

"If the book we are reading does not wake us, as with a fist hammering on our skull, why then do we read it? Good God, we would also be happy if we had no books, and such books as make us happy we could, if need be, write ourselves. But what we must have are those books which come upon us like ill-fortune, and distress us deeply, like the death of one we love better than ourselves, like suicide. A book must be an ice-axe to break the sea frozen inside us."

--Franz Kafka (before using in print, find original source and check wording.)

WINTER

My tribes are in the mind, along the bookshelves.

"Hart Crane once wrote to Sherwood Anderson of his hope to find a 'form that is so thorough and intense as to dye the words themselves with a peculiarity of meaning.'" (Publishers Weekly, 2/27/95, p. 98)

Where I come from, au courant would be taken to mean full of currants. And be surprisingly close to the mark.

However Shakespeare did it, we're still waiting for another one of him.

The virtues of its flaws:

Orwell When Wrong

A writer's faults are at least as important as his virtues, according to the critic and psychologist Robert Coles. He is the author of one of the essays in "Reflections on America, 1984: An Orwell Symposium" (University of Georgia), edited by Robert Mulvihill.

Orwell can also be . . . as hopeful and uncritically adoring, in brief spells, as he was mostly

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thoughtful and careful scrutinizing and sensibly balanced. The love he felt for his ordinary, working-class English countrymen was, as I've mentioned, considerable, and upon occasion turned wonderfully blinding. I use that last adverb out of delight, I suppose, pleasure in an honorable, sensitive writer's obvious demonstration of his humanity. . . . Orwell's love for his country can be considered the greatest source of his writing energy. His novels are, so significantly, efforts at evoking English life. His best essays are similar efforts, as in the marvellous approach to Charles Dickens, an approach which, unintentionally (one dares say) becomes quite autobiographical. Dickens the moralist, the one who disliked much of organized religion but loved deeply Jesus and his disciples, those radical egalitarians and communarians, becomes so dear to us in the critical piece because Orwell's own anarchic political compassion and social generosity and, yes, spiritual vigor also become eminently clear.

The Nation, Oct. 12, '85--Catharine R. Stimpson, review of NEVER GUILTY,
NEVER FREE by Ginny Foat

"(The book) seems designed to leave the page and become the basis for a film
~~off~~ a 'docudrama,' a commodity for an image-consuming market that is vaster than
a book can satisfy." (p. 351)

Dangerous creatures, books.

Dr. Johnson quote (approximate), "Nobody but a dunderhead ever wrote but for Money."

--Marx; Freud...

Thoreau (Krutch, 4: bk aptly was A Week on the Concord and Merrimack Rivers)
His first book had been printed at his own risk in an edition of one
thousand copies and when, four years later, fewer than three hundred
had been sold he had taken over the remainder with the wry comment, "I
have now a library of nearly nine hundred volumes, over seven hundred
of which I wrote myself."

Deering Library at Northwestern:

--reading room lights hanging down a thousand feet, like watchfobs of the gods.
You sit in the golden pool of reflection with your book, the lens of light

--periodical room, where I would simply shop: supermarket-like. It ~~is~~ turns out
it didn't matter what those hundreds of periodicals were, just that they were
there.

--Gaia: Libria