Stroupe

ENGL 8906

**Critical Origin Myths**

This project began with an attempt to explain the peculiar power of a two-word phrase in the last stanza of Keats’ ode “To Autumn”: “and now.” In one grammatical stroke, it seemed to take in the events of the passing season (with the backward glace of its conjunction) and to situate the poem in an ongoing present (with its hovering adverb). (viii)

Christopher R. Miller. *The Invention of Evening: Perception and Time in Romantic Poetry*

I had a vision⎯or, since I am embarrassed to call it that, let us say only that I had as near a thing to a vision as a scholar is likely to have. It was 1993, and I had stopped to listen to a noon concert on my campus featuring the band Toad the Wet Sprocket, which had started locally before going national. I stood on a slight rise and enjoyed the music. The gentle, smooth sun of Santa Barbara washed down over the upturned faces, tousled hair, and bare shoulders of a few hundred students watching the band⎯and not just watching. but moving gently, rising up and down in time to the strangely innocent yet also worldly-wise rock that was the signature of this band. It was a moment of delicious pause in the ordinary rhythm of work and study, of what ungenerous commentators on Gen X at the time might have called "slack'' but that seemed to me to be “recreation'' in something near the original sacral meaning of the word⎯that is, the experience of a diffuse, saturated re-origination of spiritual meaning in everyday life like that in the

But then as Shelley said in the "The Triumph of Life " "a Vision on my brain rolled.” It may have been the heavy burden of committee meetings and other administrative duties I carried that year. Or perhaps it was because I was a recent parent, and. anxious about how to care for my research, my students, and my family simultaneously. In any case, with startlingly bleak, cold vision, I suddenly seemed to see the future of the students before me. I saw each of those bright, young, free people taken out of the open air and the music, and captured along in a cubicle. I saw each bathed not in sunlight but in cold office lights and the glow of a computer screen I saw them, that is, caught not in Weber’s “iron cage” but in a "silicon cage" into which not even music would be allowed to flow. (387-88)

Alan Liu. “Epilogue.” *The Laws of Cool: Knowledge Work and the Culture of Information.*

It is ﬁtting that this book begins with Shelley, because it originated with Shelley. More precisely, my understanding of “art’s undoing” arose from my repeated efforts to understand what was happening in certain crucial moments of Shelley’s *The Triumph of Life*. More precisely still, this project began from what I felt to be the shortcomings of my previous book’s attempt to come to terms with what happens when Shelley’s last poem addresses the relationship between aesthetic and political judgment. Despite my attempts to use the most supple and nuanced notions of ideology at my disposal, I felt that *The Ideology of Imagination* came up short when trying to reckon with the poetics of aestheticization in *The Triumph*. That undoing led to *Art’s Undoing*. By this title I mean to identify…. (xi)

Forest Pyle. “Preface.” *Art's Undoing: In the Wake of a Radical Aestheticism*