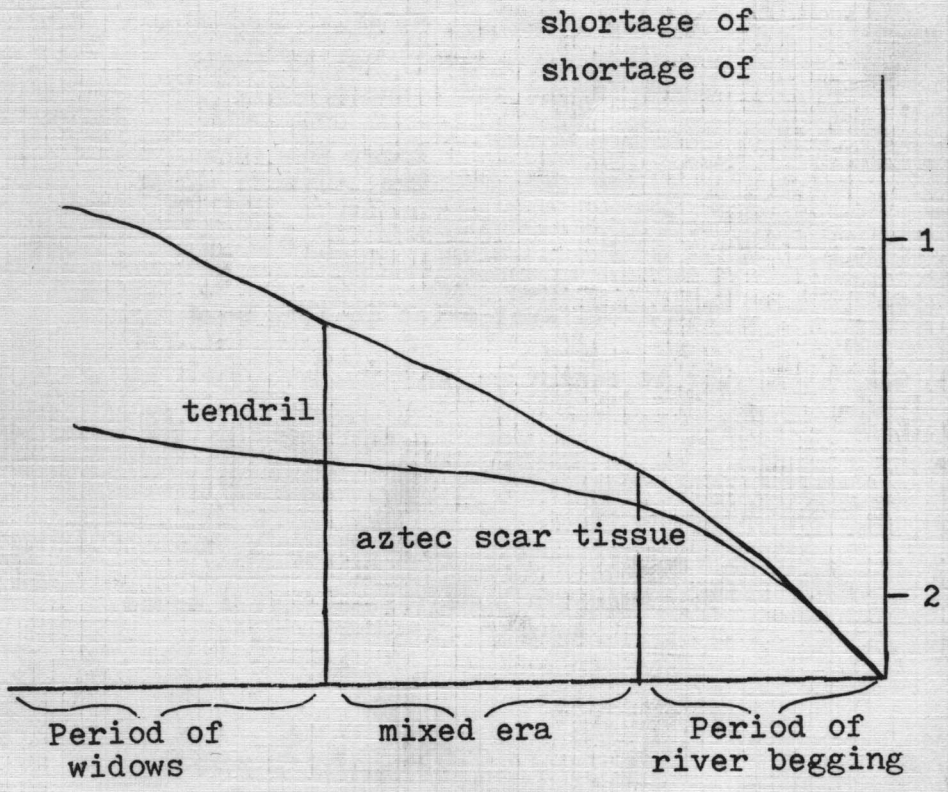


# EDGE

BRUCE ANDREWS



"There is a sound that came and made  
the agreeable displacement of no sign."

Gertrude Stein  
*Geography and Plays*, p 85

"Joining items not by their center  
(denotative meaning) but by their  
edges (sound and connotation)."

Roger Shattuck  
NYR, 5-18-72, p 28

"The story must exist in each word  
or it cannot go on."

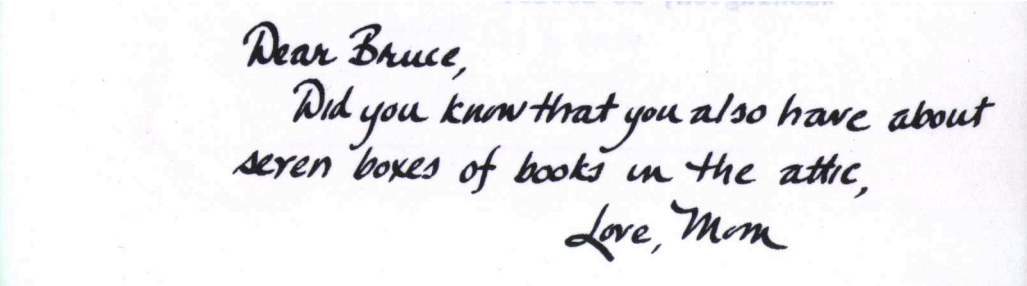
Louis Zukofsky

You cannot misunderstand just a sound.

EDGE

\*

Bruce Andrews



*Dear Bruce,  
Did you know that you also have about  
seven boxes of books in the attic,  
Love, Mom*

"Everything that was directly lived  
has moved away into a representation."

Guy Debord, *Society of the Spectacle*

Some of these works have been or  
will be in: TOTTEL'S, THIS, SALT LICK,  
& Paul Carroll's THE YOUNG AMERICAN  
POETS (2nd selection)

[*EDGE* was originally published in an edition of 500 copies with a cover  
collage by Ellen Andrews in 1973 by ARRY PRESS for SOME OF US PRESS]



A small bird  
invites all the  
animals to a  
great feast Then  
he pulls mountain  
goats and fat out  
of his rectum with  
a hook and feeds  
them all. Raven  
boasts, "I can do  
the same."

\*

They claimed that  
where the hole is  
is where the serial  
number should  
have been

GETTING READY TO BE FRIGHTENED

---

all over you

---

little cold streams

I'm

---

eat themselves

eat each other

---

a box

with a lid

---

wife

eggshells

---

I'm hurrying  
hurrying again

---

good,  
blood

---

her ears  
I'm shouting

---

smoke  
ladder  
down

---

too fast  
to be blessed

---

accept  
except

---

selling the books  
taking my father  
off my back

---

we both know it  
we both hate it

---

spooning out the bird

---

film

---

it's me,  
I miss

---

white  
white

---

able to read,  
nothing else

---

ministration

---

gender  
end

---

mustard womb

---

eating the glass  
with the gravy

---

think of my parents  
thinking of the parents

---

lungless prayers

---

fear's blue

ear rope

---

uncolored breast

---

melting down

the poetry magazines

to make a fence

---

shaking my milk

---

a flag made out of nails

and you wave it



Dear . . . .

Most of my stuff is based on fragmentation and the qualities of words other than (and along with) their meaning. The words aren't related at the center but by their edges (connotation, etc) — like the interrelated pieces of a non-representational ceramic sculpture.

What's stressed is sound, texture, rhythm, space and silence. Those qualities seem to get obscured when we focus too strenuously on the words' "meaning" (which is the referential aspect of the words, the part that draws the reader's attention away from the words themselves).

There's less "content" here (in the old sense of pre-determined information about the world outside the poem) but hopefully the language becomes the content and the event, because the words don't have to be (primarily) transparent signposts to something beyond. The poems can be "self-referring" — with other "organizing principles" than the one of pre-set meaning. Sound, for example.

I don't try to give up the feel of words, or treat them as just clumps of sound. The individual words have meanings and possible associations. It's just that these meanings and connotations aren't yoked together and armed outside the poem at a single externally-applied meaning for a poem as a whole (a tightly knit network of references). The way words fit into a sentence or a line (or a line of thought) doesn't grab me as much as how they relate to the space and silence around them. I like the edges, discreteness, fragments, collision.

creole

lint of

shrugs of

hop

shaying

whistle

methane's foal

lickety-split

and blue

mint

of that

and blue

buddy air

wealth

only his legs

with cabs  
prison it is

wood duck

flouride

try to rarebit it

sperm  
cannot be touched

sugar

pitch

adorn

on one's laurels

annexation

velvet

toxicant woalsack All Souls heap row

spell nothing once stall ever wide

levee fast bake seed phosphoresce

(21)

remove my peignoir

WHY PAY MORE

sprocket

popcorn

like a baloon's

as race

S.O.S.

raise

gram

pantry

bunt cigar

knobbing on gist

lean

now

crow

it's weave fancies

singe frightened

married frightened

\*

(28)

snow

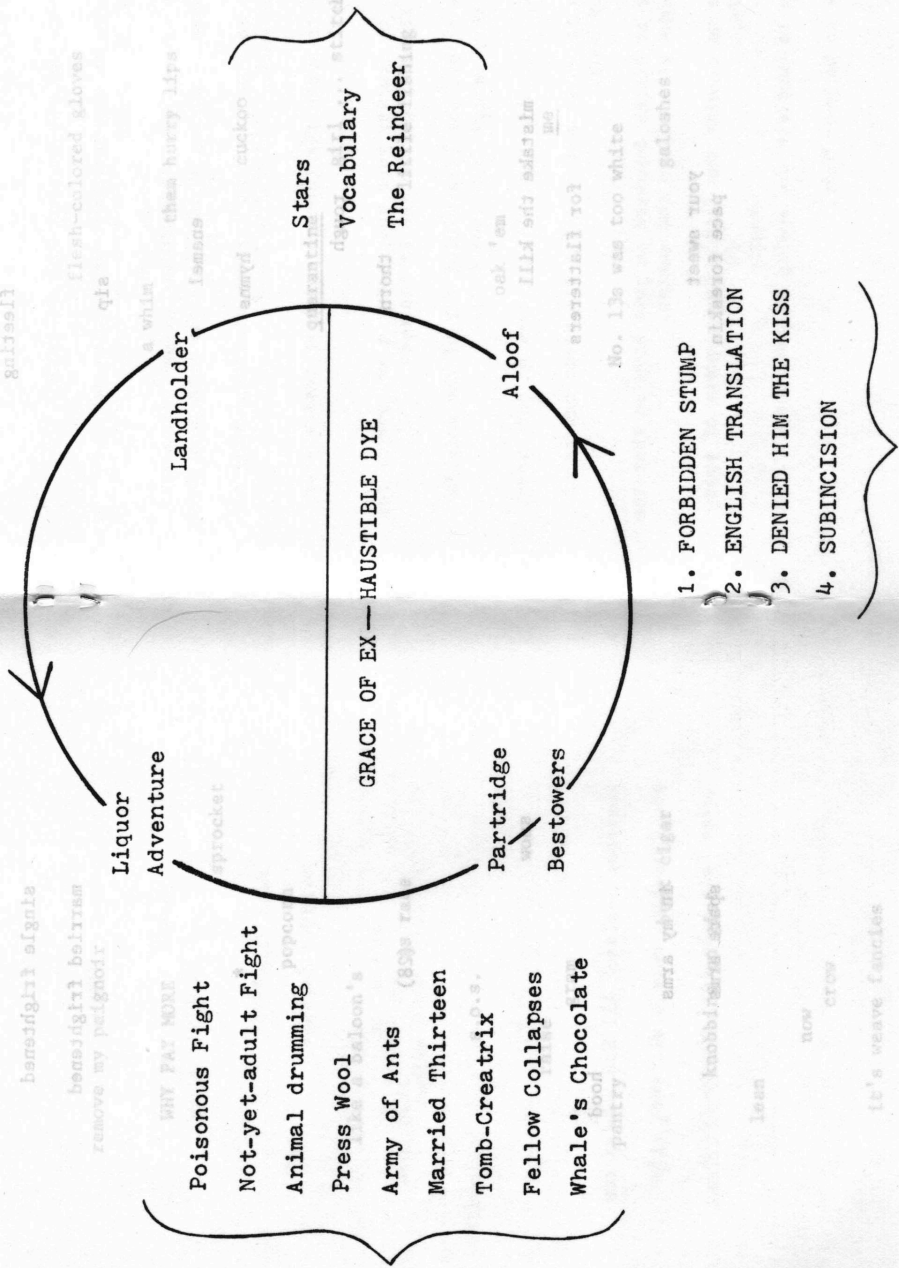
hood

in my arms

spare arms



can be summarized in the following diagram



I'd like your body.

I'd like to see you in your body waltzing.

I'd like to be inside your body looking out one-third of the way.

I'd like to take a small bailpeen hammer & several pieces of string & make a puzzle from your body.

I'd like to find a throat lozenge disintegrating in your body.

I'd like to smoke the tobacco you keep inside your body.

I'd like to crucify your body using a new pewter peg to attach your one arm to the wood.

I'd like to pet the blue-violet fur of the animals as they emerge from your body.

I'd like to quickly shut all the eyes of your body.

I'd like to weigh and re-weigh the seven ounces of your body.

I'd like to strike downward on your body so that the sparks will hit in the center.

I'd like to capsize the little tourniquets of your body.

I'd like to complete the sewing of your body.

I'd like to be your body.

my first  
heart attack  
my second  
heart attack  
my third  
heart attack  
my father's  
third  
heart attack

\*

Oh  
dress

rain fire revow

swig

nitric burr

iguana

at the two or  
three foreheads

which

little

red

begin strutting

the know-alls

deep shit

tent blew down

(29)

hully gully

mother of

pearl

stocking

v-shaped anus

soda

rags : chrome

or

deft niece fiddle

can we do it  
without moving

woof

every

cussing

sleep lollipops

jump off

wet his quartz lips

Honey

I don't

do

this

avoid this

worse put kantelle  
y-comen of beginneth  
spedde he gan to caste  
a caas sette  
but swich for wel woot stonde in  
quod he radix malorum bulles shewe  
alle assoille y-gaunted juil bifil  
his wyf of no swich eek the fyn  
nil finde swete ye so spyced dede  
gode shenyl japes  
and ek fre pleyde  
    leoun fro wil bide an hous  
unnethes ryde or wende  
    yiven           honge



clear sight / granulated

howitzer's rosette

tightwire

how they (they?) raw-prize a tree stump

Adam's apples

Dry. Yes, ma'am.

Dry. Like lava.

bowsman silks

chicory

epilept

between red bottle and red helix  
between red bottle and pepper helix

wide night

in tide

wet sign

davis votive noon trolling fin star

in canker

at best lore larrikin

1860 1831

paint shoes

YR BIRTH

welt

wren

sect

a hosiery

taker

wed night

lace

nine

Jefferson nine

LEAVING 1

her hand

my gauze pad

crumpled goldfinch

billeted cot breast

guns

keep awake Matthew Oils

his full.

trebled lieutenancy.

offstage

chemist-limb  
victrola

from her contour

limb paint

germinate

bent pestle

eau-de-salvo

HIKING SEA

ctive

ring tow

tion

ww

atallpart

retro-bulb

spun-a-off

amethyst trunk,  
leaves out of

quartz, almost

res do

berry

vintage

(16)

eel

I'd say refuse

gal

blue water

to mooove into

& gypsy into

biscuit

insinuatingly

Narragansett Lager

hey!

quart short

scrapping no paint

ain't  
crippled

oak star aorta

Jacob's pillow. Four more wars. 18 mg. "tar,"  
19 mg. "tar." Red or Longhorn. Ultraviolet.  
Stunting leather straps. Tibia sniff you.  
Opus Dei. Firmly-seated cork. Devil-may-care.  
Methadone en route. Mule token. Rubber ever.  
Sine die. "Foo foo feminine things." Now  
Paar. Throw the reins over their necks.  
Minor hand-me-downs and razor-edged carp.  
Applauds. Spiral. Bug Tussle, Okla. Head  
stocking one more time. A wise old owl and a  
child. Feeble ducks. Story spinner and to  
be torpedoed. Well-oiled ping. Blacklist  
airs the linen. Drunken looks good if it's  
jackers and clamps. So long, sympathy.  
Plenty of legs defrogged. Test sit. Baffles.  
Polyethylene. Swear by. Goodbye. Roach  
Brown.

Were shining stretching the hogs were Tuscon  
housefronts shad were ticket six puff comes  
with privilege colors scram glad above back-  
ground tilting.

Purple stepping street hitch hurrying any  
gray the tender the bucks coat his which  
certain tickets with oh pullets then seve-  
rest tilting.

Buck bright were straits loam bent sweet  
reacher orange cents wide intense  
includes other brave aye some.

Excellent brown cast hope hunter truck right  
which posts on event fronter sky and tent.  
Trek mopped thirty hand satisfied zens some  
what his life  
what his like her does white his.

bucket of creek-  
wash twig

the clay bears a pod

take everything all in-  
side

my father even

ole half price tinplate

and shuts down

wet wet open

it's like a furnace

memory

have I made a good lasso?



