition in the metamorphosis that I attempt to draw upon. To my mind, the definition engages a particular nuance of how scholars employ the word "ephemera." In contemporary taxonomical usage, the word substantiates material, physical, and tactile objectivity: ephemera is a living "thing" that manifests in a particular space in a particular time. But the temporal delineation is problematic: living solely for a day, the "fleeting" nature of the insect's existence gives it its name. Yet, it takes time to develop into "Ephemera." The insect first grows into its "winged or imago form." Only at the end stage is it defined as "ephemera." This seemingly innocent taxonomy complicates the word's second definition, which moves out of the realm of substance and into the abstract and figurative. It is the definition employed in archival or textual studies: "One who or something which has a transitory existence."[22] Only the first definition denoted the spatio-temporal issues attached to the insect or object, yet the second, in its expansive delineation, is the one used by scholars of the little magazine precisely because it is so expansive: One can get away with using the nebulous term to address any number of documents. Paula McDowell addresses this very complication in her astute article on ephemera: "While collectors tend to define 'ephemera' chiefly by example, and librarians and archivists often use the term as a collective noun for a type of 'difficult' materials that do not fit…. 'Ephemera' is not a *thing* but a classification. The category 'ephemera,' is not transparent, timeless, or universal, but a classification, existing in history, that has done and continues to do powerful rhetorical, practical, ideological, and disciplinary work."[23] We see here from the standpoint of book history that this term has caused much consternation for those working in the field of literary history, archives, and collections. Because of this "classification" of ephemera, a definition that defines a "thing" is impossible.

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[21] "Ephemera." *Oxford English Dictionary Online*.

I spend time delineating the definitions of "ephemera" and "little magazine" to get to one of the main problems with the study of archival materials that may be deemed "ephemeral," including, of course, the little magazine. The discourse of the little magazine as "ephemera," could be said to be metaphorically analogous to the ways in which we discuss sound. Take, for instance, key conceptions of sound, as follows: "Sound inhabits its own time and dissipates quickly. Its life is too brief and ephemeral to attract much attention, let alone occupy the tangible duration favored by methods of research."[24] In short, although the ontological status of the ephemerality of the little magazine comes from the exterior of the little magazine (the discourse "hovering around" the historical account of the little magazine), the ontological status of the ephemerality of sound seems constitutive of the concept "sound." Both the little magazine and sound are described in certain scholarly circles as "ephemeral." The little magazine and sound are partitioned from traditional modes of literary analysis because of their supposed "ephemerality," and the "ephemeral" designation places them in an analogous relationship ripe for analysis.

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[22] Ibid.

[23] McDowell, Paula. "Of Grubs and Other Insects: Constructing the Categories of 'Ephemera' and 'Literature' in Eighteenth-Century British Writing." Book History. 15 (2012) 48-9. Print.

Such challenges that come with studying sound have made research *about* sound ephemeral in its own right. But I would like to press upon this notion that sound is inherently ephemeral, and that this ephemerality is somehow unique to sound alone. The inimitable Walter Ong has discussed sound and its temporality at length in his two most well-known works, *The Presence of the Word* (1967) and *Orality and Literacy* (1982). He argues in *The Presence of the Word* that "sound is related to present actuality rather than to past or future"[25] and that it exists only as it goes out of existence. But, as Sterne notes, "Ong's claim is true for any event—any *process* that you can possibly experience—and so it is not a quality special or unique to sound. To say that ephemerality is a special quality of sound, rather than a quality endemic to any form of perceptible motion or event in time, is to engage in a very selective form of nominalism."[26] Any event can be said to be inherently related to the present, thus, attempting to somehow tie sound directly to a temporality that is inclusive of any event and make sound the exception is a problem for scholars working on sound.

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[24] Kahn, Douglas. *Noise, Water, Meat: A History of Sound in the Arts.* Cambridge: MIT Press, 2001. 5. Print.

[25] Ong, Walter. *Presence of the Word*. New Haven: Yale U P, 1967. 111. Print.

[26] Sterne, Jonathan. *The Audible Past*. Durham: Duke U P, 2003. 18. Print.

Here I would like to return to the stakes of my argument. Why does sound even matter for the little magazine, or for mid-century poetics, or maybe even for literature at large? In *Picture Theory*, WJT Mitchell argues that the pictorial turn

> is rather a postlinguistic, postsemiotic rediscovery of the picture as a complex interplay between visuality, apparatus, institutions, discourse, bodies, and figurality. It is the realization that *spectatorship* (the look, the gaze, the glance, the practices of observation, surveillance, and visual pleasure) may be as deep a problem as various forms of *reading* (decipherment, decoding, interpretation, etc.) and that visual experience of 'visual literacy' might not be fully explicable on the model of textuality.[27]

This phrase, though focused on problems of 'visual literacy,' could just as easily apply to sound. The sonic experience of "sound literacy" so to speak, may not be completely explicable on the model of textuality that I have heretofore constituted. Sound literacy may have to go beyond the text, into multimedia as a place for understanding "literacy" writ large. And listening itself may be just as deep a problem as reading.

The Little Magazine as Archival Art Object

I would like to spend a few moments delineating two basic practices for scholars who approach the little magazine for contemporary study. The first practice is to interact with the little magazine as an archival "art object," an object preserved in special collections for academic study. The second method is to interact with the little magazine as a medium of dissemination, and in particular a medium of dissemination in a particular community of readers in a particular historical time. This first approach to the little magazine has certain basic assumptions that are encoded by the institutional, cultural, and social norms of the archive itself. One of the major underpinnings of the archive is that one looks at and interacts with the original document or object. In this set of presuppositions, the "original" is the reason one goes to the archive itself. Rather than examine the tenth edition of *Ulysses*, one goes to view the original, first published in the little magazine *The Little Review.* But *The Little Review*, as a little magazine, was disseminated across two continents and is, in its very nature, a reproduction. The first edition of *Ulysses* as a full novel, published by Olympia Press, is also, by its very nature, a reproduction. So when one goes to the archive to view the little magazine or the first edition, one is viewing one of a handful of copies lying in archives around the world. So why do we go the archive to see a reproduction? Because the intrinsic value of the first edition or the little magazine lies in the history of the object. The value of the "object" is bound to a human desire to understand origins, to understand the original moment of creation as well as understand the historical context of a particular work. Of course, such answers are tied up in institutional, social, and historical knowledge that underscores the term "value" that I used above. Such values seem not inherently tied to the object itself. Like ephemerality, there is nothing intrinsically a part of the object itself that allows one object to become central to the archive. It is always in retrospect that the object becomes important. And this is also where Walter Benjamin's notion of the "aura" plays a role. Like the value of the archival art object, the "aura" of an art object follows the same temporal trajectory: only after the fact of the object becoming important for culture, society, history, does the object attain "auratic" status.

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[27] Mitchell, WJT. *Picture Theory*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995. 16 Print.

For example, in his famous essay, “The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction” Benjamin argues that mechanical reproduction and the technologies associated with it constantly threaten to strip the original artwork of its “aura.” The “aura” of the artwork, Benjamin notes, is related to the context in which the artwork is situated: the artwork is constitutive of the place and time in which it exists, and without its context, the artwork is stripped of the aura. He argues that this stripping happens when an artwork is mechanically reproduced: 'Even the most perfect reproduction of a work of art is lacking in one element: its presence in time and space, its unique existence at the place where it happens to be.”[28] His emphasis on the spatio-temporal dimensions of the artwork restricts broader, more encompassing conceptualizations of the artwork, and it leaves the aura in a precarious place. The myth of the origin, and the time and place of origins, then, are captured in Benjamin’s notion. And the very inability to recuperate the time and place of the origin of creation is precisely what creates the aura: for the desire to “go back” to origins creates it. And art that has no originary or authentic moment of origination cannot have an aura.

For instance, the photograph cannot have an aura because the photograph is a reproducible technology that imitates “authentic” art. And Benjamin’s “original artwork” cannot come from the new technologies of reproduction. If reproduction and reproductive technologies strip the aura from the art object, then the little magazine could be said to have no “aura.” If it has no “aura,” then, according to Benjamin, it is not a work of art. It is a mere reproduction of an original work of art, one that is lost to the fleeting ephemerality of time. Yet, Benjamin immediately qualifies his definition of *aura* in a note: “Precisely because authenticity is not reproducible, the intensive penetration of certain mechanical processes of reproduction was instrumental in differentiating and grading authenticity.” In *this* formulation, the very construct of aura is, by and large, retroactive, something that is an artifact of reproducibility, rather than a side effect or an inherent quality of self-presence. Aura is the object of a nostalgia that accompanies reproduction.[29] In this formulation, the aura is in a very tight relationship with reproduction itself and in fact delineates, again on a scalar level, “authenticity.” Reproduction, authenticity, and aura are bound up in a constantly shifting, ever dynamic interplay within the archive. The little magazine as art object ensconced in the archive is, to some extent, misrepresented by the very structure of the archive. Taken from this perspective, it is not a “fleeting, ephemeral” object but rather a document that is highly mediated by the construction of the archive and authenticity.

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[28] Walter Benjamin (1968). Hannah Arendt, ed. ″The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction″, *Illuminations*. London: Fontana. 214–218. Print.

The Little Magazine as Medium of Poetic Dissemination

The little magazine as archival art object is one concept from which methodologies of studying the little magazine can be taken. The other is to view the little magazine as one medium of poetic dissemination. This viewpoint, which I discuss here, will be invaluable for understanding the relationship between the two types of materiality co-constitutive with mid-century poetics. That is, the little magazine and sound are constitutive of and bound up in the mid-century poetry. Here I would like to discuss the relationship between the little magazine and conceptions of dissemination to get at a clearer idea of the *function* that dissemination plays in reiterating the place of the little magazine as a site of production, re-production, dissemination, and communication. What will become apparent is the relationship between metaphorical dissemination and literal dissemination and / or circulation of the text enacts a type of community building that is central to the purpose of the little magazine. Media theorist Lisa Gitelman has noted the value of the physical attributes of an artwork's medium: "Just as it makes no sense to appreciate an artwork without attending to its medium (painted in watercolors or oils? Sculptured in granite of styrofoam?), it makes no sense to think about 'content' without attending to the medium that both communicates that content and represents or helps to set the limits of what that content can consist of."[30] In thinking about the relationship between medium or form and content, one is required to think about what the little magazine does differently than other forms of literary dissemination. But beyond this ordinary line of discussion about form and content, we need to think through the limits or boundaries that are set by the form and content of the little magazine. Such limits can be seen in how we approach metaphorical and literal dissemination while acknowledging and understanding the types of communities into which the little magazine fell. But before approaching the question of community, we have to parse out what the medium is.

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[29] Quoted in Sterne, Jonathan. *The Audible Past*. Durham: Duke U P, 2003. 220. Print.

The medium is double layered: there is the medium of the little magazine, which carries between its covers poetry and prose, statements of poetics and manifestos of approaches to art. Then there is the medium of language. Rather than thinking of language as a universally coded system that can be unpacked through scientific study (linguistics, in other words), what if we were to think about language as, as WJT Mitchell argues, a "medium of expression and discourse inevitably result[ing] in its contamination by the visible."[31] And while Mitchell's medium, of course, relies on the visible to carry it through the world, we could also say that his medium in which "heterogeneous field[s] of discursive modes require[e] pragmatic, dialectical description rather than a univocally coded scheme open to scientific explanation"[32] could give us a way of delineating the text itself as a medium, as a mode of dissemination. In this sense, language is medium as well as system. The two are intertwined in ways that, at first glance, seem contradictory. Thus, the little magazine is one form of medium, and between its covers is couched a different medium.

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[30] Gitelman, Lisa. *Always Already New: Media, History, and the Data of Culture*. Cambridge: MIT Press, 2008. 7. Print.

But what is dissemination, and why is important for our purposes here? Dissemination descends from Latin roots that indicate scattered seeds.[33] The metaphor of dissemination points to the contingency of publication, its uncertain consequences, and their governance by probabilities rather then certainties. Rather than appropriating the feedback loop that has defined "communication" in terms of communication studies, dissemination provides us a strong metaphor for thinking through the place of the little magazine as a medium of dissemination. Like literary interpretation, dissemination is contingent upon an attentive listener at the other end of the metaphorical line. And what happens in between the time of dissemination and the time of interpretation cannot be knowable. Knowing is a future act.

Thus, I see dissemination of the little magazine, and the words within the little magazine, as enacting a type of power that builds community. From editor, publisher, and writer to an unknown and contingent audience, the little magazine builds what Benedict

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[31] Mitchell, WJT. *Picture Theory*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995. 97. Print.
[32] Ibid.
[33] "Dissemination." Oxford English Dictionary.

Anderson has so famously called the “imagined community.” Such an imagined community is caught up in the relational aspects of dissemination through the participatory structure of the disseminitive community. The action of dissemination, and dissemination of a type of little magazine that requires a small coterie of readers, builds upon the idea of the imagined community in that the faith required to publish is enacted through the structures of dissemination. The little magazines that I discuss in the following chapters build their audience through this dissemination, through a contingency of publication, as well as through face-to-face interaction with one another in coterie communities from the Lower East Side in New York City to San Francisco. Though we cannot fully know who made up the full audience for each magazine, we can know that writers published between the covers were also readers. The amount of long-ranging discussion between poets, published in issues of these magazines (and which issues would become heated at particular points) shows how diligently poets read their favorite little magazines. This indicated that the little magazine was a kind of dissemination of “poet’s poetry,” a type of audience who would read Olson, Ginsberg, and others in the little magazine venues as well as other venues. What is important and different about the little magazine as a publishing venue is that it was usually the first site of publication, the first site of dissemination of some of the most famous and important works of literary import in the twentieth century.

Movement from the “High” Modernist Little Magazine to the Mid-Century Little magazine

It is not a coincidence, I think, that scholars of early twentieth-century little magazines do not widen the field of analysis to include mid-century creations. For them to do so would challenge many of their longest held beliefs of the place and function of the little magazine. If "modernism began in the magazines," and the form of the letter is more substantiated than the "ephemeral bibelots," then why can't they include the mid-century little magazine in their analysis? I think the answer to this question is a complex one, one that relies on an understanding of the movement from early twentieth-century literary movements to mid-century literary movements and their relationship to the medium of the little magazine. In one sense, the problem lies in modernism's guard against contamination of media. Even Mitchell acknowledges modernism's impulse to "purify" media: "all media are mixed media, and all representations are heterogeneous; there are no 'purely' visual or verbal arts, though the impulse to purify media is one of the central utopian gestures of modernism."[34] This separation seems to be a problem distinctly for high modernism. By mid-century, poets used various media to produce poetry, and poets and editors welcomed such interventions. Just take a look at Jack Kerouac's "Essentials of Spontaneous Prose" or Charles Olson's "Projective Verse" and one will see how these statements take into account musical and oral performances. And early twentieth-century poets speak about the little magazine in terms of its content rather than acknowledging the form as something new or innovative, while mid-century poets speak about content in relation to the form itself.

Indeed, Ezra Pound, writing in 1930, explains why multimedia is not appropriate for high modernism in "Small Magazines." Ezra Pound argues that the significance of the small magazine has nothing to do with its format, but rather its "original motivation" establishes the magazine's significance: "The significance of any work of art or literature is a root significance that goes down to its original motivation."[35] He continues in his essay to say that the form that the medium through which a poem comes into existence is insignificant. Even in Pound's own scholarly work we see such separation beyond separation of media.

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[34] Mitchell, WJT. *Picture Theory*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995. 5. Print.

Thus, the movement from the early little magazine to the mid-century little magazine changes in two significant ways: the "anxiety of contamination"[36] of mass culture that appears in the early little magazine has been completely erased in the mid-century little magazine. Such contamination between the various artistic media in the mid-century magazine, unlike its earlier predecessor, however, was accepted as a vital component to the health of the magazine. The mid-century little magazine existed "for a particular purpose; and when that is realized, part of its function is to die rather than go moribund."[37] The editors of the mid-century little magazine found death a productive metaphor for discussing the purpose of the little magazine. And, as we see here, the metaphor of death helps to instantiate the vitality of the mid-century magazine, a vitality that incorporates multiple media to produce its effect.

In her astounding work on the history of media culture entitled *Always Already New*, Lisa Gitelman challenges long-held conceptions of the place of media as the go-to objects of historical analysis. At the conclusion of her work, she places recorded sound at the center of all media at mid-century: "I want to be clear that the media of the 1960s, new or old, in this respect have much more in common with the new medium of recorded sound that I have described at length. I argued that most explicitly in chapter 1 that when recorded sound was new, it was in some ways experienced as party to the existing, dynamic logics of writing, print media, and public speech, the nexus of so many open questions I have here called bibliographic ones, because I started with meanings authored and conveyed on paper."[38] If the media in use during the 1960s (which would include the little magazine as a medium for subcultural poetics) have more in common with recorded sound, then the relationship between reproduced sound and subcultural poetics is closer than we have heretofore understood. And, as Gitelman claims in the next sentence, the relationship between inscriptive practices like writing have more in common with sound recording at its outset. The emphasis, then, shifts from paper inscription in the early twentieth century to sonic inscription in the mid-twentieth century. The movement from an emphasis on paper inscription to sonic inscription can be seen in the editorial statements of purpose from early century little magazines to mid-century little magazines.

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[35] Pound, Ezra. "Small Magazines." *The English Journal* 19.9 (1930). 689. Print.

[36] Andrew Huyssen argues that modernist artist's relation to mass culture produced an "anxiety of contamination" produced by advertising in the early little magazines. This produced a visual effect that foregrounds the visual and material aspects of the little magazine and its relationship to material goods sold.

[37] Michelson, Peter. "On The Purple Sage, Chicago Review, and Big Table." *The Little Magazine in America*. Eds. Elliott Anderson and Mary Kinzie. Stamford: Pushcart Press. 354. Print.

Harriet Monroe published the Imagists almost exclusively in the first two years of *Poetry*. Her publishing of some of the finest imagist poetry by Pound and H.D. leads scholars to this magazine as a visual poetry treasure trove. *Rhythm*, published from 1911-1913 and edited by J.M. Murray, directly opposes the turn of the century aesthetics of "art for art's sake" in favor of a more "humane" and "real" aesthetic in art, poetry, and criticism, the three main genres of expression found between its covers. Murray emphasizes visual art, literature, and criticism as the three main genres of expression for his little magazine.[39] The socialist little magazine *The Masses*, published from 1911-1917, became important for other reasons. From the outset, it laid claim to an almost entirely visual set of purposes, a magazine of illustrated art, literature and politics.[40] In emphasizing the visual aspect of the little magazine, *The Masses* calls attention to its co-operation between various genres of editing: there will be a specific literary, political, artistic, and science editor for each aspect of the magazine. But the over-arching theme of the magazine will be drawn from its visual artistry, for "poor illustrations poorly reproduced are worse than worthless. They merely cause an unpleasant irritation in the optic nerves, which by sympathetic action is communicated to the entire nervous system."[41] Such an emphasis on the artistic quality of the magazine also emphasizes the need for communication of message across the body. If the eye is unsatisfied with the image, the whole magazine suffers, no matter whether it has between its covers the best ideas for social change in America. Such an emphasis on the visual, I think, also emphasizes the desire to have the broadest readership possible, including the illiterate or semiliterate. To focus on image is to focus on populations that Socialism desperately needed to survive: the working man and woman who may have had little education.

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[38] Gitelman, Lisa. *Always Already New: Media, History, and the Data of Culture*. Cambridge: MIT Press, 2008. 94. Print.

Mid-century editors, however, emphasize sound as the ultimate manifestation of poetic sensibility. Robert Creeley's insistence on "sounding" language in an attempt to recuperate the present moment will be a starting point for examining such a multifaceted question. Creeley avers that "[t]hat undertaking most useful to writing as an art form is, for me, the attempt to *sound* in the nature of the language those particulars of time and place of which one is a given instance, equally present."[42] "Sounding" time and place returns us to the discussion of the temporality of the sonic. Yet, here, Creeley seems to suggest that time and place are equally present, but not that "presence" as a temporal construct in an Ongian fashion is a problem. For Creeley "sounding" is a manifestation, a conjuring up of time and place, whether that be a place and time in the past or a place and time in the future. Sounding, then, is like a record in that time and place which is not necessarily dependent upon the temporal present. For Creeley and for the poets originating from the Black Mountain School, such questions emphasize the importance of the little magazine as the site of disseminating such "sounding." In relying on sound to provide form, the textual consideration of the poem on the page has to account for breath. But, if the poem is an immediate "sounding" of the world around the poet, what consideration is given to the little magazine through which such poetry is disseminated? Inscriptive practices at mid-century, according to Gitelman, have much more in common with sound reproduction than with print media of the early twentieth century, including their predecessors, the early twentieth century little magazine.

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[39] Murray, J.M., ed. *Rhythm*. 1911-1913. The Raymond Danowski Poetry Library, Manuscript, Archives, and Rare Book Library, Emory University.

[40] In issue one of *The Masses*, the editors outline an intention for the magazine: "The *Masses* will watch closely the development of the American co-operative organization, and will keep its readers informed of its work and progress. But while the co-operative feature constitutes its distinctive feature—distinctive merely because other Socialist publications have so far almost entirely neglected this field—its aim is a broad one. It will be a general ILLUSTRATED magazine of art, literature, politics and science."

[41] *The Masses*, Issue #1, 1911.

That is not to say, however, that the poetry written and published in the early twentieth century magazines were somehow "more" or "less" visual or sonic than poetry written and published in the mid-century magazines. On the contrary, early twentieth-century poetry was just as concerned with its relationship to sound in various forms as mid-century poetry.[43] Yet, the *emphasis* on sound at mid-century says something about the shifting tides of poetic media: the early focus on print to elucidate, say, the recitation movements of the early-twentieth century relies on print media to disseminate oral inscription. At mid-century, however, the tide had changed and the little magazine was a foundational—and yet one of a few media found useful—mode of dissemination that has shifted in focus: rather than talking exclusively *about* sound or orality or aurality, Creeley's little magazine (and others that would follow) would attempt to *demonstrate* sound or orality or aurality. The early little magazine was less connected to non-text based modes of dissemination, as it was historically, a period of transition from print media to multimedia. By the 1940s, media had broadened its base to include print, radio, telephone, and television. That is, of course, not to say that these technologies did not exist, but rather that these technologies had not become affordable alternative media ensconced as household items until the end of the second world war.

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[42] Creeley, Robert. "Introduction to *The New Writing in the USA*." *The Collected Essays of Robert Creeley*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989. 96. Print.

The poetics of improvisation, which flourished from 1945 to 1970, has said to be a direct translation of musical improvisation, with the "present moment" at the heart of said poetics, translated into a poetic or writerly improvisation. These practices and social formations morph into a "surge of energies" that makes the improvisation present.[44] In representing jazz in 20th-century writing, the inaccessibility of improvisation has been the fundamental stumbling block for an integration of text and sound. But for the period between 1953 and 1968, the text on the page was more than just text. It was an enactment of oral readings rather than polished, singular units of poetry: "While the poem was still text on a page, the ideal reader accepted a tacit invitation to conceive of the poet's body articulating the lines. Silent reading became an event, a poetry reading taking place in the imagination."[45] Such conceptions of the word as a lively and alive form, in all of its sonic glory, are central to the mimeograph revolution and the practices of the poets.

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[43] For instance, the often-cited example of Eliot's use of dialect is one way that the sonic influences early twentieth-century poetry.

[44] Fischlin, Daniel and Ajay Heble, eds. *The Other Side of Nowhere: Jazz, Improvisation, and Communities in Dialogue*. Middletown: Wesleyan U P, 2004. 9. Print.

Thus, the little magazine and sound have a deeply complex relationship that promoted visual *and* sonic materiality, especially, I argue, during the period from 1953 to 1968. There are various reasons that the sonic would become important during this time. For one, the poets who were publishing little magazines were heavily involved with the live jazz scene around the country. Jazz musicians sharply turned away from "popular" jazz to bebop, hard bop, cool jazz, thanks in part to Charlie Parker and Miles Davis. The relationship between jazzman and poet became entwined through a set of ideals that set them apart from the larger, Cold War culture. Another reason the sonic would become important at this time is because sound reproduction technologies entered the domestic, middle class spaces in larger numbers than ever before. While the larger culture of the 1950s were listening to records on their record players, the poets that I read were influenced by both the dissemination of jazz through the radio as well as live performances. This in turn shaped their own poetic practices, namely by promoting a poetry "scene" in which the poetry reading became the center. In placing the poetry reading at the heart of poetry, these poets shifted the materiality of the little magazine into the realm of the sonic and performative.

The relationship between sound and the mid-century little magazine is foundational for understanding reception, dissemination, and function for the avant-garde of the mid-century. Indeed, Charles Olson, the forefather of post-1945 poetry, has stated that the little magazine "could realize the possibilities of field composition more effectively than could a book," and hence that it reflected his poetics more accurately. Olson's "field of composition" is Olson's poetics that interrogate the relationship between form and structure. As the poem transfers poetic energy from the poet's breath to the written page, the field of composition is the site of poetic breath transferred to the page. Thus, rather than wrangling with structures of the poem that are textually based, Olson calls for a bodily structure originating with the poet's voice and "projects" through the breath onto the written page. His is a composition that resides first and foremost in the body of the poet. The challenge for such poetic composition resides in the transmission of the energetic force from poet to reader. The text provides a mode of transmission from poet to reader, but does not become a physical durable object separated by its materiality from either poet or reader. The printed word is only an analog for the relationship between poet and reader. Thus, "text" or the printed word, is a medium through which the poet interacts with the reader.

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[45] Ibid., 28.

Olson thought of the little magazine as a conduit or poetic "energy" to those outside of his physical presence, an energy that the traditional book could not articulate. His projective verse, which starts with the body, the origin of creation, signals a shift in textual potential: "'I like best, origin, the life & moving of it, the very going on, that a book never, for me, has—quite the openness.' Creeley agreed, commenting to Olson on 'what a mag can have over a book—fragmentia—burst—plunge—spontaneous—THE WHOLE WORKS.'" Rather than rely on the traditional form for inscription of a new poetics, Olson and Creeley find that the little magazine sanctions experiment. But what does Olson *mean* by “origin;” and what does Creeley mean by “THE WHOLE WORKS”? Both of these descriptions of the little magazine will be foundational for this project. What the little magazine can do—and has traditionally done—is to transmit vitalistic concerns, concerns that place the traditional, individual work of art at the mercy of a poetic energy transmitted through the page. For Olson, “origin” and “openness” are two ends of the same spectrum. The magazine allows for both the transmissional “openness” that the “origin,” the poetic body, requires. Thus the magazine as physical object is an ephemeral object because it almost disappears when one conceptualizes it through Olson’s “composition by field.” One is left with the poet, the poem as projected energy, and the reader. Hence, Olson follows Ezra Pound’s appeal for poets to compose “in the sequence of the musical phrase, not in sequence of a metronome.”[46] What Pound emphasizes is a rejection of common poetic measure that relies on succinct units of time and an acceptance of the musical phrase as an expansive definition of time. Such considerations of the musical phase as a method for composing poetry leads us to a discussion of the work of improvisation in Olson’s poetics.

In chapter 2, I argue that Charles Olson and Russell Atkins, the two major figures in the next chapter, would scoff at the idea that poetic content that is imbued with sonic qualities is somehow ephemeral because it relies on the sonic. For example, Charles Olson’s *Projective Verse*, written in 1950 and published as a small pamphlet that circulated among friends and colleagues at Black Mountain College before being published in the first issue of *The Black Mountain Review*, makes clear that the relationship between breath, ear, and voice are substantive and essential components of

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[46] Pound, Ezra. “A Few Don’ts.” *Poetry* 1.6 (1913). 200. Print.

"Projective Verse," or "Composition by Field": "If I hammer, if I recall in, and keep calling in, the breath, the breathing as distinguished from the hearing, it is for cause, it is to insist upon a part that breath plays in verse which has not (due, I think, to the smothering of the power of the line by too set a concept of foot) has not been sufficiently observed or practiced, but which has to be if verse is to advance to its proper force and place in the day, now, and ahead. I take it that PROJECTIVE VERSE teaches, is, this lesson, that that verse will only do in which a poet manages to register both the acquisitions of his ear *and* the pressure of his breath."[47] There is a lot going on in this phrase, including the call to "recall it," which Olson uses alongside similar statements to make his prose more conversational. More importantly, I think, is the last statement in this phrase, namely, that "verse will only do in which a poet manages to register both the acquisitions of his ear *and* the pressure of his breath." Whether he intended to emphasize "acquisition of ear" and "pressure of breath" or not I do not know. But I do know that when the "ear" has "acquired" the verse, the verse becomes successfully communicated, according to Olson. We may also see in this paragraph a relationship between technological reproduction and the voice. The "recall/ calling," "breath/ breathing," and "registering" recall the very terms that one uses when speaking of a sound recording device. Olson's poetics include a type of understanding of the mechanics by which the origin and the reproduction can do similar work.

And indeed, Olson "substantiates" sound in his poetics by treating the poem as a material entity because of speech, not text: "Because breath allows *all* the speech-force of language back in (speech is the "solid" of verse, is the secret of a poem's energy), because, now, a poem has, by speech, solidity, everything in it can now be treated as solids, objects, things."[48] In this phrase, Olson delineates the relationship between "speech" and "solidity." Speech is the secret of the poem's energy, and Olson treats this energy as a solid, substantial thing. In some sense, verse only becomes solid when spoken aloud, when the energy of speech is infused into the verse itself. Of course, "speech" is more than just sound. Speech is also silence. Thus, in his poetics, breath becomes important because it allows the poet a natural rhythm for her verse. What we see or read on the page is a manifestation, a sonic artifact of Olson's original substantiation of versification through speech.

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[47] Olson, Charles. *Projective Verse*. New York: Totem Press, 1957. 1-2. Print.

Unlike Olson, Russell Atkins bases his notion of "pychovisualism" on the relationship between the visual, sonic, and musical. Published in 1955 in his *Free Lance* little magazine, Atkins's "psychovisualism" is an suprising mix of music and visual theory. In his most basic premise, Atkins sees poetry and music as one entity. For him, composing music and composing poetry are more than two sides of the same coin; they *are* the same side of the same coin. But what is perhaps most inexplicable about his poetic/ music theory is how music is first and foremost a visual phenomenon. He states: "Composition and sound applied was quite radically different from 'music.' Then and there 'music' as presided over by Muses, as tone-system, as a 'language,' received a deathblow. To the psychovisualist 'Music' is passee. He purposes a day of absolute Composition. In short, so-called 'musical composition' is a VISUAL ART."[49] In this interesting and somewhat labrynthine passage, Atkins takes us from "applied" sound as divergent from music, claiming music's death by tone and language, leaving nothing for composition but the visual. And in his claims that music qua music is passee, he also claims that musical composition is very much alive. For him, composition itself, indeed, creation itself, becomes the mantra of the art object: the art object should not be judged based on its purported “excellence,” rather—and much like William Carlos Williams—poetry exists or doesn’t, and it is the creation, the composition of the artwork that matters.

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[48] Ibid., 2.
[49] Atkins, Russell. *The Free Lance 9.1. Print.*

Here, we can deduce Atkins’s resistance to notions delineated above, namely the resistance against “ephemerality” as such. If the poet is in a constant state of creation, manipulating sound through visual means, Atkins seems to suggest a direct opposition to Olson’s “projective verse”: instead of speech being the “substance” of poetry, or verse, for Atkins, the process of creation through visual queues (for example, inscription or writing as a type of visual mode) allows for the sonic to become the artifact of the visual. To think of the sonic as an artifact of the visual shifts perhaps our perceptions of the place of the sonic in literature.

Chapter three discusses the evolution of *Yugen*, a traditional letterpress publication, and *The Floating Bear*, a mimeographed publication, as indicative of the major technological shifts occurring in publishing, which in turn display an evolution of the poetic voice that concerns lyric poetry. I draw upon a term used in sound studies and musicology to produce a historically accurate conception of the lyric. I extend this claim, averring that one should take into account the structures or forms out of which acousmatic listening could become possible. For instance, instead of focusing solely on the context and content of a story in a general sense, one can also focus on the form or structure of a body of work that allows for the acousmatic—as practice *and* theory—to be used as a framework for analyzing the precarious place of the voice in lyric poetry.

My fourth and last chapter discusses the height of the technical innovation in sound reproduction and poetry with the little magazines *Les Deux Megots* and *Aspen*. The stark contrast between the two very different constructions and uses of these two journals shows the climax of the little magazine era with *Les Deux Mégots* as a remnant of live poetry readings and *Aspen* as a site for disseminating the physical object on which sound is reproduced.

Finally, the Coda of my project looks back on the preceding fifteen-year period to highlight the evolution from a print-based poetry and poetics that encouraged "sonic reading and writing" to an emerging form of the little magazine that caught up to the sonically-informed poetics of Olson and Atkins. I argue that this historical period is pivotal to understanding twentieth-century American literature because of how poetics may transform the objects through which poetry is produced. Studying these little magazines helps us to continue to "sound" print culture and to extend our understanding of postwar poetics.

The little magazine published from 1912-1930 has already proven useful for "high" modernist poetic and textual studies, studies that provide useful methodologies for understanding visual and material culture. But while the pre-1945 modernist little magazine has been the focus of book-length projects, not a single book-length study of post-1945 little magazines have emerged. Thus, the little magazines discussed here frame the discourse of poetry and sound while recuperating the historical significance of the post-1945 little magazine. I aim to broaden studies in textual and material culture to include the sonic. The figuration of sound, whether in terms of music, breath, orality or aurality, is deeply imbricated in the contemporary debate on archival ephemerality. Such a study is not only important for “recuperating” subcultural little magazines from the tomes of history, but it is important for understanding a specific poetic history that has its progeny in current poetic, material, and textual cultures. In questioning the ways that we have discussed (or not discussed) sound in musical and oral cultures, we have failed to question how sound goes beyond music or speech, infiltrates our every day existence, and is historically, culturally, and textually constituted.

Chapter 2

Text Understood as Speech/ Speech Understood as Text: Projectivist Poetics in *Black Mountain Review* and Psychovisualism in *The Free Lance*

In Robert Creeley's introduction to *The New Writing in the USA*,[50] he insists that poetry "sounds" time and place in an attempt to make the created artwork fully alive.[51] But what does it mean to "sound" time and place? Creeley substantiates sound by using a verbal form which acts as a tool to carve out time and place. In other words, poetry uses sound as its definitive form for sculpting time and place while sound is also the substance of poetry. And while this notion of poetry based in sound is as old as poetry itself, this particular linguistic formulation places sound as the verb doing the acting between poetry and spatio-temporal construction. Creeley's formulation establishes "sound" as the substance through which poetry moves and the substance of poetry itself *is* sound in a particular time and space. Following William Carlos Williams's maxim "no ideas but in things,"[52] Creeley places sound at the center of Williams's maxim, which affects both the "thing" and "sound": he substantiates sound as the special and temporal identity of poetry.

However, as we shall see in this chapter, sound as an act becomes problematic for both Robert Creeley and Charles Olson, Creeley's friend and mentor, when delineating a "new" kind of verse, "projective verse." "To sound" poetry is to place the voice at the center of poetic expression and thus to concpetualize differently the page onto which poetry is projected. Olson's projective verse relies on an understanding of the text on the page as speech while also thinking of speech in the poetry reading as text. The tension between the page of the *Black Mountain Review* and the very breath of the poet (the fundamental origin of the poem for the "projectivists") is not only documented in the pages of the magazine, but the magazine is the place where the tensions between a poetics based in the sound of the poet's voice and the space of the white, blank page are teased out. The location of sound, whether it originates with breath or with the page (in a metaphorical sounding or performance), becomes a central question taken up in the pages of the *Black Mountain Review*.

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[50] Edited by Donald Allen, this anthology follows in the wake of the seminal *The New American Poetry: 1945-1960*.

[51] Creeley, Robert. "Introduction to New Writing in the USA." *The Collected Essays of Robert Creeley*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989. 96. Print.

[52] Williams, William Carlos. "Paterson." *The Collected Poems of William Carlos Williams: 1909-1939, Vol. 1.* Eds. A. Walton Litz and Christopher MacGowan. New York: New Directions, 1986. 263-266. Print. This phrase is first found in the poem "A Sort of Song."

While the Projectivist Poets problematize the location from which sound should be produced through the *Black Mountain Review*, *The Free Lance*, published in Cleveland, Ohio, produces some of the most dynamic theories that merge musical and poetic composition. The musician and poet Russell Atkins, *The Free Lance*'s editor, teases out the complex relationship between sound and vision in poetry in his theory of "psychovisualism." Atkins interrogates the boundaries of sound as metaphor and literal substance, arguing that composition itself (whether poetic composition or musical composition) is a visual method for understanding the two art forms. For him, all compositions (musical, poetic) enact the same process, a process in which the sonic as a metaphor plays no part: vision and visuality are the ultimate tools of composition. The focus on production of literal and metaphorical sound is important because it is the foundation of projectivist and psychovisualist poetics. It in turn affects the production of the *Black Mountain Review* and *The Free Lance* as stable modes of dissimenation of the poetry and poetics of each little magazine. Atkins's formulation challenges the whole history of poetic creation, while Creeley's formulation challenges a contemporary moment in which poetry is tied up in the "visual turn." Both poets grapple with the place of sound in their poetry, and indeed in the little magazines that they edit, and such grappling makes central the conceptual and perceptual forms of sound in poetry in the age of mechanical reproducibility.

As this chapter unfolds, it will become apparent that the visual/ sonic divide is central for understanding mid-century poetry and poetics. The *Black Mountain Review* is organized by its insistence on "sounding" time and place, which, for Creeley, means substantiating sound as a thing in itself. "Sound," for Creeley, is a verb that carves out time and place—that arrests, that captures the spatio-temporal. What is not as clear in this phrase (which he uses in many instances to discuss his poetry) is the *place* of sound: is sound a tool through which one sculpts time and place? Or is it the very material out of which a poem is constructed? I suspect Creeley *wants* sound to be the "stuff" of the poem. However, Russell Atkins's poetics is focused on composition. The process by which a musical or poetic composition is created becomes Atkins's focal point. This distinction between the *process of composition* and the *fully composed* or complete poem is important for two reasons. Firstly, it is important to note that, through a reading of his poetics, Atkins is at once ensconced in a conception of the autonomous artwork, of the fully formed, complete poem. Secondly, the contradictions in Atkins's poetics come from this tension between the fully formed work and the process by which an artwork is formed. Eschewing the metaphorical in favor of the literal, we will see how Atkins's poetics does not fully align with his poetry. Once we understand the reliance on the autonomous artwork, we can bracket his published poetry so that we may examine the process by which his poetry comes into existence. Sound does not arise in composition. If the poet is in a constant state of creation, manipulating sound through visual means, Atkins seems to directly oppose Olson's intentions for a "projective verse": instead of speech as the "substance" of poetry, or verse, the process of creation through visual queues (for example, inscription or writing as a type of visual mode) allows for the sonic to always already register as an artifact of the visual.

To think of the sonic as an artifact of the visual shifts perceptions of the sonic in literature. But the problem with Russell Atkins's psychovisualism is that his poetry does not hold up to his ideal of the autonomous artwork. It is incredibly sonic through its use of a peculiar and linguistically undefined type of word. In grammatical or linguistic parlance, the closest syntactical concept to Atkins's nonsense words would be the interjection.[53] However, his interjections are not culturally or socially constituted. For instance, he does not use "hmm" to mean that something is interesting. His interjections are "nonsense" interjections. For example, he uses "smm" in one poem between the word "night" and "distant." Such nonsense interjections highlight the purely sonic and non-referential signifier that has no signified. However, it could also be argued that such phrases are purely visual, since no sense, no meaning can be attached to them. In such a case, the phrases would be silent markers of a visual rupture within the text of the poem itself. This is an instance in which the visuality of the text on the page could either underpin or resist the type of "psychovisualism" that he espouses. In other words, his poetry is incredibly sonic because he uses nonsense interjections, and his poetry is anti-sonic because he uses nonsense interjections.

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[53] "Interjection." *The Cambridge Encyclopedia of Language, 3rd ed.* Ed. David Crystal. Cambridge: Cambridge U P, 2010. 95. Print.

The Free Lance, with Atkins's "Psychovisualist Perspective on 'Musical' Composition," both embeds and undermines the sonic in his theory of composition. He argues that musical composition is a *visual* practice and should be treated as such: one does not write a sound; rather, one writes, and in writing produces a symbol of a sound, not the sound itself. It is also necessary to understand that when Atkins speaks about music, his theory is not just a theory of "musical" composition, but also a theory of the whole artistic project, which includes his poetics. Poetry for him is a type of musically-inflected work of art.

The implications of such a theory are far-reaching, and poets have been directly influenced by Atkins's work. His conception of "psychovisualism," while understudied and undervalued, situates composition outside of any sonic influence, which has repercussions for practices of reading. In taking the sonic out of the poem, he also radically alters the landscape of poetic possibility. Because sound is ephemeral, immaterial, or evanescent, sound is, ultimately, *formless*.[54] What gives the composition (whether musical or poetic) form is the visual *reading* and *writing* of the composition's text. The privileging of the reader/ writer becomes problematic when turning to Atkins's own poetry, which I take up in this chapter.

The *Black Mountain Review*, however, takes up the sonic directly as a substance through which the poem may become a "thing." From the beginning the direct emphasis Creeley places on sound as a sensory articulation—as well as a concept—highlights a particular moment in mid-century poetry. The *Black Mountain Review* and *The Free Lance* preserve, or archive, a moment in history that illuminates tensions between the mechanical reproducibility of the written word (the print culture of the text) and the mechanical reproducibility of the spoken word (the emerging cultures of sound).

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[54] Brian Kane makes this point about Voegelin's theory of sound art in his piece "Musicophobia, or, Sound Art and the Demands of Art Theory," on nonsite.org.

I have broken this chapter down into subsections divided yearly from 1953 to 1958. I do this for two reasons: 1) I want to show the evolution of the little magazines and the theories that they rework throughout this five-year period, and 2) I want to show just how prolific and influential the two little magazines were. It is difficult to discuss the magazines in any detail without showing how they were formulated, how they evolved, and how they influenced the next generation of poets and writers. Organizing the magazine issues chronologically as they were published shows a deliberate trajectory in poetic culture over this five-year period. I shift from one magazine to the other in a given year to juxtapose how each overlapped, changed, and shifted with the historical and contextual setting.

I also want to highlight an implicit critique of the study of mid-century avant-garde, which Marjorie Perloff and others have analyzed extensively.[55] Although I tend to stay away from words like “avant-garde,”[56] Perloff has called Projective Verse a type of “avant-garde” of mid-century poetry. While I appreciate Perloff’s designation, which highlights the radicality of Olson’s poetics, she (and others who study mid-century poetry) never once speaks to the African-American experimental poets working alongside and parallel to the institutionally established poets. Indeed, the avant-garde in poetry has been coded as a practice reserved for white participants only.[57] In this chapter, I wish to critique the whole notion of the avant-garde to strip the word of its power in discourses of race and to show how such a term erases black experimental poetics written and conceptualized in the same time period. To underscore the implicit racism in a "mid-century avant-garde," I will end the introduction with a rhetorical question: Which poetic figure have you heard of, Charles Olson or Russell Atkins?

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[55] See any number of Perloff’s monographs or articles, namely “The Radical Poetics of Robert Creeley,” published in Electronic Book Review, 10 (2007); *Poetic License*. Evanston: Northwestern U P, 1990. And others.

[56] See Jed Rasula’s “Contemporary Avant-Garde?” in *Lana Turner Journal*, issue 7, for a comprehensive way in which this word has been overused and overdetermined in the last twenty years.

1953: Atkins and *The Free Lance*

While the *Black Mountain Review* has a reputation today as an influential little magazine that published the works of "projectivist" poets and as a precursor to the L=A=N=G=U=A=G=E poetry of the 1970s and 1980s, *The Free Lance* has not garnered a reputation in contemporary literary history and has been fairly obscure to the literary establishment, even at the height of its publication. The magazine evolved from "The Free Lance Poets and Prose Workshop," established in 1940. It turned into a full-fledged publication by 1953.[58] The magazine ran for an astounding 18 years, far outpacing any of its contemporaries. In an interview with *Input* magazine, Atkins claims that "no 'little' magazines could be found here [in Cleveland] save those hoary with respect, the conservatively dull plushes, etc…. *Free Lance* worked indefatigably to change this' ('Letter to *Input*' 6)."[59] Though obscure to the current literary establishment, *The Free Lance* and its editorial board reached poets in New York City, San Francisco, and even

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[57] See for instance Cathy Park Hong's essay "Delusions of Whiteness in the Avant-Garde" in *The Lana Turner Journal*, Volume 7, 2014. Online at http://www.lanaturnerjournal.com/print-issue-7-contents/delusions

[58] Russell Atkins Papers, Clark Atlanta University Special Collections.

[59] Found in: Nielson, Aldon Lynn. *Black Chant: Languages of African American Postmodernism*. Cambridge: Cambridge U P, 1997. 55. Print.

Black Mountain, influencing the formation of the Black Arts Movement in 1964 through its relationship with various African American writers living in New York City.[60] It was the only black-owned and -operated little magazine in the country from 1953 to 1962. It was a touchstone for those artists migrating to New York City from 1964 to 1970 and is the first little magazine after the Harlem Renaissance to be published by an all African American editorial board. While they focused on publishing African American writers, the editors also published the early works of Robert Creeley and Charles Bukowski.[61]

Born and raised in Cleveland, today Russell Atkins is not widely known outside of Cleveland. However, his poetry and poetics influenced some of the leading African American poets writing today. Jericho Brown[62] and Kevin Young[63] cite Russell Atkins as an influence on their poetry, even comparing his work to Paul Celan. Atkins experiments with form and his syntax remains elliptical, mimicking the jazz avant-gardism of John Coltrane.[64] His poetry converses with a wide range of modernist and postmodern poets. Marianne Moore and Langston Hughes, two poets with which he corresponded extensively, inspire his earlier verse. Charles Olson is an interlocutor, while Frank

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[60] Including participants of the proto-Black Arts Movement group "Umbra," whose little magazine will be the subject of Chapter 4 of this dissertation. Starting with the first 1960 edition of *Free Lance*, a column titled "Of" became a regular feature for the rest of the run of the little magazine. This column mapped the activities of the group, including travels to New York to go to readings as Le Metro and to meet members of the proto-Black Arts Movement group Umbra.

[61] Robert Creeley's "Heart Crane and Private Judgment" was published in *The Free Lance*, Volume 5, Number 2, 1960. Charles Bukowski's poem "Wrong Number" was published in *The Free Lance*, Volume 6, Number 1, 1960.

[62] Brown, Jericho. *Russell Atkins: The Life and Work of an American Master*. Eds. Kevin Prufer and Michael Dumanis. Warrensburg: Pleiades Press, 2013. Print.

[63] Private conversation with KevinYoung.

[64] Leatrice W. Emeruwa, writing for *Black World Magazine* in 1973, wrote that "Russell Atkins has been to poetic, dramatic, and musical innovation and leadership what John Coltrane has been to jazz avant-gardism" (Prufer 10).

O'Hara and d.a. levy, in the mid-1960s, influence the playfulness of Atkins's verse. Yet, even with such interlocutors, Atkins maintains his own distinct, elliptical voice: "This was a poet interested in music and silence, favoring the fragmentary and disjunctive over the linear or finished, capturing distinctive diction and the mood of an instant."[65] Capturing his "distinctive diction" was a way of working through, in immediate time, the disjunctions inherent in the poetry and poetics that he sought to define. His very definitions seem contradictory because of this fragmentation. Such distinctive diction and instant mood is seen most readily in the little magazine that he and Casper Leroy Jones edited.[66]

The Free Lance was the heart of Cleveland's poetry scene for almost two decades, and its influence was felt widely. It was printed, like many little magazines, on regular 8.5 X 11 paper which was folded in half horizontally to open up in codex form. d.a. levy, another Cleveland-based editor whose name is synonymous with the "mimeograph revolution," in the 1960s would, in 1964, become the art editor of *Free Lance.* He edited the art in *Free Lance* from 1964 to 1965.[67] These issues had a particularly mimeographed, home-production quality to them. Yet, the earlier versions aspired to the level of a fine quality press: the paper was higher quality than the paper used after 1964, and they used a standard Times typography throughout. However, by 1964 they had shifted to a typeface that matched that of a typewriter and used paper that disintegrated easily.

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[65] Prufer, Kevin. *Russell Atkins: The Life and Work of an American Master*. Eds. Kevin Prufer and Michael Dumanis. Warrensburg: Pleiades Press, 2013. 10. Print.

[66] The editors of *The Free Lance* shifted around often, but Atkins remained one of the editors throughout the run of the magazine. Other editors were Casper Leroy Jones, Adelaide Simon, and Helen J. Collins. Very little is known about all three of these individuals.

[67] *The Free Lance*, Vol 8 1964-Vol 9, No. 2, 1965.

In the early 1950s, well after the start of the "Free Lance Poets and Prose Workshop," which met with regularity starting in the late 1940s, the group's more avant-garde poets split with the more traditional poets in the group. The avant-garde poets took control of the magazine, and the traditionalists left the workshop. With tensions within the group gone, they were able to publish freely, and Atkins developed and published "Psychovisualist Perspective of 'Musical' Composition" which was his " complete and original bid for a 'scientific aesthetic.'"[68] Atkins went beyond his psychovisualist theory in later publications, developing a theory of "ego centrical phenomenalism" which he defined as "an objective construct to properties to substantiate effect as object."[69] In this theory, Atkins rejects experience as subject matter, arguing for explicit technique and artifice aimed at undermining the power of the New Critical turn as well as critiquing a notion of the use of ordinary language, which is in contradistinction with Olson and the projectivists, who use ordinary language as the basis for a projectivist poetics. His "ego centrical phenomenalism" also allows for subjective agency and the creation of, and writing of, one's own subjective experience in the world while at the same time allowing for the poet to create his own world through the word on the page. Subjective experience, Atkins would have it, is created by the poet himself. For Atkins, "technique should not serve meaning but rather meaning must not only *be* but SERVE technique."[70] Meaning is subservient to technique; universalized meaning is subservient to form. Atkins's project fuses method to meaning, and vice versa, which tells us that the usual content / form divide is far from divided. Indeed, the content *is* the form and the form, content wherein form envelopes content. But perhaps we should examine this concept in terms of the black aesthetics out of which it arises.

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[68] Nielson, Aldon Lynn. *Black Chant: Languages of African American Postmodernism*. Cambridge: Cambridge U P, 1997. 56. Print.
[69] Ibid, 56.
[70] Ibid. 56-7.

Aldon Lynn Nielson elucidates a fundamental problem with how African American poetry has been conceived in the twentieth and indeed the twenty-first century. In juxtaposing "singing" and "signing," he argues that many scholars misunderstand African American poetry: "singing" and "signing" are not *opposed* to one another: they rather work in conjunction with one another to produce a distinctively African American voice *and* graphic sign. "In this respect, chant, and indeed all orature, bodies itself forth in the garb of the mark, inscription, calligraphy. Orature is not opposed to writing; lecture is not opposed to listening."[71] In attempting to understand Atkins's poetry, we can see that Atkins resists this move toward the repeated. How does he do this? He inscribes lines that can be read, but not read aloud. This resistance to oral articulation is important because we have no record beyond early writer's workshop documents that Atkins ever gave public readings. This resistance to the poetry reading is in distinct contradiction to the trends of coffeeshop reading from the 1950s to today. They seem to resist oral reproduction. But this resistance to oral reproduction was not necessarily uncommon in the creation of an African American music during the same period: it relied on abstraction and resistance to meaning in any usual sense of the term. Atkins was, however, among the first African American poets to pursue techniques of concretism, placing the inscription, the written, in a place of prominence. And it is this insistence on the written, on the visual object, that shifts how one relates to his poetry.

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[71] Ibid. 30.

In the first issue of *The Free Lance*, published in 1953, Atkins publishes "In the Impositive Phenomenal," which turns away from the "oral" versification of Langston Hughes as well as the "ordinary" language of William Carlos Williams or even Charles Olson. What Atkins writes obfuscates the content of the poem with a technique that is at once highly visual and highly oral:

IN THE IMPOSITIVE PHENOMENAL
(What do you read, my Lord?)

In the impositive phenomenal, you ascertain
 the dominant hyper-conclusive condition
 of hysteria: the unrational fixed matter
 for that delirium entertaining the successive
          forces.
 The interpretive multiple might delay

 that unrational instantaneous association of

          hysteria

 and yet it frames the average on a more con-

          tingent

 and interdependent basis that the reciprocal

refragable material denotes thereby
relative amorphism—or intuitive
amorphous selective superiority

called athanasia.[72]

This poem, for all of its impenetrable vocabulary, speaks of the relationship between the trinity (and the doctrine of the trinity) and vital phenomena that lies just outside of rational discourse. Let's look at the first line: "impositive" isn't quite morphologically part of the English language, but it sounds like it could be. The prefix "im-", while giving "positive" the negative connotation that works with the poem, creates a nonsense word that does not exist in the English language. However, when thinking semantically about the prefix, one notices that the non-word "impositive" has the effect of negating "positive," making the word mean something like "non-positive," thus logically, "negative." What is Atkins doing, then, when he uses a word that doesn't exist, but that *sounds* like a word that *could* exist, to get to a meaning that negates the "positivity" of the word? On the one hand, Atkins relies on the eye to see the two *p*s in the first line in "im*p*ositive" and "*p*henomenal," which, if focused solely on the *visual* of the signifier, would read as an implicitly positive "phenomena" in the end. On the other hand, he uses the "m" *sound* in "i*m*positive" and "pheno*m*enal" to signify the negation of such positivity. The visual signifier and the sonic signifier are in a constant tension with one another. Not only do we have the tension between visual and sonic, but we have a poem that is obscure in its conceptual or ideological reference. This obscuring of the reference *highlights* the sonic and makes it the component that *matters* (in both senses of the word), that gives the poem its meaning *and* makes the poem "material." Thus, the sonic is central for the poem's materialization *and* meaning.

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[72] Atkins, Russell. "In the Impositive Phenomenal." *The Free Lance* 1.1 (1953): 23. Print.

To end the poem with the word "athanasia," another non-word that sounds and operates very much like a concept and a tradition of the church, is to end at the height of what Atkins would call "impositive phenomena." For him, and many who grow up with Christian doctrine, the apex of illogical phenomena would be the trinity. "Athanasia," according to the OED, is not a word. However, "Athanasian" is. "Athanasian" is someone who adheres to the doctrine of the trinity, or the belief that Father, Son and Holy Spirit are all the same entity. But Atkins strips "Athanasian" of its final "n." Throughout the poem, Atkins has used nasal consonant sounds (/m/ and/n/) to represent the illogical. Leaving the final "n" and /n/ sound off of the very last word could denote a turn away from the non-logic of the trinity, resisting the notion that the trinity is an illogical construction. What, then, would be Atkins's message? Is he trying to say that, in all of the illogical, intuitive phenomena in the word, the religious one has an ability to be understood? Atkins leaves us with more questions than answers in this poem.

However, as we move on to the next poem, which follows directly from the one above in *The Free Lance*, Issue 1, we move from religious imagery and thinking in the phenomenal sense to a clearer, more direct message that relies on form to deliver part of the message:

ON A 'BEAUTEOUS' SCENE

(or more yes approximately)

“You see" I said "wherein the Beautiful (etc) trust

not (what?

The rest you know.

(She thought everything beautiful)

Ah, these bowers!

And to have had a corpse buried in them:

A fresh-from corpse buried a year.

You just can’t begin to believe?

But I shouldn't have said should I?

You love the Beautiful don't you?

That sex madman—you remember?

He raped her here.

Such a mass of

(you know only God can make them)

trees

! [73]

One can see in the evolution from the first poem to this one that Atkins starts experimenting with typographical symbols as either a deflection from the matter of the poem, what the poem is about, or to highlight the speech-driven form of the poem. The quotation marks in the first line denote more than one would expect at first glance. The fourth quotation mark that one would expect to appear never materializes, leaving the designation of speech open throughout the poem: speech is never foreclosed. The whole poem, then, can be viewed as attached to voice. The questions that appear later in the poem also reiterate the vocative nature of the overall structure: the questions are more rhetorical than they are actual questions; they appear only to move the conversation away from the beauty of the scene to the scene of the crime. Natural beauty is tainted by the horrors of a rape and murder of a girl that happened in the exact spot where the poem takes place. The horror of the crime strips the scene of beauty, thus the quotations around "beauteous" in the title.

The use of open quotation marks and open parentheses, seen in the second line, reminds us of Charles Olson's *Projective Verse*, which will become a major poetic aesthetic in the coming years. For Atkins to use similar typographical notations does not necessarily mean that he and Olson were in conversation with one another,[74] but it does mean that using such open typography was becoming integral to the two poets' projects. It is true that Olson's poetics had been published in a slim volume in 1950 and was quoted liberally in William Carlos Williams *Autobiography*, published in 1951. Atkins could have come into contact with the verse type well before writing these poems, but this is just speculation at this point. What we do know is that Atkins's poetry relies on typographical symbols to denote speech. Johanna Drucker reminds us that "the difficulties of reintroducing the sound structure into this visual field show immediately how intimately the visual and verbal codes are integrated in transmission on the page—and how dependent on graphical devices our reading habits are."[75] For us to understand what Atkins is doing in the poem, we have to understand how the visual markers—the quotation marks, the parentheses, the question marks—work together to provide us with an understanding of poetic voice. To end the poem with a single exclamation point makes us rethink the shape of the poem. "Trees" is the last word of the poem, but not the last inscription of the poem. The exclamation mark displays the emphasis on the revelation of a poem about brutal murder and rape while simultaneously drawing our attention to the shape of the exclamation point. It is given its own line in the poem, signifying its importance to the overall structure of the poem. To end with the exclamation point and not a period signifies the importance of the exclamation mark as a sign within language while at the same time Atkins makes the exclamation point its own unique sign. The verticality of the punctuation mark recalls the tree itself, in all of its verticality. It also takes us to the phallus, which is also the site of violence and erasure throughout the poem. To end with the phallic exclamation point is to point us toward the site of violence, exaggerating the already horrifying event of the poem, as well as to point us to a site of erasure, which is where the image of the tree and of a landscape initially takes us. In this one symbol, which is both a signifier of sound as well as of vision, Atkins infuses the whole of the narrative of the poem.

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[73] Atkins, Russell. "On a 'Beauteous' Scene." *The Free Lance* 1.1 (1953): 23-24. Print.

[74] Although it is possible that Olson and Atkins were in conversation with one another, no documents from the Atkins archive exist to show a relationship.

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[75] Drucker, Johanna. "Not Sound." *The Sound of Poetry/ The Poetry of Sound*. Eds. Marjorie Perloff and Craig Dworkin. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2009. 238. Print.

With the next poem, “Night and a Distant Church,” we begin to see the direction Atkins will take over the course of the next thirty years. Atkins is evolving towards his more mature work in which graphs, signs, symbols disrupt and resist the meaning of the poem as a whole. In this poem, words that are referential (that have a reference outside of themselves, in linguistic parlance) are intermingled with “words” (and I use the term “word” loosely) that do not reference anything outside themselves. These “words” without meaning or reference work to undermine the meaning of the whole of the poem while, paradoxically highlighting the “words” as sheer sound: they mean nothing but make sound. They disrupt the visual meaning of the text with shear sonic interruptions.

> Forward abrupt up
> the smmm mm
> wind   mmm m
>   mmm
> upon
> the smm mm
> wind   mmm m
>   mmm
> into the xmm wind
> rain now and again
> the xmm wind
>   ell s

b

ell s

b[76]

Atkins does not give us alphabetic phrases that we could piece together as sound analogous to “wind” or onomatopoeic interjection like “woosh” that we may associate with the sound of wind. Instead, we are given “nonsense” phrases, or phrases not associated with the overall meaning. To take the sibilant /s/ and place it next to the nasal /m/ juxtaposes the interjection, which is usually tied to the sound sense, to the non-referential sound of the word. This move, on the one hand, highlights the sound that comes from the articulation of the s and m. On the other hand, this move highlights the very oddity of the ‘xmm” throughout the poem. “Xmm” cannot be pronounced with ease in the English language. In fact, it is a construct that does not exist in English, which makes the phrase resist pronunciation. Rather, the only way to understand this “word” is to look at it: it favors a visual “reading” of the line. This is especially true when we get to the last four lines of the poem. If put in the correct line order, the last four lines look like this: “ells/ b/ells/ b.” This structure resists a sounding out of the line. However, looking at it on the page, we read the lines as “bells/ bells.” Such a visual juxtaposition resists articulation, yet it also allows us to “make sense” of the lines by placing the “b” in the line above, giving us “bells.” Atkins plays with the structure visually as well as sonically.

In these three examples, we see how Atkins shifts questions of poetics and aesthetics in directions they have hitherto not gone. Rather than focusing on epistemological questions about the nature of what we do or do not know, Atkins’s aesthetics address the ontological questions surrounding authorial intent. Rather than ask "does the poem convey the artist's intention?" Atkins questions whether the poem qua object is the proper object to put into the world (Prufer 144). And, if we seek the visual "objectness" of his poems, we cannot forget the sound structures that are embedded within the visual structure on the page. Atkins wants a poem that has a visual structure on the page while also desiring to give us a sound structure when reading the poem, and thus, the "objectivity" of the poem lies on the page as well as in the mind. Its existence in the mind is just as valid as its existence on the page.

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[76] Atkins, Russell. “Night and a Distant Church.” *The Free Lance* 1.1 (1953): 24. Print.

Black Mountain Review, 1954

In a short three years, Robert Creeley produced one of the most historically significant mid-century little magazines, just as John Cage, Merce Cunningham, and Buckminster Fuller produced musical compositions, choreography, and architecture that would place Black Mountain College as a vanguard of creativity at mid-century.[77] Indeed, Creeley, Cage, Cunningham, and Fuller taught courses while creating masterworks like Cage's *4'33"*.[78] Arthur Schoenberg's beloved student Heinrich Jalowetz, following the *anchluss*, or annexation of Austria in to Germany in 1938, moved straight to Asheville to teach and experiment at Black Mountain College.[79] However, by 1943, the College had financial difficulties and was on the brink of closing. In an effort to keep the College afloat, then-rector Charles Olson invited Robert Creeley to edit a magazine of poetry and prose that would expand Black Mountain College beyond the small avant-garde coterie community. Unfortunately, dissemination of a magazine did not successfully move beyond the boundaries of the avant-garde and only printed runs of 400-500 with each issue.[80]

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[77] Bauhaus alumni, like Xanti Schawinsky, among many others, immigrated to the US in the 1930s, influencing the artistic direction of the Black Mountain School artists. See *Black Mountain College: Experiment in Art* for more on this inter-dependence of artistic media.

[78] *Black Mountain College: Experiment in Art*. Ed. Vincent Katz. Cambridge: MIT Press, 2002. 137. Print.

[79] Ibid., 246.

Editor Robert Creeley, with contributing editors Paul Blackburn, Irving Layton, Charles Olson, and Kenneth Rexroth, published the first issue of the *Black Mountain Review* in Spring 1954, and Creeley remained the editor-in-chief for the run of the magazine, which was published quarterly from Spring 1954 to Autumn 1957. Not willing to follow the format of little magazines that had come before, Creeley expanded the scope of genres included in the mid-century journal. He published intimate letters between poets, diary or journal entries taken from friends, as well as his letters to Charles Olson. He also published foundational work of Olson, Robert Duncan, and Denise Levertov.

Creeley and Olson started corresponding in the Spring of 1950 at William Carlos Williams suggestion. The two friends would remain close until Olson's death in 1970. The *Black Mountain Review* created a space and an audience for the "projectivist" poets who had been writing in the "projectivist" style since 1950. "Projective Verse," Olson's seminal work of mid-century poetics, had been published as a chapbook in 1950, four years before the publication of the *Black Mountain Review* and heavily influenced which poets were to be published in the little magazine.

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[80] This small run is one of the major factors of designating a magazine "small." It has nothing to do with the size of the magazine and everything to do with the size of the audience for a particular magazine.

Olson breaks *Projective Verse* into two parts. The first part focuses on what Olson calls “open verse,” as opposed to “closed verse,” which he associates with verse “which print bred,” or verse written “for the page.”[81] He claims that “closed verse,” or verse that has a distinct meter, rhyme scheme, and form, was written for the page because of its overreliance on the visual text to signal the sounds that should emanate from the poem. Instead, the poem should be projected by the poet’s body, by the poet’s breath (and all that breathing entails, including the body), to the ears and minds of the audience. In creating a verse that resists the page, Olson formulated a bodily practice of poetry, a poetry substantiated by the movement of voice from poet to audience. Centering his poetics on the relationship between the physical body and the body of meaning, Olson changes the conception of twentieth-century poetry, a poetry that goes beyond the traditional understanding of the page. Here, Olson already has a poetics that shifts away from a specular phenomenon of reading, a poetics that is bound to the page. But how can we have poetry without the page? Olson renegotiates the boundaries of the text by emphasizing that the “origin” of the poem starts with breath: “Verse now, 1950, if it is to go ahead, if it is to be of *essential* use, must, I take it, catch up and put into itself certain laws and possibilities of the breath, of the breathing of the man who writes as well as of his listenings.”[82] Though written in the cryptic and non-grammatical way that he often writes, Olson states that articulating in one’s own words, as well as listening to the words of others, is paramount for verse to continue to be important. Olson does not say that the page is not important (because it is, even in projective verse), but he says that the over-emphasis on the page, on print matter, has left us with a constricted notion of the poem.

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[81] Olson, Charles. “Projective Verse.” New York: Totem Press, 1959. 3. Print.
[82] Ibid.

Poetry will start with the breath, with the fundamental activity of all life. Poetry originates with breath, moving into a "kinetic" energy that opens the "field of composition" creating an architecture of the poem that relies on breath itself to substantiate the relationship.

Even with Olson's emphasis on breath, his claims are seemingly contradictory statement that wavers back and forth between emphasis on the visual and the auditory. For instance, Olson continues his statement on poetics by introducing a line and syllable as "objects" within a field (3), yet it is the "speech-force of language" that gives the poem "solidity."[83] He treats linguistic legibility as an object, as something that is more than a system; it is rather something that has an ontological status. The "speech-force of language" is the actual motion of language, which not only *has meaning* but *moves*. And the typewriter, in its ability to "record the listening he has done to his own speech," becomes a sound-recording device that recursively allows Olson to re-voice his poetry anew.[84]

Olson's insistence on breath as the poem's origin and the ability of the typewriter to act as a device for sound recording shifts us outside the realm of a poetics of language dissociated from the content of composition alone. And, though Olson, like Williams Carlos Williams, promotes poetry built upon "ordinary language," Olson's concern in Projective Verse lies with the *material medium* of poetry. Olson will tie print and voice in "Projective Verse." Olson does not treat poems as ephemeral objects that have no substance, no ontological existence. Instead, he keeps with William Carlos William's substantiation of poetry as "no ideas but in things;" having no idea about the thing but the thing itself. But how breath, arguably the most ephemeral and evanescent component of the human body, gives substance and ontological existence to the poem itself? If a poem should *be* rather than *mean*, what is the poem's significance, and indeed what makes it a poem? Wouldn't a poem rely on the page to give it its existence?

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[83] Ibid., 4.
[84] Ibid., 5-7.

Olson's "Projective Verse" is neither total graphic poetry nor total sound poetry. Olson pulls from the tension between the two media to bridge early-twentieth-century notions of the poem as thing (a la William Carlos Williams) and the mid-century experiments in pure sound poetry (a la Dadaists like Schwitters, Russian *zaum* poets like Khlebnikov). The divide between graphocentric and phonocentric poetries, aided by technological reproduction and inscription, one through print, the other through sound recordings, was at an apex in 1950, the year Olson publishes "Projective Verse." Olson, then, rather than take up one side of the "poetic medium" debate, sidesteps the debate by placing breath, voice, and the typewriter as media through which the poet "re-voices" poetry. Though this sounds like it might be more on the side of the "phonocentric," I argue that Olson sidesteps the divide altogether. He creates a sonic poetry that is referential (unlike the a-referentialtiy of phonocentric sound poetry).

Olson emphasizes a sonicity that emerges from the body via breath as well as a sonicity that emerges from the phenomenon of composing by "field." This composition by field privileges the material page on which the poet writes. Thus, the page itself becomes a spatial component of composition by which the page and the words on the page are in interlocking discourse: the materiality of the text not only encompasses the words on the page, but also the page itself. But, beyond the interlocking material, physical print, the force of kinetic energy that originates with the poet is transferred to the page; thus, the whole poem unites breath, kinetic energy, the pages, and the words on the page. The emphasis on the syllable as the unit of language that best emphasizes a projective poetics becomes important because it highlights the boundaries of the linguistic unit. Rather than privileging the word, which privileges the whole reference or sign, highlighting the syllable privileges the signifier.

Olson also uses the typewriter *as a type of transformative medium that emphasizes its sonic functions rather than its graphic functions*. In this way, his poetics is situated as a multimedia poetics, but one that emphasizes the sonic abilities of the graphic, and indeed the sonic abilities of the little magazine as a medium through which the typewritten page represents vocal enunciation. Such a theory is represented in the pages of his "Projective Verse," and the sonoricity of the text will be taken up as a problem and a site of discourse for the poets writing in the *Black Mountain Review.*

Indeed, poets were moving "beyond the modernist drive toward self-enclosure (*auto-telos*), the arts at this time undertook an opening out and interaction with context that gave rise to emblematic forms like happenings and performance."[85] And this emphasis on context as an aesthetic practice—as well as a concept—in post-1945 poetry is arguably the single most defining aspect of Creeley's poetic practice. Indeed, the Norton Anthology of Poetry states in the section on poetic forms that the late-twentieth century defined the modes of poetry (e.g., Confessional, Imagist, Objectivist) by "aesthetic or philosophical criteria, rather than by any distinct formal characteristics."[86]

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[85] Fredman, Stephen. "Creeley's Contextual Practice: Interviews, Conversations, and Collaborations." *Form, Power and Person in Robert Creeley's Life and Work*. Iowa City: Univ. of Iowa Press, 2010. 182. Print.

[86] *Norton Anthology of Poetry*. Eds. Ferguson et al. New York: W.W. Norton, 2005. 1274. Print.

While more or less true, what is missing from the anthology itself, or, really, any anthology dealing with poetry of the twentieth century, is the multimodal context of poetry. While Projective Verse is defined by its emphasis on breath as the origin of the poem, one forgets that this is precisely the problem with attempting to capture the fullness of twentieth -entury poetry simply as a text. Fredman further avers that poetic context shaped Creeley's initial understanding of poetry stated in the phrase "Form is never more than an extension of content" to the fullness of Creeley's poetics found in the phrase that "content is never more than an extension of context."[87] Furthermore, Creeley claims that the total spatio-acoustic context of the writing environment must be taken into account to produce the type of writing necessary: "In the interview from which the volume takes its name, 'Contexts of Poetry,' he describes how media such as the typewriter, the paper (its size and properties), and the ambient music (radio or phonograph) provide the physical, sensory context for what was at the time a carefully staged, solitary writing practice."[88] Such a carefully staged writing practice, in which the body of the poet is removed from the world around him and "staged" so as to be able to "perform" his writing process, combines the poetic aesthetic with the body in space. And, one could argue, that such a poetics necessarily redraws the boundaries of the poem: the poem is no longer just words on the pages; rather the poem encompasses the page, the typewriter/ writing utensil, the body of the poet, and the space in which the poem is being written.

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[87] Fredman, Stephen. "Creeley's Contextual Practice: Interviews, Conversations, and Collaborations." *Form, Power and Person in Robert Creeley's Life and Work*. Iowa City: Univ. of Iowa Press, 2010. 183. Print.

[88] Ibid.

In turning now to Robert Creeley's *Black Mountain Review*, we understand that Olson's "Projective Verse" had more than a passing influence on Creeley. It was a vital component in his poetry, and indeed, in the formation of the magazine itself. Indeed, in a letter dated October 18, 1950, Creeley writes to Olson that his little magazine will be a serious publication of poetry: "The thing: make that 40 pages he plans—a real gig, …. BUT, what a mag can have over a book—fragmentation—burst—plunge—spontaneous—THE WHOLE WORKS."[89] This description will follow Creeley throughout his time as editor in chief of the *Black Mountain Review*. It gets to the heart of the type of poetics that he and Olson possess. In this description, we see a vitality given to the printed page, a vitality that mimics the kinetic energy that underscores the projective project.

It is fitting that Charles Olson would have two strong pieces in the first issue of the *Black Mountain Review*. Perhaps the most surprising and interesting piece in this first issue is Olson's prose piece "Against Wisdom As Such," which is a slight critique of Robert Duncan's reliance on the abstract notion of "wisdom" writ large. Robert Duncan was a San Francisco-based poet and writer who is associated with both the Black Mountain "school" and the San Francisco Renaissance groups of poets. What we have here is an early relationship with Black Mountain, and in fact Duncan is one of the first links between the two. Olson claims that Duncan's over reliance on some abstract notion of wisdom inhibits his ability to be fully creative: "And that he chastises himself as either more or less than he is, because of some outside concept and measure of 'wisdom'. Which is what's wrong with wisdom, that it does this to persons. And that it damn well has to go, at least from the man of language."[90] Olson uses Duncan as a springboard to then discuss the problem with "wisdom" in the creative arts, and the essence of poetry. Instead of claiming that wisdom is something that comes from outside the artist, he claims that "wisdom, like style, is the man—that it is not extricable in any sort of a statement of itself; even though—and here is the catch—there be 'wisdom', that it must be sought, and that 'truths' can be come one (they are overwhelming and so simple there does exist the temptation to see them as 'universal'.) But they are, in no wise, or at the gravest loss, verbally separated. They stay the man, As his skin is. As his life. And to be parted with only as that is."[91] This non-separation of wisdom from the man or woman of poetry is in fact the "fire" that propels the poet forward. But here, "fire" is not just some abstract term that Olson has pulled out of thin air to come up with a useful metaphor. "Fire" is a particular metaphor to talk about sound: "Light was the sign of the triumph of love and spirit before electronics. And here we are after. So, fire…

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[89] Creeley, Robert. *The Selected Letters of Robert Creeley*. Eds. Rod Smith, Peter Baker, and Kaplan Harris. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2014. 45. Print.

Sound
is fire. As love
is.[92]

I have kept the whole phrase in its original typography because this typography is important: Olson is trying to tell us something about "light" and "fire." Olson juxtaposes "light" with "fire." What comes between this juxtaposition is electronics. But what does this mean? "Light" of course has so many connotations, and one of the strongest references is the Enlightenment. It also signals the ocular sensory perception: light comes to us through the visual sense. If “light” or the visual is the triumph of action (specifically love and spirit) before electronics, then sound and fire, both of which are equated with one another, are used to signify energy and the use of the ear or the sonic as the sensory perception that is heightened after the electronic revolution. What is striking about his description is that Olson leaves “love” ambiguous. Is love supposed to correspond to fire or to sound? Does it actually matter if both fire and sound are the same? Perhaps it does not matter, but the connection of sound to fire runs throughout the rest of the piece.

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[90] *Black Mountain Review*. Vol. 1, Number 1, 1954. 35. Print.
[91] Ibid., 36.
[92] Ibid., 37.

To form the poem using fire, one must pay attention to rhythm and time, says Olson: “… A poem is ordered not so much *in* time or *by* time (metric, measure) as of a characteristic *of* time, which is most profound: that time is synchronistic and that a poem is the one example of a man-made continuum.”[93] Thus, time plays a particular role for him: time is not just something that one rides along with, but rather time is constitutive of the poem: the poem must be created of time; time must be the prime factor driving the poem itself.

He ends the piece by stating that “A song is heat. There may be light, but light and beauty is not the *state* of: the state is the grip of (and it is not feverish, is very cool, is—the eyes are—how did they get that way?

‘He who controls rhythm
controls’.[94]

In Olson’s somewhat cryptic and syntactically complex last statement, he offers us layer after layer of complex metaphors to get us to the last lines of the poem-essay. This last stanza-paragraph leads to what Olson has been claiming throughout the essay: when one finds one's natural rhythm, one's natural breath, that is when s/he controls poetic voice. As this piece is addressed directly to Robert Duncan, Olson makes clear that Duncan's poetry will not do the work that he wants it to until he leaves everything—including Duncan's increasing fascination with mysticism—but the breath to do the work of the poem.

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[93] Ibid., 38.
[94] Ibid., 39.

Both as a response to Olson and a tribute to his friend and poet Denise Levertov, Duncan writes the poem "For Denise Levertov: An A Muse Ment." In the Fall, 1954 issue of the *Black Mountain Review*, Creeley publishes Robert Duncan's poem, notedly prefixed as a "letter" for Denise Levertov. However, after the poem was published, Levertov thought that Duncan was parodying her style of writing and never quite fully forgave Duncan or Creeley for its publication. In subsequent publications of the poem, Duncan changes the title to "For Denise Levertov: An A Muse Meant" to denote that Duncan was in fact treating Levertov's poetry as inspiration for his own. Igor Stravinsky was Duncan's most contemporary non-poetry based influence, and Duncan bases his understanding of how sound works in the poem on the influential *The Poetics of Music*, by Igor Stavinsky in which Stravinsky argued that music is "derived not from nature but from artifice and is ruled by 'principle' rather than 'self-expression.'"[95] And indeed, Duncan's own poetics mirrors that of Stravinsky's: "Language is drawn forward most fundamentally not by meter, and certainly not by the desire to formulate a particular idea, but by cadence, modulation in sound (moving, for example, from long to short vowels as the poems reaches ecstatic awareness), and meticulous attention to line breaks."[96] In poetic terms, Duncan focused on duration, on cadence of sound to get to the tension provided by line breaks. Vowels, in Duncan's case, rule the poetic line: "The poem is then a struggle between limitlessness and confinement, ecstasy and restraint, but it aspires to the freedom of vowels, and it is vowels that are ultimately triumphant."[97] We see such tension in first two stanzas of the poem "For Denise Levertov: An A Muse Ment":

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[95] Ibid., 141-2.
[96] Ibid., 147.

- in
spired/ the aspirate
the aspirant almost
without breath
it is a breath out
breathed—An aspiration
pictured as the familiar spirit
hoverer
above
each loved each
a word giving up its ghost
memorized as the flavor
from the vowels / the bowels /

hesitate (as if the bone-
cranium-helmet in-
hearing;) clearing

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[97] Ibid., 148.

of meaning.   old greym attar[98]

In the first stanza, we hear the tension, as if someone is holding her breath, and then releases it in the next stanza. This first stanza starts with the syllable "in-" which signals two significant operations: firstly, we have the meaning of "in" as a prefix: it is used most commonly with verbs and signifies an "inward motion," just like someone taking a breath. It is also a labial sound: the /n/ sound hits the top of the mouth and does not have an exhaling motion but rather an inhaling movement. This movement is important in considering the rest of the poem, which will move as if one is exhaling. We move on to the next line and read the syllabic tone that will follow throughout the rest of this section of the poem; that is the sibilant sound produced by the "s" used four times before we get to the last line in the stanza, which takes us from the sibilant sound of the "s" to the dental fricative of the "th" sound. Once we move to the "th" sound, we are hurried down to the next stanza, which uses the fricative "th" in conjunction with the sibilant "s" to move us into fuller lines, which signal a release of breath.

In the second stanza, we have an added complication because of the "meta"-stanza to the right. The tension between reading linearly and reading horizontally, as we English speakers have been taught, is apparent in this stanza. It is also interesting to note that the poem could be said to be about the sound of the poet's voice to produce "a word," and that this word "word" does not appear until the seventh line in the stanza. And, more importantly, this point in the poem is where the "meta-stanza" to the right happens to be placed. A couple of different interpretations present themselves as to how to deal with the stanza to the right in relation with the stanza to the left. Each interpretation has its own benefits. For instance, one could read the line “a word giving up its ghost” and then follow straight through with a reading of the whole right-side stanza. This reading would emphasize the line on the left, highlighting “ a word giving up its ghost.” In this case, the word, personified, and given the authority to act on its own, would “give up” or “release” the “ghost” of “aspiration” or breath, which, according to Duncan, gives vowels meaning. If we read the stanza horizontally, and use the gap between lines as a caesura, then we would have a slightly different meaning for the poem. We would get a pause in breath between “ghost” and “hesitate” for example. In terms of meaning, the former way of reading the poem makes more sense than the latter, because we would have an understanding of the “meta” stanza as one whole unit. Yet, we could also think of this whole stanza as a type caesura in that the meaning of the word “hesitate” (and everything that follows from it) gives us a type of pause that is emphasized as such to a greater degree than any other line break in the rest of the stanza.

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[98] Duncan, Robert. "For Denise Levertov: An A-Muse-Ment." *Black Mountain Review* Fall 1954: 19-21. Print.

From the first two stanzas, we move on to a single line that captures the tension between speaking and listening:

“be still thy brathe and hear them speak:”

However, as we know from our earlier discussion of Duncan’s poetics, the “them” becomes paramount; the “them” divides speaking from breathing, and further divides breathing from one’s own ability to listen. What, then, does such a line tell us about Duncan’s relationship to the voice? It tells us that for Duncan, voice is secondary; listening is primary. But this is not just a listening to one’s own thought. In fact, it is far from listening to oneself. It is about listening to the “ghost” of the word speak from beyond, as spirits spoke to Yeats, and others from a past. Duncan’s own relationship to spirit conjuring follows Yeats's own understanding of the relationship between voice and the sprites of the past. But just who is "them"? Have we moved into the realm of the spiritual? This poem places the voice and the ear at the center of the poem.

1956: Atkins's Psychovisualism in *The Free Lance*

We first see Russell Atkins's "A Psychovisualist Perspective for 'Musical' Composition" published in *Free Lance*, Volume 3, Issue Number 2, 1956. However, we know from archival documents that he had been working on this theory since 1950. "Psychovisualism," as Atkins called it, evolved out of a disagreement with a friend who was a jazz composer studying musical composition at the Cleveland Institute of Music. The disagreement turned into weekly, sometimes nightly, discussions about the place of the visual and sonic in musical composition. Atkins asserts that composition is essentially *visual*, the mind comprehending music through image, creating image-based compositions onto which sound is applied.[99] Atkins places "composition" at the center of his theory rather than music, because the concept of music as we know it did not exist for Atkins. Rather, *composition*, musical or poetic, are one and the same process: there is no distinction between the process of composing a song and the process of composing a poem. The final outcome of any composition is the creation of an autonomous art object. But Atkins's "Psychovisualist Perspective" examines the process of creation rather than the final product, and it is here that the convoluted syntax, obscure vocabulary, and, one could say, wacky concepts lead to a poetics in which sound is too easily brushed aside in favor of the visual. Yet, even as Atkins decouples music and sound, sound remains central to his overall theory.

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[99] Prufer, Kevin. *Russell Atkins: The Life and Work of an American Master*. Eds. Kevin Prufer and Michael Dumanis. Warrensburg: Pleiades Press, 2013. 15. Print.

Let us go step by step through “A Psychovisualist Perspective for ‘Musical’ Composition.” When trying to understand the overall idea of what “psychovisualism” actually is, Atkins resists easy answers to this question: “Psychovisualism does not try to frame new concepts. It is chiefly preoccupied with adjustments : adjustments that might make a composer several times surer of effectuality. The following is a condensation of the general tenets of a psychovisual attitude toward composing and sound.”[100] Atkins proposes not a new theory, but an “adjustment,” a shift that emphasizes a concept that is already in the musical discourse. Such “adjustments” seem to be a misnomer when we arrive at the text, not because “adjustment” is not the correct word: perhaps it is. But when parsing our Atkins’s difficult syntax, we come to see that the text itself is saying something slightly more than just an adjustment and that a certain sense of play is at work in all of Atkins’s work, both poetry and prose. He seems to wink at his audience at every turn, calling attention to his sense of coyness that revelas itself most fully in his poetics. We see that Atkins’s “perspective” is more complicated than first assumed. In some ways, Atkins is acutely aware of the problem with “radical difference,” a difference that is rarely that different from what has come before it.

While his theory is less well known than Charles Olson’s “Projective Verse,” “psychovisualism” can help us to understand the place of sound in an influential vein of mid-century avant-garde Black poetry. Atkins asserts that the composer is more vital than sound itself for the creation of ‘music’:

> It is more obvious today than ever that the power of ‘music’s’ impressive communication lies outside of the very element that transmits it, sound,

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[100] Atkins, Russell. “A Psychovisual Perspective for ‘Musical’ Composition.” *The Free Lance* 1.2 (1956): 2. Print.

> and has far less to do with objectivity in the combinations of that medium than presumed seemingly behind 'musical' practices. Though it is said to be common knowledge (and there is little doubt that it is) the psychovisualist wishes to reaffirm that the creative process is not apart from its constituents, and might appear in this perspective's hypothesis as the very nature of a paradox wholly responsible for the pleasure received on 'music.'[101]

Here we may recognize Atkins's vocabulary: music is a type of communication, and music has far less of an "objective," standard structure than one first assumes. Next, he treats sound as the way in which such communication is transmitted: sound transmits and has no other meaningful qualities. He then states that the creative process, as is well known, and with which he agrees, cannot be separated from the actual ingredients used in the creative process. But, he claims, these ingredients used in the creative process are paradoxically the problem of musical pleasure. He then argues that the American music schools are derivative of European music in meaning and form. Yet it is unclear from this passage what "constituent" in fact means. This ambiguity does not clarify the place of the creative process and its overall components.

Polemically, Atkins commences the next section, "Error of 'Music'," by claiming that the notion of music written for the ear is nonsense and instead focuses on the structures around which the discourse of music has been built: "The psychovisualist finds it increasingly difficult to accept the term 'music' as actually representative of other than improvisation or 'written for the ear.' He prefers to investigate the conditions existing between three things which he feels have become confused in rank ; sound, music, composition."[102] Here, we see that "music" in its current state, as the term is used in current vocabulary, is only valid when discussing improvisation. But why improvisation? Atkins suggests that improvisation is that which is *not written* in any traditional sense of "writing": improvisation relies on two forms of musical creation: 1) the "standard," a tune that is known and has been played for years, and 2) the riff off of the standard, a creation that is more or less performed in front of a live audience and that is 'improvised' in the moment of play. To be able to improvise is the ultimate "music"-based art, because it relies on sound that is immediate and is decoupled from the page. Thus, for Atkins, there is a divide between the written and the more performative and instantaneous that accompanies sound. However, Atkins is not interested in improvisation. Rather, in this piece, he is interested in composition which musical improvisation is not composition. In the last part of his sentence, he claims that sound, music, and composition have become confused in rank. Rather than place sound or music before composition, Atkins highlights how composition is the highest ranking of the three. And if one takes seriously improvisation, one moves away from Atkins's emphasis on the composer as intentional creator of a communication that relies on the visual: the composition is not music and the improvisation is not composition.

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[101] Ibid.

Music is the antithesis of composition: "The psychovisualist concludes that 'music' contrary to its presumptions as 'organized sound' is the antithesis of composition. There is, to a psychovisualist, no appreciable validity in the term 'musical composition'."[103] Here we run in to the first of many of Atkins's seeming contradictions: how can 'musical composition' something that Atkins is seemingly invested in, be so antithetical to his overall message? Atkins further notes that a "musical composition" is based on a science of sound, a science, Atkins contends, that has little to no semantic value: "Such a composition makes use of relationships imposed out of a pure world of noises, tones, et al. Such a composition can be constructed on a distortion of such relationships which becomes, in its way, an opposite aspect of the same science of sound. Such a world has no significantly expressive form- meaning. It is a collection of raw materials. The composition must be made."[104] Here, we see that Atkins attempts to delineate compositions made from the science of sound (in which case the composition has little semantic value and is made of "raw materials") and compositions in which form and meaning are completely intertwined. It is the latter that Atkins favors, and the composition that must be "made" is the composition that is both object and process, wherein object and process entwine with form and meaning: "In short, the psychovisualist contends that the small meanings that may be made to exist in an absolute world of tone relationships, are derived from a larger more significant phenomenal world: Composition As Object-Form."[105] Atkins takes us to the heart of his theory of psychovisualism: we are not dealing with "music" as a "tone-system" or a "language." Anything written "for the ear" is automatically suspect, because Atkins conceptualizes the ear as a passive organ- an organ that something is *done to* rather than *creates*.

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[102] Ibid., 3.

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[103] Ibid., 3.
[104] Ibid.
[105] Ibid.

The musical composition as a meaningful entity does not exist because sound alone cannot provide meaning. Music is tone relationships ordered into sound, and sound is secondary to the objects from which sound emanates. For Atkins, composition is a visual art. In "Part II: 'Composition and Sound Applied,'" he states that "Tones **cannot** be found existing actually in an objectively dimensional space of related positions. A ' high' or ' low' tone has no existence among frequencies. There is only vibratory rate. The psychovisual composer accepts that high and low is imposed by psychic phenomena on tones as a primary condition for meaningfulness."[106] Here, Atkins recognizes that "tone" in and of itself is nothing more than vibrations regulated by physical presence in time and that tones come from an external source: they are "movement" that occurs outside of "dimensional space": they lie outside of objective space and have no substantial "thingness." Thus, the way in which we seek to make tones meaningful is through psychic phenomena: we project meaningfulness onto the sound. If an entity is not an object, it cannot produce meaning by itself. But what is meaningful, or what is meaning-making, is the "high" or "low" tone, two conceptions that come from within the mind rather than from outside the mind, or from the physical world.

And then Atkins guides us to a somewhat quizzical phrase about music and composition: "the psychovisualist believes that much that is taught as music is simply a naive study of that truly important phenomenon, spatial relationships for conception."[107] It is the mind working towards an understanding of the spatial relationships *between* something like the "high" and "low" tones that Atkins mentions above. It is in the space between the visual, the sonic, objectivity, and the mind that creates, or composes, the psychovisualist work of art. And yet, Atkins insistence on the "ear" as the organ that is deficient is somewhat paradoxical to his overall claims. Is the eye better able to discern semantic meaning right away? Not necessarily. Meaning is produced by the psychic phenomena "in between" high and low tones. Thus, composition happens in the space between sound and vision. The composition itself may be visual, but the meaningfulness of the composition happens in the space between vision and sound in the psyche: "That sound-art is a visual art to the composer, and a composer, one who composes for sound to be applied, is psychovisual in perspective."[108] I think here the optimal phrase is "one who composes for *sound to be applied.*" In placing "application" at the fore of his discussion, Atkins places "doing" or "making" as the central purpose of sound. Sound applied, then, is a dynamic, ever-changing and shifting creation that Atkins ultimately views as a formed object. For Atkins to claim that "[t]here is NO SOUND OR RHYTHM SAVE THAT PRODUCED BY OBJECTS IN (INERTIAL) CONFLICT OR 'MOTION'"[109] is to claim that the basis of sound and rhythm is not in some abstract, unknown, metaphysical conception of sound dissociated from the objects from which a sound may be produced. Rather, sound is a byproduct of an object (an instrument, etc.) in conflict or motion. Thus, objects themselves are things—have an ontological status—whereas sound is the motion between objects. Sound itself has no ontological status: it is a motion, a "verb," so to speak.

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[106] Ibid., 5.
[107] Ibid.

What, then, does his theory of psychovisualism have to do with his poetry? In short, everything. But there is a much longer explanation. Atkins states that "it needs then reaffirmation; Composition-and-sound literally is no language and cannot achieve what language can achieve in the way of communication by methods of discursion."[110] Atkins tells us that "music" is an inferior art to the possibilities of language as an art form. Composed sound is not a "language," as many have been prone to argue, because it does not have the fundamental semantic structure, which allows language to be imbued with meaningfulness from the very start. Composition of a poetic text is laden with meaning—and thus value—from the very building blocks of its composition. Atkins also argues that the temporal swiftness of words carries meaning much more quickly between interlocutors, and thus is better suited to carrying meaning than music: "The specific application of words enables them to traverse in seconds a meaningfulness that a Composition-and-Sounds must convey in a far greater time length and less specifically. Because of the specific object behind words, they enjoy a conceptual multiplication and manipulation that sound cannot logically emulate the same effect."[111] Here, in this last sentence, we come to the crux of Atkins's argument: the "object behind words" is what trumps sound alone. Atkins sounds like a structural linguistic, like Saussure, when he speaks about the "object behind words," or the signified beyond the signifier. The referent to which the word points gives a phrase, a sentence its meaning. And here we get to the very center of Atkins's overall understanding of what poetry can do, and the limits of sound-based methods of analysis: "Thus the psychovisualist composes with this attitude; that the object-form in Composition and sound application is a synthesis of the ASSOCIABLE FLEXIBILITY of a WORD- NOUN-OBJECT IN LANGUAGES and the STATIC FORM- OBJECT IN PAINTING. Such a primary in psychovisual composition is a 'COMPOUND MOTIVIC ORGANIZATION,' or OBJECT-FORM."[112] Thus, the "object-form" is the basis of all poetry, indeed of all language, and is the starting point for understanding how sound can be meaningful. For Atkins, sound is never meaningful on its own: it is in the interstices between object-form and sound that composition happens, and it is in the process, rather than the product, where the composition is most meaningful. It is the process that is most meaningful, and indeed we might go so far as to say that composition is nothing more than process, which gives the text its meaning. Yet, it is a certain *type* of sound-based method to which Atkins responds. It is the method and theory of "sound for sound's sake" that Atkins decries in psychovisualism. Sound detached from the object-form is a problem, and is the problem with the discourse of music as it stands in post-War America. Instead, sound is an integral component of the overall object-form created by the composer. Sound is integrated into the object-form, and thus cannot be extricated as its own singular entity. Sound is thus wrapped up in the ontological realm of psychovisualism.

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[108] Ibid., 6.
[109] Ibid., 8.

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[110] Ibid., 9.
[111] Ibid., 9.

Atkins then reiterates the place of sound as integral to the object: "Sounds must derive directly or indirectly of presentational objects in VISUAL FIELDS."[113] The object in a visual field becomes a space and a place where sound may then emanate. Yet, it never starts with sound. Sound is a secondary product of the primary object in space. Yet, this whole discussion is only a small portion of how "psychic phenomena" operates for Atkins. For instance, when Atkins claims that "Sound is secondary and cannot emulate of itself the important features of psychic phenomena,"[114] it is necessary to pay attention to the phrase “psychic phenomena.” So far, we have discussed the exterior world of sound and sight in relation to objects. What Atkins claims is that it is not only important to understand how sound and vision operate as they are created for the exterior world, but it is just as important to understand how they operate in the mind. Atkins avers that it is not enough to hear or see objects outside of ourselves. This is not what gives a great composition meaning. What gives a composition meaning is the ability to hold it in one’s mind.

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[112] Ibid.
[113] Ibid., 10.
[114] Ibid., 16.

Black Mountain Review 1956:

Robert Creeley’s editorial expertise is at its apex with the *Black Mountain Review*’s Issue 6, published Spring 1956. This issue includes one of the most diverse sets of poets and writers the *Review* would ever see, a carefully constructed publication of well-placed and well-juxtaposed poems, reviews, and essays. The issue starts with a “Notes” section by Robert Duncan, which is taken from a personal journal and in which he responds to Olson’s “Against Wisdom As Such.” The issue moves on to five poems by Louis Zukofsky, to poems by Joel Oppenheimer, Denise Levertov, Irving Layton and Jonathan Williams. Then, the issue returns to Louis Zukofsky and his study of Shakespeare. The denouement of the issue lies in Zukofsky’s opus.

What is masterful about this issue is the way in which Robert Creeley has mastered the little magazine’s structure. Creeley, writing to William Carlos Williams on February 27, 1950, six years before this issue, outlines what a successful little magazine would look like: “Briefly, it comes to this; that magazines like WAKE, etc. Come to little because of no center, no point, if you will, beyond a collection of ‘available’ material, printed without much of an eye as to why A should come after B, and so on."[115] For Creeley, as one would assume, finds a "center" or "point" necessary. Eclecticism does not make for a good journal. In contrast, the *Kenyon Review* "blends, if you will, and alien & conflicting criticism is never less at home, nor more crude, than when allowed in, by way of a 'fair' representation of both sides of the question."[116] He notes the lack of manifesto so common in other little magazines that would "limit any kind of development that comes from the act of editing, the act of selection."[117] One could say that this issue is a fulfillment of his ideals, stated years before they could be fulfilled. Indeed, with Louis Zukofsky's essay right in the center of the issue, Creeley indicates the importance of this essay as an apex of the issue. By placing Charles Olson's poems directly after the large essay, we see a juxtaposition between Zukofosky's understanding of the early modern dramatist's character formation and the contemporary moment when projective verse becomes fully developed.

Louis Zukofsky's "Bottom: On Shakespeare" moves deftly from Shakespeare's *Midsummer Night's Dream* to Aristotle's *Metaphysics* to the contemporary philosophy of Wittgenstein. The purpose of this piece is to understand knowledge in terms of its relationship to the senses, and in particular the interaction and juxtaposition of sight and sound throughout Shakespeare's work. In a sense, the work is a bout experience as knowledge, and more precisely how sensual knowledge relates to ways of knowing intellectually. The essay rambles. It does not lead us down a narrow, philosophical linear path. Instead, it takes a particularly circular trajectory, returning to the main point over and over again. We have an epitaph that plays a crucial role in understanding the overall message of the essay: “*Music’s master*: notes for Her music to *Pericles* and for a graph of culture.”[118] The epitaph is in fact a subtitle of the piece, and relies on our knowledge that the title is taken from *Pericles*, Act II, Verse 30, which states “Music: Herself!” Zukofsky then goes on to detail how the H possibly became capitalized, referring to the early typography and possible mis-capitalization in the first folio: “The *H* in the title presumes after Shakespeare that *Her* means *Music: Herself!*—two syllables emboldened with a capital *M* showing Pericles’ mastery.”[119] But it is Marina who is the master of music in the play, not Pericles, and thus the quizzical nature of this piece unfolds. He then moves to a close reading of a particular scene in *Antony and Cleopatra*. Quoting Scarus in Act 4, Part 7, line 8, Zukofsky starts with Scarus’s body, which has been inscribed with what looks like the letter “T” from various battle wounds: “I had wound here that was like a T. But now ’tis made an H.”[120] That Scarus’s battle wound has been “made an H” signifies not only the new swipe of a sword that would change a T to an H, but also the body onto which such configurations, such letters, are possible. Zukofsky deftly moves from a description of the H sound in Pericles’ discourse, to the H on Scarus’s skin, to the wall that separates Pyramus from Thisby in Pyramus and Thisby separated in the play-within-a-play of *Midsummer Night’s Dream*:

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[115] Creeley, Robert. *The Selected Letters of Robert Creeley*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2014. 20. Print.
[116] Ibid.
[117] Ibid.

> Sounded upper-case *H* is unseen, like *h* is hoarse; printed it abstracts him who reads. As a spoken part of *Her*, obliged to breath and thereby to love its aspirated limits… But because it is uppercase with a reason that cannot

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[118] Ibid.
[119] Ibid.
[120] Zukofsky, Louis. “Bottom: On Shakespeare.” *Black Mountain Review* Fall 1956: 119. Print.

> altogether dispel bodies, it also helplessly calls up to itself the momentous eye—to which sound, smell, taste and touch are reciprocal incident—the implications of seeing that alone strengthens *Her* as present object. Scarus had a wound that added stroke to a T. Turned either clockwise or counterclockwise by its head, made an upright visible H… Thru Wall, Bottom (Pyramus) either sees 'no bliss' or sees 'a voice,' Thisby's.[121]

In this phrase, we get to the crux of Zukofsky's study: the relationship between vision, sound, and knowledge. The *H* becomes something other than a signal of the word; rather, it becomes a visual and aural marker for knowledge. But, before we get to this knowledge, we must first examine what exactly Zukofsky is saying here. He takes the aspirated and thus fully formed *H* in the phrase *Music: Herself!* and links it to seeing "Her" as a referent for a present object. He then links "Her" as a seen and heard object to Scarus's body, the scar which makes visibile an "H." And "Wall," (who is an actual person pretending to be a wall in Pyramus and Thisby), we see Zukofsky link Scarus's very real bodily scar to Wall as a person. What this does is transform where meaning lies: rather than originating in the reference put forth by the history of the word, he emphasizes the sensuousness, the sensory qualities of the *H* in the context presented here. Thus, the H provides a type of sensory quality that is unique to it, and is not primarily a knowledge that comes to it through the visual. However, he says in this last statement, *Her* as an object must have a reciprocal relationship to the visual, since the visual allows us to see *Her* with an uppercase *h*.

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[121] Ibid., 120.

Moving to *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, Zukosfsky then discusses the relationship between seeing, hearing and knowledge that Shakespeare lays out: "Bottom's stage intent is to *hear* Thisby's face. And, of course, Bottom's intent is Shakespeare's text, and his thought, spun of a desire to make trust and grace *seen*; and therefore spun like a mathematical transformation, which founders a previous visible energy."[122] For Zukofsky, Shakespeare intended for trust and grace to be seen, for the action of the two abstract concepts to be laid out so that one could comprehend, or "know" trust and grace. But to see trust and grace, something else must be lost; another concept made visible must be masked under the weight of the attempt to show trust and grace.

Zukofsky ends this part of the essay with a juxtaposition of the eye and the ear: "Restored to this reading—as tho Fortune herself now recites Ulysses' *How some men creep in skid dish Fortune's hall, / While others play the idiots in her eyes* (T & C III iii 134) the lines stand well in the shade of Bottom's argument that the *ear of men hath not seen*; and sound Shakespearean enough perhaps to some wondering least reader, for whom print as spatial object must lie in infinite space, as he discovers in the latest logic the inverse with which Bottom begins: *The eye of man hath not heard."*[123] This phrase takes us into Zukofsky's piece in the next issue, which attends to the problems of the logical notions we have discussed above. In this last sentence, Zukofsky gets us to the point that is central to Zukofsky's own poetics, and to the intention of the *Black Mountain Review* itself. In such a construct as above, the eye has the multisensory knowledge of hearing. If we take this statement to be true, then we have Zukofsky getting to the main point in the text; that is, the eye and ear are connected, but the knowledge of the ear is central to understanding 1) Shakespeare, 2) Zukofsky's poetics, 3) the *Black Mountain Review*.

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[122] Ibid., 122
[123] Ibid., 150

Black Mountain Review, Issue 7, 1957

The *Black Mountain Review* ran from 1954 to 1957, ending with an influential issue that encompassed three distinct generations of poets, as well as some of the first "Beat" poetry and prose. From William Carlos Williams to Charles Olson to Jack Kerouac, Allen Ginberg and WS Burroughs, this issue encompassed the past and the future of American poetry. It is no surprise that the *Black Mountain Review* is considered a "successful" little magazine with contributors like these. Not only did it include Williams, Burroughs, Kerouac and Ginsberg in one issue, but Creeley also oversaw the first publication of Jack Kerouac's "Essentials of Spontaneous Prose"[124] as well as Part 3 of Burroughs's *Naked Lunch*.[125]

The impact of this issue was huge. Almost every little magazine that I will discuss throughout this dissertation will cite the *Black Mountain Review*, Issue 7 as a watershed moment in American poetry and prose. But this also means that the *Black Mountain Review* had shifted in aesthetics so much in one year that this issue is unlike the previous six. No longer a little magazine with a "coterie" audience, the magazine had become larger than the space given to it by Black Mountain College. However, the magazine did not cease publication because of this aesthetic shift, but because the School's doors were closing for good after years of struggle to make ends meet. The magazine was a success, even up—and especially up —to its end.

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[124] "Essentials" was in fact written in 1953, but went unpublished until its appearance in the *Black Mountain Review*, Issue 7.

[125] *Naked Lunch* would be published in its entirety by Olympia Press in Paris in 1959. The American edition would not be published until 1962. Burroughs has published almost the entire novel in various little magazines across the country from 1957 to 1959, mostly due to censors in the US.

Kerouac's "Essentials of Spontaneous Prose" is well known today, partly for its naiveté as a poetics that can hardly be maintained if one is to be taken seriously as a writer. On the other hand, because of its ability to link jazz to a prose style, Kerouac was able to bridge the gap between the music arts and the written word. "Essentials" was originally written for Allen Ginsberg who questioned Kerouac's ability to write his novel *The Subterraneans* in three days. Kerouac responded with this piece, saying that he writes without editing, without self-consciously thinking about every single word. However, when one examines "Essentials," it is easy to see that he has an organizing principle around which his writing evolves. Moving from "Set-Up" to "Procedure" to "Method" and so on and so forth, he shows that there is a certain method to "spontaneous" prose: "Never afterthink to 'improve' or defray impressions, as, the best writing is always the most painful personal wrung-out tossed from cradle warm protective mind—tap from yourself the song of yourself, *—blow!—now!— your* way is your only way—'good' —or 'bad'—always honest, ('ludicrous') spontaneous, 'confessional' interesting, because not 'crafted.' Craft *is* craft"[126] (227). Kerouac uses metaphors of the horn player throughout, drawing a strong parallel between the present jazz world and the world of writing. His is a prose of the present moment. The only value of writing is the confessional, painful moments that slide out of the writer like a note into the air.

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[126] Kerouac, Jack. "Essentials of Spontaneous Prose." *Black Mountain Review* 7 1957: 227. Print.

1958: *The Free Lance* and the Development of Psychovisualism

Russell Atkins publishes an expanded “Psychovisualist Perspective on ‘Musical’ Composition,” which he started in 1955 and is completed in 1958. This piece is a whole new addition, which in some ways clarifies his stance and in other ways obscures his poetic thought. It is not difficult to see why the manuscript took three years to complete. In his first issue of Free Lance, Atkins states that psychovisualism will not provide a new “theory” for music and poetry, but rather it will provide an “adjustment” to current theories of aurally and sonicity in music and poetry. However, here, we get a complete reworking of the job of the composer, listener, and music itself. Indeed, the first section, entitled “The Positive and Negative Continuums in Equivalent Inertia for Space as Psychic Space for Percept, Composition, Etc.” indicates that a whole new state of mind is necessary for understanding the “psychovisualist perspective.” And he follows this subtitle with a lengthy and opaque understanding of the “mind” as it becomes ready for a psychovisualist perspective.

He starts by dividing the mind into two “continuums”: the “Positive Continuum” and the “Negative Continuum.” Both continuums are necessary for producing psychovisualist compositions. It is the “Positive Continuum,” however, that is the basis for all thought. Atkins states at the beginning that the Positive Continuum is a “prodigious group of energies, inertial systems, ‘statics’” which “kills” the Negative Continuum if one takes the whole Positive Continuum as the only possibility for human thought. However, the Positive Continuum and Negative Continuum work together with something he calls “human phenomenon,” which, I think, is the creative process, to produce the psychovisualist perspective. Once the psychovisualist perspective operates, three phenomena become of the utmost importance: "(1) unexistence-as-subsistence; (2) Intertia; (3) time-space."[127] But what these three components *do* or how they work together, Atkins does not say. He does say in the next line that "Psychovisualism accepts unexistence-as-substence and existent substance as a hypothetical duality preparatory to inertia and a negative continuum end-product *shape for identity.*"[128] Here he says we need both a type of non-existence that has the possibility to become substance and the existence of a substance as two necessary conceptions for inertial force to bring about or "shape" identity. His notion of substance reasserts a type of Kantian *a priori* by which transcendental thought is possible: there is a condition for the possibility of creating substance based not on experience, but based on a type of intuition that is built into the human.

The second part of his elongated "psychovisualist perspective" takes into consideration the relationship between composer and audience. He starts with a phrase that seems at first to be opaque: "*The composer, however, must transmit his 'objects' even 'illumination', through the antagonist of identity; stimulating stress 'motions'.*"[129] I am unsure what "illumination" has to do with the rest of the phrase, but he seems to be saying that the process of the psychovisualist is one that goes from the object as created in the mind to the external object, the object that has to be identified as a particular object so the the exterior world will comprehend the object as such. So, the composer must shape his "objects" (his creations?) through identity, which is found in the dynamic of substance-creation in the positive continuum.

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[127] Atkins, Russell. "Psychovisualist Perspective on 'Musical' Composition." *The Free Lance* 5.1 (1958): 7. Print.
[128] Ibid.
[129] Ibid., 11

And this is where his theory starts to get interesting in terms of how Atkins conceptualizes how sound, vision, and substance interact in his theory. He creates a conception of the "regular" human who can only *hear* and not *see* the composition. But, he says that music is in fact perceived by the eye, but that it takes the individual many years to be able to see the sonic composition. Such a composition, for the psychovisualist, always remains in the eye, in the perception of the composition, not in the ear. "With initial threshold depending on human limitations in 'music' but in the world of light to 'naked eye', aided by supranatural sources, it is little wonder that 'music' takes years to see while the external world is more immediately perceived. This partly accounts for the assumption that 'music' is NEVER seen."[130] Music CAN be SEEN, but one has to develop one's sensibility towards seeing before it can materialize as such.

And then he moves on to tell us how it is possible for someone to visualize music: "1. Repeated hearings velocity accrues as mass or force provisive of intensification for eventual maximum 'illuminations' and definition…. Quality and quantity accrue from closure and memory acts to fix shapes of 'motion' as image…. Nevertheless, certain definites establish themselves and remain with the listener, *if the composer exercises object assertion.*"[131] The psychovisualist not only doesn't believe in music as such, but that what we think of as music is, once one gets to a certain point in his/ her listening abilities, can make a piece of music ONE single object unified, like a symbol that manifests itself as one big object. Now we are completely in the realm of the unified art object, the object that has no temporal designation (because if it did, it would no longer be a composition, but rather would just be ‘music,’ which is the conception that he wants us to get away from). However, the composer has to “exercise object assertion” to be successful at “psychovisualist composition.”

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[130] Ibid., 14
[131] Ibid., 15

But where does the audience or the observer fit into this equation? Atkins has much to say about the relationship between composer, composition, and audience. He has a notion that the “object in Motion” has a type of agency all its own: “There are three behaviors: (a) A person’s approach to inherent-object ‘motion’ (eye-adjustments involved) after which inherent-object ‘motion’ withdraws; (b) An inherent-object ‘motion’ approach that stops and the observer withdraws; (c) of this, favored by the psychovisualist: the inherent-object ‘motion’ approaches (in sight, difficult eye-adjustments) incurs the apprehension of the ego and passes *behind* the observer where it is comprehended and memorized in reduced anxiety.”[132] The composed object, or the “inherent-object motion” “passes behind the observer” so that the observer may comprehend and memorize the object in motion with less anxiety. Such a notion gives the object itself a type of supernatural power that moves beyond the artwork as we know it in aesthetic theory today. The force of the object in motion as conceptualized by Atkins challenges notions of the object as art that have withstood generations. However, we also have to accept that such a notion has no basis in philosophical or rigorous thought. Many of his ideas are interestingly similar to Kant’s transcendentalism. However, we should acknowledge the creative and imaginative debt of Atkins’s theory. What should be noted in closing is Atkins’ commitment to the idea that composition is not just a matter of the functioning of the retina or the eye in and of itself, but a whole visual process that is required for a composition to take shape. But, this type of composition is not just visual. Atkins's poetry reminds us that the verbal composition is central to his overall theory and poetics.

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[132] Ibid., 24

The Free Lance and the *Black Mountain Review, 1953-1958*

What I have shown is how these two midcentury little magazines are shaped by and structured around notions of sound. In Russell Atkins' resistance to sound as force that produces his "object-form," he ends up showing that sound is integral to his theories of composition. Robert Creeley, on the other hand, knows wholeheartedly the debt of sound to projectivist verse and cultivates its attention in the pages of the *Black Mountain Review*. Both individuals are writers themselves as well as contributors to the volumes that they edit. However, Creeley's relationship to sound is vital to the projectivist poetics, and Atkins's relationship to sound is vital to his notion of composition. The two come from two distinct backgrounds in American culture, one living in Europe the majority of the time that his little magazine was published, while the other never left the city that allowed his poetic and musical compositions to flourish.

Atkins and Creeley attempted to cut ties with the modernism[s] of the previous generation, yet both attempted such cuts differently. Atkins finds Langston Hughes both his "precedent and point of departure,"[133] situating himself in a "post" relationship to Hughes's black modernism. While he finds in Hughes a unique typography and tonal materials, his move away from Hughes comes with his emphasis on composition of "object-form" rather than a straight relationship between black voice and its inscription. Atkins eschews the "natural" language poetics of the black tradition, as well as the

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[133] Nielson, Aldon Lynn. *Black Chant: Languages of African American Postmodernism*. Cambridge: Cambridge U P, 1997. 58. Print.

"natural" language poetics of the projectivists. Atkins moves away from traditional notions of black poetry while moving away from his contemporaries' emphasis on "natural" language. He articulates a "third" position in which neither the "New American Poets" nor African American poets fit. However, Atkins was able to maintain a strong relationship with the Black Arts Movement in the 1960s while sitting just outside of the basic tenants of the movement. His obscurity, it would seem, is self-imposed but not self-alienating. Instead of moving toward the oral which increasingly came to play a part in the Black Arts Movement, he moved toward the performative values of inscription.[134]

Creeley relies on "natural" language finally deemed worthy of poetical status. For Creeley, the poem was tied up with Kerouac's notion of "spontaneous prose" when he states: "Poetry seems to be written momently—that is, it occupies a moment of time. There is, curiously, no time [that is, no passage of time] in writing a poem. I seem to be given to work in some intense moment of whatever possibility, and if I manage to gain the articulation necessary *in* that moment, then happily there is the poem."[135] The poem becomes one with the temporality of the moment, and is given voice through the breath of the poet, the ordinary breath that is vital to human life. It is this breath that measures rhythms, articulates sounds; it is, as William Carlos Williams avers in "Empty Mirror," the "mystical measure of [the ordinary] passions."[136]

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[134] Ibid., 143

[135] Fredman, Stephen. "Creeley's Contextual Practice." *Form, Power and Person in Robert Creeley's Life and Work*. Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 2010. 192. Print.

[136] Williams, William Carlos. "The Empty Mirror." *Black Mountain Review* 7 1957: 239. Print.

Chapter 3

Locating Acousmatic Sound in the Mid-Century Lyric: *Yugen* and *The Floating Bear*

This chapter focuses on two little magazines published from 1959-1963. *Yugen*, co-edited and -published by Hettie Jones and Amiri Baraka (as LeRoi Jones), is considered one of the foremost little magazines of the post-war period. Diane di Prima and LeRoi Jones created the mimeographed little magazine *The Floating Bear* as a companion to—and less expensive alternative to—*Yugen.* While Jones and Cohen only published *Yugen* from 1959 to 1963, Jones and di Prima published *The Floating Bear* for a full ten years, from 1961 to 1971. Because di Prima and Jones used a vastly different print material and ink technology for quick reproduction of *The Floating Bear* from the one employed by Cohen and Jones for *Yugen*, *The Floating Bear* was able to sustain a readership over a longer period of time. Hettie Cohen would use a traditional letterpress to reproduce *Yugen*, while di Prima would use the new, smaller version of the business office mimeograph machine, a machine that had become small enough for household use. This shift from using traditional letterpress to the mimeograph machine would change the landscape of magazine reproduction over the next twenty years. Indeed, the early 1960s would become the era of the "mimeograph revolution," collapsing publishing gate-keeping with individual expression to create the first "DIY" (do-it-yourself) movement that could reach a wider audience, one outside the confines of a particular domestic space.

However much the mimeograph machine changed the post-1945 publishing landscape, the relationship between the very material circumstances creating these little magazines and the poetic content of *Yugen* and *The Floating Bear* cannot be decoupled.

As I show throughout this chapter, the magazine's very technological reproducibility is mutually constitutive of the content that appears between its covers. Whether explicitly intentional or not, the conceptual foundation that emerges from the practice of publishing sutures together the technological apparatus of the magazine's creation with the poetic content of each magazine. The five years in which I discuss *Yugen* and *The Floating Bear* are indicative of the major technological shifts occurring in publishing, which in turn displays an evolution of the poetic voice that returns to a concern with lyric poetry. This era marks a stark shift in the fluid capabilities of the lyric voice. And *Yugen* and *The Floating Bear*, through different mechanisms that I will outline below, show just how integral reproduction technologies were to the understanding of the lyric voice.

Both *Yugen* and *The Floating Bear* published more lyric poetry between their covers than any other type of poetry or prose. Indeed, both magazines rely on the apostrophe of the lyric poem, in short, long and more experimental forms, to account for three-quarters of all of the poetry published. This reliance on the apostrophe is at once mystifying and understandable in an era of dramatic artistic innovation. On the one hand, it makes sense to use apostrophe in the context of the little magazine: when one writes for a more intimate audience, an intimate form is appropriate, and choosing to publish in such a form lends the magazine a content to the medium itself. While the mimeographed little magazine is in the process of collapsing barriers between guardians of the publishing world and published content, the lyric poem intimates a return of the poetic voice as an embodied, speech-like form while also doing a bit of gate-keeping of its own. The lyric invites intimacy while at the same time pushing back against intimacy by using the apostrophe. Thus, rather than having a direct one-to-one relationship between speaker and listener, the lyric produces a kind of triangulation between speaker, the spoken to, and the listener in what Northrop Frye, influenced by John Stuart Mill, calls "the overheard voice." While Charles Olson, in *Projective Verse*, claims that his generation must overthrow the hegemony of print, he, contradictorily, still writes and publishes *in print*. It is this contradiction that is at the heart of this era. While little magazines were still published, the call to overturn the hegemony of print was rampant (leading to well-known "happenings" in New York City and elsewhere). However, the main mode for distributing poetry was the text-based little magazine. How, in an era in which print reigned, would those very same poets and publishers call for the end of print? Here, I claim that this time period was central in bringing back the poetic voice, and indeed the lyric, into the text. The poet printed between the covers of *Yugen* or *The Floating Bear*, I argue, resisted the poem's very textuality by focusing so centrally on the lyric. Thus, this historical period of poets were constrained because the sound technologies that archived and reproduced the voice had not yet caught up to the poetic ethos of the era. Here, then, we could say that the little magazine, as a site of technological reproducibility that allowed for the archiving of poetry, was the site of tension that lived precariously between print culture and sound culture. And, the lyric form perfectly captured the resistance to the hegemony of print through its reliance on print-based speech while simultaneously confounding any direct address to a reader.

In exploring the link between mechanical reproduction, exemplified by the midcentury use of the mimeograph machine, the lyric poem, and the little magazine, this chapter is divided into three main parts. 1) In the first part, I examine the history of the mimeograph machine from Edison to 1965, showing the integrated relationship between the creation of the mimeograph machine and the creation of the phonograph, and highlighting how sound and inscription influence one another over the course of a century. 2) In the second section, I establish how the mimeograph machine, as the chosen mode of reproduction for midcentury little magazines, influenced the publication of poetry in *The Floating Bear*, perhaps the most well-known mimeographed publication of the era. 3) In part three, I show why the lyric poem became the preferred genre of poetry in *The Floating Bear*, and, through this explication, I reexamine the lyric as a much-discussed yet little-understood poetic genre. I focus on the lyric address in particular to contend that we do not understand the lyric because we ask little about the underlying structure of the lyric address. I introduce a conception from sound studies, the *acousmatic*, which, I argue, helps us move to an understanding of the lyric address that returns us toward a sonic framework.

A Short History of the Mimeograph Machine

The mimeograph machine has a much longer history than one would think. Invented in 1811, records show that early attempts at marketing and using the mimeograph machine were unsuccessful. Dr. James Lind, the original inventor (long before Edison's "improvements to" the machine were conceptualized) and surgeon, thought that one could reduce the work of hand-copying medical bills by reproducing copies using a standard stencil to outline words on thick metal plates.[137] Because of its bulk and the inefficiency of doing what it promised, the early mimeograph languished until 1876, when Thomas Edison filed a patent for "Edison's Electrical Pen and

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[137] Rhodes, Barbara and William Wells Streeter. *Before Photocopying: The Art and History of Mechanical Copying, 1780-1938*. New Castle, Del.: Oak Knoll Press, 1999. 132-140. Print.

Duplicating Press,"[138] which used a needle-like device to perforate a sheet of paper that acted as a stencil. In 1877, Edison used wax paper to produce stencils and used a metal plate that would support the waxed paper for stenciling, which developed into the "Edison Mimeograph Typewriter."[139] Edison would conceive of an idea for a phonograph in his 1877 notes, using much of the same language and mechanical conceptions in both the formation of the mimeograph and phonograph.

The creation of sound recording and twentieth-century print technologies have been bound together for far longer than our current historical narratives tell us. Archival evidence suggests that Thomas Edison's conception of the phonograph and "autograph machine''—what we know today as the mimeograph machine—are inextricably linked through sketches, graphs, and patents found in the Edison archives. In a journal entry from 1877, Thomas Edison observes that "[s]pkg [speaking] vibrations are indented nicely on washed paper by a diaphragm having an embossing point" so that, he explains, he should be "able to shore up & reproduce automatically at any future time the human voice perfectly."[140] For Edison, the voice could physically mark, or write, on "washed paper," mediated by a needle guided by an external, mechanical wheel that would indent paper (see Image 1). Such a description recalls Edison's work from 1875, in which he writes that he "prefers to use an electro-magnetic [motor] and a fly wheel for the purpose of … reciprocating the perforating needle."[141] While Edison describes the phonograph in the former description, he illustrates the components of the "autograph machine" in the latter (see Image 2). From 1875 to 1885, Edison would continue to file patents for improvements upon the early mimeograph in the same breath as the phonograph. The two instruments are so connected to one another that, if not for the title of the patent, it would be difficult to tell which patent described which machine. The history of the machine that could "capture the voice perfectly"—and would go on to change musical production—and the machine that could replicate page after page of manuscript production has not been clearly delineated in the scholarship of sound or print reproduction.[142]

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[138] Ibid.
[139] Ibid.
[140] Thomas Edison Notebooks, July 18, 1877. Thomas Edison National Park, *Technical Notes and Drawings*, TAEM 11:367 (TAED TI2197: 188). Print.
[141] "Improvements to Autographic Printing" patent, Britain, October 20, 1875. Thomas Edison National Park, *British and American Patents*, MBP006 (TAEM 9248.6). Print.

Such integral conceptions of speech and writing, and the resultant mechanical products of reproduction, have far-reaching consequences. Lisa Gitelman, one of the only scholars to investigate this link, briefly discusses nineteenth-century copyright laws that inadvertently conceptualize this tie between speech and writing. Combing through nineteenth-century law books for cases arguing for the privilege to copyright the content of newspapers, she discovered that in every case, copyrighting a newspaper's content was tantamount to jeopardizing the First Amendment. The newspaper was protected by freedom of speech. Thus, Gitelman argues, judges protected the written word found in the newspaper as voiced speech. Laws protected newspapers as speech-based print. "Contradictorily bivalent, printed speech"[143] would reign as law for newspapers into the twentieth century. Consequently, Gitelman urges us to think about the nineteenth-century newspaper as a site for "vocal performances,"[144] a site where the voice could arise from print.

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[142] The link between sonic reproductive technologies and written reproductive technologies can be traced back even further, to the seventeenth century, when the makers of early "talking dolls" used paper-based "scripts"—perforated sheets of paper rolls, like those seen in a mechanical music box—to make the doll "talk" (See, for instance, Jonathan Sterne's *The Audible Past*). These early inventions show how speech and the written word were integrally tied with one another: thinking about speech-based mechanisms has its origins in written inscription.

[143] Gitelman, Lisa. *Always Already New*. Cambridge: MIT Press, 2006. 10. Print.

I highlight Gitelman's research into print-based speech and Edison's conceptions of mechanical "improvements" in speech and automatic writing to show that print and speech, as produced and reproduced, have a long history together. While Edison centers on the creation of mechanical, technological objects that reproduce speech and writing, Gitelman focuses on the conceptual relationship between speech and writing. Both the creation of technologies that reproduce speech and writing and the conceptual underpinnings of the relationship between print and speech will be the focus of this chapter. Taking the mimeograph machine at midcentury as the site of technological reproduction and the midcentury lyric as the site of a conceptual relationship between speech and print, my aim is to provoke scholars to rethink midcentury poetry—particularly that published in the mimeographed "little magazines"— as sites where the "vocal performance" remained an intact and vital component of poetry published in the midcentury printed little magazine.

At first, while the phonograph flourished, the mimeograph machine languished. Its early marketing to businesses and Wall Street failed because the scrivener reigned at the top of the capitalist business system: penmanship was still important, and companies employed scriveners to produce each document by hand, giving wills, deeds, and other business documents an artistic flair.[145] By World War II, however, the mimeograph machine began to emerge as a useful tool in the propaganda wars due to its ability to quickly print flyers, pamphlets and other ephemera that espoused political agendas for the cause. The quality of paper did not matter either: scrap paper could be used not only to pack weapons but also to disperse news about battles quickly. In the 1950s and 1960s, the mimeograph found its home within underground and subcultural movements, keeping with its use as a tool to effect social and political change. The mimeograph revolution of the 1960s was the culmination of a more than one-hundred-year history.

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[144] Ibid.

[145] Zakim, Michael. "Producing Capitalism: The Clerk at Work." *Capitalism Takes Command: The Social Transformation of Nineteenth-Century America*. Chicago: U of Chicago Press, 247-249. Print.

The machine had not changed much in structure from what we read in Edison's descriptions: cellulose-based waxed paper remained the key material in print reproduction. This waxed paper would be stenciled, either by hand or by typewriter. Then it would be placed on an ink-coated drum. The printer would turn a crank to rotate the drum in a rolling motion, with clean sheets of paper below, so that ink would fill the stenciled spaces and transfer to the paper, producing an exact replication of the original image or text.

Mimeograph technology had several functions in the world of midcentury literature. Daniel Kane discusses its use at poetry readings, specifically the readings at St. Mark's in the Bowery. A publisher, or even a mimeograph-owner, would bring a mimeograph machine to the poetry reading, and she would stencil out the poem as it was being read by the poet.[146] The "on-the-spot" replication of the poetry reading would fuel and foster the mimeograph revolution as well as midcentury print culture by making publishing more accessible to the oral poetry community. If the "on-the-spot" replication of a poetry reading transformed the way in which production and reproduction would operate at midcentury, then the little magazine that was mimeographed produced a particular community of writers and readers at midcentury. Indeed, the oral poem, the poem read for an audience changed how readers interacted with poetry. This midcentury moment became the new bearer of poetry across the country by accessing poetry readings, which could then be disseminated through the mimeographed little magazine. Consequently, the printed word was a replication of the poetry reading.

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[146] Kane, Daniel. *All Poets Welcome: The Lower East Side Poetry Scene in the 1960s*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003. 36-7. Print.

The mimeograph machine's main function at midcentury, though, was to produce little magazines pocketed throughout the country that would sometimes function alongside the poetry reading. These little magazines came to prominence because of the quality of poetry that was being published in them. That is not to say that they were longstanding bastions of good poetry; many of these magazines only have one or two issues and much of the poetry is uneven in quality. However, *The Floating Bear* published poetry from some of the most well known midcentury poets. Denise Levertov, Charles Olson, Frank O'Hara, among many others, could be found in each issue of the magazine. And, its co-editors Diane di Prima and Amiri Baraka were important and well-known poets in their own right. A close look at this magazine will show how the mimeograph machine, as the chosen reproduction machine of the midcentury little magazine, made the voice come off of the printed page and return to a sonic reproduction of the lyric.

Yugen 1958-1962

"I had been reading one of the carefully put together exercises The New Yorker *publishes constantly as high poetic art, and gradually I could feel my eyes fill up with tears, and my cheeks were wet and I was crying, quietly, softly but like it was the end of the world. I had been moved by the writer's words, but in another, very personal way…. But I was crying because I realized that I could never write like that writer…. I realized that there was something in me so out, so unconnected with what this writer was and what was in me that wanted to come out as poetry would never come out like that and be* my *poetry" (168).*[147]

The above quotation, taken from Amiri Baraka's autobiography at the time he was still known as as LeRoi Jones, is indicative of the persistence that brought about the little magazine *Yugen*. Published from 1958 to 1962, the magazine was edited by Hettie Cohen (Jones) and LeRoi Jones. "Yugen," the title of the magazine, was taken from the Japanese for "beauty" and "nothing" at the same time. According to the first issue, "YUGEN means elegance, beauty, grace, transcendence of these things, and also nothing at all."[148] Ephemerality instantiates the idea of the magazine from the beginning: embedded within the very meaning of the title is an intent to be at once an aesthetic object as well as no object at all. Such a title is indicative of the type of "objectless" object that the little magazine, as ephemeral object, is to represent. In some sense, however, such a title is also meant to resist the notion of ephemerality. This play on existence and nonexistence can also be seen in the language of sound. We discuss sound as something fleeting, something not at all there, or as something, like the voices or instruments that the 19th-century French "acousmate" "imagines hearing in the air" to bring us back to Morin's earlier language. Amiri Baraka notes that the magazine's name "was a Zen word, a special quality of being, a texture of perception reflected by the term ‘mystery.’ It had to do with attaining a high state of grace and relationship to divinity in whatever you did, especially in the arts…. And to me this was the quality the magazine must have, must attempt to put out” (220).[149] The spiritual overtones of the “Zen” reference cannot be lost among the visceral “texture of perception” that moves the little magazine from the physical world to the metaphorical realm. Working between the objectivity of the physical world and the objectivity of the metaphysical world, Baraka negotiates the ephemerality of his little magazine with the very texture and intractability of the printed word. In a somewhat paradoxical way, Baraka and Cohen call for their little magazine as object to be ephemeral and fleeting while also calling for the printed word, printed poetry to have an aesthetic of endurance through time. It is this paradox of the fleetingness and resistance to the very same fleetingness found in the word “Yugen” that is the first indication that the editors were conceptualizing their little magazine as sonically inflected.

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[147] Baraka, Amiri. *The Autobiography of Leroi Jones*. New York: Lawrence Hill Books, 1984. 168. Print.
[148] *Yugen*. New York: Totem Press. 1958. 1. Print. Emory University. Raymond Kanowski Poetry Library. Manuscript, Archives, and Rare Book Library.

The subtitle “A New Consciousness in Arts & Letters” captured the moment in which, as Baraka says, “we had no heavy weight of bullshit literary tradition staring us down” (221).[150] And Hettie Cohen agreed that “Few magazines out of New York, to that date, had promised the new consciousness that everyone downtown agreed was just what the world needed. I know mine was raised by the very act of press-typing each quarter-inch character of that *new consciousness in arts and letters*” (53-54).[151] Indeed, the magazine had taken on a new set of writers and readers at mid-century period, a set that had heretofore been relegated to writing for smaller coterie audiences, audiences that may not have spoken with one another because of spatial distances. Publishing everyone from Allen Ginsberg to Philip Whalen, the magazine had a substantial influence on the poetry world at the time, and, as Baraka notes "We were, in some respects, at the center of a particular grouping of folks. The magazine both created that circle and connected people to us that we didn't even know" (231). The little magazine was able to connect disparate groups and create the group as the magazine gained legitimacy as a place for serious poetry.

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[149] Baraka, Amiri. *The Autobiography of Leroi Jones*. New York: Lawrence Hill Books, 1984. 220. Print.

[150] Baraka, Amiri. *The Autobiography of Leroi Jones*. New York: Lawrence Hill Books, 1984. 221. Print.

[151] Jones, Hettie. *How I Became Hettie Jones*. New York: E.P. Dutton, 1990. 53-4. Print.

Hettie Cohen explains the process of producing the first issue in her autobiography *How I Became Hettie Jones*: "We rented a rickety IBM with erratic adjustable spacing, and rigged up a light box for pasteups; Roi collected poems and drawings—among the contributors Allen Ginsberg himself and the artist Tomi Ungerer; Dick Hadlock offered production advice; even the motor-scooter man from Ferry Street helped with graphics. Piece by piece I put it all together, on my old kitchen table, with a triangle and T-square" (54).[152] Here, we get a glimpse at the process of creating the little magazine itself, in all of its physical components. This magazine was created through a combination of typewriter and letter press, the physical creation was done with the letter press itself. This method differs from the one that produced *The Floating Bear*, which was done by mimeograph machine. I will explain the differences in detail once we get to *The Floating Bear*. One of the biggest differences between *Yugen* and *The Floating Bear* is in the content of the magazines themselves. *Yugen* is almost exclusively devoted to poetry. *The Floating Bear* spends about half of the content on poetry and half on other genres of writing, including short stories, theatre scripts, and reviews of dance, theatre, and music. This difference will become more apparent as we continue.

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[152] Ibid., 54.

Each cover managed to be a different abstract art piece. The cover for Issue #4, published in 1959, is black and white, with the black in the background and white as an abstract painting. Fielding Dawson created this cover. A veritable "who's who" of the "new American poetry" can be found in the table of contents. From Jack Kerouac to Charles Olson to Frank O'Hara, this issue shows the breadth of writers that were publishing in this little magazine.

Edward Marshall, who is rather unknown still today, can be found with poems in both *Yugen* and *The Floating Bear.* In this issue, he has a poem entitled "At Tudor City."[153] In it, Marshall uses the lyric "I," along with a lyric address that is not only interior to the poem but also projects exteriorly to the audience as a triangulated "overheard" voice, all while keeping a rhythmical quality that projects a type of urgency. In other words, the traditional lyric address, known as the apostrophe, works in a traditional mode in which "you" is an unnamed other. But what is slightly different here is that the "you" responds directly in the poem. It is a type of call and response that relies on the "you" to respond. It is as if we, as readers, are listening in on a conversation. Thus, though we have a traditional apostrophe, we have a very untraditional response from the "you." We, as readers, are not being spoken to; rather we are listening in, we are overhearing an address to someone who is not the reader. Here is the poem in total:

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[153] I can only imagine that "At Tudor City" is named for the famous block of buildings in Mahattan called Tudor City, which was, and still is, home to about 5,000 New Yorkers.

Are you holding that line?

I am holding that line—

Now the difference between the Lost Generation

From the Beat Generation is——

A guest arrives - 'Excuse me,

But do hold that line'

Now continue-

The Telephone rings-

Wait do you think you can hold that

line?

Of course, I can hold that line-

And when it does come out it

Will be— (another guest arrives)

More than Kerouac's 110 words per

Min.

Are you still holding that line-

What did you say the difference was?

Difference?

I am holding that line—

And will put my Boiled

Socks on it[154]

The play on "line" as both a telephone line and a line of a poem plays into the double meaning of the poem as telephone. Although more than one voice speaks in the poem, it's impossible to know how many voices we do or do not have: we seem to have one speaker addressing another *within* the poem while also having a speaker addressing someone (maybe the reader-listener?) outside of the poem. The telephone reminds us of our—the reader/ listener—place within the text: the telephone automatically signifies that someone is overhearing at least half of a conversation. I draw attention to this poem because of the problem of how even Culler cannot capture what is happening in this poem: while he states that Frye is wrong because the poet is not "turning his back on" an audience, but rather *redirecting* the reading to a third party: "He or she is not turning his back to them but offering language to listeners, with **indirection**, addressing them through language implicitly or explicitly addressed elsewhere. The situation is not radically different when the poem arrives in written form. I take the underlying structure of lyric to be one of triangulated address, where an audience of readers is addressed through the act of address (implicit or explicit) to an imagined addressee" (164).[155] While I agree with Culler that the poet is "addressing listeners through language implicitly or explicitly addressed elsewhere," it seems a rather less than satisfactory comprehension of what is happening in this poem because one cannot say for certain whether it is triangulation that occurs: we do not know how many voices are in fact speaking within the poem, and thus we do not know who is speaking, even indirectly, to the audience.

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[154] Marshall, Edward. *Yugen* Issue 4:1959. 11. Print. Emory University, Raymond Danowski Poetry Library, Manuscript, Archives and Rare Book Library.
[155] Culler, Jonathan. *The Theory of the Lyric*. Cambridge: Harvard U P, 2015. 164. Print.

What would happen if the telephone had been announced in the poem? What if we lacked the line that mentions the telephone? We'd have nothing more than what Culler gives us here. However, with the telephone as an indicator of (at least) a third party being addressed *somewhere else* we have a more complicated construction than even "indirection." The question, "Can you hold that line?" asked over and over again indicates that not only is the reader-listener implicated, but that there is someone, a second or third person within the poem that the questioner is speaking with. Thus, we have directionless indirection: we, as reader-listeners, are cut off from the second-level vocalization here.

Offset by the constant interruption that seems to happen throughout the poem, we see here how this poem could be considered a part of an acousmatic experience: because we can never know the location of the second-level vocalization, the listener-reader is constantly in a state of hearing the voice as it surfaces rather than the voice that is tied to an original location. For this poem, which seems to me to be indicative of a wide range of lyric poetry at mid-century, the play on "line" gives us a type of fidelity between the technology of the telephone line and the line of the poem. Here, the "line" is both electrical and poetic, and both electrical and poetic lines are highlighted by their sonorous qualities.

Philip Whalen published a poem entitled "I Return to San Francisco," in *Yugen* Number 5, in 1959. The poem, like "At Tudor City," places voices in juxtaposition with one another from the very beginning. However, instead of one guiding voice, we are lead to believe that a character with the initials "MM," "Jo B." and "JW" speaks within the poem. Taking a half-hearted approach to following the format of the dramatic script, Whalen focuses our attention on the script-like quality of the poem. Thus, speech becomes the central figure, denoted by the layout of the poem, which highlights voices by arranging the poem on the page like one would a script. Juxtaposing the script-like quality by adding the initials or names, followed by colons or commas, the poem moves in and out of the multi-vocal range with asterisks that break it up. Here are a few of the first lines:

SCARED?

MM says, I just found out what's wrong with me
Is fear & it scares the shit out of me.

Jo B., Intellectual comics, they've taken EVERYTHING there's nothing
left—jokes about Proust, Joyce, Zen
Buddhism, it's the end of culture, the world . . . .

And JW, What are we going to do?

I said, I going home & start typing
I'm tired of nothing happening

****

CONTINUATION, IN ANOTHER KEY

ENOUGH, I'm tired of sound & silence, the alternation of opposites
The weak middle sagging between both
ALL RHYTHMS[156]

Here, we see the page reflect the voicing of at least three different characters. The asterisks are more prevalent throughout the poem than the denotation of different voices, indicating breaks in either temporal unity, or, as the passage above indicates, a change in key. This break with either temporal unity, or more likely a shift in tone or voice, is a rupture from the traditional lyric. Thus, here, instead of one complete unity of voice speaking throughout the poem, we have disjointed vignettes that do not exactly tell us when or where they take place or who is speaking, but that there is something disjointed and polyphonic.

The last lines that call our attention to sound and silence, to rhythm, is key in a poem that allows for just that: the disjunction of sound and silence through the use of asterisks to show the use of vignettes. Whalen calls our attention to rhythm, while at the same time not allowing for any rhythmic pattern to come to the fore in the poem. Thus his tiredness with sound and silence, with rhythm, is also resisted throughout the structure of the poem, not just in name only. Calling this poem a "lyric" may be problematic because it resists the notion of a strong lyric rhythm, but it does have a particularly specific lyric address. The address is more along the lines explored by Culler in his understanding of the "indirect" addressee. Here, we—the overhears— are listening to a conversation not exactly aimed at us.

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[156] Whalen, Philip. *Yugen 5* 1959. 14. Print. Emory University. Raymond Danowski Poetry Library, Manuscript, Archives, and Rare Book Library.

In *Yugen 7,* there are many poems that work with some of the concepts that we have already spoken about, including “Manuscript in Several Hands,” “To Orpheus” and many others. Thus, I wish to pursue a new line of thought through the poem “Summer Nightmusic” by another relatively unknown poet, Bruce Boyd. This poem, while less lyrical in the ways that I’ve already discussed, is more of a lyric poem through the strong rhythm and unique use of voice. The rhythm is characteristic of the lyric in three ways: 1) the pattern of repetition and iteration of like syllables gives the whole poem a type of incantatory quality; 2) the forward slash [/] marks a caesura in the middle of particular lines, allowing the line itself to breathe; 3) this caesura works with other other punctuation, mainly the comma and quotation, to highlight the spaces of silence that are fundamental to understanding the overall rhythm. The unique use of voice can be found in the hyperbole used throughout. In this way, we may understand Culler’s argument that hyperbole is a fundamental characteristic of lyric: “Lyrics hyperbolically risk animating the world, investing mundane objects or occurrence with meaning….Lyrics seek to remake the universe as a world, giving a spiritual dimension to matter” (38).[157] Here, we see repetition and caesura work together in the formal mode while hyperbole works to produce voiced objects throughout:

> 1.
> blue-green in twilight, with the moon
> comes the sea-bird now,
> springing from the middle of the river to

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[157] Culler, Jonathan. *Theory of the Lyric*. Cambridge: Harvard U P, 2015. 38. Print.

enlist & arm responses; & downstream to sea-mist, through
responsive word-spun shallows, moves / the moon-bird, mobilised. how
it seeks by clinging / on the outside of the river, to
keep / clear of the grasping middle, note/ not,
hearing it sing

"soon gone, all birds;
"not recognized until by recollection,
"then mummified in words."[158]

The narrator's repetition of the progressive present tense ending "-ing" signals that we are in the middle of the action itself, that we are witnessing the events first hand. The last word after the "not" last forward slash puts us in quite a quizzical position for understanding whether we are indeed "hearing" the birds "sing" or not. The "not" is offset on one side by the forward slash, and on the other we have a comma before we move to the next line. On the one hand, the narrator could be saying "we are not hearing the birds sing because they are already gone, but we can imagine that we are hearing them." On the other hand, the narrator could be playing with the "note/ not," and thus the "note" could denote a musical note, as in "keep clear of the middle note." Yet, the "not" of the line throws the linear narrative off. The "not" places the speech by the birds in the realm of the otherworldly, which is only further reiterated in the actual words the birds sing: the birds will soon be gone from the physical world, and thus will only exist in recollection through words, through historical description. This otherworldliness of the moon bird’s speech is further reiterated in subsequent stanzas, and indeed, the shifting of who is speaking throughout the next two stanzas indicates a problem of the voice in the poem:

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[158] Boyd, Bruce. "Summer Nightmusic." *Yugen* 7, 1961. 8-10. Print. Emory University. Raymond Danowski Poetry Library, Manuscript, Archives, and Rare Book Library.

> 4.
> now the solitary moon-bird’s
> sudden sea-prone wings
> skim the grasping middle of the river as it sings
>
> “alone/ the stalks of sea-grass hang/ parted by quiet, as
> “water & weather (how the wind & the river, coming together, sang)
>   were parted by sound, echoing moon-blown on the foam-damp
>   ground,
> “shaking recollection/ like a sound shakes idle hands.
>
> “aground in silence where the sands/ pass
> “back & forth, erasing mountains, can
> “the moon/ sow back the night, to find protection?
>
> “its black inside the white
> “afterglow of night/ entails detection;
> “but planned, would it germinate, expand?
>
> 5.

"imitations glimmer/ wave-like on the day-bright sand,
  play back/ & forth, across the line from/ recollection to
    projection.
"restive in the middle of the river, I look for swarms of birds
  writing words down/ on the line projected onto recollection
    as if from verse (which is a woman) onto man;
"& grasping, I design, words pass, responsively to mountains, just/ as
  to the night-wind, is the intertwining sea-grass.

"words/ turn, will the planted moon-bloom grow, seeded with/ the mountain-grass?
"if birds still fly/ above the water; if the stone-cold sand
  turns warm, & the thicket flowers into speech,
"then, renewed, the cluster night will reach the sky in all directions,[159]

I quote two long stanzas from the whole of the poem to show how voice operates. Throughout the poem, other entities are speaking: at one point, the "wind & river/ conferred;[/] & the water and weather" (8) speak, as well as the "word-blown thicket" (10). Yet, in these two stanzas, we do not know when the moon-bird speaks and when (or whether?) the narrator picks up the story again. It is as if the moon-bird morphs into the narrator, indicated by the continual quotation marks throughout the stanza. I bring this problem to our attention, because it is precisely this problem of the origin of the voice, of the origin of the sound, that Pierre Schaeffer remarks upon in his study of sound objects. While Schaeffer wishes that we not focus on the "origin" of the sound, it is precisely this problem of the origin that makes this poem interesting. Here, one could say that neither lyric theory nor Schaeffer's studies in sound can do justice to this poem, because the context enriches our reading. Instead, what we might consider is a masking and unmasking that is only possible through the "textual voice," or an effect of a voice that allows for an obfuscation of speaker. Thus, as the moon-bird sees himself disappear from the physical world and enter the textual world in the first stanza, by stanzas 4 and 5, he has indeed become the narrator that starts the poem. The textual voice allows for indiscreet, fused, and merged voices.

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[159] Boyd, Bruce. "Summer Nightmusic." *Yugen* 7, 1961. 8-10. Print. Emory University. Raymond Danowski Poetry Library, Manuscript, Archives, and Rare Book Library.

The Floating Bear 1961-1963

The Floating Bear is perhaps the quintessential little magazine in its overall design. Plain, bare, almost boring looking, *The Floating Bear* looks like a letter typed up and mailed on cheap paper that could fall apart at the least amount of use. Even the ink, in copies that are found today, bleeds, fades, and the paper residue can be felt on the hands like that of a newspaper written from the era. The editors devote the first quarter of the first page of each issue to the paratextual and editorial information, including the issue number, how often *The Floating Bear* was published (which changed dramatically, from twice monthly to every six months to sporadically, over its lifetime), the editors' names, the address for sending manuscripts. What is perhaps most interesting for our purposes is that the magazine also includes *how* it was distributed. It was "distributed solely by mailing list"[160] for its first three years, then as di Prima moved to California, the magazine was distributed both by mailing list and distributed freely throughout the San

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[160] *The Floating Bear*. Eds. Diane di Prima and LeRoi Jones. Emory University. Raymond Danowski Poetry Library, Manuscript, Archives, and Rare Book Library. Print.

Francisco area. This change in distribution is indicative of the magazine's waning influence in the literary scene. Di Prima's move to California changed the tenor and audience of the magazine so much that it became largely irrelevant to the larger poetry world by 1963.

Just as the distribution of the little magazine changes by 1963, so to does the "newsletter-like" quality of the magazine. By the December 1963 issue, di Prima had artists contribute by drawing cover art for each issue. This changed the letter-like quality of the magazine. *The Floating Bear*'s subtitle "A Newsletter" does a couple of interesting things. Why call it a "newsletter" when so many of the other literary magazines of the time (and even today) use a subtitle like "a magazine of the arts" or some such variation? "Newsletter" seems almost out of place as a title for a little magazine. The magazine is neither "news" nor a "letter." Yet, this subtitle captures a type of editorial intention: Di Prima and Baraka wanted the chatty quality found in the letter-form and the immediacy of the news to be two of the largest influences of the magazine. Indeed, the magazine included many letters, either in the form of intimate letters between two people or in the form of "letter to the editors." Both types of letters would become important for *The Floating Bear*.

Indeed, as di Prima recollects in the introduction to the bound volume of *The Floating Bear* in 1970, that "the last time I saw Charles Olson in Gloucester, one of the things he talked about was how valuable the Bear had been to him in its early years because of the fact that he could get new work out that fast. He was very involved in speed, in communication. We got manuscripts from him pretty regularly in the early days of the Bear, and we'd usually get them into the very next issue. That meant that his work, his thoughts, would be in the hands of a few hundred writers within two or three weeks. It was like writing a letter to a bunch of friends" (x). The rapidity of publication influenced the value of the publication while the small, coterie audience to which it was distributed limited the audience to "friends," to those who knew di Prima or Jones/ Baraka personally. This direct link between writer and audience, facilitated by the editors, will become an important point of discussion between the lyric and the acousmatic in this particular chapter.

Not only did di Prima edit the magazine, but she also laid out every issue. Typing directly onto the mimeograph stencils, di Prima would edit the magazine as she went. Laying out and typing at the same time allowed her to adjust the issue as she went, replacing a too-long prose piece with a shorter poem at a moments notice. However, the poetry would always be kept in fidelity with the layout that the author had provided. Using 8.5x11 paper helped to keep the layout fairly easy, since most writers used this size of paper.[161] In terms of the actual printing, di Prima recollects that "for the first year or a little more we printed the Bear on a mimeograph machine at Larry Willrich's Phoenix Bookshop and gave him fifty copies of each issue in exchange. Then Larry left for England and sold the shop to Bob Wilson, and about the same time we bought our own machine with money we had raised around New York. We still continued to take fifty copies of each issue to the Phoenix, only now we sold them to Bob Wilson. He often bought them in advance, to give us the money we needed for paper" (xi).[162] And indeed, the whole endeavor, at least at the beginning, was a community event: di Prima had help from painters, musicians, and other poets through the winter of 1961-1962. They all helped mimeograph, collate, and print mailing labels, sometimes staying up all night on Sunday to distribute the little magazine by Monday morning (xii).[163] Di Prima printed 250 copies of the first issue, but by the end of 1961, they printed 500 copies, and at the end of the run, in 1971, she printed 1500 copies (xii-xiii).[164] What is perhaps most interesting in terms of di Prima's views on the Bear is that she considered it a "throwaway": "I always considered the Bear a throwaway, and if we had an issue that wasn't going very well, we would bring a whole bunch of it someplace where they could be given away" (xiii).[165] This emphasis on the magazine's disposability gets us back to the magazine's ephemerality. If the editor of the little magazine thought that the magazine was disposable, what does this tell us about the status of the object itself? If the editor conceptualizes her own magazines as a something fleeting, something that is important to the moment, then we have her conceptualizing the magazine in the same way as many conceptualize sound.

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[161] Di Prima, Diane. "Introduction." *The Floating Bear*. 1970. xi. Emory University. Raymond Danowski Poetry Library, Manuscript, Archives, and Rare Book Library.
[162] Di Prima, Diane. "Introduction." *The Floating Bear*. 1970. xi. Emory University. Raymond Danowski Poetry Library, Manuscript, Archives, and Rare Book Library.

Perhaps Daniel Kane is right when he discusses poetry readings and the mimeographed reproductions of those readings: "the poems in rexograph and mimeo machines were really enactments of oral readings, as opposed to finished presentations of 'closed' poems" (Kane 37).[166] Here, we might think about how enactments of oral readings and "disposability" of the physical object may speak to one another. Di Prima does explicitly state that her magazine was an enactment of oral readings, and she also says that she distributed the magazine among a community, for free, when she was "going somewhere." This to me signals a type of community-building around the poetry itself. Perhaps the *physical* object did not matter much to her, but the poetry and prose embedded between the covers was important enough for her to distribute the magazine throughout her community. For Kane, the reader was called to direct "attention to the poet's situated body…. While the poem was still text on a page, the ideal reader accepted a tacit invitation to conceive of the poet's body articulating the lines. Silent reading became an event, a poetry reading taking place in the imagination" (Kane 27-28).[167] The link between poetics and social life is almost always a part of the poem itself. The bodies of the poet and audience fuse symbolically with the "body" of the poem through the "event" of the poetry reading in the imagination. I want to underline this notion, because the reader of Beat poetry cannot be severed from the hipster performance: the poet's body, the text on a page, and the performance are sutured together to articulate the "event" of the poem. Indeed, di Prima acknowledges the necessity and urgency of connecting poets to one another in era in which poetry was changing rapidly: "What we did have in common was our consciousness that the techniques of poetry were changing very fast, and our sense of the urgency of getting the technological advances of, say, Olson, into the hands of, say, Creeley, within two weeks, back and forth, because the thing just kept growing at a mad rate out of that " (xi). Thus, enacted oral readings, disposability, and the poet's embodied voice are all interconnected by a conceptual underpinning of sound metaphors.

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[163] Ibid., xii.
[164] Ibid., xii-xiii.
[165] Ibid., xiii.
[166] Kane, Daniel. *All Poets Welcome: The Lower East Side Poetry Scene in the 1960s*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003. 37. Print.

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[167] Ibid.

The early *Floating Bear* had much in common with *Yugen*. In fact, the early issues printed work that Jones had wanted to publish in *Yugen*. Thus, *The Floating Bear* was in a better position, in terms of contacts with poets, and manuscripts that were ready to be published, to publish than *Yugen* was when it had started. This overlap between *Yugen* and *The Floating Bear*, in terms of content, only lasted about a year. After 1961, most of the material was published *for The Floating Bear*. Diane di Prima reminds us that cultivating such a coterie audience, and trying to get manuscripts that were good enough to publish was a difficult challenge: "It wasn't simply one clique of writers throughout the country. There were still a lot of people working quietly and separately in a lot of funny little places. Then, too, we didn't know too much about the West Coast writers except for a few well-publicized ones, like Ginsberg and Ferlinghetti. There were a lot of people in the earlier issues whom I had not met yet or read, for instance, I had never read Robin Blaser before I put him in the first issue of the Bear, but LeRoi had gotten his stuff in the mail" (viii).[168] Many of these relationships were formed in a more personal way after publication. These personal relationships, cultivated after long periods of reading the authors' materials, were able to give *The Floating Bear* many different genres of writing collated into one volume.

For instance, Frank O'Hara's poetry appears frequently in the early editions of *The Floating Bear*, and in Issue 2, printed and published in 1961. Here, we see an early work of O'Hara's, one that captures the everydayness that is present throughout his poetic career. But we also read it on the page in a particular way: the poem itself is off-centered in the publication, perhaps from sloppy alignment, and we see where the cellophane paper bleeds through and leaves a mark at the end of the poem (see Image 3). It is also a standard lyric with both a speaker and an unknown addressee. O'Hara conjures the history of the lyric with the title, "Song," marking the troubadour tradition of the sung lyric poem. Thus, O'Hara writes in what one could say is a "traditional" lyric mode:

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[168] Di Prima, Diane. "Introduction." *The Floating Bear*. 1970. viii. Emory University. Raymond Danowski Poetry Library, Manuscript, Archives, and Rare Book Library.

> SONG
> Did you see me walking by the Buick Repairs?
> I was thinking of you
> having a Coke in the heat it was your face
> I saw on the movie magazine, no it was Fabian's
> I was thinking of you
> and down at the railroad tracks where the station
> has mysteriously disappeared
> I was thinking of you
> as the bus pulled away in the twilight
> I was thinking of you
> and right now[169]

We notice the techniques common in the midcentury lyric: eschewing the lofty vocative seen in the traditional lyric, O'Hara calls attention to the everyday activities that remind us of friends, lovers, acquaintances. We cannot tell here whether the speaker is calling to a loved one, or whether he recalls a friend, neither the vocative nor the lover matters here. The plain, everydayness of the occasion drives the poem. The refrain "I was thinking of you" that fills half of the lines acts as a reminder of the memory of "you" while it also acts as an almost obsessive call, an attempt to re-call and summon "you" to walk beside the speaker. The last line reminds us that we are not in the past, but rather that the poem is the event of remembering in the present. O'Hara leaves us with an "unfinished" line. Much like the "unfinished" works that appear in the mimeographed *Floating Bear*, this poem depends upon an "unfinishedness" to create the present moment. As one example of many found throughout *The Floating Bear*, O'Hara reminds us of the necessity of the unfinished poem.

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[169] O'Hara, Frank. "Song." *The Floating Bear*, Issue 2. 1961. Emory University. Raymond Danowski Poetry Library, Stuart A. Rose Manuscript, Archives, and Rare Book Library.

What is perhaps one of the most unique aspects of *The Floating Bear* is the use of letters as publishable material. Starting with Issue #5, the letter becomes a direct part of the magazine throughout its run. The letter itself in Issue #5 gives us a good idea as to why a letter might be included. The letter is from LeRoi Jones to Diane di Prima and conveys not only the relationship between the two poets, but also highlights the respect that Jones has for di Prima as a collaborator and friend. Couched between a poem by the now-obscure John Thomas and a short piece by William Burroughs (followed by a letter from William Burroughs), this letter, according to di Prima, acts as a type of poetics or statement of intent for the journal itself: "the letter in Number 5 is a pretty clear statement of what LeRoi's interest and concern with the Bear was at the beginning. That, and his statement on poetics in *New American Poetry* ("'HOW YOU SOUND?' is what we recent fellows are up to"), could be a map of where he was then. He was involved with our thought, our investigation into who we were and what our stance was in relation to our society and the world outside. He liked strong, politically aware poetry, and a lot of prose and criticism. I reacted more intuitively to what I read—didn't always intellectually 'understand' the poems I was into" (x-xi).[170] This letter is perhaps the most fully fleshed out statement of intent for a little magazine of the era.

The letter starts with an invitation to di Prima to think about the role of *The Floating Bear* in society: "Just now in whatever fit of desperation, blind self-justification, or whatever, I got into some thought re/ the Bear.. Mainly, as to what specific cutins we can make… as especially some constant insistence… e.g. What we think our roles ought to be, &c." (7). While a truly transparent take on editing in which the intimate letter becomes an open-letter for the Bear's audience to scrutinize, this intimacy also shows a particular lyric-like address. Here, Jones is stripped bare, calling on both the magazine and himself to question what such a product can do, what the publishing of the little magazine can do in the immediate future to make accessible the newest poetry.

Jones also gives us a brief understanding of how he sees the magazine as a whole, a type of poetics of the little magazine, here in this letter: "It struck me also that one specific way into Life, which is what the mimeo sheet was to represent, at least for me. An attempt to get in on the very rhythms of my self… &, of course, in whatever blank community we aspire to, as peers(?), or at least contemporaries. That rhythm, as such, or as I feel it somehow, has not been kept" (7). Jones marks the magazine as a representation of life with a capital "L," yet at the same time he calls the mimeod sheet a "representation" of Life, not Life itself. Thus, his view of what the magazine should be is uneven: he says he wants the mimeo sheet to be a representation of life, but then a sentence later he wants to "get into the very rhythms of my self." However, one could read these two statements as less contradictory than they at first appear: on the one hand, he sees the mimeo sheet itself as a representation of Life, and on the other hand, he sees himself as his poetry. Thus, the poetry becomes an attempt at getting "in on the very rhythms" of himself while the mimeod sheet is to be a representation of those rhythms.

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[170] Di Prima, Diane. "Introduction." *The Floating Bear*. 1970. x-xi. Emory University. Raymond Danowski Poetry Library, Manuscript, Archives, and Rare Book Library.

No other little magazine published at the time (and there were hundreds) came close to having as interesting or detailed understanding of itself. And, at the same time, the letter is an intimate look at the relationship between co-editors. The letter transforms into a poetics of the little magazine as soon as di Prima includes it in the issue. This is important because it shows a type of lyric transformation at its very base. We do not know if Jones intended for this letter to be published from the outset, but since we have the artifact itself, we know that the letter is not addressed to its reader. There is no sign that the letter was ever meant for us, except for its publication in *The Floating Bear.*

In reading the letter as an "overheard" statement of poetics, the piece acts as a type of lyric and has the lyric intimacy that Mills, Frye, and even Jonathan Culler would call lyric. At the same time, as listeners or readers of the letter, we are *indirectly* overhearing the underlying intent of what should be enacted on the page, as if we are listening in on an explicit statement of the implicit meaning that the co-editors would have for *The Floating Bear*. If we are indeed "listening in" on the conversation, the hidden meaning of the little magazine, we are directly implied through a type of sonic register that relies on an acousmatic structure that places the audience as *indirect* listener, indirect investor in the project, while at the same time allowing the audience to be a part of a community through the intimacy of the letter.

Jones continues to insert his editorial hand in the issues that follow, making sure that the magazine's intentions rise to his highest capacity. In Issue #6, George Stanley[171] has a series of twelve lyric poems that start the issue. Each poem has three stanzas of four lines each. However, these seem to be the only two formal elements of the twelve poems. The poem is in slant rhyme with only a few "true" rhymes intersperced. What is intriguing about these twelve poems is that while they look formal on the page, once one reads the poems, despite the fact that they do not have a formal metrical line or rhyme scheme, the poems each have their own rhythm. Take, for instance, poem number 1:

> 1.
> One bird called White
> Pecked with a gold beak.
> Another, Black,
> Pecked with a cold pique.
>
> What birds with wings
> The color of X-rays fly
> Choristers I call
> And Christers He—
>
> And each

---

[171] According to Diane di Prima, George Stanley was a poet who was part of Jack Spicer's circle. He came to New York in 1961, and, upon returning to San Francisco, "he went through a very bad period because Jack and the whole circle ostracized him for having gone to New York and having been published there. They said it was prostitution…. Jack felt that the East Coast was Babylon" (567).

Receives the dawn
In its own place
Luminous as a file. (1)[172]

Here, there is no strict meter, and yet, there is an internal rhythm. Jonathan Culler examines the problem of discussing rhythm in *The Theory of the Lyric* quite extensively: "The problem of the relation between rhythm and meter is a venerable one: among the Greeks there was already a division between the *rythmikoi* and the *metrikoi*; the former saw poetic rhythm as related to music, a temporal art, and the latter treated it as a metrical structure. But the vast body of work on the movement of verse focuses on meter, and for most of the history of lyric, poems were written in relation to particular metrical frames, specific patterns of syllables of particular types" (142). And yet, despite the difficulties with speaking about rhythm, Culler reminds us that "if one takes meter as the primary name for nonmeaningful pulsation, it is possible to associate rhythm with higher-level functions that put language in motion and make it meaningful, and some theorists of rhythm have tried to make it the basis of meaning in general" (161). If we are to take rhythm here as the basis of a meaningful interpretation of this lyric, what would we have? Perhaps the words themselves would mean less than the rhythm attached. Thus, rather than focus on birds and their coloration, perhaps we could focus on the relationship between the even 2-4-6 rhythm of each line and the last line which calls our attention to the "neat" lining up of the birds as the sun comes up.

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[172] Stanley, George. "12 Poems." *Floating Bear* 6, 1961. 1. Emory University. Raymond Danowski Poetry Library, Manuscript, Archives, and Rare Book Library.

But what happens when we turn to poem number 6, which is arguably much more tied to a type of lyric than this first one, because of its use of the "I" and the palimpsestic address:

> "When he asked me
> To go to Europe with him
> In the Fall,
> There were no strings attached.
>
> But now,
> Out of two weeks of loneliness
> In New Hampshire
> There comes this long white string.
>
> I don't want to go anywhere
> As anybody's lover.
> I don't even want my pity
> To be attached to me."

To some extent, this lyric is a narrative of an event that never happened. On the other hand, this lyric can tell us something about the mid-century lyric. The whole poem is encapsulated by quotation marks. Thus, we have a visual marker indicating speech, which also indicates that the poet is not himself the speaker. The quotation marks are a relatively new indicator: this is not a style of poem that we have seen before.

Baraka gives us a "note" at the end of the twelve poems as a type of commentary on the quality and style of the poems. In his "A Note on the Twelve Poems" Baraka tells us that "these poems are unsatisfactory, tho, I admit, they are what should be called 'beautiful.' …. They glitter with competence, and make any reader uneasy with their casual intelligence. But also, the poems are so foreign to any casual or immediately available emotional alternatives (like spent lovers) that the very object-ness of which they are possessed makes them completely unimportant from the point of view of 'creation'. These poems have almost nothing to do with creation…. But I mean this word as verb. A doing rather than a skillful existence in a carefully contrived system" (7). [173] Here, I believe Baraka is trying to get to the difference between poems that are process poems and those that are already aesthetic objects themselves. Baraka would like to consider these poems aesthetic objects that live in the carefully created structure of the aesthetic object, the object that lives independently of its author because it is not trying to *do* anything, *act* in any way, or to be in the process of creation of an object. However, Baraka leaves much to be desired in terms of the actual poetic value of the poems. He says that they are "unsatisfactory" as poems, yet, they are "beautiful." Does he mean then that they are not poems at all, but rather aesthetic objects that are taken out of the realm of poetry? If so, then that adds a new dimension to thinking about what is clearly in a set of lyric poems into another realm. Baraka seems to be saying that there is some correlation between poetic creation and success as poems. Instead, he argues that the poems exist outside the act of creation: they exist in a realm beyond the author who is in the act of creating poetry, and rather they exist, flaws and all, in a realm of object-ness beyond the act which brought them into existence. Baraka's anthropomorphization of the poem in this discussion is interesting: he tries to discuss these works as works of art, and so he gives them human-like qualities in his discussion. It is as if Baraka wants the poem to walk off the page and enter the Louvre to sit next to *The Mona Lisa*.

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[173] Jones, LeRoi. "A Note on the Twelve Poems." *Floating Bear* 6, 1961. 7. Emory University. Raymond Danowski Poetry Library, Manuscript, Archives, and Rare Book Library.

By 1962, Diane di Prima and LeRoi Jones/ Amiri Baraka had published 17 issues of *The Floating Bear*, which was more than almost any other little magazine had published in that short amount of time. The issue layout stayed the same from 1961 to 1962, but the contents of the little magazine changed and grew slightly. Publishing short poems, long poems, and excerpts of longer poems, Di Prima and Jones were also now publishing dramatic works, "histories" of up and coming artists, responses to poetry published in past issues, reviews of dance, drama, and theatre around New York City, and reviews of new books of poetry. Such breadth of content allowed Di Prima and Jones more editorial control over the quality of the reviews and poetry that appeared in the magazine. They also learned how to deal with censorship of their material through the 1961-1962 trial for pornographic material contained in Issue #9.

Diane di Prima recounts the story of how Issue #9 became a problem for her and Jones: "There was a person on *The Floating Bear* mailing list, a black poet named Harold Carrington, who was in prison in New Jersey. The censor or somebody read all of his mail, of course, and however it happened issue Number Nine was reported for obscenity. I think the particular objection was to LeRoi's play *From The System of Dante's Hell*, and to William Burroughs' piece *Routine*" (xiii).[174] Di Prima and Jones were arrested on October 18, 1961 for distributing "lewd material" through the postal system. However, they never went to trial.[175] But what is interesting, besides the drama of arrest, like literary figures before them, is that Jones performed *From the System of Dante's Hell* at the New York Poet's Theatre, and it was the first dramatic piece that Jones ever staged: "He started to get the feeling of that sound and what you had to do to make it move, even thought this one obviously hadn't been written to be performed" (xv). And, di Prima, recounts that they expected to be arrested again for putting on the play, but they were never harassed again (xv).[176]

The difference in reception between what was mailed, what was distributed through the magazine—or even the book—what was distributed through the dramatic theatre performance is telling. Not only is it the printed version that is a threat unlike any other, but when something is voiced, when a dramatic piece is sounded, it does not become a part of this nexus of legality. Perhaps this is a sign of our reliance on print culture over time, but perhaps it is also because of the *type* of reproduction inherent in magazine distribution. It should be noted that both pieces dealt with sexual—and homosexual—content, but the more graphic version, the version on the stage, is not the one that was censored. This disconnect between production on the stage and reproduction that allows for a wider audience is a problem that deserves more attention than I can give it here, but should be noted.

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[174] Di Prima, Diane. "Introduction." *The Floating Bear*. 1970. xiii. Emory University. Raymond Danowski Poetry Library, Manuscript, Archives, and Rare Book Library.

[175] Di Prima recounts that "the case never went to court. LeRoi requested a grand jury hearing on Stanley Faulkner's advice. Only one of us could testify and he did. He spent two days on the stand. The first day he was questioned by the D.A., and the second he brought in a ton of stuff that had one time or another been labeled 'obscene': everything from *Ulysses* to Catullus. He read for hours to the grand jury, and they refused to return an indictment. Of course, we also had letters from people all over the world stating that the work of William Burroughs and LeRoi Jones was 'literature' (whatever that is) and that we should be left alone" (xv).

[176] Di Prima, Diane. "Introduction." *The Floating Bear*. 1970. xv. Emory University. Raymond Danowski Poetry Library, Manuscript, Archives, and Rare Book Library.

The Floating Bear's content and intent melded together more in 1961 and 1962 than any other years of its publication. One indication of this melding of intent for disseminating the "new" poetry can be seen in the poem entitled "The Swing" by Stuart Perkoff. Perkoff's work was included in Donald Allen's seminal anthology *The New American Poetry 1945-1960*, and he was one of the founding members of the west-coast Beat scene. The poem alludes to the changes in language that were occurring at the time, and, using the word "dig" as a trope around which the lyric is controlled, the poem displays some of the foremost devices used by Beat poets of the day:

THE SWING

up in san francisco, dig, he sd/
                                                  speaking then
of language
                (a concern that
     occupies our needs currently

newness
in the word
the structure, like they say
or

in the swing of a line
a sound

using, he sd, the word in sentences
as brake upon the flow of thinking/
    up in san francisco/
                                        dig/
                                                    you dig?
to shape the swing
to the tongue of a different eye

& i, thinking of the word,
                                        like,
as used to destroy a reality
within a described scene

                              this changed line
of language, swung out
as we do it
                  lines of thought
unknown
on the other side of the Grass

what might it not do, to verse, to thinking

an attempt, at any rate,
now carried on[177]

Here, we see Perkoff's use of the word "dig" to show how rapidly the vocabulary, the slang was changing, and transforming this language into poetry. The use of "sd" instead of "said" has been previously seen, and was used as a shorthand on the typewriter that was then transposed onto the paper. The short lines emphasize the rhythm of short phrases, inflected by the word "dig." At the end, here, we also see him contemplate how the word might change not only speech, but thinking more generally. What do these types of words do to language that we may not, at first, be aware of?

By 1963, *The Floating Bear* moved with Diane di Prima to California. After issue number 25 was published, LeRoi Jones had resigned from his editorial position at the magazine.[178] By 1964, he had also left his wife,[179] Hettie Jones, and most of his friends from his bohemian life. The Black Arts Movement was about to emerge with Jones at the helm. In the first two years of publication, *The Floating Bear* had become a significant artifact of the poetry scene on the East Coast. Not only, though, had it captured the poetry scene, but it had also captured a significant glimpse at the lives and communities of poets that would emerge as voices of their time, including Diane di Prima, Diane Wakoski, John Wieners, Frank O'Hara, William S. Burroughs, and of course Amiri Baraka.

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[177] Perkoff, Stuart. "The Swing." *The Floating Bear*. 1962. 9. Print. Emory University. Raymond Danowski Poetry Library. Manuscript, Archives, and Rare Book Library.

[178] Di Prima, Diane. "Introduction." *The Floating Bear. 1970.* xv. Print. Emory University. Raymond Danowski Poetry Library, Manuscript, Archives, and Rare Book Library.

[179] Cohen, Hettie. *How I Became Hettie Jones*. New York: E.P. Dutton, 1990. 219. Print.

The Midcentury Little Magazine and Its Lyric Poem: Lyric Theory and the Acousmatic

The lyric poem, as a broad, overarching genre, is present in *The Floating Bear* more than any other genre of poetry employed at midcentury. This appearance and re-appearance of the lyric genre between the covers of one of the foremost publications of the era indicates not only a shift away from an early twentieth-century favoring of the impersonal poem, but how this shift is embedded in the very technologies of publication. Paralleling the poetry of the midcentury avant-garde arose confessional poetry, the intimate poetry of Plath, Sexton, and Lowell, which drove the use of the lyric at midcentury. However, the use of the lyric by the New American poets differed from the lyric used by the confessional poets through the way each engaged with the oral components of the lyric. While di Prima and Baraka privileged the lyric address that interpolated a fixed type of audience, an audience that could read and understand its highly vernacular speech, the lyric of the confessional poets is shaped less by its relationship to an audience. The mimeographed lyric address suggests that the form used in *The Floating Bear* not only gained attention because of its capacity to illicit intimacy with an audience, but because the medium of publication allowed for a reader to interact with the voice of the poet.

Such differences between the New American lyric address and the confessional lyric address is conveyed by Paul Blackburn in a radio interview from 1960: “What goes into the poems, especially in the last ten years, is very much a matter of speech rhythms, and of natural, rather than forced rhythms…. because the rhythms that you’re starting with and that you have to resolve are very often irregular themselves, because they are the way we speak."[180] He goes on to discuss the long line that has emerged from such speech-based poetry that the New American poets are "writing very much with speech rhythms but tremendously long lines, tremendously powerful lines in terms of the buildup of emotions."[181] Here, Blackburn connects the long lines that are seen in *The Floating Bear* to the "buildup of emotions" that occurs through this particular form. Blackburn makes explicit the connection between the speech-based line and how it leads to the buildup of powerful emotions. As the lyric is known as the emotive genre, it should be unsurprising that the lyric, and its oracular foundation, should return at this moment in literary history.

Indeed, Daniel Kane reminds us that the mimeographed sheet is a visual enactment of the oral poem: "it was important to represent the way a poem *sounded* using the text as a visual medium."[182] Like the history of the creation of the phonograph and the mimeograph, the mimeograph page and the lyric poem are closely intertwined, and though the lyric is a notoriously capacious genre, it has held onto a set of distinguishing traits from its conception. Questions of voice and address, "the nature of the poetic subject or persona, the role of lyric in its historical moment, its relation to performance, and its intersection with other forms of cultural representation"[183] all still perennially make their way into discussions of the lyric. Yet, the habitual return to lyric's central concepts shows the paradoxical difficulty in grappling with the genre: on the one hand, the central problem of the lyric is its capacious definition. On the other hand, the capacious definition allows for the continual renegotiation of its boundaries throughout the history of the form.

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[180] Interview with David Ossman, WBAI, New York, 1960 (sound recording). Paul Blackburn Papers, Mandeville Special Collections Library, University of California, San Diego.

[181] Ibid.

[182] Kane, Daniel. *All Poets Welcome: The Lower East Side Poetry Scene in the 1960s*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003. 37. Print.

[183] Brewster, Scott. *Lyric*. London: Routledge, 2009. 10. Print.

The question of voice and address is perhaps the most discussed and yet least understood component of the theory of the lyric genre. The basic problem starts with the positioning of poet/ speaker, the spoken to (generally thought of as the "you" in the poem), and the audience/ reader. Each famous conception of the structure of the lyric privileges a particular position. Our current conceptions of the lyric address come from John Stuart Mill (in the nineteenth century), Northrop Frye (at midcentury), and, more recently, Jonathan Culler. I delineate all three lyric theories to highlight the positions of poet/ speaker, silent addressee, and audience/ reader so that a need for a theory of the acousmatic may become more apparent.

John Stuart Mill contends in his essay "Thoughts on Poetry and Its Varieties" that poetry (notice that he does not use the term "lyric" here) is "overheard" rather than "heard directly:" "poetry is *feeling confessing itself to itself* . . . . We should say that eloquence is *heard*, poetry is *over*heard."[184] Here, Mill moves from the troubadour lyric as a song or musically influenced address to the position of the poet's address. Mill privileges the reader's/ listener's position as the one who hears/ overhears. For Mill, the relationship between the poet and the reader is only ever indirect: the voice of the poet calls to someone other than the person who listens. His lyric address places the listener at the center of the address. His emphasis on the situatedness of the ear, rather than a situatedness of the body, is important, because here we have a nineteenth-century conception of the lyric that still holds on to the auditory tradition of the lyric while updating the lyric address for a pre-phonographic audience. The nineteenth-century lyric as it pertains to the position of an audience, then, still maintains a strong link to its sonic tradition.

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[184] Mill, John Stuart. "Thoughts on Poetry and Its Varieties." *The Crayon.* 7.4 (1860) 95. Print.

Mill's conception of the lyric address has become the central touchstone for conceptualizing the lyric address in the twentieth century. In *Anatomy of Criticism,* Northrop Frye attends to the subject of the lyric in his fourth essay on the theory of genres, in which he argues that the lyric is the genre in which the poet "turns his back on his audience."[185] While Mill uses a sonic metaphor to understand the position of the audience in lyric address (the audience "overhears" the poem), Frye uses a physical, bodily metaphor to direct attention to the lyric address while focusing his metaphor on the poet rather than the audience. He expands upon his understanding of the lyric in general to argue that the "predominating initiative" of the lyric is "oracular rhythm," whcih differentiates it from metrical poetry: "[t]he aim of 'free' verse is not simply revolt against metre and *epos* conventions, but the articulation of an independent rhythm equally distinct from metre and from prose…. The loosening of rhyme… and stanzaic structure… are intended, not to make the metrical pattern more irregular, but to make the lyric rhythm more precise."[186] Frye defends the use of the lyric genre as one that makes a lyric rhythm more precise. Staying with his focus on the body of the poet to discuss the lyric ("the poet *turns his back on the audience*"), Frye once again privileges the stance of the poet to speak about the lyric. If Mill privileges the audience (as the "overhearer"), then Frye privileges the poet/ speaker (the one who "turns his back on his audience").

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[185] Frye, Northrop. *Anatomy of Criticism*. London: Methuen, 1954. 271. Print.
[186] Ibid., 272.

Mill's, and subsequently Frye's, conception of the lyric and the lyric address have found a relatively prominent—if not contentious—position in literary history. Jonathan Culler advances earlier work in his recent *Theory of the Lyric*.[187] Culler attempts to theorize and thematize the lyric beyond earlier historical definitions. Culler renegotiates the boundary set by Frye by arguing that the poet offers "language to listeners, with **indirection**, addressing them through language implicitly or explicitly addressed elsewhere."[188] Here, Culler brings together all three components involved in the lyric address: the speaker, the (directly) spoken to, and the audience who is addressed indirectly. This combination of addresser, addressee, and audience constitutes the triangulated structure of the lyric address, and shows the precise position of each subject involved. While Culler highlights the overall structure of the lyric address, we miss the oracular foundation of the lyric. We may have the structure, but the focus on the voice of the poet, the silent spoken to, and the listener are decoupled from this structure. Instead, Culler contends, the poet "offers language" to listeners. Such "language" is *for* the reader to stand in the place of the direct address. Thus, for Culler, the lyric address *for the reader* is language and only language: the emotive and sonic excess of the poetic form and the intersubjective comportment of all bodies called into relationship with one another (the poet, addressee, and reader) matter only insofar as "language" brings them together. I am skeptical that Culler's new theory can understand the heart of the lyric; that is, the relationship, bound primarily by a structure that is oral, of the intersubjective triangle. However, if we follow his logic that the lyric is an "event"[189] rather than a representation of an event, his theory of the lyric has much to say to a contemporary audience. If the lyric is an event, a *presentation*, rather than a *representation*, then the lyric can be directly tied to performance. If performance is necessarily an event, then the lyric as performance recalls the return to its central position in midcentury poetry as an oral form.

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[187] Culler, Jonathan. *The Theory of the Lyric*. Cambridge: Harvard U P, 2015. 161. Print. Taking the lyric turn and the putative renunciation of the lyric as a specific category as a provocation in more recent works has allowed Culler to show us why the lyric is still so valuable and powerful as a literary genre: "There are several compelling arguments for preserving the category of lyric. The first is that it is not just the creation of critics but has been created by poets themselves as they have read their predecessors and sought to do something continuous with what they had done, as Horace strives to take his place among the *lyrici vates* or Wordsworth takes up the sonnet. Second, perhaps most obviously, if we scrap the term *lyric*, we find ourselves practically empty-handed when confronting the long tradition of short, non-narrative poems" (161).

[188] Ibid., 164.

I delineate the difference between lyric address and lyric as a genre in all three conceptions of the lyric to show why we need a new term to return to the lyric's oracular foundation. All three scholars show how the speaker and the audience are implicated in the lyric address that is informed by the position of the speaker and listener: Mill never takes his eye off of the listener; Frye only addresses the position of the poet; and Culler attempts to bring listener and poet together through a triangulation. For each, this placement is enacted in the address of the speaker, and the structure is embedded in the poem itself. However, the structure of the poetic address, as discussed as a "triangulation" in which language is a medium that connects all three components still lives within the figural mode, a mode underscored by the visual. The lyric address is a matter of "positioning," a matter of understanding *visually* the place of the poet, addressee, and audience. Thus, our understanding of the lyric address is lacking.

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[189] Ibid., 35.

I introduce the term "acousmatic" to develop a sonically-informed understanding of the lyric address. The term "acousmatic" is taken from sound studies and musicology. We listen "acousmatically" every day. Acousmatic listening practices, such as listening to recorded music, are those in which the original source of the sound cannot be seen and are not present. We do not experience the production of the record; rather, we hear the results of musicians gathering to record an album. Currently, we are kept at a distance from the act of recording and encounter the musicians only as compressed digital bytes, as a *re*-production instead of a production. This term for a small but important difference in modes of listening has its origins in ancient Greece.

Etymologically, the term "acousmatic" refers to a group of Pythagorean disciples known as the *akousmatikoi*—literally the "listeners or auditors"—who, as legend has it, heard the philosopher lecture from behind a curtain or veil used to separate the "insiders" from the "outsiders." The insiders were known as the *mathematikoi*, and they would sit inside the veil, close to Pythagoras. Thus, they would not only hear the master's lectures, but would also *see* the demonstrations of Pythagoras' theories. The *akousmatikoi*, however, were situated in front of the veil: they could only *hear* the master speak and did not have the privilege of seeing the demonstrations.[190] However, over time (over many years), if the listener had successfully followed Pythagoras's teachings, he would be invited to "go behind the veil" and participate in the hearing and seeing of Pythagoras's theories. The word entered Greek vocabulary as *akousmata*, which specifically denoted the "things heard," or sayings, of Pythagoras.

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[190] Kane, Brian. *Sound Unseen: Acousmatic Sound in Theory and Practice*. Oxford: Oxford UP, 2014. 22. Print. [Note here that *Brian* Kane is the musicologist; *Daniel* Kane is the literary scholar. The two are not, as far as I know, related]

Conceptual understandings of and writing specifically about the acousmatic lay dormant until the advent of radiophonic experimentation in the 1960s, where it was rediscovered in French, as *acousmate*, "the sound of voices or instruments in the air."[191] The meaning of the term in French gave the word a sense of ephemerality: not only were voices or music heard, but they were heard "in the air," disembodied from the source of the sound. Pierre Schaeffer, sound engineer for Radiodiffusion-Télévision Française (RTF), reanimated the word and expounded on a theory of the acousmatic in his *Traité des Objets Musicaux*.[192] For Schaeffer, the term *acousmatique* is used to distinguish those sounds, which can easily be traced to the object making the sound from what he calls the "*objet sonore.*"[193] The *objet sonore* is a sound that is not linked symbolically to an object making the sound. For example, when we say "that's a violin" or "that's a door creaking," we are making an allusion to the sound emitted by the violin or to the creaking of the door, and thus we identify the sound *symbolically*, as a reference to something outside of the sound itself. An *objet sonore*, however, is not reliant upon the symbolic referent: if someone other than myself takes a strip and scratches it behind a closed door, I can hear the sound but am not able to identify the original symbolic referent.[194] This difference between sound that can easily attach to a referent outside of itself and a sound that has no legibility as a visual object distinguishes our understanding of sounds with referents from *objets sonores*.

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[191] Ibid., 24.

[192] Schaeffer, Pierre. *Traité des Objets Musicaux*. Paris: Editions du Seuil, 1966. Print. This over-600-page tomb has not been translated into English. However, a translation is in the process.

[193] "Au contraire, la situation acousmatique, d'une façon, en générale, nous interdit symboliquement tout rapport avec ce qui est visible, touchable, measurable" (93). ["On the contrary, the acousmatic situation [context], in general, divides us symbolically from what is visible, touchable, or measurable" (93). (My translation)]

[194] Schaeffer uses these same examples when distinguishing between an instrument and an *objet sonore*: "Il est bien évident qu'en disant 'c'est un violon' ou 'c'est une porte qui grince', nous faisons allusion au *son* émis par le violon, au *grincement* de la porte. Mais la distinction que nous voulons établir entre instrument et objet sonore est encore plus radicale: si l'on nous présente une bande sur laquelle est gravé un son dont nous sommes

Against a tradition that has for centuries understood sound as ancillary to the visual, Schaeffer decouples sound from referent so that it can be perceived *as such*: any "residual signification" is excised from what one hears to leave only sound as an object *tout court*.[195] But Schaeffer's theory can only hold up when the sound object is both the content and context: to get away from any "residual signification," to be able to speak of the sound object *qua* object, one must be able to focus exclusively on the sound itself. But what can the sound alone tell us about the *meaning* of the sound? The meaning attached to a sound does not come from the sound alone. Just as a visual object cannot attach meaning to itself just as an object, the sound object cannot have meaning without a referential context. Thus, a residual signification that is in excess of the object is necessary for constructing meaning.

However, we can learn from Schaeffer how to privilege the sound object as an object that can have its own internal structure. Here, the sound object becomes important in relation to the acousmatic through its division—or cutting off from—the visual. Just as a visual object may have its own internal structure, so too can a sound object have its own internal structure. This internal structure allows us to privilege objects that are structured sonically first and visually second. Rather than discarding either the sonic or the visual, we can rather shift our perception to attend more to the sonic.

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incapables d'identifier l'origine, qu'est-ce que nous entendons? Précisement ce que nous appelons un objet sonore, indepéndamment de toute référence causale designée, elle, par les termes de *corps sonore*, *source sonore* ou *instrument*" (95).

[195] Kane, Brian. *Sound Unseen*. Oxford: Oxford U P, 2014. 25. Print.

Though Schaeffer's concept of the *objet sonore* decouples context from content,[196] we can still gain an understanding of the sonic object through a practice of acousmatic listening. Such a practice has been with us since Pythagoras's era in that we listen acousmatically every day. Listening to the radio while driving is an acousmatic listening practice. As Brian Kane argues in *Sound Unseen*, the first full-length book to discuss acousmatic sound, "[t]he history of acousmatic sound has been mistaken for a history of the word 'acousmatic.' Given the rarity of this word, one ends up with only a piecemeal and diffuse historical account…. Historical agents have not often recognized the extent to which they employed the practice of acousmatic listening."[197] And this account of the history of the practice of acousmatic listening can be recovered by going to sources where one can articulate the meaning or conceptually situate the audible world.

If we return to Daniel Kane's discussion of the relationship between the poetry reading and the mimeographed poem, we can connect the practice of acousmatic listening to the little magazine:

> As long as the reader was part of an interpretive community aware of the significance of breath as it related to composition, the reading of a poem necessarily serves to direct part of the reader's attention to the poet's situated body. Reading a line with the understanding that the author treated it as a unit equal to his or her particular breath tended to emphasize authorial presence…. While the poem was still a text on a page, the ideal reader accepted a tacit invitation to conceive of the poet's body

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[196] Ibid., 9.
[197] Ibid., 8.

> articulating the lines. The silent reading became an event, a poetry reading taking place in the imagination.[198]

Here, if we take Daniel Kane's provocation seriously, we could say that the readers of the mimeographed poem also experienced the reading as an acousmatic listening practice. Though Kane inserts the poet's body, I would be more precise about what *part* of the poet's body is important for such a conception: the voice. Thus, if the reader conceives of the poet's voice articulating the lines, the silent reading would become an event. Thus, we have also returned to Culler's lyric, one that is informed by its event-ness. Yet, instead of focusing on the visual component of Culler's structure, we have a sonic event, structured through the voice of the poet, and the reader who understands her position as the *akousmatikoi*, as the listener who, instead of attempting to "get behind the veil," is content in the auditory excess of her position.

I reiterate that the poets I discuss did not use the term "acousmatic." However, the structures or forms out of which acousmatic listening could become possible are embedded within their poetry. For instance, instead of focusing solely on the context and content of a story in a general sense, one can also focus on the form or structure of a body of work that allows for the acousmatic—as practice *and* theory—to be used as a framework for analyzing the precarious place of the voice in lyric poetry. Thus, I am arguing that the acousmatic can be situated in two different ways within the literary text: on the one hand, the acousmatic can be seen in the way the little magazine is conceptualized in this period, and on the other hand, the poet calls an audience into a structure of acousmatic listening by using the conception of "hearing" the printed page.

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[198] Kane, Daniel. *All Poets Welcome: The Lower East Side Poetry Scene in the 1960s*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003. 27-8. Print.

Conclusion

In Chapter One I tried to show how reliant we are on visual discourse to do the work of material culture. As an alternative, I suggest that we need to think through material culture, especially the print culture of the little magazine, in terms of how sound and sound technologies (and even print technologies that were conceptualized through the history of sonic technology) affected in a very real way the methods, theories, and poetics of the mid-century American era. In the second chapter, I focused on two statements of poetics, which were printed in the little magazines *The Black Mountain Review* and *The Free Lance*. Charles Olson's seminal essay *Projective Verse*, reprinted in *The Black Mountain Review*, influenced two generations of poets, and in it, he calls for a rebellion against print. Instead, he calls for a sound-based poetics that is founded upon the breath of the poet. The poetry in *The Black Mountain Review* attempts to put forth a print-based speech with poets like Robert Duncan succeeding in this call for a sonic poetry. Russell Atkins's poetics of "psychovisualism" published in *The Free Lance* takes us in a different direction. Atkins calls attention to how print, how the visual, can work to enhance the sonic qualities of a poem. His poetry displays how the visual and the sonic work together to form a coherent poetic unit. In chapter three, I have expanded upon the relationship between sound studies and poetry by linking acousmatic listening to the mid-century lyric form, and by extension, I link the concept of the acousmatic to the historical practice of producing and reproducing the mimeographed and letter pressed little magazine. In chapter four, we shall see how the taped poetry reading and the little magazine work together to form a sonic history from 1963 to 1968.

By 1966, when Charles Olson's first *Selected Writings* was published, the complaint that "[w]hat we suffer from, is manuscript, press, the removal of verse from its producer and its reproducer, the voice,"[199] would have already been dated. Indeed, as we see here, the mimeograph machine and its little magazine would have turned "manuscript, press" into the very medium that would produce and reproduce the voice. The reader would become the acousmatic listener who heard the voice of the poet resound from the page; the poet would become the speaker whose voice and breath were central to calling forth the lyric address; and the addressee would remain a silent conspirator, drawing the poet away from the reader, just as Pythagoras drew his veil between the *mathematikoi* and the *akousmatikoi*.

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[199] Olson, Charles. "Projective Verse. *Selected Writings.* New York: New Directions Press, 1966. 22. Print.

Image 1: Edison's phonograph sketch, taken from the Thomas Edison archival collection. Thomas Edison Notebooks, July 18, 1877. Thomas Edison National Park, *Technical Notes and Drawings*, TAEM 11:367 (TAED TI2197: 188). Print.

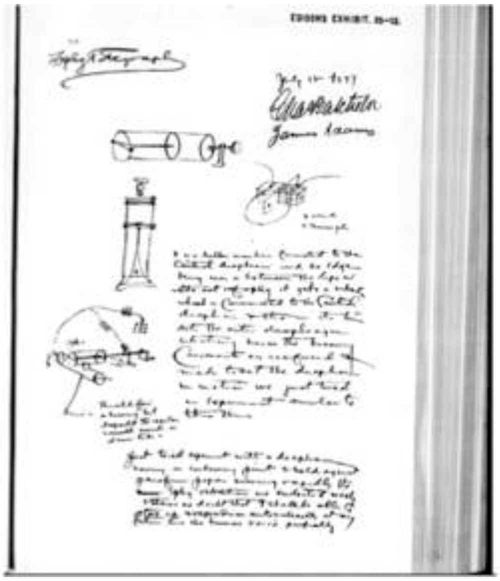


Image 2: Thomas Edison's autograph pen sketch, taken from the Edison archival collection. "Improvements to Autographic Printing" patent, Britain, October 20, 1875. Thomas Edison National Park, *British and American Patents*, MBP006 (TAEM 9248.6). Print.

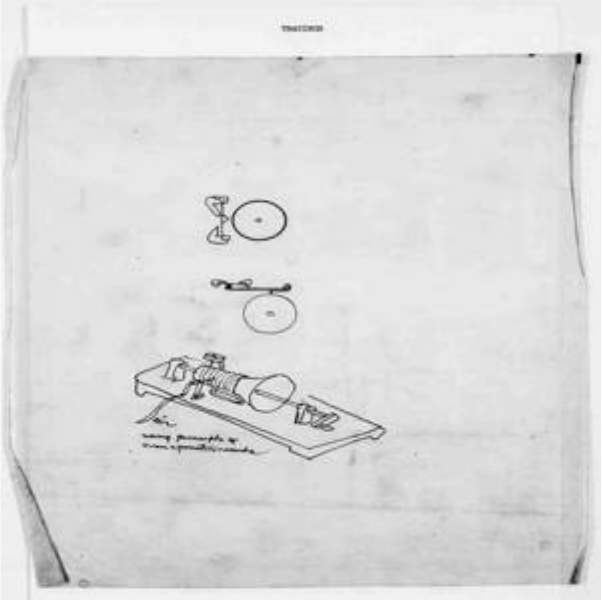
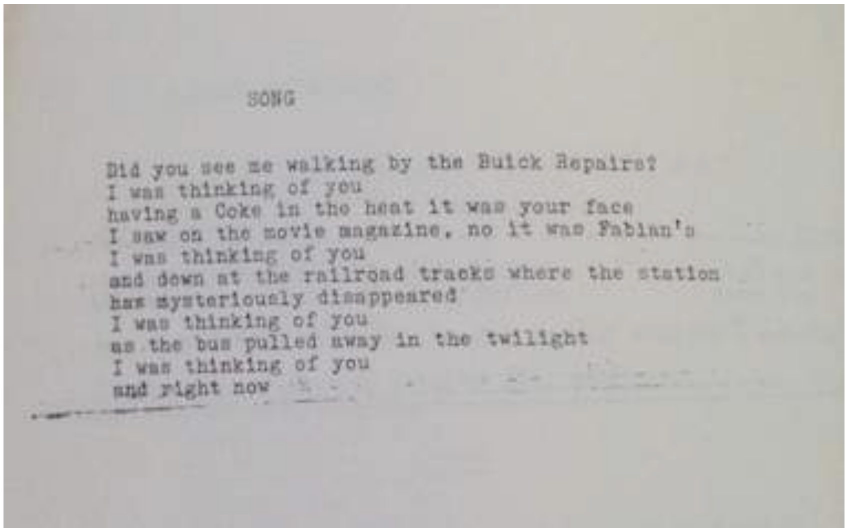


Image 3: Frank O'Hara's poem "Song," page 2 of *The Floating Bear*, Issue 2, 1961. The ink has bled from the cellulose paper onto the page. O'Hara, Frank. "Song." *The Floating Bear*, Issue 2. 1961. Emory University. Raymond Danowski Poetry Library, Stuart A. Rose Manuscript, Archives, and Rare Book Library.



SONG

Did you see me walking by the Buick Repairs?
I was thinking of you
having a Coke in the heat it was your face
I saw on the movie magazine, no it was Fabian's
I was thinking of you
and down at the railroad tracks where the station
has mysteriously disappeared
I was thinking of you
as the bus pulled away in the twilight
I was thinking of you
and right now

Chapter 4

The Divergence of Poetic Cultures: *Les Deux Megots* and *Aspen*

In earlier chapters, I have discussed the unfolding relationship between the little magazine as a production of post-1945 conceptions of sound. Now, I will expand on these ideas by showing how two little magazines, published from 1964 to 1968, diverge in both material construction and conceptualization of the way sound influences poetry on the page. While the two little magazines that I discuss in this chapter seem to have little in common, both conceptualize sound through the ways that voice—literally and metaphorically—are constructed through print technologies. *Les Deux Megots* is published on a mimeod sheet and is the most ephemeral of all of the magazines I have discussed up to this point. The other, *Aspen*, is a high-end production, a glossy affair with carefully thought-out typographical choices, and is considered by many in the art world as an "artists magazine." Additionally, the content of the two magazines could not be more different. The former printed the works of poetry readings, readings that were becoming so fundamental to 1960s counterculture. The latter first published Barthes's "The Death of the Author," a foundational text for the poststructural turn in literary theory and for conceptual poetry, a poetry that would gain favor in academic circles from 1968 to the present. I chose to juxtapose these two magazines in this last chapter because they show the beginning of the divergence between the material construction of countercultural little magazines after the height of the counterculture movement as well as the shifting landscape of the place of the voice in poetry. By 1968, where I end this project, the form of the little magazine put the counterculture of the 1950s and 1960s into two distinct camps. The first camp found a voice through experimentation with and within the mimeographed little magazine. This was, after all, the height of the mimeograph revolution, or the time in which mimeographed magazines proliferated across the country. Many of these magazines emerged as a byproduct of poetry readings, readings that were becoming more essential to the practice of writing poetry, which still remains the most prevalent way that readers experience poetry today. The second magazine, *Aspen*, emerged from an audience-based, proto-postmodern ethos that would privilege the audience as the site for aesthetic sensibility and interpretive agency. This shift to audience-based interpretation is important, because the New Critics privileged the art object (the poem, the narrative) as the sole source for interpretation. It is this situating of the autonomous artwork that plays down both reader reception and authorial intent. In other words, context did not matter for the New Critics. This shift to the audience to make meaningful interpretation of an object can be seen in the movement towards minimalism in visual art as well as poetry. These two ways of looking at the form of publication also have a direct relationship with the poetic and literary content found between the magazine's covers. On the one hand, the poetry found in the mimeographed little magazine has its ties to the oral articulation of poetry. On the other hand, the audience-based poetry found in the higher-end magazine has its ties to conceptual poetry, the type of poetry that is still hailed in academic circles today as "avant-garde."

Aspen magazine is directly linked to conceptualizing poetry as an interpretive act: the audience is at the center of meaning-making, and authorial intent has died. The poetry we find between the covers of *Le Metro* and *Les Deux Megots* is tied to the authors not only because they can publish on the spot, but because they are a part of an interpretive community that has an internal culture. Trying to decipher some of the internal "jokes" throughout these two publications is a dizzying task. Take, for instance, Ed Sanders's "poetic" contributions to *Les Deux Megots*. Sanders's text is not really a 'poem' in the traditional sense; instead, it is a collection of Greek mythological icons, and phrases including "HOMAGE TO RA/ in the sun-disc/ HAIL RA/ ON THE PEAKS OF THE EAST" scattered on the page. With its Egyptian hieroglyphics and its explicit sexual content, the text would have immediately cued its in-the-know readers to associate it with Ed Sanders, publisher of the popular *Fuck You/ a magazine of the arts*.[200] Here, we see that the intimate relationship between audience and author has created a community through distinct graphic and textual references. On the other hand, the poetry published in *Aspen* is based on the idea of the audience making the meaning for a given text: authorial intent, or figuring out what an author "intends" to say or convey through the text, is not important. Rather, the author sets up a set of parameters by which the reader would make meaningful. Indeed, this can be seen in the poem *Schema*, found in Issue 5+6 of *Aspen*: "(number of) adjectives/ (number of) adverbs/ (number of) area not occupied by type/ (number of) area occupied by type"[201] and so on. Often referred to as a "do-it-yourself poem," *Schema* exemplifies Barthes's observation that "it is language that speaks, not the author."[202] One needs to know nothing about the author to read and understand this poem.

Of course, beyond the change in type of poetry, other technologies had more forcefully entered the poetry domain, including the tape recorder. Indeed, Paul Blackburn, a "Black Mountain" poet who had lived in France and studied the Provencal language to be able to read medieval troubadour poetry, recorded every poetry reading at *Les Deux Megots* and *Le Metro*. He would continue to record every poetry reading at the Poetry Project. However, these taped recordings of the poetry readings were not attached to the little magazine itself. They were not made part of the little magazine. Readers who knew Blackburn in this circle could always *ask* for a copy. Like the recordings of the poetry readings, *Aspen* provided its audience with at least one 7.5-inch plexi-disc record with each little magazine issue. On it, one would find recordings of jazz musicians playing a particular tune, experimental composers recording their most recent composition, and poets reciting their own poetry. Alongside the recordings, one would have a text to read, written by critics prominent in their field, while listening to the recorded composition about which the text would refer. Here, one would find texts to read alongside the recording.

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[200] Kane, Daniel. *All Poets Welcome: The Lower East Side Poetry Scene in the 1960s*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003. xv. Print.

[201] *Aspen* 5+6. New York: Roaring Form Press, 1967. n.p. Print.

[202] Allen, Gwen. *Artists' Magazines: An Alternative Space for Art*. MIT Press, 2011. 58. Print.

Aspen is different from other “multimedia” little magazines in that the article, the critical text accompanying the recording, always gestures towards a listening practice. Providing up to three different critical pieces about one music or poetic composition embedded on the supplied record was one way for the audience to interact with both text and recording. A reader could agree/ disagree/ somewhat agree with the text critics would offer, and reading the critical pieces would nudge a reader to become a listener. How can one decide which critical interpretation of the music or poetry was most valid if one did not also listen to the record provided? Indeed, in the first issue of *Aspen*, three jazz musicians and critics argue for their type of jazz. Freddie Fisher praises Dixieland; John Hendricks vouches for contemporary jazz; and Chuck Israels reminds the two that *all* jazz should be listened to. At the end, one is urged to listen to the record, one side of which re recordings of dixieland and on the other are contemporary composers like Bill Evans. The publishers ask the audience: "With whom do you agree?/ Play our record and see./ One side is Dixieland;/ The other is wayoutland."[203] Three distinguished critics writing for *Aspen* ask their audience with whom they agree, allowing for an interactive relationship between musical recording, critical reading, and reader, leaving the final word up to the reader.

To understand the relationship between the height of the poetry reading as a social practice and poetry as it worked its way through academic circles from the 1960s to today, we could read Donald Hall's 1985 essay to tell us much about the status of the poetry reading ten years after the poetry reading had been crowned an essential part of the labor of the poet. In his 1985 essay, American poet, scholar and critic Donald Hall calls out academia for its lack of attention to the poetry reading as a site of scholarly interrogation. Indeed, he is on to something in the first sentences of his *American Scholar* essay "The Poetry Reading: Public Performance, Private Art" when he discusses poetry in terms of the technological changes that have occurred and which allow him (and other scholars) to speak with authority on the subject: "Certainly the technology—from scrivener to movable font to while-u-wait offset—has affected what is written. In the past thirty years, the poetry reading, which used to be rare, has become the chief form of publication for American poets. Annually, hundreds of thousands of listeners hear tens of thousands of readings. Of course this phenomenon has changed poetry—and not unequivocally."[204] Hall recognizes the poetry reading as a site of poetic and cultural production, a site that has changed poetry at its core. In calling the poetry reading a "form of publication," Hall calls attention to the way in which the terms of publication have changed: no longer relying on the traditional publisher in a publishing house with access to and knowledge of book production. Instead, "publication" occurs as soon as a poem is read. And following Hall's claim, we could say that publication shifts from a highly constructed, technically and mechanically intricate process to one in which the paratext, or the form upon which the poem is built, shifts from text to performance. This shift also designates a change in the process of publication, whereby the very term "publication," designating a certain mode of dissemination, moves from the dissemination of the page, of the text as a physical object, to a dissemination that relies on the body of the poet. In this way, dissemination of poetry is tied to the movement of the body of the poet so that the performance of a poet's poetry is a method of dissemination. Here then, we have a method of dissemination that is a performance that relies on the bodily existence of the poet.

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[203] *Aspen* 1. New York: Roaring Fork Press, 1964. n.p. Print.
[204] Hall, Donald. "The Poetry Reading: Public Performance/ Private Art." *The American Scholar* 54.1 (1985) 63. Print.

Allen argues that this reliance on performance is a primary reason that poetry readings are not taken as a scholarly subject matter. If publication is not "peer reviewed," should scholars pay attention to it? Of course, his answer is yes, scholars should pay attention, or else so much will be lost in the history of literary production.[205] Indeed, Hall suggests that poetry readings have become too ubiquitous, asking friends, other scholars to weigh in: "In the letter that made the suggestion, Mr. Epstein provided more grist for my mill. The phenomenon of the poetry reading, he wrote, 'is one, I am beginning to believe, that I do not really understand. I used to go to poetry readings when I was an undergraduate and when the poet was a great celebrity—Marianne Moore, say, or E.E. Cummings [sic] or T.S. Eliot. The purpose… was to gaze upon these figures I so admired. Is it still the same, even though the figures seem less? Is the purpose of poetry readings to put a few dollars the poet's pocket, or a few boys or girls in his bed?'"[206] Mr. Epstein, apparently, thinks that there is something inherently more valuable in the work of Marianne Moore as a high modernist than, say, Denise Levertov, a "New American" poet. But what I really want to focus on in this passage is his use of the phrase "to gaze upon these figures I so admired." This phrase, more than the rest of the passage, tells us something about the generational divide within the poetry reading circuit. To "gaze upon" celebrity was the point of an earlier generation of poets who, mostly reluctantly, gave poetry readings. Hall makes this shift to the poetry reading as a phenomenon that highlights the sonic qualities, the vocal performance, of the poem: to "gaze upon" the poet as one would gaze upon a celebrity is a high modernist form of interacting with the poet. And, if the poet is not compelled by custom or the draw of an audience to read her poetry, then the audience has one way of interacting with the poet: through the text on the page. Thus, the poem *itself* has become more valuable than the poet.

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[205] One only has to think about the state of radio and other sonic recordings wasting away in the archives.

However, Hall seems to be in a place of contention within his own self about the poetry reading. On the one hand, he believes that academics should be studying the poetry reading as a particular response to twentieth-century trends. On the other hand, he wonders what the poetry reading is actually accomplishing for the audience, for the reader. He asks us to consider "instead that the poetry reading deprives us of civilization's inwardness. Obviously, any performance deprives us of opportunity to supply our own sound and gesture. Performance makes passivity. When we read silently, we must hear what we read in the mind's ear."[207] This emphasis on the way readings overdetermine imagination with sound and gesture is one that I will return to later in this chapter, but here I would like to say that this type of passivity would have been unrecognizable to the poets gathered at Le Metro or Les Deux Megots. Hall suggests that the magic of poetry lies in the intense privacy between the words on the page and the silent reader: "When mind's voice speaks to mind's ear, we make sounds as perfect as an internal aria. At the same time, our response to the poem is our own: no communal laugh or sigh or intake breath controls or suggests the direction of response. Poet and teacher, alone together, find an intimacy that crowds inhibit or prevent. The private art—poet in solitude finding and shaping the only word, carving it like alabaster; not poet as gregarious talker improvising the moment's eloquence—finds in silent reading its appropriate publication: its public is a series of intense privacies."[208] But what the little magazine was able to do was to bring together poets and readers in a simulation of the poetry reading itself. As the byproduct of the poetry readings held at *Les Deux Megots*, the little magazine held a privileged place as a site where even the silent reading would become an "event," mimicking the poetry performance held just days prior to publication.

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[206] Hall, Donald. "The Poetry Reading: Public Performance/ Private Art." *The American Scholar* 54.1 (1985) 64. Print.

Hall continues his elegy for the printed poem by calling attention to the loss of meter and rhythm in contemporary poetry, which he associates with the loss of sound on the page: "For instance, we might have predicted that the vogue of reading would result in greater attention to poetry's sound. Yet in large part the opposite has happened, and contemporary poetry lacks sound even more than it lacks syntax: no meter or rhyme;

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[207] Ibid., 72.

[208] Ibid.

more important, no attention to vowel and consonant repetition, which characterizes the free verse of William Carlos Williams, Wallace Stevens, and Ezra Pound; above all, the loss of the line as a melodic unit separate from grammar and sense…. The best poets of the moment are meticulous and mellifluous in their sound, which works on the page and out loud, and their ears are formed from long experience of reading to audiences" (76).[209] He seems to be making a false comparison between the poetry reading and the forms that contemporary poetry takes now. In his thinking, the oral recitation of the poem should necessarily bring back some semblance of rhythm and meter, as well as assonance and dissonance as the main structure of the poem. Then, he concludes by saying that the best poets today are paying attention to how the poem sounds on paper and in the poetry reading, both being equally important for some sense of poetic legacy. This statement shows his ambivalence towards the poetry reading: on the one hand, the poetry reading allows the poet to reject older, more traditional forms of sound signifiers so that she can create new ways of thinking about sound in poetry. On the other hand, Hall notes that with the loss of the line as a single, coherent unit of poetic meaning, we have a poetry that relies on more expansive stanzaic forms that can be articulated aloud just as well as they are found on the page. However, what Hall elides in this construction is that the media though which poetry is disseminated has changed drastically in the period in which he discusses: the poetry reading is often captured on a recording, on a more accessible, reproducible, and archivable technology. Print is important, but what Hall forgets is that poetry is being disseminated in myriad ways, and thus the actual writing of poetry does not have to conform to print-only reading.

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[209] Ibid., 76.

I bring all of this up not to disparage print as a medium for poetry, but rather to point to the ways in which print has lost its currency in the poetry world as the only forum for poetry. Indeed, if Hall, writing in 1985 no less, can still argue against the poetry reading as an autonomous site for poetry to occur, then the avant-garde of the 1960s was still avant-garde in the 1980s. Indeed, Carol Berge notes in her text *Light Years* shows how the "memoirs [in this book] illustrate how these writers took poetry off the page, how they developed the heady amalgam multimedia."[210] Thus, this idea of the page as a privileged site for understanding the poem is not necessarily accurate for the period from 1964 to 1968 (nor for the earlier periods that I study in this project), the period on which this chapter focuses. And yet, it was not only the poets who were interested in this multimedia focus.

Again, we not only see this in the poetry readings at *Les Deux Megots*, but we also see this in the very idealization of *Aspen*. Including sound recordings on 7-inch records, along with the non-codex form of the magazine, which allows for a tactile experience of the form alongside the heady intellectualism of the writing itself, would have meant a more challenging and interesting little magazine that successfully held up the ideals of a total, multimedia work of art. Yet, this work would not have been possible even a short thirty years prior to its inception, as print technologies had not achieved this level of sophistication, nor had the reproduction of recorded music and/ or poetry readings. *Aspen* issued thirteen flexi-discs with recorded music, poetry, and experimental literature on them. The flexi-disc is a phonograph record made of a thin, flexible vinyl sheet that had a stylus groove so that one could play the disc on a regular phonograph turntable. The discs are made of sturdy vinyl material so that they could be handled through the mail without the risk of them being broken. They were flexible enough to withstand shuffling, moving, or bending that might occur through transportation. The flexi-disc was invented and mass-produced starting in 1962. Thus, the technology itself was only two years old when *Aspen* started to use it.

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[210] Berge, Carol. *Light Years: An Anthology of Sociocultural Happenings (Multimedia in the East Village, 1960-1966)*. New York: Spuyten Duyvil, 2010. 1. Print.

Le Metro and *Les Deux Megots*

Les Deux Megots developed out of the poetry readings held, first, at Le Metro, a coffeeshop in the Lower East Side of New York City. There, poets as diverse as Jackson Mac Low, Carol Berge, Allen Ginsberg, and Ron Padgett gathered to perform poetry for a live audience. As the poetry readings grew, Dan Saxon, poet and printer, took it upon himself to produce a mimeod, stapled set of poetry that had been or would be read that night. This insistence on the printed word to document the events at Le Metro and Les Deux Megots would become an important material link to the poetry readings.

Carol Berge, in *Light Year*s, a book of memories from those early days, recalls "how these writers took poetry off the page, how they developed the heady amalgam multimedia."[211] Indeed, in taking the poetry off the page, these writers were able to form a community in which the spoken word came to the fore of the poetry world. But this also included a particular poetic genealogy that would become important in the discourse surrounding these artists. Daniel Kane writes that "[p]oets associated with Les Deux Megots and Le Metro often looked to and discussed earlier alternative literary movements that promoted oral presentation and typographical innovation, thus situating themselves within a literary genealogy. Influenced by their reading and repercussion of earlier avant-garde experimental work, including Italian and Russian futurism, dada, and the texts of radical modernist figures, many writers at the coffee shops highlighted the poem as a spoken phenomenon and type of 'scored' their writing to emphasize its place on both page and stage."[212] Indeed, this "scoring" of writing (or writing as if scoring a piece of music) would become a large part of the remnants left of the poetry readings. Kane continues: "Additionally, the rexograph's capacity to contain actual handwriting also suggest concrete poetry combined with a scored musical page, one could treat the size of the letters as cues providing the reader with an idea of how loudly he or she should read the words. The poems in rexograph and mimeo magazines were really enactments of oral readings, as opposed to finished presentations of 'closed' poems."[213] The rexograph itself is like a mimeograph machine, but there are distinct differences. The rexograph involves reproduction from a master rather than a stencil. The master is created by writing, drawing, or typing onto a sheet of paper with a sheet of pigment below it. The pigment is transferred to the back of the master. It is like using carbon paper, but the carbon side faces the back of the sheet you are drawing on. The duplicator is filled with alcohol rather than ink. A light coat of alcohol is rolled onto the surface of the paper, which is then pressed against the master (or vice-versa). The pigment then transfers to the paper. By using different color pigment sheets for different parts of the drawing or typing, one master can produce a many-colored image. The master is good for up to about 125 copies.

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[211] Ibid.

The page becomes a place where the body and the voice meet through the use of handwritten texts (see Image 1 at the end of the chapter for a visual example). At the top of each page of both *Le Metro* and *Les Deux Megots*, Dan Saxon writes: “Collected Poems—Handwritten by the authors and Published Unedited and Indiscriminately by Dan Saxon—June 1963.”[214] Here, we have not only the subject matter at hand—collected poems—but they are announced on the cover as being hand-written. We also have a date attached to each group of poems. This inscription of a date tells us that, while ephemeral in all senses of the word, the little magazine, the hand-written poems, were meant for collection. To date a piece of writing indicates a need to archive, or make present in the very instant of writing, a particular time and place for the events to unfold. This dating of the rexograph sheets indicates a need to preserve the moment of oral articulation as well as the moment of preservation for future generations. It also has its tie back to the very moment of the reading. It is as if this mimeographed sheet is to do what the recorded record would do: it takes a moment in time and preserves it for all. This type of preservation is different from what other magazines may do, because not only is it attached to a temporal moment, but it is also attached to a place. This melding of time and place works against the notion of the archived object that exists without a place of record.

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[212] Kane, Daniel. *All Poets Welcome: The Lower East Side Poetry Scene in the 1960s*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003. xv. Print.

[213] Ibid., 36-7.

What is also striking about the magazine is the way in which Saxon has the poets hand-write, on a celluloid sheet, their poems that they have read that night. As Carol Begre remembers it, “The most democratic, published without editorial judgment or commentary by Dan Saxon, was *Poems Collected at Les Deux Megots* (later called *Poems from Le Metro*), printed directly from mats brought to the readings, on which each poet could write whatever poem was to appear in the next issue, and which was guaranteed to appear uncensored and fresh from the griddle the following week" (20). Carol Berge's statement not withstanding, the two magazines were actually specifically independent of one another while still capturing the same sentiment reworked into the same format. Dan Saxon was the "editor"/ producer of each of these little magazines. So, if the poets were able to write in their own handwriting for publication purposes, what does this tell us about the relationship between handwriting and the oral articulation of the word? Firstly, there would seem to be a direct relationship between one bodily act—the oral articulation, or recitation, of the poem—and another—the inscription, by hand, of a poem because both rely on a bodily act to fulfill the full construction (whether as a performance or as an expression of a performance) of the poem. This bodily relationship should not be discounted as something frivolous. Indeed, allowing the poets themselves to become involved in the presentation of their own poems makes the relationship between paper and publication more democratic and indeed more a representation of what the poetry readings were actually trying to do, as democratic markers of a culture on the Lower East Side. This act is democratic because the poets themselves, rather than a publisher or editor, decide what to inscribe on the rexograph or mimeograph sheet. Rather than the publishing hierarchy that we have come to know, we have a situation in which the authors themselves can make publishing choices usually relegated to someone outside of the act of creation. As Berge notes, the "spoken poem was no longer limited to a two-person exchange between writer and reader; it had resonance. Writing was entering the third dimension and superseding the conventional medium—it became closer to a theater art."[215] Theater art, perhaps, but more importantly, Berge uses the word "resonance" to describe the communal orientation and democratic markers of the work. By "resonance" I imagine she means that the poem, even in its most sonic form, had an existence and meaning beyond the interaction between poet and reader. This is important because it takes the poem off of the page and places the act of poetic meaning in the realm of the act of reading itself. This is different from the act of a reader reading a poem to himself silently because the act is in the present moment.

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[214] Saxon, Dan. Coverpage. *Le Metro*. Print.

In Raphael Allison's astute monograph, *Bodies on the Line*, he takes up the question of the body's place in oral and textual performances in the 1960s. He uses the concept of "liveness" to complicate the relationship between recording—whether vocal recording or textual recording—and the lived experience of the poetry reading. He argues that the very idea of "live" in performance "is facilitated by the ability to be recorded; recording creates, paradoxically, a sense of an event's self-similarity and aura; without recording, liveness is impossible…. Liveness has indeed become 'the realm of the authentic' if for no other reason that it can be *made* inauthentic by way of the distinction between performance and technological reproduction. In this inversion, the live depends upon the recorded, not vice versa."[216] Here, we see the poetry reading recorded on the page as a type of "liveness" that depends upon the recording to create the "live" performance. In other words, the recording, because it can be considered "inauthentic" *because* it is a recording, makes the actual poetry event "authentic" or "live" while also putting into precarity this very notion of "live" by the act of recording. In this paradoxical frame, we now have a way of merging the "live" performance of the poetry reading with the rexographed pages on which a poet would write, by hand, his poem that he had just performed. And indeed, if the rexographed sheet becomes the record of the performance, we have an oral articulation manifested as print. This print resource is at once a printed manifestation of oral articulation and a physical, recorded manifestation of a handwritten, bodily inscription of the poetry performance.

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[215] Kane, Daniel. *All Poets Welcome: The Lower East Side Poetry Scene in the 1960s*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003. 33-34. Print.

[216] Allison, Raphael. *Bodies on the Line: Performance and Sixties Poetry Reading*. Iowa City: Iowa U P, 2014. 19. Print.

The coloring of each page of *Les Deux Megots*, too, tells us something about the overall effects of the magazine as it inscribes a particular type of writing that is unique to this particular magazine. Each page bleeds through onto the next, meaning that the reverse side of each page cannot be used to write on. As Daniel Kane notes, "Additionally, the rexograph's capacity to contain actual handwriting also suggest concrete poetry combined with a scored musical page, one could treat the size of the letters as cues providing the reader with an idea of how loudly he or she should read the words. The poems in rexograph and mimeo magazines were really enactments of oral readings, as opposed to finished presentations of 'closed' poems."[217] Not only would we have a handwritten page, but the page itself would direct the audience to respond to the writing in a particular way. What is interesting about Kane's interpretation is that he also directs attention to the way the poet him- or herself should read that particular poem. Thus, in some ways, the hand written page was more restrictive, in terms of poetic or authorial intention, and perhaps *over*determined by poetic intent. The purplish-blue, handwritten poems have lasted unevenly; some of the pages are more easy to read than others. This unevenness in quality makes the page itself a site of ephemerality, one that does not hide its nature.

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[217] Kane, Daniel. *All Poets Welcome: The Lower East Side Poetry Scene in the 1960s*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003. 36-37. Print.

The poems themselves are also uneven; some seem more "publishable" than others, but the medium itself is a type of vanguard publication because of the handwritten page. The medium itself is important, and the bleeding of the pages indicate a type of precarity of the actual object, which ties to a history that may be forgotten if left to its own devices. The crisp, fixed idealism of poetry on the page was the springboard into the development of 'Multimedia,' 'Intermedia,' 'Events,' and Allen Kraprow's 'Happenings,' which would synthesize several arts into one production or performance.

And, indeed, perhaps it is even in the reading of the poem, as it has been handwritten, that makes the page less authoritative. It can be hard to take some of this poetry seriously because of its reliance on the page that does not seem to hold its permanence in the same knotted regard as a bound book of poetry. Indeed, the poets reading at *Les Deux Megots* and *Le Metro* often looked to and discussed earlier alternative literary movements that promoted oral presentation and typographical innovation, including Italian and Russian futurism, dada, and the texts of radical modernist figures. The writers at the coffee shops highlighted the poem as a spoken phenomenon, a type of 'scored' writing to emphasize its place on both page and stage.[218] Indeed, these poetry readings were not just "public presentations of texts" as Kane has noted, but were rather "events that defined a contemporary avant-garde as they redefined the way poetry was used in contemporary American culture."[219] We can see how poetry was used in contemporary culture in the following poems, published in the coffeeshop little magazines.

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[218] Kane, Daniel. *All Poets Welcome: The Lower East Side Poetry Scene in the 1960s*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003. 5. Print.

In Volume Twelve of *Le Metro*, dated March 1964, Ted Berrigan has hand-inscribed his poem "Under My Breath" which exemplifies the type of poetry at work in the group:

Under My Breath

Marked woman star boarder treasure throw
Imitations of Sousa march thru his latest pose
Are you an editor I open this and just
Start writing   why don't we move to the big table
There's a nation-wide demand for it — Yes
That's the kind of situation I like

Saxon knock knock Hello Harry ("I'll do a
Movie poem") funky jazzy Flipped-out Multitask
Female orgasms are collecting under this
It's the bottom message wide thick nice

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[219] Ibid., 27.

Spontaneous combustion points to Allen Ginsberg

One Two Three Four Five Six How blue
white gulls blue water green air Hooray!
it's ash-death wing frame frangipani Ed like
well, here comes the naughty editors in a
submarine

2 March 64 Ted Berrigan

The poem's title gives us something unexpected: instead of a poem that is more attuned to the traditional structure of the lyric, wherein the poet (the "I") speaks "indirectly" to someone (the "you" in the poem) while an audience "overhears" the poet speaking, we have a lyric "I" that speaks "under [his] breath" This is an important shift from the traditional notion of a lyric speaker who speaks out towards an audience, the kind analyzed by Northrop Frye or Jonathan Culler, two twentieth-century theorists of the lyric. However, we do have something slightly closer to John Stuart Mill's conception of the lyric, a conception created by Mill in the late nineteenth century to get us away from Hegelian and Romantic definitions of lyric. In attempting to clarify and delimit lyric poetry, Mill centers his definition on the person whom the artwork addresses: for him, the question of address helps to differentiate poetry from what he calls "eloquence." The difference between eloquence and poetry is "*feeling confession itself to itself*, in moments of solitude, and *embodying itself* in symbols which are the nearest possible representations of the feeling in the exact *shape* in which it exists in the poet's mind.

Eloquence is feeling pouring itself out to other minds, courting their sympathy, or endeavoring to influence their belief or move them to passion or to action" (95 italics mine).[220] Here, we have something slightly different than what we have seen before: poetry is a metaphor for feeling, and this feeling "speaks" back to itself in a continual loop that returns to the poet who does the feeling and uttering. The metaphors for poetry here are "feeling" and "embodying," while feeling then is "shaped" by representations of symbols in the poet's mind. Such a definition of poetry uses feeling as an expression of the poet that is not directed outwardly towards an audience. "Eloquence" on the other hand, strikes past the speaker and moves an audience to feel the very same as the speaker. Thus, "poetry and eloquence are both alike the expression or utterance of feeling. But if we may be excused the antithesis, we should say that eloquence is *heard*, poetry is *over*heard" (95).[221] Mill's differentiation between eloquence and poetry speak to a central concern of the lyric, that the audience is never spoken to, but rather the poet addresses another who is named in the poem, either through the use of a direct name or the use of "you." Lyric poetry, for Mill, does not rely on or require an audience to whom the poem is addressed, whereas the purpose of elocution is to address an audience. Here, we can see how Berrigan's title can fit with Mill's conception of the lyric.

Each line of the Berrigan poem is about the same length. There is no discernable syntactical pattern evident throughout. However, it is a very "sonic" poem: because there is a lack of syntactical pattern, this allows Berrigan to be able to make a collage-like poem in which moments, which are always in the present tense, become totally present in the moment. There is no narrative throughout the poem. Rather, there are “moments” that exist within each stanza. It resists a past moment and a future moment, all while remaining deeply in the present moment. Thus, one has no choice but to imagine Berrigan reading this poem that is outside any conception of time other than the present. In this way, the poem is an enactment of orality, of “meanings that accrue to spoken language, including a sense of presence, authority and immediacy. Orality is typically conceived in some relationship to print text, sometimes as its opposite but, since Derrida’s deconstruction of the writing/ speech dichotomy, more commonly as complexly twined.”[222] This sense of presence, of the present moment in this text takes the page as a place that is fit for enacting an orality that moves away from Derrida’s dichotomy between writing and speech.

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[220] Mill, John Stuart. "Thoughts on Poetry and Its Varieties." *The Crayon.* 7.4 (1860) 95. Print.
[221] Ibid.

However, what makes Berrigan’s poem a contemporary of—and perhaps a vanguard for—the poets reading at Le Metro and Les Deux Megots are the actual lines of poetry on the page. While the title may refer to an earlier conception of the lyric, namely, Mill’s conception of the lyric as “overheard,” the poetic line stays within Berrigan’s contemporary moment. The poem is part of Berrigan’s larger, and well-known, sonnet sequence “The Sonnets,” published in 1964. While this poem may have fifteen lines, and most Shakespearean sonnets have fourteen lines, it is still part of Berrigan’s overall project. So, what does it mean to take the poem out of the context of his larger book of poetry and, firstly, recite the poem at Le Metro, and, secondly, to hand-write the poem for inclusion in Dan Saxon’s little magazine? If we think about 1964 as a date in which surveillance ideology was still in full effect, when McCarthyism was alive and well and

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[222] Allison, Raphael. *Bodies on the Line: Performance and the Sixties Poetry Reading*. Iowa City: Iowa, 2014. 12. Print.

"rooting out" American citizens, we could say that "Surveillance ideology, by treating voice as something overheard rather than heard, creates a secondary level of presence, a simulacrum in which identity is revealed as something having already been recorded."[223] While perhaps the title, "Under My Breath," could harken back to nineteenth-century conceptions of the lyric voice, one could also make the argument that, based on the historical period in which Berrigan writes, surveillance ideology was perhaps more on his mind than Mill's conception of the lyric. Thus, the poetic voice is overheard, while also the relationship between the reader and the poet are engaged in a dynamic of presence: the poetry reading at Les Deux Megots becomes one level of poetic presence shared by the reader and poet, while the inscription of the poem into Dan Saxon's little magazine becomes a second level of poetic presence shared by reader and poet. Once the reader is invited to understand that the poem was read as an oral performance first, the presence in the magazine takes on a secondary presence in which inscription becomes a mode of archiving. However, this archiving is unique in that it is hand-written, which, in turn lends the inscription of poetry a type of meta-presence, or a secondary level of presence that returns the poet's physical presence back to the page. Thus, voice, in both metaphorical and literal terms becomes a point of departure for the poet rather than a point of arrival. And, if we take the literality of the voice seriously, then we have a different conception of voice than the one used by poets earlier in the century: "Whereas 'voice' for T.S. Eliot and Ezra Pound is a rhetorical construct produced through personae and irony, for postwar poets it becomes an extension of the physiological organism."[224] Here, again, we see the difference in what a "voice" actually is for Berrigan: the voice is the literal voice, the "physiological organism" and a metaphorical "extension" of the literal. Berrigan and, by extension of the mechanical apparatus by which this voice is extended to the reader, Dan Saxon, enact a reconfiguration of the metaphorical construction of the modernist voice. And, if Eliot and Pound create voice through "personae," Berrigan creates a voice tied to the poet as a person. In other words, if Eliot and Pound create characters with different voices, Berrigan only creates himself through a literal, physiological voice. Indeed, as N. Katherine Hayles notes, "the production of subvocalized sound may be as important to subjectivity as it is to literary language."[225] What I take Hayles to mean here is that the dynamic between silent reader, who subvocalizes when reading a text on the page, and the text of the poem creates a dynamic by which sound is central even to the seemingly unsounded literary text. And the literary text, the very act of subvocalizing while reading, creates a subjectivity in which the literal voice is at the center.

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[223] Davidson, Michael. "Technologies of Presence: Orality and the Tapevoice of Contemporary Poetics." *Sound States: Innovative Poetics and Acoustical Technologies*. Ed. Adalaide Morris. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1997. 103. Print.

The communal creative process, nurtured by coffee shop readings, such as Gaslight Café "happenings" and the St. Mark's Church Poetry Readings in New York City, allowed a generation of artists to experience poetry in all of its manifestations. The body of the poet, the voice of the poet, the space of performance, and audience unite to provide a communal experience. Daniel Kane notes in his thorough historical account of the Saint Mark's Church poetry readings that "the collaborative vocal relationship between audience members and author was clearly crucial to the ideal manifestation of the text."[226] Communication through the written, poetic word and communication through performance of the poetic word were intrinsically tied, almost infusing the body of the poet into the written page, and vice versa: "The poems in rexograph and mimeo machines were really enactments of oral readings, as opposed to finished presentations of 'closed' poems."[227] The poets reading at *Le Metro* and *Les Deux Megots* emphasized the oral performance poetry in conjunction with the written word, which was previously lost with the emphasis on the written periodical page.

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[224] Davidson, Michael. "Technologies of Presence: Orality and the Tapevoice of Contemporary Poetics." *Sound States: Innovative Poetics and Acoustical Technologies*. Ed. Adalaide Morris. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1997. 97. Print.

[225] Hayles, N. Katherine. "Voices Out of Bodies, Bodies Out of Voices: Audiotape and the Production of Subjectivity." *Sound States: Innovative Poetics and Acoustical Technologies*. Ed. Adalaide Morris. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1997. 75. Print.

As the physicality of the poet interjected in the poem itself, the concept of words "doing" or "performing" an act became less alienating for both philosophers of language and literary scholars.[228] The lyric form is a particularly fruitful place to examine the performative speech act precisely because it relies on an intimacy between poet and the poet's composition. In particular, the relationship between the poet and the poet's composition in Beat poetry is especially fruitful since orality and breath, based largely on Charles Olson's influential "Projective Verse," became intrinsically integrated into Beat poetics. The aforesaid "performance" of a poem is a more precise phenomenologization that brings body, voice, and articulation to the fore. As a consequence, those reading the subcultural reviews and avant-garde little magazines of the era were called to be a specific type of reader, one who shared a poetic intent that emphasized "the significance of breath as it related to composition."[229] The reader was called to direct "attention to the poet's situated body…. While the poem was still text on a page, the ideal reader accepted a tacit invitation to conceive of the poet's body articulating the lines. Silent reading became an event, a poetry reading taking place in the imagination."[230] The link between poetics and social life is almost always a part of the poem itself. The bodies of the poet and audience fuse symbolically with the "body" of the poem through the "event" of the poetry reading in the imagination. I want to underscore this notion, because the reader of Beat poetry cannot be severed from the hipster performance: the poet's body, the text on a page, and the performance are sutured together to articulate the "event" of the poem.

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[226] Kane, Daniel. *All Poets Welcome: The Lower East Side Poetry Scene in the 1960s*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003. 33. Print.

[227] Ibid., 37.

[228] For a cogent and thought-provoking article on the history of the "performative" in literary and philosophical studies, see Jonathan Culler's "Philosophy and Literature: The Fortunes of the Performative." *Poetics Today* (21:3) Fall 2000. 503-519. Print.

This revision of the lyric as a communal phenomenon contrasts with prominent academic conceptions of the lyric. For Northrop Frye, the lyric is "overheard;" it is a communion "with oneself."[231] He and other literary theorists were at odds with the poetics of the Beats in the 1950s and 60s. He emphasizes the relationship between the poet and her words, stripping the reader of participation in the most intimate of poetic expression. Indeed, this conception of the individual speaker/ poet detached from social influences to convey an immediate expression of feeling has dominated lyric conceptions since the Enlightenment.[232] Although Frye, among many other influential thinkers, had little in common with the then subcultural Beat community, the formulation of the lyric line as "overheard" is not completely antagonistic to the subculture's poetics.

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[229] Kane, Daniel. *All Poets Welcome: The Lower East Side Poetry Scene in the 1960s*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003. 27. Print.

[230] Ibid., 27-8.

[231] Frye, Northrop. *Anatomy of Criticism*. Princeton: Princeton UP. 1957. 250. Print.

[232] Brewster, Scott. *Lyric*. London: Routlege, 2009. 30. Print.

Scott Brewster claims that the lyric is "an intensely self-reflexive poetic form," which is perhaps why Frye and others privilege the poet-speaker. Rather than give equal weight to all three of the original components of the lyric (i.e., the poet, the poem, and the audience or reader), this construction arises through a self-conscious examination of the poet's interior self. Such examination leads to a double sense of the self-reflexive. This double sense could be construed as "a self-conscious reflection on the relationship of poetry, subjectivity, and voice, and it often produces uncertain or contradictory constructions of the self."[233] In attempts by the poet to communicate an intimate understanding of self, other, or world, the poet is at odds with herself. The self-reflexive and constant "doubling" of poetic self is seen in Berrigan's early lyric poems.

Aspen Magazine: The Antithesis of the Coffeeshop Publications

Phyllis Johnson, an editor for a couple of New York-based magazines conceived of the idea for a multimedia magazine while visiting Aspen, Colorado. In 1965, she published her first issue, which used no bounded materials. The magazine came in a box with pamphlets, essays written in fold-out large papers, and sound records. The materials corresponded with one another through particular themes, and each issue had a particular theme. In the first issue, Johnson said "'In calling it a magazine we are harking back to the original meaning of the word as a 'storehouse, cache, a ship laden with stores'."[234] This word, from the French "magasin" is important, because she envisioned a magazine in which the "storehouse" could be taken as a serious metaphor for this new type of magazine. Indeed, almost everything in *Aspen* could be considered on its own terms, without the bounded volume to hold it back. These individual items, held together only by a single box for transportation of all items, allows us to think about the nature of collecting and “storing” items for future use. Like the French “magasin,” *Aspen* collected up and stored individual items. As Gwen Allen notes in *Artists’ Magazines: An Alternative Space for Art*, “*Aspen* was a very different kind of endeavor. At four dollars an issue, and with a stated circulation of 20,000 (albeit a figure that was probably greatly exaggerated), it was not limited-edition multiple, but a mass-produced museum, designed less to preserve and protect works of art than to set them free” (52).[235] Today, French word “magasin” means a department store. Thus, if the alternative press produced just a handful of little magazines at various quality, *Aspen* would have been a different type of little magazine (that may not have been *that* little) that enacted a relationship between “store-bought” goods and “high fashion,” to use a consumer metaphor. In other words, if *Aspen* was Neiman Marcus, *Les Deux Megots* was Goodwill. And while *Aspen* could be an art director’s dream, advertisers did not last long. The advertisements could be stashed at the bottom of the box, and easily thrown out. “If *Aspen* was an art director's dream, it was also an advertiser's nightmare. After issue 5+6, there were no more ads in the magazine, partly because it was difficult to get advertisers to run ads on a regular basis, and partly because in earlier iterations of the magazine, advertisements were directly tied to the content of the magazine. In later issues, the content became more avant-garde and thus less tied to any one advertising aesthetic.[236] This lack of advertising is significant because we move away from earlier conceptions of the little magazine as relying on small, coterie advertising to make the magazine successful. By eschewing advertising altogether, *Aspen* was able to be under the complete creative control of the editor without muddying his artistic image with advertisement.

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[233] Ibid., 34.
[234] Allen, Gwen. *Artists' Magazines: An Alternative Space for Art*. Boston: MIT Press, 2013. 43. Print.

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[235] Ibid., 52.

[236] *Aspen* 5+6. New York: Roaring Fork Press, 1967. n.p. Print.

Indeed, as Johnson explains at the end of Issue 1 of *Aspen*, that since " it comes in a box, our magazine need not be restricted to a bunch of pages stapled together. We can do what editors have wanted to do since Benjamin gave his name to Franklin Gothic -- we can put in all sorts of objects and things to illustrate our articles. And each article can be designed as a separate booklet with the size, format and paper dictated by the article itself."[237] The box format lends itself to a non-bound form, a non-codex form, that allows the audience to read the pages in whatever order it sees fit. This dissassemblage of the bound format is important, because it enacts a kind of "reader's choice" organization. Without a table of contents and a bound format to follow, the issue decentralizes the authority of the publisher and editor to make organizational choices for the reader. Instead, the reader is to become an editor of sorts: rather than rely on an organization provided by the editor, which makes the reader a passive audience stripped of the opportunity to interact with the text in a more authoritative way, the reader herself enacts a type of editorial intent every time she reads an issue. For, if the editors and publishers leave the organization of reading to the reader, then the editors have relinquished, somewhat gleefully, I might add, the power to organize the reading for her audience. However, she also calls our attention to the addition of "objects" into the box: we no longer have just one object, the codex-form little magazine, but rather we have a multitude of objects, not all of which are actually sheets of paper. Instead, in every issue, we have a flexi-disc record as described earlier in the chapter and discussions of a musical or poetic history that is then inscribed onto the record, and we also have many flip books that make the reader interact with sheets of paper differently. With these various choices, the reader is placed at the center of the reading experience. As Johnson also notes above, each article dictates for itself the size, shape, and material on which it is written. Here, we have an almost revolutionary understanding of the physical form of the page taking the shape of the content of the article. In some respects, we have a full manifestation of Creely's call that "form is only ever an extension of content".[238] What Johnson calls "the first three-dimensional magazine," we could call a full manifestation of Creeley's call. Indeed, as Gwen Allen notes in *Artists Magazines*, such investigations of the materiality and temporality of the printed page (which very much overlapped with the practices of concrete poetry) coincided with new understandings of artistic meaning itself in the postwar period. As the meaning of art was increasingly seen to reside in a performative, temporal, and conceptual experience rather than a strictly formal, visual one, artists found new ways to express these experiences in the magazine, breaking away from the traditional limits of the static, two-dimensional page."[239] However, the editors still choose what to put in the box and what to leave out. The difference is not necessarily a radical practice of ridding authorial or editorial intent, but rather the lack of binding allows the material to be combined, reorganized, recombined in as many difference ways as possible. It is a type of sorting through. Yet, it is up to the reader, the audience to do this type of sorting, which moves us back into a radical understanding of the agency of the audience. Rather than bind the magazine, the editors leave the organization of each issue up to the reader. Thus the reader, through her act of organization, becomes a type of editor, does the work of the editor as she reads the content of the box. The box allows the reader the experience of tactile configuration of the text itself.

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[237] Johnson, Phyllis. *Aspen* 1. New York: Roaring Fork Press, 1964. n.p. Print.

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[238] Creeley, Robert. *Collected Essays of Robert Creeley*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1968. Print.

[239] Allen, Gwen. *Artists' Magazines: An Alternative Space for Art*. Boston: MIT Press, 2013. 6. Print.

At the end of Issue 1, Johnson tells us what's in store for the magazine in the coming years: "[t]he articles will be as surprising as the format, ranging from beautiful picture stories on nature and sports to the more esoteric subjects of art, humanistic studies, design, underground movies, music (always with a record), poetry, dance, architecture, gourmet dining. In other words, all the civilized pleasures of modern living, based on the Greek idea of the "whole man" as exemplified by what goes on in Aspen, Colorado, one of the few places in America where you can lead a well-rounded, eclectic life of visual, physical and mental splendor."[240] In a somewhat retrograde admission, the ideal of the "whole man" reappears as the marker of what the magazine aspires to. This somewhat contradictory call upon the whole man as cultivated in Aspen, Colorado, gives the magazine a pull in two directions: On the one hand, the magazine is at the forefront of the avant-garde in terms of the literature, music, and art that resides in the box. On the other hand, the localized articles on Aspen as place may seem retrograde to a contemporary audience. Even the localized articles make Aspen a locus for the avant-garde. Think about it: the magazine itself was not published in Aspen, Colorado, but rather New York City. Aspen as a place was a part of the avant-garde imaginary, especially as it developed in the first couple of issues. Rather than writing about an every day Aspen, the articles that are focused on some aspect of Aspen's culture come out of the imaginary of Aspen as a locale for magic to happen. This is seen in almost every article about Aspen in this magazine: “The subject matter of issue number 1and issue number 2 stayed close to the magazine's namesake ski spa, with features on Aspen's film and music festivals, skiing, mountain wildlife, and local architecture.”[241] We should also remember that Aspen as the ski resort we know now was not quite that in the mid-1960s. Indeed, it was not until the 1980s that Aspen became a mecca for celebrities and other wealthy individuals as a winter playground.

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[240] Johnson, Phyllis. *Aspen* 1. New York: Roaring Fork Press, 1964. n.p. Print.

Aspen No. 1, also known as the “Black Box Issue,” came in a black box, and was designed by George Lois, Tom Courtos, and Ralph Tuzzo and published by Johnson’s press in New York City, Roaring Fork Press, in 1965. *Aspen no. 2*, also known as the “White Box Issue,” was designed by Frank Kirk and Tony Angotti and published by Roaring Fork Press in 1966. *Aspen no. 3* is really a work of art in all senses of the word. Known as the “Pop Art Issue,” Andy Warhol and David Dalton designed this issue which is devoted to New York and the counterculture scenes. Quintin Fiore designed *Aspen no. 4*, known as the McLuhan issue” after media theorist Marshall McLuhan, and the collection interrogated our media-made society. The double issue, *Aspen non 5+6*, known as the “Conceptual Issue” contained one of the most important essays for poststructuralist and postmodern thought (we will come back to this issue shortly). Issue 6A was a free issue about the performance art scene at New York’s Judson Gallery, published in 1968. Issues 7 though 10 ranged from British artists and culture to Asian art and philosophy, and will not be discussed in this dissertation, due to length and historical periodization. I end with issue 6, because we see a shift through these pages from what could be termed

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[241] *Aspen*. Ed. Phyllis Johnson. New York: Roaring Fork Press, 1965-1968. Emory University. Raymond Danowski Poetry Library, Manuscript, Archives, and Rare Book Library. Print.

"modernism" to "postmodernism." A list of contributors included some of the most interesting artists of the 20th Century. Its contents, however, are all but lost: few copies of *Aspen* have survived.

Aspen issue 5+6 is particularly significant, because this is the issue in which Barthes's famous essay, "The Death of the Author" appears. It appears in English, and it appears that the whole of the text was written in English first, then translated into French and published in in France in 1968. While many anthologists and literary historians date the first publication of the essay at 1968, with the French edition, the essay did indeed appear in 1967 in *Aspen*. I have a few theories as to why the French is usually cited as first publication. While the piece was particularly written for *Aspen*, Barthes did not get paid for his contribution. In fact, none of the writers got paid for their contributions in this magazine. I believe this is the reason that most will cite the French publication before the English, not to mention the fact that it was published in a rather obscure magazine.

The editor of the issue, Brian O'Doherty, wrote to Barthes specifically, asking him to "take advantage of the unique multimedia format."[242] At first, Barthes rejected O'Doherty's request, replying "your project is of much interest to me, but I for one hold a *radical* belief in writing, as I cannot imagine doing anything but writing."[243] Yet, he sent O'Doherty "The Death of the Author" several months later, apologizing for the brevity of the piece and expressing hope that it would be acceptable and "in sufficient harmony with the issue."[244] Placing his work in context of the magazine, Barthes's essay should be understood in the context for which it was written, understood as a deeply site-specific piece of writing that is informed by and intended to be read alongside visual art, music, performances, and text. Reading “The Death of the Author” alongside these other texts helps us to more fully comprehend Barthes’s delineation of the modern text as “a multidimensional space in which a variety of writing, none of them original, blend and clash.”[245] Indeed, to read (and listen to and watch) *Aspen* is to witness the death of the author as a casualty of the sixties’ information society with its birth of new reader, which were also television watchers, radio listeners, and moviegoers. The reader became more significant as the place of interpretation shifted from the place of the autonomous artwork to a place in which the reader gave the text meaning. Even the layout and typography of the essay, printed in Universe font on square pages, embodies the stark, impersonal surface of the page as the locus of “that neutral composite, oblique space where our subject slips away, the negative where all identity is lost, starting with the very identity of the author, writing,” as Barthes described the experience of the text.[246] This focus on the starkness of the text itself, its very minimalism, follows in the footsteps of minimalist art, a type of art in which the artist imbues no meaning to the text; rather, the audience has to make meaning of the text. In this way, we have shifted from an authoritarian authorial intent—in writing, painting, and music—to an authoritarian *audience*. Because the audience makes meaning, the natural markers indicating the intention of meaning of the author have been stripped.

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[242] Allen, Gwen. *Artists' Magazines: An Alternative Space for Art*. Boston: MIT Press, 2013. 57. Print.

[243] Ibid.

[244] Ibid.

So, what does Barthes’s piece actually say and what does this have to do with sound in literature? Barthes starts in what would seem like an unusual place: He uses

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[245] Barthes, Roland. “The Death of the Author.” *Aspen*. New York: Roaring Fork Press, 1967. n.p. Print.

[246] Allen, Gwen. *Artists’ Magazines: An Alternative Space for Art*. Boston: MIT Press, 2013. 57. Print.

Balzac's description of a "castrato disguised as a woman" in his novel *Sarrasine* to place the voice at the center of the discussion of authorial intent. A "castrato" is a "type of classical male singing voice equivalent to that of a soprano, mezzo-soprano, or contralto. The voice is produced by castration of the singer before puberty, or it occurs in one who, due to an endocrinological condition, never reaches sexual maturity."[247] Let us pause here for a minute and discuss what this actually means. Barthes uses Balzac's example of a castrato disguised as a woman to complicate the following sentence written by Balzac: "It was Woman, with her sudden fears, her irrational whims, her instinctive fears, her unprovoked bravado, her daring and her delicious delicacy of feeling."[248] Barthes asks who is doing the speaking: is it Balzac himself; is it some other narrator; or is it the story's hero who ignores the castrato beneath the appearance of a woman? Barthes' answer is that "[I]t will always be impossible to know, for the good reason that all writing is itself this special voice, consisting of several indiscernible voices, and that literature is precisely the invention of this voice, to which we cannot assign a specific origin: literature is that neuter, that composite, that oblique into which every subject escapes, the trap where all identity is lost, beginning with the very identity of the body that writes."[249] Here, Barthes removes the authorial body, the subject who creates the work of art, from the writing itself. Barthes, in essence, is saying that the voice (both metaphorical and literal) which is attached to the author is not, in fact, the author's voice on the page. Writing, in essence, strips the author of her subjectivity, of her individuality as a writer. Instead, the writer must acquiesce to the page which requires working in the realm of language that is not individual nor subjective. Instead of claiming this death of the author as a new phenomenon, Barthes claims that this death has always occurred, but critics have been less thoughtful about the prospects of accepting that there is no authorial intent. And indeed, he even briefly mentions the New Critics as a part of this problem: "Probably this has always been the case: once an action is recounted, for intransitive ends, and no longer in order to act directly upon reality — that is, finally external to any function but the very exercise of the symbol — this disjunction occurs, the voice loses its origin, the author enters his own death, writing begins."[250] In his phrasing, the voice and body that was once attached to the author as a subjective, whole body, now moves into the realm of the symbol, of language, which, for Barthes, detaches the voice from the body. Once detached, the writer no longer has full bodily agency over "voice." Because the voice has entered the linguistic realm of signs and symbols, the voice is no longer alive as a part of the body of the author. Instead, the voice moves into the realm of writing, of language, and thus cannot be fully "owned" by the author.

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[247] "Castrato." *Oxford English Dictionary. Web.*

[248] Barthes, Roland. "The Death of the Author." *Aspen*. New York: Roaring Fork Press, 1967. n.p. Print.

[249] Ibid.

Here, then, Barthes moves into the relationship between time and the traditional notion of the Author, a temporality that shows the fiction that is the traditional Author: "The Author, when we believe in him, is always conceived as the past of his own book: the book and the author take their places of their own accord on the same line, cast as a *before* and an *after*: the Author is supposed to feed the book — that is, he pre-exists it, thinks, suffers, lives for it."[251] Barthes declares that there is no *present* in which the Author can function: the author exists in the past and the future, as someone who creates in the past as a record for the future. He compares this notion of the Author (with a capital “A”) with the modern writer, or what he calls the “scriptor”: “the modern writer (scriptor) is born simultaneously with his text; he is in no way supplied with a being which precedes or transcends his writing, he is in no way the subject of which his book is the predicate; there is no other time than that of the utterance, and every text is eternally written here and now.”[252] Here, we have Barthes, in a somewhat contradictory way, discussing how the modern writer works in the present, in the utterance itself as an eternal “here and now.” He likens the modern writer to a follower of the rare verbal form, the performative, in which utterance has no other content than the act by which it is uttered. Thus, the modern writer “traces a field without origin — or which, at least, has no other origin than language itself, that is, the very thing which ceaselessly questions any origin.”[253] Placing language itself at the center of the modern writer’s intent, the writer relinquishes his capacity to write in anything other than the present moment, to write the performative in every text, moving towards the present moment in which language is uttered.

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[250] Ibid.

[251] Ibid.

Barthes then ends his piece with the birth of the reader: “Let us return to Balzac's sentence: no one (that is, no "person") utters it: its source, its voice is not to be located; and yet it is perfectly read; this is because the true locus of writing is reading.”[254] In an expansion on this idea, Barthes states that every text contains “multiple writings” that enter into a dialogue with one another, and the place in which these writings are collected is the reader “the reader is the very space in which are inscribed, without any being lost, all the citations a writing consists of; the unity of a text is not in its origin, it is in its destination; but this destination can no longer be personal: the reader is a man without history, without biography, without psychology; he is only that someone who holds gathered into a single field all the paths of which the text is constituted…. the birth of the reader must be ransomed by the death of the Author."[255] Thus, the reader becomes the synthesis of all writing.

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[252] Ibid.
[253] Ibid.
[254] Ibid.

I highlight Barthes' essay here to show how sound and the voice has influenced one of the seminal post-structuralist essays of the twentieth century. It is significant that the essay was written in English first, showing that *Aspen* magazine was at the forefront of poststructuralist thought. The very format of the magazine enacted an audience-based ethos that would continue to define postmodernism in the years to come. This emphasis on the interaction of the audience with the text is a defining feature of *Aspen*, and it shows how the little magazine was breaking down the New Critical shadows that still existed in the 1960s.

Conclusion

What I show in this final chapter is the downward trend of thinking through sound in the little magazine. While we may think of *Le Metro* and *Les Deux Megots* as the apex of collapsing the barriers between embodied voice and text, we may think of *Aspen* as triggering a new conception in which sound only matters in relationship to the meaning that the audience imbues to it. This relationship that *Aspen* has to sound will continue in avant-garde circles through the 1970s, 1980s, and indeed the 1990s. Audience-based writing would put play and subjectivity (and playing with subjectivity) in the forefront of poetry movements. Here, we can think of the relationship that the Language poets have to the audience, or even the place that conceptual poetry today had with the audience. *Le Metro* and *Les Deux Megots* were at the forefront of thinking about how to represent the presence of oral articulation in print. This emphasis on oral articulation in print is at the heart of this dissertation: what does it mean to represent sound in text? Here, we can see these two rexographed, handwritten, compilations of poetry as the quintessential embodiment of sound-based poetry, poetry that performs on the page and is a performance of the page.

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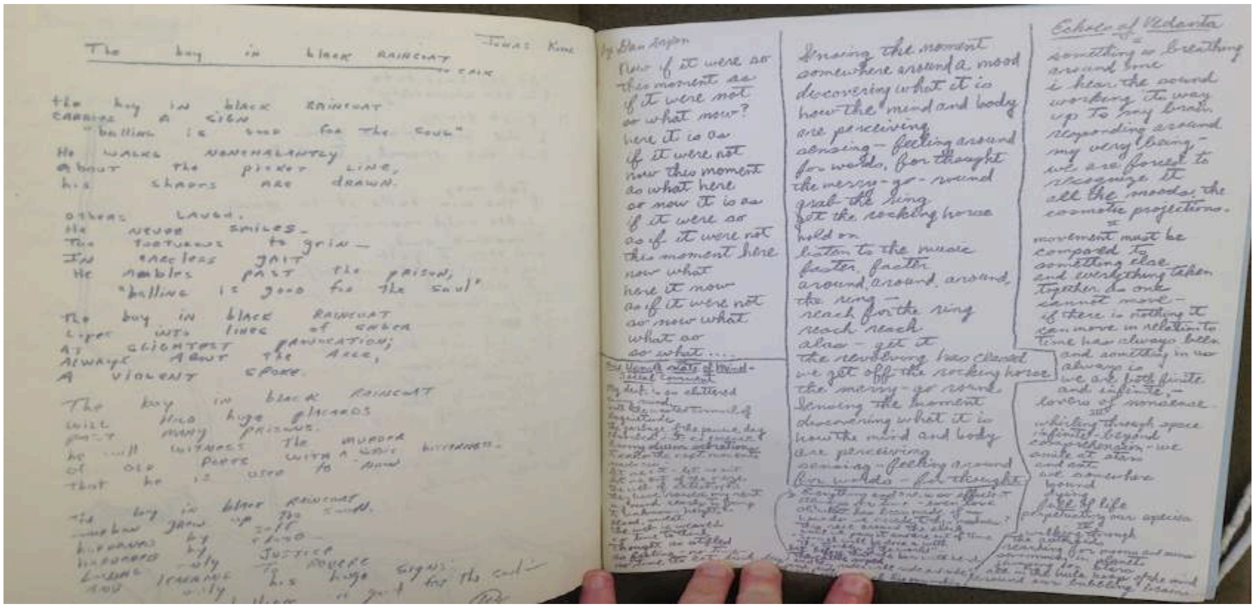
[255] Ibid.



By Dan Saxon

Now if it were so
this moment as
if it were not
so what now?
here it is as
if it were not
now this moment
as what here
or now it is as
if it were so
as if it were not
this moment here
now what
here it now
as if it were not
so now what
what so
so what....

Sensing the moment
somewhere around a mood
discovering what it is
how the mind and body
are perceiving
sensing – feeling around
for words, for thought
the merry-go-round
grab the ring
get the rocking horse
hold on
listen to the music
faster, faster
around, around, around,
the ring –
reach for the ring
reach reach
alas – get it
the revolving has ceased
we get off the rocking horse
the merry-go round
sensing the moment
discovering what it is
how the mind and body
are perceiving
sensing – feeling around
for words – for thought

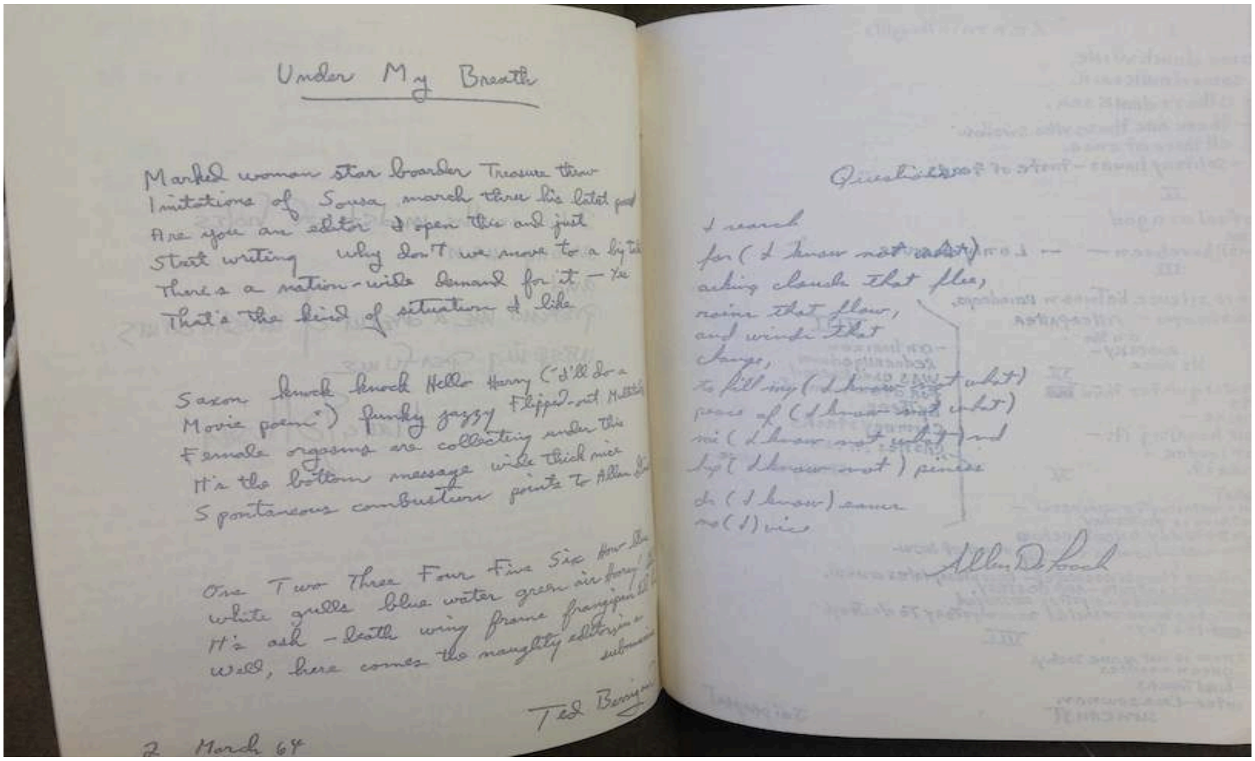
Echoes of Vedanta

I
something is breathing
around me
i hear the sound
working its way
up to my brain
responding around
my very being –
we are forced to
recognize it
all the moods, the
cosmetic projections.

II
movement must be
compared to
something else
and everything taken
together as one
cannot move –
if there is nothing it
can move in relation to
Time has always been
and something in us
always is
we are both finite
and infinite, –
lovers of nonsense

III
whirling through space
infinite – beyond
comprehension – we
smile at stars
and ants
at somewhere
beyond

Image 1: Example of page from *Les Deux Megots*



Under My Breath

Marked woman star boarder Treasure thru
Imitations of Sousa march thru his latest
Are you an editor I open this and just
Start writing   why don't we move to a big
There's a nation-wide demand for it —
That's the kind of situation I like

Saxon knock knock Hello Harry ("I'll do a
Movie poem") funky jazzy Flipped-out
Female orgasms are collecting under the
It's the bottom message while thick mice
Spontaneous combustion points to Allen

One Two Three Four Five Six
white gulls blue water green air
It's ash – death wing frame frangipani
Well, here comes the naughty editor in a
submarine

Ted Berrigan

2 March 64

Questions

I search
for (I know not what) —
aching clouds that flee,
rains that flow,
and winds that
change,
to fill my (I know not what)
peace of (I know not what)

Image 2: Ted Berrigan's "Under My Breath."

Conclusion:

Conclusion:

What Poetics in Mid-Century Little Magazines Can Tell Us Now

In the *Lana Turner Journal*, an online, digital, little magazine, Issue #7, Cathy Park Hong has created something of a stir in her piece "Delusions of Whiteness in the Avant-Garde." In this piece, she claims that the whole institutional designation of "avant-garde" has been whitewashed, has been reticent to claim its own cooptation of African American culture and identity. She states: "Even today, avant-garde's most vocal, self-aggrandizing stars continue to be white and even today these stars like Kenneth Goldsmith spout the expired snake oil that poetry should be 'against expression' and 'post-identity.'"[256] Kenneth Goldsmith aside (one could talk for hours about *his* missteps and poetic un-sensibility), I want to focus on two phrases here: "against expression" and "post-identity." Both of these phrases, thrown around in contemporary culture as well as poetic culture, have much to do with the mid-century moment out of which we have just arrived. Indeed, the very ideal of conceptual poetry, the poetry that Hong rails against and the poetry which Goldsmith is hailed for in academic circles, relies on a turning away of embodied poetry, of a poetry that relies on voice and sound as the foundation for existence.

In this way, the post-1968 moment has been actively anti-lyric. Because the lyric form is reliant upon subjectivity, upon the body, the voice of the poet, the lyric form necessarily has to say something about the poet him- or herself. Conceptual poetry breaks from this tradition and indeed wishes the audience to make meaning for themselves. Hong's essay created a stir, for no one had so explicitly called attention to the ways in which conceptual, "avant-garde" poetry erases identity. Her call to being back subjectivity, to call attention to identity within poetry is a call to arms for poets across the country to "make it new," the "it" being the poetry that affirms identity and brings us back into discourse with the lyric. Thus, the lyric necessarily works with a subjectivity that instantiates the voice as the central arbiter of poetic meaning.

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[256] Hong, Cathy Park. "Delusions of Whiteness in the Avant-Garde." *Lana Turner Journal*, 7. Online.

Yet, this notion of an "open" poem is one that has prevailed as an attribute of the anti-lyrical avant-garde that Marjorie Perloff and other academics have championed throughout their career. O'Hara's "expressive lyric," as Gillian White designates poems in opposition to Perloff's anti-lyric avant-garde, is a fruitful poem for understanding the stakes of poetry at midcentury. On the one hand, this poem "reflects the late-twentieth-century concern about poetry's identification (as a genre) with 'absorptive' first-person subjective expression" and reflects, what White has called the "shame" of the lyric ideal felt by contemporary poets and critics precisely because it does not veer too far from what one could call a "traditional" lyric.[257] On the other hand, Ron Silliman and other avant-garde, anti-lyric poets and critics of the past forty years have designated Frank O'Hara as one of their own.[258] I argue that the almost vilified traditional expressive lyric by the purveyors of the avant-garde anti-lyric decouple poetic subjectivity from poetic voice, which, in dominant poetic and critical discourse, has depersonalized the poetic voice for the last forty years.

The structure of the lyric address that I have laid out has implications for current tensions between the avant-garde—which some scholars view as the reigning poetic ideology of the last forty years—and the "expressive" poet, or the poet who places her own subjectivity—her lyric "I"—at the center of her work. This current tension between the two camps can be seen in such recent work as the aforementioned *Lyric Shame*, by Gillian White, and Cathy Park Hong's scathing critique in the *Lana Turner Journal*, Issue 7, entitled "Delusions of Whiteness in the Avant-Garde." While Hong does not take up the lyric explicitly in her essay, she does implicitly invoke it as the antithesis of the whitewashing of the twentieth- and twenty-first-century avant-garde. Both White and Hong dispel the myth of the subject-less poem, yet neither poet-critic tells us why it is important for the person to be invoked in a work of poetry. Here, I would offer one particular suggestion to further their already astute work: the importance of the subject is necessary for understanding the poetic voice that is embedded within the poem. This decoupling of subject from poem, which started at midcentury, is not a coincidence. Rather, the decoupling occurs as a result of a shift from print-based technologies to twentieth-century modes of technological reproduction of the voice (like the tape-recorder, the digital sound file, and, at its very base, the mimeograph machine as it was used at midcentury) that could decouple the voice of the poet from the subjectivity of the poet. This detachment of subject and voice unfolded in the years prior to the late-twentieth-century avant-garde manifestos of Ron Silliman et al., and a side affect of this split was that the lyric fell into disfavor while more visual modes of poetry were preferred by the increasingly influential avant-garde poets.

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[257] White, Gillian. "Introduction." *Lyric Shame: The "Lyric" Subject of Contemporary American Poetry*. Cambridge: Harvard U P, 2014. 19. Print.

[258] Silliman, Ron, et al. "Aesthetic Tendency and the Politics of Poetry: A Manifesto." *Social Text* 19/ 20 (1988): 286. Print.

White and Hong seem to be calling for an end to the reign of not only a poetic history that cherry-picks (and arbitrarily, as both White and Hong make clear) which poets should be thought of as avant-garde. They favor the expressive lyric in which the subject returns to the center of the poem. But while they focus on the person intending the poem, I focus on the voice that makes possible an articulation of that subjectivity. Thus, this dissertation should be complementary to White and Hong, while also conceptualized as an ontological argument for the uniqueness of the voice. Aligning with philosopher Adrianna Cavarero's work on voice, I work within her "ontological status of material, relational, contextual plurality of unique existences":

"An antimetaphysical strategy, like mine, aiming to valorize an ontology of uniqueness finds in the voice a decisive—indeed, obligatory—resource. The point is not simply to revocalize logos. The aim is to free logos from its visual substance, and to finally mean it as a sonorous speech—in order to listen, in speech itself… which is not simply sound, but above all resonance."[259] Cavarrero's "resonance" is that which gives sound meaning. If we are to adhere to this call, we would be well to remember Hong's call to write one's identity, one's subjectivity, to call forth in one's own speech sound, which is, above all resonance.

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[259] Cavarero, Adriana. "Translator's Introduction." Trans. Paul A. Kottman. *For More than One Voice: Towards a Philosophy of Vocal Expression*. Stanford: Stanford U P, 2005. Xxiii. Print.

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