Ambi-Valiants

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Hey!
Just when we thought we had
this hero business
all straightened out,
along comes this
startling
confusion of images ... 
What are you
newsguys
trying to do to us,
de-mythologize again
"the American hero"?
You just got through
taking him
out of war
and,
keeping him
in flag-festooned
khaki surrogates,
sent him into space!
And now this
gap-bridging handclasp!
Wow!
Next you'll tell us
that hair,
even shoulder-length,
can hide a brain
as true
to some saner sense
of red-white-and-blue
loyalty
as drives astranautical crania,
short hair cased,
to obsessive dreams
of US footsteps
very first
upon the moon ...
and then maybe
that breasts unarmored
by medals and ribbons
and pretty regimental patches
(and maybe even bare
except for lathern peace insignia
and/or beads of love
only yesterday patently
subversive)
might housel

nobler sacrifice
of life
than bleeding it out
in foxholes or
muddy rice paddies;
that such a breast
might even harbor
hopes
for "law and order"
got another way
than wrecked by riot guns
and mace
in violent victory
validated by
weaponry
and rockery;
that peace
might even
combust
spontaneously
(in spite of everything)
inhipped halls
of M.I.T.
or Harvard
or Center City
Junior College,
Center City,
U. S. A.

Clarence Amann