

THE CONTEMPORIZING CANON:  
A CROSS-EDITION CASE STUDY OF  
*THE NORTON ANTHOLOGY OF MODERN POETRY*\*

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ABSTRACT

A bellwether textbook, *The Norton Anthology of Modern (and Contemporary) Poetry* forms an intriguing case study when its several editions are compared, since *NAM(C)P*'s thirty-year history (1973-2003) spans a period of extensive change in the literary canon. Key data include both statistical "hard figures" and "soft figures," the changing shapes of inclusion and reception. Broadly considered, *NAM(C)P* typifies two "glacial" patterns of anthologies: continual expansion paired with cyclical reselection. Comparison of internal evidence and contemporary reviews reveals how *NAM(C)P* provisionally solves the problem of "coverage" in canonizing contemporary literature, now in the context of the current identity-based theoretical paradigm. Predictions for future editions are also hazarded.

KEY WORDS: *The Norton Anthology of Modern Poetry/The Norton Anthology of Modern and Contemporary Poetry*, poetry collections/anthologies/textbooks, publication history, the literary canon, contemporary literature.

RESUMEN

*The Norton Anthology of Modern (and Contemporary) Poetry* es un libro de texto líder en su género que constituye un modelo fascinante a estudiar cuando se comparan sus diversas ediciones, ya que los treinta años de historia (1973-2003) de la *NAM(C)P* abarcan un período de grandes cambios en el canon literario. Los datos clave incluyen estadísticamente "cifras rígidas" y "cifras blandas", así como las formas cambiantes de inclusión y recepción. Si consideramos a la *NAM(C)P* bajo una perspectiva más amplia, ésta viene a tipificar dos pautas "congeladas" típicas de las antologías: una continua expansión que va emparejada a una reselección cíclica. Una comparación entre la evidencia interna y las reseñas contemporáneas revela cómo la *NAM(C)P* resuelve provisionalmente el problema de "cobertura" al canonizar la literatura contemporánea, hoy en día dentro del contexto del paradigma teórico actual basado en la identidad. También se aventuran algunas predicciones con respecto a las futuras ediciones.

PALABRAS CLAVE: *The Norton Anthology of Modern Poetry/The Norton Anthology of Modern and Contemporary Poetry*, colecciones de poesía/antologías/libros de texto, historia editorial, canon literario, literatura contemporánea.



Today, when the university curriculum is unavoidably associated with “the canon” of literature (Levin), classroom anthologies have (like it or not) come to play a central role in the delineation and propagation of various literary canons, traditional or otherwise (Harris; Lauter; Mujica; Williams).<sup>1</sup> Even if we take “the canon” to be an imaginary ideal, as John Guillory argues, it is nonetheless hard to proceed, even for Guillory, without invoking the anthology as the ideal canon’s closest physical embodiment: “the canon is never other than an imaginary list; it never appears as a complete and uncontested list in any particular time and place, not even in the form of the omnibus anthology, which remains a selection from a larger list which does not itself appear in its table of contents” (Guillory 45).

In addition to the idealized catalog, another persuasive conceptual model for the process of canon formation is the glacial metaphor (Harris 113; Kuipers, “Anthology/Corpus” 55-57): as new works of literature are produced, they fall like snow on a glacier, and may or may not remain to form a permanent part of the glacial “core.” Because the size of the glacial corpus of the literary canon boggles the imagination, anthologies are both derivatively and creatively constructed for the convenience of students, teachers, and general readers alike (see Kuipers, “Anthology/Corpus”). However, given the appeal of all types of anthologies, it is one thing to create an anthology of early works, where there is already a rich tradition of evaluation and selection to guide the anthologist (pulling, as it were, core samples from the solid depths of the glacier). It is quite another to create an anthology of authors still working at the present, many of whom may later be considered ephemeral, and some of whom are simply unknown to the editor because of a present lack of prominent publication (two notable examples of such formerly unheard of poets are Emily Dickinson and Gerard Manley Hopkins). Eventually, today’s avant-garde will either be forgotten or subsumed into the tradition, or, as Alan Golding has memorably put it, canon formation seems to proceed inevitably “from outlaw to classic.” But meanwhile, what is the anthologist of “the contemporary” to do? (see McLaughlin). For poets, the stakes are high. Novelists, dramatists, essayists, and other prose writers can still make a living outside of the academy, but it has become difficult to imagine poets coming to prominence without being included in the

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\* The beginnings of this case study, then focused solely on the latest, 3rd edition and entitled “The Norton Forecast: Observations and Predictions on the Contemporary Canon,” were presented on 30 December 2004 at the Modern Language Association Annual Convention in Philadelphia. I would like to thank those in attendance at that session, especially Charles Bernstein and Alan Golding, for their stimulating feedback. Jahan Ramazani was also in attendance, and kindly offered further commentary by email. (Of course, the conclusions drawn about *NAM[C]P* should be attributed solely to myself.) I will also take this opportunity to thank Hillary LaMont for her careful and dedicated assistance in gathering sources and preparing the statistics for this article.

<sup>1</sup> See also the special issue on anthologies in *Symploke* 8.1-2 (2000). Articles from this special issue have been republished in the following collection: Jeffrey R. Di Leo, ed., *On Anthologies: Politics and Pedagogy* (Lincoln: U of Nebraska P, 2004).

standard teaching collections: “A few major anthologies [...] are one of the most-dependable ways —and sometimes the only way— for poets to get new readers” (Nelson 313).

In the context of the above issues, *The Norton Anthology of Modern Poetry* forms an apt case study when considered across its various editions, which bracket the historical “opening” of the literary canon. As a “standard” with public appeal yet edited by academics, *NAM(C)P* (as I will abbreviate it henceforth) embodies the close links between the aesthetic communities of poets (and poetry teachers) and the late capitalist formations of corporate publishing and research universities. And with its most recent edition subdivided into one “modern” one “contemporary” volume, *NAM(C)P* blazes across its publication record an illuminating trail of the changing division between a more static, “classic” modernism and a much more “revisable” contemporary realm, which always remains “open at its forward side” (Quinn). And the case of *NAM(C)P* is all the more intriguing because of the especially fraught, public nature of publishing collections of modern English and American poetry. Unlike equally canon-making anthologies of English and world literature (and even of general American literature —all those Puritans and Transcendentalists!), anthologies of modern poetry appear much more to represent “who we are now,” and thus are more often heralded or derided in the popular press, not just in scholarly organs. And so Richard Ellmann and Robert O’Clair open their first edition with a memorable phrase reprinted in the second and cited again in both volumes of the third: “The most acute rendering of an era’s sensibility is its poetry” (*NAMP/1e* XIII; *NAMP/2e* XLIII; qtd. *NAMCP/3e* 1: XXVII, 2: XXXIII).<sup>2</sup> The general reading public seems to agree, since reviews have appeared in such periodicals as *The New Republic* (Boyers) and *Harper’s* (Anderson), and in an interview on National Public Radio (Ramazani, interview).

In the next section, the current state of relevant scholarship on literary anthologies is surveyed as the context for the present study. To support the methodology of the case study, the next section examines the nature of editing large teaching anthologies according to the testimony of editors themselves. With this background, two general trends in the history of all kinds of text collections are applied to *NAM(C)P*, using statistical tables to document these changes. As a picture of how our understanding of the canon and anthologies has shifted in thirty years, the following section examines the history of the reception of *NAM(C)P* as represented in the reviews of its various editions, with a critical evaluation of this reception. Finally, a few predictions are offered by way of conclusion regarding how contemporary poetry might be represented in the Norton anthologies of the future.

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<sup>2</sup> As a shorthand for easily distinguishing the various editions of *NAM(C)P*, I borrow the convention of contemporary textbook publishers, one sure to be familiar to anyone who has recently perused their catalogs: “/1e” appended to a title = “1st edition,” “/2e” = “2nd edition,” etc.



## THE EMPIRICAL STUDY OF ANTHOLOGIES: PRECURSORS AND THE CROSS-EDITION RATIONALE

There are various precedents for both the qualitative and quantitative study of literary anthologies. The most fundamental studies on anthologies, perhaps, are those speaking broadly to their historical origins and to their literary nature of poetic collections or sequences (see Fenoaltea & Rubin; Fraistat, *Poems in Their Place*; Miner). In this vein, the broadest study to date of poetry anthologies in English argues that the historical forms of anthologies have deeply influenced poets and the ways in which they imagine their individual works as poems (Ferry). One Italian monograph on *cinquecento* poetry has suggested that a Foucauldian perspective is highly appropriate for the anthology as a form that disciplines thinking about poetry, and this analysis is coupled with tabular displays of the poets being anthologized (Quondom). Categories such as “world literature” themselves cannot be comprehended, it seems, without reference to the anthologies that have propagated the literature of the world to English readers (Damrosch, *What Is World Literature?*).

As the above studies demonstrate, most inquiries, because of the sheer numerosity of anthologies, focus on some set of anthologies delimited by language, period, genre, and so on. Various English period studies have examined the anthologies of medieval times (Nichols & Wenzel), the Renaissance and eighteenth century (Benedict), the Romantic era (Bode; Fraistat, *The Poem and the Book*), and the Victorian period (Haass). Perhaps because of its often central place in the curriculum yet its sometimes marginal place in critical circles, American literature has come under special scrutiny in regard to its anthologization (Csicsila; Gere & Shaheen; Golding; Lauter; Morris; Olsson; Pace; Rasula).

A large segment of the research into anthologies has also taken the form of case studies, typically combining bibliographical investigation with some measure of quantitative or qualitative analysis or both. The most ambitious of these case studies is by Joseph Csicsila, who tabulates data on eighty American literature anthologies, concluding that the primary determinant of anthologization is whatever critical paradigm dominates at the time. For Csicsila, examining the anthologization of particular authors has proven to be a particularly fruitful line of inquiry, with such issues in question as whether an author is included, how representative the selections from an author may be, and how selections and representation differ among various anthologies (for examples of such author-oriented anthology case studies, see Gailey; Kinnamon; Murnen; D. Young). On the other hand, many other angles on anthologies other than the authorial have also been explored: the role of an individual anthology editor (Jordan); the anthologization of a particular genre, such as the essay (Bloom); the function of literary anthologies at different levels of teaching, such as high school (Applebee; Winter); how anthologies are linked to the canonization of other national literatures, such as Canadian literature (Kelly); and how teaching anthologies interface with larger ideological concerns such as race and genre (Mullen; Pace).

Another approach, the one attempted here, is the cross-edition case study of a single anthology. This path seems particularly appropriate when the anthology



in question has not only proven particularly influential, but has also been revised considerably throughout its various editions. The method is similar to the comparative analysis that has been applied to prominently revised poetry collections, such as Wordsworth and Coleridge's *Lyrical Ballads*, published in two different forms in 1798 and in 1800, and Walt Whitman's *Leaves of Grass*, with its various editions released from 1855 to 1892. (Wordsworth's famous *Prelude*, which transmogrified from its initial composition in 1799 to its final publication in 1850, is a parallel case calling for the comparison of different versions of a single long poem.) Multiple editions of the same anthology naturally provide a detailed and accessible historical-bibliographical record, thus yielding ample opportunities for a kind of literary "archeology." The cross-edition approach has been used by Wail Hassan in his analysis of the *Norton Anthology of World Masterpieces*, one of the oldest Norton anthologies (first published in 1956). Although Hassan claimed to have chosen the *Norton* because of its high quality and its role thereby as "the most concrete embodiment of the [Eurocentric] canon" ("World Literature" 40), his article led to a spirited exchange with one of the *Norton's* current editors, who argued that not enough attention had been paid to the contextualizing role of such introductory material as headnotes and the instructor's guides, though these were also mentioned by Hassan (Clinton; see also Hassan, "Response"). Thus it appears that anyone who analyzes popular contemporary teaching anthologies should be cautious lest the editors take umbrage.

Understanding what it is like to edit an omnibus teaching anthology is vital for properly evaluating how such anthologies may or may not embody the ideological formation we call "the canon." The next section explores the cautionary testimony of the editors themselves as necessary context for making such judgments.

#### A METHODOLOGICAL PROLOGUE: UNDERSTANDING THE MATERIAL CONTEXTS OF TEXTBOOK ANTHOLOGY EDITING

Recently, a number of anthology editors have offered reflections about the nature of, and their personal experiences with, anthology editing, to the point that it seems a new subgenre of scholarly memoir has been born (Damrosch, "Mirror"; Lauter; The Library of America; Nelson; Ramazani, "Remaking"; Schrift). These reflections of anthology editors are almost unanimous in suggesting that there are strong pragmatic concerns about publishing anthologies that may often trump (or be inextricably linked with) any purely ideological influences. For instance, whatever the physical limit on the size of anthologies, they are measured by page counts, and publishers seem to wish neither to exceed nor fall short of the current "standard" of such textbooks. Thus "miraculously," despite having very different territories to cover, all major anthologies of American, British, and world literature all now weigh in at around 6,000 pages (Damrosch, "Mirror" 207).

The high cost of permissions, and the difficulty of locating them, is also a strong concern of anthologists of modern and contemporary poetry, who relate



being told in no uncertain terms by their publishers that either costs or selections or both would need to be reduced to make the anthology meet a given profitability target (Nelson 311-16; Ramazani, "Remaking" 274). Similarly, other wishes of the publisher may directly contradict the original intellectual designs of a project, such as inadvisedly splitting the collection into two separate volumes, with the anthologist in little position to argue if any form of the collection is ever to see the light of day (Schrift 166). And obviously no editor works completely unhindered, with no check on the eccentricities of that editor's particular taste. Besides being guided by the usual in-house editors and advisory boards, leading anthologies such as those published by Norton and Oxford are initially designed and subsequently re-edited only after scores of specialists and teachers have been polled with detailed questionnaires, all of which feedback (including published reviews of the previous edition) is carefully read (if not heeded) by the editors of the ensuing anthology (Lauter 31-39; The Library of America; Nelson, 321-24; Ramazani, "Remaking" 272-74).

Consequently, the cautions of experienced anthology editors themselves must be taken into account in a cross-edition study of anthologies, especially anthologies devoted to the contemporary era. These cautions are especially important for evaluating any statistics derived from a given anthology, and the comments of Jahan Ramazani, editor of *NAMCP/3e*, and Cary Nelson, editor of the *Oxford Anthology of Modern American Poetry*, are particularly instructive. For instance, the number of selections or pages apportioned to any given author in an anthology may be a poor measure of the actual importance assigned to that author by the editor. As Ramazani recalls, "Given a finite amount of page space and money for permissions fees, I felt like an administrator who, unable to please but sure to irritate everyone, must make painful choices and compromises about relative merit and proportion" ("Remaking" 273). When permissions for the works of a single poet amount to thousands of dollars, which is not uncommon depending on the copyright holder, it is tempting for an editor to cut a few high-priced poems, and include instead any number of lower-priced or public-domain selections of whatever length by major and minor authors alike (Nelson 313-14, 317-18; Ramazani, "Remaking" 274). And even if all desired selections are finally included, the anthology editor has little control over what the final page tally will be for any poet, as Cary Nelson describes:

large, heavily annotated anthologies [...] are still set from hard copy, typically photocopies of reliable editions of the poems and computer printouts of headnotes and annotations. With [...] varying type sizes and line lengths and no way of knowing how the extensive notes [will] compress when typeset, it [is] impossible to calculate either the length of the published book or how many pages each poet [will] receive. (320)

Thus any judgment about any "hierarchy" of poets in such an anthology, Nelson suggests, should not be inferred from their respective page counts alone.

With the above editorial and publishing realities in mind, this case study utilizes both "hard figures" as well as "soft figures" in its analysis, attempting thereby to combine the best of the methodologies of existing scholarship on the canon and



on literary anthologies. “Hard figures” for *NAM(C)P*, of course, are the concrete numbers of selections, authors, and pages—considered as relative rather than absolute proportions—and, most importantly, how these numbers change statistically over a period of thirty years. These hard figures reveal the kind of consistent trends and also vacillations that seem to typify the history of many multi-edition anthologies. “Soft figures,” on the other hand, are the less-quantifiable but very real “stories” or “trajectories” that may only be hinted at by the hard figures. For instance, if  $x$  number of authors are dropped in one edition, while  $y$  are added, what is the story that is being told at that moment in time about the nature of the canon generally, and the nature of the canon of modern poetry in particular?

In this literary archeology of the cross-edition case study, the hard/soft methodology of the changing internal evidence of the successive editions *NAM(C)P* is bolstered by the external evidence of its various contemporary reviews, which help to judge the history of reception of the anthology. Thus the present cross-edition case study assumes that detailed statistics are significant, but that they must also be supplemented with other kinds of qualitative analysis of the publishing record as well as external testimony. This broad rationale should be kept in mind in the next section, which discusses statistical evidence.

#### *NAM(C)P* “HARD FIGURES” AND TWO DIACHRONIC TRENDS IN MULTI-EDITION ANTHOLOGIES

There are five texts in the history of *The Norton Anthology of Modern Poetry*, initially edited by the modernist scholars Richard Ellmann and Robert O’Clair: the first edition of 1973; a shorter introductory textbook of 1976, entitled *Modern Poems: An Introduction to Poetry*; the revised or second edition of 1988; a second edition of *Modern Poems* in 1989; and, most recently, the third edition of 2003—this one edited by Jahan Ramazani (a former student of Ellmann), retitled *The Norton Anthology of Modern and Contemporary Poetry*, and issued in two slipcased volumes reflecting this new division. When placed side by side in chronological order, the five textbook anthologies of *NAM(C)P* and *Modern Poems* exhibit clear patterns of growth and change. Elsewhere, I have explored in more depth two of these basic patterns in the historical evolution of anthologies, which I have tentatively called “literary universals” after the parallel usage in linguistics and cognitive approaches to literature (Kuipers, “Diachronic Canon”): first, the pattern of continual expansion of multi-edition collections, and second, a more cyclical corollary tendency to reselect or revise anthologies, in turn delineating new areas for present or future growth in the given collection. A full scale investigation of the anthologies of world literature past and present will be necessary to demonstrate their universality, but here in the briefer history of *NAM(C)P*, at least, both of these basic patterns are in evidence.

First, *NAM(C)P* grows significantly in each of three successive editions. Certainly, this is due not only to the simple fact that the twentieth century itself was still “growing,” with the potential canon of modern poetry concomitantly ex-



panding, but to at least two other reasons, one of them pragmatic—that the publisher considered the anthology successful enough to enlarge—and one more psychological. Specifically, in re-editing, an editor naturally tends toward supplementation and augmentation rather than elimination and replacement. Ever-creative, the human mind drives to think of newer and better things without a directly corresponding need to dispense with what already exists, except when what already exists is tried and found wanting. Consequently, what is dropped from a revised anthology typically pales next to what has been added. Copyright law may mandate that changes must amount to one-third different material for an edition to be labeled “new,” but this proportion is simply easier to achieve by adding to the previous edition (and more lightly revising the existing sections) rather than deleting a large portion and starting fresh, only to wind up after such effort with a new edition little larger than before.

Second, even as it grows substantially through its revised editions, *NAM(C)P* is also radically revised and reorganized on two sets of occasions. The first set are the shorter, introductory volumes of *Modern Poems*. As one reviewer observes, *Modern Poems/1e* “is a scaled-down version of the heavy and expensive [*NAMP/1e*]” (Lopes 87), and as O’Clair admits in the acknowledgements of *Moderns Poems/2e*, “*The Norton Anthology of Modern Poetry* is the ‘parent’ of *Modern Poems*” (xxx1), meaning that these shorter editions were selected directly out of their predecessors.<sup>3</sup> These two shorter editions are intended more for introductory genre surveys than for majors’ courses in the modern period, and so a reduced number of selections is coupled with a new, longer introduction on “Reading Poems” (subdivided into such topics as “Language,” “Tone,” “Imagery,” and so on) and a closing essay on “Modern Poetry in English: A Brief History” (*Modern Poems/1e* xxvii–lxxx1, 486–500; *Modern Poems/2e* xxxiii–lxiv, 882–96). The latter “Brief History” is an abridged version of the general introductions in *NAMP/1e* and *NAMP/2e*, and the author headnotes in *Modern Poetry* are likewise abridgements from prior versions. These condensations typically emphasize biographical and historical material rather than technical details or classificatory niceties, and the abridging also carefully omits any mentions of poems found in *NAMP/1e* and *NAMP/2e* that have been cut in *Modern Poems*.

The second occasion when *NAM(C)P* has been substantially revised is in the third edition of 2003. With a new editor and a sense that the close of the century authorizes a longer view of what “modernity” is, *NAMCP/3e* adds the

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<sup>3</sup> There are two, possibly more, minor exceptions to this assessment: *Modern Poems/1e* includes two poems not present in *NAMP/1e* —“Sunday Morning” by Wallace Stevens and “[she being Brand]” by E.E. Cummings— and all of W.H. Auden’s twelve selections from *NAMP/1e* are reproduced in *Modern Poems/1e* (perhaps as a small memorial to this poet, whose passing in 1973 had not been noted in *NAMP/1e*?). In *Modern Poems/2e*, every single author and poem is also found in *NAMP/2e*, with the selections of three poets reproduced exactly (T.S. Eliot, Isaac Rosenberg, and Countee Cullen). These minor exceptions merely prove the rule: both versions of *Modern Poems* were obviously constructed by making substantial cuts directly from the preceding “full” editions.



term “contemporary” and is divided into two volumes structured around the modern/contemporary break point, taken historically as World War II. While the kind of revision entailed by *Modern Poems* and *NAMCP/3e* are diametrically opposed—abbreviating on the one hand and broadening on the other—it is interesting that both revisions are occasioned by a desire to change *how the anthology is marketed and taught*, reminding us that all these anthologies are textbooks first and foremost. *Modern Poems* brought the useful survey of the longer versions to the introductory level course, and *NAMCP/3e*, with its two volumes, can now be used for either, or both, modern or contemporary poetry surveys (unique ISBNs allow instructors to order volumes separately if desired). And though they appear as polar opposites, *Modern Poems* and *NAMCP/3e* are projects that are inconceivable apart from the existence of the preceding editions. And, notably, both kinds of revision operate on the principle of *rearticulation* of their predecessors. Working from its broader predecessors, *Modern Poems* selects authors and poems from that are especially appropriate for introducing poetry as a genre (with its subgenres: haiku, villanelle, sonnet, etc.). Likewise, the rearticulation of *NAMCP/3e*, which splits at 1945, offers separate historical introductions for the two periods, and adds prose to the mix in the form of sections of “Poetics” statements which are narrowly selected from the included poets.<sup>4</sup> The result? While the total bulk of *NAMCP/3e* is greater, each of the two volumes remains significantly smaller in size than the one-volume *NAMPI/2e*.

Just what does this cycle of anthological growth and reselection look like? In lieu of having all the versions of *NAM(C)P* at hand, the table below expresses the oscillation of the text in terms of the ebb and flow of paper. Listed for each edition are the total number of pages (the sum of front matter and main text); the size of the pages (rounded up to the nearest centimeter to allow for differences in trimming and binding); and the total geometrical area thus available for the presentation of poems. In order to make the differences as graspable as possible, this total area is expressed in both square meters and square feet (rounded to the nearest unit for both). The final row lists the approximate percentage change in size of the later editions. Since the two editions of *Modern Poems* are roughly identical in conception, and since the second was edited to look more like its immediate predecessor than the first, *Modern Poems/1e* will conveniently stand for both volumes in this

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<sup>4</sup> Such a section of “Poetics” was first appended to a Norton anthology in Paul Hoover, ed., *Postmodern American Poetry: A Norton Anthology* (New York: Norton, 1994). On the jacket copy of *NAMCP/3e*, Norton lists 195 as the number of poets included; this total however does not account for two selections in the “Poetics” whose authors are only included there: a selection of passages from T.E. Hulme’s *Romanticism and Classicism*, and the Vorticist manifesto from the jointly authored *Blast*. This manifesto is signed by twelve figures including Ezra Pound (the only anthologized poet in this group) and Wyndham Lewis. To roughly account for these “extra” authors’ selections, the number two has arbitrarily been added in the calculations below, bringing the total “authors” included in *NAMCP/3e* to 197 (the extra two are counted as white and male).



and succeeding tables, highlighting the typical differences between the “full” editions and their “shorter” offspring.

	NAMP/1e	Modern Poems	NAMP/2e	NAMCP/3e
front matter:	XLVI	LXXXI	XLIX	LXIII/LXIV
+ main text:	+ 1,456	+ 526	+ 1865	+ 1,062/1,210
total length:	1,502 pp.	607 pp.	1,914 pp.	2,399 pp.
page height:	24 cm	22 cm	24 cm	24 cm
× page width:	× 14 cm	× 14 cm	× 14 cm	× 16 cm
page area:	336 cm <sup>2</sup>	308 cm <sup>2</sup>	336 cm <sup>2</sup>	384 cm. <sup>2</sup>
TOTAL AREA:	50 m <sup>2</sup> = 543 ft <sup>2</sup>	19 m <sup>2</sup> = 201 ft <sup>2</sup>	64 m <sup>2</sup> = 692 ft <sup>2</sup>	92 m <sup>2</sup> = 992 ft <sup>2</sup>
CHANGE:	n/a	-63% ( < 1e)	+27% ( > 1e)	+83% (> 1e) +43% (> 2e)

Notably, the rate of areal growth actually accelerates from *NAMP/1e* to *NAMP/2e* to *NAMCP/3e*. Yet running against the grain of this expansion are the smaller *Modern Poems* and the two volumes of *NAMCP/3e* (which, considered separately, are 41% and 33% smaller areawise, respectively, than *NAMP/2e*). There are other ways to slice the figures to prove the same point: note the strong growth of the front matter in *Modern Poems* and *NAMCP/3e*; because they are differently conceived, both of these editions have double the introductory spadework to do.

To put this inexorable growth of *NAM(C)P* into the physical terms of coverage, or at least as an embodied parallel to the usual meaning of an anthology’s “coverage,” the next table lists the number of copies of each anthology required to cover an American football field (officially 120 yards by 160 feet, equivalent to approximately 1.32 acres or 0.53 hectares):

	NAMP/1e	Modern Poems	NAMP/2e	NAMCP/3e
copies per football field:	106	286	83	58



Given the sizable investment of many US universities in football programs, this is not a purely facetious comparison. If *NAMCP/3e* sells over 100,000 copies of the two-volume set, not an unreasonable estimate, it could cover the fields of all 612 NCAA college football teams nearly three times each.<sup>5</sup> Although the previous table suggests that *NAMCP/3e* has nearly twice the coverage of *NAMP/1e*, this is not the same as “coverage” in the canonical sense—that is, in the number of authors and selections that are included in an anthology. Changes in this kind of coverage are nonetheless expansive, as the tables below on authors and selections demonstrate.

But first, what exactly is a “selection”? As the basic unit of the anthology, “selection” is taken here to mean any discrete unit of text taken from an original source, including texts that may be abbreviated or “subselected,” insofar as the subselection is obvious as such to any reader who is not familiar with the entire original work. This working definition obviously circumvents a great deal of philosophical and bibliographical quibbling, but such are the realities of anthology editing. In practice, a selection is anything other than headnotes and other editorial material that receives a page number in the anthology’s table of contents. Of course, items that are contiguous (e.g., the first two *Cantos* of Ezra Pound) could sensibly be said to represent a single selection, and their two entries in the TOC merely a matter of paratextual convention. (This is different from giving TOC page numbers for both the title of the original work and the selection from it; obviously the former is not a “selection,” but a pure paratext.) Nevertheless, for the purposes of convenience rather than consistency, any longer “selected” item that receives a page number in the table of contents will be considered a selection here, including individual excerpts from long poems (i.e., four of Pound’s *Cantos* are four selections, even if some of them are contiguous, and the first two long sections of Okot’s *Song of Lawino* count as two selections, and so on). Separately titled passages in the “Poetics” selections of *NAMCP/3e* are also counted as single selections, even if abridged (i.e., three letters from Emily Dickinson are three selections, whether complete or abbreviated). On the other hand, in order not to obscure the growing importance of the long poem in the statistics, those sections of “poem sequences” that are sequentially numbered, along with briefer and sequentially numbered sections of certain long poems, have been counted as single contiguous selections. Even if paginated separately in the TOC, any sequential numbering in the anthology’s running text makes it clear to the reader that such shorter sections followed one another in the original. Thus the full twenty-two poems of Adrienne Rich’s *Twenty-One Love Poems* are here counted as a single complete selection; George Oppen’s *Of Being Numerous* 1-9, 18-19 are counted as two selections; and so on. This distinc-

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<sup>5</sup> The exercise remains hypothetical, of course, since only one of the sides of a printed page is ever visible; anyone wishing to paper an actual football field will need double the number of copies listed above.



tion explains why the tallies of poems listed here are lower than the figures that Norton has cited in its marketing materials for the various editions (obviously any publisher would prefer such totals to be as high as justifiably possible). The total number of selections in *NAMCP/3e* includes both the selections of poetry (1,550) and prose (47).

With the above assumptions about the nature of selections, the next two tables enumerate the changes in canonical “coverage” in the four editions of *NAM(C)P*. The average pages per selection and pages per author are calculated based not on the total number of pages from the first table, but on the number of sequential pages devoted in each anthology to selections, headnotes, and footnotes.<sup>6</sup> The figures have also been silently corrected for the changes in page area among the editions.<sup>7</sup> Notably, the number of selections from each included author remains about the same in *NAM(C)P*, hovering around eight selections per author in each of the three main editions, though less than half this in *Modern Poems/1e*—obviously because this edition is more concerned with variety than “coverage.” As the table shows, the relative number of pages devoted to each selection rises significantly in *NAMCP/3e*.

	NAMP/1e	Mod. Poems/1e	NAMP/2e	NAMCP/3e
selections:	1,283	418	1,547	1,597
change:	n/a	-67% (< 1e)	+21% (> 1e)	+24% (> 1e) +3% (> 2e)
pp./sel'n.:	1.07	1.07	1.12	1.53
change:	n/a	(= 1e)	+5% (> 1e)	+43% (> 1e) +37% (> 2e)

<sup>6</sup> I.e., not including either the general introductions, the bibliographical notes on poets, or the indices and permissions pages. These revised totals are 1,374 pages in *NAMP/1e*, 485 pages in *Modern Poems*, 1,724 pages in *NAMP/2e*, and 2,141 pages in *NAMCP/3e* (i.e., 1,010 pages in volume 1, and 1,131 pages in volume 2). These figures are still rough (i.e., a less accurate measurement than the number of lines or column inches devoted to poetry alone), but are certainly closer to the mark than the total page counts for each volume.

<sup>7</sup> While, as the first table shows, the area of the page of *NAMP/1e* and *NAMP/2e* are approximately the same, the page areas of *Modern Poems* and *NAMCP/3e* are different enough to matter when multiplied over hundreds or thousands of pages. Even the seemingly slight increase in the width of the page in *NAMCP/3e* means that a great number of longer lines that are broken up in the previous editions are now taking up only their one intended line, further increasing the actual amount of poetry (and prose) that *NAMCP/3e* is able to encase. The figures in the next two charts are thus silently adjusted to be relative to the area of *NAMP/1e* and *NAMP/2e* (in decimal form, these adjusted figures are 0.92 for a page of *Modern Poems* and 1.14 for a page of *NAMCP/3e*).



The sharp increase in the latest edition in pages per selection reflects the growing inclusion of long poems, poem sequences, and also the “Poetics” selections, which by virtue of being prose require more space per selection than the poems do. A breakdown of the total number of authors included in each edition, and the average number of pages apportioned to each author, reveals a similar pattern:

	NAMP/1e	Modern Poems	NAMP/2e	NAMCP/3e
authors:	158	124	180	197
change:	n/a	-11% (< 1e)	+13% (> 1e)	+25% (> 1e) +9% (> 2e)
pp./author:	8.70	3.60	9.58	12.39
change:	n/a	-59% (< 1e)	+10% (> 1e)	+42% (> 1e) +29% (> 2e)

While the two global patterns of expansion and rearticulation of anthologies may partly explain the statistics offered here, certainly there are local pressures driving the significant expansion of pages allotted to individual selections and authors in *NAMCP/3e*. But here the statistics are starting their natural turn into stories about authors and their individual canonical fates, the subject of the next section.

### CANON STORIES: THE “SOFT FIGURES” OF *NAM(C)P*

How individual authors, selections, and perhaps most tellingly selection practices can transmogrify across the editions of an anthology is only partially revealed by statistical analysis. Behind *NAM(C)P*'s broad expansion and sudden rearticulations are scores of local tales, the “canon stories” of poets and of poems, as well as larger narratives about the canon as a whole. Once the hard figures have been laid out, these stories about the fates of individual authors and selections begin to emerge. When *NAMCP/3e* expands to include almost half a page more per selection and per author, some authors profit and others lose, all because of climate changes that authors, living or dead, cannot control. One of these contemporary concerns, as suggested above, is the renewed understanding of the importance of the long poem in modernism. This leads Ramazani to add “more than twenty long poems new to the anthology” (“Remaking,” 274). For instance,

Ramazani reintroduces a poet like H.D., who had been dropped in *NAMP/2e*, with new selections from *The Walls Do Not Fall* and *Tribute to Angels*.

Another climatic shift affecting *NAMCP/3e* is the recent ascension of prose as a fully canonical form of literature, meaning that authors who before were represented only as poets can now appear as critics and theorists in the “Poetics” appendices. Interestingly, the canonical investiture of prose threatens poetry’s long-held premiership as the greatest genre, and thus it makes perverse sense that certain quite canonical—but incidentally older—authors who are known for their drama, fiction, or criticism as well as for their poems have been dropped in *NAMCP/3e*. These include Lewis Carroll, Oscar Wilde, James Joyce, Samuel Beckett, and Josephine Miles among others. (Will this happen to Michael Ondaatje and Leslie Marmon Silko a generation from now?) Certain poets famous for their associations with greater lights (such as Robert Bridges, with Gerard Manley Hopkins, and John Malcolm Brinnin, with Dylan Thomas) also find themselves deselected.

Shifting vignettes of the canon such as these appear everywhere across *NAM(C)P*, but the largest story being told is the inexorably advancing threshold of the present. This master narrative of time itself can be traced along both sides of the glacial metaphor: alongside the steadily growing corpus or “ice age” of modern poems, there run perpendicular attempts to reselect and reorganize this ungainly mass. The glacier of the literary canon slowly presses forward into the new millennium, and individual poets are picked up or deposited like erratics, or glacial boulders, and individual poetic schools or movements are delimited, carved out like glacial valleys and murrains. Meanwhile the depths of the glacier remain relatively unchanged, and the poets that enter this “glacial core” tend not to leave, though they often do erode. Thus Edgar Lee Masters, whose *Spoon River Anthology* may have itself inaugurated the prevalence of “anthology” as a book title today, is unlikely ever to disappear, though he is now represented in *NAMCP/3e* by less than half of the sardonic monologues of the dead included in *NAMP/1e*.<sup>8</sup> Even as the glacial canon creeps forward, however, it remains profoundly conservative regarding who is, or will be, “a classic,” and thus the two volumes of *NAMCP/3e* show a wide separation in the number of pages devoted to individual poets. The moderns of volume 1 are each allotted more than fourteen pages, over half again the number devoted to each of the contemporary poets of volume 2, who receive about nine pages each.

Other stories are being told in the two larger revisions of *NAM(C)P*, in the transitions to *Modern Poems* and from *NAMP/2e* to the latest edition. It must be no accident that there are almost exactly one third of the selections in *Modern Poems/1e* as in *NAMP/1e*: this must be, is it not, the residue of a publisher’s target figure

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<sup>8</sup> Not counting Master’s introductory poem “The Hill,” which frames the original collection, these figures show the gradual erosion of a minor poet who happened to strike lightning with work that was once timely, provocative, forward-looking in its plain style, and original in its conception: 13 “epitaphs” in *NAMP/1e*; 9 in *NAMP/2e*; and 6 in *NAMCP/3e*.

given to the editors to sort out? *Modern Poems* 1e originally sold for \$4.95 in paperback, and *NAMCP* 1e for \$14.95 clothbound —suggesting that cutting two thirds of the permissions cost was another conscious goal of the *Modern Poems* abridgement. A comparison of TOC's, moreover, shows that *Modern Poems* draws most strongly from the first half of its sister volumes, suggesting an impulse to represent more fully the well-established major authors of the modern period. Alternately, this may simply reflect the likely cognitive process of cutting two thirds of a longer edition: starting at the beginning, the pressure of the target number builds slowly and only becomes urgent towards the end of the selection process, which in this scenario coincides with the end of the table of contents. In any case, the process of cutting down a longer edition to a “shorter” or “concise” one tends to involve editorial choices that may be more difficult than those involved in the longer version (Lauter 29).

Some of the most important stories in an anthology are told by the beginnings and endings of the collection. The story of the latest revision is one of a whole new set of beginnings and endings. For *NAMCP* 3e, this division between “modern” and “contemporary” must be communicated more firmly than it was when the anthology was a single ecumenically “modern” volume. This is accomplished by playing with the break point of the two volumes, whereby Ramazani neatly circumvents the Norton rule of printing poets and poems by dates of birth and publication. Keith Douglas (born 1920) is the final poet of volume 1, and Charles Olson (born 1910, a full ten years before Douglas) is the first of volume 2. Douglas's and volume 1's final poem, “Aristocrats” (1946), could have come just as well from the Modernist watershed of World War I, but Olson's and volume 2's first poem, “Pacific Lament” (also 1946), is undeniably from World War II, and it exhibits the “projective” style that would influence Language Poetry. Two war elegies: one British, one American; one “modern,” one “contemporary” —for a sensitive reader of an anthology, this arrangement speaks much louder than a headnote. And the fact that volume 2 begins with Olson and Elizabeth Bishop is, as one reviewer has it (LoLordo para. 1), “a pairing straight out of central casting,” one that certainly echoes on several levels the potent pairing of Walt Whitman and Emily Dickinson that has opened *NAM(C)P* from its inception.

Likewise, the choice of the suddenly canonical Sherman Alexie as the final poet of volume 2 is just as determined an editorial choice as that the final poem, whose last words are “the end of the world,” is dated the year 2000. And in the preceding pages there are many other poems with even more recent dates. The message is that this is an anthology that attempts to embrace the entire twentieth century, no matter how many omissions will glare back from the future. But the show is not over yet: there are also the “Poetics,” and it is interesting how the very last two selections here —one a set of excerpts from A.K. Ramanujan's “Where Mirrors Are Windows: Toward an Anthology of Reflections,” and the other Derek Walcott's Nobel Prize speech “The Antilles: Fragments of Epic Memory”— both provide powerful metaphors for understanding and justifying the diverse groupings of selections that embody *NAMCP* 3e itself. This diversity has been noted by a number of reviewers of the third edition, and the next section will critically ex-



plore these and other reviews of *NAM(C)P* relative to how well they comprehend of the complicated ways in which the anthology has been constructed.

### THE RECEPTION OF *NAM(C)P*: A CRITIQUE OF CONTEMPORARY REVIEWS

*NAM(C)P* has been the subject of reviews across its history, some of them in general periodicals as well as prominent disciplinary journals. Those collected for examination here include three reviews of *NAMP/1e* (Boyers; Cox; V. Young); one of *NAMP/2e* (Galvin); and four of *NAMCP/3e* (Anderson; Kitchen; LoLordo; Wojahn). While not exhaustive, this group of reviews serves to provide a barometer of the anthology's changing reception. The thirty-year period spanned by *NAM(C)P* obviously brackets an immense paradigm shift in how literature, and literary anthologies, have been understood by the profession. During this time, the publication of major new textbook anthologies has come to be heralded as forward-looking, or deplored as old-fashioned. The contrast with the reviews of major anthologies in the past is marked: the sense that an anthology may itself *define*, rather than simply represent, an area of study is a new one.

To those scholars and teachers who regularly experience what Jeffrey Williams calls “anthology disdain,” it may come as a surprise to read some of the appreciative, even bibliophilic opening words of the review of *NAMP/1e* published in *College Composition and Communication* three decades ago in 1975:

Together O'Clair and Ellmann have produced one of the finest anthologies of modern poetry in many a year. This book even *feels* good. Norton obviously took great pains in printing this remarkable volume. The heft is just right, and the pages turn easily, making it reminiscent of an expensive Bible. It seems a pity that it was not bound with a flexible Moroccan cover. (Cox 84)

Today we recognize that such blatant linkages between literary and scriptural canons are not only highly suspicious, but seriously misleading: the Bible represents a closed and exclusive canon, while the literary canon may expand and contract indefinitely (Guillory 36-37; Harris 110-12). Other reviewers considered *NAMP/1e* and *NAMP/2e* to be so good, in fact, that they assume that there would thenceforth be few rivals (Boyers 26; Galvin xvi; V. Young 597). Today *NAMCP/3e* has several competitors, but it is striking to see, nevertheless, that the scriptural metaphor is still very much alive for the popular, if not the professional, reception of the anthology. In an interview broadcast on National Public Radio, host Jacki Lyden bracketed the discussion of the anthology's editing by stating that *NAMCP/3e* is “that Bible of English verse” and “a living testament to the poetic word” (Ramazani, interview).

One of the most common rhetorical devices among *NAM(C)P* reviewers is the dual catalog of those poets who should not have been anthologized, and those who should have been. Predictably, these catalogs focus on the latter or “contemporary” half of *NAM(C)P*, where predictions and evaluations of poets are more diffi-





cult. In hindsight, it is easy to see that certain reviewers were more prescient, listing poets who were indeed included in a subsequent edition, while other reviewers enumerate poets that time has been far less kind to. Either way, these counter-catalogs are not pointless, since Norton, like other publishers, gathers such formal and informal reviews during the ensuing re-editing process. But there can be no hope of satisfying every commentator. In reviewing the bulked-up *NAMCP/2e*, for instance, Galvin suggests that “[i]n a better world this book would have been two books — *The Norton Anthology of Modern Poetry* and *The Norton Anthology of Contemporary Poetry*” (xvii). But do the two volumes of *NAMCP/3e* embody that better world? One *NAMCP/3e* reviewer points to the division into two new volumes and claims that “the latest edition has grown overlarge, and it buckles under the weight of its contending ambitions” (Anderson 84).

Like its predecessors, *NAMCP/3e* has occasioned public reflections that range from delight to hand wringing. The four reviews of *NAMCP/3e* surveyed here each have reservations about the *Contemporary* volume, but are agreed that “[Ramazani’s] assessment of contemporary poetry [...] will have a lasting impact” (Anderson 84), though the inevitable process of “Nortonization” of such large swaths of culture may not be an impact that is positive (Wojahn). That impact, specifically, is the “opening” of the contemporary poetry canon where multicultural identities are now prized. As one reviewer baldly catalogs, “the last three pages of the table of contents list two African Americans, three Latinos, three Asian Americans, one Irish-Scots female, two gay poets, and only one ‘mainstream’ writer —if that is a term that can be applied in this context” (Kitchen 861). Such comments recall Joseph Csicsila’s historical analysis of scores of American literature anthologies, revealing that the single greatest determinant of anthologization is the critical paradigm during which the anthology is edited; *NAMCP/3e* epitomizes the multicultural phase that Csicsila finds has already been decades in the making.

But rather than broadly protesting this historical development, *NAMCP/3e* reviewers object more to how multiculturalism finds representation in the anthology as too simplistic: “if one looks for a recent poem in the *Norton* that treats the relation between language and identity as a *problem*, the pickings are slim” (LoLordo para. 18; original emphasis). Ramazani’s headnotes for contemporary poets “regularly betray a fixation on the ethnic backgrounds and sexual orientations of his chosen writers,” and often the poems chosen to represent the multicultural author, continues this reviewer, exhibit “the symptoms of a contemporary literature that inoculates itself against objective scrutiny by employing the untouchable suffering of its first person narrator” (Anderson 85, 86). Poems that are merely narrative markers of some identity, these reviewers seem to argue, are incomplete representations of the varieties of multicultural experience. Poets’ “work should be chosen for its quality, not for its ethnicity. They deserve to be poets first and hyphenized Americans second” (Kitchen 862).

At least some editors believe that the multicultural impact of these poets is the best thing to happen to poetry in recent memory (Nelson 324), but there are other ways to understand the sudden inclusion of minority writers in the final pages of *NAMCP/3e*. In fact, if we remember how “contemporary” anthology se-





lections fare, it may be that having exceptionally strong representation of minority poets at the very end of a table of contents is a form not of inclusiveness, but of marginalization. As a reviewer of *NAMP/2e* comments, “It’s almost the literary kiss of death to be among the youngest in any gathering like this, as a perusal of the back pages of earlier anthologies reminds us” (Galvin XVI). Reviewers generally make impressionistic judgments about inclusions and exclusions, and are obviously not concerned with making close comparative studies of any previous editions. Nevertheless, a poet-by-poet comparison of the various TOC’s of *NAM(C)P* reveals that the editors took significant pains to reconsider all the contemporary poets and poems that were carried from one edition to the next. With a single notable exception, every single poet who was so carried over had their selections varied in some way in each edition, no matter whether their totals were increased or decreased. The one exception is Sylvia Plath, who is represented with exactly the same selections in both *NAMP/1e* and *NAMP/2e*. One wonders whether there was some difficulty with permissions to explain this unusual instance; however, Plath’s selections are more than doubled in number in *NAMCP/3e*. Whatever the reasons behind it, the unusual case suggests that there might be another way to marginalize a poet even when that poet appears in anthology after anthology: simply include the same old selections, or choose selections directly from a previous table of contents, as Cary Nelson cynically suggests: “The competition includes Gary Soto and Cathy Song, so you have to as well” (324). Obviously, this kind of marginalization should not be attributed to *NAMCP/3e*.

Reviewers who question Norton’s or other publishers’ rush to a multicultural representation in anthologies like *NAMCP/3e* might temper their observations when a census of the canonization of poets is tallied relative to gender and race. Based on their headnote identifiers (or lack thereof, as is often the case with white male poets), authors have been blandly assigned in the table below to categories of “male” or “female” and “white” or “other.” (Please note that the latter category is not meant to appear reductive, but simply as the most generous possible grouping for a variety of minorities, including those of mixed race.) Percentages have been rounded to the nearest point. “Change” figures are based on the numbers of authors in the previous edition rather than on their proportional representation.

	NAMP/1e	NAMP/2e	NAMCP/3e
male, female:	138, 20	141, 39	141, 56
percentages:	(87%, 13%)	(79%, 21%)	(72%, 28%)
change:	n/a	+2%, +95%	-1%, +41%
white, other:	144, 14	158, 22	162, 35
percentages:	(91%, 9%)	(89%, 11%)	(82%, 18%)
change:	n/a	+9%, +69%	+1%, +59%

If we focus only on the numbers of women and minorities in the above table, it appears that representation of female and minority poets in the modern canon has been growing by leaps and bounds, almost tripling for both categories from *NAMP/1e* to *NAMCP/3e* as a whole. However, there is hardly a quota system in place—or if there is, it is for the males and the whites, who seem to have solidified their numerical place in this canon. The new two-volume division also unintentionally serves to marginalize the more multicultural “contemporaries,” who are now no longer in the same volume as the major “moderns” of volume 1. Although the canon has opened in *NAMCP/3e* to the point where about a third of the authors in volume 2 are female and/or minority, that opening has certainly been a glacial one. Because of their initial under-representation, minority poets can see their proportional inclusion increase by forty percent from *NAMP/1e* to *NAMP/2e*, and yet their actual numbers increase by only nine, while an additional thirteen white poets have simultaneously been added. Reviewers of such anthologies in the future should be aware both of how gradually such minority representation in the canon has been gained, and of how little ground the majority poets have had to give up.

#### CONCLUSION: TEXTBOOK FUTURE

Although predictions about literary trends are as doubtful as any kind of forecasting, some guesses will be hazarded here regarding what the next major Norton anthologization of modern and contemporary poetry will look like. Instructors at least certainly do dream about their “ideal” anthology (Doyno). Whether or not Norton’s ownership of certain modern poetry properties has given it an advantage in the anthology market (see Nelson 315-16), whereas there were once few or no competitors, several serious challengers have begun to appear. In addition to Cary Nelson’s *Oxford Anthology of Modern American Poetry* (Oxford UP, 2000), there are now entrants from The Library of America (Hass, et al.) and a two-volume anthology of modern poetry from around the world from the University of California Press (Rothenberg & Joris). As reviewers of the latter have pointed out, these volumes creatively attempt to reorganize the canon (Quinn; Sherwood), running thematic circles around the Norton’s historical juggernaut. The dropping of much modern poetry out of copyright in coming years will also allow further innovation in such collections, perhaps coming from university presses or other publishers outside of the mainstream. Thus we can expect that *NAM(C)P* will continue to be challenged, but will also continue to be revised to meet the challenges.

First, *NAMCP/3e*’s two-volume structure will allow significant further growth. One reviewer has already offered another possible division for a third volume: modern, postwar, and contemporary (Kitchen 862-63). Likewise, the “Poetics” sections will also grow, perhaps including critics who are not poets at all (already there is one author, T.E. Hulme, who has a “Poetics” selection without being anthologized as a poet in the main section of the text). This growth in all areas will in turn lead to further reselection, perhaps in the form of “casebooks” organized



generically or thematically. As Norton's other anthologies have shown, these casebooks work well alongside a chronological organization. However, it is unlikely that Norton will abandon this traditional ordering by author's birthdate. Though this arrangement is especially arbitrary when everything between the anthology's covers is from the same period, it does evade the problem of how to group poets coherently.

Second, the next Norton will have some strong visual component. This component may not appear in the book itself, but perhaps on a website, a DVD, or other electronic archive linked to the printed text—all other possible outlets for continued expansion. These archives will also have audio modules to reflect the oral dimensions of modern and contemporary poetry. Pictures of authors will also relieve the rhetorical contortions that currently mar the headnotes in their markings of race. Unlike textbooks, electronic databases are less limited, meaning that the long poem may be made available as never before. There may even be opportunities for more teacher-driven anthologies, if Norton sees fit to join the “custom publishing” bandwagon with its own stable of poems.

Finally, the Norton will eventually have to come to terms with the last great unanthologized frontier of twentieth-century poetry: music lyrics. Occasionally in the past, a selection from the likes of Bob Dylan has appeared in a lower-level anthology like *The Norton Introduction to Literature*. But until the Library of America began including them, the words of popular music have generally been ignored by influential anthologies. The publisher that finds an effective way to package modern music with a modern poetry anthology is bound to leave other publisher's offerings far behind. A side benefit of inclusion of music as a canonical genre of poetry will be the possibility of opening the canon even further to women and minorities.

All of the above forecasting must be taken with a grain of salt, however. Any of these predictions could be obviated if, for example, there are significant changes in current copyright law. For after all, the times, as the saying goes, they are a-changin'. And we can expect anthologies will change as well to reflect the times, and perhaps will change the times in turn.

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