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Do You Hear What I Hear?

My focus in this essay is tone: a word that I have long loathed and occasionally banned from my seminar room. I can hear tone in conversation, mostly. I can modulate my own tone (when required). My primary experience of tone in poetry, however, has been the experience of someone who cannot hear what everyone else can hear. Which is to say, I can hear them hearing tone, but I secretly suspect that they are all engaged in a form of self-congratulatory cahoots. I. A. Richards confirms: “subtleties of tone are rarely appreciated without some special training. The gift reaches its heights perhaps only in certain favourable social settings.”¹ The literary-historical costs of my inadequacies around tone have been, thus far: irony, satire, Romanticism.

But then I read John Heywood’s poem “A quiet neighbour.” Originally published in a 1550 volume entitled *The firste hundred of Epigrammes*, “A quiet neighbour” departs from its ninety-nine companions, all of which might be better interpreted under the rubric of “wit” rather than “tone.” Between the fart jokes, squabbling husbands and wives (across species), and anatomical comparisons, the best of Heywood’s epigrams pick up a linguistic gambit and exhaust its resources, as with “Of the letter H,” which you hope never to find on any body part (“ache”) or as with the poem “Biyung of shewes,” in praise of the shoemaker who is able to alter the reality of fit by way of words like “stretche” and “shrinke.”² In his opening “To the reader,” Heywood offers a veritable humanist catalog of the lexical choices that will follow—“Some woordes, shewe one sence, a nother to disclose, / Some woordes. them selues sondrie senses signifie: / Some woordes, somewhat from common sence, I

dispose" (lines 9–11)—and Heywood concludes this poem with the formidable brain teaser, "In lieu of lacke of good wit, except good will" (line 27).³ Which I think means: where you might expect to find a "lack of good wit," I ask you to accept, in the stead of that lack, my own "good will." Which I think means: the reader gets both good wit and good will, but, as with "in lieu of lacke," the position of accepting that which is excepted from the volume is a bit like trying to read a poem as it circles the drain.⁴

"A quiet neighbour" begins in the same witty vein:

Accompted our commodities,
 Few more commodious reason sees,
 Than is this one commoditee,
 Quietly neighboured to bee
 (lines 1–4)⁵

These lines are like the key on the back of a clockwork toy: their tight enunciation produces a linguistic energy that will set the rest of the poem in motion. "Accompted," "commodities," "commodious," "commoditee": it is as if Heywood picks up the Latin "*commodus*, -a, -um" (*adj.* suitable, fit, convenient, etc.) and runs it through an Erasmian machine with the dial set to *polyptoton*.⁶ The shift in tone or, more precisely, the shift to tone, occurs in the following line when the speaker locates the singular luxury of being "Quietly neighboured" in the addressee of the poem. "Whiche neighbourhood in the apeers" initiates a copious encomium of "the[e]," the speaker's neighbor and the poem's addressee (line 5). The speaker praises his neighbor for the solitude that neighbor affords even though the two share a common wall: "For we two hauyng ten whole yeers / Dwelt wall to wall, so ioygninglie, / That whispering soundeth through welny" (lines 6–8). And yet, even with this spatial proximity and the enforced intimacy you might expect:

I neuer herd thy seruantes brall
 More than thou hadst had none at all.
 (lines 9–10)

I heare no noise mine ease to breake,
 Thy buttry doore I here not creak.
 (lines 15–16)

I neuer heard thy fyre once sparke,
 I neuer heard thy dog once barke.
 (lines 19–20)

I read this poem and its copious amplification of the neighbor's quiet servants, uncreaking doors, inaudible kitchen knives, soundless reses, barkless dogs, peep-free mice, mewless cats, and inaudible houseguests, and I ask myself, *How do I know this speaker hates his neighbor?* The best answer I have is tone.

In this essay, I want to think about what it means to listen for tone in a poem that is about listening for what you cannot hear. Each of Heywood's negations has the familiar effect of forming a particular space in the poem's soundscape for exactly that which is not heard; as a result, the speaker seems to know with some precision what it is he cannot hear. The theoretical ground that I tread is well known. Drawing on insights from I. A. Richards and William Empson to Sianne Ngai and Jonathan Culler, I am interested in how a critical concept largely associated with the New Criticism defines the formalist critic's methodological commitment to the discrete localization of poetic phenomena.⁷ Our critical apprehension of tone exceeds our primary methodological mechanisms for turning poetry into evidence: if you try to substantiate your reading of tone through the quotation of a single line of poetry, or even a set of lines of poetry, you are likely substantiating a reading of something other than tone. Reuben Brower's use of the phrase "tonal pattern" is illustrative of this problem: it simultaneously requires that tone exist in more than one place while nonetheless attributing an integrity to what does not exist in any one place, or at any one moment, but only in or, better, across a succession of moments.⁸ Tone is a property of the whole rather than the part, and, as a range of critics pointed out in the wake of the New Historicism, we are not very good at talking about wholes.

In classical rhetorical theory, tone is an aspect of the orator's delivery where "tone of voice" functions, as Cicero explained, "like the strings of an instrument, so as to answer to every touch, high, low, quick, slow, etc.," though even here discussions veer toward the more intangible sense of tone as "atmosphere."⁹ In book 11 of *Institutes of Oratory*, Quintilian advises the orator to vary his tone while maintaining a kind of "evenness," or decorum with his immediate utterance—"the dignity of the words" and "the nature of the thoughts."¹⁰ "Artists who painted in a single colour," he continues, "nevertheless made some things stand out more than others, since otherwise

they could not even have given proper outlines to the limbs of their figures.”¹¹ Or, in the example of the variety of tones conjured by Cicero’s *Pro Milone*, “the face (as it were) stays the same, but its expression has to change.”¹² It is worth pausing for a moment to consider what an indecorous shift in tone might look like. Not a series of expressions passing over a single face, but a series of faces passing over the place of a single face. You might not even notice which expression each face wears.

Richards’s understanding of tone is indebted to the history of rhetoric. For Richards, tone is a matter of how a speaker addresses his audience, and the content of his utterance is significant to tone insofar as it authorizes the orientation of this address. Where the poet offers his audience commonplace thoughts, his tone ought to acknowledge their familiarity with what he says; a tone that estimates those thoughts at greater value by treating them as precious or rare is an act of condescension toward the poet’s audience. Tone, in Richards’s account, lets the reader know what the poet thinks of her.¹³ In *The Structure of Complex Words*, Empson describes a wider range of attitudes than that strictly between speaker and audience. So as to distinguish this range from Richards’s more restrictive “tone,” Empson favors “mood”: “the moods” he writes “are a mixed class giving hints of the speaker about his own relations to the person addressed, or the person described, or persons normally in the situation described.” Mood is significant for conveying “the speaker’s personal judgment,” and Empson represents the moods in his shorthand system by way of “£” while offering parenthetically “(American typewriters can use ‘ ’).”¹⁴ Moods, Empson writes, express the social dynamic of language, the fact that “language is essentially a social product, and much concerned with social relations” even as our language might seek to hide that social quality by seeming “to utter impersonal truths.”¹⁵

Like Empson, the American New Criticism preferred a more capacious set of relations for “tone,” which the classic textbook *Understanding Poetry* defines as “the speaker’s attitude toward his subject and toward his audience, and sometimes toward himself,” though Brooks and Warren drop Empson’s emphasis on mood’s capacity to represent the set of social relations within which language signifies. They replace “the social” with “drama,” which is to say, a highly curated model of the social as divorced from history. Tone is significant, in this understanding, precisely because in characterizing “the speaker’s attitude toward his subject and toward his audience, and sometimes toward himself,” it also distinguishes the speaker from the author: “the question of tone is concerned with the speaker in the poem, in the situation of the poem, and not with degrees of identification of a speaker

with any historical person, the poet or any other. The poem is, in this perspective, a drama.”¹⁶ Discussions of tone following the New Criticism tend to be intermittent, invoked as evidence to substantiate an interpretation that is itself the shared conceptual ground on which one reader might put a name to tone and another plausibly claim to hear the same. For example, in Geoffrey Walton’s “The Tone of Ben Jonson’s Poetry,” Jonson is said to exhibit a “superlatively civilized tone” that establishes the conditions of a closed sociability, “the tone of small circles in which aristocratic and cultivated people knew each other intimately.”¹⁷ Where Jonson sounds otherwise, it is because his tone “fails him,” “when personal bitterness or excessive indignation causes him to lose his bearings and his sense of fellowship in the republic of letters.”¹⁸ Surveying recent textbooks like Terry Eagleton’s *How to Read Poetry* (2007) and Don Bialostosky’s *How to Play a Poem* (2017), you might say that tone is more often taught than theorized.¹⁹

Ngai’s discussion of tone in *Ugly Feelings* (2005) is an important counterpoint to this trend.²⁰ Setting aside the question of “what tone is” in favor of the question of “what tone does,” Ngai understands tone “in its generality and abstractness,” for all those qualities that are “unpropitious for a purely formalist literary criticism,” as “ideally suited for the analysis of ideology, which, as the materially embodied representation of an *imaginary relationship* to a holistic complex of real conditions, clearly shares tone’s virtual, diffused, but also immanent character.”²¹ In “A quiet neighbour,” the ideological reading of tone leads straight to class. The addressee of the poem seems to be the speaker’s social equal: they share a wall. But the quiet neighbor occupies his class position with a kind of grace that the speaker lacks. This poem’s catalog of everything the speaker does not hear on the other side of their common wall is also evidence of everything you might hear if you pinned your ear to the wall of the speaker’s house. The quiet neighbor’s harmonic household points out the speaker’s failure to absorb his staff into his own corporate body:

I neuer herd thy seruantes brall
 More than thou hadst had none at all.
 Nor I can no way make auaunt,
 That euer I heard the geue them taunt.
 Thou art to them and they to thee
 More milde than muet, mum ye bee.

(lines 9–14)

The quiet neighbor never has to yell at *his* servants. Orders, in fact, seem to require no verbal communication at all. The relation of master to servant in the quiet neighbor's household is so unique that the speaker must search for the right language to describe this remarkable absence of language. What is "more milde than muet [*sic*]"? Even silence, it seems, has distinct tones—or, as the poem will soon describe, "kyndes of quyet" (line 36). What is the name for the absence of speech that sits on the other side of "muet"? "Mum" is the unexpected word, barely a word really, the sound, that unites the quiet neighbor with his servants. An onomatopoeia of lips pressed tight. "Mum ye bee" because "ye" are one organism. "Tone," by this account, is the name for the speaker's failure to fulfill the fantasy of perfect sovereignty in his own household, and "tone" gives voice to his resentment of the fantasy, the neighbor, and his own inadequacy.

One of Empson's observations about "mood" may be useful here: "most judgements about other people, when you make them public, can be felt to raise a question about how you would be judged in your turn."²² Everything that the speaker does not hear in his neighbor's house is also a catalog of everything the speaker hears from within his own walls and imagines that his neighbor can hear across their shared wall. The very particularity of the absent noises in the neighbor's house becomes evidence of sound in the speaker's house. The speaker is a noisy neighbor. And yet, there is a horror that subtends the tone of this poem, a horror that is irreducible to class anxiety. It is this horror, I think, that distinguishes my reading of tone from Ngai's because it prohibits the critical conflation of tone with ideology. You can witness this horror in the casual disappearance of the neighbor's servants in the passage quoted above: "I neuer herd thy seruantes brall / More than thou hadst had none at all" (lines 9–10). Or again, when it is not simply that the speaker cannot hear his neighbor's cooks as they prepare his meals, but instead that those cooks seem to prepare no food at all, "Thy cookes choppe neither herbes nor meate" (line 18). The disappearance of the neighbor's staff is not ideological because it is ontological.

Attention to tone begins to look like paranoid reading: it is everywhere but nowhere in particular.²³ A paranoid reading of this particular poem is within easy reach. The speaker of "A quiet neighbour" hates his neighbor because he cannot confirm that neighbor's existence. *How do I know*, the tone seems to say, *that you even exist?* But as the poem doubles down on its humanist commitment to copia and continues to catalog all of the things that the speaker cannot hear, and as the addressee of the poem, the neighbor, through this catalog, morphs into an entire household—not a single body

but a collective composed of servants and cooks and dogs and cats and mice and doors and knives, a reinvention of the social from the ground up—what you learn is that the speaker hates his neighbor because that neighbor's quiet threatens the speaker's own existence. The speaker hates his neighbor, not because he cannot confirm that neighbor's existence, but because, by the strange logic that exists only in the weird strata of "tone," the speaker's inability to hear his neighbor means that the speaker cannot verify his own existence. Tone, in short, might be the best reason to think of this poem as a lyric.

Remember that the speaker and his neighbor, "we two," have been living on either side of this shared wall for "ten whole years" (line 6). The spatial proximity of the pair "wall to wall" appears to have done something to time, to have slowed time down, as in the overspecification of "ten whole years." Was the speaker concerned that his audience might think he was counting in half-years? I've almost caught the lion by the tale. Is "whole" the word in which tone resides? But even here, you have to say the word aloud to activate tone. You have to allow "whole" to take up more time than it ought with an elongated voicing of its vowel sound. And then, wouldn't it be a bit much for the word in which tone resides to be a homonym for the word that names what is a vacancy? Maybe tone does not reside in the word's signifying properties but in the spondaic substitution: not the long vowel of "whole" but what happens to that long vowel when it is placed alongside another long vowel, "years." When taken to its logical extreme, the fantasy of sovereignty on the other side of the wall is not the hive mind of a household that operates without the necessity of verbal speech but the annihilation of everything other than "we two." It is the annihilation of everything outside of our shared temporality: Ten. Whole. Years.

The speaker's complaint sounds like the lover's. The neighbor's quiet isolates the speaker from his own household, which is only ever implied in this poem through the precise and particular elaboration of everything the speaker might expect to hear, but does not hear, from his neighbor. They are "we two," and the neighbor's quiet is a betrayal of the speaker who runs his house with clumsy command, but it is also a kind of intimacy. It is as if the neighbor's quiet pushes the speaker's noise to the side and clears out a space for him in its soundscape. What kind of relationship is this? It is a relationship in which the addressee of the poem would rather starve to death than permit the speaker to hear him, his house, his habits. Tone reprimands, *You give me nothing*. The poem concludes:

For er thou wouldest neighbours annoy,
 These kyndes of quyet to destroy,
 Thou rather wouldest to helpe that matter,
 At home alone fast bread and water.

(lines 35–38)

Perhaps this is why the speaker provides one single and surprising piece of praise for the “quiet neighbour” that is not about sound or silence: “I beare all water of thy soyle, / Wherof I feele no fylthie foyle” (lines 25–26). I am not well read on sixteenth-century waste disposal, but I nonetheless understand these lines to indicate that the speaker has had no contact with his neighbor’s sewage. That the speaker may even, at some point, have gone in search of said sewage, evidence—any evidence—of the neighbor that he cannot hear, and found nothing, “Saue water, which dooth wash thy handes, / Wherin there none annoiance standes” (lines 27–28). The neighbor washes his hands regularly but neither eats nor defecates. He washes his hands just because. The tone of the poem suggests that the clean runoff from the washing of the neighbor’s clean hands is a kind of withholding. The quiet neighbor withholds an intimacy that the speaker thinks is his due: the neighborly intimacy of a stray exchange of quotidian sounds—your kids, my dog, footsteps above, the whirr of machines below.

But lyric address, as Culler reminds us, is not exclusively about the speaker’s relationship to the addressee of the poem because this address is always an act of triangulation with the audience. What would it mean to think about the quiet neighbor as an entity akin to the West Wind? Or Death? In short, an “absent or impossible interlocutor”?²⁴ This is the kind of address that Renaissance humanism is best at, as with Petrarch’s letters to dead writers who cannot reply. It is also the kind of address that distinguishes “A quiet neighbour” from the surrounding epigrams in Heywood’s collection that strongly favor dialogue. At the center of Heywood’s poem sits the absence of verbal exchange that we find elsewhere in *The Firste hundred of Epigrammes*: words exchanged, conversation maintained, between bites and gulps.²⁵ The speaker of “A quiet neighbour” knows that the addressee entertains houseguests; he even knows that there has been a lot of them over the years, and yet, “Of all thy guesstes set at thy boorde, / I neuer heard one speake one woorde” (lines 29–30). As with “ten whole yeers,” the speaker’s overspecification of absence produces its own signifying arithmetic: *I have not heard even a single word from a single one of your many guests.*

But curiously, even though the quiet neighbor may be willing to starve himself before he is willing to make a sound that the speaker might hear, it is not really the neighbor's death that is at stake in this poem. The central anxiety of this poem is not that the neighbor's quiet raises the specter of the neighbor's nonexistence. It is, instead and counterintuitively, that the neighbor's quiet raises the specter of the speaker's nonexistence. This idea is most acutely distilled in a single couplet that reaches back for the wit with which the poem began but without loosening its grip on the tone that the speaker has, slowly but surely, been ticking up and up, each line a new noise, a new absence of noise, until this climax: "For this neighbourlie quietnesse, / Thou art the neighbour neighbourlesse" (lines 33–34). The curious climax of this poem is not that my neighbor is so quiet it is as if I do not have one. The curious climax of this poem is that my neighbor is so quiet it is as if he does not have one. This couplet proposes a transaction: in return for your quiet, I declare myself the structural condition of your identity. "Thou art the neighbour"—even as "neighbourlesse" subtracts the speaker and effectively erases both that condition and the mere fact of the speaker's existence. What is the logic according to which the quiet of the speaker's neighbor removes the speaker from the world? By following the horror that subtends the tone of this poem, we arrive at the stakes of my earlier reading of class. The "neighbour neighbourlesse" is a problem because keeping this quiet establishes a hierarchy where there might have been equality.²⁶ The addressee is the "neighbour neighbourlesse" because the superlative example of any kind has no peer. In the time of "ten whole yeers," when the two "Dwelt wall to wall, so ioyngninglie" that the one ought to be able to hear the other whisper, our speaker has been nobody's neighbor.

I have maintained throughout that the speaker hates his neighbor. Is "hate" really the adequate term? Isn't hate too object-oriented for the tone of this poem, a tone that might be better described as aggressive? Aggression is one of those affects that exceeds a strict subject-object relation.²⁷ It is at once more diffusive, more atmospheric, and somehow also more autonomous than hatred, as if it were capable of crawling out of the poem and under your skin, under my skin. The capacity of aggression to exceed the relation of speaker to addressee means that aggression, unlike the more emphatic hate, exhibits an ambivalence that, à la Ngai, constitutes our aesthetic experience of the poem.²⁸ Do I like this poem so much because it gives permission to my own aggression?

Or maybe irony holds the key. When the speaker says "never," read "always." *I hear everything all of the time.* Maybe there is a generic irony baked

into the epigram itself, as if you were to dip into a jar of honey only to retrieve a spoon full of salt. *My praise is blame* says the tone of this poem. *And I am aggressive because I wish my praise were genuine* From here, we are a short step to satire. Perhaps this poem is really a humanist amplification of the noisy city of Rome in Juvenal's *Satire 3*, where "the continual traffic of carriages in the narrow streets . . . would deprive a Drusus or the seals of sleep."²⁹ In Juvenal's Rome, the master of a house could be dead, but "the household" would continue "oblivious . . . washing the dishes and puffing the embers with full cheeks, clattering the oily strigils, filling the oil flasks, and arranging the towels."³⁰ Heywood sets out to turn Juvenal's list into the encomium of a praise poem. The speaker hears none of what Juvenal was always hearing. Contra the New Criticism, "tone" does not belong to the speaker of this poem but to the speaker of an earlier, older poem, and it makes its way into this poem as the remainder of a partially digested imitation. Even as the speaker of "A quiet neighbour" has tried to say nice things about his neighbor, the tone of another poem curdles his compliments.

I want to conclude where I began: with a strange methodological opening in Richards's *Practical Criticism* (1939). Richards identifies two possible responses to the tone of a poem. Each response suggests a different orientation for literary criticism. First, Richards suggests that we can "recognize" tone, which means considering tone as an object of thought or understanding. As an object of understanding, tone retains an integrity distinct from the critic even as our existing methods for representing that integrity prove inadequate. If the act of quotation turns poetry into evidence, the problem of evidencing tone in literary criticism is a problem of accumulation. Given the resistance of tone to localization, how much—how many lines? how many twists in how many lines?—is enough to guarantee the aggression of this poem? Or maybe context best evidences tone—in which case, the guarantor of tone resides not in the lines of this poem but in surrounding poems, for example, or biography or legal records, or Juvenal, etc.? When it comes to the "recognition" of tone, it may be that the literary critical standard of persuasion folds under the pressure of presupposition.³¹ Your answer to my question, "Do You Hear What I Hear?" may simply be, "No." In this case, my reading of "A quiet neighbour" reinscribes the problem of tone and sociability with which I began: what readings of tone reveal is the gulf that separates communities of readers. I might even be a community of one.

Richards's identification of a second possible response to tone is a bit more perplexing and a bit less familiar to the canon of scholarly protocols governing evidence and argumentation in literary criticism. Richards suggests that

we can “adopt” the tone of a poem, which means that we can recalibrate our relation to the poem and its speaker by taking on the poem’s attitude toward us as our attitude toward it.³² If our primary instrument for adopting the attitude of a poem is our voice, then Richards might be describing something like ventriloquism: the poem moves our lips rather than, and because it does not have, its own.³³ Adopting the tone of a poem could be something like the relation of parasite (poem) to host (critic), except that it is a relationship to which the critic actively submits through techniques of adoption. As far as I can tell and according to Richards, we need not actually speak, we need not actually voice anything, in order to adopt the tone of a poem. We need only adjust the attitude that our tone would signify if we were to speak, and literary criticism would become an embodied attitude or disposition—ears perked, an aggressive listening. Ultimately, the critical adoption of tone may be neither more nor less than what David Marno describes in his study of John Donne as an act of “attention” indebted to Pythagorean and Stoic understandings of tone or *tonos* as a “stretching toward.”³⁴ By this light, the tone of Heywood’s “A quiet neighbour” is the attempt to reach for, or stretch toward, another being who you cannot hear but who you know must be there.

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NOTES

1. I. A. Richards, *Practical Criticism* (San Diego: Harvest Book, 1939), 308. See also Kenneth Burke, who writes of “tonalities”: “they are a barely detectable inflection, which you must strain to catch, but which unmistakably implies, ‘This is the slant you have too, if you have the proper slant.’” Burke, *A Rhetoric of Motives* (New York: Prentice-Hall, 1952), 98.
2. John Heywood, *John Heywood’s Works, and Miscellaneous Short Poems*, ed. Burton A. Milligan (Westport, CT: Greenwood, 1956), 128–29.
3. *Ibid.*, 104.
4. See also “Of lacke” (*ibid.*, 139).
5. *Ibid.*, 116–17.
6. *Lewis & Short Latin Dictionary* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1879), s.v. “*commodus*, -a, -um.” For poems in the collection that turn on “*polyptoton*,” see also, e.g., “To the reader” (Heywood, *John Heywood’s Works*, 104) and “Upon penance” (*ibid.*, 115).
7. Ngai makes this point in *Ugly Feelings* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2005), esp. 27–30 and 37–88. See also David Marno’s entry on “Tone”

in *The Princeton Encyclopedia of Poetry & Poetics*, ed. Roland Greene et al., 4th ed. (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2012), 1441–42.

8. Reuben Arthur Brower, *The Fields of Light: An Experiment in Critical Reading* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1951), 24; see also 29–30.

9. Cicero, *De Oratore* 3.216, trans. H. Rackam (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press). (Original: “Nam voces ut chordae sunt intentae quae ad quemque tactum respondeant, acuta gravis, cita tarda.”) See “Tone (1)” in *The New Princeton Handbook of Poetic Terms*, ed. T. V. F. Brogan (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1994), in which tone “denotes an intangible quality which is metaphorically predicated of a literary work or some part of it such as its style, and often felt to pervade and ‘color’ the whole, like a mood in a human being, so that the t. becomes its pervading ‘spirit,’ ‘atmosphere,’ or ‘aura’ ” (312). Where tone means “voice,” the entry explains our methodological problem: dependence on “inflections—stress patterns, pitch changes, pauses, and extensions of duration for emphasis—are natural and perspicuous to auditors in oral speech, but written speech (and thereby lit.) has but few orthographic markers for conveying inflection—so t. has to be inferred from the context by attentive readers, reasoned out or argued for as a plausible interp. of the statement” (313).

10. Quintilian, *Institutes of Oratory* 11.3.46, trans. Donald Andrew Russel (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2001). (Original: “sed ut in isdem partibus isdemque adfectibus sint tamen quaedam non ita magnae vocis declinationes, prout aut verborum dignitas aut sententiarum natura.”)

11. Ibid. (Original: “ut qui singulis pinxerunt coloribus, alia tamen eminentiora alia reductiora fecerunt, sine quo ne membris quidem suas lineas dedissent.”) See also Cicero, *De Oratore* 3.217, 3.224–25.

12. Quintilian, *Institutes of Oratory* 11.3.47. (Original: “facie tamen quasi vultus mutandus est.”)

13. Richards, *Practical Criticism*, esp. 175–76 and 196–200.

14. William Empson, *The Structure of Complex Words* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1967), 17.

15. Ibid., 18.

16. Cleanth Brooks and Robert Penn Warren, *Understanding Poetry* (New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1938), 181, 184.

17. Geoffrey Walton, “The Tone of Ben Jonson’s Poetry,” reprinted in *Seventeenth-Century English Poetry: Essays in Modern Criticism*, ed. William R. Keast (New York: Oxford University Press, 1962), 196–97.

18. Ibid., 200.

19. Terry Eagleton, *How to Read a Poem* (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2007), 114–18; Don Bialostosky, *How to Play a Poem* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press), 92–118. Bialostosky is thoughtful about ambiguities of tone and problems of interpretation.

20. Recent work on Heidegger's concept of "mood" seems also to revive earlier discussions of "tone," if under another name. See, for example, the special issue "In the Mood," ed. Rita Felski and Susa Fraiman, *New Literary History* 43, no. 3 (2012).
21. Ngai, *Ugly Feelings*, 47.
22. Empson, *The Structure of Complex Words*, 18.
23. See Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, *Touching Feeling: Affect, Pedagogy, and Performativity* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2003), 123–52; Ngai, *Ugly Feelings*, 298–331.
24. Jonathan Culler, *Theory of the Lyric* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2015), 188.
25. See, e.g., "Of a surfet" (110–11), "Two blinde men" (122), "Of two studentes" (124), "Of this woorde enough" (127), and "Of the foole and the gentlemans nose" (135). Page citations refer to Heywood, *John Heywood's Works*.
26. See Christopher Warley, *Reading Class through Shakespeare, Donne, and Milton* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), esp. 1–28.
27. Ngai, *Ugly Feelings*, 20.
28. See Ngai's description of the "ambiguous affect of affective disorientation in general—what we might think of as a state of feeling vaguely 'unsettled' or 'confused,' or, more precisely, a meta-feeling in which one feels confused about *what* one is feeling" (ibid., 14).
29. In *Juvenal and Persius*, ed. and trans. Susanna Morton Braund (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2004), lines 236–38. (Original: "raedarum transitus arto / vicorum in flexu et stantis convicia mandrae / eripient somnum Druso vitulisque marinis.")
30. Ibid., lines 261–63. (Original: "domus interea secura patellas / iam lavat et bucca foculum excitat et sonat unctis / striglibus et pleno componit lintea guto.")
31. See Burke, *A Rhetoric of Motives*, 94.
32. Richards, *Practical Criticism*, 311.
33. See Culler, who provides the following answer to this essay's title: "What we 'hear' is our own ventriloquizing of ambiguously directed address" (187).
34. David Marno, *Death Be Not Proud: The Art of Holy Attention* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2016).