

Abstracts

- 580 **Michael Collins, The Antipanopticon of Etheridge Knight**
Panopticism seeks to make the psyche visible to a top-down system of examination and classification. In the process, it drives out privacy, the right to privacy, and, with them, the right to free self-making. Against this driving out, Etheridge Knight poses a remarkable body of poetry and prose that becomes a kind of antipanopticon in its cultivation of unconstrained communication and communion. During the years he spent as a “guest” of the Indiana State Prison, for instance, Knight wrote for prison and, later, other publications. He sought, even in the prison columns that were his main early outlet, to cultivate a communicative feedback loop capable of providing a channel through which hospitality could reach those who could not recognize themselves in mainstream American discourse. Knight’s feedback loop confirms Jacques Derrida’s view that “language is hospitality.” (MC)
- 598 **Siobhan Phillips, The Daily Living of Robert Frost**
While Robert Frost’s emphasis on ordinary themes has often been noted, his use of ordinary time bears further attention: his poems show how the repetitive pattern of daily living can be a creative possibility rather than an enervating necessity. His everyday verse suggests revised definitions of lyric temporality as well as new reconciliations of the dualistic oppositions structuring accounts of modernist and Americanist literature. In Frost, human repetition allows a willful independence endorsed by the natural world. The generally neglected poem “In the Home Stretch” demonstrates his most beneficent version of ordinary living, showing how retrospection and conversation are crucial elements of its practice and how marriage can promote these habits. Frost provides a contrasting, failed version of everyday practice in “Home Burial” and a comparable sense of repetitive possibility in “Never Again Would Birds’ Song Be the Same.” (SP)
- 614 **Hana Pichova, The Lineup for Meat: The Stalin Statue in Prague**
In Prague a debate is taking place over whether an aquarium ought to be built on the site that once housed the largest monument to Stalin. The site is difficult to contend with, not only because it is a physical reminder of the atrocities committed during the Communist rule but also because of the monument’s bizarre history, one plagued by absurd events. The monument’s history is preserved in obscure historical and fictional narratives. I explore these narratives in terms of monumentality, foreign imposition, socialist-realist aesthetics, power, and humor. I concentrate on the dual function the absurd served in the history of the statue. Reliance on humor, while enabling the Czechs to undercut the monumentality of this emblem of the imposition of foreign power, also fostered a forgetting of the statue’s history and political significance. Thus, the Czechs’ propensity for the absurd, even if temporarily freeing, ultimately undermines the nation’s understanding of its past. (HP)