

# The New Criterion

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## Of verts

by John Simon

Consider the verts: the in and the per,  
The intro and extra, who con or who sub.  
For conversation somehow to occur  
Could they perhaps band into a club?

Is there an aspect of vert they can share,  
Or must they endlessly animadvert?  
Would they not rather rise to the dare  
To talk to each other and act in concert?

Vert comes from Latin, meaning to turn  
This way or that, advert or revert.  
And surely it's better to move than to yearn,  
Impacted in stasis, inane and inert.

It allows us to change from the common course,  
Ignore dull convention that doesn't divert;  
If a different color can profit a horse,  
To humans why should it bring nothing but hurt?

Will it be permanent or only a spurt?  
It can turn many heads, conquer a heart.  
The one thing it can't do is to revert  
To an impossible better new start.

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**John Simon** was a distinguished critic and a regular contributor to *The New Criterion*.

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