

ELICITED RESPONSE

semantic satiation
due to [over-use of words] & internet

Sestina: Like
A. E. Stallings

With a nod to Jonah Winter

Now we're all "friends," there is no love but Like,
A semi-demi goddess, something like
A reality-TV star look-alike,
Named Simile or Me Two. So we like
In order to be liked. It isn't like
There's Love or Hate now. Even plain "dislike"

Is frowned on: there's no button for it. Like
Is something you can quantify: each "like"
You gather's almost something money-like,
Token of virtual support. "Please like
This page to stamp out hunger." And you'd like
To end hunger and climate change alike,

But it's unlikely Like does diddly. Like
Just twiddles its unopposing thumbs-ups, like-
Wise props up scarecrow silences. "I'm like,
So OVER him," I overhear. "But, like,
He doesn't get it. Like, you know? He's like
It's all OK. Like I don't even LIKE

Him anymore. Whatever I'm all like ..."
Take "like" out of our chat, we'd all alike
Flounder, agape, gesticulating like
A foreign film sans subtitles, fall like
Dumb phones to mooted desuetude. Unlike
With other crutches, um, when we use "like,"

We're not just buying time on credit: Like
Displaces other words; crowds, cuckoo-like,
Endangered hatchlings from the nest. (Click "like"
If you're against extinction!) Like is like
Invasive zebra mussels, or it's like
Those nutria-things, or kudzu, or belike

Redundant fast food franchises, each like
(More like) the next. Those poets who dislike
Inversions, archaisms, who just like
Plain English as she's spoke — why isn't "like"
Their (literally) every other word? I'd like
Us just to admit that's what real speech is like.

But as you like, my friend. Yes, we're alike,
How we pronounce, say, lichen, and dislike
Cancer and war. So like this page. Click Like.

Language ironically detaches
↳ tradition/slang
↳ expression from emotion

Language = alive

vague affirmation
↳ action equivalent of "like"
↳ feeling now just part of an exchange

instead of making things clearer, language creates vagueness

people want language/emotion to be concrete; even "plain" feelings are too abstract

quantifiable, concrete
↳ or at least the illusion of there of

language & action on the internet is purely virtual
↳ the appearance of humanity only

speech is more about emphasis/noise than meaning
speech full of meaningless, hyperbolic & self-affirming phrases

dependancecy on slang
and action is dependent on language

"Like" is more than just a filler word; it is a killer word
↳ the real issue is not that it's meaningless, but that we pretend that it has meaning

internet culture trivializes issues
unnatural, but quickly decimates "native" species

approximation on approximation
↳ comparing to a comparison removes from reality
paradoxical ability to be both more and less comprehensible through use of "like"

poetry & language not about reality or accessibility

language ~~skews~~ skews relative truth
↳ art actually even worse
↳ glorifies and glosses over ugly truth of language
urges action

still some possible good, as language (even corrosive, meaningless language) connects humanity
↳ but this action (as previously discussed) is actually inactive
↳ action just as deceptive/elusive as lang. & emotion