

AmeriSong: Poetry, Art, & Dialogs about Amerika

Post-Bubble Eco-Perspectives:

JOHNNY COLLEGIATE SPEAKS

John Collegiate is a part-time poet and freelancer as well as a former Rhodes scholar at a university in the southwestern USA. His essay on structural rigidity received kudos from several senior faculty and was even quoted in a recent issue of The American Journal of Economics. This interview was conducted at a bar near his condo in Flagstaff, Arizona in June 2004, shortly after his graduate studies were completed. He was half-sober during the interview and mainly intent on some grunge music.



TN: *How would you rate the government's ongoing reform efforts?*

JC: Well, they could make a better beer. Especially when things heat up, a good lager helps cool things down.

TN: *Do you think current pension reform measures are adequate?*

JC: That depends on the notion of adequacy. It is certainly adequate for the rich. Could I have another pitcher, please?

TN: *But don't you think an income tax hike is justified, given the grave financial situation at hand?*

JC: Hmm, people have such interesting ways of justifying what they do. I can tell you this beer goes down mighty smoothly. No justifications are needed for that.

TN: *You aren't taking this interview seriously!*

JC: Roger. Do you think any of my opinions matter? Do you believe anything that I write or say actually matters an iota? Get this straight – you and I are basically irrelevant. The system has a pre-set trajectory, which at this point is towards oblivion. Your entire life is simply a bubble in this beer!

TN: *That's a cop out – don't we have a genuine impact on how the world turns?*

JC: Get real: your existence is but a quantum fluctuation and entire lifespan a mere ephemera. In the big picture, you're basically insignificant. So shake off your notions of "importance" and enjoy a good beer. The greatest wisdom is to cherish the brief moments that appear. Be kind-hearted and share your suds with those around you. Soon enough, there will be no barrel, no brew, no self.

TN: *No one will take such talk seriously.*

JC: Do you think ordinary conversation is serious?

TN: *Well, anything worth saying?*

JC: (crunching on a cold cucumber) Yah, interview some mountains, trees, or rivers. They are wiser than us. Those in power should listen to them more.

- T Newfields

Begun: 1998 in Kihei, Hawai'i ≡ Finished: 2015 in Tokyo, Japan

