The late Philip Booth of Castine, one of the most important poets of his generation, was known for his ability to compress meanings into a small space. In today’s poem he discusses the social reality of America in just ten lines.

United States
_by Phillip Booth_

All right, we are two nations.

Immaculate floors, ceilings broken
only by skylights, The insulated
walls, the soundless heat; and hidden
everywhere, a fan for every odor.

Of our two nations
that is one.

    And you who will not
read this

    presume you know the other.