

1997

# Test Day

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## Recommended Citation

Repp, John. "Test Day." *The Iowa Review* 27.2 (1997): 166-166. Web.  
Available at: <https://doi.org/10.17077/0021-065X.4936>

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## John Repp

### TEST DAY

After John unbolted the manifold,  
I dropped the brush in the gas, watched him fold  
the blueprint, John the Socrates of old

engines—slant-sixes, Ford V-8s, bulbous  
Chrysler fan housings, piston rings, green bus  
seats by the score. On test day, just us,

no customers. No use. A massacre.  
I bolted that sun-blasted shit-acre.  
I'd sooner translate the tablets of Ur

than change my own oil. The classicist  
I wanted to be burst like a ripe cyst  
four years later. My brother asked *Was ist?*

and I said *schlecht* in our lifelong attic,  
high school German nothing more than a tic  
in the face of envy. Larry said *ick*

for Chaucer's *ich*. Richard! Your Baudelaire  
spoke French merely, whereas mine built a lair  
for me and mine to hide in. Now I want air.