Thesis Prospectus

This thesis will be a poetry manuscript that, through its various poems, will establish its footing in multiple poetic traditions, particularly blank verse and free verse. Reflecting the influence of

Wallace Stevens, Kenneth Koch, Frank O’Hara, Pablo Neruda, James Tate, and Dean Young, this manuscript will utilize different traditions of verse to speak, with varying degrees of lightheartedness and graveness, to issues of separation, isolation, and alienation on both the social and personal levels while also speaking to the prospect and attainment of pleasure. The poems of this manuscript, while willing to move somewhat off-topic for the purposes of imaginative expression, will likely not completely abandon the topic at hand, and if the overall focus of the poems shift, there will likely be signals of that shift. In this regard, this manuscript’s poems, instead of completely embracing the tendency of poetic fragmentation discussed by Dean Young in *The Art of Recklessness* and by Tony Hoagland in his essay “Fragment, Juxtaposition, and Completeness” from *Real Sofistikashun*, will tend more toward a balance between, on one side, the sense of order discussed by Hoagland in “Thingitude and Causality” and “Fear of Narrative and the Skittery Poem of Our Moment” and, on the other, pursuits of the type of creativity termed “insubordination” by Hoagland in his essay “On Disproportion.” The poems of this manuscript will thus try to follow the advice of Young, who, addressing in *The Art of Recklessness* the issue of measuring the right extent of poetic “outburst,” metaphorically writes, “Don’t build a reactor without a radiant core but don’t produce a radiant core without providing containment.”