BALLAST is an acronym for Books Art Language Logic Ambiguity Science and Teaching, as well as a distant allusion to BLAST, the short-lived publication founded during World War I by Wyndham Lewis, the Vorticist artist and writer. BALLAST is chiefly a pastiche of more or less curious excerpts from books, magazines, diaries and other publications. Put differently, it is a journal devoted to wit, the contents of which are intended to be insightful, amusing or thought-provoking.

The purposes of BALLAST are educational, apolitical and noncommercial. It does not carry paid advertisements, nor is it supposed to be purchased or sold. It is published every three months, more or less, beginning in October and ending in June. There is no charge for subscriptions as such, and (to the extent that finances allow) the journal will gladly be mailed to persons who send in a mailing address and two first class U.S. postage stamps for each issue. In other words, to receive BALLAST for one year (four issues), we ask that each reader contribute a total of eight genuine unused U.S. postage stamps, interesting or not. Do not send postage meter stamps. When subscribing, good-looking, antique and/or unusual stamps are preferred. (At the moment we are especially fond of the colorful new "poison ivy commemorative" -- just ask for it at your post office window.) We do not accept phone orders.
ALICE B. TOKLAS What is sauce for the goose may be sauce for the gander but it is not necessarily sauce for the chicken, the duck, the turkey, or the guinea hen.

RODNEY DANGERFIELD I TOLD MY PSY-
I wish people would stop saying "Da-chiatrist that everyone hates me. He Vinci!" when they want to refer to said I was being ridiculous -- every-
Leonardo. It is like saying "Of Vienna" one hasn't met me yet.
If they want to refer to Sigmund Freud.

Rudolf Arnheim ("Of Ann Arbor")

W O O D Y A L L E N Years ago, my mother gave me a bullet. I put it in my breast pocket. Two years after that I was walking down the street when a berserk evangelist heaved a Gideon Bible out a hotel room window, hitting me in the chest. The bible would have gone through my heart if it wasn't for the bullet.

EDWARD MARSH [Ned Lutyns] thought as a little boy that the Lord's Prayer began with "Our Father Charles in heaven, Harold be thy name."
I remember ANON having to go to the toilet at the house of Herr Heller, who had a reputation for diet -- when I see stinginess. This was confirmed when I discovered that the toilet paper was composed of quartered sheets of typing paper with holes in one corner, through which a piece of string attached them to a nail arbitrarily driven into the bathroom wall. These pieces of paper were covered minute. Or you might not write the paragraph at all.

Having imagination, it takes you an hour to write a paragraph that, if you were unimaginative, would take only a minute. In messages printed in violet ink, many of them marked "Secret" and some of them "Most Secret." How much simpler a method of disposal than all the latterday complications thought up by those involved in activities of the CIA and FBI.

Franklin P. Adams

[ON THE DAY THAT WILLEM AND ELAINE DE KOONING ARRIVED AT JIM EASON BLACK MOUNTAIN COLLEGE, JOSEF] ALBERS TOLD US THAT MEALS

were announced with a loud bell, and we agreed to meet young and thin,

him at six in the dining hall and returned to our house to hang around old

unpack and to set up our studios. We were sitting in the fat people.

dock deep in conversation when the dinner bell rang. To

our amazement and amusement, we saw people running —

from every direction to converge on the dining hall. "Look —

at them run at the sound of that bell," Bill laughed. —

"Pavlov's dogs," I said smugly. We continued our leisurely —

conversation and strolled over to the dining room some —

twenty minutes later to discover that the food was all —

gone -- every scrap of it. From then on, at the sound of the —

bell, Bill and I proved to be more than adequate sprinters —

and never again came late for a meal.

ELAINE DE KOONING, "de KOONING MEMORIES" IN MERVIN

LANE, EDITOR, BLACK MOUNTAIN COLLEGE: SPROUTED SEEDS:

AN ANTHOLOGY OF PERSONAL ACCOUNTS (KNOXVILLE: UNIVER-

SITY OF TENNESSEE PRESS, 1990), P. 245.
I am always surprised that the highway is an image of freedom in American culture, because in fact it is the most confined and restricted form of movement imaginable. The fact that car travel is an image of freedom is almost absurd. The driver sits in a tiny metal box with perhaps three inches of head and shoulder room, unable to move his or her body except incrementally, while keeping the car in a predetermined lane and driving at a predetermined speed. The fact that this act of almost fanatic discipline can be interpreted as freedom can be fascinating.


Suggested by Kevin Kelly, a reader from Sausalito, California.
HIGHLY RECOMMENDED

...when Elder William Brewster of the Plymouth

When Avital Ronell, The

Plantation was a lad in England, even such

God Telephone Book:

Elementary devices as chimneys, solid and perma-

sneezed Technology, Schizo-

nent bedsteads, glass windows, wooden floors, and

I didn't phrenia, Electric

Pewter tableware (instead of wood, leather, and

know Speech (Lincoln:

Horner) were relatively novel features of the ordi-

what University of Nebraska

nary English home. Chairs were

to not widely used. As in the Middle Ages

say.

Irritated by the layout

They were generally reserved for persons

Henny of BALLAST this

of importance, the others sat on stools or

Youngman issue, you'll be

Benches. At a time when tables often

equally annoyed by

Consisted of removable

the text as well as the

Boards set upon trestles, he who occupied the principal

layout of this wonder-

Seat had that distinction we recall in the phrase

ful (and wacky)

“CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD.”

“deconstruction of

Marshall B. Davidson, The American Heritage History

technology, state

Of Colonial Antiques (New York: American Heritage,

terrorism, and

1967). Suggested by Mary Ann Merriam Koontz, A

schizophrenia.”

Reader from Ridgewood, New Jersey.
I had a rough marriage.

Highly Recommended Kenneth Good, *Into the Heart: One Man's Pursuit of Love and Knowledge Among the Yanomama* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1991). The adventures of an American anthropologist, who ended up falling in love, immature to you: I would marrying, and settling in this country with a woman from the Stone Age Amazon rain forest tribe that he initially planned to be home in the bathroom be taking a bath, and my wife observe. would walk right in whenever she felt like and sink my boats.

*Woody Allen*
She (his mother) had one ability about which there was no doubt: she could find four-leaf clovers. If she saw a patch of clover on someone's lawn, she would bend down and almost immediately come up with a stem with four leaves. She would frequently find two or three while the rest of us finished, he said, "But Walter, searched in vain. Her satisfaction was intense, and she never overlooked an opportunity to demonstrate her skill.

There was never any noise once he had begun, and the high rich
shrillness of his voice came streaming out under the closed
eyelids in his ivory face. He seemed literally inspired; and my
memory has completed the picture with curls of pale blue smoke
-- such as tubes of tooth paste that seem to be
burst on us like bombshells, and with his mastery of the art of
all but empty but keep
preparation he worked us up into excruciating suspense for the
delivering more for days
next. When It came I was always startled, and almost always
and days.
convinced. The excitement was far too great for note-taking, so
Rudolf Arnheim
I used to put a dot under each word that he noticed; and every-
thing was put so perfectly that I scarcely ever found I had
forgotten what my dot meant.

Edward Marsh [remembering his teacher, A.W. Verrill], A Number
Someone remarked on the diminutive size of the figures in St. Jambs's Park today. I noticed a grey wagtail running about on the now temporarily dry bed of the lake, near William Orpen's pictures, the dam below the bridge, and occasionally picking small insects out of the cracks in the dam. Max said it was because he was so small. Probably the occurrence of this bird in the heart of London has been recorded before, but I have not myself noted it in the park.

Edward Marsh, A Number
To view your life as blessed does not require you to deny your pain. It simply demands a more compli-

don the relativity of distance: If in an all-
cated vision, one in which a but-empty restaurant somebody takes the table next to mine, he has come good or bad but is, rather, both very close indeed -- so close that a good and bad, not sequentially but special reason must justify his choice. If simultaneously. In my experience, the room is filled, the distance be-
tween two neighboring tables sepa-
hold in your head, the better off rates us sufficiently.

YOU ARE, INTELLECTUALLY AND Rudolf Arnheim, Parables of Sun Light: EMOTIONALLY.


SUGGESTED BY CAROL STEVENS, A reader from New York.
I noticed in New York, where the traffic is so bad and the air is so bad, everything, and the food, and the coffee, everything, and the streets are falling to pieces, the sex you get into a taxi and very frequently the poor taxi driver is just beside himself with irritation. And one day I got into one and the driver began talking a blue streak, accusing absolutely everyone of being wrong. You know he was full of irritation about everything, that as good and I simply remained quiet. I did not answer his questions, I did not enter into a conversation, and very shortly the driver began changing his ideas and simply through my being silent he began, before I got out of the car, saying rather nice things about the world around him.

Highly Recommended Sumner Stone, *On Stone: The Art and Use of Typography on the Personal Computer* (San Francisco: Bedford Arts, 1991, now distributed by Chronicle Books). Stone the man, former head of typography at Adobe Systems, defines it as "the art of writing with the aid of machines." The typeface Stone was created on a Macintosh, and this elegant volume, splendidly phrased and precisely composed, is an eyewitness account of how it came about, and how best to use it.

ANY EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM THAT FAILS TO TEACH STUDENTS HOW TO PLAY WITH AND INTEGRATE THE TOOLS OF THOUGHT EMBODIED IN THE FINE ARTS AND CRAFTS IS PRODUCING INTELLECTUALLY HANDICAPPED STUDENTS. I SAY THIS AS A CHALLENGE: A GENERAL CHALLENGE TO OUR WESTERN MODE OF EDUCATION THAT DIVIDES CULTURE INTO ARTS AND HUMANITIES ON THE ONE HAND AND SCIENCES AND TECHNOLOGY ON THE OTHER; AND A PARTICULAR CHALLENGE TO THE OBJECTIVIST-REDUCTIONISTS WHO SEEM TO THINK THAT THAT WHICH CANNOT BE WRITTEN AS AN EQUATION IS NOT KNOWLEDGE.

BALLAST is published in Iowa in a region increasingly listed among the most desirable places in which to live (alright so why not move here soon before we all go stir crazy!). All subscriptions (including gift subscriptions) must be mailed to the following address:

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Dysart, Iowa 52224-9767

BALLAST is published in a limited edition and back issues are not available. However, the magazine may be xeroxed to provide others with copies, but the copies must never be altered or sold. Our readers are encouraged to suggest offbeat examples of visual and verbal insight of the sort that the journal might publish. Original material must be explicitly labeled as such. Material which is not original must clearly make note of its author and source. All contributions are unpaid, and unsolicited material will not be returned unless accompanied by a self-addressed stamped envelope.

BALLAST doesn’t have a budget really. For six years, it has operated at a loss. Even if we demanded stamps from everyone who receives the magazine, we would still lose money on printing, without beginning to account for research, typesetting, paste-up, correspondence, avoiding skunks, outsmarting the groundhog, making avatars for Keeko and Zooey (the African gray parrots), and putting up the garden fence. The losses are currently offset by donations from enlightened subscribers and generous deductions from the Subscription Cluck’s paycheck. If anyone is foolishly philanthropic (foolish because such contributions are surely not tax deductible), we will sometimes accept a check (made payable to Roy R. Behrens), live moth cocoons, or a good pair of binoculars.

Illustrations in this issue by Jennifer Dolanger (p. 8) and Brad Huffman (cover and interior circular trademarks).