

EPIGRAMS, I

Mark S. Bauer

American History

1. A Primer on Primers

The victors' pens write history,
And writing well's no mystery:
Take Boston's Quakers hanging 'round
Or slavers through Block Island Sound,
The Trail of Tears as leitmotif
Or logger Wobblies come to grief.
And should you find a disgrace or two:
Simply drag an eraser through.

2. It Depends

The Red Man views White Man's behest:
A Destiny not Manifest.

3. It Couldn't Happen Here

Dogmatic, heartless Taliban—
So foreign, cruel...well, Puritan.

On War

1. A Concise History of War

The story line: Which innocents will die,
When, where, by whom, and winners' reasons why.

2. Manhattan/Baghdad

The full, fluorescent moon moves slowly round,
Stone-faced above the carnage on the ground.

3. Waging War

To timeless tactics we have clung:
Old men wage wars fought by the young.

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