

***WORD PROCESSOR***

**By Joan Mcnerney**

Margie often thought words  
just spilled through her fingers.  
It was all learned so long ago  
by touch typing in school.

Then she was thrilled by winning  
an over ninety-words-a- minute  
prize. Margie was sure to  
transcribe important documents.

But today she finished the form letter.  
Now what must be noted is paragraph  
three be included with addressee list five.

Section seven contains financial  
disclosure which only went to top list  
number one. Someone would check it.

Technological advances had replaced  
people. Equipment never felt sick or  
required holidays, vacations, breaks.  
Much more cost effective.

Margie wanted to close her eyes  
against this flood of words. Shut  
her ears against the pounding of

machines, sighs of other operators.

***WAITRESS***

Sally thought everything was  
up to luck and she had zero.  
Her chances got swept  
away with yesterday's trash.

Every day working in this  
dumpy dinner slinging hash.

There were the regulars  
who knew her name and  
left good tips. They had  
no place else to go.

Her feet swelled up at  
the end of lunch rush.

Sally wiped tables filling  
ketchup bottles, salt shakers,  
sugar jars while staring out the  
window at pulsing rain.

Waiting a half hour for the bus,  
winds tangling her hair.

She stopped at the market to  
bring a few groceries home.  
Struggling now to open her door,  
only cold rooms would greet her.

***TEACHER***

She hoped some would leave,  
rise above dirty factory gates  
past plumes of smoke spewing  
from the cement plant.

Occasionally when discussing  
great American novels, the walls  
shook. Ravines were blasted  
for more rocks to crush into powder.

She wished they would not become  
clerks for soul-less chain stores or  
cooks in fast food joints where  
smells of burning grease lingered.

What was the use of teaching literature  
and poetry to these children who would  
soon grown listless? Their spirits grinded  
down like stones in the quarry.

**Bio**

**Joan McNerney's** poetry has been included in numerous literary magazines such as Seven Circle Press, Dinner with the Muse, Camel Saloon, Blueline, Poppy Road Review, Spectrum, three Bright Hills Press Anthologies and several Kind of A Hurricane Publications. She has been nominated three times for Best of the Net.