

## Poem

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The following poem was written by the author's doctoral advisor at the Illinois Institute of Technology sometime during the 1960s. It is offered as a light-hearted satirical view of continuum mechanics, rheology, and academics. The poem is probably best appreciated after having completed some of the material in the text.

## RHEOL-LOGIC

*The tensor tramps across the page,  
And fields of functions stage by stage  
Inform the reader in the know  
Of how the stress affects the flow.*

*No cone or plate need shear a goo  
To find the laws of nature true,  
But all is known to those who think  
And nothing flows but printers' ink.*

*For by the rules of logic rheol,  
To which the erudite appeal,  
By word and wit and cogitation  
Come true and trusty revelation.*

*You need not stir a can of paint  
To find what is or see what ain't.  
Jusy follow through the mathematics  
Of stress and flow and creep and statics.*

*Yet stay before you ope the books,  
It's not as easy as it looks.  
No spring, no dashpot leads you on  
No molecules to lean upon.*

*Just tensors, fields, and energies,  
Just talk and inequalities  
In utmost generality.  
All else is but banality.*

*How many heads have spun and reeled  
Confronted by a classic field?  
How oft have students felt upset  
By new, unheard-of alphabet?*

*The rational assured mechanic  
May drive a simple soul to panic,  
When concepts new and old are flung  
Both here and there in Caesar's tongue.*

*But hold before you seek a tryst  
To meet your psychoanalyst.  
Just learn the ways of secret cults  
To seek some new and grand results.*

*New terms you think to add and state  
You try your best to complicate,  
And should a problem make you weary  
You turn instead to newer theory.*

*And so you think you wield your pen  
You write and publish, talk, and then  
When all is done and seems perfection,  
You print additions and corrections.*

*... Barry Bernstein*