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Camelot Kid's Triggertopia by David S. Pointer

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By David S. Pointer
Propaganda Press
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A review by Mignon Ariel King

The cover sketch of the collection announces that this is not pretty poetry: an automatic rifle and guitar hybrid. Inside is rough, political work with titles such as "A Slice of the Modern Sex Trade" accompanied by disturbing sepia-toned sketches. Sharp humor appears, as in the "Major CEO: Basic Job Description":

*must be expert
at creating the image of
false job creation while
using the money to move
overseas...(Lines 17-21).*

No institution or organization goes untouched by Pointer's pen. The poet links the all-too-excruciatingly-obvious link between modern medicine and money. What distinguishes this political writing from much of the "rant" work being done lately, however, is its knowledge of the past that is sentimental without being sappy in its nostalgia. The tone is: Remember the good ol' days? --not that they were perfect, just better than the polar opposite we're stuck with today, including an over-medicated society. Really, is the "time-sturdy statement" (L3) of "The Patient First" too idealistic a goal for modern medical professionals?

Sprinkled throughout the collection of full-length poems are haiku, again, more entertaining than most I've seen in recent years. Here's one that amuses and produces a "Yikes!" from the reader at once: "casino day-care/plastic coins/for the kids." Halfway through the collection the reader discovers (via a spoken-word-worthy prose poem) that "Camelot Kid" grew up in a federal housing project named "Camelot". There, "where there were no/round tables, or lingering middle class/fables..." (L13-15).

In another class statement, the narrator's advice for "Removing Rot in Excessive Riches" is for the rich who are "laughing on their caribou calf-skin couches" (L3) to "make wage suppression go down/smooth as white chocolate cheesecake" (L4-5). More anti-economic inequity lines offer this brilliant metaphor:

and nobody clears
poverty's airway
just the pockets

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of the global poor (L9-12, "Wall Street Washington")

The poet's criticism of institutionalized social injustice and corruption is not softened, rather humanized, by autobiographical family-oriented words and old photographs. The reader is drawn in as opposed to feeling yelled at. Pointer's indignation feels righteous.

Mignon Ariel King is a former English instructor, a voracious reader and writer of poetry, and an online journal editor.