

Bibliography with Excerpts  
from Reviews and Commentaries on the work of Douglas Crase  
1979-2018

*Lines from London Terrace*

Arnold, Bob. "Douglas Crase," *A Longhouse Birdhouse* (blog), February 20, 2018.  
<http://longhousepoetryandpublishers.blogspot.com/2018/02/douglas-crase.html>

And since when has a book of essays on poetry and poets felt this good to you?

Yau, John. "Douglas Crase, Literary Subversive," *Hyperallergic*, March 4, 2018.  
<https://hyperallergic.com/429479/douglas-crase-lines-from-london-terrace-essays-and-addresses-2018-pressed-wafer/>

Crase is that rare figure in American letters: a subversive who challenges the received wisdom promulgated in English and American literature departments from sea to shining sea.... The entire body of Crase's work invites the kind of close attention that is usually reserved for poetry.

*The Astropastorals*

Ford, Mark. "Books of the Year," *Times Literary Supplement*, no. 5981, November 17, 2017, p. 12.

*The Astropastorals* is a slim pamphlet that collects the handful of lyrics the American poet Douglas Crase has deemed fit for publication in the three-and-a-half decades since his astonishing debut, *The Revisionist* of 1981. Although it runs to only eighteen pages, it packs a powerful punch. Crase is the master of complex, sinuous sentences that twist and loop and unfurl in the most unpredictable of ways—indeed navigating his poetic idiom can feel a bit like riding the rapids. The title poem in particular succeeds in conjugating the mysteries of our planetary existence with an eloquence and sweep I found at once dizzying and uplifting.

Logan, William. "Old Wounds," *The New Criterion*, Vol. 36, No. 10, June 2018. [A dissenting opinion.] <https://www.newcriterion.com/issues/2018/6/verse-chronicle-9845>

The rendered detail of Crase's early poems gave fertile ground for abstraction. On the evidence of the poems here, he soon went off chasing meta- and astrophysics, where the abstractions gradually spun out of control—I'm surprised that he didn't start doodling in notebooks, using passing license plates to derive the solution to Fermat's Last Theorem.

Pople, Ian. "Douglas Crase, *The Astropastorals*," *The Manchester Review*, Issue 20, January 2018. <http://www.themanchesterreview.co.uk/?p=9084>

Crase seeks to observe 'other worlds' and implores us to preserve them. *The Astropastorals* might play on both the idea of pastoral poetry by presenting a heavily ironized, interplanetary idyll. But there is also the sense of these pieces as pastoral letters, again speaking ironically to the spiritual needs of those who inhabit the future.

Rice, Kylan. "Things as They Are," *Tupelo Quarterly*, June 14, 2018.  
<http://www.tupeloquarterly.com/14424-2/>

In his latter-day "astropastorals," Crase posits a poetics that brings us back to the deep, imperceptible axis of common origin: the quantum probabilities that sparked the cosmos.

Schwabsky, Barry. "The Earth as a Dump and Refuge," *Hyperallergic*, August 27, 2017.  
<https://hyperallergic.com/396887/douglas-crase-the-astropastorals-pressed-wafer-2017/>

*The Astropastorals*, at minimum, serves as a reminder that the history we are brooks no conclusion, so that it remains in continual need of revisionists (and therefore of *The Revisionist*). Crase's first book is not, after all, a closed case, a done deal. We still need him.

### *The Revisionist*

Ashbery, John. Jacket copy submitted to the publisher, January 15, 1981.

This is a first book of poetry, and rivals any produced by a younger American poet in the last decade. Crase looks at the city and the landscape with the amused, disabused eye of a lover. Revisionism, in his supple argumentative poetry, turns out to be something very close to love.

Balakian, Peter. "Dreaming of America," *American Book Review*, vol. 5, no. 2, January-February, 1983, p. 21.

In his best poems he unites empirical vision with intellect and enables us to experience the complexity of inhabiting particular American landscapes.

Black, Star (UPI). "New Poems Address American Landscape," Celina, OH, *Standard*, May 21; Sacramento, CA, *Union*, May 21; New Smyrna Beach, FL, *News & Observer*, May 23; Connellsville, PA, *Courier*, May 24; Fort Dodge, IA, *Messenger*, June 2; Fairborn, OH, *Herald*, June 3; Cedar City, UT, *Spectrum*, June 4; Seattle, WA, *Post-Intelligencer*, June 9; others, 1982.

"The Revisionist," an extraordinary first book of poems, re-addresses the American landscape—the continental "you" of our country—with racy confidence and informed pride.

Bloom, Harold. "Introduction" in Stephen Berg, David Bonanno and Arthur Vogelsang, eds., *The Body Electric*, W. W. Norton, New York, 2000, p. xxxviii.

Carson is a great original; so, oddly, is Douglas Crase, even though he writes in the idiom of Ashbery. Always the revisionist, he performs a kind of *askesis* in relation to Ashbery, wonderfully exemplified by his "There Is No Real Peace in the World," with its not wholly reassuring close: "The cows / Are freshening off schedule again. There is nothing to fear."

Bloom, Harold. "The Chaotic Age," *The Western Canon*, Harcourt Brace, New York, 1994, p. 567.

Bloom, Harold. Jacket copy submitted to the publisher, February 9, 1981.

Douglas Crase's *The Revisionist* is a first vision of poems comparable to John Ashbery's *Some Trees*, A. R. Ammons's *Ommateum*, and James Merrill's *First Poems*. Among Crase's accomplishments, the title poem, as well as "Six Places in New York State," stand out, but there are no weak poems in the book. The debt to Ashbery is an authentic matter, and already Crase gives evidence of transuming that inheritance, in a generous struggle. Rarely has any poet been as capable as Crase is, here at his start, of reconciling the surfaces and depths of his poems, without falsifying the agon between surfaces and depths. Crase has every prospect of becoming one of the strong poets of his own generation.

Bloom, Harold, ed. *Twentieth-century American Literature*, Vol. 2, C-E, The Chelsea House Library of Literary Criticism, Chelsea House, New York, 1986, pp. 868-876.

Reprints in full the commentaries of David Kalstone, Charles Molesworth, Jay Parini, Vernon Shetley, Louis L. Martz, Hyatt H. Waggoner, Barbara Clark, Frederick Garber, and includes statement by Crase from *Ecstatic Occasions, Expedient Forms* on his poem "Once the Sole Province."

*Booklist*, [J.P.], February 15, 1981.

In this hugely ambitious and remarkably effective book, Douglas Crase reviews, revises, and re-envisions no less a topic than America itself through the lens of an extraordinarily strong poetic imagination... As myth-making, historical second sight, but above all, as poetry, this collection is a signal achievement.

Burt, Stephen. "'September 1, 1939' Revisited: Or, Poetry, Politics, and the Idea of the Public," *American Literary History*, vol. 15, no. 3, Fall 2003, pp. 533-559, esp. 546-548, 551-553.

Crase's poem ["There Is No Real Peace in the World"] may exist comfortably alongside poems of civic engagement, but Crase's poem is those poems' ghostly double, a reflection of the public fears that keep private individuals anxiously reflective, defiantly private, uncertain, and strangely apart. And it does not pretend (as Auden's can) that its uncertainties themselves amount to a liberal politics: the privacies it investigates, and the style it finds for them, grows from Crase's sense that against the fact of death in general, and the threat to America in particular, he cannot feel that he already knows what to do... Crase's poem suggests ways of thinking about impending catastrophe that appeal precisely because they are *not* ways of thinking that claim to speak for a community, nor to advocate a course of public action.

Clark, Barbara. "Who Is the Revisionist?" *Some Other Magazine*, Number 2, Fall 1979, pp. 11-15.

For Crase, naming fixes the place in memory better than description. The act of naming arises from the imagination, separate from science yet just as precise, and mere description falters in the face of each powerful assertion... Crase's meticulousness transforms common events into uncommon phenomena of language and logic: the long sentences, the complex syntax, and the impeccable grammar combine to revise the landscape of our awareness.

Clothier, Peter. "In Verse," *Los Angeles Times*, June 14, 1981.

The starting point for Crase's revision is the pluralistic foundation of much contemporary thought. The work makes heavy demands on the reader's attention, but yields the more for that.

Crawford, Rob. "The Revisionist by Douglas Crase & Landlocked by Mark Ford," *The Best American Poetry blog*, April 13, 2011.

[http://blog.bestamericanpoetry.com/the\\_best\\_american\\_poetry/2011/04/here-well-look-at-two-important-books-of-poetry-that-share-the-unlikely-status-of-being-unavailable-from-an-american-publis.html](http://blog.bestamericanpoetry.com/the_best_american_poetry/2011/04/here-well-look-at-two-important-books-of-poetry-that-share-the-unlikely-status-of-being-unavailable-from-an-american-publis.html)

Crase's *The Revisionist* is a truly exceptional collection of poems. When published by Little, Brown in 1981, the book received astounding acclaim—quotes on the back cover are from James Merrill, John Hollander, and John Ashbery. More than this even, Crase was named a MacArthur Fellow in recognition of his achievement. The book interfuses many elements, including a pastoral attunement to the natural world, a unique coloring that recalls a sense of early America, powerful apocalyptic tones, and a finely balanced voice that is both philosophical and lyrical.

Cox, Christopher. "Revising America," *The Soho News*, July 1, 1981, p. 16.

Douglas Crase could be compared to every major American poet of the last 100 years, but I'll leave that to academics and old poets. I'm content with originality, imagination and feeling. I also feel safe in saying Crase may be the most important poet of his generation.... Revisionism for him is restoring the world in a way that makes affirmation possible. At the same time, his stance also seems to be an instrument of self-protection, a way of countering and encountering a lost world. In the end this shuttling between wariness and hope is emblematic of what we know to be true.

Diamond, Dan. "A Generation, a Nation, a Self," *New York Native*, March 29-April 11, 1982.

The poet takes us and our nation to task, but in a way that lovingly suggests evolving out of this mess, just as we evolved into it.

Diggory, Terence. *Encyclopedia of the New York School Poets*, Facts on File, New York, 2009, p. 120.

Crase's poems have been collected to date in only one volume, *The Revisionist*, which won such wide acclaim that it immediately established him as a poet of significance beyond the narrow confines of a "school."

Eichwald, Richard A. "The Poetry of Place," *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, Sunday, February 21, 1982, p. 4B.

The jacket comments bestow on Crase the obligatory comparison with Whitman, which is neither unexpected nor accurate. There is nothing hairy-chested about these poems; there is a care here, and a sturdy delicacy that Whitman was probably capable of but had little interest in achieving. Whitman, said Ezra Pound, "broke the new wood." Douglas Crase is a joiner and shaper of seasoned timbers. He does very good work.

Fremont-Smith, Eliot. "Critics' Choice" [National Book Critics Circle Award Nominations], *The Village Voice*, December 23-29, 1981.

In Poetry, there are five superb titles; but after admiration, Crase's *The Revisionist* should take it by a length.

Garber, Frederick. "Territorial Voices," *The American Poetry Review*, vol. 14, no. 1, January-February 1985, pp. 18-22.

With all the Whitmanesque expansiveness there is a laid-back quality in Crase, a cool reminiscent of Ashbery in many of his modes and, for this reader, of the early Miles Davis.

Gilbert, Roger [R.G.], in Ian Hamilton, ed. *The Oxford Companion to Twentieth-century Poetry in English*, Oxford University Press, Oxford and New York, 1994, pp. 106-107.

To date Crase has published only one volume, *The Revisionist* (Boston, 1981), yet that has been enough to establish him as one of the most important poets of his generation.

Guenther, Charles. "Braving the Flood of New Poetry Books," *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, November 8, 1981.

Crase writes long expository lines.... This is a splendid first book of poetry.

Gurley, George H., Jr. "Poet Celebrates, Vilifies America," *The Kansas City Star*, Sunday, November 1, 1981.

Crase apostrophizes America—America as a lover, an antagonist and a martyr, and America as a representation of all creation. At times he achieves an almost evangelical thunder.

Hecht, Anthony. Jacket copy submitted to the publisher, December 29, 1980.

*The Revisionist* seems to me an extraordinarily fine book of poems, only the more extraordinary for being a first book. It has behind it a rich and composite tradition that would include those aspects of Whitman, Hart Crane and William Carlos Williams that are devoted to the exacting and meticulous celebration of this country. And it derives as well from another, no less American, stream, flowing from Stevens and Ashbery, a native experimentalism and inquiry into language itself. As regards language, Mr. Crase is already brilliantly the master of several distinct and identifiable idioms, all of which he uses to dramatic or comic or even shocking effect in his poems. There is the jaunty, colloquial voice of easy and chatty conversation; the bloodless jargon of efficiency experts; the deadpan, impersonal address of the handbook or the directions for the assembling of mechanical toys. And besides all these, as well as mixed in with them, there is a witty, demanding intelligence, full of pretexts and calculations, cool, good-humored, and sometimes slightly taunting. I will single out for special admiration the title poem, a long love poem in eight parts which in its honest account of love does not omit those moments of being infuriated, those brief but powerful lovers' quarrels. The "beloved" in the poem is this country, its face and history, and it seems to me worthy to stand beside the very best of the tributes that our poets have paid to this nation. As a towering pinnacle in this book, it is still part of a whole mountain range of fine poems that echo and confirm its eminence.

Hill, Eugene D. Introducing Crase at the Glascock Award ceremony, Mt. Holyoke College, South Hadley, MA, April 23, 1994.

Mr. Crase is best known for a volume of verse entitled *The Revisionist* that appeared, to glowing notices, in 1981. It's often the case that a poet's intentions are most clearly stated in that poet's occasional prose, and Douglas Crase is no exception. In a lucid review of *The Complete Prose of Marianne Moore*, Mr. Crase discussed what he called "Moore's notorious REVISIONS" (my caps, to be sure). He begins with a remark of Miss Moore's—I quote: "It may be true that the author's revisions make it harder, not easier, to hurried readers; but flame kindles to the eye that contemplates it." Mr. Crase comments on the passage: "There's a decidedly spiritual tone to that, and... Moore saw her... revisions as a means to detain the mind—otherwise rapt with commerce—for decidedly spiritual ends. To rearrange a subject is truly to contemplate it."

And such contemplative rearrangements form the stuff of Mr. Crase's verse—not least in the elegant re-articulation of Whitman that this contemporary boldly yet reverently essays in his poem "The Revisionist." Crase takes the Whitman of "Crossing Brooklyn Ferry"—that teasing master of transtemporal intimacy—and answers in kind:

...I can see that my intervention is required,  
The more urgently as your prospects alter and disappear.  
I will have to be your guarantee. If you're out of place  
I'll have to give you place, and if you're out of time  
I'll have to lift you into mine. As you are dispersed,  
Return and inhabit me. In every jurisdiction  
And every area I promise I've already arrived.

I wish I had a class hour to explicate for you the unrivaled scrupulousness of influence here, to unravel the threads of modesty and authority with which Crase addresses at once a poet, Walt Whitman, and a polity, America. But fortunately for you, if unfortunately for me, I don't have that hour. I can only ask you to join me in welcoming to Mount Holyoke one of the premier poets of his generation... Douglas Crase.

Hollander, John. Jacket copy submitted to the publisher, 1981.

This is the most powerful first book I have seen in a long time. The thematic title poem is magnificent, proclaiming the originality which only revision can provide, finding at a late time in parts of a twilit city the highest tales of our whole country.

Howard, Richard. Books of the Year, *The Nation*, December 26, 1981, p. 714.

The most interesting book of first poems in many years.

Kalstone, David. "David Kalstone Introduces Douglas Crase and John Ashbery," *Envoy*, Number 46, Nancy Schoenberger and Henri Cole, eds., The Academy of American Poets, New York, 1985, pp. 1-2.

*The Revisionist* came out in 1981, and I think I speak for many in saying it appeared with that sense of completeness of utterance and identity that must have come with the first books of Wallace Stevens—*Harmonium*—and Elizabeth Bishop—*North and South*.

Kalstone, David. Jacket copy submitted to the publisher, January 16, 1981.

*The Revisionist*, like the poems of Wallace Stevens, is preternaturally and painfully alive not so much to people as to our traces in landscape and language. Crase imagines American scenes—a neighborhood, a clearing—as if they had been abandoned or, to change the figure, as if they could be restored from scar tissue. These are sobering and wonderful poems.

Koethe, John. *Poetry at One Remove: Essays*, Poets on Poetry, University of Michigan Press, Ann Arbor, 2000, pp. 59-61. Reprinted from Susan Schultz, ed., *The Tribe of John: Ashbery and Contemporary Poetry*, University of Alabama Press, Tuscaloosa, 1995, pp. 88-90.

What Crase does in a way is receive Ashbery into the body of American poetry that is the common property of all poets, rather than let his work remain the private preserve of those who feel a temperamental affinity with it or have some special relation to it. In particular, he recovers Whitman through Ashbery—or, put another way, he enlists the rhetorical and psychological strategies of the poet many castigate as our most private and hermetic in the service of a public, Emersonian project of reclamation of his own—a Bloomian swerve implausible enough to render almost believable the claim that, even while “the past / Seems to be level in its place there’s room for more / And the ragged additions polish the previous days.”

Krieger, Martin H. “Keeping Up ... with America,” *Gay Community News Book Review*, January 1983, pp. 2, 6.

Crise is as powerful for me as is Eakins, and for much the same reasons of touch and sensibility, as uplifting as Whitman, but a lot less gushy. He is not so much sublimating as he is transforming experience—and it is not clear what, and if, he is holding back.... My life is made articulate in these poems.

Lehman, David. “The Practical Side of Poetry,” *Newsweek*, vol. 80, September 22, 1986, p. 84. High on anyone’s list of poets who have resisted the blandishments of the academy is Douglas Crise.

Lehman, David. *The Line Forms Here*, Poets on Poetry, University of Michigan Press, Ann Arbor, 1992, p. 199.

Lehman, David and John Brehm, eds. *The Oxford Book of American Poetry*, Oxford University Press, Oxford and New York, 2006, p. 1009.

He has published only one book of poems, *The Revisionist* (1981), but on its strength rests a formidable underground reputation.

Lehman, David. “Poets ’81: Tomorrow’s Poetry Today,” *Newsday*, December 13, 1981, back page, continued on p. 21.

Every once in a great while a young poet bursts upon the scene trailing clouds of critical glory. Such a poet is Douglas Crise, whose greatly admired first book of poems, “The Revisionist,” all by itself makes the past year seem a particularly bright one for the poetry posterity will remember us by. Crise is that rarest of young poets, he who seems able to give us tomorrow’s poetry today.

Logan, William. *Library Journal*, March 1, 1981.

These prosy poems, often addressed to an unnamed person, their movements similar, their tone bleached, do not have the variety that would differentiate one argument from another, one line from its peers.... Despite these flaws, the poems have a welcome intelligence and a force that suggests Crase may become a convincing topographer of “the beauty of something beautiful.”

Martz, Louis L. *The Yale Review*, October 1982, pp. 73-76.

Douglas Crase’s first book comes heralded by exuberant praise from James Merrill, John Hollander, and John Ashbery; but if one expects examples of discipleship one will not find them. It is true that Crase likes a long fluent colloquial line that might suggest Hollander; he is addicted to obliquities that might suggest Merrill; and he has the allusions to painting and a certain canny vagueness in syntax and reference that one might associate with Ashbery. But these things are on the surface. What these three poets have recognized in Crase is something quite different from their own work: an emergent semi-Whitmanian, semi-Lawrentian, but still wholly Crasean belief in the eternity of natural processes working their way out to something good.

Matuz, Roger. ed. *Contemporary Literary Criticism*, vol. 58, Gale Literary Research, Detroit, 1991, pp. 159-166.

Extensive excerpts from commentaries by Phoebe Pettingell, Louis Simpson, Charles Molesworth, Helen McNeil, Jay Parini, Vernon Shetley, Robert von Hallberg, William H. Pritchard, Richard Tillinghast, and Frederick Garber.

May, B. Hal. *Contemporary Authors*, vol. 106, Gale Research, Detroit, 1985, pp. 124-125.

Summarizes commentaries by Christopher Cox, Phoebe Pettingell, Stephen Wigler, David Lehman, Charles Molesworth, and includes the following brief statement by Crase:

“For me, right now, the liveliest poetry is an act of citizenship. Not in the ‘good citizen’ sense, because a poem is by nature seditious or seductive in its argument. It was said by a poet, who was known for putting us on, that poetry makes nothing happen. Of course, poetry settles nothing, but this is precisely okay; it’s the great accomplishment of a poem to keep even one possibility intact. There are enough vandals in the world.”

McNeil, Helen. “In the Line of the Image,” *Times Literary Supplement*, no. 4113, January 29, 1982, p. 113.

Crase is the unusual case of a contemporary poet whose most public, expansive voice is his most authentic.

Merrill, James. Jacket copy submitted to the publisher, December 20, 1980.

A marvelous new poet—deeply and absorbingly ‘American’, unfazed by the complex sentence of our past, and already parsing a future he will help us to live.



Molesworth, Charles. "Three American Poets," *The New York Times Book Review*, August 23, 1981, pp. 12, 29.

Mr. Crase has what it usually takes several books to achieve: an important subject; a consistent and supple attitude toward it; and a style rich enough to answer to it... Imagine, paradoxically, Auden as the guiding spirit of style and Williams as the instructor of concerns, and you have a sense of Mr. Crase's richness... Some may say he writes more as a Horatian poet than in our native grain. But that draws the boundaries too narrowly. It's more important to note that he has written on a large scale, and with considerable authority.

Murray, G. E. "Bridging the Gap of Self, Society," *Chicago Sun-Times*, July 19, 1981.

Douglas Crase's *The Revisionist* introduces a first-rate talent. In scenes from Sausalito to the Allegheny Plateau, Crase celebrates America in its constant state of becoming. And he does so with an unswerving eye, warning at one point that "Every road leads home and none is getting there."

Myers, D. H. "Long Island Books," *East Hampton Star*, January 7, 1982.

The Wordsworth of "The Prelude" comes immediately to mind, though Mr. Crase is a much more conscientious stylist. In fact, Mr. Crase's high style allows him to say practically anything and somehow or other to get away with it.

"Notable Books of the Year," *The New York Times Book Review*, December 6, 1981, p. 62.

Parini, Jay. "A New Generation of Poets," *The New Republic*, vol. 186, no. 15, April 14, 1982, pp. 37-39.

For sheer ambition, ingenuity, and wit, Crase stands alone.

Perkins, David. *A History of Modern Poetry*, vol. 2: Modernism and After, Belknap/Harvard University Press, Cambridge, p. 633.

One might argue that Crase takes more from Whitman than from any other poet, and that he is trying to gather as much of Whitman's hope for America as can still be gathered in our time.

Perloff, Marjorie. "La Grande Permission: John Ashbery in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century," *Tab: The Journal of Poetry & Poetics*, vol. I, no. 2, 2013, p. 22. [A dissenting opinion.]

*The Revisionist* is best understood as a symptom of an aesthetic of willed indirection and abstract meditation that soon hardened into a period style.

Pettingell, Phoebe. "America in 'Metres,'" *The New Leader*, vol. lxiv, no. 11, June 1, 1981, pp. 14-15.

*The Revisionist* is a remarkable first book of poems, an audacious attempt to put Emerson's poem that is America into "metres." That Crase's invocation of the Whitmanian poetic tradition can be so powerful after all these years of overuse and abuse is a small miracle of revisionism itself.

Pritchard, William H. "Intelligence and Invention," *Salmagundi*, Number 60, Spring-Summer 1983, pp. 176-185.

Speaking of Ashbery, Douglas Crase's first book was highly touted by that poet of whim-wham and filigree, also by the official designator of "strong poets," Harold Bloom. So I was doubly on my guard, only to be charmed and awed—in a way I seldom am with Ashbery—by Crase's elegant procedures, his command of name and place, his inventive scope and generosity.... This seems to me the voice of a potentially major talent, but certainly, at the least, that of a rewarding and original new poet.

*Publishers Weekly*, March 27, 1981.

It is a special reader who will wish to undertake Crase's highly intelligent but exceedingly dense and difficult collection of poems.

Reynolds, Joseph. "The Traditional in Poetry," *Worcester Sunday-Telegram*, July 26, 1981.

Douglas Crase in his first book of poems has something to say about America.

Schiavo, Michael. "Douglas Crase's *The Revisionist* and *Amerifil.txt*," *Lost and Found, Tin House*, vol. 5, no. 1, Fall 2003, pp. 142-146.

When I read Crase's books it was as if some better angel pushed through the past and announced that someone else felt the same way about America...and that no matter how distorted the world becomes, inside of our collective character dwells the truth of our country's aspiration that we can never escape, no matter how poorly we conduct this great experiment of democracy. Crase became for me, as Emerson said of "The Poet," a liberating god, because every line of his work carries a civics lesson of terrible importance.

Schott, Webster. "Three Poets Light the Sky in Search for Beauty, Truth," *Cleveland Plain Dealer*, September 20, 1981.

Crase is talented, naturalistically inclined, and as lyrically grim as an abandoned strip mining field.

Shekerjian, Denise. *Uncommon Genius: How Great Ideas Are Born*, Viking, New York, 1990, pp. 45-48.

He didn't feel like he was wasting his time when he drifted about Cuylerville soaking up the particulars of the terrain, the richness of the history.

Shetley, Vernon. *After the Death of Poetry: Poet and Audience in Contemporary America*, Duke University Press, Durham, 1993, pp. 185-188.

Crase's strategy involves addressing America in the way one would a lover.... Anyone, the reader is likely to imagine, whose concerns range as widely and whose knowledge is so minute must actually feel about citizenship the kind of intimacy and urgency most of us feel only in love.

Shetley, Vernon. "Ask the Fact," *The New York Review of Books*, vol. xxix, no. 7, April 29, 1982, p. 43.

Crane views things from an unusual angle but his vision nowhere obtrudes as merely a peculiarity. In the book's title poem, the "you" addressed seems at once a former lover and America itself, a conception that in other hands surely would seem a tour de force; Crane treats it so naturally that one is convinced he really does conceive of love affairs and his relation to America in the same terms.... This is a poetry that convinces us not merely by an assured and masterful style, but by its ability to acknowledge its own limits without bitterness or nostalgia, by its ingenuity in turning the losses of experience into imaginative gain.

Simpson, Louis. "The Down-to-Earth and the Acrobatic," *The Washington Post Book World*, June 7, 1981, pp. 4-5. [A dissenting opinion.]

I don't mind a poet's using a mannered style—Yeats, for instance, could be very grand—but I object to verbosity, and Crane is verbose. And he uses abstract language so that his argument is obscure—and he is always arguing.

Supplee, Curt. "Updike, 3 Others Win Book Awards," *The Washington Post*, Tuesday, January 5, 1982, pp. C1, C4.

The poetry debate proved the most heated, and eventually centered around three titles: "The Revisionist," a collection by Douglas Crane; "Brotherly Love," an epic poem about William Penn by Daniel Hoffman and Ammons' "A Coast of Trees."

Tillinghast, Richard. "Ten New Poets," *The Sewanee Review*, vol. xci, no. 3, Summer 1983, pp. 473-483.

Mr. Crane's subject is nothing less than America—her landscape, her history, her buildings, her soul. This is a staggeringly ambitious book, and its author sets about his task manfully, with no bashfulness or false modesty, even addressing the country (though not, let me add, by name) in the second person—a form of address which is more familiar to us through the medium of the television commercial.

"20 Books Vie for '81 Prizes," *The New York Times*, December 15, 1981, p. C8.

Vance, Jane Gentry. "A Poetry of Ideas, Not Images," *Louisville Courier Journal*, January 10, 1982.

This volume comprises a disenchanting, but persistent, love poem to the United States.

von Hallberg, Robert. "American Poetry 1981," *Contemporary Literature*, vol. 23, no. 4, Fall 1982, pp. 556-559.

Waggoner, Hyatt H. "Poetry in a Fearful Time," *American Poets: From the Puritans to the Present*, Louisiana State University Press, Baton Rouge, 1984, p. 627.

Whitman's celebrations of national beliefs and hopes seem simply irrelevant to most poets of the present, though Douglas Crane in an impressive first volume, *The Revisionist*, seems to be saying that with suitable revision, Whitman's love of and hope for the land and its people may still be experienced.

Wetzsteon, Rachel, in Jeffrey Gray, James McCorkle, and Mary Balkun, eds. *The Greenwood Encyclopedia of American Poets and Poetry*, vol. 1, Greenwood Press, Westport, Connecticut, 2006, p. 333.

Douglas Crase's sole collection of poems to date, *The Revisionist*, has established him as one of the major poets of his generation... What separates Crase from other Ashbery-influenced poets, not to mention Ashbery himself, is the exhilarating (though hard-won) optimism that leaps from every page of *The Revisionist*.

Wigler, Stephen. "A Poet in Love with Rochester," *Rochester Sunday Democrat and Chronicle*, May 10, 1981, pp. 1C, 6C.

Crase said he cares about Rochester so much because his mature poetry might not have been possible without it.

### *Both: A Portrait in Two Parts*

Ashbery, John. Jacket copy submitted to the publisher.

A fascinating account of the lives of two avant-garde English botanists who played a hitherto unrecorded role in the vibrant New York art scene of the 1950s.

Akeroyd, John. "Both: A Portrait in Two Parts," *Hortus* Number 71, vol. 18, no. 3, Autumn 2004, pp. 119-123.

The author, himself a poet, has coped manfully with plant names and taxonomy to capture the sheer aesthetic pleasure of plants, especially the colors—so close to the hearts of the artistic Barneby and Ripley.

Akeroyd, John. "David and Jonathan," *Plant Talk*, Number 37, August 2004, p. 44.

By drawing together details of the two lives, Crase not only emphasizes how botany spans both sciences and arts (despite the best efforts of the modern scientific establishment to unhook these two approaches), but bravely explores a facet of the botanical world "that dare not speak its name."

Beghtol, L. D. *Time Out New York*, April 22-29, 2004, p. 70.

Their sparkling circle included Cyril and Jean Connolly, Peggy Guggenheim (with whom Ripley had a torrid affair), Clement Greenberg, and the decidedly odd couple of Willard Maas (with whom Barneby had an equally torrid affair) and his wife, experimental filmmaker Marie Menken. *Both* is a great read for botanists, lovers of obscure biographies laden with precious insider gossip, and folks who yearn for a time when New York was the center of the world. For most everyone else, it's a bit of a snooze.

"Briefly Noted: 'Both,'" *The New Yorker*, vol. 80, May 24, 2004, p. 87.

Ripley and Barneby... moved to America and fashioned a new family among the artistic elite of New York; Ripley funded the Tibor de Nagy gallery and Barneby continued his taxonomical labors at the New York Botanical Garden. Crase's work, as its title playfully suggests, is itself a kind of reclassification, in which taxonomy becomes poetry, paintings serve as love letters, and gardens rival art.

Christ, Ronald. "Biographies of Pioneering Pairs Illuminate Aesthetic Ideas," *The New Mexican*, September 19, 2004.

A poet, Crase has put his discoveries not only into the story of two exceptional men but also into his language, a patinaed prose with iridescences of humor and good sense. His book takes us gently beyond information to arrive, more than once, at wisdom.

Eyman, Scott. "Book Review: 'Both,'" *Palm Beach Post*, May 9, 2004, Entertainment.

What starts out as a memoir about a friend who became a village elder evolves into something more: a moving tribute to a father.

Frankenthaler, Helen. Jacket copy submitted to the publisher.

*Both* recalls delicate lunches with Dwight and Rupert and tours of their fascinating gardens. Dwight supported John Myers's Tibor de Nagy Gallery and the Second Generation New York School. In this delightful book, we have the whole story of the part they played in the literary and artistic life of their moment and a fresh account of that moment in all its vibrancy.

Hartigan, Grace. Jacket copy submitted to the publisher.

Their modesty and my lack of perception kept me from realizing how extraordinary Dwight and Rupert were. *Both* brings them to life, as botanists and artists, with great charm and wit and intelligence. At last they can be appreciated.

Hinkley, Daniel J. Jacket copy submitted to the publisher.

A touching love story. Effortlessly present here are the glowing affections of two remarkable men, not just for one another but for the joy of life and learning that they wove seamlessly throughout their lives. *Both* translates the undiluted pleasure of their discoveries into ours.

Lytal, Benjamin. "Deeply Rooted," *New York Sun*, April 8, 2004.

One of Mr. Crase's felicities is to have made these two unlikely lives seem plausible, even on the page: He writes about botany, English castes, the cold war, and abstract expressionism with equal immediacy.

Milazzo, Lee. *Dallas Morning News*, July 23, 2004.

Crases picture of these two largely unknown figures brings them vividly to life and casts new light on the arts after World War II.

Moore, Judith. Interviewing the author, *San Diego Reader*, June 17, 2004, pp. 87-89.

Judith Moore: "Why should we care about all these people—Ashbery, Schuyler, Dwight Ripley, and Jean Connolly and Clem Greenberg and Frank O'Hara?"

Douglas Crase: "Well, because we're their children."

JM: "You and I are."

DC: "Yes, and others, too, in ways they probably know nothing about. People like Connolly were self-conscious about the need to make a culture and preserve and carry it. I think what's interesting for an American, for me in particular to realize, is that those attitudes were transported across the Atlantic. They were brought to New York, not just

by the Surrealists from Paris, but they were brought by these English refugees that we don't hear much about. I used to like to think that the culture that came out of the postwar period—that of Frank O'Hara, of the New York School poets, of the art scene—that it was indigenous. That it was America waiting to happen. But it seems clear, the closer, the more attention we pay, that it's an international movement. And there's some insight there, for us to remember that a great nation can't do it alone, not even in culture."

Price, Matthew. "Art and Botany," *Newsday*, Sunday, April 11, 2004, pp. C36, C35.

Barneby and Ripley knew everyone who was anyone in the Anglo-American cultural set.... This is an insider's insider's account.

*Publishers Weekly*, vol. 251, no. 6, February 9, 2004, p. 66.

Writing with lilting appreciation and gentle humanity, Crase is clearly at home in this rarefied aesthete's world.

Rubin, Merle. "Friendship Cultivated like a Delicate Plant," *Los Angeles Times*, April 12, 2004, Entertainment, p. E-13.

Admirable for its sensitivity and sympathy towards its subjects, its scrupulous regard for truth and facts rather than gossip and innuendo, *Both* conveys what bound this pair together and what made each of them unique.

Schmid, Rudolf. "Lives More Than Botany: Rupert Barneby (1911-2000) and Dwight Ripley (1908-1973) Come Alive," *Taxon*, vol. 53, no. 2, May 2004, pp. 620-621.

Both is so multidimensional it cries out to be cast as a movie.

Taylor, Benjamin. *Introducing Douglas Crase reading at Monkey Temple, 558 Broome Street, New York, 2004.*

"The United States," said Whitman, "are essentially the greatest poem." There's no sense pretending an extraordinary remark like that makes any sort of common sense. But equally well, it's clear that for some among us it has. Douglas Crase attended to it and produced *The Revisionist*, whose poems, born out of the soil of our greatest poem, remain among the deepest encounters I know with our national history. Reading them, you feel not just that this poet overwhelmingly loves the American past, but that the American past is loving him back.

Doug's patriotism, like Walt's, is visionary, however: this upstart, patched-over, breaking-down Republic is not finally the end either has in view. No, they are both Emersonians, both patriots of Nature, not just of native ground. They do not write just from history but, as Crase says, "from natural history, to broaden the annals of Love."

It's in the spirit of that remark that we should read his surprising and glorious book called *Both*. Here are broad new annals of Love, at once personal, historical, and natural-historical. So much of what Crase, this North American rarity, has thought and felt and known finds its way into the account of Dwight Ripley and Rupert Barneby, whose fifty years together were a cross-pollination between the kingdoms of botany and art.

Original people have the gift for finding one another—it's one of the perennial mysteries, how they do so with such success—and Rupert found Frank and Doug, and the ultimate outcome has been the book called *Both*, this sovereign work of literature, in

which an exceedingly rarefied world becomes, by poet's magic, the world of our common days. How the poet does this, you are now going to see.

Ward, Bobby Jay. "Both: A Portrait in Two Parts," *Rock Garden Quarterly*, vol. 62, no. 3, Summer 2004, pp. 224-226.

*Amerifil.txt: a commonplace book*

Pollitt, Katha. "Tidings of Discomfort and Joy," *The Nation*, vol. 266, no. 1, January 5, 1998, p. 9.

Thought-provoking and perfect for fidgety moments is *Amerifil.txt*, Douglas Crase's commonplace book of unfamiliar and exhilarating quotations from the writers in his personal pantheon. Consider this, from Wallace Stevens: "For nine readers out of ten, the necessary angel will appear to be the angel of the imagination and for nine days out of ten that is true, although it is the tenth day that counts."

Schiavo, Michael. "Douglas Crase's *The Revisionist* and *Amerifil.txt*," *Tin House*, vol. 5, no. 1, Fall 2003, p. 143.

Crace continues the search for the America behind America. Fittingly, it reads more like poetry than a commonplace book, the motley of the quotations hanging together like the stanzas of one epic soliloquy.