

Continuing Diversity

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By Renee Rude

The column for this issue highlights three serials in disparate fields: a special issue of a library journal noted for its alternative perspectives, a brand-new literary journal that seeks a wider audience for the works of Canadian and international poets, and a current events newspaper geared to adults who are learning English as a second language.

Counterpoise: for social responsibilities, liberty and dissent. ISSN 1092-0714, Volume 6, Number 3, July 2002. Editor: Charles Willett. Contributing editors and supporters: Byron Anderson, Sanford Berman, Martha Cornog, Earl Lee, Jason McQuinn, and Frederick W. Stoss. Published by the Civic Media Center and Library, 1716 SW Williston Road, Gainesville, FL 32608-4049; phone: (352) 335-2200; e-mail: contact@counterpoise.info; web site: www.counterpoise.info. Quarterly. Subscriptions: Institutions, \$45; Individuals, \$35; Low Income \$25; Single Copy \$12. Back Issues: Complete retrospective runs and individual issues are available.

For its first years (volume 1, number 1 through volume 4, number 2; January 1997–April 2000), *Counterpoise* was published by the Alternatives in Print Task Force of the American Library Association's Social Responsibilities Round Table. Volume 4, numbers 3 and 4 (July and October 2000) were published by CRISES Press, Inc. Beginning with volume 5, number 1 (January 2001), *Counterpoise* became a project of the Civic Media Center and Library, Inc., a not-for-profit 501 (c) (3) tax-exempt, alternative library and gathering place in Gainesville, Florida. *Counterpoise* is an active member of the Independent Press Association.

In the first issue released (1997) the editor Charles Willett stated that the "ideas and publications [of the alternative press] are often ignored, misrepresented or suppressed by corporate and government media and are overlooked by schools, universities and libraries worldwide." He added, "*Counterpoise* describes, criticizes, defends and promotes these publications and products against this bias."

In this special issue, the current Editor's Page states: "When the newly formed *Counterpoise* collective began its weekly meetings in early 2002, the topic of their first discussion was 'why not publish a special issue on zines?'" Dedicated to zines, the publication lists an exclusive interview with a Zine Librarian and contains articles on Feminist, Personal, Librarian, and Environmental Zines, as well as more than 100 Zine Reviews. This 67-page issue is all, and perhaps more than, any casual reader might want to know about zines.

Ten authored articles, ranging in length from scarcely one page to a maximum of four pages, provide the bulk of this issue. Making up the rest are the eight-page "Zine Guide's Top 20 Zines," "Zines are Dead," 15 full pages of zine reviews, and

the "Zinester Resource Guide."

T. Fristoe, zine librarian, states: "I'd define a zine as a homemade publication—maybe done so more out of the need for expression rather than pleasing advertisers or a certain target demographic, but that's tangential and not always applicable." Titles of zines reviewed run the gamut: "Greenpepper," "Thoughtworm," "The Big Takeover," "Zine World: Reader's guide to the underground press," "Ugly Things," and many other highly unusual names.

In 1999, *Counterpoise* was reviewed in *Journal of Information Ethics*, which noted that "the editor's notes were an affirmation of long held beliefs (albeit only rarely addressed in academia) that many voices reside at the margins, pleading to be allowed entry." This special issue of *Counterpoise* gives testament to that goal.

It is true that zines fill a void for certain writers and readers and, as such, zines no doubt will continue to do so whether or not libraries are able to collect and catalogue them. One very timely, compelling article, "Campus Alternative Papers: Making Change at the Grassroots," explains that "right-wing foundations funnel millions of dollars a year directly into conservative campus papers, while conservative attacks on student fee funding have left many progressive papers reeling or extinct." The Campus Alternative Journalism Project (CAJP) was founded in 1994 by the Center for Campus Organizing and since 2001 has been housed at the Independent Press Association in an effort help progressive campus papers assist each other with numerous cooperative ventures such as a mailing label exchange to get a sense of what their peers' publications look like on paper.

"The New Pages Zine Rack" is an article contributed by Sean Stewart, a librarian at Wichita Falls Public Library in Wichita Falls, Texas. Stewart contributes his definition of a zine and then lists nine reviewed zines. He writes, "I think librarians and zines are a perfect match, seeing as both typically represent free expression of ideas and intellectual freedom."

This issue's shining star (for this reviewer) was penned by Chris Dodge on the occasion of the Twin Cities (Minneapolis/St. Paul, Minnesota) Anarchist Book Fair, April 28, 2002. Titled "Minnesota Zine Manifesto," Dodge lists "Seven Questions for Zine Publishers" that begins with "Why publish a zine anyway?" and ends with the "Ten Commandments of Zines." The seventh commandment reads, "Write so honestly you're leery of sharing it with anyone." Dodge and the other text writers of *Counterpoise* each have substantive thoughts to put in print for others to read and ponder. While this special issue might be questionable in the "scholarly" arena, it certainly gives voice to many interesting people and their ideas and work. Institutions of higher learning need a subscription to *Counterpoise*.

Indexed in *Alternative Press Index* and *Book Review Index*,

Counterpoise's articles are accessible through the full-text database, Alt-PressWatch.

Vallum. ISSN 1496-5178. Volume 2.1, 2003. Editors: Joshua Auerbach and Eleni Z. Auerbach. Published by Blue Phoenix Press, P. O. Box 48003, Montreal, Quebec, H2V 4S8, Canada; e-mail: vallummag@sympatico.ca; web site: www.vallum.com. Semiannual. Subscriptions: Individuals: \$14/year, \$7 single copy; Institutions: \$20/year, \$10 single copy. In Canada add \$2.50 postage. U.S. orders in U.S. funds. Overseas add \$4 postage.

writing today, with a broad focus on work that pushes limits and is the best in its field," according to its editors. This publication was launched in April 2001 by the Vallum Society for Arts & Letters Education, a federally incorporated charitable organization in Canada that promotes literature and the arts through publications and live events. In 2002, *Vallum* was nominated as a finalist in the National Magazine Awards for Poetry. Publishing work by notable Canadian and international poets, writers, critics, and artists, *Vallum* has a "poly-vocal flavour, engaging in the art and reviews of international figures." This magazine is made of heavy stock paper; it sports a bright, glossy cover and holds 75 pages of poems (one translated from the French), an interview, an essay, four reviews, and visual art, all prior to listing three pages of contributors' biographical information. The end product is enclosed in a sturdy binding, which completes this 17 x 21.5 cm magazine.

—Edgy and sharp, "*Vallum* promotes the best poetry and

Vallum is a high-level product of art, both in design and contributions; all poets and writers should take note of this new publication. *Vallum* is indexed in the *Canadian Literary Periodicals Index* and in the *Index of American Periodical Verse*.

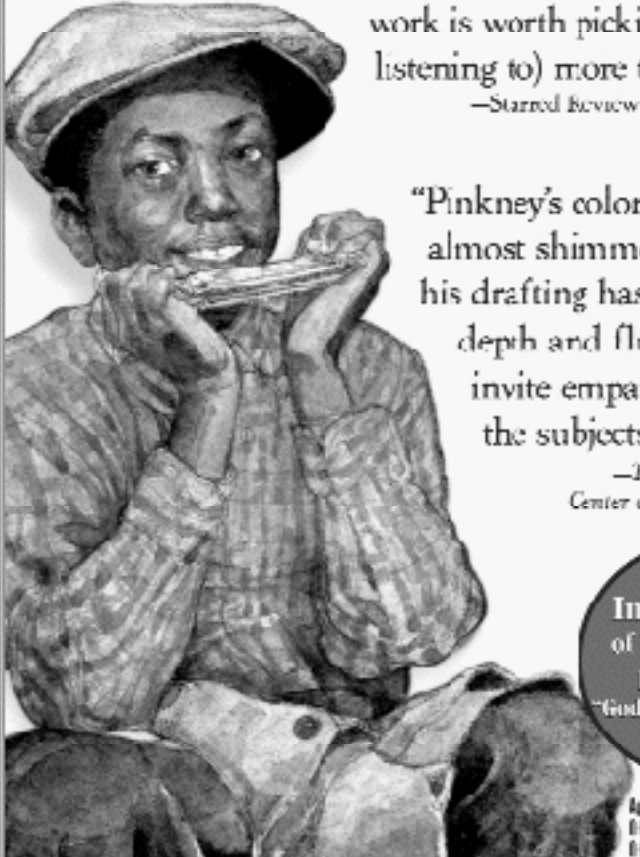
Easy English News. ISSN 1091-4951. Volume 8, Number 3, March 2003. Editor: Elizabeth Claire. Published by Elizabeth Claire, Inc., Easy English News, P. O. Box 2596, Fair Lawn, NJ 07410; phone: (888) 296-1090; e-mail: eceardley@aol.com. Monthly (no issues in July or August). Subscriptions: U.S. \$25; Canada and Mexico \$30; all other countries \$40. *Easy English News* plus Teacher's Pages: U.S. \$30; Canada and Mexico \$35; all other countries \$50. Contact for group discounts.

This newspaper is written on a third- to fourth-grade reading level, but covers topics of interest to adults, especially immigrants who want current, vital information to help them manage their new lives in the United States. All materials are written by editor/publisher Elizabeth Claire or other expert English as a Second Language (ESL) text writers; Claire herself produces about 85 percent of the content. This is a 12-page monthly newspaper for adult and high school readers whose native language is not English. Teaching aids are built into the newspaper for classroom or individual use. *Easy English News* is geared to teachers of ESL classes at the adult or high school level and to public libraries seeking materials for immigrant users, though one might question the fact that so much of the material is written by the editor/publisher. In addition, potential subscribers might find the journal pricey.

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