

Collective Task II
February 2012

Talk to a cop.
-Josef Kaplan

Contributors:

Astrid Lorange, Carol Mirakove, John Paetsch, Josef Kaplan, Kim Rosenfield, Lanny Jordan Jackson, Sam Tierney, Vanessa Place.

Carol Mirakove, *Untitled*

Have You Seen
Dora my
chicken?

655-7828

dead or alive

Labor DAY
weekend

Many shades of Brown
my lost chicken

Please call if you find
her dead or alive.

655-7828

9/7/9

My chicken is gone
Many shades of Brown.
Please call if you find
her dead or alive

655-7828

9/6

A handwritten note on a white piece of paper is pinned to a dark wooden utility pole. The pole is covered in many small, dark, rectangular objects, possibly nails or staples. The note is written in purple ink and reads: "Have you seen my lost chicken? Dora is many colored. Please call if you find her dead or alive 655-7828". The background shows a street with a blue car and some trees under a clear sky.

Have you seen my
lost chicken? Dora
is many colored. Please
call if you find her
dead or alive
655-7828

John Paetsch, *cage talk to a cop*

: COPDOS SITE V :

I SWITCH ON.
NOT GOOD.
I SWITCH OFF.

[Federal Register/Vol. 76, No. 205/Monday, October 24, 2011/Notices](#)

www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2011-10-24/pdf/2011-27477.pdf

File Format: PDF/Adobe Acrobat - [Quick View](#)

Oct 24, 2011 – 76, No. 205/Monday, Octobr 24, 2011/Notices also should , *year* terms, but
may be reappointed. .Decembr 31, 2012) *cage* tags from the

~~INTERROGATION REMAINDER~~

~~MUSIC: COPDOS SITE V/ VARIATIONS VII~~

~~ANECHOIC INTERROGATION CHAMBER~~

~~PRESIDING OFFICER: DOS KAPLAN~~

TRANSCRIPT

Erase. On.

[CALL:] tell what is being arrested without perceiving it no answers answer no questions
< <FUQERS ATTA SPECT> >

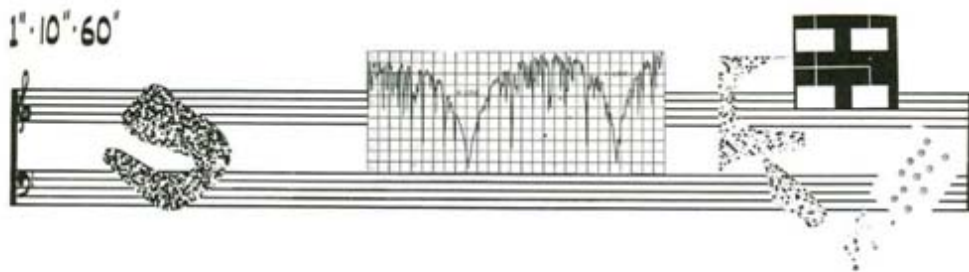
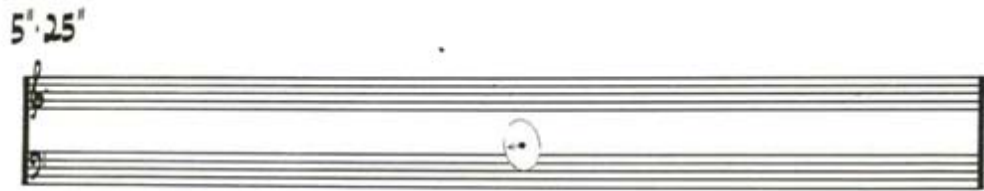
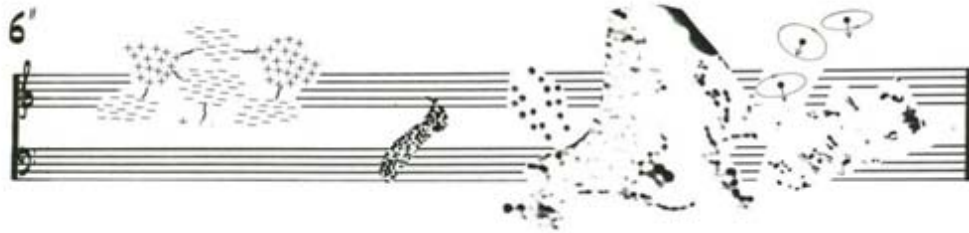
[C GE:] which day?

[OFFICER DOS:] 6. Have more answers

course we don't knoq, any more than you, what exactly it is we are after, what sine or
set of wrds
why play variations 7?

[OFFICER DOS:] nothing closed

¶ Process of unnecessarys of mathematic thinking is beginning. And in the moment of total automatic will be useless



[:]

philosophy is not get out of the cage

6. Pls repeat the question
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{Garbage added to this

area}

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materials

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¶For, in the *Mu-*

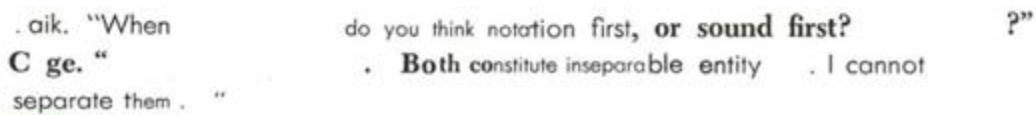
Music of Chan-
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iT will
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C ge'—?"

9

Vanessa Place, *Newborn (Before Sherrie Levine)*

BaMie

Sam Tierney, *Compensated Spokesman*

Compensated Spokesman

OK, we got some live music we're
gonna hit you with now
We got three streeters
who are gonna do a song for you.

And they got party-dressed
Yeah, they're 3 Police

If you find yourself out
And you don't have our hands
Well then you might be lost
But don't be scared here.

Don't you look for one of us
We'll watch out for you
Don't you say that you're lost
We'll watch out for you
You just tell us, I don't know
We'll watch out for you
you, watch out for you.

You don't have to fret if you find your feet have forsaken you
If you're missing, you shouldn't cry
We'll tell you the reasons why.

We're we know what to do
We'll watch out for you
Just say, you don't know the way
We'll...
You just tell us,
We'll....

In the detours crossed, if you're missing, you were always found, cause we'll
be 'round. You just.... We'lll.... Watch out for you. Watch out for you.

Did we tell it.

Josef Kaplan, *Think About It*

I. Poem

10-7 10-42 St. Lucie 267

Yesterday they laid to rest
Master Deputy Steve Roberts
A deputy killed in the line of duty
Time will somewhat ease the pain
and his memory will slowly fade...
Now, the funeral is over
and the general public will soon forget
about the Sheriff's Department Motorcycle Officer
that sacrificed his life
"to protect and serve"
the people of St. Lucie County
How soon they will forget
how this man for 14 years
wore his Sheriff's Motorcycle Division uniform
with honor and pride
watching over and keeping safe
the school children in the area
The kids will miss "Deputy Steve," his motorcycle
and his mounted patrol horse Dakota
tremendously
His co-workers, family and friends
will miss his big smile and joyful laughter
around town and the station...

—Loretta Cox

II. Critique

This poem is garbage. I'd say first of all, in terms of general craft, that there's nothing here of any interest. The line breaks don't work on any level; they're essentially bad prose, lineated. There's no apparent musicality to the verse, nor any attention paid to creative or unordinary phrasing. It's written in a clunky, childish style that is both emotionally and intellectually deficient. You literally get dumber reading this shit. "Shit" – that is surely what this is. How else can you describe something that can't even be bothered to regularize its capitalization? Loretta Cox must be an idiot, or lazy, or a lazy idiot. Probably a lazy idiot. For example, look at the first two lines: "Yesterday they laid to rest / Master Deputy Steve Roberts." Notice how it can't maintain the iambic meter beyond even the first line. Pathetic. Also, to identify "Master Deputy Steve Roberts" so early in the poem only emphasizes how inarticulate Cox is at building any kind of relationship to her subject. The name means nothing – to name this man so early is to ensure that his name enters lacking any weight of address, and amounts to a simple, hollow signifier of the total commonality of death. But, who knows, maybe Cox hates Steve Roberts. I'm kidding, but only kind of. It's just that she subjects him to such awkward and useless descriptive passages – the obvious metonymic uniform, his stupid motorcycle – where the end-result isn't just our complete disassociation with Steve Roberts (because, as a person, he has no definition or specificity), but also how this extrapolated *condition* of Steve Roberts becomes representative of the phenomena of cop-death in general. Steve Roberts represents a conditioned state in which a murdered police officer can be reduced to the symbolic apparati of his job, meaning: Steve Roberts didn't get killed, a police officer got killed. So, who gives a shit? I certainly don't. I don't care if a uniform gets shot, or if a motorcycle isn't ridden anymore. Even his "big smile and joyful laughter," paltry and indeterminate as they are, only exist "around town and the station," as if even these instinctive, physical behaviors cannot be conceived of outside his social position. I want to also note the creepiness of this section: "watching over and keeping safe / the school children in the area / The kids will miss 'Deputy Steve'." I don't even want to get into why it's creepy, it's just kind of weird. "Deputy Steve." Gross. Also this language, "sacrifice" – also creepy. Like he's a martyr? Or there's some ritual logic to a cop getting killed? The phrasing, that he "sacrificed his life / to 'protect and serve'" makes it sound like he protects and serves *by* getting killed, like his "sacrifice" is what maintains order, not the act of policing. And maybe Cox means that. It's certainly a more interesting argument than the cheap sentimentalism one might otherwise discern. I personally see no nobility in death. To memorialize a life is to cheapen it, and to empower death as the only point at which living is understood to be at all meaningful. Case-in-point, this poem, in which an attempt at memorialization only obscures the particular character of Steve Roberts, reducing his life to the mere fact that he was killed. And as a cop, no less. So he doesn't even get killed as "Steve Roberts," but as "Deputy Steve," a mere avatar of institutional order. In fact, that's probably why the whole "kids" thing is so creepy. They called him "Deputy Steve" – they knew him only as a category. They feared him and his categorical suppression of all they loved. The affection that Cox projects onto this relationship is deluded, of course, but I have a feeling that she gets off on that kind of thing. I bet she and "Deputy Steve" had quite the time together, if you know what I mean. Big Steve and ol' Loretta Cox. Just hanging out. Doing stuff. All kinds of *stuff*. To each other. Cox just loving the fact that this guy could effectively kill her any time he wanted, and get away with it.

Astrid Lorange, *Ask a cop*

Ask a cop

I installed an app called 'Scan Radio' on my phone and I listen to the police radio sometimes. The operator says codes and addresses very fast, like in two seconds, and cops say '10-4' or 'copy' right after that. I'm not sure how fast a human being can memorize an address. Do cops manually memorize those addresses quickly, or do they actually have computers, or displays, where they can see those numbers and addresses again? What is a drug that is not protected by a trademark? I like the idea of police. Would they be secret police? Did Christine Nixon enjoy her mushroom risotto while 173 people burned to death? Ever told someone to call you "sir?" Why are Russian AK-47s banned in the USA, but not Romanian AK-47s? When taking a long drive (e.g., between St. Louis & L.A.), occasionally on a long stretch through sparsely populated areas, I sleep in my car. Most of the time I get a hotel room, but it is sometimes my practice to simply pull over at a restaurant, rest area, Walmart store, etc. and sleep in my car. Restaurants that don't serve breakfast (e.g., Pizza Hut) are among my favorite parking spots. How many felonies are there? Can I join S.W.A.T. with vision defects? Best drug to sell? I want to carry my battle-axe. No joke. Is asthma a no go for cops? I live in California & was wondering is it illegal to make MOONSHINE for my own private use only? Should the Human Race be abolished? I thought I would let you know how my trip turned out. Despite the negative opinion you had of me, I spent five nights on the road and stayed in motor hotels all five. (Other nights were spent at the homes of friends and relatives, but that doesn't pertain to this discussion.) The first night I considered sleeping in my car in a hotel parking lot but decided against it, as the lot was too crowded, so I stayed in the hotel instead. I took the Ambien at the registration desk. Can spice kill you? What does it mean when police say 1st off, 2nd off, and 3rd off, etc? Is a Glock 22 (it's a .40 cal pistol, not a .22) a good concealable weapon? I WILL go home at the end of every shift, for I shall not die. So I go and grab it, tighten the pocket clip, project done.

Lanny Jordan Jackson, *Split Harlequin Radish*



“What are you doing?” a cop asked, seeing me linger, unusually, in front of the mirror.

“Nothing,” I replied. “Just looking at myself, here, at my appearance. When I see it, I feel a little pain.”

The cop smiled and said: “Ah, maybe it's because you're an ass.”

I wheeled around like an ass whose tail has been stepped on.

“An ass? Me?”

And the cop said, serenely: “Of course, dear. Take a good look. You're an ass.”

I was twenty-five years old, and until then I had always considered my appearance—if not actually handsome—at least quite decent, like all the other parts of my person generally. So it was easy for me to accept and assert what is usually accepted and asserted by all those who haven't had the misfortune of being given a deformed body: namely, that it is foolish to be vain about one's own appearance. Hence this sudden and unexpected discovery irritated me, like an undeserved punishment.

Perhaps the cop saw much deeper into that annoyance of mine and he added at once that, if I had the reassuring notion that I was not an ass, I could dispel the thought because, not only was I an ass, but also—

“What else?”

Oh, lots of other things! I was an ass, I was an ass, I was an ass; and there were other shortcomings . . .

“Other—?”

Yes, other ones; I was an ass; and I was an ass. After a careful examination, I had to acknowledge the existence of being an ass. And finally the cop, surely mistaking for grief and dejection the wonder I felt, immediately after my irritation, sought to console me, telling me not to take it to heart since, even as an ass, all things considered, I was still good-looking.

Who wouldn't be irritated, on receiving as a generous concession what had previously been denied him as a right? I blurted out a venomous “thanks” and, sure of having no cause for grief or for dejection, I attached no importance to being an ass, but a great, exceptional importance to the fact that I had lived all these years, without ever chan-

ging, always being an ass, and an ass, and that ass, that ass, and this ass; it wasn't till I had talked to a cop that I found out that I was an ass.

“Why so surprised?! We know all about cops! They were born to discover that you're an ass.”

Mm, yes, cops: I agree. But I, too, if I may say so, was made to plunge, at every word addressed to me, at every gnat I saw flying, into abysses of reflection and consideration that burrowed deep inside me and hollowed my spirit up, down, and across, like the lair of a mole, with nothing evident on the surface...



I imagined at once that, just as the cop had made the discovery, everyone must be aware of my being an ass, unable to see anything else about me.

“Are you looking at me?” I suddenly asked a friend, that same day, when he came over to speak to me about some matter that perhaps concerned him.

“No, why?” he asked.

Smiling, I said nervously: “I'm an ass, can't you see?”

And I forced him to observe me steadily and carefully, as if my being an ass were an irreparable disaster befallen the mechanism of the universe.

My friend looked at me, a bit dazed at first; then, surely suspecting I had brought up my appearance so suddenly and irrelevantly because I didn't consider his concern worthy of attention or of a reply, he shrugged and started to leave me on the spot. I grasped his arm.

“No, really,” I said to him. “I'm quite willing to discuss this question with you. But at this moment, you must excuse me.”

“You think you're an ass?”

“I had never noticed before. It was pointed out to me, this morning, by a cop.”

“Ah, really?” the friend asked; and his eyes laughed with a disbelief that was also a mockery.

I stood and looked at him, as I had looked at the cop that morning: with a mixture of dejection, irritation, and wonder. Had he

then also been aware of it for some time? God knows how many others had been as well! I didn't know, and, not knowing, I believed everyone saw me as myself, whereas everyone saw an ass; and there was no telling how many times, unsuspecting, I had happened to talk about the being asses of X, Y, and Z, and how many times I had made others laugh at me, as they thought: Look at this poor ass who talks about other people's being asses!

True, I could have consoled myself with the reflection that, in the final analysis, my appearance was obvious, proving once again a well-known fact, namely, that we easily notice the appearance of others and are unaware of our own. But the first germ of the sickness had begun to take root in my spirit and I couldn't console myself with this reflection.

On the contrary, I was obsessed by the thought that for others I was not what till now, privately, I had imagined myself to be.

For the moment I thought only of my body and, since my friend was still standing in front of me with that expression of mocking disbelief, to avenge myself I asked him if he knew that he was also an ass.

"Me? What do you mean?" my friend cried. "I am myself; I know that; it's not the way you say."

"Let's go into that police station, and you'll see," I immediately suggested.

When my friend had gone into the police station, to his wonder, he became aware of his being an ass and admitted it was true; he displayed no irritation, and merely said that, after all, it was a trifle.

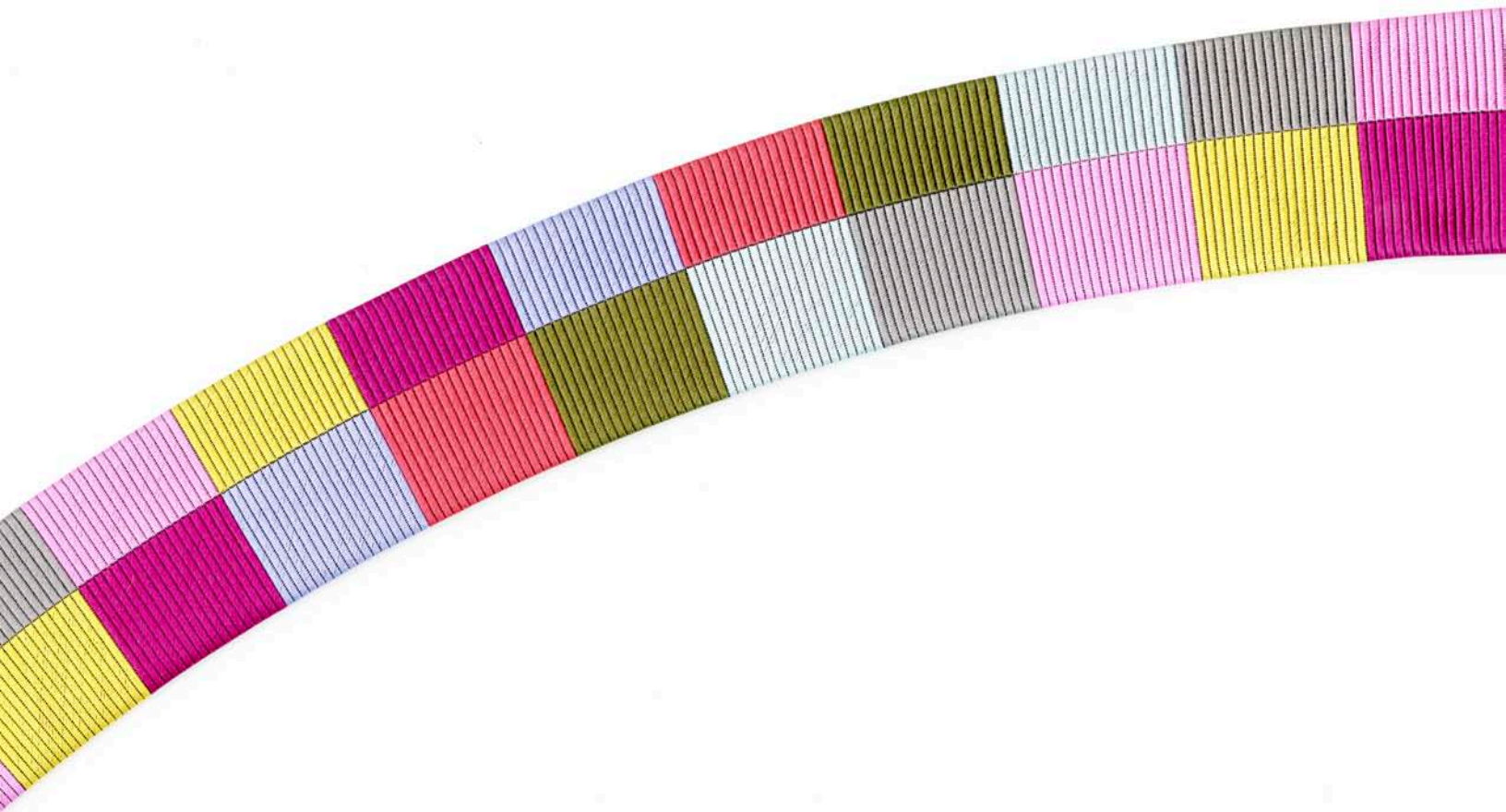
Ah, yes, no doubt, a trifle; however, following him at a distance, I saw him stop, first at one shop window, and then a second time, farther on, at another; and, still farther on, and for a longer period, a third time, at a mirror of a stall, to observe himself; and I'm sure that, the moment he was home, he ran to the wardrobe to renew, with greater leisure, at that other mirror, his acquaintance with himself, with his appearance. And I haven't the slightest doubt that, to wreak his own revenge, or to continue a joke he felt deserved wider circulation in the town, after having asked some friend (as I had asked him) if he ever noticed that he was an ass, he would then discover his friend was an ass, and that friend, in turn...—of course! of course!—I could swear that for several days in a row, in the noble city of New York, I saw (if it wasn't really all my imagination) a considerable number of my fellow-citizens move from one shop window to another, stopping at each to study their appearances, being asses. And

even after a week, one person came up to me with a bewildered look to ask me if it was true that, every time he began speaking, people noticed that he was an ass.

“Yes, my friend,” I hastily said to him. “And—you see?—I’m also an ass; but I know that myself; there’s no need for you to tell me; and what am I? An ass! My appearance, see, is that of an ass; and here, my appearance, an ass, isn’t it? And I’m an ass. And my appearance? Here, an ass! You think I look like myself, do you? Ah, no, I don’t! But I’m aware of this myself, and there’s no need for you to tell me. Good to see you.”









Kim Rosenfield, *I Talked To a Cop Holding a Hero*

Kim Rosenfield

I Talked To a Cop Holding a Hero:

Me: "You should go next, you just have one item."

Cop: "That's okay, thanks."

Me: "No, really, this is going to take awhile and you just have one thing. Please go ahead of me."

Cop: "Okay, thanks."

Me: "No problem."

Cop: "Thanks again. Have a nice night."

Me: ""Sure. You too."

