

'twas  
this  
began



## THE ANTI-ANÆSTHETIC

■ The framework — can we avoid it? Can we speak outside a framework? *A guide or friend? A restraint on vision?* Can we ignore it? Can we say “pure sound”? “I am a woman is full of consequences” (Nicole Brossard, but now everyone knows), for we are part of a representational system, a system of behavioural laws, of social conditions that have privileged the (male) gaze.<sup>1</sup> Thus what I have to say is necessarily tied with social and linguistic conditions, and with the gaze through which femininity has been defined. (In the work of some philosophers, when the notion of the gaze is questioned or displaced, not only femininity disappears, but also women. The discourse of privilege is infinitely absorptive. The relational vanishes. There are versions of the postmodern, too, that wear this privilege.)

Here, though, I just want to propose some notions and musings on the idea of poetic structure. Structure, not form. And the social consequences of structure. We normally talk about form as one side of the content/form binary, the side that contains structure. Yet, for me, they are different; structure deals with the stresses and forces in materials,

in the relationship between materials and in the proximity of materials, whereas form is a cultural artifact, a presentation, “a principle giving unity to the whole,” and “the shape and structure of something as distinguished from its material” (*Webster’s Collegiate Dictionary*). It’s materiality that interests me in writing poetry: words and the force of words, sounds, and signification, as well as the relation between the parts or particles, the interrelation of parts in the whole. This sense of structure I refer to as “the jewel.” What intrigues me is how this structure relates to our bodies and physical presence and, thus, to the social order. I won’t deal here with events or content or histories. My thoughts are purely of structures, forces inside forms, forces and order. And privilege.

#### JEWEL

Because words can’t entirely convey our desires, because a gap between desire and expression is implicit in language and also because language carries the baggage of the social and metaphysical order, the poem is a physical presence whose structure, outside the surface meaning of its words, can and must resonate (desire) in and through the reader. In a non-verbal way — like painting does, according to Francis Bacon, but not a flat surface. Because if you use a word, or a sign like a word, a hieroglyph, relying only on semantic meaning, you are back to that gap between desire and expression where “something” is lost. A heat loss, entropy. This makes memory essential because without it we would risk total heat loss; we would spontaneously combust. *But memory also is a structure framed by social order.*

The poem itself is the jewel, a knotted space made out of the world. A planar fold, not flat: a set of foldings. A relation of light, and not the flat mirror of the “specular” gaze. Closer

to the speed of light, the jewel is those spoken sounds whose mass increases and becomes a tracing, visible. Coalesces in a linguistic order. Density and cadence. Sound. The fold. Place of memory and desire. The past and future tenses in us, acting, as we look upon and consider their tension. (As in “The Acts” in *Furious*.)

The jewel is an enactment of linguistic sounds in which the relational (a folding?) pushes at order (the gaze?). Enactment, of course, presumes a subject enacting, or through whom something is enacted. The speaker appears, or has always been there. Identity becomes apparent. Yet memory here — for a speaker has memory — is not a stable telling of *I remember when*. Vasyl Stus, a Ukrainian poet imprisoned by the Soviets (who suppressed all manifestations of Ukrainian culture) until his death in 1985, wrote in Perm labour camp: “Memory, the sound of the Dnieper.”<sup>2</sup> Sounds unlock memories which precede the laws of social order. Sounds that precede words. The sound is where memory coalesces in the poem.

Not *sound*, but *sense*, you insist? Sound *is* sense, a truer sense, undercutting surface commerce and ideology. When we rely too much on the surface meanings of the words we are in danger, for the surfaces are always full of commerce; the meanings and neurological thought processes they evoke and provoke are those of our social and economic culture, and convey those values, perpetuating them, using our words as their icons. But sounds are not surface; they endure in the brain longest of all sensory information. Psychologists have shown that in a train or plane crash what is etched most deeply in the brain is the sound. In recovering from disaster, people can eventually reintegrate the visual — the sight of torn bodies or burning people or people being shot — but sounds veer up, deafen, overwhelm years later. I was in a train wreck

in 1980 and can still hear the exact grinding of the sleeping car bending around me, the gravel roar of the roadbed underneath and shredding of ties, rivets popping out of the paint inside my roomette. The long-term psychological wounding stems concretely and precisely from the neurological scarring made by the sound tearing electrically inside the skull. How can any of us write again without considering the sound of what we do?

Of course, we can't speak about sound without admitting the presence of the speaker, that socially structured being who enacts it. Vasyl Stus, for example, was the speaker or subject in whom every kind of enactment had been exhausted and sickened except this: the sound of a river existing ever and irrevocably in proximity, though it was not near. Through this proximity (not coincidence or prescription) of sound, the self makes its fierce sketch that coalesces in the *now* of the poem.

#### RELATION/TERMS: DISRUPTION/RECUPERATION

When Julia Kristeva talks of two types of signifying process at work, the semiotic and the symbolic, within any production of meaning, I hear an echo of the jewel. Kristeva relates the semiotic to the (Platonic) *chora*, a space anterior to space/time/law, a structure imprinted in relation to the maternal body (*Revolution in Poetic Language*). The entry into the symbolic is an entry into sign, syntax, the Law of the Father (the social order, the republic, the polis). From sound to sign. Memory becomes possible, for memory is known to us only as it becomes structure.

Poetic language, Kristeva claims, comes from the semiotic *chora*. It's a return to the mother, to that unspeakable, non-extensible hole from where we are descended. It contains *that* memory. It contains the unspeakable. It enacts. It is an

enactment of what can't be said in words or forms. It consumes its form in order to enact, but can do so only through the sign, through the Law, by disturbing the sign in its own soil (Derrida, *Of Grammatology*). It is a leak out of meaning and a folding back on meaning, an excess, not a complexity of meanings but the way that new meaning occurs, as doubling, redoubling, but not of "the same" (Irigaray). It is "the expression of longing, in and among the collapse of social systems" (*Furious*).

Yet the relational does require *terms* to make sense. The semiotic *chora* is not simply relational; it is not the absence of terms but the non-identity of terms prior to space/time. It is non-extensible because infinitely extensible, and duration does not apply to it because it is unlimited in duration. That unspeakable hole is not translatable. In a curious paradox, we can speak of its *relationality* rather than its *terms* only because the symbolic aspect of signification always contains and privileges *terms* (though it still contains relations). To truly privilege the relations, then, requires the creation of a structural slippage, but this process holds only for a moment because to privilege the relational (since it requires terms) means, ever, a slip back into terms again. In addition to causing the force of the terms to slip momentarily, the terms themselves must be examined and our relation as speakers who are subject to those terms must be laid out. At times, even laying out the terms acts to disrupt the law. On the other hand, to ignore the entry into Law, and think we can define ourselves through slippage alone, is dangerous. It perpetrates a social order.

Entry into the Law (at Lacan's mirror stage, when the Ego is formed) has an advantage: it reduces anxiety for the organism. Its binding is painful but reduces anxiety. Quite

efficiently.<sup>3</sup> Provides the coordinates of space, place. But for some people, the ones who later realize they are absent (women, blacks, First Nations, lesbians, working class, immigrants, combinations of all these), the ones who are not centred in but are at the edge of society's privileged markings, the Law increases anxiety to a sometimes unbearable level. How can this anxiety be alleviated? Well, there is an alleviating force at work: a pull toward the centre. An anæsthesia. A centripetal force to lure us and make us forget, or repress, or define ourselves in terms acceptable to the order. If we don't accede to that pull or drift, if we resist it or do not love it, something often breaks in the organism. People are carried off by smallpox, by tuberculosis, by alcoholism. And we all know the history of women who have put stones into their pockets, or who have shut themselves into their rooms.

Poetic structure does not come solely from the semiotic, from some undifferentiated place related to the mother; the relation of the speaker to social order is also part of poetic structure. The entry, the flash of a mirror. Poetic structure has to reflect this, too. Even if it can't stop or hold it, it's there as a fold.

#### RHYTHM

A poetic structure is a linking that may not be a completion, a final thing. (Until it is recuperated or absorbed as marginal into the social order, of course, where poetry is received as completion and thing.) It's a collection of stresses, of rhythmic steps, an interplay with the reader.

Cadence, the extension of rhythmic sequences over space/time, extends rhythm or sound beyond the word, beyond the sentence. Sound and rhythm, cadence, are bases of meaning,

too. We need more than the dictionary meanings of words. These are just legal traces of meaning (and not the important ones) that privilege certain speakers and ways of speaking in the social order.

What I long for is the gaps that make the body present as a reader, and make it impossible to be satisfied with a surface that alleviates anxiety: the oh-what-a-beautiful-poem representation and effect. Instead, I want the words to make a context of sound that envisages the folds and flashes, the gaps in words, where time is ready to reverse if the tracing can be visible, audible enough. Defying the entropic process. Visible: but folded, faceted — thus, THE JEWEL.

#### COMMUNITY

To consider social ordering, we have to consider how our bodies, our sense of ourselves as physical presence, fit into this context of sound, this semiotic field, these gaps. I think of neurologist Oliver Sacks, in *The Man Who Mistook His Wife for a Hat*, describing cases of brain damage to show that even when the sense of self as memoried and present Cartesian individual is damaged, a core self can still assert a kind of presence *in relation to* the community of objects and individuals, *in relation to* the interlinking, even when objects and individuals themselves can no longer be identified. It is as if relation itself becomes present or privileged in the (not absence but) non-identity of terms: a folding redoubled many times. This relationship is rhythmic, each part of it forming a beat: Sacks described people with brain damage who use musical rhythms almost as prostheses to help them perform tasks such as walking and dressing. He tells of the man with neurological damage to the frontal cortex who would mistake his wife's head for a hat and who, in order to get dressed and

put his shirt on instead of the chest of drawers, sang himself little songs about the objects. It is songs — the creation of narratives — that help the body function despite the damage. Sound and rhythm give the objects and our actions meaning, allow our bodies to establish their own physical presence and capacity, and to constitute, on some level, the self. Clearly, to keep the self intact, to *identify*, is in some way an acknowledgement of the otherness and multiplicity of the non-self, of what is outside the self, an acknowledgement the body makes automatically at a pre-social level to retain its own sense of body, of presence, of equilibrium.<sup>4</sup> (To speak of eliminating the subject, then, is a bit of a cover-up.)

This acknowledgement is the building block of community and self. It's also very tentative and has no root in what is called basic experience. It *is* rhythmic. As if the interlinking (the jewel) is what keeps us in the world. It precedes (by the flash of a mirror, thus an inversal-precedence, a blur) the inclusion of the self as "subject" in a system of representations. Which could be why women have insisted on it so urgently: because the system of representation, once entered, covers over, as Irigaray says, the economy of women's desire. It's hard to make an identity-discourse out of women's desire — that economy of "touching" or contiguity where "nothing" is visible — because its terms slip; they are not privileged, so they never reassert themselves over the relation in the same way. There is always a return to the terms but they are unstable, and for women there is always this radical instability of terms.

That first rhythmic interlinking, tied to community, is a linking that creates the self without any teleological end: without transcendence, and not containable in words. How does language account for this relationality? It devalues it,

says it's meaningless unless turned into visible representations, where the terms themselves predominate. My poem "The Jewel" (WSW 15–19) struggles against this, tries to focus on the interlinkings, dehierarchize the visual, not just in its use of the image, but in the existence of the beginning, middle, and end of the poem, and in the title, in the very location of the title. The poem breaks up the gaze and specular knowing, breaks up self-presence, when it is read.

But "to move the force ... even for a moment" only "held for that moment" (*Furious* 98). This breakdown of the gaze breaks up the logos as self-evident meaning. Still, "the tendency toward the centre breaks down the fucking organism"<sup>5</sup> because *even the breakdown of the logos is buried in the logos*.<sup>6</sup> The discourse of privilege (that privileges speech, the speaker, and the speaker's position in the social order) is infinitely absorptive. The reduction of anxiety is a pull in the organism, in the cells. The tendency toward the centre, the centripetal force, is a paradox: necessary to reduce anxiety, and deadly because it involves one's own absence. The anæsthetic. Æsthetic, from the Greek word *aisthetikos* (of sense perception), had ties to the word that became, in Latin, the root of the word "audible." We've gradually lost the sense of sound in the word "æsthetic." Anæsthetic comes from *anaisthetos* (insensible), not-perceiving. If we are not perceiving the audible, the sound of the Dnieper, the sound of the womb, we are anæsthetized; we become citizens of the Republic.

How then to maintain or urge a shift to the relational? How to not let the slippage stop, and pull us toward the centre again? Is it memory itself *slipping* (because memory is a social structure, a linguistic order)? If so, it would *have* to stop, or we would spontaneously combust (we as identity, our "us"ness). Is the slippage the evidence of time reversing?

The end, therefore, of entropy? The end of decaying orders is not so simply arrived at! If we speed up, time moves faster, but we can't pass the speed of light because, when we do, time reverses. Thus, such a passage is not permitted: as we approach that speed, mass increases and we slow down, creating a trace that is audible, visible. We can't just speak of slippage of meaning, but slippage of whole structural relationships. Which only holds for a moment, otherwise our "us"ness is too threatened. Mass increases and we slow down. We arrive at a kind of individualism that is a set of terms privileged over the relational presence that is our first notion of community. *What we call community — the Republic, polis — exerts this kind of privilege, has this power.*

There is a parallel moment in metaphysics: to posit Being as transcendent privileged "substance" of which we are made, or in which we think, is to obscure the sound of the Dnieper, obscure our origin out of our mothers from whom, physically, we are descended. The word *descent*: its ancestral connotations seem to indicate we are descended from our fathers. But *descent*: downhill, slippery, descent into hell, into the gutter. And being rises. *A tree rising! A tree inside the ear! The family tree? The father? The baron in the trees? The tree on which the Son was hung up & pierced in the side, androgynous, his vaginal wound?*

Literally, we flow out of our mothers and are made present. We are slippery. We are slimy. We enter into the world by turning inside out the place we were in. The womb just becomes more extensible when we are born; we don't start to distinguish from the *Mother* who is not a person, object, but rather an extension-without-end, a phase-without-duration. As we start to distinguish space differences, durations, and ourselves mirrored, we enter

into the polis. We distinguish sounds. In us is imprinted the Law. We are. We recognize ourselves.

The I of the (liberal humanist) individual is the figure caught in the “Platonizing drift” toward the centre, that centripetal pull, which requires suppression of certain noises, pulses, and beats that cannot be located or identified as “in” or “out” of the body. This drift also places origin outside the body as transcendent, claiming we resemble “God,” instead of locating origin in our mothers. Even if we do not recognize these standard social representations, they will still try to represent us. For women, they can mean an erasure of ourselves, of our bodies. To avoid this, we must take risks, and engage what coalesces, refracts, folds, enfolds, multiplies, and digresses. The cadence in the sounds of words, in their interlinkings. We must risk imperfection, so-called “flaws” in expression, that are flaws only according to the Law which seeks to uphold the Republic.

Look you, child, I signify three hundred years in  
swarm around me this thing I must this uneasy  
thing myself the other stripped down to skin  
and sex to stand to stand and say to stand  
and say before you all the child was black and  
female and therefore mine listen you walk the  
edge of this cliff with me at your peril do not hope  
to set off safely to brush stray words off your face  
to flick an idea off with thumb and forefinger to  
have a coffee and go home comfortably  
Recognize this edge and this air carved with her  
silent invisible cries  
Observe now this harsh world full of white  
works or so you see us

and it is white white washed male and dangerous  
even to you full of white fire white heavens white  
words and it swings in small circles around  
you so you see it and here I stand black  
and female  
bright black on the edge of this white world and  
I will not blend in  
nor will I fade into the midget shades peopling  
your dream

|| Claire Harris, "Policeman Cleared in Jaywalking Case"  
(*Fables from the Women's Quarters* 38)

#### DEFYING ENTROPY: STRUCTURE AND SOCIAL ORDER

Poetry is protest, for it opposes, even as it uses, ordinary speech where the gap and heat loss *are* entropic. Poetry's fold is a disruption of order, which is really a disruption of disorder, because entropy is the constant tendency to disorder, measurable as heat loss.

If there is no need for poetry in Plato's Republic it is because it would be a fissure, a gap where entropy falters, and there is thus no need for the Republic. It is what the Republic fears most, because it is a fetishistic construct that covers up a blind spot (I can only describe it with an oxymoron). The jewel — which is a faceted relationship, a folding, and not a sum — cannot be co-opted by the terms of a political or any other structure. Because of its disruptive capacity, the jewel will always be suppressed by the centre, if not by censorship, then by privileging other speakers, or by covering over the relation of the speaker in the text.

"Not to question the Republic" reduces anxiety. But if we merely reproduce the forms of the polis without questioning, directing our energies on neural paths already well established,

we reproduce oppression. This is especially apparent to me as a woman, and lesbian; I ride that balance of reproduction every day. Every day, I reproduce both my own privilege and my own oppression. The Republic acts as an organism that has a collective will to maintain itself. And this happens regardless of what kind of Republic it is, or what kind of group gets together: even a world of feminists would begin, without certain applications of heat-awareness, to act like a Republic. Maintenance of the collective body (the polis) is easily compatible with anæsthesia of the cells. Without a kind of stress applied to the cells (or the individuals), the cells lose mitochondria: the cell parts that digest, and which feed the cell. When there are fewer mitochondria, the cell can't store glycogen as easily, and thus begins to lack endurance. It is therefore part of the entropic order of the whole. The whole, the Republic, the social body, and the human body seen as entire are — at any given point — processes of falling apart. The drift toward the centre is a redoubled fold — the coalescence of falling apart. The fetish of Being tightens the bounds around these processes to alleviate our anxiety at being nowhere at all.

If poetry just privileges the author's voice, without self-questioning, or if it tries to make the subject vanish, it fails to take into account this social and linguistic condition (which includes, as well, the edges, folds, and contradictions that feminism, radical feminism, blacks, lesbians, the working class, and the poor are talking about), and if it fails to take into account the dynamic between the mainstream and the marginal, it will fail to deal with how information is conveyed, and fall into the Order created by the Republic, thus perpetuating it. As Derrida notes: "Everyday language' is not innocent or neutral.

It is the language of Western metaphysics, and it carries with it not only a considerable number of presuppositions of all types, but also presuppositions inseparable from metaphysics, which, although little attended to, are knotted into a system" (*Positions* 19). This system is — or risks being — an anæsthesia (non-perception). The discourse of privilege is infinitely absorptive. Engaging poetry or poetic structure as enactment can help us defy the second law of thermodynamics, that is, disturb the organism and apply stress to the cells (for it is the tendency to the centre, to stasis or anæsthesia, that destroys the organism) even to those cells called feminism or feminist writing. Because these too are terms.<sup>7</sup> Yet when we speak, we have no choice but to use the terms, putting the relational at risk. Since we need the order to express the relational, we have to face the risk, and create questioning folds in the order: enactment.

This defiance is not a battle or destruction, to me, but a cherishing. To cherish entails "the expression of longing, / in & among/ the collapse of social systems" (*Furious* 98). And if we are to free our memories, our desires, we must take up the wager offered us by this longing, and refuse to *restrain ourselves*.

## IT REMAINED UNHEARD

■ That we integrate the visual more easily than we do sound, calming it and quelling it, so as to feel remote or separate from images, means that television is a perfect method of social control. The screen can show us any atrocity — napalm burning children, black South African policemen in fatigues shooting blacks, the RCMP in riot gear called in to prevent New Brunswick woodcutters from blocking the road to the Consolidated Bathurst pulp mill — depriving us mostly of the sounds, just giving us the visual and the voice and head of the newscaster, maybe a bit of background noise but the newscaster is always standing in a safe place, in a studio or to the side. After all, their equipment is expensive. We can be *shown* anything and integrate it into our lives and feel only sympathy. Which is the perfect corporate emotion. It protects and isolates the self. It has no sound but is mimicry — no sound of its own. Even the sound of the TV is not ambient but sets us up as “viewer” of a screen, provides a binary context which excludes “us” from “them,” secures us in an economy of “the same.”

But for the woodcutters who saw the police advance, banging billies on their plexi-shields in an intentional show

of fierceness — long after everything else departs, there will still be that sound. When they hear it in their minds, they'll be able to smell the trees again, the dust on the road, the isolated branches and light shining, oh, through clouds let's say, the cigarette smell of their comrades, smell of jacket-wool, tiredness. All this because of the sound of those clubs. *Memory, the sound of the Dnieper.*

Our bodies, with our proprioceptive sense of our selves as physically present, fit into this: a relation between rhythm and the body is crucial to self-identity, as Sacks noted. This relation is clearly one that is taut with an outside world, with community; it is a *skin* or integument that relates without "dividing." The two sides of it may not be commensurate but may, fleetingly and persistently in repetition, correspond.

I believe *narrative* is tied to interlinking, to correspondence, to rhythms, and not just to temporal order. The importance of an event as *meaning* is in interlinking, in its *événement*, its *coming to be*, in the contiguity of sound(s), image(s). Interlinking is narrative structure, and (re)presents the desire (our inner mode for the future tense) that slips in the words themselves.

Sometimes what I long for are the torn edges where we can't or won't grab on to the image as singularity (it's a construct anyhow), yet something powerful coheres in our reception. We receive not an image but a shape that coalesces out of movement's very intensity. I believe that when the structure *does* resonate in this way, as shape or sound, that even if the poem is in a foreign language, we can capture the resonance by reading it aloud. Thus, I sometimes try to read Neruda in Spanish or Ritsos in Greek. I remember hearing Yevtushenko in 1979 at the ICA in London reading "Dwarf Birches" in Russian and me, in the sound of his voice, finally understanding the structure of that poem. His words

existed in a context of sound that envisaged the gaps *in words*, where time is ready to reverse if the tracing is visible, audible enough. Defying the entropic process.

This is one way that poetry fissures, or can fissure, oppressive structures. Because of this possibility of fissuring, poetry will continue to be suppressed by some governments and some social structures, if not through censorship, then through some kind of *smoothing*: by not broadcasting certain types of poetry on the CBC, for example, claiming it is too difficult. The Olympic Arts Festival in Calgary in 1988 was a case in point for me; there, talk about poetics was funded, but as part of an event sponsored by business and government to give bobsled runs and other sports facilities to Calgarians. Also part of this event, a spirit of First Nations life was celebrated by the Glenbow Museum, when the reality in Alberta was and is that some First Nations people — the Lubicon Lake Cree — didn't and still don't own their own land because the government, which is all of us, forces a certain definition of "negotiation."

Under such circumstances of questionable justice and "smoothing," some people believe poetic theory is best not talked about, and should be discussed in another framework. Those who accept invitations to talk about poetry at such events are co-opted, as I was, or was in danger of being, for I was invited and was present at that arts festival. But it made me uneasy. If structure is *in* the interlinking, then what I was saying was linked with that bobsled run. What were *my* motives for being there? For appearing as "poet"?

I knew and know very well that to work on a poem is to displace oneself as "poet" at every possible turn. Appear as a "poet" often enough and you will start to behave like one, and write things. The essential is the other way around:

don't write things, and avoid as much as possible being a poet, before, during, and after you are writing. Talk about the language as if you participate in its strictures and structures irrevocably, and not as if it is just "you" "speaking." Talk about the social representations, the systems of representation that, if you do not recognize them, will try to represent you. To do it and not be precious, you will have to risk failure and listen to the cadence in the sounds of words, in their interlinkings: the places where "noises" "touch," where they extend to "interlink" and "fissure," which is no place. You have to risk imperfection, the flaws in expression that are only flaws according to the Law that upholds the Republic. Where some of us are not heard, or are "marginal," or "non-mainstream," or fail to accept the meaning of words like "negotiation."

Yet why did I not *say* these things? The Olympic Arts Festival was clearly not set up for serious discussion about writing. Though I'd prepared a talk on these precise subjects, when I discovered that neither of my two panel companions had prepared anything, nor had had any questions posed to them in advance (nor was there a moderator), I didn't present what I had prepared. The panel would have been too lopsided, and I would have stood out as ungrateful or unruly, I felt. Our mutual talk, instead, regrettably, fell into the personal, anecdotal mode that addresses nothing and perpetuates everything.

The actual purpose of the Olympic Arts Festival still confuses me twenty years later. What was it? To bring variety to Calgarians? To entertain? But whom? And why? Why was the set-up beyond criticism? Why was any protest or defiance referred to, as was the Lubicon petition in a *Calgary Herald* article, as detrimental to future funding? Is to disagree to cut oneself off from funding? Is funding destined to cow us?

At the event, I felt very much the unease of being funded. The funded are supposed to be glad to be there. But I felt the same unease I had felt some days when at work in the bureaucracy of a large corporation, a benevolent and good corporation at that. I had the uneasy thought that I was accepted into the social order as marginal in order to perpetuate the order. Even though “the marginal” is a fiction of the centre, it is part of the social order, and this order restrained me in Calgary, and I acquiesced. I turned my back on the fissure, and I felt bad about it. I stood in a safe place, miming safe people, as if my equipment was expensive. I admit it; I wanted to fit in that day, and — to my peril — I made only safe sounds.