

New Poetry by Justice Castañeda: “There Will Be No Irish Pennants”



PRESSED AND WITHOUT / *image by Amalie Flynn*

There Will Be No Irish Pennants

“Discipline organizes an analytical space.” [1]

Field Day & Inspection.

Windows shut blinds open half-mast. Sinks will be bleached, faucets are to be pointed outward, and aligned. The toilet paper roll will be full. The shower handle will be left facing directly down towards the shower floor. Waste basket will be empty, cleaned out with no stains or markings, set between the secretary and the window, where the front corner meets, farthest from the door.

Beds will be made showing eighteen inches of white; six beneath and twelve above the fold. The ends will be neatly tucked at a 45 degree angle. One pillow will be folded once and tucked in the pillow case.

A shoe display will be at the foot of the bed and will consist of one pair of jungle boots, one pair of combat boots, go-fasters and shower shoes, in this order. All

laced left over right.

Each lock will be fastened on each locker and secretary, all set to '0.'

Inside one wall locker, hanging up there will be: one all-weather coat, one woolly pullover sweatshirt, one service 'A' blouse, two long sleeve khaki shirts—pressed with the arms folded inward, four short sleeve khaki shirts, three cammie blouses, two pair of green trousers, three pair of cammie trousers, and one pair of dress blue trousers, in this order. All shirts will be pressed and buttoned up. All trousers will be pressed and folded over. All clothing will hang facing right. All hangers will face inwards, separated uniformly by one inch. On the shelf inside the locker, starting at the inner most edge, there will be six green skivvy shirts and three white skivvy shirts—folded into six-by-six squares, six pair of underwear folded three times, six pair of black boot socks, folded once.

The markings will be last name, first name, middle initial, stamped on white tape, no ink spots or bleeding. All collared shirts will be marked centered on the collar; on all trousers and belts on the left inseam, upside down so when folded over they read right side up. On all underwear markings will be centered along the rear waistband. On all socks markings will be on the top of the left sock. All covers will be marked on the left inner rim.

On top of the wall locker covers will be placed, from left to

right as staring at the
wall locker, one barracks cover with service skin, one piss
cover, one utility
cover—pressed and without Irish pennants.

Irish pennants are not permitted.

Stand up straight. Arms to your side, thumbs along the seams
of the trousers,
shoulders back, chin up. Heels and knees together, with feet
pointed outwards at a
45 degree angle.

Eyes. Click.

Ears. Open.

Attention.

[1] Michel Foucault. Discipline and punish. 143

[2] Two faucets in each barracks room.

[3] Irish Pennants are loose threads or strings coming out
from the stitching.

New Poetry from Sheila Bonenberger: “They Gave Their Lives”



UNDERGROUND FORGETTING / *image by Amalie Flynn*

The brass buttons are piled in a bowl
that sits on the shop counter
beside the cash register,

so I buy one,
watch as the clerk drops it
into a paper bag, gently
folding the open end over
so the button doesn't fall out.

Such are the tender considerations
we resort to when it comes
to Union buttons mined
from Marye's Heights, the field
blood transformed into a massive
trauma center, and those many
soldiers, hastily tipped into graves
scratched higgeldy-piggeldy in the earth
and quickly left, without markers,
abandoned to the underground,
earth's crowded room,
to work its magic on the soldiers
and their uniforms under
the same gibbous moon
shining down on life going on,
so that one day a treasure hunter
turns the detector's sensitivity
to high, reaching well past
unreadable trash,
finally capturing a deeper
signal to shovel through grass,
past stones and worms, into dreams
of wealth or glory, pulling up
a solitary, now verdegris button
bent slightly as the soldier
fell hard perhaps against a rock
that would sleep unchanged beside him
until the treasure hunter conspired
to craft a stranglehold on history
proclaiming that this discovery
announced an end of sorts to the story

of a fallen soldier,
one that can be labeled,
one you can put a price on,
but the truth is that buttons
cannot be counted on
to hold a jacket snug, can even
loose their hold on the fabric
of dignity, on the fable
of victory, if what they hold
has been released to flourish
underground forgetting
that perfection is elusive
and we are not perfect
though we hurl ourselves at it
again and again.