

I		II	III	IV	V	VI
1		6	3	5	4	2
2		1	6	3	5	4
3		5	4	2	1	6
4		2	1	6	3	5
5		4	2	1	6	3
6		3	5	4	2	1

Ryan Peeters

A Sestina Against Sestinas

There is no more distasteful form than the
sestina.

It is composed of six
stanzas of six lines with six possibilities
for the order of terminal words in strict
repetition.

It has a most annoying
character in that it is unnecessary

in its sheer mindlessness and unnecessary
recurrences of the same word. The sestina
is also without a doubt the most annoying
of all the forms to write in, in that the six-
line stanzas of repetition
are somewhat randomly distributed in the range
of possibilities.

Yet we see all the available possibilities
of order shown. Then finally comes the truly
unnecessary
three-line envoi stanza in which repetition
of the six words from earlier in the sestina,
yes, the very same six
words, are repeated: internally and externally,
annoying

all beyond even the most annoying
of the previous stanzas in their random
possibilities.
In comparison, they stand as pillars of sense.
The six

words we hate by now are unnecessarily repeated to the end of the sestina with a feast of repetition

in their final repetition,
bearing some epitome-of-annoying statement that wraps up the sestina.

In the random distribution of possibilities of those few unnecessary words, we see those six

words too much. For six words to have so much repetition is completely unnecessary and really annoying. It exhausts the possibilities of how to be wrong. The sestina

is just six really annoying sets of repetition in random possibilities. I hate the unnecessary words in the sestina.

Ryan Peeters has published work in *Digress*, *Plainsongs*, *Wednesday*, *Transcendent Visions*, and elsewhere. His first chapbook, *Screaming Wet Mammals* (Petroglyph Books), came out in 2007.