

Chris Tănăsescu

University of Bucharest

FE/MALE (RE)FASHIONINGS OF THE SELF IN US AND UK CONTEMPORARY POETRY

Keywords: contemporary poetry British American female male fashion language

Abstract: *The paper tries to unveil how contemporary poetry has always wondered and wandered about the question of the self, its avatars, speculating about its configurations and refashionings and trying to convince itself and its readers about the verse's capacity to define a/the self in the world by performing its language-enacting fundamental gestures or by proving and even making manifest its inexistence and/or dissolution into the same language. In US and UK literatures nowadays, this quest for or exasperation about the self comes with the whole postmodern pageant of concerns related to gender, power and authority, social and political realities, and the all-engulfing popular culture. A thorough analysis of Harryette Mullen's collection *Recyclopedia* details such concerns in contemporary poetry and tries to prove how this refashioning of the self and cultural identity themes are rooted in both literary tradition and popular culture by the paradigm of clothing and fashion. Recent critical approaches, like the ones of Susan M. Schultz, have proved that such a paradigm is relevant for certain important male poets as well, the best example being Charles Bernstein. Moreover, such approaches discover salient feminine characteristics and feminine-culture-paraphernalia and vocabularies as ways to escape various poetical impasses in other important male poets, like John Ashbery and Ronald Johnson. A review of radical avant-garde women's poetry (especially the one anthologized in Maggie O'Sullivan's *Out of Everywhere*) reveals that a somewhat symmetrical phenomenon is going on in the works of such female poets who choose to ally with radical anti- or non-mainstream male poets and thus produce poetries that are less hospitable and easy to read but extremely relevant in terms of subversive text-building strategies and in language exploration and innovation.*

Contemporary poetry has always wondered and wandered about the question of the self, its avatars, speculating about its configurations and refashionings and trying to convince itself and its readers about the verse's capacity to define a/the self in the world by performing its language-enacting fundamental gestures or by proving and even making manifest its inexistence and/or dissolution into the same language. In US and UK literatures nowadays, this quest for or exasperation about the self comes with the whole postmodern pageant of concerns related to gender, power and authority, social and political realities, and the all-engulfing popular culture.

In her introduction to her own 2006 collection, *Recyclopedia: Trimmings, S*PeRM**K*T, and Muse & Drudge*, Harryette Mullen speaks of a poetics in which innovation and the pride of breaking new ground – ideals that certain readers of high modernist poetries but also of major postmodern poetries would expect to be fulfilled – are given no credit and, moreover, are toppled into the apparently meager status of mere recycling elements of the surrounding culture. Whereas an encyclopedia, as an epitome of aristocratic cultural endeavors, *collects* general knowledge, the recyclopedia “*salvages and finds* imaginative uses for knowledge” (emph. mine, Mullen vii), in a way that speaks of the apparently self-effacing and ancillary role certain contemporary verse would (double-dealingly) be happy to play.

The apparent modesty is one which actually undermines not poetry as such but some specific cultural assumptions that would (and in the views of poets like Mullen, so often did) bestow a bloating hieratic prestige not so much on certain species of verse but mainly on hypothetical ways of circumscribing and imposing authority through poetry (too). The classical Poundian urge “Make it new!” (cf. Pound 35 et infra) is now being rephrased as a re-making in which novelty refrains itself to mere refreshing and rearranging a leftist very-much-LANGUAGE-like “surplus” (whose avant-garde ring, as Dr. Ioana Zirra in the Irish Department of our University once inspirationally suggested to me, could also put one in mind of *sur-realism* as well): “That’s what poetry does when it remakes and renews words, images, and ideas, transforming surplus cultural information into something unexpected” (Mullen, vii). The ever-new backing-up for such options is of course Walt Whitman and his appeal to (as well as his absorbing of) multitudes, which become here “communities” of readers, writers, and also scholars, communities that more often than not constitute themselves around the specialized dialogue of the poet with editors and publishers. It is the paradox and the ambivalence that such poetries experience, as they set out to dismantle traditional approaches by simply “rephrasing” the culture and incorporating its popular elements, while at the same time they inevitably confine themselves in specialized professional and even academic exchanges.

The *Recyclopedia* itself is a recycled book, as it is made of three previously published books that came out throughout the 90s and are now being presented together as a consistent sequence. The model of such a trilogy is, as the author accepts, Gertrude Stein’s *Tender Buttons* with its three sections, “Objects” and “Foods” on the one hand paralleled here by “Trimnings” and “S*PeRM**K*T”, and “Rooms” on the other, which instead of being also accompanied by an understandable replica in Mullen is given a “wild” Black culture counterpart in which women choruses of spirituals and blues music accommodate an American idiomaticized Sappho. Stein’s experiments focused on language and its automatism and pun-potentials as ways to signal the fluid boundaries of a problematic self are now grafted in Mullen with layers of language that try to outline interactions in the public sphere with its mass media and its political, its advertising and marketing discourses, in a context of the “clash [between] fine art aesthetics with mass consumption and globalization, and the interaction of literacy and identity” (ibidem, x), amidst which the mission of the poet is “[to] *reconfigure language*” (emph. mine, idem).

In one of the first poems in prose in the “Trimnings” section, the poet announces a vision in which identity can be circumscribed by fashion-related terms whereby a racial / cultural / symbolic femininity is periodically assailed – the cycles alluded to in the figure of the “green thief” below which could be assimilated to the traditional green Knight, as well as the inexperienced (“green”) street-gang hoodlum or the clumsy reader trying to violate and plunder the intimacy of the text:

Lips, clasped together. Old leather fastened with a little snap. Strapped, broke. Quick snatch, in a clutch, chased the lady with the alligator purse. Green thief, off relief, got into her pocketbook by hook or crook (Ibidem, 4).

Femininity itself has its own taxonomy related to race, labor, and mainly attire, in all of the latter’s acceptances. The white woman wears, that is, puts on, airs, while the black one is perceived as mere shadow of the “mistress.” Black culture is favored here as bringing about the flourishes of vital energy (the flowers the black character bears and probably sells, her pink dress as opposed the white’s pink “disgraceful” appearance, etc) and “naked truth” (which still, “lies”, but) which also makes a mark, for “she is ink”. As everywhere in the book, Mullen’s language is closely stitched, with strong stresses clustered into close-range rhyming effects and with surprising euphonies that cross the rattling puns, the tough tone of ambiguous syntax, and the fractured yet symmetrical imagery.

A light white disgraceful sugar looks pink, wears an air, pale compared to shadow standing by. To plump recliner, naked truth lies. Behind her shadow wears her color, arms full of flowers. A rosy charm is pink. And she is ink. The mistress wears no petticoat or leaves. The other in shadow, a large, pink dress (p. 11).

Femininity sometimes crosses the boundaries of race – just like in the poet’s cultural and literary relationship to Gertrude Stein – and finds echoes of its own identity/ies in poetical traditions that have before and elsewhere explored the labyrinths of self-discovery and the perils of cultural death as/and rediscovery. In another prose poem that alludes to Sylvia Plath’s *Ariel*, the poet brings along what is in her vision neuralgic in redefining or in the loss of one’s identity, a pageant of concerns and registers of language absent in the classical Feminist poet. “Body stalking software inventories summer stock. Thin-skinned Godiva with a wig on horseback, body cast in a sit calm.” (12). A wave of delicacy and softness crosses these lines (as well as the whole poem), with the “stalking software” readable as “stockings soft-wear”, with the aristocratically erotic “thin-skinned” Lady Godiva of the legendary Anglo-Saxon (hence uncommon, “high”) and Tennysonian tradition (as again Dr. Zirra once prompted), a character also present in Plath’s poem, and with the finally “sitting calm” of the concluding line that encapsulates the incident in the Plathian poem where the speaker’s finally mastering the horse she was riding coincides with an awakening of the “eye” / “I” of her genuine self.

But what has been added there is blatantly present, blurring the Plathian mythological narrative and smearing it with modern commerce and media culture vocabulary. Plath’s speaker’s self-quest is now translated into an “inventory” of the various layers of culture and poetics (the tripe “stock”) that such an ethos involves, and then processes them with the “software” of contemporary verse. The “I / eye” of the classic becomes the TV watching eye of the nowadays persona that sees in the mythologically poetical resuscitation of the self just another mass-media release, “a sit calm” which obviously also reads just as “a sitcom.” But femininity and finance can work their way even deeper into established literary traditions, beyond Feminism and postmodernism, and even beyond female authorship. Mullen rummages up the same obsessive theme of feminine evanescent identity/ies from deep down inside the history of modern American verse:

Mistress in undress, filmy peignoir. Feme sole in camisole. Big part, petite cliché. Dégagé ladies lingering, careless of appurtenances. Longing pajamas, custom worn to disrobe. Froufrou negligee, rustling silk, or cattle. Negligent in ladies’ lingerie, a dressy dressing down (p. 21).

The language of this masterly poem in prose put me in mind instantly of two things that actually both led me to the same author. The first one was the opening line of a famous poem – “Complacencies of *the peignoir*, and late...” – and the second a strange opinion that seemed after all so at home in this Mullen’s fragment, namely that “French and English constitute a single language.” Both of them belong, of course, to Wallace Stevens (Stevens 1982, p. 66 for the line, and Stevens 1986, p. 914 for the prose fragment), and it is the great modernist poet that Mullen’s poem alludes to most prominently. The female character in “Sunday Morning” is, as it is perceivable in the text but also in Stevens’s correspondence to his then future wife Elsie – he writes “so that, you see, my habits are positively lady-like” (quoted in DuBois and Lentricchia, 64) – as the feminine identity of the poet himself. It is the mixture of gender and economic related concerns in Stevens – he identifies with the character in “Sunday Morning” because he identifies his early poetry writing and indulging in literature reading as a typically feminine, that is, non-lucrative and socially inactive behavior – that Mullen exploits in her own work in a way that serves her as an excellent opportunity to scathingly portray still deeply rooted male-centered preconceptions in the Western culture and at the same time find in Wallace’s hesitations and his “sexual other within” (idem) a traditional counterpart to her own language-culture-femininity explorations. Thus, the one “negligent in ladies’ lingerie, a dressy dressing down” in the conclusion of the poem quoted above, could be both Stevens and Mullen (the latter for instance writes later on in the collection under discussion “Clothes opening, revealing dress, as French comes into English. Suggestively, a cleavage in language.” p. 150, echoing again Stevens’s adage), awkward as bared of their own specific cultures and at the same time meeting each other in their attempts to contain social and private identities under the clothing of poetic language.

The “clothes – feminine cultural identity” equation in Mullen’s *Trimnings* and her preoccupation with producing proofs of its occurrence in important male poets too is something an important

contemporary critic has diligently pursued in one of her recent books. Susan M. Schultz, of the University of Hawaii, published a significant work in 2005 – *A Poetics of Impasse in Modern and Contemporary Poetry* – in which she eruditely and perceptively discerns various hypostases of personal and/or cultural blockage that have turned out paradoxically relevant and fruitful in American verse. Yet, while making also a case for local cultures and poetries such as the Hawaiian ones, the only significant shortcoming of the book is to not even mention Stefan Baciu, an internationally acclaimed poet, critic, and professor who taught at the same University of Hawaii for 29 years, until his death in 1993.

The most relevant chapter in *A Poetics of Impasse...* for our analysis is the one dedicated to Charles Bernstein – whose concept, actually, of the “reader’s block” is the seminal influence that helped Schultz define a somewhat symmetrical “symptom”, the poet’s block or impasse. The blockage of the culture, induced by a stiff poetic tradition that resorts to power-related clichés can and should be countered according to Bernstein by taking its fakeness to extremity. Schultz analyzes how the concept of “fashioning” in Bernstein – with connotations ranging from designing clothes to putting together texts – is a means of turning ready-made already assembled language that stands for self or authenticity up against its own traditional falsity. The epitome term for such a poetic is *dysraphism*, in itself a term related to tailoring, to fashion, and clothing, as, although borrowed from biology, it etymologically means *missembling* and seamlessness. The shard-like fragments of culture are fashioned, refashioned and reassembled in manners that denounce the former illusory conventions of coherence and univocalness that have counterfeitedly endorsed the existence of self and organic subjectivity. Style is content in such an approach, and this view takes Bernstein in particular and the LANGUAGE poets in general to favoring sensibilities and to practicing languages and styles typical of the “feminine” cultures, which are so profusely present in Harryette Mullen’s poetry too – popular culture, kitsch culture, advertising, etc.

Parallels can be extended to classics as well, the first coming to mind being of course Thomas Carlyle’s *Sartor Resartus* where a somewhat similar irreverence towards the theological and the idealistic is intriguingly fused also with, as the title itself suggests, some fallaciously elevated reflections on clothes, their origin, and influence. Besides, the imaginary village in Carlyle’s classic – Dumbdrudge – has a relevant ring to it, and a consistent meaning, in terms of Mullen’s third section of *Recyclopedia*, “Muse & Drudge.”

This is a point where female poets and/or critics like Mullen and Schultz reach a certain commonality with male poets/critics like in the abovementioned case of Charles Bernstein or also gay poets that share a similar interest in attire, urbanity, and gender. Linda Gregerson, an awarded poet, critic, and active professor of poetry at the University of Michigan embarked in a very significant article from 2007 on outlining a concept of “gay sublime” in contemporary verse. Here a parallel to classics like Carlyle’s becomes several points of intersection between female and gay poetries. Gregerson supplies a number of milestone poems in contemporary American literature by Merrill, Howard, and last but not least Mark Doty (whose speaker wants to “wear the city”) that lyrically define the gay sublime as a crossroads of an “aesthetics of drag, [a] metaphysics of drag” which “demand the embrace of paradox, the preemptive ironizing of mortal decay: we *tear* our pleasures with rough strife” (emph. mine, Gregerson 181). The art of such poets and the truth where their sublime dwells is “not merely <<art>>, the art of cathedrals and pyramids and vacant lots, but [very much like in Mullen] the art of *wearable surface, of fashion, and of fashion queerred.*” (emphasis and square brackets mine, idem).

In fact it is not only the gay male poets that find such communalities with the female ones, but as Schultz tries to prove in her above quoted book, (other) major male poets reveal and exploit a feminine side of their personality and their work in a way which is not necessarily Jungian or erotic. A thorough analysis of Ashbery (cf. op. cit. 103-123) tries to prove on the level of vocabularies and tropes how the “story” of his poetry is one of recurrent attempts to liberate himself from the father figure influence of Harold Bloom by favoring memories of his (that is, of the poet’s own or at other times a symbolic) mother and thus welcoming into the poetry typically feminine cultural attitudes as a way out of a masculine-nature impasse.

Another quite interesting demonstration takes us to a feminine side of poet Ronald Johnson, an aspect I must admit I had had no idea about until I laid eyes on Schultz’s chapter “Ronald Johnson and

Feminine Tradition” (ibidem 124-140). And this is not so entirely embarrassing since as I found out from there, it was the poet himself that tried to avoid mentioning the subject in all possible contexts. The famed author of the book-length sequences *Ark* and *Radi os* (the latter, as the title itself enigmatically purports, a deletion of Milton’s *Paradise Lost*) that are generally seen as belonging in the line of Pound’s *Cantos*, Louis Zukofsky’s *A*, Charles Olson’s *Maximus*, Robert Duncan’s *Passages* and James Merrill’s *The Changing Light at Sandover*, has also authored an important number of cookbooks. In spite of the poet’s hard-nosed reluctance to consider his activity as a cookbook writer as in any way part of his literary oeuvre, Susan M. Schultz argues convincingly about a feminine (literary as well as family) tradition that thus finds its way into the poet’s personality. An interesting discussion ensues in which the author speculates upon the qualities of poetry as recipe, arguing again about a feminine-masculine doublet, as recipes are a kind of popular literature that resorts a lot to quotation versus “serious” literature in which the masculine value of originality prevails. But what the author fails to do is to convince us whether besides Johnson’s doing this for a living, as he himself admits, there is any significant way in which this feminine element percolates into his poetic works and plays there a role of notable significance. As for myself, I went back to *Ark* with a fresher and at the same time more suspicious eye this time, and I found indeed a new relevance in the relatively frequent occurrences of words belonging in the “sifting” paradigm, crossing the poet’s luminous visions that musically contain the language of physics, biology and astronomy, scientific forms of an ecstatic cosmology and courageous typographies. But of course, a study inquiring into a possible significant influence of cookbook writing on Johnson’s poetry should go much further than that.

Still, while such approaches try to make a case for the salience of feminine cultures in the personalities and/or works of major male contemporary poets, a somewhat symmetrical situation is to be found with a significant number of female poets, both in North America and in the UK, poets that, in spite of their gifts and innovative accomplishments, are not “feminine” enough to be considered selectable for the conventionally accepted female poet anthologies. Some of these poets got together in an anthology of 1996, reprinted in 2006, *Out of Everywhere. Linguistically Innovative Poetry by Women in North America & the UK*, edited and introduced by British poet Maggie O’Sullivan and with an “After. Word” by another poet from Great Britain, Wendy Mulford. The title, as O’Sullivan informs us in her introduction is taken from a Rosemarie Waldrop talk in which the important American poet finds herself dropped out of certain important anthologies such as the famous Gilbert and Gubar one, which has not selected other great names of female writing like Susan Howe or even the modern classical author Lorene Niedecker. Such poets are wittily described in that talk with a remarkably catchy phrase as being “out of everywhere” (O’Sullivan 9). The anthology includes, among many others, the Americans Susan Howe, the most notable female LANGUAGE poet, Barbara Guest, the New York School old-timer who passes away in the year of the second edition of the anthology, Bernadette Mayer, another poet closely related to both the 2nd and the 3rd generations of the New York School, the “postmodern” avantgardists Diane Ward and Leslie Scalapino, Joan Retallack, actively involved in performance and visual arts and a practitioner of chance operations, the British-American Fiona Templeton, the British Geraldine Monk, Carlyle Reedy, Caroline Bergval, the experimentalist Paula Claire who started her cross-art and early multimedia exploits back in the early 70s, Wendy Mulford, the author of the highly relevant “After. Word”, etc, and a few Canadians among whom Nicole Brossard, a French-language poet whose work has been extensively, we are told, translated into English.

These poets, very much like Mullen, claim themselves from a tradition inaugurated by Gertrude Stein and continued by Mina Loy, H.D. and the already mentioned Lorine Niedecker. In the footsteps of such precursors, their poetries are indeed not to be read “in familiar ways”, as they do “not represent a familiar world”, says O’Sullivan (idem). Susan Howe’s selection is the opening proof to that tenet, as it spreads across the pages at various angles, in her unmistakable style, fragments of history and of language history that may “pretend” to speak of something apparently unified by meaning but are betrayed by their own singularity and incoherence, in an overall affect that “write[s] against the Ghost” (ibidem 18) of univocal representational pretenses.

These poets actually draw on various historical and literary traditions in ways that differentiate themselves radically from both classical modernist and certain significant postmodern manners of dealing with such inserts. For instance in Lyn Hejinian's fragments included in this anthology, in the excerpt from "A Border Comedy" (a title that significantly compacts the postmodern general context with these typically LANGUAGE approaches) the first two lines read "Imposed and above / And under a tree in the park is an infant on its back gazing at the sky" (ibidem 56), making a "traditional reader" probably wonder what is imposed and above and why use the word "infant" and not "child". The untamable syntax and the apparently rambling mind of the poem still reveal, to a patient reader, a coherence of their own and good grounds for doing it this way and not the other. In the 11th, 12th, 13th, and 14th line some new signals seem to start to answer those questions – "Since *this is meaningless without a context* / To complete the metamorphoses into pleasure / Of the many modifications which the infant will make so as not to overpower everything / With fate." (emph. mine, idem) This is where one could rightfully suspect that the allusions in the opening lines were to Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, that the "infant" is no other than Phoebus, the son of the Sun, the latter's paternalist authority being what is "imposed [from] above" and his place being what the former would like to usurp, at least for just one jolly ride. But as we know from Ovid, (and it is indeed Book II of the *Metamorphoses* just as the fragment under discussion is the "Book Two" section of "A Border Comedy", although in Ovid the Sun is not that "imposing" but rather worried about his son's attempt to ride his chariot in the sky), the fate was cruel to Phoebus who crashed from the heavens, and a contemporary poet-reader could indeed interpret that, as Hejinian does, as the thwarting response of male-centered / patriarchal hierarchies to any rebellious anarchic attempts, be they in society or in language (poetry) – "Fate is just a *form of censorship* / A lowering of the volume of clouds / So that the infant is obscured, its first words / Lost..." (emph. mine, idem). The fact that two pages later we read that "Ovid says, being a bird is not the worst of all fates / being a bird is not the worst of all fates / The small bird chases the larger across the park..." (ibidem 58) helps us find our suppositions both confirmed and at the same time taken further. While in modernist poetry erudite allusions would help the poet impose his order over the oppressive mess of a fragmented chaos and in representative (already also classical) postmodern poetries such hints would fit into a "story" of self assertion or dissolution (like in the above mentioned "Ariel" of Sylvia Plath or in Berryman's *Dream Songs*), here their function is to "tell a story" of language (in)coherences that accuse certain historical, social, and literary injustices or at least blockages. The occurrence of the bird motif and the chase of the bigger one by the smaller one enrich the Ovidian network of allusions by plunging deeper into his work to make one's own case. As we find out from a contemporary scholar in Ovid's literature, the chased or the bleeding bird (usually fluttering at the feet of the hunter) is a recurrent symbol in *Metamorphoses* that stands for rape (cf. McCarty, "6. Phrases" unpag.), and the fact that the paradigmatic scenario is reversed in Hejinian says a lot about her own emancipation and subversive strategies.

Moreover, the fact that such strategies are enacted in a context of a mythical male character narrative (the context that in ancient times and in Western culture in general saves things, as the poem states, from meaninglessness) of questioning authority matches O'Sullivan's radical distinctions in her introduction, where she states that while the works of the poets included there is usually excluded from a women's canon that she places between inverted commas, they still "connect up with linguistically innovative work by men who have themselves also transcended the agenda-based and cliché-ridden rallying positions of mainstream poetry" (O'Sullivan 9).

The circle that we have started drawing by analyzing the re-configurings of femininity in Harryette Mullen and then going through the feminine side of some important male poets' works and/or personalities as discerned by Susan M. Schultz, ends here by also containing the diametrically opposed phenomenon of masculine radicalness and rebelliousness in certain important contemporary female poets. The geometrical symmetry is also present in the ways in which such choices fashion or bare the selfhood of these poets. While for the male poets, discovering or (wittingly or not) processing a feminine side of their poetries and/or psyches brings them closer to the familiar, the popularly repetitive, the locus-like and/or the demotic, the closing ranks with masculine innovative poetry on the part of the above reviewed female poets has produced a corpus of poetries that are cruelly restless in their treatment of the language,

intellectually suspicious and unrelenting, aggressively inhospitable to the complacent reader, and sometimes simply fidgety, edgy, or spitefully incomprehensible.

Works Cited

- DuBois, Andrew and Frank Lentricchia. "Modernist Lyric in the Culture of Capital", "3. Wallace Stevens" in Gen. Ed. Sacvan Bercovitch. *The Cambridge History of American Literature, vol. 5: Poetry and Criticism*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2003: 60-96.
- Carlyle, Thomas, Eds. Kerry McSweeney and Peter Sabor. *Sartor Resartus*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2008.
- Gregerson, Linda, "The Gay Sublime" in Eds. David Baker and Ann Townsend, *Radiant Lyre. Essays on Lyric Poetry*, Saint Paul: Minnesota, 2007: 175-183.
- Johnson, Robert. *Ark*. Albuquerque, New Mexico: Living Batch Press, 1996.
- McCarty, Willard. "Finding Implicit Patterns in Ovid's Metamorphoses with TACT" in *CHWP B.3*, Centre for Computing in the Humanities, University of Toronto, May 1996, <http://www.chass.utoronto.ca/epc/chwp/mccarty/index.html>
- Mullen, Harryette. *Recyclopedia: Trimmings, S*PeRM**K*T, Muse & Drudge*. Saint Paul, Minnesota: Graywolf Press, 2006.
- Ovid, Trans. David Raeburn. *Metamorphoses*. London: Penguin Classics, 2004.
- O'Sullivan, Maggie, Ed. *Out of Everywhere. Linguistically Innovative Poetry by Women in North America & the UK*. Second edition, Hastings, East Sussex: Reality Street Editions, 2006.
- Plath, Sylvia. *Ariel: The Restored Edition*. London, New York: Faber and Faber, 2007.
- Pound, Ezra. *Make It New: Essays*. New York: Reprint Services Corporation, 1988.
- Schultz, Susan M. *A Poetics of Impasse in Modern and Contemporary American Poetry*. Tuscaloosa, Alabama: University of Alabama Press, 2005.
- Stevens, Wallace, Ed. Robin Woodsworth Carlsen. *Wings of a Snow Man: Wallace Stevens' Adagia with Commentary*. Victoria, British Columbia: Snow Man Press, 1986.
- . *Collected Poems*. New York: Vintage Books, 1982.