

## 3 New Hampshire Songs

mixed choir  
16 parts

- I. Litany (R.S.A. 161:2, IV)
- II. Proposition (3 verbs and a logical operator)
- III. Doggerel (four voice canon #12)

Larry Polansky  
1999

### 3 New Hampshire Songs

The *3 New Hampshire Songs* are based on (mostly) indigenous New Hampshire texts. My family and I have lived in New Hampshire for close to 10 years now, and these pieces are a kind of meditation on home.

Each is dedicated to fellow New Hampshirites who have enriched our lives in this remarkable, interesting, and contradictory state. I often say that much of American music (at least my own) is about place. These pieces are explicitly about the possibilities of place, dedicated to others who see those possibilities in new ways.

Each song is based on a text, emblematic of our state in some way. The Shaker "abcdarius" is not originally from New Hampshire (nor is it actually a Shaker text), but Shaker culture and music (through Shaker music expert Mary Ann Haagen and our friends in the Shaker family at Sabbathday Lake) have wonderfully permeated our lives in recent years, and I wanted to set this text to music (as have many others). Whether it is one of the most beautiful or nonsensical of American poems ("angleworm dog"?), it is used here with the deepest affection and respect for the culture and music it represents. The subtitle was inspired by my brother, Steven Polansky, a writer, who once told me, after I played him a recording of the Seeger family singing this poem, that he often used it to teach his poetry class, as an example of "pure doggerel".

*Proposition* takes its text from our famous licentious slogan, in all its potential for confusion.

*Litany* is an unedited setting of the text of a form which, by law, until a few months ago, prospective adoptive families were made to sign. My wife and I, with great discomfort, signed this document. One couple we know (Kate Soule and John McDermott), also signed it. After the law was repealed they asked for their copy back and ceremoniously burned it. Similarly, this piece is my response.

All three songs use only pitches derived from the first 17 harmonics of a fundamental: D for *Proposition*, E for *Doggerel*, and F for *Litany*. The pieces should all be sung in the intonation of the harmonic series, as follows (using the series on D as a prototype):

<b>Harmonic #</b>	<b>Pitch (<i>Proposition</i>)</b>	<b>Pitch (<i>Doggerel, Litany</i>)</b>	<b>Cents Deviation</b>
1, 2, 4, 8, 16	D	(E, F)	0¢
3, 6, 12	A	(B, C)	+2¢
5, 10	F#	(G#, A)	-14¢
9	E	(F#, G)	+4¢
15	C#	(D#, E)	-12¢
7, 14	C	(D, Eb)	-31¢
11	Ab	(Bb, B)	-49¢
13	Bb	(C, Db)	+41¢
17	D#	(F, F#)	+5¢

These pieces were premiered by the York Vocal Index, York, England, under the direction of William Brooks, in June, 2003. I am grateful for a number of suggestions made by those musicians which have been incorporated into the score. In that performance, the fundamental of all pieces was made the same (A), and in *Proposition*, separate clicktracks (through headphones) were given to each performer.

Larry Polansky  
Lebanon, Fall, 1999  
(rev. 8/20/03)

**I. Litany (R.S.A. 161:2, IV)  
for Walter and Liz Sinnott-Armstrong**

For 16 or more voices. In Section I, each voice sings only one pitch, designated by the first "measure" (not sung) in which the 16 harmonic pitches are distributed for the 16 voices. The singers should divide up these pitches according to their most comfortable range. In Section I, each voice (except the lowest) moves gradually from an indefinitely tuned pitch somewhere close the target pitch (x-noteheads) to the target pitch (ordinary notehead). A slight crescendo (almost an accent) should accompany the arrival on the target pitch. All lyrics are in unison. Vibrato should be little or not at all. In general, definite pitches should be a dynamic level or two louder than indefinite pitches. The idea is of a noisy harmonic series gradually refining itself.

In Section II, a continuous, monophonic melody should "move through" the choir as indicated in the score. Singers should join in, unobtrusively, when they can sing a pitch, and some simple mechanism should be devised by the singers so that the legato effect indicated in the score is achieved (perhaps by physical position in the choir). Higher voices may begin a bit lower to ensure greater clarity of words.

Section III should be sung by those who can sing the notes (the designation "men" and "women" is for convenience only).

There can be a slight pause between each section. Care should be taken throughout to make the words as clearly understood as possible.

All tunings are based on the harmonic series on F (see chart in introduction).

## **II. Proposition (3 verbs and a logical operator) for Jack and Ann Wilson**

For nine or more voices. Each voice sings only one pitch. Although voices are designated soprano, alto, tenor, bass, they may be sung by anyone who can sing the one pitch in the part. There may be more than one singer to a part, but the nine parts should be of roughly equal loudness.

The "quarter note" is used throughout as a common pulse, and all grupetti relate to it. Thus, *all* grupetti (even the small ones, like 7, 5, 3, and 2) are *n* quarters in the time of 8 quarters (for the measure). Stems and grupetti brackets are dropped after a few measures in each part. The only exception is the low bass part (D), which is always a whole note, or two per measure (with the first whole note rest omitted in the last few measures).

When each voice has been reduced to one note, that note is the "middle" of the grupetto. Although this is rhythmically difficult, care should be taken that the natural, superparticular accelerando up the harmonic series is observed. In other words, 13 is closer, rhythmically to 12 than 12 is to 11, and so on. All these pitches come after the middle of the measure.

All notes are more or less legato, held almost to the next note or rest.

All tunings are based on the harmonic series on D (see chart in introduction).

### **III. Doggerel (four voice canon #12) for Mary Ann Haagen and Charlie DePuy**

Each part consists of four pitches from the harmonic series on E (2-16). The piece may be sung in one of two ways:

- in hocket fashion (one voice to a note, for a total of 16 voices)
- the entire section singing all of the pitches in the part

As in I. and II., pitches are tuned to the harmonic series (this time on E). Pitches may be distributed among the voices in the most comfortable way. For example, since the bass and tenor parts are a bit high (owing to the natural spacing of the harmonic series), altos may sing the top tenor note(s), tenors, the top bass note.

The score consists of four individual parts, sung at four different tempi, related as 7:6:5:4. In other words, if the bass part (the longest) is sung at mm. 60, the tenor, alto, and soprano parts are at mm. 75, 90, and 105, respectively. A system of synchronized click tracks may be used, or better, individual conductors who are part of the choir. The conductors conduct 5 against 4, 6 against 4, and 7 against 4 with reference to the conductor of the bass part.

All parts should end precisely together. Tenor, alto and sopranos parts start successively later in the bass part, proportionate to their tempo. In other words, since the tenor part's tempo is 5/4ths of the bass part, it begins on beat 22. The alto and soprano parts begin on beats 36 and 46 of the bass part, respectively.

A tempo between mm. 50 and 60 is suggested for the bass part. At mm. 60, the bass part lasts 1:45, tenor 1:30, alto 1:40, and soprano 1:00. The tenor, alto and soprano parts last 84, 70, and 60 beats of the bass part, respectively.

Upper case words should be accented slightly. All tunings are based on the harmonic series on E (see chart in introduction). Depending on the specific ranges and strengths of the singers, the fundamental for the entire piece may be moved up or down (putting the entire work in a different "key").

(Thanks to William Brooks for the first performance of the piece, and for valuable assistance with the score).

**I. Litany**  
**(R.S.A. 161:2, IV)**

for Walter and Liz Sinnott-Armstrong

# Litanu

RSA 1G1:2 V

Larry Polansky

x means sing "around" the pitch, softly, in no particular intonation.  
As the "x"s turn to noteheads, focus in on exact pitches.

The di- vi- sion of Chil- dren and Youth Ser - vi- ces is pro- hi- bi- ted by R S A one hun- dred and

(pitches) I.

1 & 2      3 & 4      5 & 6      7 & 8      9 & 10      11 & 12      13 - 16

*pp* (crescendo gradually to measure 6)

*pp*\* (crescendo gradually to measure 6)

*pp* (crescendo gradually to measure 6)

N.B Small hairpins apply to the individual voice changes from rough to accurate pitches.

six-ty one co-lon two Ro-man nu-mer-al IV from gran-ting a li-cense to a-ny Fo - ster Fa-mi-ly Home in which one

1 & 2      3 & 4      5 & 6      7 & 8      9 & 10      11 & 12      13 - 16

*mp*      *mp*      *mp*      *mp*      *mp*      *mp*      *mp*

*slight rit.*

or more of the adults is ho-mo-sex-u-al.

Ho-mo-sex-u-als

are al-so pro-hi-bi-ted from a - dop - ting.

Sing parts of the melody when pitches enter your range. By alternating voices, sometimes hold those pitches for several beats, overlapping with the next few notes. Like a sustain pedal. Let pitches die out gradually over the course of 2-4 beats, or even a whole measure. There should always be at least 2-3 notes sounding, with the current melody note the loudest. The effect should be like a moving filter. The melody and words should be clear and continuous.

II.

all 20

per - forms or sub - mits to a - ny sex - u - al act in - vol - ing the sex or - gans of one per - son and the mouth

all 25

or a - nus of a - noth - er per - son of the same gen - der (un - quote) (pa - ren - the - sis) R. S. A. one hun - dred and

all 30

six - ty one co - lon two Ro - man nu - mer - al IV as am - mend - ed by the nine - teen eigh - ty se - ven re - gu - lar ses - sion. (close par - en - thes - is).

### III. free tempo, a little louder, strong

Yes. No. Sig - na - ture(s).

Women 35

Women 35

Men 35

Men 35

Speak your name,  
free rhythm, on your pitch.  
*mp*

pause, then

In unison, on your pitch, say the date,  
in some simple, agreed upon way.

*pp*

let chords ring, die out gently

**II. Proposition**  
**(3 verbs and a logical operator)**

for jack and ann wilson  
**Proposition**  
three verbs and a logical operator

11

S 1      > 17      > 17      > 17      > 17      > 17  
 or die live free or die live free      or die live free or die live      free or die live free or  
 die live free or die      live free or die

S 2      > 15      > 15      > 15      > 15      > 15  
 free die and live free die and live      free die and live free die and      live free die and live free  
 die and live free die      and live free die

A 1      > 13      > 13      > 13      > 13      > 13  
 live die free not live die free not      live die free not live die free      not live die free not live  
 die free not live die      free not live die

A 2      > 11      > 11      > 11      > 11      > 11  
 die free live or die free live or      die free live or die free live      or die free live or die  
 free live or die free      live or die free

T 1      > 9      > 9      > 9      > 9      > 9  
 die nor live free die nor live free      die nor live free die nor live      free die nor live freeze die  
 nor live free die nor      live free die nor

T 2, 3      8      8  
 die or live free die or live      die or live free die or live      free die or live free die  
 die or live live or free die or die      die or live live or free die or die      live or free die free or die  
 $\textit{mp} - \textit{mf}$        $\textit{mp} - \textit{mf}$

(soften slightly to end)

S 1

live free or

> 15

S 2

die live

15 >

A 1

and live free

die and

13 >

live

13 >

live

13 >

live

13 >

free not live

die free

not

live

live

free

A 2

> 11

live or die

free live

die

free

die

live

T 1

9 >

live free live

nor live

free

die

live

live

T 2, 3

free 7 die

or 7 live

free 7 >

die

die 7 >

live 7 >

free 7 >

live or free

die live

free

free

die

die

live

live

B1, 2

3:8

free live or die

live live free

live or free

live die

live live

mp - mf

**III. Doggerel**  
**(four voice canon #12)**

for mary ann haagen and charlie depuy

## Doggerel

### four voice canon #12

(bass begins piece)

Larry Polansky

A musical score for a children's song. The key signature is A major (no sharps or flats). The time signature changes between common time (indicated by 'C') and 3/4 time (indicated by '3'). The vocal line includes lyrics for various animals: Crocodile, Monkey, Buffalo, Hare, Drummer, Dancer, Lion, Pard, Mud, Turtle, Bear, Elephant, Badger, Peacock, and Ox. The music consists of two staves of sixteenth-note patterns.

12                    \*Sopranos (7/4) begin here

LI - ZARD Ich - neu - mon Hon - ey - bee Rat      MOCK - ING - BIRD Ca - mel Grass - hop - per Mouse      NIGHT - IN - GALE Spi - der Cut - tle - fish Grouse  
(*mp*)

O - CE - LOT Phea - sant Wol - ver - ine Auk      PER - I - WIN - KLE Er - mine Ka - ty - did Hawk      QUAIL Hip - po - po - ta - mus Ar - ma - dil - lo Moth  
*f*      *mp*

RAT - TLE - SNAKE Li - on Wood - pec - ker Sloth      SA - LA - MAN - DER Gold - sinch An - gle - worm Dog      TI - GER Fla - min - go Scor - pi - on Frog

U - NI - CORN Os - trich Nau - ti - lus Mole      VI - PER Go - ri - lia Ba - si - lisk Sole      WHIP - POR - WILL Beav - er Cen - ti - pede Fawn  
*mf*

XAN - THOS Ca - na - ry Pol - li - wog Swan      YEL - LOW - HAM - MER Ea - gle Hy - e - na Lark      ZEB - RA Cha - me - leon But - ter - fly Shark  
*mp*      *p*

for mary ann haagen and charlie depuy

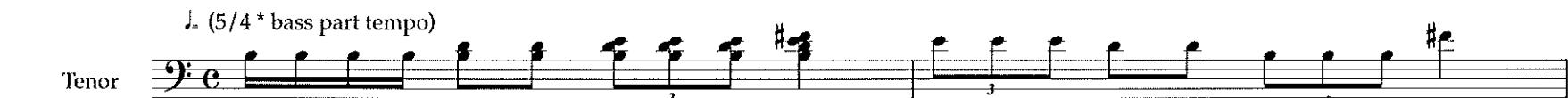
# Doggerel

four voice canon #12

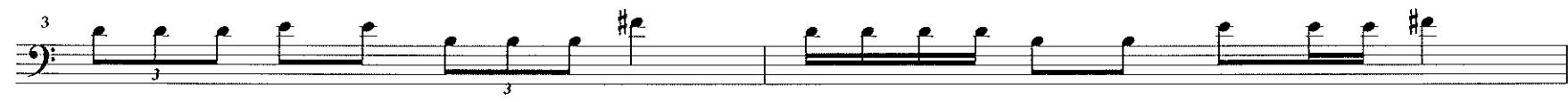
(Tenor begins on beat 22 of the bass part)

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L (5/4 \* bass part tempo)

Tenor 

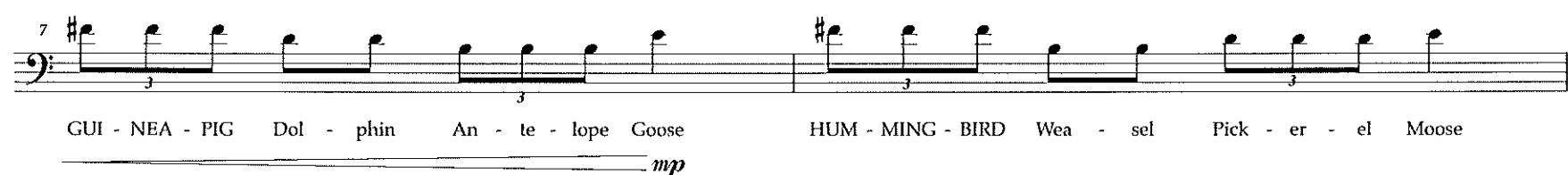
AL - LI - GA - TOR Bee - tle Por - cu - pine Whale BO - BO - LINK Pan - ther Drag - on - fly Snail  
*pp* *ff* *p*



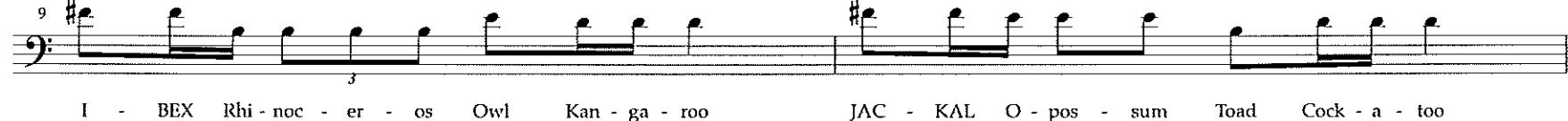
CROC - O - DILE Mon - key Buf - fa - lo Hare DROM - E - DAR - Y Leo - pard Mud Tur - tle Bear



EL - E - PHANT Bad - ger Pe - li - can Ox FLY - ING FISH Rein - deer An - a - con - da Fox  
*(p)*



GUI - NEA - PIG Dol - phin An - te - lope Goose HUM - MING - BIRD Wea - sel Pick - er - el Moose  
*mp*



I - BEX Rhi - noc - er - os Owl Kan - ga - roo JAC - KAL O - pos - sum Toad Cock - a - too

11 KING - FISH - ER Pea - cock Ant - eat - er Bat LI - ZARD Ich - neu - mon Hon - ey - bee Rat MOCK - ING - BIRD Ca - mel Grass - hop - per Mouse  
 (each voice sustains its pitch)  
 (mp)

14 NIGHT - IN - GALE Spi - der Cut - tle - fish Grouse O - CE - LOT Phea - sant Wol - ver - ine Auk PER - I - WIN - KLE Er - mine Ka - ty - did Hawk  
 (mf) f mp

17 QUAIL Hip - po - po - ta - mus Ar - ma - dil - lo Moth RAT - TLE - SNAKE Li - on Wood - pec - ker Sloth

19 SA - LA - MAN - DER Gold - finch An - gle - worm Dog TI - GER Fla - min - go Scor - pi - on Frog

21 U - NI - CORN Os - trich Nau - ti - lus Mole VI - PER Go - ril - la Ba - si - lisk Sole WHIP - POR - WILL Beav - er Cen - ti - pede Fawn  
 (mf)

24 XAN - THOS Ca - na - ry Pol - li - wog Swan YEL - LOW - HAM - MER Ea - gle Hy - e - na Lark ZEB - RA Cha - me - leon But - ter - fly Shark  
 (mp) p

for mary ann haagen and charlie depuy

# Doggerel

four voice canon #12

(Alto begins on beat 36 of the bass part)

Larry Polansky

J. (3/2 \* bass part tempo)

Alto

AL - LI - GA - TOR Bee - tle Por - cu - pine Whale BO - BO - LINK Pan - ther Drag - on - fly Snail  
pp ff p

CROC - O - DILE Mon - key Buf - fa - lo Hare DROM - E - DAR - Y Leo - pard Mud Tur - tle Bear

EL - E - PHANT Bad - ger Pe - li - can Ox FLY - ING FISH Rein - deer An - a - con - da Fox  
(p)

GUI - NEA - PIG Dol - phin An - te - lope Goose HUM - MING - BIRD Wea - sel Pick - er - el Moose  
mp

I - BEX Rhi - noc - er - os Owl Kan - ga - roo JAC - KAL O - pos - sum Toad Cock - a - too



KING - FISH - ER Pea - cock Ant - eat - er Bat LI - ZARD Ich - neu - mon Hon - ey - bee Rat MOCK - ING - BIRD Ca - mel Grass - hop - per Mouse  
(*mp*)

14

NIGHT - IN - GALE Spi - der Cut - tle - fish Grouse O - CE - LOT Phea - sant Wol - ver - ine Auk PER - I - WIN - KLE Er - mine Ka - ty - did Hawk  
*mf* *f* *mp*

17

QUAIL Hip - po - po - ta - mus Ar - ma - dil - lo Moth RAT - TLE - SNAKE Li - on Wood - pec - ker Sloth SA - LA - MAN - DER Gold - finch An - gle - worm Dog

20

TI - GER Fla - min - go Scor - pi - on Frog U - NI - CORN Os - trich Nau - ti - lus Mole VI - PER Go - ril - la Ba - si - lisk Sole

23

WHIP - POR - WILL Beav - er Cen - ti - pede Fawn XAN - THOS Ca - na - ry Pol - li - wog Swan  
*mf*

25

YEL - LOW - HAM - MER Ea - gle Hy - e - na Lark ZEB - RA Cha - me - leon But - ter - fly Shark  
*mp* *p*

for mary ann haagen and charlie depuy

## Doggerel

### four voice canon #12

*(Soprano begins on beat 46 of the bass part)*

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J- (7/4 \* bass part tempo)

Soprano

*pp*

*ff*

*p*

*mp*

*f*

11

KING - FISH - ER Pea - cock Ant - eat - er Bat LI - ZARD Ich - neu - mon Hon - ey - bee Rat MOCK - ING - BIRD Ca - mel Grass - hop - per Mouse (mp)

(each voice sustains its pitch)

14

NIGHT - IN - GALE Spi - der Cut - tle - fish Grouse O - CE - LOT Phea - sant Wol - ver - ine Auk PER - I - WIN - KLE Er - mine Ka - ty - did Hawk *mf* *f* *mp*

17

QUAIL Hip - po - po - ta - mus Ar - ma - dil - lo Moth RAT - TLE - SNAKE Li - on Wood - pec - ker Sloth SA - LA - MAN - DER Gold - finch An - gle - worm Dog

20

TI - GER Fla - min - go Scor - pi - on Frog U - NI - CORN Os - trich Nau - ti - lus Mole VI - PER Go - ril - la Ba - si - lisk Sole

23

WHIP - POR - WILL Beav - er Cen - ti - pede Fawn XAN - THOS Ca - na - ry Pol - li - wog Swan *mf*

25

YEL - LOW - HAM - MER Ea - gle Hy - e - na Lark ZEB - RA Cha - me - leon But - ter - fly Shark *mp*