

DIANA HENDRY

At Miss Foulkes Secretarial College

My father sent me there. Typing, he said
was a skill no girl should be without.
You'll always be able to earn a living.

We all sat Upright
at our Upright Machines and clacked
in Unison. Miss F played music
as we got the rhythm going.

We were PERCUSSION. Our platens
whiiiiiiiiizzzzzzed
our bells *trilled,*

we were learning the alphabet
all over again in the grownups' order.
Left hand: **a s d f**—finger across for *g*.
Right hand: **g l k j**—finger across for *h*.

do not look down
at the keys. Soon we will graduate
to words. Soon we will tap tap tap
them out fasterandfaster. Miss F times us with her stop.
Watch. So many words a minute so many words a minute
somanywords ... Nobody told us it was the spaces
between
that mattered, earning a living, a living
a living in words.