

THE POCKET POETS SERIES

HOWL

AND OTHER POEMS

ALLEN GINSBERG

Introduction by

William Carlos Williams

NUMBER FOUR

Howl

For Carl Solomon

I

I saw the best minds of my generation destroyed by
madness, starving hysterical naked,
dragging themselves through the negro streets at dawn
looking for an angry fix,
angelheaded hipsters burning for the ancient heavenly
connection to the starry dynamo in the machin-
ery of night,
who poverty and tatters and hollow-eyed and high sat
up smoking in the supernatural darkness of
cold-water flats floating across the tops of cities
contemplating jazz,
who bared their brains to Heaven under the El and
saw Mohammedan angels staggering on tene-
ment roofs illuminated,
who passed through universities with radiant cool eyes
hallucinating Arkansas and Blake-light tragedy
among the scholars of war,
who were expelled from the academies for crazy &
publishing obscene odes on the windows of the
skull,
who cowered in unshaven rooms in underwear, burn-
ing their money in wastebaskets and listening
to the Terror through the wall,
who got busted in their pubic beards returning through
Laredo with a belt of marijuana for New York,
who ate fire in paint hotels or drank turpentine in
Paradise Alley, death, or purgatoried their
torsos night after night
with dreams, with drugs, with waking nightmares, al-
cohol and cock and endless balls,
incomparable blind; streets of shuddering cloud and
lightning in the mind leaping toward poles of
Canada & Paterson, illuminating all the mo-
tionless world of Time between,
Peyote solidities of halls, backyard green tree cemetery
dawns, wine drunkenness over the rooftops,
storefront boroughs of teahead joyride neon
blinking traffic light, sun and moon and tree
vibrations in the roaring winter dusks of Brook-
lyn, ashcan rantings and kind king light of mind,
who chained themselves to subways for the endless
ride from Battery to holy Bronx on benzedrine

until the noise of wheels and children brought
them down shuddering mouth-wracked and
battered bleak of brain all drained of brilliance
in the drear light of Zoo,
who sank all night in submarine light of Bickford's
floated out and sat through the stale beer after
noon in desolate Fugazzi's, listening to the crack
of doom on the hydrogen jukebox,
who talked continuously seventy hours from park to
pad to bar to Bellevue to museum to the Brook-
lyn Bridge,
lost battalion of platonic conversationalists jumping
down the stoops off fire escapes off windowsills
off Empire State out of the moon,
yacketayakking screaming vomiting whispering facts
and memories and anecdotes and
and shocks of hospitals and jails and wars,
whole intellects disgorged in total recall for seven days
and nights with brilliant eyes, meat for the
Synagogue cast on the pavement,
who vanished into nowhere Zen New Jersey leaving a
trail of ambiguous picture postcards of Atlantic
City Hall,
suffering Eastern sweats and Tangerian bone-grind-
ings and migraines of China under junk-with-
drawal in Newark's bleak furnished room,
who wandered around and around at midnight in the
railroad yard wondering where to go, and went,
leaving no broken hearts,
who lit cigarettes in boxcars boxcars boxcars racketing
through snow toward lonesome farms in grand-
father night,
who studied Plotinus Poe St. John of the Cross telep-
athy and bop kabbalah because the cosmos in-
stinctively vibrated at their feet in Kansas,
who loned it through the streets of Idaho seeking vis-
ionary indian angels who were visionary indian
angels,
who thought they were only mad when Baltimore
gleamed in supernatural ecstasy,
who jumped in limousines with the Chinaman of Okla-
homa on the impulse of winter midnight street
light smalltown rain,
who lounged hungry and lonesome through Houston
seeking jazz or sex or soup, and followed the
brilliant Spaniard to converse about America
and Eternity, a hopeless task, and so took ship
to Africa,

who disappeared into the volcanoes of Mexico leaving
behind nothing but the shadow of dungarees
and the lava and ash of poetry scattered in fire
place Chicago,
who reappeared on the West Coast investigating the
F.B.I. in beards and shorts with big pacifist
eyes sexy in their dark skin passing out incom-
prehensible leaflets,
who burned cigarette holes in their arms protesting
the narcotic tobacco haze of Capitalism,
who distributed Supercommunist pamphlets in Union
Square weeping and undressing while the sirens
of Los Alamos wailed them down, and wailed
down Wall, and the Staten Island ferry also
wailed,
who broke down crying in white gymnasiums naked
and trembling before the machinery of other
skeletons,
who bit detectives in the neck and shrieked with delight
in policecars for committing no crime but their
own wild cooking pederasty and intoxication,
who howled on their knees in the subway and were
dragged off the roof waving genitals and manu-
scripts,
who let themselves be fucked in the ass by saintly
motorcyclists, and screamed with joy,
who blew and were blown by those human seraphim,
the sailors, caresses of Atlantic and Caribbean
love,
who balled in the morning in the evenings in rose
gardens and the grass of public parks and
cemeteries scattering their semen freely to
whomever come who may,
who hiccuped endlessly trying to giggle but wound up
with a sob behind a partition in a Turkish Bath
when the blond & naked angel came to pierce
them with a sword,
who lost their loveboys to the three old shrews of fate
the one eyed shrew of the heterosexual dollar
the one eyed shrew that winks out of the womb
and the one eyed shrew that does nothing but
sit on her ass and snip the intellectual golden
threads of the craftsman's loom,
who copulated ecstatic and insatiate with a bottle of
beer a sweetheart a package of cigarettes a can-
dle and fell off the bed, and continued along
the floor and down the hall and ended fainting
on the wall with a vision of ultimate cunt and

come eluding the last gyzym of consciousness,
who sweetened the snatches of a million girls trembling
in the sunset, and were red eyed in the morning
but prepared to sweeten the snatch of the sun
rise, flashing buttocks under barns and naked
in the lake,
who went out whoring through Colorado in myriad
stolen night-cars, N.C., secret hero of these
poems, cocksman and Adonis of Denver-joy
to the memory of his innumerable lays of girls
in empty lots & diner backyards, moviehouses'
rickety rows, on mountaintops in caves or with
gaunt waitresses in familiar roadside lonely pet-
ticoat upliftings & especially secret gas-station
solipsisms of johns, & hometown alleys too,
who faded out in vast sordid movies, were shifted in
dreams, woke on a sudden Manhattan, and
picked themselves up out of basements hung
over with heartless Tokay and horrors of Third
Avenue iron dreams & stumbled to unemploy-
ment offices,
who walked all night with their shoes full of blood on
the snowbank docks waiting for a door in the
East River to open to a room full of steamheat
and opium,
who created great suicidal dramas on the apartment
cliff-banks of the Hudson under the wartime
blue floodlight of the moon & their heads shall
be crowned with laurel in oblivion,
who ate the lamb stew of the imagination or digested
the crab at the muddy bottom of the rivers of
Bowery,
who wept at the romance of the streets with their
pushcarts full of onions and bad music,
who sat in boxes breathing in the darkness under the
bridge, and rose up to build harpsichords in
their lofts,
who coughed on the sixth floor of Harlem crowned
with flame under the tubercular sky surrounded
by orange crates of theology,
who scribbled all night rocking and rolling over lofty
incantations which in the yellow morning were
stanzas of gibberish,
who cooked rotten animals lung heart feet tail borsht
& tortillas dreaming of the pure vegetable
kingdom,
who plunged themselves under meat trucks looking for
an egg,

who threw their watches off the roof to cast their ballot
for Eternity outside of Time, & alarm clocks
fell on their heads every day for the next decade,
who cut their wrists three times successively unsuccess-
fully, gave up and were forced to open antique
stores where they thought they were growing
old and cried,
who were burned alive in their innocent flannel suits
on Madison Avenue amid blasts of leaden verse
& the tanked-up clatter of the iron regiments
of fashion & the nitroglycerine shrieks of the
fairies of advertising & the mustard gas of sinis-
ter intelligent editors, or were run down by the
drunken taxicabs of Absolute Reality,
who jumped off the Brooklyn Bridge this actually hap-
pened and walked away unknown and forgotten
into the ghostly daze of Chinatown soup alley
ways & firetrucks, not even one free beer,
who sang out of their windows in despair, fell out of
the subway window, jumped in the filthy Pas-
saic, leaped on negroes, cried all over the street,
danced on broken wineglasses barefoot smashed
phonograph records of nostalgic European
1930s German jazz finished the whiskey and
threw up groaning into the bloody toilet, moans
in their ears and the blast of colossal steam
whistles,
who barreled down the highways of the past journeying
to each other's hotrod-Golgotha jail-solitude
watch or Birmingham jazz incarnation,
who drove crosscountry seventytwo hours to find out
if I had a vision or you had a vision or he had
a vision to find out Eternity,
who journeyed to Denver, who died in Denver, who
came back to Denver & waited in vain, who
watched over Denver & brooded & loned in
Denver and finally went away to find out the
Time, & now Denver is lonesome for her heroes,
who fell on their knees in hopeless cathedrals praying
for each other's salvation and light and breasts,
until the soul illuminated its hair for a second,
who crashed through their minds in jail waiting for
impossible criminals with golden heads and the
charm of reality in their hearts who sang sweet
blues to Alcatraz,
who retired to Mexico to cultivate a habit, or Rocky
Mount to tender Buddha or Tangiers to boys
or Southern Pacific to the black locomotive or

Harvard to Narcissus to Woodlawn to the
daisychain or grave,
who demanded sanity trials accusing the radio of hyp-
notism & were left with their insanity & their
hands & a hung jury,
who threw potato salad at CCNY lecturers on Dadaism
and subsequently presented themselves on the
granite steps of the madhouse with shaven heads
and harlequin speech of suicide, demanding in-
stantaneous lobotomy,
and who were given instead the concrete void of insulin
Metrazol electricity hydrotherapy psycho-
therapy occupational therapy pingpong &
amnesia,
who in humorless protest overturned only one symbolic
pingpong table, resting briefly in catatonia,
returning years later truly bald except for a wig of
blood, and tears and fingers, to the visible mad
man doom of the wards of the madtowns of the
East,
Pilgrim State's Rockland's and Greystone's foetid
halls, bickering with the echoes of the soul, rock-
ing and rolling in the midnight solitude-bench
dolmen-realms of love, dream of life a night-
mare, bodies turned to stone as heavy as the
moon,
with mother finally *****, and the last fantastic book
flung out of the tenement window, and the last
door closed at 4. A.M. and the last telephone
slammed at the wall in reply and the last fur-
nished room emptied down to the last piece of
mental furniture, a yellow paper rose twisted
on a wire hanger in the closet, and even that
imaginary, nothing but a hopeful little bit of
hallucination
ah, Carl, while you are not safe I am not safe, and
now you're really in the total animal soup of
time
and who therefore ran through the icy streets obsessed
with a sudden flash of the alchemy of the use
of the ellipse the catalog the meter & the vibrat-
ing plane,
who dreamt and made incarnate gaps in Time & Space
through images juxtaposed, and trapped the
archangel of the soul between 2 visual images
and joined the elemental verbs and set the noun
and dash of consciousness together jumping
with sensation of Pater Omnipotens Aeterna

Deus

to recreate the syntax and measure of poor human
prose and stand before you speechless and intel-
ligent and shaking with shame, rejected yet con-
fessing out the soul to conform to the rhythm
of thought in his naked and endless head,
the madman bum and angel beat in Time, unknown,
yet putting down here what might be left to say
in time come after death,
and rose reincarnate in the ghostly clothes of jazz in
the goldhorn shadow of the band and blew the
suffering of America's naked mind for love into
an eli eli lamma lamma sabacthani saxophone
cry that shivered the cities down to the last radio
with the absolute heart of the poem of life butchered
out of their own bodies good to eat a thousand
years.

II

What sphinx of cement and aluminum bashed open
their skulls and ate up their brains and imagi-
nation?

Moloch! Solitude! Filth! Ugliness! Ashcans and unob-
tainable dollars! Children screaming under the
stairways! Boys sobbing in armies! Old men
weeping in the parks!

Moloch! Moloch! Nightmare of Moloch! Moloch the
loveless! Mental Moloch! Moloch the heavy
judger of men!

Moloch the incomprehensible prison! Moloch the
crossbone soulless jailhouse and Congress of
sorrows! Moloch whose buildings are judgment!
Moloch the vast stone of war! Moloch the stun-
ned governments!

Moloch whose mind is pure machinery! Moloch whose
blood is running money! Moloch whose fingers
are ten armies! Moloch whose breast is a canni-
bal dynamo! Moloch whose ear is a smoking
tomb!

Moloch whose eyes are a thousand blind windows!
Moloch whose skyscrapers stand in the long
streets like endless Jehovahs! Moloch whose fac-
tories dream and croak in the fog! Moloch whose
smokestacks and antennae crown the cities!

Moloch whose love is endless oil and stone! Moloch

whose soul is electricity and banks! Moloch
whose poverty is the specter of genius! Moloch
whose fate is a cloud of sexless hydrogen!
Moloch whose name is the Mind!
Moloch in whom I sit lonely! Moloch in whom I dream
Angels! Crazy in Moloch! Cocksucker in
Moloch! Lacklove and manless in Moloch!
Moloch who entered my soul early! Moloch in whom
I am a consciousness without a body! Moloch
who frightened me out of my natural ecstasy!
Moloch whom I abandon! Wake up in Moloch!
Light streaming out of the sky!
Moloch! Moloch! Robot apartments! invisible suburbs!
skeleton treasuries! blind capitals! demonic
industries! spectral nations! invincible mad
houses! granite cocks! monstrous bombs!
They broke their backs lifting Moloch to Heaven! Pave-
ments, trees, radios, tons! lifting the city to
Heaven which exists and is everywhere about
us!
Visions! omens! hallucinations! miracles! ecstasies!
gone down the American river!
Dreams! adorations! illuminations! religions! the whole
boatload of sensitive bullshit!
Breakthroughs! over the river! flips and crucifixions!
gone down the flood! Highs! Epiphanies! De-
spairs! Ten years' animal screams and suicides!
Minds! New loves! Mad generation! down on
the rocks of Time!
Real holy laughter in the river! They saw it all! the
wild eyes! the holy yells! They bade farewell!
They jumped off the roof! to solitude! waving!
carrying flowers! Down to the river! into the
street!

III

Carl Solomon! I'm with you in Rockland
where you're madder than I am
I'm with you in Rockland
where you must feel very strange
I'm with you in Rockland
where you imitate the shade of my mother
I'm with you in Rockland
where you've murdered your twelve secretaries
I'm with you in Rockland

where you laugh at this invisible humor
I'm with you in Rockland
where we are great writers on the same dreadful
typewriter

I'm with you in Rockland
where your condition has become serious and
is reported on the radio

I'm with you in Rockland
where the faculties of the skull no longer admit
the worms of the senses

I'm with you in Rockland
where you drink the tea of the breasts of the
spinsters of Utica

I'm with you in Rockland
where you pun on the bodies of your nurses the
harpies of the Bronx

I'm with you in Rockland
where you scream in a straightjacket that you're
losing the game of the actual pingpong of the
abyss

I'm with you in Rockland
where you bang on the catatonic piano the soul
is innocent and immortal it should never die
ungodly in an armed madhouse

I'm with you in Rockland
where fifty more shocks will never return your
soul to its body again from its pilgrimage to a
cross in the void

I'm with you in Rockland
where you accuse your doctors of insanity and
plot the Hebrew socialist revolution against the
fascist national Golgotha

I'm with you in Rockland
where you will split the heavens of Long Island
and resurrect your living human Jesus from the
superhuman tomb

I'm with you in Rockland
where there are twenty-five-thousand mad com-
rades all together singing the final stanzas of the Internationale

I'm with you in Rockland
where we hug and kiss the United States under
our bedsheets the United States that coughs all
night and won't let us sleep

I'm with you in Rockland
where we wake up electrified out of the coma
by our own souls' airplanes roaring over the
roof they've come to drop angelic bombs the
hospital illuminates itself imaginary walls col-

lapse O skinny legions run outside O starry
spangled shock of mercy the eternal war is
here O victory forget your underwear we're
free

I'm with you in Rockland
in my dreams you walk dripping from a sea-
journey on the highway across America in tears
to the door of my cottage in the Western night

San Francisco, 1955-56

FOOTNOTE TO HOWL

Holy! Holy! Holy! Holy! Holy! Holy! Holy! Holy! Holy!
Holy! Holy! Holy! Holy! Holy! Holy!
The world is holy! The soul is holy! The skin is holy!
The nose is holy! The tongue and cock and hand
and asshole holy!
Everything is holy! everybody's holy! everywhere is
holy! everyday is in eternity! Everyman's an
angel!
The bum's as holy as the seraphim! the madman is
holy as you my soul are holy!
The typewriter is holy the poem is holy the voice is
holy the hearers are holy the ecstasy is holy!
Holy Peter holy Allen holy Solomon holy Lucien holy
Kerouac holy Huncke holy Burroughs holy Cas-
sady holy the unknown buggered and suffering
beggars holy the hideous human angels!
Holy my mother in the insane asylum! Holy the cocks
of the grandfathers of Kansas!
Holy the groaning saxophone! Holy the bop
apocalypse! Holy the jazzbands marijuana
hipsters peace & junk & drums!
Holy the solitudes of skyscrapers and pavements! Holy
the cafeterias filled with the millions! Holy the
mysterious rivers of tears under the streets!
Holy the lone juggernaut! Holy the vast lamb of the
middle class! Holy the crazy shepherds of rebell-
ion! Who digs Los Angeles IS Los Angeles!
Holy New York Holy San Francisco Holy Peoria &
Seattle Holy Paris Holy Tangiers Holy Moscow
Holy Istanbul!
Holy time in eternity holy eternity in time holy the
clocks in space holy the fourth dimension holy
the fifth International holy the Angel in Moloch!

Holy the sea holy the desert holy the railroad holy the
locomotive holy the visions holy the hallucina-
tions holy the miracles holy the eyeball holy the
abyss!
Holy forgiveness! mercy! charity! faith! Holy! Ours!
bodies! suffering! magnanimity!
Holy the supernatural extra brilliant intelligent
kindness of the soul!

Berkeley, 1955

Notes (based on Barry Miles)

Crucial revision: "Mystical" is replaced by "hystexical," a key to the tone of the poem. Tho the initial idealistic impulse of the line went one way, afterthought noticed bathos, and common sense dictated "hysteria." One mind can entertain both notions without "any irritable reaching after fact and reason," as Keats proposed with his definition of "Negative Capability." The word "hysterical" is judicious, but the verse is overtly sympathetic. "Do I contradict myself?/Very well then I contradict myself,/(I am large, I contain multitudes.)" (Whitman, "Song of Myself," 51.) The poem's tone is in this mixture of empathy and shrewdness, the comic realism of Chaplin's City Lights, a humorous hyperbole derived in part from Blake's style in The French Revolution "If you have a choice of two things and can't decide take both," says Gregory Corso. Negative Capability = One Taste.

2 [2]

Herbert Huncke cruised Harlem and Times Square areas at irregular hours, late forties, scoring junk. See Herbert Huncke, *The Evening Sun Turned Crimson* (Cherry Valley, N.Y.: Cherry Valley Editions, 1980).

- [3]

"Starry dynamo" and "machinery of night" are derived from Dylan Thomas's mixture of Nature and Machinery in "The force that through the green fuse drives the flower / Drives my green age ..."

3 [4]

Ref.: Bill Keck, Anton Rosenberg and other contemporaries who gathered often at the San Remo bar, living in Lower East Side, N.Y., early 1950s --their circle was

prototype for Kerouac's fictional description in *The Subterraneans*, written 1953. The jazz was late bop Charlie Parker, played in Bowery loft jam sessions in those few years.

4 [5]

Jack Kerouac had given anecdote of Philip Lamantia's celestial adventure to author in early 1950s. Poet Lamantia in note written for author May 25, 1986, New Orleans, provides this accurate account:

1953, Spring, aged 25, reading the Koran on a couch, one night, I was suddenly physically laid out by a powerful force beyond my volition, which rendered me almost comatose: suddenly, consciousness was contracted to a single point at the top of my head through which I was "siphoned" beyond the room, space and time into another state of awareness that seemed utterly beyond any other state before or since experienced. I floated toward an endless-looking universe of misty, lighted color forms: green, red, blue and silver, which circulated before me accompanied by such bliss that the one dominant thought was: This is it; I never want to return to anywhere but this place- i.e., I wanted to remain in this Ineffable Blissful Realm and explore it forever-since I felt a(radiance beyond even further within it and so, suddenly the outline of a benign bearded Face appeared to whom I addressed my desire to remain in this marvel-and who calmly replied: "You can return, after you complete your work."

Part of Manhattan's subway system, the Third Avenue elevated railway, one of those familiarly called the "El," was demolished in the mid-'50s. See Kerouac's "sketches" in *Visions of Cody* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1972), P. 6; as well as pictures in *Berenice Abbott. American Photographer*, ed. Hank O'Neal (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1982), pp. 90, 97, 119, 123, 140.

5 [8]

Ref. Carl Solomon, an anecdote. Carl Solomon writes: "I burned money while upset about the evils of materialism in 1956, prior to commitment to Pilgrim." Date may have been earlier; "How]" written in 1955.

9 [6]

Refers to author's adventures at Columbia College.

"Anarchy" changes to "Arkansas," in order to substitute a more concrete thing-name for an abstract word.

"Post-war cynical scholars" refers to some of Lionel Trilling's students, perhaps an inkling of literary "cold-warrior" Norman Podhoretz -see *Making It* (New York: Random House, 1967), pp. 39-40, 215-16. Time magazine in the fifties portrayed

American intellectuals as comfortable, complacent. Time's negative review of Rachel Carson's *Silent Spring* showed early (& anti-feminist) antagonism toward the inchoate ecology movement.

In final text, "scholars of war": During author's residence, 1944-48, Columbia scientists helped split atoms for military power in secrecy. Subsequent military-industrial funding increasingly dominated university research, thus two decades later rebellious student strikes had as primary grievance that the trusteeships of the university interlocked with Vietnam War-related corporations. That cold war influence darkened the complexion of scientific studies and humanistic attitudes. Columbia President D. D. Eisenhower himself had warned against such military-industrial complexity in his farewell address as U.S. Chief Executive. However, two decades after 1968 student activism, secret military-industrial research reached cosmic proportions, and "Star Wars" era university contracts swelled academic coffers with little hint of an historical scandal. Common private complaint against this "monstrous exotic" rarely flashed on TV.

10-11 [10]

This verse evolves into "Paradise Alley," a coldwater-flat courtyard at 501 East 11th Street, NE corner of Avenue A, Lower East Side New York, bricked up in the '70s and demolished after fire in 1985. As sketched by Kerouac in *The Subterraneans*, the prototype of his heroine Mardou Fox lived there in 1953 in friendly contact with the author, Corso and Kerouac, and typed the original ms. of Burroughs' *Yage Letters and Queer*.

Various artists lived in cheap hotels in the area, St. Mark's Place, their small rooms suffused with the smell of turpentine.

12 [13]

The "backyard green tree cemetery dawns" ref. Bill Keck's apartment on East 2nd-Street off Second Avenue, in New York City, overlooking cemetery; see author's April 17, 1952, entry, *Journals Early Fifties, Early Sixties*, ed. Gordon Ball - (New York: Grove Press, 1977). Keck's early poem ended: "Life is the green lime tree." The author tried peyote (sold from East 10th Street storefront) two days later.

The "teahead joyride" likely refers to drive Neal Cassady and Jack Kerouac took thru Brooklyn to hear some early-morning jazz late 1940s. Final draft "kind king light of mind" paraphrases Kerouac's epithet "Kind King Mind" in *Mexico City Blues* and his last phrase in *Visions of Cody*, "Adios, King."

"Tree vibrations" ref. author's first peyote experience-see *Journals*, pp. 7-13.

13 [14]

From an anecdote, trying to score for morphine from an old doctor in the Bronx, 1945, told by Herbert Huncke in the 115th Street apartment.

This verse, the longest so far in its original composition, was a conscious attempt to go all the way from A to Z (Zoo) in associative flash and extension of breath.

14 [15]

Author's casual college job was mopping floors at various Manhattan cafeterias including Bickford's 42nd Street.

Fugazzi's Sixth Avenue Greenwich Village bar was early 1950s alternative to the noisier San Remo nearby. "Fugazzi" phrasing was added to accommodate "jukebox"; cafeterias had no jukeboxes.

Some end-of-the-world or apocalyptic vibration was noticed by the "subterraneans" in the roaring of the jukebox, thus "hydrogen [bomb] jukebox."

15-16 [16]

Ruth G---, an intelligent dreamy young Jewish woman ("meat for the synagogue" [19]), who wore Salvation Army granny dresses in times of Eisenhower prosperity, and associated with author, Carl Solomon and others in early 1950s Greenwich Village, one day began a flight of talk in Washington Square that continued through the day and night for 72 hours until she was finally committed to Bellevue.

Ref. also Neal Cassady's nonstop monologues; see Kerouac's Visions of Cody, pp. 268-74, for comic paraphrase of same.

"Eyeball kicks": See note re Cézanne, 44 [73] below.

"Nowhere Zen New jerseys of amesia": Composite image of a few post-college "career failures" characteristic of 1950s, including author's own two year sojourn in Paterson 1950-51 on leaving Columbia Psychiatric Institute.

Author's family spent many 1930s summers at the shore in Belmar-
"Atlantic City," final draft.

"Sharks" ref. recurrent seaside newspaper reports and souvenir postcards.

18 [21]

"Tangerian bone-grindings": Details of W. S. Burroughs' withdrawals from heroin are found in his letters to the author, Letters to Allen Ginsberg 1953-1957 (Geneva: Editions Claude Givaudin/Am Here Books, 1978; New York: Full Court Press, 1982).

Author saw "Newark's bleak furnished room" with Eugene Brooks, his brother, who lived in one such studying law, late forties.

19 [24]

Author had read in Wilhelm Reich's Function of the Orgasm and Mass Psychology of Fascism, Vico's Scienza Nuova, a smattering of Gurdjieff (at Burroughs' suggestion, 1945), little on kabbalah, and knew Robert Fludd's name only thru reference in W. B. Yeats and random illustrations of cosmographic human form. Change to final draft "Plotinus Poe St. John of the Cross telepathy and bop kabbalah" focused on matter closer to author's reading, juxtaposing hermetic sublime with Americanist esoterica for sake of sound and provincial sense. Plotinus and St. John of the Cross (and Plato's Phaedrus) were arranged in bookcase "orange crates of theology" in Russell Durgin's 121st Street Spanish Harlem 6th floor apartment, where author experienced Wm. Blake illumination described elsewhere. Journal entry April 1953: "to read recommended by [Meyer] Schapiro. Robt. Fludd--Cosmographia . . ." A brief paper on Vico was written as special study of cyclical history for Prof. Jacques Barzun's Columbia College class 1946.

Overt intention of this mystical name-dropping was to connect younger readers, Whitman's children already familiar with Poe and Bop, to older Gnostic tradition. Whitman dropped such hints to his fancied readers.

20 [36]

"Saintly motorcyclists" ref. Marlon Brando's film The Wild One, 1954.

"And screamed with joy": Popular superstition had it that one screamed with pain in such a circumstance. "Howl"'s enthusiastic version is more realistic. For its time the iconoclastic "shocker" of the poem, this verse reversed vulgar stereotype with a statement of fact. Tho "screamed" is a hyperbole -- "moaned" more common.

This crucial verse militated against author's thinking of the writing draft as "poet in any way that would reach th thus author was left free to he actually thought, from his own experience.

21 [37]

The poet Hart Crane picked up sailors to love on Sand Street, Brooklyn, etc. Suffering alcoholic exhaustion and rejected by the crew on his last voyage from Veracruz, Crane disappeared off the fantail of the Caribbean ship Orizaba.

- [43]

Ref. Neal Cassady, 1926-1968, author of *The Third & Other Writings* (San Francisco, City Light Books, 1971). His account of adolescent adventures stealing cars, seducing waitresses and haunting Denver alleyways written in long "Joan Anderson Letter", inspired Kerouac to forms of spontaneous personal narrative that involved continuous scanning of writer's consciousness during time of original composition for simultaneous multilevel references sufficiently swiftly to include them in extended sentences.

It was Cassady's profusion of physical energy and abundance of self-recollection that brought him to Kerouac's attention as prototype of Dean Moriarty in *On the Road* (1950) and Cody Pomeroy in its grander sequel, *Visions of Cody* (1952), among other books.

For twelve years with wife, house and children an exemplary senior brakeman on S. P. Railroad till entrapment by marijuana tax agents, Cassady served thereafter as central figure and model driver of Kesey's "Merry Prankster" psychedelic Trips Festival crosscountry and Bay Area celebrations, inspiring songs and attitudes of *The Grateful Dead*.

Solitary during withdrawal from the exhaustions of amphetamine in San Miguel Allende, Mexico, Feb 3, 1968, he passed by the door of a wedding party. was invited in, drank alcoholic pulque, was later found collapsed and suffocating on railroad tracks outside town and died in hospital.

26 [26]

First and final versions ref author's Blake illumination E. Harlem 1948. See *Paris Review* interview collected in *Writers at Work, Series 3* (New York: Viking Press, 1967), pp. 301-11. Author also dimly remembered an anecdote from conversation about surrealist poet Philip Lamantia, mostly apocryphal.

For "Baltimore," Poe association, his brick house and grave are there.

27 [44]

"Heartless Tokay" ref. Kerouac's letters, an account of occasional drinking on weekends in New York.

"filthy Passaic": In W. Carlos Williams "The Wanderer: A Baroque Fantasy". 1915, the youthful poet plunges his hands in her waters requesting sacrament of Goddess of Passaic River for his Muse: "and the filthy Passaic consented."

28 [58]

"Fell out of windows vomit in the toilet" ref. William Cannastra, legendary late 1940s New York bohemian figure, life cut short by alcoholic accident, body balanced out of subway window, knocked against a pillar, fell at Astor Place, Manhattan. Final draft: "Leaped ... cried ... danced ... smashed records" ref. same saga.

"Nostalgic German jazz": Rise and Fall of the City of Mahagonny Brecht-Weill opera arias "O Show Me the Way to the Next Whiskey Bar" and "Benares Song," which echoed loud late nights repeatedly in Cannastra's West 21st Street Manhattan loft 1949.

31 [32]

Living Theater director Judith Malina writes:

June 15, 1955, Julian [Beck] and I and about 27 others refused to take shelter when "the sirens .. wailed." It was City Hall Park and not in Union Square, and I was sent to Bellevue for sassing the judge. The trial (with lawyers from the Ford Foundation's 20th Fund) was prolonged.

"We were an all star set of defendants; [including] Hugh Corbin, Dorothy Day, Ralph diGia, Ammon Hennacy, Richard Kem, Jackson MacLow, A. J. Muste, James Peck and Bayard Rustin.... I tell story in my Grove Press diary [The Diaries of Judith Malina 1947-1957 (New York, 1984)] on pps. 367-374.

"There's another telling of the story of the trial, etc. in a booklet called What Happened On June 15th? put out by the War Resisters' League. I don't think that anyone took their clothes off for that demo (with Day and Muste!), though surely at many others.

Account in Malina's Diaries is invaluable for those who wish to be acquainted with the genesis of postwar peace protest movement, for its humor and simplicity.

32 [57]

"Meat trucks": This apocryphal burlesque conforms with Chaplinesque tone of "hysterical" verse 1.

Tuli Kupferberg writes:

In the Spring of 1945 at the age of 21, full of youthful angst, depression over the war and other insanities and at the end of a disastrous love affair, I went over the side of the Manhattan Bridge.

I was picked up tenderly by the crew of a passing tug and taken to Gouverneur Hospital.

My injuries were relatively slight (fracture of a transverse spinal process) but enuf to put me in a body cast.

In the hospital wards I met other suicide attempters less fortunate than me: one who wd walk on crutches and one who wd never walk again.

Thruout the years I have been annoyed many times by "O did you really jump off the Brooklyn Bridge?" as if that was a great accomplishment.

Remember I was a failure at the attempt.

Had I succeeded there wd have been 3 less wonderful beings (my children) in the world, no Fugs, and a few missing good poems & songs, & some people (including some lovely women, hey!) who might have missed my company.

In the US today, over 5000 young people between the ages of 15 & 24 do succeed every year in destroying themselves.

Fools!

There's nothing glamorous about it. (I know first hand of someone who regretted the act the day after & died a lingering death of throat burns 2 weeks later.)

There's time, there's time.

You'll be dead a long long while, & sooner than you imagine.

Patience patience, my young, wild, beautiful, daffmed friends!

See Tuli Kupferberg's 1001 Ways to Live Without Working (New York: Birth Press, 1961), illustrated edition (New York: Grove Press, 1967); Kill for Peace (being Yeah 10), (New York: Birth Press, 1965); 1001 Ways to Beat the Draft (with Robert Bashlow), (New York: Layton, 1966), illustrated edition (New York: Grove Press, 1967); 1001 Ways to Make Love (New York: Grove Press, 1969). Also Birth magazine and all the recordings of The Fugs, significant intellectual breakthrough rock band of the 1960s returned to play their old and new lyric satires even more brilliantly in the mid 1980s.

33 [-]

Ref. Iris Brody, Lower East Side artist, whose work author collected. Unstable materials used to compose her pictures deteriorated within two decades. Her painting of poet-musician Jackson Mac Low with recorder can be seen in background of author's photographs of William Burroughs 1953.

34 [31]

A specialized Columbia College jape or fad.

"Narcotic ... haze of capitalism": "WASHINGTON-The tobacco industry spent \$1.24 billion advertising cigarettes in 1980 and got the average American smoker to buy 11,633 cigarettes that year, the Federal Trade Commission said.. .."- Washington Post, November 22, 1982

35 [60]

"Crosscountry in 72 hours": To author's recollection, Neal Cassady literally did so in one late-'40s coast-to-coast auto trip on the road to see Kerouac and compare recent illuminations and despairs.

36 [61]

Lyric lines by Kerouac: "Down in Denver,/ Down in Denver,/ All I did was die."

Final-text verse ends "& now Denver is lonesome for her heroes," a line taken intact from December 1951 journal entry, drafts for the poem "Shroudy Stranger of the Night." See also note, verse 66 [23].

37 [34]

"Bit detectives" ref. William Cannastra, not literal.

38-39

Description of an unfortunate car crash 1948 on Utopia Blvd, Queens, New York, which resulted in arrest of author, Herbert Huncke and friends. Stolen car was filled with stolen loot from second-story jobs, as well as several years' journals, address books, letters from William Burroughs, etc., being transported for safekeeping with author's brother prior departure from N.Y.C. See Jane Kramer, Allen Ginsberg in America (New York: Random House, 1969), pp. 123-30.

41 [29]

Ref. Malcolm Lowry, Under the Volcano. More specifically the myth of John Hoffman, N.Y. acquaintance of author and Carl Solomon. Solomon writes:

"John Hoffman, 1930?-1950 or 1951. Home-town: Menlo Park, California. Friend of Gerd Stern, et, born circa 1930. Also friend of Philip Lamantia, PO Chris Maclaine, both California poets. Blond, handsome, bespectacled, long hair. Spaced out

quality that amused many people. Girl friend blonde girl named to Mexico in 1950. Experimented with peyote. Died of mononucleosis while in Mexico. Poems highly regarded by avant-garde connoisseurs."

Philip Lamantia read Hoffman's work at the seminal Six Gallery poetry reading where author first read 'Part I of "Howl."

Chicago as fireplace ref. Mrs. O'Leary's cow, which kicked over kerosene lantern, starting the celebrated fire of 1871 which consumed that city.

42 [69-70]

Ref. somewhat to Carl Solomon & those we left behind at Psychiatric Institute, 1949. Dolmens mark a vanished civilization, as Stonehenge or Greystone and Rockland monoliths. At time of writing, author's mother dwelled in her last months at Pilgrim State Hospital, Brentwood, N.Y., housing over 25,000, the largest such mental hospital in the world. Description of the wards and halls is drawn from Greystone State Hospital, near Morristown, N.J., which author frequented in adolescence to visit Naomi Ginsberg. New York's Rockland State Hospital's name was substituted for rhythmic euphony. Poem was occasioned by unexpected news of Carl Solomon's recent removal to Pilgrim State.

At this point, with an unusually extended line, the triadic form of William Carlos Williams definitely broke down and author realized it couldn't be restored as measure for the verse. The only option was to expand the verse line beyond that of Christopher Smart, as on occasion Whitman did, and the modernist Kenneth Fearing, more loosely. Paragraphic prose poetry by Rimbaud and St.-John Perse provided more electric model.

43 [65]

"Accusing the radio of hypnotism":

"As a young boy growing up in Paterson, New Jersey, Allen watched his mother succumb to a series of psychotic episodes that grew progressively worse despite desperate attempts at treatment. Before the episodes began Naomi Ginsberg had been a pretty and vivacious schoolteacher, perhaps eccentric in her fanatical devotion to the Communist party (not an uncommon thing among Jews of her generation), but well-loved by family, friends and neighbors. The first episodes occurred before Allen was born, and then again when he was a few years old. Naomi, complaining of a painful sensitivity to light, would sit in darkened rooms for hours. A visit to an expensive sanatorium, Bloomingdale, seemed to help, and

Naomi was better for a while. As Allen entered his early teenage years, Naomi got worse again. She had never gotten along with her mother-in-law, and began to suspect Buba of plotting against

her in bizarre ways. Light hurt her eyes again, her behavior became harder and harder to explain, and she was sent to Greystone, a large mental hospital in

New Jersey, where she was treated with medication, insulin shock and, later, electroshock. The treatments did not help. Naomi would remain deeply unstable and unhappy during Allen's teenage years, returning to Greystone often, sometimes staying for years at a time. The three men of the Ginsberg house, Allen, his older

brother Eugene and his father Louis, managed to keep the family together through the difficult times, and the closeness the three shared must have made the ordeal easier. Allen had a special feeling for his mother, though. He understood her insanity as a spiritual condition rather than a mental one, and always sought to find meaning or truth in her disconnected, paranoid ravings." (Levi Asher, "On Kaddish")

Naomi Ginsberg was convinced circa 1943 that doctors had planted "three big sticks" down her back during insulin and electric shock treatments as antennae to receive radio broadcasts from the ceiling-voices sent by President Roosevelt that alternately praised her as a "great woman" or mocked her as a "radical" and "bad girl."

After shock treatments at Rodez asylum, circa 1943, Artaud, in his "Van Gogh" text, accused his doctors (and modern society itself) of materialist hypnotism. His idea was that electroshock drives the spirit down, from its flight to liberty from God, back into the mortal body, which he calls a pile of shit. See also the brilliant vehemence of accusation in his text "To Be Done with the Judgement of God," and Carl Solomon's mordant refutation of this concept, derived from greater experience with the issue: "Afterthoughts of a Shock Patient."

44 [73]

This stanza concerns itself with aesthetic technique: the mechanisms of surrealist or ideogrammatic method, the juxtaposition of disparate images to create a gap of understanding which the mind fills in with a flash of recognition of the unstated relationship (as "hydrogen jukebox"); viz. Aristotle's "apt relation of dissimilars," his analysis of traditional metaphor.

L.-F. Céline punctuates the jump cuts in his prose with three dots of ellipsis. ("Ellipse" is a solecism in original mss. and printings; "ellipsis" is correct) One theory of haiku is that it presents two opposite images that connect only in mind of reader. In Buddhist psychology, ordinary mind includes the space between thoughts, awareness of sonata. Or, as in Cézanne: the space gap between hot and cold colors. According to George Wald's Nobel Prize theory of optics, the muscles of the retina can focus on only one plane of color at a time, narrowing or widening the lens in relation to varying intensities of light presented by "hot" and "cold" colors.

Whitman's catalogues present such grand spaciousness in "list poems" moving thru varying geographies, trades, sounds, stages, multiple precise but discrete observations. Cézanne re-composed his "petite sensation" of space on the flat canvas by interlocking squares, cubes and triangles of "hot" colors advancing and "cold" colors retreating in the optical field. His innovative paintings create the appearance of gaps in space without recourse to conventional perspective lines. Early cubist praxis entered this new space after his breakthrough. Paul Klee's "magic squares" may be viewed in this light. Apollinaire appreciated this mode in poetics, thus his pre-surrealist image montage. Eisenstein applied this insight to film, thus the terms "montage" and "jump cut."

Ezra Pound constructed an epic out of vivid ideograms, and extended the meters of English-language poetry to include classic quantity among other neglected measures of verse length. W. C. Williams moved forward into the "variable foot" or "relative measure" to include his own breath's spoken cadences.

A further extension of this model of sense consciousness into open space may be seen in "nonlinear" or "aleatoric" art: work by Gertrude Stein, Jackson Mac Low, John Cage and William S. Burroughs.

Contemporary mass swift-shifting-image music television (MTV) falls into place with the same mind. Spontaneous prosody" in Kerouac's novels and poetry and "Howl" text composition rely on the same notion of sense consciousness.

N.B. Phrasing in this verse has been clarified for present edition, from: "use of the ellipse the catalog the meter & the vibrating plane" in *Collected Poems*, to: "use of the ellipsis catalog a variable measure and the vibrating plane," to conform more precisely to above referents.

45 [40,74]/

"Blocks of pigments": A summary reference to Cézanne's theory as author understood it. "Aetema" (*Collected Poems*) corrected to "Aeterne."

[Regarding the second half of the stanza (40), Ginsberg has tended to leave this out in recent years' public readings. -B.M.]

This line continues the invention of paragraphlong verse formation (see the note to verse 42).

46 [66-67-68]

Carl Solomon writes about the incident in a letter to the author, September 29, 1985:

This section of the poem garbles history completely and makes light of what to me was an extremely serious matter. I was attending Brooklyn College; the lecturer was Wallace Markfield (later a friend); it was an offcampus affair; Markfield's subject was Mallarmé and Alienation; The potato salad throwing was supposed to be Dadaism and also an illustration of alienation; it was done in jest and also as a gift-gesture to a campus girl-friend whose birthday it was and who thought the idea very funny. Contradiction: "in jest" and "quite a serious matter," this was typical of the black humor of dada.

The harlequin speech of suicide and request for lobotomy was meant to be the absurd humor a lot of people were into then which stemmed from the illconceived hard-boiled manners of American students especially New York students in the 1940s. The perfect existential gesture in those days was supposed to be putting an apple in your mouth and jumping into a fire.

Of the second part of the line, Carl Solomon writes: "No Metrazol or electricity for me. Electricity followed six years later at Pilgrim. But I think Dr. Benway (Naked Lunch) treatment seems typical of modern psychiatry."

Of the third part, "who in humorless protest," he writes:

This sounds good but the catatonia I doubt as P.I. (where it occurred) diagnosed me as neurotic. Can you make sense of this legalistic diagnostic shit? (More, even further compounding the confusion, has been offered since, like "as normal as apple pie"- so long as your politics are OK, and anxiety neurosis thrown in.) In short, whatever [diagnosis] has suited the occasion or the needs of the examiner. Also anybody who yelps is called paranoid even by book-thieves who are trying to ward off a conscientious clerk. They call you paranoid too. Pardon the use of the word bullshit, but it should be lavishly applied to most aspects of our culture.

The incident of the Ping-Pong table is described by Solomon as a "big burst anti-authoritarian rage on arrival at P.I. by me."

Author received hydrotherapy, psychotherapy, occupational therapy (oil painting) and played Ping-Pong with Carl Solomon at N.Y. State Psychiatric Institute, July 1948-March 1949.

Carl Solomon writes: "Further addendum, perhaps of some pertinence. I first learned of dadaism in an English class at Townsend Harris H.S. (a school for the academically gifted and a prep school for C.C.N.Y.) conducted by Mr. Melvin Bernstein. He described dada, jocularly, as a pro-Dad protest against Mama. This apparently had no relationship to Philip Wylie's protest against 'Momism.'

48 [71]

In a passage in his book *More Mishaps*, called "Background to Howl: *Memoirs of the Waugh Years*," Solomon writes:

History moves in strange ways, I met for the first time my fellow Beatnik to be, Allen Ginsberg. I gave Allen an apocryphal history of my adventures and pseudo-intellectual deeds of daring. He meticulously took note of everything I said (I thought at the time that he suffered from "the writer's disease," imagined that he was a great writer). Later, when I decided to give up the flesh and become a professional lunatic-saint, he published all of this data, compounded partly of truth, but for the most raving self-justification, crypto-bohemian boasting a la Rimbaud, effeminate prancing, and esoteric aphorisms plagiarized from Kierkegaard and others-in the form of *Howl*. Thus he enshrined falsehood as truth and raving as common sense for future generations to ponder over and be misled. [P. 51.]

Author replaced letters with asterisks in final draft of poem to introduce appropriate element of uncertainty. In a letter regarding this project received September 29, 1985, Carl Solomon wrote: "Mother finally '**. Crap. Sorry Allen. Also 'heterosexual dollar' is crap; much of our literature is crap. And so on ad i@tum. *Howl* is a good poem but poetry isret life."

"Last hopeless companion flown West" ref. the author's 1954 move to West Coast, thinking that also meant "abandoning Carl to Doom and Fate."

Final draft alters to "last fantastic book flung out of the tenement window." Carl Solomon comments: "That's what the best people read in Manhattan. Chic and expensive; not aberrated. Ginsberg was just having a verbal orgy at this point. He likes words. No hallucinations were involved in the 'breakdown'; just overexposure to the metaphysical imagination of Manhattan's crackpot intelligentsia vintage 1956."

The end of the stanza includes author's own associations to Naomi Ginsberg's clothes closet, the "Rosebud" flashback in last scene of Citizen Kane; also a paraphrase of L.-F. Celine's "vomiting up the last raspberry" description of shipboard mass seasickness, in Journey to the End of the Night.

49: [72]

On the line "Ah, Carl, while you are not safe . . . Carl Solomon writes: "It's safer in hospital than out side. Vide Neal Cassady's fate. Allen and I are probably both physical cowards anyway which is why he addresses me in such terms.

"I do acknowledge Allen's great skill in describing the maze of thoughts of upset people and conveying this to the reader. A kind of Malcolm Lowry, Virginia Woolf, William Styron expertise. I don't den he's a great writer."

50 [7, 56]

Verse opens with author's adventures at Columbia College, 1945. Author traced the words "Fuck The Jews..... [N. M.] Butler has no balls," and images of male genitalia and skull and crossbones on the dirty glass of his window to draw the attention of an Irish cleaning lady who consistently overlooked it. The action was seen by Dean Nicholas D. MacKnight as offensive and author was suspended from classes for a year. Final draft: "obscene odes on the windows of the skull."

Ref. Vance Packard's novel The Man in the Grey Flannel Suit and Mary McCarthy's story "The Man in the Brooks Brothers Suit," mild aspects of 1950s conformism that clothed the more savage animosity of McCarthyism.

"Blasts ... of leaden verse": Refers to academic poetry of '40s-'50s, Eliotic tone with J. C. Ransom and Alan Tate text models, rejection of Whitman and W. C Williams tone and form as naive, crude, raw, provincial. See the modish anthology New Poets of England and America, ed. D. Hall, R. Pack and L. Simpson (Cleveland: World Publishing Cornpany, 195 7).

"Nitroglycerine shrieks of fairies": See Lorca's "Ode to Walt Whitman" ("shrieks of pansies").

"Sinister intelligent editors" ref. Robert Giroux and other editors' early 1950s rejections of Kerouac's *On the Road* manuscript.

"Subconscious bloop of the hand grenades": Très Beatnik! Phrasing in this verse coincides with Kenneth Koch's "Fresh Air," a contemporaneous comment on the same theme: "Farewell, stale pale skunky pentameters (the only honest English meter, gloop gloop!"

- [51]

Ref. Benzedrine exhaustion all night writing experiments 1945; author's crosshatched dawn revisions terminally indecipherable.

51 [28]

In September 1947, author waited a week in Houston-Galveston area for a job on ship to Dakar, W. Africa, after summer with Neal Cassady in Denver and at William Burroughs' marijuana farm, New Waverly, Texas.

"Brilliant, Spaniard": Journals Early Fifties Early Sixties, entry for June 17, 1952:

In Houston, 1947- I was broke, stealing Pepsi Cola bottles to cash in and buy candy bars for hunger, waiting for a ship. Outside the old Union Hall, walking down the street, a latin animal, Cuban, Spanish, I don't know. Electricity seemed to flow from his powerful body--black hair, curled wildly, looked impossible for him to live in society, to me--powerful malignant features--he was perhaps 22 or less--springing down the street in a tense potent walk, dungarees, powerful legs, not too tall, blue shirt opened several buttons on the chest, black hair curling sparsely on chest--he seemed made of iron, no sweat--or brown polished rock. I never saw in my life a more perfect being--expression of vigor and potency and natural rage on face--I couldn't conceive of him speaking English. I wonder what loves he had. Who could resist him? He must have taken any weak body he needed or wanted. Love from such a face I could not imagine, not gentleness-but love and gentleness are not needed where there was so much life. He just passed me by and I stood there amazed staring at him as he disappeared up the block & around the corner scattering the air in spiritual waves behind him. I couldn't believe he was human. He had thick features, black eyebrows, almost square face, powerful chest, perfect freedom of walk.

52 [46]

Ref. a story told in Jack Kerouac's fiction, *Vanity of Duluo*, Book 12, Chap. VIII.

53 [52]

Authors mother cooked lungen (lung stew) and Russssian borscht (beet soup) when not eating nature-community vegetarian.

Russell Durgin (d. August 28, 1985), Columbia 57 theology student in whose sublet apartment, 321 East 121st Street, East Harlem, 198, author read William Blake, left Manhattan that summer for medical treatment, tubercular lungs. Treatment may have involved filling chest space with celluloid balls to prevent collapse.

"Orange crates of theology": Durgin's books were displayed in wooden orange crates, then commonly used as bookcases. See annotation 19 [24]

56 [45]

After homeless weeks on New York's winter streets upon release from Rikers Island prison on an 86'd from Times Square by police who called him "a creep," friend Herbert Huncke knocked at author's door in this condition one winter's day, 1948.

54 [48]

Ref. Naomi Ginsberg's Chaplinesque recollections of Orchard and Rivington streets, Manhattan streets 1905, after debarking ship from Russia. See "Kaddish, Part IV, the "with your eyes" section, for similar images: ". . . with your fingers of rotten mandolins ... arms of fat Paterson porches ... belly of strikes and smokestacks

"Scabs": Huncke's skin disturbances 1945-48, related to junk needles and amphetamine.

55 [50] .

See William M. Garver in Jack Kerouac's Mexico City Blues (Choruses 57-61, 80-84) and other books; in Junky, by William S. Burroughs, the character Bill Gains. Garver purloined overcoats from semi-elegant restaurants, pawned them, used the money to score and pay rent--a good Russian overcoat was worth a week's rent. He'd sit at a table nursing coffee and apple pie till he spotted expensive unprotected apparel on a wall hanger.

Author sent Kerouac this original ms. of Howl (first six pages of Part 1) in Mexico City. Kerouac showed it to Garver, who commented, "No coathangers in Longchamps [restaurants]." See Kerouac's annotation bottom p. 5 thus. Entire verse is dropped in final draft.

"Coat hanger apparition" alludes to W. B. Yeats' "The Apparitions":
"Fifteen apparitions have I seen;/ The worst a coat upon a coat hanger."-The Poems of
W. B. Yeats (New York: Macmillan, 1983), p. 334.

58

An image of Herbert Huncke hustling Bryant Park, N.Y., which author
associates with opening pages of Jean Genet's *Our Lady of the Flowers* (New York:
Grove Press, 1963): the Negro Angel Sun ... eyes are clear and sky-blue . . . vacant like
the windows of buildings under construction, through which you see the sky. ."

59 [55]

Ref. some of author's Columbia College gay contemporaries' later careers.

60 [54]

As author remembers anecdote friend Walter Adams visited poet Louis
Simpson's high-floored apartment near Columbia in 1946:

L.S.: Do you have a watch?

W.A.: Yes.

L.S.: Can I have it?

W.A.: Here.

L.S. (throwing watch out window): We don't need time, we're already in
eternity.

In letter November 21, 1985, kindly responding to query from author,
Louis Simpson writes:

It seems this does apply to me. I say "seems" because I don't
remember doing this, but a man whose word I could trust once wrote me a letter in
which he said that I thought "that technology had destroyed time so that all lives ever
lived were being lived simultaneously, which was why you could ask Walter Adams for
his watch, throw it out the window and remark that we didn't need such instruments
any more."

This must have happened shortly before I had a "nervous breakdown"-
the result of my experience during the war. There may have been other causes, but I
think this was the main. I have no recollections months preceding the breakdown, and
if people threw watches out of windows, OK.

61 [64]

William Burroughs, among others, "retired Mexico (and Tanger] to
cultivate sex," Garver Mexico for his "habit," Jack Kerouac to his sister's North Carolina
house in "Rocky Mount to Buddlu," Neal Cassady worked for S.P. Railroad, John
Hollander among others went on to Harvard. Naomi Ginsberg's window 1953
overlooked Woodlawn Cemetery in the Bronx; see "Kaddish."

Poe wrote "Annabel Lee," "The Bells," "Ulalume" and "Eureka" 1846-48 in his Fordham cottage, now moved to Grand Concourse, Bronx.

63 [49]

Bill Keck built a harpsichord in his 2nd Street loft. Other artists had cold-water flats under Brooklyn Bridge, some furnished with Wilhelm Reich's wardrobe-sized Orgone Accumulator boxes to which they repaired sitting in daily sessions to replenish cosmic-energy monad "orgones." See Reich's *The Function of the Orgasm* (New York: Touchstone, 1974).

Large packing crates were adapted for furniture, closets, beds, etc, in this milieu.

64 [77]

"Goldhorn shadow" in this verse paraph some sentence by Kerouac.

Lester Young, Coleman Hawkins, Charlie Parker, Illinois Jacquet saxophones were heard on "Symphony Sid" all-night bebop radio program mid-40sManhattan.

First draft's concluding phrase, "last blue of Time," ref. Jelly Roll Morton's "Jelly, jeli Jelly stays on my mind," Ma Rainey's ". Blues," etc., as black metaphor for erotic sq "Lamma lamma sabachthani"@"My God, why have you forsaken me?" Christ's last word: the cross ("Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani": Matth 46)-of final draft was lifted from Tristan Coi version in "Cris d'Aveugle" ("Cries of the man") in *Poems*, trans. Walter McElroy (IVt.: Banyan Press, 1947), p. 30:

List of Essentials

1. Scribbled secret notebooks, and wild typewritten pages, for yr own joy
2. Submissive to everything, open, listening
3. Try never get drunk outside yr own house
4. Be in love with yr life
5. Something that you feel will find its own form
6. Be crazy dumbsaint of the mind
7. Blow as deep as you want to blow
8. Write what you want bottondness from bottom of the mind
9. The unspeakable visions of the individual
10. No time for poetry but exactly what is
- II. Visionary tics shivering in the chest
12. In tr2nced fixation dreaming upon object before you
13. Remove literary, grammatical and syntactical inhibition
14. Like Proust be an old teahead of time

15. Telling the true story of the world in interior monolog
16. The jewel center of interest is the eye within the eye
17. Write in recollection and amazement for yourself
18. Work from pithy middle eye out, swimming in language sea
19. Accept loss forever
20. Believe in the holy contour of life
21. Struggle to sketch the flow that already exists intact in mind
22. Don't think of words when you stop but to see the picture better
23. Keep track of every day the date emblazoned in your morning
24. No fear or shame in the dignity of your experience, language & knowledge
25. Write for the world to read and see your exact pictures of it
26. Book movie is the movie in words, the visual American form
27. In praise of Character in the Bleak inhuman Loneliness
28. Composing wild, undisciplined, pure, coming from under, crazier the better
29. You're a Genius all the time
30. Writer-Director of Earthly movies Sponsored & Angled in Heaven

This list was tacked on wall above author's bedstead in North Beach hotel a year before "Howl" was written. See Robert Duncan's comments apropos in Allen Verbatim, ed. Gordon Ball (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1974), pp. 143-47. See also Essentials of Spontaneous Prose

81 [741

Regarding haiku and prose syntax, reworking and expanding the aesthetic program of verses 44-45 (see note above), reference here is to Cézanne's method of composition. Letters and conversations of Cézanne from which author derived this aesthetic, applied somewhat to "Howl" poetics including paraphrase of key words ("sensation") and phrases, were first encountered in Erle Loran's *Cézanne's Composition* (Berkeley, Cal.: University of California Press, 1943). At the time, author was writing term paper on Cézanne for Prof. Meyer Schapiro at Columbia University.

Correct Latin line should read: "Pater Omnipotens Aeterne Deus."
Relevant passages from Loran follow:

"The study of arts is very long and badly conducted. Today a painter must discover everything for himself, for there are no longer any but very bad schools where one becomes warped, where one learns nothing. One must first of all study geometric forms; the cone, the cube, the cylinder, the sphere. When one knows how to render these things in their planes, one ought to know how to paint." Emile Bernard. *Souvenirs sur Paul Cézanne* Michel, 1912).

"The form and contour of objects is given to us by the oppositions and contrasts which result from their individual coloration." -John Rewald, *Cézanne: Sa Vie, son oeuvre, son amitié pour Zola* (Paris: Albin Michel, 1939).

"This is absolutely indisputable-I am very positive: an optical sensation is produced in our visual organ which causes us to classify the planes represented by color modulations into light, half-tone, or quarter-tone." -Bernard, Souvenirs.

On Gauguin: "Well, he hasn't understood me; I have never wanted and I shall never accept the absence of modeling or of gradations; it's nonsense. Gauguin isn't a painter, he has only made Chinese images ... [he has] stolen [my] little sensation and paraded it before the public." -Ibid.

"In an orange, an apple, a ball, a head, there is a culminating point; and this point is always-in spite of the terrible effect: light, shade, sensations of color -the nearest to our eye. The edges of objects recede toward a center placed at our horizon." -Ibid.

"Lines parallel to the horizon give extension, whether it be a section of nature or, if you prefer, of the spectacle that the Pater Omnipotens aeternae Deus spreads before our eyes. The lines perpendicular to this horizon give depth. Now for us, nature is more in depth than in surface." -Paul Cézanne to Emile Bernard, April 15, 1904. Ibid.

Cézanne: I have my motif [he joins his hands]. A motif, you see, is this....

Gasquet: How's that?

Cézanne: Eli? Yes-[he repeats his gesture, draws his hands apart, fingers spread out, and brings them together again, slowly, slowly; then joins them, presses them together and contracts them, making them interlace] there you have it; that's what one must attain. If I pass too high or too low, all is ruined. There mustn't be a single link too loose, not a crevice through which may escape the emotion, the light, the truth. I advance, you understand, all of my canvas at one time-together. I bring together in the same spirit, the same faith, all that is scattered. All that we see disperses, vanishes; is it not so? Nature is always the same, but nothing remains of it, nothing of what comes to our sight. Our art ought to give the shimmer of its duration with the elements, the appearance to all its changes. It ought to make us taste it eternally. What is underneath? Nothing, perhaps. Perhaps everything. You understand? Thus I join these straying hands. I take from left, from right, here, there, everywhere, tones, colors, shades. I fix them, I bring them together. They make lines. They come objects, rocks, trees, without my thinking about it. They take on volume. They acquire value. If these volumes, these values, correspond on my canvas, my feeling, to the planes and patches of color which are there before our eyes, very good! my canvas joins hands. It does not vacillate. It does not pass too high or too low. It is true; it is full. But if I feel the least distraction, the least weakness, above all if I interpret too much one day, if today I am carried away by a theory which is contrary to that of the day before, if I think while painting, if I intervene, why then everything is gone.

Joachim Gasquet, Paul Cézanne (Paris: Editions Bernheim-Jeune, 1926).

For earlier articulation of ideas from Cézanne applied to "Howl," see author's 1965 Paris Review interview in *Writers at Work: Third Series* (New York: Viking, 1967), pp. 291-97.

82 [75]

On improvised sound track of the Al Leslie- Robert Frank film *Pull My Daisy*, 1959, Kerouac explains: "Well, they turn over their little purple moonlight pages

in which their secret naked doodlings do show. Secret scatological thought, and that's why everybody wants to see it " -Pull My Daisy (New York: Grove Press, 1961), P. 23.

83 [78]

Ref. Lionel Trilling, *The Liberal Imagination* (New York: Viking, 1950). Author sat in Prof. Trilling's Romantic Literature class at Columbia College, studying Wordsworth, Keats, Shelley, Byron, little Blake, and did paper comparing Rimbaud to Keats. See Trilling's response to "Howl" .

84 [76]

Attempt to clarify the role of poetry as revealing naked mind, identical itself with the experience (and suffering) of love. See Whitman's poetics "of perfect personal candor," in 1855 preface, *Leaves of Grass*.

"Madman bum & angel [beat in Time]": See note to verse 79 above, re Kerouac's *Visions of Cody*, as quoted.

Moloch (The Catholic Encyclopedia)

(Hebrew Molech, king).

A divinity worshipped by the idolatrous Israelites. The Hebrew pointing Molech does not represent the original pronunciation of the name, any more than the Greek vocalization Moloch found in the LXX and in the Acts (vii, 43). The primitive title of this god was very probably Melech, "king", the consonants of which came to be combined through derision with the vowels of the word Bosheth, "shame". As the word Moloch (A.V. Molech) means king, it is difficult in several places of the Old Testament to determine whether it should be considered as the proper name of a deity or as a simple appellative. The passages of the original text in which the name stands probably for that of a god are Lev., xviii, 21; xx, 2-5; III (A. V. I) Kings, xi, 7; IV (II) Kings, xxiii, 10; Is., xxx, 33; lvii, 9; Jer., xxxii, 35. The chief feature of Moloch's worship among the Jews seems to have been the sacrifice of children, and the usual expression for describing that sacrifice was "to pass through the fire", a rite carried out after the victims had been put to death. The special centre of such atrocities was just outside of Jerusalem, at a place called Tophet (probably "place of abomination"), in the valley of Geennom. According to III (I) Kings, xi, 7, Solomon erected "a temple" for Moloch "on the hill over against Jerusalem", and on this account he is at times considered as the monarch who introduced the impious cult into Israel. After the disruption, traces of Moloch worship appear in both Judah and Israel.

The custom of causing one's children to pass through the fire seems to have been general in the Northern Kingdom [IV (II) Kings, xvii, 17; Ezech. xxiii, 37], and it gradually grew in the Southern, encouraged by the royal example of Achaz (IV Kings, xvi, 3) and Manasses [IV (II) Kings, xvi, 6] till it became prevalent in the time of the prophet Jeremias (Jerem. xxxii, 35), when King Josias suppressed the worship of Moloch and defiled Tophet [IV (II) Kings, xxiii, 13 (10)]. It is not improbable that this worship was revived under Joakim and continued until the Babylonian Captivity.

On the basis of the Hebrew reading of III (I) Kings, xi, 7, Moloch has often been identified with Milcom, the national god of the Ammonites, but this identification cannot be considered as probable: as shown by the Greek Versions, the original reading of III (I) Kings, xi, 7, was not Molech but Milchom [cf. also III (I) Kings, xi, 5, 33]; and according to Deut., xii, 29-31; xviii, 9-14, the passing of children through fire was of Chanaanite origin [cf. IV (II) Kings, xvi, 3]. Of late, numerous attempts have been made to prove that in sacrificing their children to Moloch the Israelites simply thought that they were offering them in holocaust to Yahweh. In other words, the Melech to whom child-sacrifices were offered was Yahweh under another name. To uphold this view appeal is made in particular to Jer., vii, 31; xix, 5, and to Ezech., xx, 25-31. But this position is to say the least improbable. The texts appealed to may well be understood otherwise, and the prophets expressly treat the cult of Moloch as foreign and as an apostasy from the worship of the true God. The offerings by fire, the probable identity of Moloch with Baal, and the fact that in Assyria and Babylonia Malik, and at Palmyra Malach-bel, were sun-gods, have suggested to many that Moloch was a fire- or sun-god.

BAUDISSION, *Jahve et Moloch* (Leipzig, 1874); SMITH, *Religion of the Semites* (London, 1894); SCHULTZ, *Old Testament Theology*, I (tr., Edinburgh, 1898); LAGRANGE, *Etudes sur les Religions Semitiques* (Paris, 1903).