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POETRY-ING: FEMINIST DISABILITY AESTHETICS AND POETRY COMMUNITIES

PETRA KUPPERS

Within this syntax, in this order of discourse, woman, even though she is hidden,
manages to make "sense"—sensation?—manages to create content.

—Luce Irigaray¹

"sense/sensation/content, within orders of discourse": this is a challenge that contemporary artists face when they engage art practice and identity politics. Much contemporary practice recedes from the space of content in the attempt to critique the discourse itself. Bricolage and montage are some of the techniques contemporary practice inherits from modernist understandings of the need to disrupt, and lay open unconscious institutionalized ways of seeing, feeling, narrating, self-imaging, space-making, the co-constitutive, hierarchy-dependent creation of concepts like Empire or Subjectivity.

Against this trajectory of modernist critique and aesthetic dissection stand many artists who rarely had access to public and culturally valued forms of expression, and for whom the playground of radical technique seemed less inviting, having just fought their way to a place at the table of the mainstream art banquet. So, for instance, the Judson Church dance movement of the 1960s played with pedestrian movements in a largely white environment, un-doing modernist dance practices, while some contemporaneous black dancers worked in these modern idioms, having finally access to larger stages, bigger audiences, the institutions, and survival. The point of this mini-story here is not sequentiality and teleological development, but the invisibilities of privilege and desires within progressive communities, aesthetic projects' lack of traction when the ground, the economic or expressive base, is not taken into account.

In this essay, my focus is with a particular "identity politics" group, people who see themselves in relation to or in alignment with disability. The particular artists I am concerned with here also embrace a re-evaluation of embodied location, and mobilize conceptions of subjectivity that can be critical of wholeness, of closure, of the storytelling conglomeration of affect, history, and story into totality. My analysis proceeds not through textual analysis, but through a cultural studies approach to poetry communities, and to poetry-ing: acts that make up poetic art/life, the communal behaviors and activities that make community out of the often lonely activities of being in close engagement with words and patterns.

The essay takes up Irigaray's query, and modulates it through the story of an arts-based research project on feminism, embodiment, disability, poetry, and performance (FEDPP in the running of this text), focusing on a core workgroup of poets in the Bay Area: Amber DiPietra, Denise Leto, Eleni Stecopoulos, and myself, with additional interviews and meetings across the United States. The FEDPP project centered on two research questions aimed at experimental practices at the site of poetry and embodiment: How to create art in the presence of pain and alienation, without causing it? How to provide artful comfort without closure?

In processing these questions, I worked with self-identified feminist disabled (or who see themselves in a complex relation to disability) poets who employ what they identify as experimental aesthetics, as opposed to other activist-grounded storytelling or witnessing work. They all locate their experimentalism at least in part in their histories of embodiment and enmindment: words I use here to point to the processual character of bodies and minds, to the spatiotemporal dynamics of subject-formation and the sedimentation of bodily techniques within socio-cultural frameworks. All these poets offer thoughts on how somatic specificity modulates their aesthetics in rich and productive ways.² We employed two core methods in the FEDPP research project. On the one hand, we used qualitative inquiries familiar from cultural studies approaches, such as participant-observer techniques. The results of this part of the project constitute the material in this essay. In addition, the FEDPP project also used arts-based approaches, and most of the poets involved created new work influenced by our joint inquiry.³ Both method strands differ from close-reading practices or the assembly of historicizing narratives, dominant modes of research into contemporary poetic cultural labor, allowing formations of feminist/disability/interdependent work practices to emerge through a different perspective.

The cultural studies research, gathered through intense discussion with many poets, including the core group, focuses on a participant-observer's sensing of the cultural escalators (to use Stuart Hall's term)⁴ that shape the highly fragmented, clique-based community formations around poetry's evaluative criteria and gatekeeping. Who is in what camp, and how to demarcate camps, name them, value them, denounce them: these are some of the core concerns of cultural studies' perspectives.

I will use two critics' work as examples of the denigratory discourses that came up in the FEDPP discussions. Poetics discussions can be doctrinal in their policing of how far "the personal" might intrude into poetry. Critic Patrick Durgin comments on the emergent field of disability poetry, calling a wide variety of publications in the field involved in "a neo-romantic poetics of commiseration, tempered by a preponderance of confessionalist and essentialist attention to authorial 'voice[.]'"⁵ These terms seem used within a rhetoric of dismissal here, and the lineage of this dismissal is easy to trace: "confessionalist," "essentialist" and even "voice" (as well as commiseration/care/tending) are all terms often associated with femininity, women's work, with the minor of literature, those marked by (gendered, raced, classed, or other) specificity, those that are non-neutral.⁶ These histories of critical

terms already push me to try to embrace a more catholic perspective on what might be worthwhile in the discussion of disability poetry, with its grounding in discrimination, cultural dismissal, eco-disaster, or economic oppression's creation of impairments.

Another critical pressure emerges from disability studies, and from the relations between theoretical perspectives and the experience of pain. Disability studies as a field offers surprisingly little engagement with the kind of theoretical perspectives that have nourished many contemporary poetic projects. An influential book in the field can be named *Disability Theory* without any mention or discussion of writers who might be found in other texts discussing identity and critical theory, such as Deleuze, Merleau-Ponty, Cixous, Lorde, or Derrida. The author of this text, Tobin Siebers, discusses Donna Haraway centrally in his critique of "current body theory."⁷ He refers to his own sense of truth in order to disengage from her:

I know the truth about the myth of the cyborg, . . . because I am a cyborg myself . . . Pain is not a friend to humanity. It is not a secret resource for political change. . . . Theories that encourage these interpretations are not only unrealistic about pain; they contribute to the ideology of ability, marginalizing people with disabilities and making their stories of suffering and victimization both politically impotent and difficult to believe.⁸

Given my own experience, and the work in FEDPP, I would argue against this perspective that pain can indeed be a motor to aesthetic political labor, embodied and felt, shared and negotiated. In multiple ways, pain disrupts the clear boundaries of self and language, truth and embodiment, as the history of poetic practices by people in pain shows.⁹ But even though I do not agree with Siebers's perspective, I am also aware that his exasperation is shared by many disabled people fed up with the metaphorization of their embodied reality.

Taste-formations of criticism are very much alive in our project. For instance, the "confessional" often appeared as an in-joke in conversations, a touchstone of "the other" to experimental practice. The ability to make jokes about it shows how degraded "confessional" has become in everyday (or at least poetry discussions' everyday) parlance. But when we look under the hood of the term, or the history of its employment, we can find resonance—and in many conversations with different feminist-identified disabled poets around the United States, we discussed the draw toward sharing life stories in the face of cultural invisibility and silencing. When in the company of poets who source from their own life experiences, I find people who talk about the acts of shaping words as dynamic crucibles of structure and pressure, moments of freedom, gained through the distance that a new angle, a new perspective, a new ordering (on the page, in one's mouth, in communal performance) can afford. There seems to me to be much potential in looking at and working with grassroots poets who *do* wish to share their biography with others, to find recognition for their experience, to be heard in a world that often dismisses their voices/bodies/minds. Isn't the act of poetry writing itself an act of social analysis, a preparation for understanding, and the rehearsal for creative change?

I wish to position my own research project against critical investments in division, lineage, and judgment. I investigate and analyze the activities involved in disabled people's aesthetic labor, even as the question of "who identifies/is identified" as disabled offers unstable ground. With many disabled people (whether cognitively, emotionally, physically, or otherwise disabled) still with limited access to educational resources (and specific kinds of white/Western taste development), a cultural studies-framed investigation can be aware of registers and modes of communication, of taste cultures and the location of "poetry" within mainstream discourses. To deride, for instance, Mary Oliver or Rumi (often easy and broad targets of cultural taste arbiters, and yet publically beloved and widely visible) might well result in the alienation of people who do turn to poetry to see their own life world reflected, to find inspiration and models to live by, to contemplate and meditate.

Part of FEDPP involved noting and evaluating the responses to poetic experiments that do not decline away from specific forms and processes of embodiment and enmindment, do not disarticulate themselves from an embodied location, but also do not own an easily articulable sense of identity. So some of the meetings were set up around discussions of either the interviewed poet's own work, or certain historical projects that felt appropriate. In some of these one-on-one workshops, we read material like Monique Wittig's *The Lesbian Body* or work by Gertrude Stein, but also poems from Qwo-Li Driskill, a CherokeeTwo-Spirit poet. We discussed essays from collections like Laura Hinton and Cynthia Hogue's *We Who Love to Be Astonished: Experimental Women's Writing and Performance Politics*, from Christine Wertheim's *Feminaissance*, or from Shelley Tremain's *Pushing Limits: Disabled Dykes Produce Culture: all different kinds of critical seeds*.¹⁰

During the project's duration, I met with many poets who saw themselves in some relation to "disability culture" or "a disability aesthetics," and I discussed with them their sense of identification, nearness or farness from any "community" created by these terms. Some of these meetings occurred after disability-themed panels at the Association of Writers & Writing Programs (AWP) conferences in Chicago and Denver, some were private meetings in restaurants and cafes in Berkeley and Ann Arbor, and some took a shape similar to focus groups, with a small group of poets coming together to discuss these issues. In all these meetings, I placed myself as a fellow wayfarer, as a disabled performance artist/poet who has to articulate her project within these parameters, within the differently nourishing and repressive histories of feminism, performance, and contemporary poetry. Most poets involved in the project offered as a crux of their sense of oppositionality to other movements within contemporary poetry their insistence on location, personal experience, and the direct experience of discrimination. Many reported how the intertwining of language creation and bodily specificity had been called "confessional" by others, labeled as impure, immature, or negative. We noted the misogynistic, classist, racist, and ableist assumptions that seemed to feed these dismissals. This finding, initially mainly communicated in the one-on-one interviews, became increasingly more complex and nuanced as the project proceeded, as groups met, and we all worked together to enlarge our understanding of our-

selves and others involved in the niche worlds of contemporary poetry. Relatively stable markers and self-descriptions of “one’s brand” or location within “the scene” articulated themselves into feathered moving things, trajectories, in movement. I enjoy, and I feel many of my project participants enjoy, the pleasures of self-narration, the rituals and stories of group identification, articulating one’s own difference, the painful exclusions and insults that demarcate cultural circles, and the stories of acceptance, finding one’s tribe, creating momentary community, and then yet again rehearsing these tropes of longing, denial, and redemption. These narratives and their ever-more-minute analysis provide much pleasure to participants in many sub-cultural movements, and, in the absence of much external kudos, make up a significant part of my and others’ social rituals.

Thinking thought to be a body wearing language as clothing or language a body of thought which is a soul or body the clothing of a soul, she is veiled in silence. A veiled, unavailable body makes an available space.

—Harryette Mullen¹¹

These are the ending lines of Harryette Mullen’s book *Trimmings*, and I find her language of agency-ful bodies, souls, and clothing not only involved in a citational feminist space-making echoing Gertrude Stein, but also resonant for my interest in articulating potentials for the relations between embodiment and poetic language, spaces for selves, and available openings to duck and evade the hail of authority. Furthermore, I find Mullen’s troping of the layering of tissues and sound generative in approaching some of the public self-definitions of the poets who became central to the research question.

A number of poets, probably most *simpatico* in our aesthetics, became the core workgroup of FEDPP. One of these core group members is Eleni Stecopoulos, a poet who lives in the Bay Area, and who sees herself aligned with disability discourses. She is organizer of the Poetics of Healing program at the Poetry Center, San Francisco State University. She writes about the series:

Poetics: theories of creation. The art of how things are composed. Healing, too, an art of composition, the art of making whole—which may yet lie in asymmetry, fragmentation, chronicity, disability. The Poetics of Healing began with a desire to re-examine the therapeutic dimensions of poetry and other art, and to explore the uses of poetic language, sound, and imagery in a wide range of medical and somatic practices, across different cultural traditions. Through the diversity of our participants—who include poets, physicians, ethnographers, historians, psychotherapists, diviners, disability activists, visual and performance artists—the series has evolved to ask questions about how healing is imagined, created, and performed on multiple levels, from the subtle body to the body politic. Our intention is to foster a public forum where different perspectives and practices can be put into conversation, to make possible an interdisciplinary exploration of method, scientific and creative, somatic and scholarly, in ways that might be unexpected and mutually generative.¹²

Stecopoulos's work on the Poetics of Healing series shows a deep interest in interdisciplinarity, a world-making of multiple methods, engagement with, as she says, various levels of the body politic, not divided from one another, but in interdependent relationships. Bodies clothing themselves in multiple languages, skins of souls and deep tissue articulated in multiple practices. This focus also extends to her poetry work: Stecopoulos is involved in a poetic project that aims to articulate the condition of healing and illness in language. The title of her first poetry collection, "Armies of Compassion," is based on language of the George W. Bush administration, and undercuts affects of healing with the dramatically different affects of poisoned and poisonous language.¹³ At the same time, her form of embodiment is on the line. Stecopoulos has at various points in her life been affected by environmental toxicity. In her poetic production, she articulates spaces of agency within geopolitical/environmental influence fields, calling upon the magic potential of linguistic diagnostics. The metaphor of "armies" also speaks of allergens and responsive bodies, immune attacks and microscopic agents, healing as warfare, warfare as healing, within and without the bounds of bodies. Theaters of war, war in hospital theaters, scenes of language and regime change: multiple rhetorical echoes work their way through her poetic labor.

Another core participant in the workgroup, and my most frequent reading partner, is Denise Leto, a Bay Area-based lesbian disabled poet who writes about her core inquiry like this, linking herself to a tradition of writing that sees itself in close alignment with embodiment:

I am interested in speech as movement. The articulation of words as a wave that is formed through air when a sound is made. Text on the page that reads corporeal, breathing, with punctuation as marks in time, and the written as a way of seeing/touching sound. I am currently exploring "waveforms" as visual de-coders of speech and the idea of the body as a cipher of the environment to render a multi-layered poetics of elegy and engagement: the effects of language-making, speech formation, prosody, and movement within a framework of disruption and variation.

As a poet with a neurological voice/body "disorder" my utterances are sometimes perceptually indistinct units of sound-artifice, breaking. Pieces of a word revise as they are being spoken (fluent and dysfluent communication). The chasm between the given voice and the constructed voice is a field of query: polyvocality, syntactic fracture, chance constraint, and a re-communion with self and other. On the page, the poetic line becomes a sensory encounter with orality.¹⁴

Personal embodiment and cultural dynamics of smooth delivery, the oratory of unexpected linguistic performance, find intriguing meeting points in the rhythms and waves of Leto's poetry. Intrigue, and starting points for experimentation: this seems to me emerging from Leto's self-description, not a confessional, self-witnessing "voice" that seeks commiseration, but instead "voice" as wave, as contact, as material. Leto's aesthetics point to a space- and time-making in a world where the halted voice can easily become the silenced voice.

A third member of many of the workgroup meetings is Amber DiPietra, a San Francisco-based Latina disabled poet, and a writer who utilizes new media formats in her labor (and who also blogs for Kelsey Street Publications, a press with a long-standing focus on feminist poetics). She writes about herself on her blog, highlighting the materiality of poetic labor deeply intertwined with her particular form of embodiment as a physically and visually impaired woman who has been undergoing multiple eye operations:

This is my blog, full of errata and gaps. Typos should read as the blips and darts and granularity you get when listening to records. My eyes operate on phonograph time. Copy editing only scratches the surface, causes lines that grid an already tenuous visual field to wobble and converge more often.¹⁵

DiPietra's writing statement foregrounds connections between touch, vision, and sound, a nexus of transdisciplinarity and remediation. Reading her lines leads me to re-imagine an older image that had astonished me, and now comes alive with new green bone tensility in DiPietra's analysis of blog writing. Rainer Maria Rilke articulated connections between physicality and the production of poetic sound in the suture lines of a human skull as substrate for sound production: "The coronal structure of the skull (this would first have to be investigated) has—let us assume—a certain similarity to the close wavy line which the needle of a phonograph engraves on the receiving, rotating cylinder of the apparatus."¹⁶ In his essay "Primal Sound," Rilke is fascinated by what sound might emerge when the skull lines were put under pressure by the machines of recognition. DiPietra's poetics statement holds for me a different vital charge, and a charge of vitalism, a reflection on twentieth-century obsessions with reproducibility, energetics, and disembodiment: here is life (the malleability of corneal membranes) rather than death (dry bone). The pain of scratched eyes emerges as site of phoneme production, as productive typos, as a production machine that creates and sounds itself into the world even in the presence of pain. The blog, hypertext, the Internet re-body around the typo, the trace that the means of cyber-production speed often leave behind: a medium's formal pressure, emerging not as a lack (of accuracy), but as a thick marker of embodied writing. The specificity of her changing and scratchy eyes pressure linguistic production into an apparatus, into an assemblage of human/machine (blog/photograph/text/tissue/braille/map).

And lastly, there is myself, a disability culture activist, a community performance artist, a researcher and pedagogue, a woman living with pain and fatigue, a wheelchair user and floor dancer. It is always intriguing to find oneself written about by others, and Amber writes about me in this way:

Petra is a professor of women's studies, a performance artist, a poet, and a culture worker in the disability community. *Olimpias* is a collective of sorts, loosely organized by Petra—in which dance, art and storytelling unfurl during get-togethers which also double as potlucks and "formal" performances. Petra's personal style is that of the myth-maker, the ritualist. To enter one of her workshops is to be drawn into a realm of red cloths and lavender scents or just simple meditation exercises, while following her on an imaginative journey.¹⁷

In her write-up of my creative practices, DiPietra stresses the informal, the simple, from breaking bread to (with lavender and meditation) common sites of therapeutic labor. To me, this description echoes well with my self-articulation earlier in this essay, where I site myself in an edge space between (some definitions of) high- and low-brow, between a poetics of personal growth and meditation and one of radical alterity and critical play. I indeed use cloth, scents, sounds, and movement to vitalize and vibrate the space between people. After denying “therapy” as part of my creative desires for many years, I have begun to embrace the therapeutic more and more, as I witness many people in pain and in discomfort, and, beyond individual bodyminds, a social world in need of therapeutic intervention. I’ve also come to embrace the multiple meanings of “ritualist” as one of the definitions of performance art, of social remedy-ation, transformation, and cultural healing. Providing comfort, and, even, spaces for “voice” and “commiseration” for people often unheard are indeed part of my practices.

Over the life of the FEDPP research project, the four of us worked together a few times, rarely all of us together, but in various constellations, talking, hanging out, speaking about poetics or poetry business, poetry community or future plans, creating work together, or exploring what happens when private productions (pages of text) launch out into studios, become sonorous connections between embodied and enminded beings. When in the studio, we work in the frame of embodied poetics: we engage in a widening of the poem, encompassing not just text-based practices, but also visual arts and somatic work. Blowing up the page, not in an explosion, but in a material density, a cloud pillow, a texturing of languages, densely entwined with our bodies, our geopolitical locations, our temporalities.

“A veiled, unavailable body makes an available space.” Mullen’s veil speaks to the vibrational tension between the unavailable body agency-full shaping and claiming available, public space. I read in her project moves of shrouding and revealing, not toward authenticity or essential self-identity, but toward kernels of specific experience unsharable in their specificity, and yet markable in their existence, though the projects of poetic language and lived embodiment. Prosody, sound patterns, semes, and signifiers dance.

When Irigaray writes “woman, even though she is hidden, manages to make ‘sense’ — sensation? — manages to create content,” I feel the same draw toward the somatic sensations of meaning making, the roil of material, soundings, utterance, with the elements of linguistic productivity: an active managing, choices within stricture. Mullen’s veils, and Irigaray’s hidden sense/content provide tropes that can keep projects like FEDPP in motion. Here, poetry-ing becomes a shivering between solidification and fluidity. On the one hand, the poets involved in the project feel some degree of responsibility toward engaging a social contract/contact with its demands of political and sub-cultural solidarity—such as affirmations of disabled lives, and women’s cultural production. On the other hand, the poets edge into the experimental space in order to limn the effects of embodied and enminded multiplicity in time and space.

My core finding in the workgroup so far focuses on poetry-ing, community building, resilience, and grace. Poetry-ing: being in artful process in communal labor, a different perspective than one that is focused on the production of individual poems, poetics, or poetry books. For me, poetry-ing speaks to experiments on the level of sociality, on finding accessible forms of being open to one another.

In the various experiments we conducted, time and space became core sites of engagement: where we would meet, in person, often was a core query, as most of us are not able to navigate space easily, as work schedules and fatigue levels prohibited regular meetings. There were celebratory moments when some of us did manage to get together, and acknowledged to ourselves how precious that time together is. Various kinds of friendship and collaboration blossomed between the four of us, and the contact proved productive on multiple levels, including levels that fed back into the machines of poetry business, i.e., publications, readings, blog entries, and publicity. There are also tensions, and at this moment, I would be hard pressed to articulate how exactly these three women see themselves in relation to issues of "disability culture," its lyrical production, and questions of identification. But that seems to me to be yet another sub-cultural strength: all of us are able to code switch, to move in different worlds, to riff on different political and aesthetic framings, a competence we share with many academic and non-academic producers of disability poetry.

Complexity and process characterize not only the individual productions of the poets at the heart of FEDPP, but also their projects. In Stecopoulos's *Poetics of Healing* series, she curated and brought together many different perspectives on healing, and these did include validations of wholeness and curing (complicated trigger points for many disability activists) as well as perspectives on disability's exciting aesthetic potential. Likewise, DiPietra's ongoing *Write to Connect* writing group project brings together many writers with different political projects, and different orientations to "voice," storytelling, self-witnessing, and experimentalism. The labor of poetry-ing here offers engagement beyond the page and across the page: in contact, interdisciplinary listening practices, interdependent life projects, time and space for the unfolding of voices away from the rhetorics and rhythms of normality, with bodies that offer complex metaphors and intersected experiences, that pressure the tongues of linguistic practice in multiple ways.

What links the FEDPP inquiry most directly to a heritage of feminist experimental practice are all our emphases on the complexities of the "I," a questioning of language as construct, as material, as vibration and resonance. Partialities, vulnerabilities, and hesitations revalue themselves as agentive sites of productive, positive life and points of connection: "writing to connect."

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NOTES

¹ Luce Irigaray, *This Sex Which is Not One* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1985), 132.

² I was not able to share this essay with all the poets associated with the project: while the named poets all read this, and approved my formulations, others did not, in particular my friend Laura Hershey, whom I interviewed as part of the project. Laura and I e-mailed quite a bit, and she was well aware of the trajectory of my analysis. She died unexpectedly in 2010, and I miss her presence and voice in here.

³ In this essay, I am sharing the cultural studies part of the project, not the arts-based write-up. I wrote an experimental essay as part of my meditation on what I learned during the project, and it has been published as "The Poeti(x) of Disability Activism." It forms the epilogue of my book, *Disability Culture and Community Performance: Find a Strange and Twisted Shape* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2011), and also served as the basis for deformation by an editorial collective, for the inaugural issue of the *Epistemologies Humanities Journal* 1, no. 1 (2011), <http://www.epistemologies.org>.

⁴ Stuart Hall, "Notes on Deconstructing 'The Popular.'" In Raphael Samuel, ed., *People's History and Socialist Theory* (London: Kegan Paul, 1981).

⁵ Patrick Durgin, "Post-language Poetries and Post-ableist Poetics." *Journal of Modern Literature* 32, no. 2 (2009): 159–84.

⁶ Even though I critique his critique here, I value Patrick Durgin's fierce engagement with disability poetics. While approaching it from a different perspective than I, he is not only critically engaged, but also nourishes the field in other ways. For instance, he is the publisher of the chapbook *Waveforms*, by two FEDPP participants, Denise Leto and Amber DiPietra, forthcoming with Kenning Editions. Our poetry worlds are, in the end, quite small, and we need to honor all our members, even or particularly when we disagree.

⁷ Tobin Siebers, *Disability Theory* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2008), 62.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 64.

⁹ See, for instance, the work collected in Jennifer Bartlett, Sheila Black, and Michael Northen, eds., *Beauty is a Verb: The New Poetry of Disability* (El Paso, TX: Cinco Puntos Press, 2011), which presents work by most of the women who participated in FEDPP, including Denise Leto, Amber DiPietra, Laura Hershey, and me.

¹⁰ Monique Wittig, *The Lesbian Body* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1975); Qwo-Li Driskill, *Walking with Ghosts* (Cambridge, UK: Salt, 2005); Christine Wertheim, ed., *Feminaissance* (Los Angeles: Les Figues, 2010); Laura Hinton and Cynthia Hogue, eds., *We Who Love To Be Astonished: Experimental Women's Writing and Performance Poetics* (Tuscaloosa and London: University of Alabama Press, 2002); Shelley Tremain, ed., *Pushing the Limits: Disabled Dykes Produce Culture* (Toronto: Women's Press, 1996).

¹¹ Harryette Mullen, *Recyclopedia: Trimmings, S*PeRM**K*T, and Muse & Drudge* (Saint Paul: Graywolf, 2006), 62.

¹² Stecopoulos, Poetry Center publicity, *Poetics of Healing* (blog), 2010, http://poeticsofhealing.blogspot.com/2010_02_01_archive.html.

¹³ Eleni Stecopoulos, *Armies of Compassion* (Berkeley: Palm Press, 2010).

¹⁴ Denise Leto, unpublished fellowship statement, Movement, Somatics and Writing symposium, University of Michigan, 2011. Quoted with permission of the author.

¹⁵ Amber DiPietra, *Falling in Real Time* (blog), 2011, <http://adipietra.blogspot.com/>.

¹⁶ Rainer Maria Rilke, "Primal Sound," in Friedrich Kittler, ed., *Grammophone, Film, Typewriter* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1999), 40–41.

¹⁷ Amber DiPietra, "October 23rd," *Falling in Real Time* (blog), 2010, <http://adipietra.blogspot.com/>.