



cover image source: http://www.fas.org/man/dod-101/sys/dumb/cbu-tmd_39.jpg

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BellumLetters

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A Project for
“National” Poetry Month
April 2007

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written, designed and published
in Goleta, California in 2007
by Michelle Detorie
for the Dusie Chap Kollektiv

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BELLUMLETTERS
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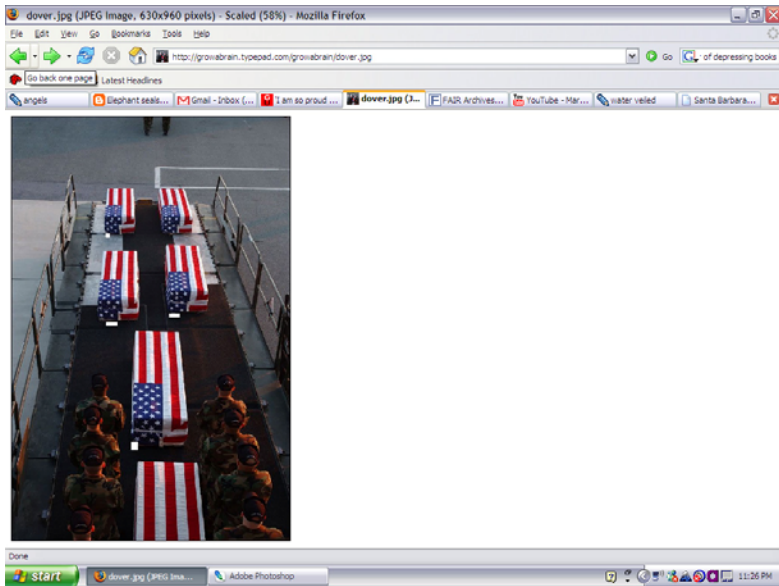
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PREFACE

BellumLetters is a play on the term belles-lettres, which means "beautiful" or "fine" writing. Bellum is the Latin word for war, thus "bellumletters" is meant to suggest "war writing." The BellumLetters were written one poem per day throughout the month of April. The poems were written as daily acts of protest against the war in Iraq. I posted the poems, day by day, at my blog (ovariessequins.blogspot.com). The poems were therefore composed for an online environment and contain hyperlinks to news stories, photographs, graphics, statistics, blogs, videos, government documents, and databases about the war. For the presentation of these poems on paper, I've underlined the words that are also links in the online versions. Since I could not possibly include the contents of the links in a hard copy, the addresses and a brief description of the various web sites are included in a notes section at the end of the text. In some cases, the links have expired; thus, the poems are also documents in which a sort of digital disintegration is an integral feature of their underpinning.* BellumLetters #29 is a video poem, and a link to the video is noted in the back. BellumLetters #20, #21, and #23 are handwritten shape poems, and transcriptions of these poems are also available in the back. Additionally, I've also included the labels/tags I used when posting the poems. For the most part, these labels/tags are self-explanatory. One, "napowrimo," refers to "national poetry writing month." This term was coined by Maureen Thorson who originated the tradition of writing a poem a day during the month of April.

An appendix contains a few notes I've made about the BellumLetters which were also posted to the blog. While I do not consider this a finished project, I do consider the poems to be a sort of documentary, and for this reason I have not revised the poems since their original composition in any way.

* For archival purposes, I've made screen shots of the pages; an archive of these screen captures will be available online soon.



P R E E M P T I O N

Today I drew marks
in the sand; they
reminded me of letters
or bones or teeth. Perhaps
you would call them vulgar.
The light pulls back
as an arm draws the arrow.
Bow, the bough breaking.
Rope and pulley singing
as wind throws birds
from the cliffs. It isn't even
ours -- this sand. We are
so stupid sometimes.

Labels: [animal](#), [apology](#), [bellumletters](#), [bone](#), [iraq](#), [links](#), [napowrimo](#), [poem](#), [protest](#), [war](#)

OPEN BOOKS or PROFIT

It will not be enough to open
the wires; the monkey records
filed away shall be shelled
and scattered and planted
as keys hid in the garden wall
pretend roots where a lens
flowers unlock their soft
hocks to dispel wounds
excited by the spring rage
of rockets, plastic, and microphones.
The diesel ills. How can we fill
the dirt with so many books
when so many come home empty.

Labels: [bellumletters](#), [bone](#), [iraq](#), [napowrimo](#), [poem](#), [protest](#), [war](#)

WEATHER REPORT



Not everyone is legible:
spider syndicate, lace fences
hung for borders where wires
cross and heal. A hanger
for a hand, a healer. Which
wires cross? One is lost
among the ruins
of arcades and alleys
pretending threads
and glue make bottleships.
No letters bind
him to a mother's mast.
The belly is a bone
to heal. Take one
thing from her
and she becomes a house:
a loaded gun come mended.

Labels: [bellumletters](#), [iraq](#), [napowrimo](#), [poem](#), [protest](#), [war](#)

AMBULANCE

As if *that* lets you off the hook. My skirt
could not become your palm, spread
wreckage of tires, triggers.
Giddyup, lover. (But really
you are full of it.) I practiced
making fists under the table
as garden walkers rowed the aisles
with sown syringes. You think
I don't know how you stay
awake so long? The taste
of gunpowder on your wrists
and the dogs barking
all through the night. I hang
my garments on the line
inviting fire, syllables.

Labels: [bellumletters](#), [iraq](#), [links](#), [napowrimo](#), [poem](#), [protest](#), [war](#)

L I G H T H O U S E

i.
the village is an instrument
for cash. lavender skyline
smudged to pink. It's how
the sun shines in: round
curve grinding snails
to bits. Where bars
suggest *animal* and faux moss
the garden imagined by capitalists.

ii.
the frozen birds
today were like starlight
streaming through a sieve.
Feathers soft despite
the cold. We dragged
the goose home in a net
and then arranged the quills
upon a shelf. It's like
pretending somewhere
else the lantern still exists;
machines of nesting, a wealth
of stunned propellers.

Labels: bellumletters, iraq, napowrimo, poem, protest, war

ALL THE KINGS HORSES

Body puzzle, where to begin
to put you back together again?
Sun-yolk spilt, my split heart
plump with thieving (even
that isn't mine)

_____ Like
a pencil the missile moves
over the city; outline of streets
and houses traced and tensile.
Soldier, isotope, when you
report the green sunset
and how the halos bloomed
and the ash clouds bundled
one thousand shovels,
the budding pacers
made from prosthetic
transplants, silk lantern
engines fit for larceny, become
sails knit together with
shrapnel, a place for roofs
to grow if it finally rains.

Labels: [bellumletters](#), [iraq](#), [links](#), [napowrimo](#), [poem](#), [protest](#), [war](#)

LYREBIRD

I'm awake in the scissors
of ten thousand lines, the ascension
of soldiers. The lamplight
here is cruel sometimes; limbs
squiggle in the haze, the letters
rearrange themselves, anagram
constructing a refrain, silvery
and unlimited. Do you
mimic or lie? The flax
threshing allows us to deny
the frayed hems, the genuflecting
tides strewn with radioactive
plastics that elide the difference
between safety and disaster.
A mouth of salt makes ink elastic
and all our papers brine.

Labels: [bellumletters](#), [iraq](#), [napowrimo](#), [poem](#), [protest](#), [war](#)

BIRDBOX

1.

no arrival, only the construct

a tethered thing, a lid
to lift

2.

wood from the sea
where birds are made
wood box

the saw
through

white tail
tip
blade feather

box of knives
box of beds

3.

thermometer for blood making

syringe, feeder

drained and piled
faceless wings

shaped to slip, flesh grip
soft and bone

glass on stone
tip red tip

knock on bone
without breath

outside, too
a life stretch
brown and moving
eye, wing stitch
the missing sound
boxless

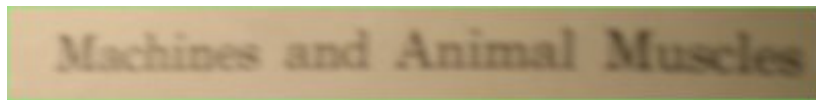
4.

sad neck, deflated
unfrozen and soft

homeless, three
sisters
missing home
tapered tail to tip

unlidded
without flight.

Labels: [bellumletters](#), [iraq](#), [links](#), [napowrimo](#), [poem](#), [protest](#), [war](#)



LIKE A LION

The lupine is so obvious
in its blue, not like asphodel
which is white and cold
and smells like death.
Not like us who pretend
to forget this is the betting
list, the get. The odds
are our way of pretending.

April is the mime forging
outlines: apple, machine
gun, stray letters in the slug-
gutter. Clone of our dotted
lines: mirrors untethered
and let to roam sinew
and gravel, the slow roads
we build away from home.

Only the still patience
of the toys compares
to our games with glue and paper.
Let's forget it's spring -- say
the ash on the air
is actually snow.
Winter is the absence
of pretending; it buries us.

Labels: bellumletters, iraq, napowrimo, poem, protest, war

LIKE A LAMB

They would answer us if only
they knew our names. The glimmer
threaded through phone lines, spools
and spools of wire. Our numbers rifle.
They file them away. We could go riding
but then we could not pretend
the story ended anywhere other
than a sort of taming, braids
and boxes made for captives.
When they call us, it's as though
their voice is made of worms
and all our longings dirt.

Labels: [bellumletters](#), [iraq](#), [napowrimo](#), [poem](#), [protest](#), [war](#)

TREASURE MAP

It's not enough to just
be lost. Magpie
at the mistress box
and glass jaw bobbing.
Thieving a way home
along the hems
with the bobbin. "X"
is where, gathered
in the crook of a tree,
jewels and bones construct
a furtive geometry. Cages
or faux forests composed
by driftwood staked
in tundra, the gorgeous
lie of generous muscles.

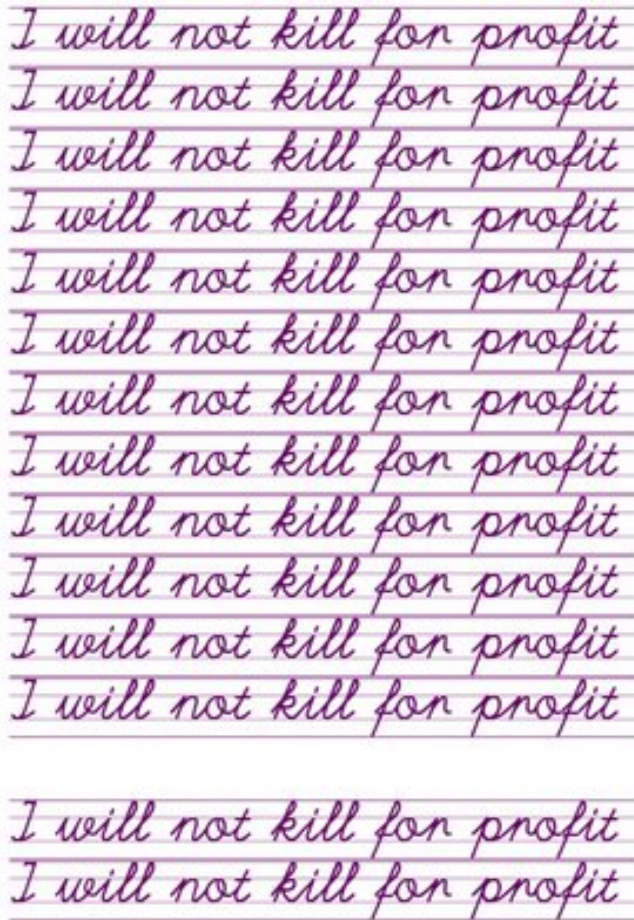
Labels: bellumletters, iraq, napowrimo, poem, protest, war

HALFWAY HOUSE

As if it were halfway home:
the red dogs the same
color as the beach, the swimmers
turning gold, the tops
of underwater mountains
forgiving hydrogen and grenades.
It's only a phase. The green
river full of ash quivers
like a bow; the winter swans
did not return this year, nor
did the silver swim flicks, minnow
towers swaddled in the haze.
IF more than half are called away
again, the other half will never
come home: paper cranes
folded into shallow paper graves.

Labels: [bellumletters](#), [iraq](#), [napowrimo](#), [poem](#), [protest](#), [war](#)

DETENTION SONNET



I will not kill for profit
I will not kill for profit
I will not kill for profit
I will not kill for profit
I will not kill for profit
I will not kill for profit
I will not kill for profit
I will not kill for profit
I will not kill for profit
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I will not kill for profit
I will not kill for profit
I will not kill for profit

I will not kill for profit
I will not kill for profit

Labels: [bellumletters](#), [iraq](#), [napowrimo](#), [picturepoem](#), [poem](#), [protest](#), [war](#)

SENDER/RECEIVER



Glossary of veins, clittella
and brain, crops of hearts
and ventricles. Nephridia
uncurled a series of bones
so that the blood concealed
its surfaces. Coalescence
of waves and fuel where
two skins meet. Rubbed
together, ignition keyed
for fences. Dust and glass
and nails spread by metal
birds, fragile engines flashing
incendiary streamers.

Labels: bellumletters, iraq, napowrimo, poem, protest, war

Sunday, April 15, 2007
BellumLetters # 15

ON THE LINES

person_____

_____ person

_____ person_____

_____ person_____

_____ person_____

Labels: bellumletters, iraq, napowrimo, poem, protest, war

Monday, April 16, 2007
BellumLetters # 16

EVERYONE CAME RUNNING

No hands: x-ray breast laced with lead, bullet
in the house come chasing skin. Flame
cells happened the way snow held
glass, magnifying everything.

Labels: bellumletters, fear, iraq, napowrimo, poem, protest, virgina tech massacre, war

"DOMESTIC INCIDENT"

One thing, a peg on the board, could be isolated. Pushed forward along the block to block path that swayed front to back and back; the peg moved dully along. The trained eye does not blink back. They are trained to not come back. Roving the boxed-in track, the pegs truck along. Not in halves or pairs or packs, no door-to-door knocking. No knocked over bottles. No pink babies in the back. Only the tick tick tick as the lines thicken and sink. One by one as elsewhere ink overflows its gutters.

Labels: bellumletters, fear, iraq, napowrimo, poem, protest, virgina tech massacre, war

OF PREY

Today the falcons -- wings curled like lashes
at their tips -- their wings making marks -- slashes
back and forth above me -- etched a zig-zag script
upon the air. The trees ripped
of their leaves -- bare but for the few black nests
in their branches -- cast their stray branches like nets
up at the sky, their ragged limbs
reaching for the birds -- the falcons' slim
outlines -- letter-bone-bodies writing a song
that sounds like winter -- lean, and white, and long.

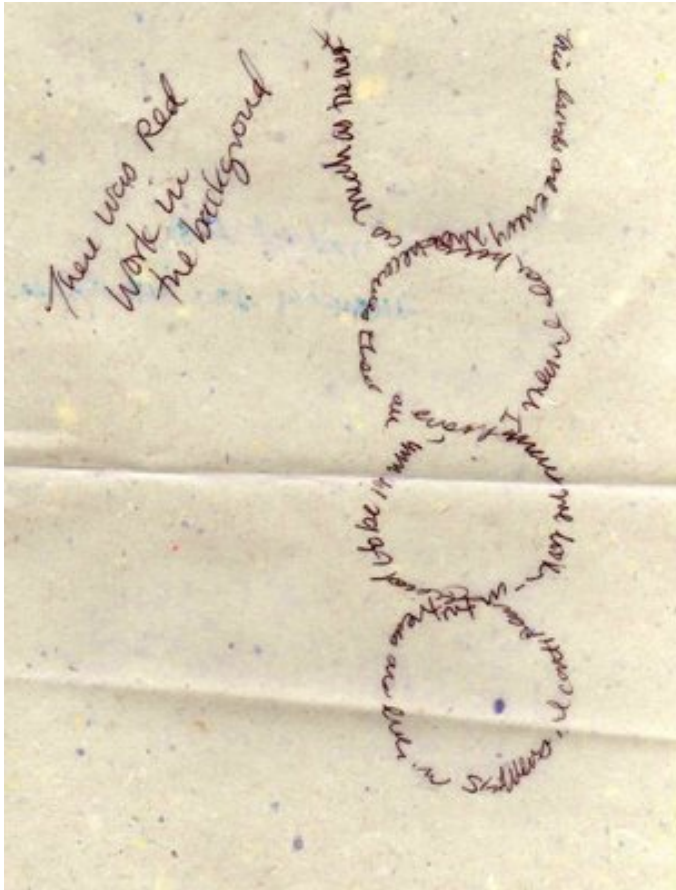
Labels: [bellumletters](#), [napowrimo](#), [poem](#), [protest](#), [revision](#), [war](#)

WHICH THINGS COULD WE USE?

1. Luthier, hook, we should try
to be so hard. String-wound. Coil.
2. All the sewn books go tap tap tap at
the tabernacle door. Rib-swifts. Lung-guards.
3. Threaded jar lip. Tender rips. Dome
of forget-me-not blue. Rotten we.
4. Soldier-love and spark-sparrows
lifting wool where needles fall. Curtain dirty.
5. Monstrous sail eight times folded
to a purse. Cotton-wire crewel.
6. Paneled hilt. A spring-pulled
labyrinth. Hoof-print primed.
7. Vernacular gills web cold tablets, close flaps. Arrows: little throats stuffed with thread.

Labels: bellumletters, napowrimo, poem, protest, war

THERE WAS RED WORK IN THE BACKGROUND



Labels: [bellumletters](#), [napowrimo](#), [picturepoem](#), [poem](#), [protest](#), [war](#), [x-ray poem](#)

Saturday, April 21, 2007
BellumLetters # 21

MINE FIELD/BRIDLE



Labels: bellumletters, napowrimo, picturepoem, poem, protest, x-ray poem

INTO THE WOODS

You were all for leaving; no beauty
contests or pageant queens. The trees
were full of secrets, undisturbed
save for several endangered species.
I wanted to bring my trowel
in a basket, hopeful that digging
might relieve the strain and static
of clinging phone lines. The roof
of the barn smoked, begging for rain.
I raked rows for sowing, dirt
blackened from where you hung
the doe. New greens from these
hewn veins remind us, tasting of coal.

Labels: bellumletters, napowrimo, poem, protest, war

Monday, April 23, 2007
BellumLetters # 23

VICTORY BLUE



Labels: bellumletters, bomb, napowrimo, picturepoem, poem, protest, war, x-ray poem

COINCIDENCE OF WANTS

little captions scattered
_____feed and seed

(I see where what was buried blooms)

you are nothing to me

one could burrow, worm through
one could move, under stylus of worm, glue

the undersigned (the underused)

persona or mask? *I could not do* (Plath)

they bathed the recluse in ashes
not made by a body, but by oiled feathers
made as leather, a leaking hurt
threaded through

pull it

we can use it

Labels: bellumletters, napowrimo, poem, protest, war

SYRINX

Syringe of singing, see-saw sealer
seeking a find. No note for the taking.

Take-toc-tic, the slit lip the sleek throat
whittled to a line that hollows and pours.

Clean beam of the tuning. Little red wheel
mining the air, fountain of bloom near water

spills, trilling. Sweet throat of the nipped
whistle plumed with beading -- rubber band

thrumming -- threshold beating with chime.

Labels: bellumletters, iraq, napowrimo, poem, protest, revision, war

SOME TYPES OF FEARFUL SYMMETRY

It's true: we're all for making blame
disappear. But when it comes
to linking, those choke-chains
tear at skins and walls as if pinned
with eyelash glass and hollow
marrow tubes. The organs tune
their keys, devour clues. The scum
rules under the gun, under un-
believable yellows and blues, sour
as soap rubbed in fur. Aorta, a cannon
inferred, spare spears in the swallow
_____ (in tombs).

Labels: [bellumletters](#), [iraq](#), [napowrimo](#), [poem](#), [protest](#)

RENAISSANCE

Amid genuflecting spheres, bands
of nylon filled with sand, knotted
to become disembodied pairs, headless
limbs spread as though to scissor
the white air or swim-kick
the dry light, shredded tiers
of warped atria, of wrapped hollows
and corners shaped by where
and how a body wants to move.
My pen moves like a needle
in the wrist, ink-flick of a vein about
to bloom, about to loosen, about to lose.

Labels: [bellumletters](#), [iraq](#), [napowrimo](#), [poem](#), [protest](#), [war](#)

REGIMEN

You Are NOT allowed to do
anything unless it is new.
You think this is a rib-flick
joint, a root burrow?
Everywhere's a desert
these days. You may braid your
hair, you may make a ladder, you
may make a trail, a house, a wheel.
But its the fattening that matters.
A lap for greased palms. We love
those who frighten us the best.

Labels: bellumletters, iraq, napowrimo, poem, protest, war

Sunday, April 29, 2007
BellumLetters # 29

MUST IT BE TURNED ON?



Labels: [bellumletters](#), [napowrimo](#), [poem](#), [protest](#), [video poem](#), [war](#)

SYNTHETIC ANIMALS

I lied. We went into the woods.
But when did we come out? And into
light that was like the light
of an amusement park, themes
of many colors charming the wheel?
Facades of arrow-hoofs under a dome
of expired wires, glitter-pins
amid plastic coxcombs, gills flared, fur
mapped in imaginary lines. Menagerie
replicating thrills, feigning capture.
Glisten-grill like a pair of jaws unlocked.

Labels: bellumletters, divination, iraq, napowrimo, poem, protest, war

Notes/Links

#1

drew marks: CRS report "The Cost of Iraq, Afghanistan, and Other Global War on Terror Operations Since 9/11"

<http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/natsec/RL33110.pdf>

reminded me: CRS report "Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs) in Iraq and Afghanistan: Effects and Countermeasures"

<http://research.fit.edu/fip/documents/SecNews1.pdf>

teeth: walter reed medical center graphic

http://www.wramc.army.mil/departments/PM/IH/old-index_files/image002.gif

you: "Army general tried to warn Bush on Tillman death: Report"

http://www.thepeninsulaqatar.com/Display_news.asp?section=World_News&subsection=Americas&month=April2007&file=World_News20070401115541.xml

vulgar: "changes to the marines tattoo policy"

<http://www.marines.mil/almars/almar2000.nsf/52f4f5d11f10b4c4852569b8006a3e35/ce7c18a9b2b3b2d5852572a3007babbf?OpenDocument>

back: UNSCOM and Iraqi Chemical Weapons <http://www.fas.org/nuke/guide/iraq/cw/unsc.com.htm>

arm draws: Tsunami strands thousands <http://www.theage.com.au/news/world/tsunami-strands-thousands/2007/04/02/1175366116272.html>

bough breaking: image of American flag draped coffins <http://growabrain.typepad.com/growabrain/dover.jpg>

rope:

singing: image of American flag draped coffins

http://msnbcmedia.msn.com/j/msnbc/Components/Newsweek/Photos/mag/040503_Issue/040424_IraqSoldiers_hd.hmedium.jpg

the cliffs: "Iraq links cancers to uranium weapons / U.S. likely to use arms again in war" <http://www.sfgate.com/cgi-bin/object/article?fc=/c/a/2003/01/13/MN233872.DTL&o=1>

sand: military looking into civilian deaths in Iraq

<http://www.nytimes.com/imagepages/2006/05/25/world/26haditha.1.ready.html>

#2

enough: "US Ready to Strike Iran on Good Friday" <http://www.commondreams.org/archive/2007/04/02/262/>

scattered: "A Parent's Guide to the Marine Corps" <http://parents.marines.com/>

the garden wall: "The Worse Things Get in Iraq, the More Privatized This War Becomes, The More Profitable This War Becomes" <http://www.democracynow.org/article.pl?sid=07/04/02/1345218>

flowers: satellite image of Iraq http://www.theodora.com/maps/new8/iraq_satellite_nasa.jpg

the spring rage: budget authority for Iraq <http://zfacts.com/metaPage/lib/Iraq-war-cost.gif>

diesel ills:

so many: "7k Soldiers Part of Next Iraq Rotation" http://www.armytimes.com/news/2007/04/army_rotation_iraq_070402w

come home: graphic of position of an Iraq road bomb

http://newsimg.bbc.co.uk/media/images/41423000/gif/_41423029_iraq_road_bomb_416.gif

3

everyone: "Faces of the Fallen" <http://projects.washingtonpost.com/fallen/dates/2007/mar/22/freeman-l-gardner-jr/>

spider syndicate: image of war plane http://www.fas.org/man/dod-101/sys/dumb/cbu-tmd_38.jpg

cross: "Faces of the Fallen" <http://projects.washingtonpost.com/fallen/dates/2007/mar/24/trevor-a-roberts/>

heal: "Faces of the Fallen"

<http://projects.washingtonpost.com/fallen/dates/2007/mar/23/lance-c-springer-ii/>

hand: "Faces of the Fallen" <http://projects.washingtonpost.com/fallen/dates/2007/mar/23/greg-n-riewer/>

healer: image of bomber jet http://www.fas.org/man/dod-101/sys/dumb/cbu-tmd_39.jpg

among: image of a "dumb" bomb <http://www.fas.org/man/dod-101/sys/dumb/mk56a.jpg>

threads: "Faces of the Fallen" <http://projects.washingtonpost.com/fallen/dates/2007/mar/22/henry-w-bogrette/>

glue: "Faces of the Fallen" <http://projects.washingtonpost.com/fallen/dates/2007/mar/21/dustin-j-lee/>

bind: "Faces of the Fallen"

<http://projects.washingtonpost.com/fallen/dates/2007/mar/21/darrell-r-griffin-jr/>

belly is a bone: image of tank <http://www.fas.org/man/dod-101/sys/land/lavgen3-001.jpg>

house: "Theater Rapid Response Intelligence Package" <http://www.fas.org/irp/program/disseminate/trrip.htm>

loaded gun: "Baghdad Merchants Astounded at McCain's Claims of Security"

<http://www.commondreams.org/archive/2007/04/03/279/>

mended: gifford image of an exploding missile

http://bp1.blogger.com/_ssnb652rs8g/RhNjcpP2NrI/AAAAAAAAAJ4/q18f4CJp1is/s1600-h/faecanim.gif

4

that: image of military ambulance
http://www.afsc.org/iraq/personal_stories/images/040203_road_010_290.jpg
become:
really: image of man dancing on charred car
http://www.kommersant.com/photo/300/DAILY/2006/223/A2006112820D_1.jpg
garden walkers: image of army medical helicopter
http://www.arcent.army.mil/cflcc_today/2006/august/images/aug30_31/31_01.jpg
syringes: image of rifle squad
<http://issho.net/2/riflesquad.gif>
taste of gunpowder: image of medical bus
<http://public.travis.amc.af.mil/shared/media/photodb/photos/061207-F-7637M-0004.jpg>
dogs barking: graphic of "Iraqi Insurgent Linkages"
<http://www.intelcenter.com/Iraqi-InsurgentsLinks13Feb2006.jpg>
hang: image of woman in "no war" shirt
http://www.womensaynotowar.org/img/original/wsnwtw_mar6_6.jpg
garments: image of iraqi iternerants
http://www.ladlass.com/intel/archives/images/Iraq_internat_troops.jpg

#5

instrument: "Secret FBI Unit Detained War Protestors in 2002"
<http://www.democracynow.org/article.pl?sid=07/04/05/141252>
round curve: "US Agents Visit Ethiopian Secret Jail"
<http://www.guardian.co.uk/worldlatest/story/0,,6531179,00.html>
bars: "Guantanamo Conditions Worsening"
<http://www.commondreams.org/archive/2007/04/05/322/>
faux moss/the garden: "US Working to Give Iran Access to 5 Detainees in Iraq"
capitalists: Image of George W. Bush's Astrological Chart <http://starlightnews.com/bush.gif>
frozen birds today: "Canadian Seal Hunt Opens Amidst Outcry" <http://www.commondreams.org/archive/2007/04/05/332/>
soft: image of Iraq explosions
<http://macdonnellofleinster.com/Iraq%20explosions.jpg>
arranged the quills: <http://photosfromiraq.revolutionweb.org/arch/mar6/mar6bg.jpg>
lantern: image of explosion http://www.defensetech.org/images/War_in_iraq_explosion.jpg
stunned propellers: image of battle-ready tanks
<http://www.iraqwarveterans.org/images/photos/pre-war/marines/1-2-marines-3rd-opt.jpg>

#6

you back together: "Violence Empties Schools in Iraq" <http://english.aljazeera.net/English/archive/archive?ArchiveId=36823>
a pencil: "Worth Contemplating"
http://www.wagingpeace.org/articles/2007/02/08_krieger_worth_contemplating.htm
houses traced and tensile: "Citizens Hearing on the Legality of US Actions in Iraq" <http://www.wartribunal.org/>
how the halos: "Horror of USA's Depleted Uranium Threatens the World" <http://www.truthout.org/cgi-bin/artman/exec/view.cgi/37/11023>
thousand shovels: "Pity the Sick of Iraq" <http://weekly.ahram.org.eg/2007/839/re10.htm>
prosthetic transplants: "Former Wal-Mart Worker Blows Whistle on Company Surveillance Operation"
<http://www.democracynow.org/article.pl?sid=07/04/06/142238>
together with shrapnel: Multi-National Force Iraq video blog <http://www.youtube.com/profile?user=MNFIRAQ>
finally rains: image of anti-war protest
<http://www.mccullagh.org/db9/d30-32/anti-iraq-war-protest-4.jpg>

#7

ten thousand lines: "ABC (Under)Counting Iraq Dead" <http://www.fair.org/index.php?page=3064>
squiggle: "Iraq's Devastated Healthcare System" <http://electroniciraq.net/news/2976.shtml>
anagram: "My Name used to be #200343" <http://www.alternet.org/waroniraq/50191/>
refrain: United for Peace and Justice Iraq Campaign <http://www.unitedforpeace.org/article.php?list=type&type=70>
threshing allows: "Budgeting for Empires, Ambitions Outweigh Strategy" <http://www.fpif.org/fpiftxt/4112>
elide: "I am So Proud of My Action Girl" <http://www.guardian.co.uk/Iraq/Story/0,,2052564,00.html>
mouth: image of DCMA Iraq Centcom Operating Locations <http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/facility/images/map-iraq-2004oct00.jpg>

#8

1. image of stealth bomber <http://www.af.mil/shared/media/photodb/photos/030327-F-7203T-008.jpg>
2. map of Iraq http://www.lib.utexas.edu/maps/middle_east_and_asia/iraq_bw_2002.jpg

3. chart of Iraq ballistic missiles <http://www.globalsecurity.org/wmd/library/news/iraq/2002/image018.jpg>

4. image of rocket bomb http://newsimg.bbc.co.uk/media/images/39204000/jpg/_39204137_dossier.jpg

#9

lupine: "Iraq Rally Peaceful, But New Danger Seen"

http://seattletimes.nwsource.com/html/nationworld/2003659952_iraq10.html

death: "Pentagon Strains to Uphold Troop Levels in Iraq" <http://www.latimes.com/news/nationworld/nation/la-na-guard10apr10,0,7610558.story?coll=la-home-headlines>

the get: voices in the wilderness UK <http://www.voicesuk.org/>

outlines: <https://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/geos/iz.html#Govt>

clone: The White House's Iraq Info Page <http://www.whitehouse.gov/infocus/iraq/>

sinew and gravel: "Woman Bomber Kills 17 Iraqi Police Recruits" <http://www.alertnet.org/thenews/newsdesk/L10324804.htm>

home: Iraq Occupation and Resistance Report <http://psychoanalystsopposewar.org/ORR.htm>

spring: Iraq War Statistics <http://www.stopwar.org.uk/Statistics.htm>

ash: Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament <http://www.cnduk.org/>

it buries us: "Silence is Acceptance" http://www.thewe.cc/thewei/&/&/images4/anti_war/silence_is_acceptance.jpg

#10

our names: image of Iraqi women <http://watch.windsofchange.net/pics/r2916729183.jpg>

threaded: http://www.dahrjamiliraq.com/hard_news/archives/iraq/000504.php#more

They file them away: "After Sadaam, Iraqi Women are Used as Sex Objects"

http://www.aljazeera.com/me.asp?service_ID=10709

riding: image of army recruits on campus

<http://www.stanforddaily.com/image/preview/3598?force=horizontal&x=380>

braids and boxes: "Iraqi Women Much Worse Off After Occupation" http://www.aljazeera.com/cgi-bin/review/article_full_story.asp?service_ID=10980

call us: image of Iraqi's hostage note http://images.democracynow.org/images/story_images/IraqHostageNoteLarge.jpg

dirt: graph of coalition fatalities of Iraq

<http://zfacts.com/metaPage/lib/Iraq-war-hostile-fatalities.gif>

#11

enough: "Iraq's Wounded Struggle for Compensation" <http://electroniciraq.net/news/2995.shtml>

lost: "Powerless" <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EGsK0MT-aYM>

glass jaw: "US British War on Terror Backfires"

<http://www.commondreams.org/archive/2007/04/11/466/>

hems: "Pentagon Extends Iraq Service" <http://www.abcnews.go.com/WNT/story?id=3027796&page=1>

"X": image of stealth bomber <http://www.af.mil/shared/media/photodb/photos/030327-F-7203T-008.jpg>

jewels and bones: image of soldiers walking away from destroyed building <http://www.earthisland.org/the-edge/IraqUNSCOMstorage.jpg>

staked: image of US Army Billboard in Arabic http://marketplace.publicradio.org/i/news/arabville_ali_army_sign.jpg

generous: image of granny war protest

http://www.bayareawomeninblack.org/photogallery/photo21526/14Feb06_Grannies2.JPG

#12

As if: image of soldiers and tanks

<http://graphics8.nytimes.com/images/2007/02/21/world/21brit.600.jpg>

halfway home: satellite image of Iraq

<http://geology.com/world/satellite-image-of-iraq.jpg>

the tops: "How Rocket-Propelled Grenades Work"

<http://science.howstuffworks.com/rpg.htm>

forgiving: image of aircraft carriers with lightning in the background <http://www.ussyorktown.com/yorktown/lightning1.jpg>

It's only a phase: image of guns, boots, and helmets

http://www.spokesmanreview.com/news/live/iraq_020205.jpg

like a bow: image of man and canoe in marsh in Iraq

<http://www.oberlin.edu/art/Iraq/Iraq-006.JPG>

this year: image of marsh in Iraq

http://www.birdlife.org/images/sized/400/s_basra_marshes_iraq2.jpg.jpg

in the haze: "Hadley want 'War Czar' as Soon as Possible" <http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/18089899/>

come home: image of war plane

<http://www.aviation-news.co.uk/media/aug2629.jpg>

shallow paper graves: US map of fatalities in Iraq
http://icasualties.org/oif/images/US_CityLarge.jpg

#13

Detention: list of Gusntanomo Bay detainees
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Category:Guantanamo_Bay_detainees
Sonnet: Iraq Body Count <http://www.iraqbodycount.net/>

#14

ventricles: image of pineapple cluster bomb http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/c/cd/BLU-3_Pineapple_Cluster_bomblet.jpg
concealed: image of a carbomb <http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/3/3e/Carbomb.jpg>
waves and fuel: image of plane dropping cluster bombs http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/0/0a/B1-B_Lancer_and_cluster_bombs.jpg
fences: image of a big bomb
http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/7/78/MOAB_bomb.jpg
flashing: <http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/0/09/Multichemin.svg>
incendiary streamers: Iraq Journalists in Danger
http://www.cpj.org/Briefings/Iraq/Iraq_danger.html

#15

person: "Cheney: Democrats Will Cave on War Bill"
<http://www.guardian.co.uk/uslatest/story/0,,6559614,00.html>
person: "Baghdad Bomb Kills 45" <http://www.guardian.co.uk/worldlatest/story/0,,6559803,00.html>
person: "UK Choppers Crash After Bomb Kills 50 in Iraq"
http://www.nzherald.co.nz/section/2/story.cfm?c_id=2&objectid=10434479
person: "In Iraq, A Parliament in Disarray"
<http://www.csmonitor.com/2007/0416/p06s01-woiq.html>
person: "US Airmen on Ground do Combat Duty in Iraq" <http://www.azstarnet.com/allheadlines/178564>
person: Iraq Body Count
<http://www.iraqbodycount.org/>

#16

hands: "Top Wolfowitz Postings Went to Iraq War Backers" <http://electroniciraq.net/news/3004.shtml>
breast: "Where Al-Queda Reigns"
<http://electroniciraq.net/news/3005.shtml>
lead: image of George Bush speaking
<http://graphics8.nytimes.com/images/2007/03/28/us/28bush.600.jpg>
house come chasing: "Trauma Severe for Iraqi Children" http://www.usatoday.com/news/world/iraq/2007-04-15-cover-war-children_N.htm
glass: google results for search tems george + bush + right + to + bear + arms
<http://news.google.com/news?hl=en&client=firefox-a&rls=org.mozilla:en-US:official&hs=rMg&q=george%20bush%20the%20right%20to%20bear%20arms%20virginia%20shootings&btnG=Search&ie=UTF-8&oe=UTF-8&um=1&sa=N&tab=wn>
magnifying: Virginia Tech Shooting
http://news.yahoo.com/s/ap/virginia_tech_shooting;_ylt=AgG1f1xrSRXzDE15SvMGhjSm1OFF
everything: "Virginia Gunman Identified as Student"
<http://www.nytimes.com/2007/04/17/us/17virginia.html?ex=1179892800&en=ffb51ad7a654296b&ei=5070>

#17

One thing: "85 People Found Dead Across Iraq"
http://www.boston.com/news/world/middleeast/articles/2007/04/18/85_people_found_dead_across_iraq/
block to block path: "One Reminder" http://andrewsullivan.theatlantic.com/the_daily_dish/2007/04/one_reminder.html
blink back: "Iraq: Neighbors Stem Flow of Iraqis Fleeing War"
<http://www.alertnet.org/thenews/newsdesk/HRW/19c23ea04d463e863b3add9bc82e148e.htm>
trained: "A Tragedy of Monumental Proportions"
<http://www.commondreams.org/archive/2007/04/17/568/>
no door-to-door: "Will the Terrible Day In Virginia Be Enough to Dent America's Love Affair with Guns"
<http://www.commondreams.org/archive/2007/04/17/572/>
pink babies: "600 US Contractors Have Been Killed in Iraq"
<http://www.defensenews.com/story.php?F=2688598&C=mideast>

lines: # of dead <http://www.antiwar.com/updates/?articleid=10829>
elsewhere ink overflows: "Queda Group Says Iraq a University of Terror"
http://www.reuters.com/article/topNews/idUSL1744453120070417?src=041707_1506_DOUBLEFEATURE_

#18

Today: # of dead <http://antiwar.com/updates/?articleid=10837>
making marks: "IRAQ: Thousands Missing Since War Began"
<http://www.alertnet.org/thenews/newsdesk/IRIN/a8bd8caf93b030f08d3810f356c825da.htm>
ripped: "Iraq War is Damaging Forces"
http://news.yahoo.com/s/usnews/20070419/ts_usnews/militaryexpertsiraqwarisdamagingforces
leaves: "Faces of the Fallen" <http://projects.washingtonpost.com/fallen/>
ragged limbs: "If the Americans are Losing, the Iraqis are losing much more" <http://electroniciraq.net/news/3015.shtml>
outlines: "Patriot's Day: Stop the Violence" <http://www.commondreams.org/archive/2007/04/18/591/>
winter: "Hounded by Insurgents, Abandoned by US" <http://www.commondreams.org/archive/2007/04/18/590/>

#19

coil: "Mentally F-ed Up" Hometown Baghdad youtube channel
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Z5p56BwhshM&url=http%3A%2F%2Felectroniciraq%2Enet%2Fnews%2F2988%2Eshtml>
tabernacle: "US Defence Secretary Visits Iraq"
http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/middle_east/6571351.stm
forget-me-not: "Thousands Without Food and Supplies Due to Failing Distribution System"
<http://electroniciraq.net/news/3012.shtml>
spark sparrows lifting: Veterans Against the Iraq War
<http://www.vaiw.org/vet/index.php?name=News&file=article&sid=3205>
lifting wool: Iraq Veterans Against the War
<http://www.ivaw.org/>
curtain: image of billboard "Support our troops. Bring them home now."
https://www.workingforchange.com/webgraphics/WFC/WFCnyc_billboard_350.gif
eight times: graph showing coalition hostile fatalities in Iraq
<http://zfacts.com/metaPage/lib/Iraq-war-hostile-fatalities.gif>
Hoof-print primed: "Were 1998 Memos and Blueprint for War?"
<http://abcnews.go.com/Nightline/story?id=128491&page=1>
stuffed with thread: "'Proof' that Iraq Sought Uranium is Fake"
<http://www.hartford-hwp.com/archives/27c/152.html>

#20 THERE WAS RED WORK IN THE BACKGROUND

the blinds were everywhere because that everywhere is we look in the trees are blue in silhouettes. I can't pretend to be in with I mean I love blinds as much as the nest.

#21 MINE FIELD/BRIDLE

will her mother hear?
sister can you hear?
RUN
a loop hole becomes
did you answer her or did you can you hear
BONE bit metal
bit by bit
is the station sudden?
I don't know where
where the eye begins
closed or where the lips feather and vane the mare is tweaked to ride with me mare and flow ready and done ready

#22

leaving: "Iraq: Televised 'confessions', torture and unfair trials underpin world's fourth highest executioner"
<http://electroniciraq.net/news/3022.shtml>
full of secrets: "Insecurity and Insufficient Funds Prevent Cleansing of Polluted Sites"
<http://electroniciraq.net/news/3021.shtml>
hopeful: "The Iraqi Resistance Only Exists to End the Occupation"
<http://www.guardian.co.uk/comment/story/0,,2054881,00.html>

barn smoked: United States Central Command Casualty Reports
<http://www.centcom.mil/sites/uscentcom2/Lists/New%20Casualty%20Reports/DispForm.aspx?ID=1725>
New greens:
coal: # of war dead
<http://www.antiwar.com/updates/?articleid=10852>

#23 VICTORY BLUE
axe blow strength I expect
went upstairs
little understander
swallow swift soon soot
toll

#24
captions:
buried blooms: Iraq Blast Kills 9 GIs, Injures 20 at outpost
<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2007/04/23/AR2007042301704.html?hpid=topnews>
under stylus: "Walls will increase violence, say specialists"
<http://electroniciraq.net/news/3025.shtml>
oiled feathers: "The Blackburg Massacre in a Global Context"
<http://www.antiwar.com/engelhardt/?articleid=10866>
pull: "Al-Maliki Support Eroding in Iraq"
http://www.usatoday.com/printedition/news/20070424/1a_ledc24_dom.art.htm?POE=click-refer
use it: "And the Agony Continues"
<http://www.stopwar.org.uk/statement240407.htm>

#25
singing: "Army Warden Charged with 'Aiding the Enemy'"
<http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/18311404/>
slit lip: "Iraq Says Modifying Baghdad Neighborhood Wall"
http://uk.reuters.com/article/idUKL2565825020070425?src=042507_1003_TOPSTORY_bloodiest_month
Clean beam: "U.N. Report and Times Data Paint Grim Iraq Picture"
<http://fairuse.100webcustomers.com/fairenough/latimes965.html>
Sweet throat: # of dead
<http://www.antiwar.com/updates/?articleid=10871>
beating: google image search results for "Iraq" + "April"
<http://images.google.com/images?q=iraq%20april&ie=UTF-8&oe=UTF-8&client=firefox-a&rls=org.mozilla:en-US:official&um=1&sa=N&tab=wi>

#26
disappear: "US officials exclude car bombs in touting drop in Iraq violence"
<http://www.realcities.com/mld/krwashington/17134253.htm>
choke-chains: "Iraq refuse to provide civilian casualty figures to the U.N."
<http://fairuse.100webcustomers.com/fairenough/latimes967.html>
under the gun: "Iraqi Civilians Believed Dead in US-strike Military"
<http://www.alertnet.org/thenews/newsdesk/IBO636521.htm>
sour: # of dead
<http://www.antiwar.com/updates/?articleid=10876>
soap

#27
nylon filled: "Can Guantanamo be Closed?"
<http://www.zmag.org/content/showarticle.cfm?SectionID=80&ItemID=12684>
shredded tiers: "And the Walls Came Tumbling Down"
<http://www.zmag.org/content/showarticle.cfm?SectionID=22&ItemID=12681>
body wants to move: "Moving Beyond Anti-War Politics"
<http://www.commondreams.org/archive/2007/04/27/811/>
wrist: "US Media Have Lost the Will to Dig Deep"
<http://www.commondreams.org/archive/2007/04/27/790/>

#28

unless: image of bombed and blackened square
http://newsimg.bbc.co.uk/media/images/42817000/jpg/_42817637_sadriya2_afp_416.jpg
root burrow: "A War By Any Other Name"
<http://www.commondreams.org/archive/2007/04/28/832/>
hair: "Bush has Gone AWOL"
<http://www.commondreams.org/archive/2007/04/28/820/>
fattening: "Too Many Hazardous Waste Sites in Minority Areas"
<http://www.commondreams.org/archive/2007/04/28/834/>
frighten us: image of stealth bomber releasing bombs
http://www.tonyrogers.com/images/weapons/b2bombs_300px.jpg

#29

video link: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jOaEmnpKF1M>

#30

lied: "Why Didn't George Tenet Just Resign?"
<http://www.commondreams.org/archive/2007/04/30/868/>
into the woods: "US cites 91 Percent Rise in Terrorist Acts in Iraq"
http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2007/04/30/AR2007043001663_pf.html
was like the light: "April Toll is Highest of '07 for Iraq Troops"
http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2007/04/30/AR2007043001929_pf.html
facades: # of dead
<http://www.antiwar.com/updates/?articleid=10896>
coxcombs: "US sees sharp rise in global terrorism deaths"
http://today.reuters.com/news/articlenews.aspx?type=worldnews&storyID=2007-04-30T225605Z_01_N30466093_RTRUKOC_0_US-USA-TERRORISM.xml
mapped: "Faces of the Fallen"
<http://projects.washingtonpost.com/fallen/>
feigning: "Iraq Showdown Looms After Senate Vote"
<http://electroniciraq.net/news/3033.shtml>
Glisten-grill: "What War? At home, the economy soars and Americans Let The Good Times Roll. Meanwhile, Iraq Burns."
<http://www.commondreams.org/archive/2007/04/30/855/>

APPENDIX

On the BellumLetters (4.6.07)

* Is it scary to read the bellumletters? I do not necessarily want it to be scary, but I acknowledge that link-clicking poses a certain degree of risk for the reader. Where will the link take me? will I be offended? manipulated? upset?

* I like the way links make clear the "underneath-ness" present in all text: the zip-current that binds the syntax , the sentence bridle. I also like being able to make links with the surface details of the poems -- the way a link works as a sort of metaphor-maker. But it's oblique; not literal. AWAY. And yet it is also a sort of attachment.

* What is "the news"? How do we get it? I do not even know what news is. Is it the most important stuff that happened today? Who is the news for? How is the news here different from the news there?

* I think of the bellumletters as being somewhere in between documentary and commentary: they are records that are highly subjective. When I select links, I'm also documenting the things that I read that day. They are not always all about the war in Iraq, but they are all about cruelty, suffering, or lies.

* This war is so dumb and makes me so sad but saying it feels hollow and vague. I don't know what to say about it. So I say around it. I try to tether words to something concrete. This is not enough.

* The "national" part is the most odious aspect of "national poetry month." I dislike nations. Why "national"? It seems strange. The monthification is perhaps superficial, but it's the national that I disdain. Especially today.

Labels: bellumletters, iraq, napowrimo, protest, war



Making the notes section for the bellumletters chap, I'm struck how it too is a poem. The juxtaposition of text, rather than the sort of layering text that linking constructs, is effective in a way that is at once more and less familiar. Like looking in glossary or appendix, but also disorienting. The mapping of virtual space that is this troubling information which is always under everything produced by an imperialistic, capitalist machine. A palimpsest or x-ray. And what to do? Perceive the limits of geography or feel the limits dissolved? Pretend to comprehend? Fight? Play dead? Cry? And there are so many bombs with names like "dumb" and "pineapple" -- and uranium and planes and tanks and people people people people people people. It is a lie to feel any war is far away. A weirdly loose knitting made by text, wires, flesh, and metal.

Labels: bellumletters, fear, iraq, protest, war

BellumLetters en route (6.15.07)

I mailed out the BellumLetters chaps for Dusie yesterday. It's an interesting punctuation for a project that I feel is still developing. I like this actually -- the idea of publication as a moment of shift or diversion or pause as opposed to a sort of terminus or ending. It's almost a way to see it as a terminus in literal sense -- a point of simultaneous departure and arrival in all sorts of directions. Disruption.

In the end, I opted for a design that satisfied my desire for a tactile sense of the pedestrian. A design that used materials familiar to me from days in elementary school. The war is in everything I touch. It is even in construction paper and glue. And in stickers from kmart. Stickers that depict dog tags and tanks and army stars and bombers and helicopters. No ambulances. No wounds. No flag-draped coffins. No people even. Only the depiction of materials that remotely represent the human who wears the dog tags, who drives the tank, who flies the plane. And a representation in which "the enemy" is an absence. A space without. For a moment it possible to imagine that soldiers are released to this emptiness. That this emptiness is not a construction that intends to conceal the humans who *live there*. Live where soldiers are sent to fight. Sent to _____.

Labels: [apology](#), [bellumletters](#), [dusie](#), [protest](#), [publication](#), [sadness](#), [war](#)

Michelle Detorie lives in Goleta, California where she edits *WOMB* and Hex Presse. Her poems have appeared or are forthcoming in *Bird Dog*, *Pool*, *Foursquare*, *Typo*, and elsewhere. A chapbook, *Daphnomancy*, was recently published by Peter Ganick's Small Chapbook Project and another chapbook is forthcoming from dos press. Michelle is a writing tutor at Santa Barbara City College and a volunteer at the Santa Barbara Wildlife Care Network. Visit her online: www.daphnomancy.com

