MAINTAINING PRESSURE AT THE EQUILIBRIUM LEVEL

 I tracked down the Irish

 expert on anti-sound

 to a pub, rock blaring

 round. He said — it's all

 a wave, love, you know

 it's air; compressed just so

 by your prate, a caw; a tweaked

 millionth of an atmosphere

 and there, you've let sixty

 db babble go. Bit of solid

 state circuitry — a cinch,

 to synthesize the opposite

 phase, respond (here he leered

 at a blonde). A crest atop

 a trough, that's how it works,

 he said, it sums to a flat

 nil, the din rendered quiet.

 Two pints on, maudlin,

 he cried he got the idea

 from his second wife — the

 damped dialogue of her yes, his

 no. There still be problems,

 dearie, he yelled in my ear

 as we danced, there's wild, wild

 sound. And we can't figure out

 why people get this damn short

 fuse in our custom-made silence.