

1986

Introduction

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Recommended Citation

Hamilton, David. "Introduction." *The Iowa Review* 16.1 (1986): 1-1. Web.
Available at: <https://doi.org/10.17077/0021-065X.3285>

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INTRODUCTION

Our issue is not a chronicle of the Workshop's first half century. We lacked the time, the means, and the full range of material necessary to attempt that. Though much of the work here has spent all the time in dark drawers that Pope or Horace recommends, and none of it seems hasty, our work, editorially, has taken less than a year. Last fall we solicited writing from every Workshop graduate and former teacher for whom we had an address, and by early January had received submissions from over 300 writers. Idiosyncracies in the rhythms of lives of many persons influenced what we gathered, and what, perhaps, in another year we might have had. Still, we felt well rewarded when we started reading manuscripts five months ago.

In reading, we simply set out to discover what we admired most. Every item here has grown in our esteem while under discussion in our small group. That was true also of much we left out. Though very little came in from writers at Iowa before the Korean War, the last three and a half decades of participants were richly represented, and almost always with work that is new. Our selections, then, represent the still active lives of writers who were here over the last thirty-five years, and stretch a bit beyond that. We have found it all fine reading and hope you will too.

D. H.