

he said, "you don't intend to remain  
in pre-med, do you?"

"god, no," i said, "i've already changed  
my major to english."

"thank god," he said, "you can't do much harm there.  
i'll give you a D, but if you double-cross me  
i'll find a way to have you kicked out of school."

i had no desire to double-cross him,  
but he was wrong about my not being able  
to do much harm in english.

#### BEACH APPRECIATION 101

the berm is coming down.  
the bulldozer is flattening it  
inch by inch. soon it will not  
even be a memory.

who after all walks around in july  
remembering a sand-berm?  
who wants to remember winter at all,  
to recall the days when the water was  
numbing and the sand nearly mud and  
the clouds antithetical to comfort?

i know people who claim to love  
the beach on dismal days, but i  
never see them at the beach on dismal  
days. also, i suspect they like those  
days a lot less when the tide breaks  
through the berm and soaks their million-  
dollar living rooms for which no flood  
insurance is available.

the people who claim to love the wintry beach  
have a name for themselves: they call  
themselves poets.

i only know of one insurance man who ever  
called himself a poet, and he didn't call  
himself a poet very loud or outside of  
certain circles and i bet he was sharp  
enough when wintering in key west not  
to sell the local poets hurricane insurance.