The following index lists the major topics in the audio recording and the approximate point when they occur in the recording according to an analog cassette recorder’s tape counter. This tape counter index (TCI) has not been edited for accuracy by Archives and Special Collections.
Introduction to the program.

Bevis announces that this program is the second of two dealing with the poetry of Richard Hugo. Bevis explains that Hugo may not be on this program because he had car trouble in Billings and hasn't arrived at the radio station yet. If Hugo shows up they will go on with their interview if not Bevis will go into more depth about Hugo's poetry.

Bevis explains that he will be reading the last eight poems in Hugo's *The Lady in Kicking Horse Reservoir*. Bevis explains that this book came out in 1973 and is not his recent most work. The reason Bevis chose the book was because it is fairly well known, contains a lot of Montana material and represents some of the things that made Hugo a Montana poet. Bevis says that he would now like to talk about the poetry of Dick Hugo and the poetry of William Butler Yeates and compare the two.

Bevis reads a quotation from which Hugo got the title of one of his poems. Bevis comments that Hugo couldn't have written some of his poetry without the influence of the poet Yeates. Bevis says that there are three major styles in contemporary poetry and he includes Hugo in the Yeatesian style. The first style is that of W. S. Merwin. This style has a lot of wrenched syntax and the information is very compact. It is an intelligent, highly technical speech and is very difficult to read.

The second contemporary style of poetry is that of Wallace Stevens. There tend to be a lot of fictitious places in the poems, many of the scenes indoors. The third style is that of Yeates. The speech is common, everyday and there are a lot of genial conversations in the poetry. Bevis says that Yeates quite often dedicated poems to people and so does Hugo.

Bevis reads one of Yeates' poems to show how the conversation is so relaxed and common. Yeates was a poet of one local, in his case of his home country, Ireland. Bevis compares some of the things that Yeates and Hugo share in their poetry.

Bevis says that what is so important about Yeates and Hugo is that they want to make their presence felt and heard by others. Many of the modern poets don't have
this quality. Bevis now returns to Hugo's *The Lady in Kicking Horse Reservoir* to take a closer look at some of the details about Hugo's poetry. Bevis says that one should be prepared to be disappointed when you read poetry because if a poet is good you can probably find about one of every five poems that you like.

301-350 Usually you don't read a poet's best work until after he is dead and then someone combines 20 or so of the poet's greatest works into one book of which you might like about 90% of the poetry. Bevis says that there are several things that he doesn't like in the poems.

351-400 He says that when so much is compressed into one poem the syntax gets obscured. Bevis reads a poem that is sort of confusing because of the great amount of information and no punctuation. He says that examples like this of obscure imagery are not particularly useful or enjoyable.

401-450 Bevis now wants to talk about other things that are problems in Hugo's poetry. The problem is the bleak, destructive vision that is commonly found in the poems. He says that some of these negative emotions have a way of obscuring issues and prevent advance in a poem. He feels that if a lot of self-pity and sentimentality is used the poetry will be very limited.

451-500 He says that many of Hugo's poems represent a sort of maudlin. Bevis says that the poems do not reflect as much the feelings of the author as they do the feelings of the psyche of the reader and how he is affected by the poem.

501-550 He says that if he had phrase his greatest reservation about Hugo's poetry it would be that this poetry is that of the village drunk. So a person who reads this kind of poetry gets the feeling that he doesn't need to read anymore after a while because the poetry of a village drunk would be very dull and unimaginative. Bevis says that Hugo is sometimes obscure and unconstructive in his poems.

551-600 Bevis feels that it is apparent in some of Hugo's early books that the writer thinks of himself as someone who drinks a lot. This is not so true in the later books, however. Bevis raises the next question of how Hugo pulls off the poetry of the drunk at times. He comments that one question about Hugo's poems on Phillipsburg is that we aren't sure whether the grey picture he paints of the town is part of Hugo and his feeling or whether it is a documentary or possibly even both.

601-650 He mentions that in the last program DeFrees commented
that the people of Phillipsburg shouldn't be concerned about the descriptions by Hugo. Bevis has trouble dealing with some of Hugo's descriptions. He wants to distinguish between an honest "you" in one of Hugo's poems and a dishonest "you".

651-700 A dishonest "you" in one of the poems is one which could be neither in reference to the reader or Hugo himself. An honest "you" in a poem could refer to the reader of the poem or the author.

701-750 In the last eight poems of the book Bevis will give examples as to where these "you" come in. He says that the context that "you" is used in poetry determines the value of a poem for him. He says that in the poems "Camas Prairie" and "Dixon" Hugo uses a dishonest "you" because he never grew up in those places.

751-800 For example the Dixon poem has the arrogance of putting the reader into the position of a person living in the position of the situation in the poem, which is dishonest. Bevis says that if he wants to use "you" in a poem like this it may be better for him to use "I" in its place.

801-850 Bevis reads the Dixon poem with "I" substituted in. He feels that this makes the poem more honest because you can then imagine some poor person who lives in Dixon and you aren't generalizing.

851-946 He then gives examples of honest poems where the "you" is used to describe a personal experience by the author or one the reader might have. Next, Bevis wants to make the distinction between static art and process art. Static art is a conclusion given image and form whereas process art is a searching for that conclusion on a page.

[END OF SIDE A]

[SIDE B]

000-050 Bevis feels that the self-deprecation found throughout the poems tend to bring out the humanity in the poetry. The self-deprecation found in these poems are not destructive to the poetry but instead represents a plea. Bevis now turns back to static and process. Bevis first makes the assumption that a person is going to write a poem, and this person is very uncertain about his poetry and himself. There are then two ways to go about writing such a poem. The first way is the static way. The uncertainty can be asserted and be given a conclusion and form.

051-100 Bevis then reads an example of process poetry from
Hugo's book. This process art if asserting conflicting conclusions to come up with a flowing process.

101-140 So when Hugo uses a general "you" in his poetry, when he doesn't know the place he writes about, it comes across as a combination of an unbelievable voice and a flat assertion of humility.

141-200 Bevis reads another of Hugo's poems and analyzes it.

201-250 The poem starts with a positive assertion of a man in jail and that he will get out. Then it moves to an unsure feeling then to thoughts of suicide where the man is feeling that he will go to sleep and never wake up. The poem then takes another turn and there is a feeling that the man can escape.

251-300 So in this poem there is not only a feeling of despair upon people who may not want it but there is also a real assertion of uncertainty. Bevis then reads a stanza from Yeates that shows this assertive uncertainty.

301-372 Bevis reminds everyone that Hugo is only in the middle of his career when writing these poems whereas Yeates was in his seventies. Bevis then reads a poem from one of Hugo's newer books.

372-392 Bevis signs off.

[END OF TAPE]