

JOHN COLEMAN BENNETT
Seuss on Subway

On we board and out come
our private displays to show us
what we want most to know by going
where we go, with the shriek
of the cable brake, and the rich smell
of coffee, and the wet umbrella
in dentist-style lighting, and the mother
who sits in front of the stroller
and holds up the big colorful worn book
with its well-stained professor's dust
jacket, and the sound of the plastic
crinkling as she explains the art-
ifact of a book slip,
then proceeds with the inspiring
inscription, and on to those
first expository pages, recites
and turns the tome to show
the illustrations of those smirky
and calm *Whos* who seem as content
as the last time we bothered
to check on them, each confirming
the prolonged dichotomy (we must
either be on the fox, or beside it;
in the box, or outside of it)
and one by solemn one
our gadgety-gears and digi-pokers
go into our coat pockets, and we inch
closer, and the mother, realizing now
a wider audience, begins to sway the illustrations
right to left, enough for scouting

eyes to agree that we are half in on his joke—
the parent with the picture book
and the child it was gifted down to
and us Businesssticians
and the conductor navigating tracks
with the old Burrowmobile hurtling into Cityville,
booming *Zook! Zook!* at every stop—
and half of it.