

BOOK REVIEWS

Babel and the Ivory Tower: The Scholar in the Age of Science. By W. David Shaw. Toronto: U of Toronto Press, 2005. xiii, 288 pages. \$60.00.

Late in the concluding chapter of *Babel and the Ivory Tower*, W. David Shaw quotes the philosopher Richard Rorty's comment that too many liberal humanists "yearn to 'see love, power, and justice ... coming together deep down in the nature of things'" (242). For Rorty, the integrity of liberal humanism depends on overcoming the metaphysical yearning for a unifying ground of experience. In *Contingency, Irony, and Solidarity*, Rorty urges liberals to abandon their romantic longing for a comprehensive philosophical, religious or aesthetic perspective that would "hold self-creation and justice, private perfection and human solidarity in a single vision" (xiv). Liberals for whom the avoidance of cruelty is a paramount concern should "drop the demand for a theory which unifies the public and the private" (xvi), and cultivate instead a determined tolerance of mutually exclusive aims. Such 'liberal ironists,' weaned of metaphysical hankerings, accept "self-creation and human solidarity as equally valid, yet forever incommensurable" (xv).

As a romantic liberal humanist, David Shaw (although tempted by Rorty's views) cannot accept the incommensurability of private and public aims. Whereas Rorty's commitment to tolerating exclusive aims is decisive, Shaw defends his "Arnoldian" identity by asserting a subtle (but significant) qualification of Rorty's position. For Shaw, it is "almost impossible to be personal and social, self-fulfilled and useful, liberal and professional, at the same time" (242, my emphasis). Like Matthew Arnold, who laments in his famous poem "The Scholar Gypsy" the "strange disease of modern life, / With its sick hurry, its divided aims" (l. 203-04), Shaw refuses a liberalism that (like Rorty's) advances "divided aims" as a condition of cultural health. With reference to Karl Marx, Shaw observes that the "enemy" of humanistic understanding "is not just consumerism, but the division of higher learning into ... meaningful self-formation, on the one hand, and social utility ... on the other" (144). The primary task of *Babel and the Ivory Tower* is to restore wholeness to liberal learning by healing the debilitating rift between private aims of "self-creation" and public concerns of "social utility."

Shaw's remedy for this divided condition is the scholar-prophet, an appealing figure who (like Blake, Nietzsche and Northrop Frye) reconciles the divergent demands of the *vita contemplativa* and *vita activa* by at once "contemplat[ing] what he loves" and "embod[y]ing what he knows" (5). The scholar-prophet's "persuasive unity of power, love, and knowledge" (241) weaves together technique and inspiration, reason and instinct, the explicit and the inchoate, Apollo and Dionysus. The scholar-prophet overcomes in his or her teaching and writing the assumed incompatibility of professors and poets. In Shaw's view, the authentic "soul of scholarly discourse is the sustained (and sustaining) meditation of prophets, rebels, and poets" (76). The "scholar's world" is maintained, not by slavish adherence to research trends and cunning professionalism, but in the marginalized efforts of humanistic misfits "who are by birth and by nature artists, architects and fashioners of worlds" (77). True scholars are unbidden prophets,

"Promethean deliverers who use the fire they steal from heaven to enhance the quality of civilized life" (11). Most importantly, a manner of scholarship faithful to its hidden springs in poetry and prophecy "foster[s] knowledge that combats disconnection" (80). The scholar-prophet, like Browning's Sun-Treader, sees experience "all at once as an undivided whole" (7), and thus as harmonizing self-creation and social usefulness, private and public commitments.

There is much to admire in Shaw's masterful evocation of the scholar-prophet, but I worry that his insistence on overcoming divided aims partakes too much of Matthew Arnold's innocence regarding the dangers of pursuing a unifying knowledge. Consider again Arnold's figure of the Scholar Gypsy, whose "*one aim, one business, one desire*" (l. 152) is to remedy the chaos of conflicting demands by learning the art of tyranny. The gypsies who charm the Oxford scholar "had arts to rule as they desired / The workings of men's brains, / And they can bind them to what thoughts they will" (l. 45-47). The Scholar Gypsy intends (indeed craves) to make this private or "secret" wisdom of dominion public by imparting it to the world, presumably so that every culture will have the means to subdue the enervating disease of "cross and shifting" (l. 228) purposes. The Scholar Gypsy's monomania is clearly prophetic as his access to the art of tyranny awaits a revelatory "spark from heaven to fall" (l. 120). But will the Scholar Gypsy's promethean knowledge really serve to "enhance the quality of civilized life" (Shaw 11)? The answer is clearly "no" if by civilized life we mean the tolerance of divided aims endorsed by Richard Rorty as the saving grace of liberal humanism. Shaw's powerful and provocative book leaves one wondering (and worrying) that his scholar-prophet is too much akin to Arnold's Scholar Gypsy in his heedless pursuit of domination. Particularly unsettling in this regard is Shaw's remark that the scholar-prophet "should never try to humanize the world by caring more for a virtuous life than an intellectual one" (11). For Rorty's liberal ironist, who does care more about virtue than intellectual power, the only thing worse than deliberate cruelty is cruelty swathed in innocence.

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Pessimism: Philosophy, Ethic, Spirit. By Joshua Foa Dienstag. Princeton: Princeton U Press, 2006. xix, 293 pages. \$38.90.

This book has two central purposes: to highlight the importance of the pessimistic tradition in European political thought, and to make a case for the continued relevance and plausibility of pessimistic philosophy.

Dienstag, a Professor of Political Science at UCLA, wants to counter the tendency to dismiss pessimism as a symptom of psychological depression or grumpiness. For Dienstag, pessimism is a coherent and compelling philosophic tradition, one that includes many central figures in the history of modern European thought. Pessimists do not form a specific school, but neither are they linked by mere disposition: "[w]hat they share is something more than a sensibility, but less than a doctrine" (19).

Dienstag argues that the modern view of time is central to genuine pessimism. Like most moderns, pessimists see time in linear rather than cyclical terms, but unlike

other moderns, they refuse to see linear time in terms of progress. They do not necessarily believe in decline, but they deny that history is a march toward happiness and freedom. In rejecting this assumption, pessimists stand against liberals, Marxists, and other optimists whose world-views have held sway in recent centuries.

This is not to say that pessimists are nihilists. On the contrary, says Dienstag, it is the optimists who are the true negativists and life deniers. By committing themselves to an unattainable realm of future perfection, optimists end up deprecating the present. Pessimists reject all faith in historical safety nets, but in expecting nothing, they are “more truly open to every possibility as it presents itself” (40). Pessimists need not be political agnostics; they can devote themselves to justice, but since they have no expectations about the future, they are “free to experience it as it will be, rather than as a disappointment” (247).

This book covers a lot of ground. Three of the early chapters are devoted to general categories of pessimism. The chapter on cultural pessimism focuses on Rousseau and Leopardi, the one on metaphysical pessimism focuses on Schopenhauer and Freud, and the one on existential pessimism focuses on Camus, Unamuno and E.M. Cioran. These chapters are informative and make a strong case for the existence of a neglected pessimistic strand in modern thought. They are, however, a little dry. Dienstag’s favourite philosophers are masterful stylists, thinkers who straddle the line between philosophy and literature and whose ideas resonate beyond the academy. Surprisingly, his early chapters discuss these figures in an uninspired scholarly style.

The following chapter, devoted to Nietzsche’s Dionysian pessimism, is the weakest in the book. Like many contemporary theorists, Dienstag tries to rally Nietzsche to his banner while overlooking the less attractive features of his thought. He downplays Nietzsche’s political extremism, insisting that Nietzsche can only “mistakenly” be accused of “indifference to the suffering of others” (186). This is a highly questionable and one-sided presentation of Nietzsche. As is too-often the case in Nietzsche scholarship, Dienstag makes no distinction between the aphorisms that Nietzsche chose to publish and those he did not. Dienstag’s arguments rely heavily on the latter without considering the fact that even some of the unpublished work undermines his interpretation of Nietzsche (see, e.g., the highly disturbing 964th aphorism in *The Will to Power*). This chapter does have some good insights about *The Birth of Tragedy* and about Nietzsche’s relation to Schopenhauer, but Dienstag nonetheless overextends himself by packing such a contentious reading of Nietzsche into so short a space.

The last sections of the book are more impressive. There is a delightful chapter on Cervantes’ pessimism, followed by an equally delightful chapter of Dienstag’s own aphorisms on pessimism. Dienstag is finally in his element here: his style becomes brisk and forceful, and one feels that he is having fun. He may not turn his readers into full-fledged pessimists, but he will convince them to take this tradition more seriously. Even the proofreader’s interest seems to get piqued: the typos that crop up here and there in the first two thirds of the book disappear altogether in these final chapters.

The Theatre of the World: Alchemy, Astrology and Magic in Renaissance Prague. By Peter Marshall. McClelland and Stewart. 2006. xi, 276 pages. \$34.99.

Like his previous works, *The Philosopher's Stone* and *World Astrology*, the most recent offering by Peter Marshall is a work of intellectual history aimed at a general readership. Once again Marshall explores the cultural significance of the 'Hermetic' sciences of alchemy and astrology, but here with a more refined focus on the role of Hermeticism in Rudolfine Prague.

Holy Roman Emperor Rudolf II (1552–1612) was an eccentric figure: reclusive and melancholic; obsessed with the pursuit of occult knowledge and power; a compulsive hoarder of art, forbidden books, and curiosities from every corner of the known world. Like Shakespeare's Prospero, his esoteric preoccupations diverted his energies from the realities of political life, and ultimately his authority was usurped by his scheming brother Matthias.

While acknowledging his eccentricities, Marshall paints a sympathetic portrait of Rudolf as an enlightened patron, whose castle was a safe haven for some of the greatest visionaries of the late Renaissance: John Dee, Giordano Bruno and Johannes Kepler are only the most prominent in a long list of scholars who enjoyed Rudolf's patronage and protection. These figures were iconoclasts, who attracted the scrutiny of the Inquisition; and they tended to share a commitment to a broadly 'Hermetic' world view, fueled by the recovery and translation of ancient Hermetic, Neoplatonic and Cabalistic sources. These kindred esoteric traditions attributed to the human a god-like potential to attain direct knowledge of the spiritual powers underlying creation, a mystical illumination that transcended religious creeds and institutions. For Hermetically-inspired visionaries, the goal of science was to decipher the hidden patterns that structured creation, since to know the universe in this systematic way was to know the mind of the creator. These men were mystics *and* scientists, for whom our rigid distinctions between alchemy and chemistry, or astrology and astronomy would have been unintelligible. But they were also transitional figures, who "developed new methods of experimentation and observation which saw the first glimmerings of empiricism and the modern scientific method" (109). Marshall's treatment of the collaboration between Brahe and Kepler at the Rudolfine court is a case in point. It was on the basis of Brahe's astronomical observations that Kepler developed his laws of planetary motion, establishing the mathematical foundations of heliocentrism. Though Kepler was inspired by a Neopythagorean conception of cosmic harmony, his work contributed to the development of a mechanistic cosmology which would ultimately "[drain] the universe of its animism, by replacing the psychic life of nature with the laws of inertia and gravity" (239).

The book's early chapters (1–4) tell the story of Rudolf's ascendancy, from his education in the austere Spanish court of his uncle Philip II to his coronation as King of Hungary, Bohemia and finally Holy Roman Emperor. The biographical content is resumed in the final chapters (13–15) which recount Rudolf's descent into a chronic depression, overwhelmed by the conspiratorial forces rallying against him. The intervening chapters (5–12) contain the intellectual substance of the book. Here Rudolf 'the man' slips into the background as Marshall explores the main intellectual currents of the Rudolfine milieu. Neoplatonism, Hermetism, Cabala, astrology, magic and alchemy each receive a synoptic treatment along with biographical sketches of key figures who

benefited from Rudolf's patronage, either as itinerant scholars (like Dee and Bruno), avoiding the watchful eye of the Inquisition, or as permanent scholars-in-residence (like Kepler and the alchemist Michael Maier).

Marshall's conclusions about the cultural legacy of Rudolf are not original. His narrative is dependent on R.J.W. Evan's seminal study of the Rudolfin Age (*Rudolf II and his World*, 1973), a work of meticulous scholarship, based on documentary evidence dispersed throughout the archives and libraries of central Europe. Frequent reference is also made to Philippe Erlanger's, *L'Empereur insolite* (1971). In his more general claims about the centrality of Hermeticism in the 'scientific revolution,' Marshall is clearly indebted to the pioneering works of Francis Yates; however, he does not address subsequent scholarly debates over the role of occult mentalities in early modern science (e.g. the controversial role of Hermeticism in the heliocentric turn). His silence on these issues is, no doubt, consistent with the goal of presenting an accessible and straightforward narrative; and despite frequent oversimplifications, he does succeed in telling a captivating story, which breathes new life into the Hermetic spirit of the Rudolfin Age. For academic purposes this book would serve as an enjoyable introduction, but those who decide to investigate more deeply will ultimately have to tackle the authoritative study of Evans.

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Writing, Geometry and Space in Seventeenth-Century England and America: Circles in the Sand. By Jess Edwards. London and New York: Routledge, 2006. x, 166 pages. \$144.47.

This book critiques and complicates the idea, perhaps most radically articulated by the historian of cartography, Brian Harley, that seventeenth-century cartography "fostered the image of a dehumanized geometrical space whose places could be controlled by coordinates of latitude and longitude," such a mathematization of place serving the interests both of reforming landowners in England and of colonizers in America (28). Harley serves as an epitome of a cross-disciplinary consensus that the seventeenth century was the "the age of the improver" (28), deploying the Baconian principle "that all natural bodies be, as far as is possible, reduced to number, weight, measure, and precise definition" (24), and the Lockean argument that the improvement of "uncultivated nature" constituted a basis for property rights. Edwards reviews the components of this consensus in Early Modern studies, but his own thesis is that "we often greatly exaggerate the confidence and consistency of a seventeenth-century culture of mathematical discipline and improvement," turning "a lengthy, doubtful and contingent journey into a metamorphosis" (28). While not denying the impact of mathematics on land use, Edwards offers readings of literary texts, mathematical treatises and handbooks, surveys and surveying manuals, plotting what he regards as a "more complex route which navigates the unstable currency of early modern mathematics; the uncertain and fragmented politics of early modern geography; and the inherent ambivalence of Protestant humanist culture towards artful individualism and economic change" (29).

Edwards is interested in the broad cultural currency that, he argues, was held by mathematics, or by ideas and images of mathematics. He traces tropes of mathematics in plays, poems, and emblems, arguing that they “played a constitutive role in negotiating its nature and value,” even in “specialist mathematical publications” (37). Conversely, in these same specialist publications, the nature and purpose of the science itself is seen as “rhetorical,” as in part a result of verbal and cultural negotiations that reflect the fears, as well as the hopes, stemming from its deployment. Edwards offers interesting and suggestive readings of figures in the drama—estate stewards and surveyors at work; of images and narratives of famous or legendary figures in mathematics such as Archimedes; of surveyors and instructors of mathematics themselves, seen constructing their public personae in manuals and courses of study, steering their way amongst the complex social signifiers of mathematics, on one hand seen as an abstract “liberal” art, and on the other as the craft of surveying, historically grounded as much in verbal testimony as to traditional land use as in any impersonal application of geometry. This brief study includes a lucid review of this important issue in Early Modern studies, and then numerous specific readings of texts that support Edwards’ view that the age was more rooted in its past and more conflicted about modernizing ideas. This reader, to offer one example, concurs with Edwards’ claim that colonists and colonial cartographers were often more understanding of, and engaged with, Native land use practices than the retrospective meta-narrative of cartographic voiding would allow.

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Evangelical Balance Sheet: Character, Family, and Business in Mid-Victorian Nova Scotia. By B. Anne Wood. Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier U Press, 2006. 198 pages. \$65.00.

Evangelical Balance Sheet: Character, Family and Business in Mid-Victorian Nova Scotia is less comprehensive than the subtitle suggests, for the book is primarily focussed on a single diary. This was kept by W. Norman Rudolf (b. 1835), who moved to Pictou in 1853 from his home town of Lunenburg, becoming a clerk and then a junior partner in a merchant banking firm. Rudolf’s Pictou diary begins in 1862; in 1870 he immigrated to Scotland where he died in 1886.

B. Anne Wood’s use of Rudolf’s diary provides some interesting insights into the nature of mid-Victorian Pictou society and Nova Scotian life generally. However, as Rudolf was an Anglican, it is surprising that she does not have a better understanding of the Church of England. Her statement that the Evangelicals “were calling for populist control of clergy, church rituals and cultural interpretation of dogma” (xx) absurdly over-simplifies a complex subject. Hibbert Binney, fourth bishop of Nova Scotia, is twice referred to as “Binning” (p. 94) and Wood believes that the 1851 disestablishment of the Church of England in Nova Scotia was socially significant (xix), when by then the official status of the Church was of limited importance.

The major problem with the book is that Wood approaches Rudolf’s diary as a case study to illustrate notions developed by historians of gender and the family. Wood is concerned to explore Rudolf’s “ideal” of character. Although the Victorians

were obviously concerned with questions of character, her presuppositions that there was an “ideal of character,” and that Rudolf’s diary should be read in the light of his “ideal,” tie the text to the Procrustean bed of contemporary historical theorizing.

Wood’s reliance upon currently fashionable ideas about identity, gender and the family drains away both the individuality of Norman Rudolf and the particular context within which he wrote. According to Wood, Norman Rudolf was engaged in “an effort to imagine and construct his emerging ideal concept of character” (7). When the diarist married he “attained what would be deemed the fullness of a man’s gender identity” (xxi). When there was a family crisis, he “introduced the notions of unselfishness and responsible family stewardship into his character ideal” (29). In his relations with his brother, “Norman did not fully appreciate James’ attempt to construct his own male gender identity, separate from the increasingly idealized prestige of motherhood and female authority in the private home that characterized Victorian culture at the time” (37).

But did people really “construct” their “emerging ideal of character” in the nineteenth century? Did they consider marriage as “the fullness of a man’s gender identity”? These and other tendentious assertions are not sustained by the evidence advanced in *Evangelical Balance Sheet*. Accordingly, Wood’s approach obscures rather than illuminates Norman Rudolf’s world. One day, perhaps, his diary will be revisited by an historian less wedded to theory and more versed in the history of Nova Scotia.

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Beyond This Point. By Holley Rubinsky. Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 2006. 291 pages. \$24.99 paper.

Beyond This Point is Holley Rubinsky’s first work to come out in nine years, and her first full-length work of fiction. It is well worth the wait. A story of betrayal and reconciliation set in the British Columbia interior, *Beyond This Point* follows five very different women as they struggle to take the wheel of lives that have spun out of control.

The backdrop to this novel is stereotypically Canadian—and self-consciously so. (Rubinsky explicitly plays with this trope when she has Lenore warn a group of American retreat-goers about bears: “You’re in Canada The wilderness,” she said, opening her arms dramatically,” to the “gasps and inhalations” of the tourists.) *Beyond This Point* is set in the woods and peopled with characters who wear plaid jackets and work boots and eat pancakes with maple syrup. But nobody is safe in her log cabin. Wild fires from the United States lick at this leafy Eden, and a hungry grizzly bear is roaming the Judith Lake Valley. Both are looming, potentially overwhelming forces that provide an unsettling backdrop to the stories of these women.

Beyond This Point is a novel about regret and becoming, about transformation. Some of the characters need to exit the Judith Lake Valley in order to find salvation, but some are coming home in order to make peace with their past. This sense of movement—of cars zooming down the highway in and out of the valley—is a recurrent theme. Only Bet’s life remains static, and the lack of movement in her life, its very “averageness,” is the thing that undoes her.

Rubinsky's intertwining of storylines is deft, even slightly Dickensian in the way characters come in and out of each other's lives. It requires an alert reader, but the payoff is an animated community that is difficult to leave at the end of the novel. Of the five main storylines, each of which is treated like a short story in serial form, Bet's is the least fully-realized. Unlike the other characters, who are on the move, Bet remains static in her unhappiness. Instead, she assigns the job of escape to her daughter, who is university-bound. When Bethany Jane chooses, instead, to escape to Mexico with a reefer-smoking bad boy, Bet (who has up until now sat in judgment of everyone else in the community) is devastated but humbled. Perhaps the most unresolved part of this book is when Bethany Jane returns to the safety of Judith Lake and resumes her role of dutiful daughter.

Two storylines feature characters who are running from broken relationships, both having been replaced by younger women. When Lucinda, who administers the Centre for Light Awareness for her airplane-driving shaman boyfriend, finally realizes that her time with Gabriel has come to an end, Lenore steps in to cook and clean for the sooth-seekers. Miserly of spirit, a hoarder, and a neurotic eater, Lenore suffers intestinal problems from her emotional bind. When Gabriel suggests she ingest some slippery elm to counteract her problems, an almost birth-like experience ("the strangest, oddest excrement in the world") begins her transformation. It is both humorous and unexpectedly moving, like much of Rubinsky's novel. Lenore may not be able to save her own son, the source of much of her unhappiness, but she expiates her perceived sins of motherhood via a hauntingly strange boy named BB.

The notion of surveillance pervades much of this novel—particularly the storylines of Mory and Kathleen. Mory, beginning her descent into a terminal illness after a life of trading on her body, returns to the Judith Lake Valley with her son BB, who spies on a naked Lenore. Kathleen, a grieving young widow, arrives from the East for a visit with friends and becomes obsessed with her best friend's husband ("She cupped her hands and looked in through the mudroom door ... the longing misplaced, mysterious, practically predatory").

The close, oppressive atmosphere of *Beyond This Point* feels like the dry summer heat it describes. And the water bombers which come choppering in at the end of the novel nicely mirror the resolution of the storylines, as each character becomes drenched in a new self-awareness.

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Airstream Land Yacht. By Ken Babstock. Toronto: House of Anansi, 2006. 110 pages. \$18.95 paper.

Ill at ease in the postmodern moment, Ken Babstock uses poetry to demonstrate how the singing self is often our only certainty. In the poem "Essentialist," we learn that "the singing's not / to record experience, but to build one viable / armature of feeling sustainable over time." In Babstock's poems, the self wants both ignorance and knowledge of human significance, wants to affirm and deny the death of the referent. If the self is experienced and expressed linguistically, Babstock wonders, then what happens

when, like the children's kites in "Windspeed," referents float away: "signs enacting what signs meant"?

Against these uncertainties, Babstock builds lyric fortresses, places from which he can foray beyond the pale, into the booby-trapped realm of philosophy. The concreteness of concrete, the tactility of life's bric-a-brac offers solace to the philosophic subject. His poem "Compatibilist" echoes the profound validation of things found in the Book of Genesis: "I watched a field of sun- / flowers dial their ruddy faces toward / what they needed and was good." The poet's perspective is far from god-like, but there is an affirmative quality that runs throughout this collection, gratitude for the permanence of even garbage, overpasses, cigarettes and grime.

The focus of these poems oscillates between the arcane and the mundane, and the poet often comments on the pretence of philosophy, on the self's preoccupation with its own significance. The bathetic shift in poems such as "On Utility" undercuts the speaker's self-absorption—"was that too much?"—and saves many passages from appearing preachy or cold. Babstock also places highly specific images directly after abstractions or sentimental passages in order to achieve tonal balance. This measuring rarely fails, with the exception of "Compatibilist," with its sentimental lines: "I lived in that same light but felt / alone," "later I cried myself to sleep," and "we should be held and forgiven." The tone of this poem differs markedly from the rest, and it detracts from the otherwise crisp tone of the collection.

Airstream Land Yacht is also formally diverse, and even Babstock's free verse supports the belief that open form does not entail formlessness. While few of the poems adhere to strict metre or syllabics, there is definite form, which is also reflected in content. In the postmodern subject's war on nihilism, the closed form—whether sonnet or rhymed quatrain—offers enticing sanctuary, embodying order, offering a safe place to regroup before the next existential battle. Rhyme and closed form, in pieces such as "Windspeed," also allow a more narrative and/or descriptive approach, while guarding the flanks against charges of prosiness. Moreover, Babstock plays with form, dispensing with its confines as content demands. For instance, in "The Minds of Higher Animals," the speaker's former lover complains:

'This is a poem,' she said, 'and that's not
good enough. Around here, we don't let art, no matter
how acutely felt, stand in for what's necessary, true, and right.
Next time you face me, maybe leave you here. End quote.'

Here the tirade against artistic artifice actually breaks the ABBA rhyme scheme of the poem. Similar illuminating deviations from form occur in "Tarantella" and "The Lie Concerning the Work."

Babstock most often employs slant rhyme throughout his compositions. His use of internal rhymes, linguistic echoes, polyptoton and alliteration allows him to create poems of resonance and coherence, and all the while there is a delight in word play. This sense of fun is especially prominent in "Tarantella," in which all 22 lines rhyme with the title (although some are extremely slant). While the reader is at times confused, the resilient world-wonder evident in *Airstream Land Yacht* is compelling.