

# CDE JOURNAL

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# THE 8 MYTHS OF COACHING (and Teaching)

--William H. Bennett\*

There are urban myths, Greek myths, creation myths, and teaching myths. Most teaching myths are self-perpetuating. As you work to become a better coach it is smart if you challenge some of the common speech and debate myths of our time. To do so will improve your skills and effectiveness.

*Myth #1: A good coach will offer all the major events.* If you want to win sweepstakes and offer your students every opportunity, the reasoning goes, you should offer them the chance to succeed in any and every common tournament event. Not so.

First of all there are at least 10 major tournament events in most areas of the country, and up to 18 in a few areas. Dividing your coaching time into so many arenas guarantees that that your students will rarely excel at anything.

You can, of course, coach only a small number of events but let your students enter anything they want. That dilutes the focus they put on their major event and or the events you want to focus on. It dilutes the amount of learning that occurs in each event. But some sweepstakes successful coaches do use this approach.

You should, instead, do what you do best. Malcolm Gladwell makes the point well in his insightful and delightful best seller Outliers: The Story of Success (1)—successful people focus on very few things, and those are the things that they know best. Educational research by Prof. Karen Rogers argues the same point (2), the most effective teachers of gifted students are those that develop expertise in a specific talent area. I would argue that the best coaches know what they are strongest at and focus their teaching and coaching in that (or those) arenas.

*Myth 2: A good coach is a generous or easy grader.* Research says exactly the opposite. Teachers who scored highest in student respect and polls of “my best teacher” did NOT give grades when they were not deserved. Several studies show that some of the hardest grading teachers scored at the top of student polls. The crucial elements students report are clarity of expectations, immediacy of feedback, and transparent understood grading requirements--not the ease of obtaining an A.

*Myth 3: We should let our experienced students set their own pace.* But experience is not a substitute for depth of knowledge and or experience.

It is easy to think that a student who has two or three years of solid competition behind her is ready to make her own decisions, or even assist by coaching novices without your assistance and supervision. Yet time spent coaching others is time away from developing his or her craft. And experience is not a creator of good or automatic work ethic. Even the most experienced of students still needs a coach who sets goals, parameters, objectives, time lines, and provides detailed methods to achieve them. Truly admirable research (3) argues that ten thousand hours of practice is necessary to truly master a skill. “Experienced” speech and debate students need more practice and coaching, not the freedom of a reduced or relaxed work schedule.

*Myth 4: Most of My speech or debate time is spent coaching.* Very probably this is not the case. In fact many coaches spend most of their time doing other things.

What do coaches do? They fill out forms, make travel plans, work in the tab room, judge tournament rounds, catch a snack or socialize in the coaches’ lounge, play chaperone on the bus and at the motel. But all of those activities are times that could have been spent listening to or working with students.

Bus trips are a great time to hear speeches. Tournaments are the best time to sit in and see what students do in competition (practice is one thing, a young person's reaction to tournament stress is another). When you can buy out of judging or use a parent to replace you that can be great coaching time. Tab room work teaches your students nothing; this writer's advice is do it only when there are absolutely no other reasonable alternatives. And do your entry forms and essential minutia only when students are not available to be coached.

*Myth 5: My continuing college work should be in education.* School systems increase your pay as you move towards a Master's Degree or a Ph.D. But your students will do best if you earn that degree in a subject more likely to deepen your subject knowledge, not the shallow world of education courses (4).

The coach's knowledge needs to stay ahead of the students' knowledge. On each debate topic and extemp topic or oration the teacher needs the knowledge or knowledge acquisition skills to best help his students. That knowledge is much more likely to come from history or government or political science or economics courses than it is from education classes. For interpretation certainly a knowledge of literature, drama, acting, and the contemporary stage would be of the utmost importance.

Very often I see coaches receive their L.D. or Public Forum or policy case sets and just hand them to their students without reading the material themselves. And coaches who admirably try to research with the students often lack the research skills and or content knowledge to make those efforts sufficiently beneficial. Content classes rather than educational method courses are the best solution for these ills. The best teachers are especially strong in the content areas (5). As Alexander Pope advised us, "Let such teach others who themselves excel". (6)

*Myth 6: The best coaches are friends to their students, and often treat them as equals.* Not true. The best coaches walk the fine and important line between support and friendship. A coach's job is not to be their "pal" but it is to be enthusiastic and warm. Wells *et al* (7) write that immediacy (which they define as closeness, warmth, and enthusiasm) is closely related to perceptions of teaching effectiveness. But don't confuse closeness with equality or a reason to act in a less-than-professional manner.

High school life is drama, do not get caught up in it. Personal trauma, emotional involvement, and or the natural emotional evolution of young students is normal and must be accounted for but not become the primary focus of the student-teacher relationship. To nurture the mind and skills is the role of the best coach, but not to think or act in terms of equality and friendship. Thomas Wolfe (8) came close to describing the best relationship: "I put the relationship of a fine teacher to a student just below the relation of a mother to a son...". A great teacher cares but is not a friend.

*Myth 7: Its important to be flexible, to adjust most classes or practices to what your students say they need.* But flexibility too often sacrifices important learning. Instead the greatest coaches will usually be flexible only within both the immediate and long term lesson plan.

The best teachers have an organized and often disciplined approach to build knowledge and skills. Tossing that aside in the name of flexibility is rarely the right move. A good coach learns to counsel and advise but as part of or in addition to the teaching plan, not at the expense of the plan. A good teacher is organized, prepared and clear—factors that are all but impossible in impromptu lessons derived spontaneously from what students say they need in that hour or practice session.

Expert teachers have very well developed schemata and know how to tie subject matter to a creative diversity of teaching methods. They are very effective lesson planners but are reflective enough to carefully integrate student needs into creating intellectual and skill growth. (9) Students needs are the fresh fodder and practicum for future days and plans, not the reason to jettison or down-scale the current lesson plan.

*Myth 8: A good coach will often let students work on their own.* The logic of this myth is an oxymoron. By definition students are there to learn and are rarely successful at learning or improving their skills "on

their own”. Research on the characteristics of effective teachers (10) reports that “Their worst teachers were characterized as requiring isolate behavior with little interaction, activity, or discussion.”

If skill development in different events requires dividing into practice subgroups, for example, the best teachers will give each group a very clear purpose, critique and feedback forms, and immediately follow-up the practice with teacher involved discussion. The casual speech class with a teacher who divides into groups by event and then advises “practice” or “work on the problems from the last tournament” is a far cry from the coach with a solid immediate lesson intent drawn from a longer term detailed learning plan.

There are Roman myths, legend, folktales, and fables. And there are myths about the best coaching and teaching. If you are a coach or speech teacher challenging and reviewing education myths can stimulate you to find better alternatives to mentor your students.

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\*William H. Bennett is Chair of CDE. His students have won 12 N.F.L. National Champions, 5 college national champions, and 4 international championships.

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## SOURCES

1. Malcolm Gladwell, *OUTLIERS: THE STORY OF SUCCESS*.—1<sup>st</sup> ed. Little, Brown and Company, New York. November 2008.
2. Prof. Karen B. Rogers, *TEACHERS WHO MAKE A DIFFERENCE IN GIFTED CHILDREN’S LIVES*. College of Applied Professional Studies, Univ. of St. Thomas. [www.scgifted.org](http://www.scgifted.org)
3. See, for example, K. Anders Ericsson, Ralf Th. Krampe, and Clemens Tesch-Romer, “The Role of Deliberate Practice in the Acquisition of Expert Performance,” *PSYCHOLOGY REVIEW* 100, #3 (1993), pp. 363-406.  
Also Daniel J. Levitan, *THIS IS YOUR BRAIN ON MUSIC*. Dutton, New York, 2006, p. 197.
4. For those offended or dubious about my indictment of education classes I refer you to  
Center for American Progress (Craig Jerald, July 2009, [Aligned by Design](#), page 1)  
Susan Sclafani and Marc S. Tucker, October 16, 2006, [Lesson From Abroad](#), page 1  
Jamie Glazov, March 16, 2007, [Symposium: The Problem with Public Education](#), page 2-3  
Linda Shaw, *Seattle Times education reporter*, October 14, 2009, [Seattle study focuses on teacher quality](#), page 1  
Harvard Graduate School of Education (Mary Turner, [www.gse.harvard.edu/news\\_events/ed](http://www.gse.harvard.edu/news_events/ed), Spring 2007, [Up Front](#), page 1)  
Thomas Kane, Prof. at Harvard, November – December 2006, [Grading Teachers](#), page 1-2  
*The Quick and the Ed* (Kevin Carey, Policy Director, November 10, 2008, [www.quickanded.com](http://www.quickanded.com), page 1)  
Center for American Progress (Dan Goldhaber, University of Washington and Urban Institute, May 2009, [Teacher Pay Reforms](#), page 1)

5. Stephen Crabbe, QUALITY TEACHING FOR AUSTRALIA, copyrighted April 13, 2007. Accessed Nov. 23, 2009 at <http://educationalissues.suite101.com/> Also see Rogers (above), p. 4.
6. Alexander Pope, AN ESSAY ON CRITICISM, 1711, publisher unknown, sec. 1, page 15.
7. Richard T. Walls, Anne H. Nardi, Avril M. von Minden, & Nancy Hoffman, TEACHER EDUCATION QUARTERLY, Winter 2002. "The Characteristics of Effective and Ineffective Teachers," pp. 39-48.
8. Thomas Wolfe in a contribution to Claude and Emory S. Basford Fuess' UNSEEN HARVESTS—A TREASURY OF TEACHING, Macmillan Publishing, New York, 1947.
9. J.J. Gallagher. ANNUAL REVIEW OF PSYCHOLOGY, 1994. "Teaching and Learning," pp. 171-195. Also G. Leinhardt and J.G. Greeno, THE COGNITIVE SKILL OF TEACHING, Ablex Publishing Corp., Norwood, New Jersey, 1991.
10. Walls (see 7 above), p. 46.

## **World Wide Web Research Tools**

Robert Harris

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This is a list of search tools I use when I want to look something up. Whether you want to buy a car, find a personal fitness trainer, comparison shop for the best price on an iPod or iPhone or television, this page offers the tools you need

## Engines

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|--|--|
| <a href="#">Google</a> Collaborative filtering, huge database. Excellent.                      | <a href="#">Ask</a> Natural language search engine.                    |
| <a href="#">Alltheweb</a> Large database, good results.  | <a href="#">Web Wombat</a> Search engine, vertical engines, directory. |
| <a href="#">Alta Vista</a> Web, Usenet. Speedy. Large database.                                | <a href="#">KartOO</a> Visual search tool.                             |
| <a href="#">HotBot</a> Web, Usenet. Directory. Large database.                                 | <a href="#">MSN Search</a> Search engine from Microsoft.               |
| <a href="#">Go Network</a> Web, Usenet, news, maps, directory, yellow pages, company profiles. | <a href="#">Zapmeta</a> Metasearch tool. Site previews.                |
| <a href="#">Excite</a> Search and directory, sports, news, weather, reviews.                   | <a href="#">Turbo10</a> Deep Web metasearch tool.                      |
| <a href="#">Lycos</a> Search and pictures, sound, news, software, rated sites.                 | <a href="#">Dogpile</a> Performs metasearching on web, Usenet, FTP.    |
| <a href="#">Starting Point</a> Web search and directory.                                       | <a href="#">Clusty</a> Clustering metasearch tool.                     |
| <a href="#">SearchEdu.com</a> Search engine for university sites.                              | <a href="#">Zuula</a> Results from several engines, tabbed format.     |

## Directories

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|--|---|
| <a href="#">Yahoo</a> Most popular directory, <a href="#">image searches</a> .                                   | <a href="#">LookSmart</a> Nicely set up directory from Reader's Digest.                   |
| <a href="#">Google Directory</a> Google rankings applied to Open Directory. Very Good.                           | <a href="#">Open Directory</a> Directory created by volunteer editors.                    |
| <a href="#">Online Books Page</a> Full text of more than 18,000 books.   | <a href="#">1UpInfo</a> Excellent, easy to use directory.                                 |
| <a href="#">about.com</a> Directory of expert guides, including <a href="#">Web searching</a> .                  | <a href="#">Education Index</a> Directory by educational subject, with annotated entries. |
| <a href="#">Librarian's Index</a> Very nice directory, dozens of categories                                      | <a href="#">UniXL</a> Directory of education related sites.                               |
| <a href="#">Search.com</a> Directory plus links to search engines.   | <a href="#">PlanetSearch</a> Engine with links to companies and government pages.         |
| <a href="#">Webbrain</a> Really cool graphic directory with good reference links.                                |   |
| <a href="#">100Hot.com</a> 100 most popular web sites in many categories, including <a href="#">newspapers</a> . |   |

## Reference and Databases

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|---|---|--|---|
| <a href="#">Britannica</a>                          | Encyclopedia Britannica & Internet Guide.                     | <a href="#">Bible Gateway</a>                | Search or read several English and other versions of the Bible. |
| <a href="#">Encyclopedia.Com</a>                    | 17,000 short articles (Concise Columbia Encyclopedia).        | <a href="#">InfoPlease.com</a>               | Almanacs, Encyclopedia, Dictionary.                             |
|   |   | <a href="#">Libraryspot.com</a>              | Reference and Library site.                                     |
| <a href="#">AllRefer</a>                            | Database of articles and reference materials.                 | <a href="#">Complete Planet</a>              | Hundreds of databases by category.                              |
| <a href="#">Free Internet Encyclopedia</a>          | Another encyclopedia.   | <a href="#">All Academic</a>                 | Journals & other free academic content.                         |
| <a href="#">Dictionary.net</a>                      | Excellent dictionary, multiple sources.                       | <a href="#">Bartleby</a>                     | More reference works. Good.                                     |
| <a href="#">Refdesk.com</a>                         | Links to facts, encyclopedias, dictionaries, news, much more. | <a href="#">whatis?com</a>                   | Dictionary of Computer Terms.                                   |
| <a href="#">WWW Virtual Library</a>                 | A global encyclopedia.  | <a href="#">Dictionary.com &amp; M-W.com</a> | Dictionaries and Thesauruses                                    |
| <a href="#">Onelook Dictionaries</a>                | Several hundred searchable dictionaries.                      | <a href="#">AcronymFinder</a>                | The meanings of acronyms.                                       |
| <a href="#">Infomine</a>                            | Extensive index of scholarly Internet resources.              | <a href="#">Essential Links</a>              | Wonderful list of specific links.                               |
| <a href="#">AllWords</a>                            | Find a word if you know only part of it.                      | <a href="#">SciCentral</a>                   | Science sites.  |
| <a href="#">English Dictionary</a>                  | Another dictionary.   | <a href="#">The WayBack Machine</a>          | Search archived Web content.                                    |
| <a href="#">Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy</a> | Articles on philosophical topics.                             | <a href="#">Wikipedia</a>                    | Community written encyclopedia.                                 |
| <a href="#">The Free Dictionary</a>                 | Dictionary and resources.                                     |  |   |
|   |   | <a href="#">Findarticles.com</a>             | Search hundreds of journals.                                    |
|   |   | <a href="#">Magportal</a>                    | Full text magazine articles.                                    |

## Graphics

[Google Images](#) Image search from Google.

[Foto Search Photos](#) Stock image photography.

[World Wide Arts](#) Links to all the arts, including museums.

[National Gallery](#) National Gallery of London.

[Internet Archive](#) Audio and film archive.

[Marine Art](#) Marine Art Information Center. Paintings, photographs, and more.

[Art.Com](#) More than 100,000 art images.

[Barewalls.com](#) Thousands of art images.

[The Louvre](#) Many excellent art works.

[National Gallery](#) The U. S. National Gallery of Art.

[PCL Maps](#) Links to hundreds of online maps from library at U Texas.

[Artcyclopedia](#) Encyclopedia of art and artworks.

## Specialty

[Google Groups](#) Search discussion groups.

[HealthAtoZ](#) Directory and search for health and medicine.

[InfoSpace](#) Directory of people, business, government, cities, more.

[AskMeHelpDesk](#) Ask real people questions.

[AnyWho](#) Directories by AT&T of people, businesses, toll-free, more.

[Superpages.com](#) Find businesses, get maps and directions.

[FindLaw](#) Legal resources.

[Healthopedia](#) Info on health, disease, nutrition, medicines.

[AllPages.com](#) Yellow pages from everywhere.

[Da+](#) White & yellow pages, reverse phone lookup.

## Periodicals

[Onlinenewspapers.com](#) Links to 100,000 newspapers worldwide.

[BUBL Information Service](#) Abstracts and some full text of 200+ journals.

[Newslink](#) Links to all media.

[Columbia Journalism Review](#) Keeps an eye on the news media.

[New York Times](#) News

[Washington Post](#) News and archives.

## Government

- [Fedworld](#) Gateway to many federal government sites.
- [FirstGov](#) Government info gateway.
- [Govt Info Xchange](#) Links and search for U.S. federal, state, & local government. Foreign too.
- [Govspot.com](#) Lots of government links.
- [Thomas](#) Legislative information.
- [U. S. Census](#) The U. S. Census Bureau.
- [Fedstats](#) Gateway to statistics from many government agencies.
- [Consumer Information Center](#) Hundreds of consumer information items.
- [American Memory](#) Library of Congress American Memory.

## Books

- [Amazon.com](#) Includes reviews of many titles.
- [Barnes & Noble](#) Lots of books.
- [Christianbook.com](#) Lots of Christian books.
- [Pricescan](#) Search for the best price from many bookstores at once.
- [Borders](#) Books, bargain books (remainders).
- [Melvyl](#) The University of California Library catalog.
- [Chambal](#) Book shopping bot. Compare prices.
- [Powell's Books](#) Used, new, hard-to-find, and out of print books.
- [Affordabook.com](#) Book shopping bot with results from 20 vendors.
- [Bookwire](#) All kinds of book information.
- [Bookspot.com](#) Book information, reviews, [sites with reviews](#).
- [Overstock.com](#) Books and other items.
- [Books Price](#) Shopping bot to compare prices.

## Media

- [IMDb](#) Internet Movie Database with reviews.

## News

- [FOX](#) General News.
- [News Index](#) News source, search engine, and gateway to news sites.

[News.com](#) Emphasis on technical and computer news.

[News Watch](#) Media watchdog organization.

[ABYZ News Links](#) Links to 15,000 newspapers, TV stations, other news sources.

[MSNBC](#) Cable channel news site.

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# **POETRY INTERPRETATION TOOLS**

## Dealing With Themes

*“Without art, the crudeness of reality would make the world unbearable.”* –George Bernard Shaw

As editor of a series of thematic poetry anthologies for the past several years, I have reviewed thousands of poems produced by hundreds of able poets in response to the published title and theme of a forthcoming volume.

These poets follow their own muses, composing topical poetry on various themes with great skill. However, when given a subject or theme, some poets disregard what they themselves would normally require of their own poetry and elect instead to simply express their opinions on the matter prosaically, as though they were asked to offer a stance on some topic of conversation.

Recently, for example, a poet, not an activist or political person, responding to the political theme of a proposed anthology, chose to write a poem on the Chinese government’s public suppression of the Democrat revolutionaries in Beijing’s Tiananmen Square. Annoyed and shocked by my criticism of the poem as it was presented, the poet wrote: “In this poem I am not concerned with form or poetic structure . . .” and “this poem is about my feeble outcry against the injustices and terrible slaughter. . . .” The poet is essentially saying that the sentiments displayed are justification enough to suspend the necessities of poetic art.

How can poets address the commonplace themes of our modern society without debasing their poetry? There are many ways, of course, but here we have neither room enough nor time. Let us, however, admit some principles.

First, understand the dimensions and possibilities of the given theme, listing an array of subjects that appear to relate to it.

**Example:** For a theme on social discord, we must recognize that domestic squabbling, political oppression, and teen gangs (to mention just a few) are subjects that can relate to it.

Next, select subjects with which you are comfortable—subjects you feel informed about and competent to address and, most important, subjects that interest you. Avoid subjects in which you have little experience or no interest.

**Example:** You may feel you’re informed about domestic squabbling, perhaps even competent to address it, but if you haven’t any interest in writing on that subject, pass it up. You may be interested in teen gangs, but have no experience and little knowledge about them. You should probably not attempt that subject.

Once you’ve chosen your subjects, start by selecting one and jotting down the first several, relevant things that come into your head, no matter how apparent or superficial. Do this with your entire list of subjects.

**Example:** For the subject domestic squabbling, you might note:

- The family is the basic unit in society
- Harmony in the family is important
- All members of the family must work to bring the family together

Important: When you are ready to compose your poem, make certain that you do not include these off-the-top-of-your-head statements. Remember, they were the first thoughts to come to your mind about the subject. They will be obvious (never argue the obvious) or trite (avoid thinking that is ordinary or cliché). You may safely presume that these ideas would also have occurred first to the other poets and readers.

Now, begin to examine in depth the ramifications of your subject. One way to do that is to imagine people you know (neighbors, parents, colleagues at work, friends) in situations appropriate to the subject. What would be the result?

**Example:** How would your real neighbors, Sally and Bob, respond? If you recognize that the situation's effect on Sally will differ from its effect on Bob, and perhaps both effects will differ from the situation's effect on you, your awareness of differences is an important step in your mental approach to your poem.

Next, extract the salient features of the situation and construct its narrative line. Like a parable, a narrative makes its point. Presented in chronological order, each step in the progression of events could become a paragraph of the poem.

**Example:** Remove the real Sally and Bob from the narration and replace them with the fictional ones. For instance, if you replace them with barnyard animals (as George Orwell did in his novel *Animal Farm*), the story should still make its point. Your fictional characters, embodying different viewpoints, will enable your poem to contrast the outcome. Edwin Arlington Robinson was a master at this. See his *Eros Turannos* for a succinctly composed, three-sided look at marriage's dissolution.

We have examined just one of many approaches to dealing with commonplace themes. The thing to remember, of course, is that the value of an approach to a theme can only be measured by the resulting poetry. All step-by-step methods have a distinctly mechanical or unnatural feel to them at first, but usage quickly smoothes out the kinks in any process.

Francoise Sagan wisely tells us that “art must take reality by surprise.” Don't make the mistake that she is simply advocating novelty. She's telling us that we are somewhat jaded by reality, the routine stuff we encounter every day in the news, in our streets, at the work place, and—often sadly—in the home. The artist must make reality vibrant somehow. The poet's vision should make us see the ordinary afresh, tendering a view of the world in a way

that not only draws but also detains our notice. But if we couple Sagan's axiom with the noble sentiment embodied in Robert Frost's comment that poetry "is a way of remembering what it would impoverish us to forget," we'll recognize that no poetic effort should restate the obvious, lack thought or substance, or succumb to the undistinguished conventions of ordinary prose.

The *CDE Dramatic Interpretation Cuttings List* has a poetry section. At the end of it, often overlooked by both coaches and competitors, is a section of anthologies you can use to find quality less commonly used poetry. It is included below but the *CDE Journal* has added some reviews, updates and notes to make it even more (we hope) useful to you.

And this section ends with a web site recommendation you will find very useful and friendly for any reader or interpreter of poetry.

### **SUGGESTED THEMATIC ANTHOLOGIES**

Against Forgetting: Twentieth-Century Poetry of Witness, ed. by Carolyn Forché, W.W. Norton & Co., 1993.

Ain't I a Woman!, ed. by Illona Linthwaite, Peter Bedrick Books, 1990.

American History in Verse, ed. by Burton Stevenson, Bob Jones University Press, 1975.

Atomic Ghost: Poets Respond to the Nuclear Age, ed. by John Bradley, Coffee House Press, 1995.

The Brand-X Anthology of Poetry: A Parody Anthology, ed. by William Zaranka, Apple-Wood Books, 1981. This is a masterpiece, from the Foreplay to the Prosodomy. A voluminous work, it includes everybody from Chaucer to Russell Edson. Aldous Huxley observed that parodies and caricatures are the most penetrating of criticisms. Among those that try their own gifted hands at their famous predecessors' work are John Keats (Edmund Spenser), Lewis Carroll (Wordsworth, Longfellow and Tennyson), Cyril Connolly (Aldous Huxley) and John Updike (Jack Kerouac). A few of my favorites are "Anne Sexton's" From The Brothers Grimm to Sister Sexton to Mother Goose: One Transmogrification, by David Cummings, in which a spider comes to warn Miss Muffet against her un-American health food breakfast; "Sylvia Plath's" Ragout, by William Zaranka himself, and "Allen Ginsberg's" Squeal, by Louis Simpson:

"... They came here to L.A.,  
Flexing their members, growing hair,  
Planning immense unlimited poems,  
More novels, more poems, more autobiographies."

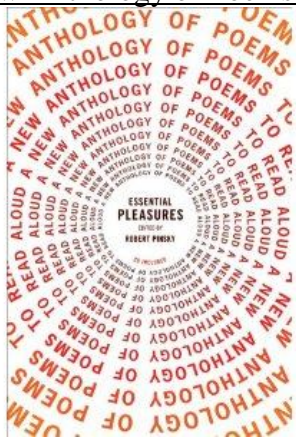
But that's merely scratching the surface. This unique anthology is best digested over a couple of weeks or months, and never fails to yield more gems. Brand X Poetry is a treasure trove of humor, a book that one returns to again and again. The index of first lines, titles and authors comes in handy of course.

Campfires of Resistance: Poetry from the Movement, ed by Todd Gitten, Bobbs-Merrill Co., 1971.

Carrying the Darkness: American Indochina – The Poetry of the Vietnam War, ed. by W.D. Erhart, Avon Books, 1985.

Drive, They Said: Poems about Americans and Their Cars, ed. by Kurt Brown, Milkweed Editions, 1994.

Essential Pleasures: A New Anthology of Poems to Read Aloud W.W. Norton & Company, 2009.



~ [Robert Pinsky](#) (Editor)

### Editorial Reviews From [Booklist](#)

Pinsky, poet, scholar, and poetry advocate, has been a motivating and innovative force in the great popularization of poetry. His Favorite Poem Project brought poetry lovers of all ages and tastes together in a stream of excellent anthologies, including *Poems to Read* (2002), and he continues to match erudition with unabashed fun in his latest dynamic endeavor. Pinsky's mission is to share both the "intellectual and bodily" pleasures of poetry, the latter best appreciated when poetry is read out loud—hence this ebullient read-aloud anthology. With an oceanic knowledge of poetry and a musical ear, Pinsky has assembled an astonishingly vital, enjoyable, centuries-spanning array cleverly organized by form. Here are beautiful, mournful, and funny love poems; narrative poems; odes; complaints; celebrations; parodies; and insults by both celebrated and obscure poets. A CD of Pinsky's expert readings accompanies the book, but the point is to do it yourself. Readers who read these wisely selected poems out loud, whether to themselves, a sweetheart, friend, cat, or plant, will be amazed at what they discover. --Donna Seaman

### **Giving Sorrow Words:**

Anthology-Resource in Use Nationwide

National Asctn. For Poetry Therapy Foundation, 2002

*Giving Sorrow Words* is an outgrowth of the many poems received and posted by the National Association for Poetry Therapy (NAPT) in September, 2001. The organization received such positive feedback to poems posted on its website that it decided to produce an anthology in print.

The collection was edited by publication chair, Karen vanMeenen of Rochester NY, and special projects chair, Charlie Rossiter of Oak Park, IL, along with Kathleen Adams who provided the Preface. The NAPT Foundation funded the first printing of 2000 copies. The Taub foundation and individual donors funded the second printing.

The anthology includes original poems by internationally renowned poets such as Lawrence Ferlinghetti, Billy Collins, Ellen Bass, Robert Bly, Lucille Clifton, Denise Levertov, Naomi Shihab Nye and others. It also includes a guide for individuals and helping professionals which explains how reading, discussing and writing poetry can be beneficial for healing and personal growth. Finally, the book concludes with brief commentary and writing activities tied to each individual poem.

The Light from Another Country: Poetry from America's Prisons, ed. by Joseph Bruchac, The Greenfield Review Press, 1984.

Nuke-Rebuke: Writers and Artists Against Nuclear Energy and Weapons, ed. by Morty Sklar, The Spirit That Moves Us Press, 1984.

On Freedom's Side: An Anthology of American Poems of Protest, ed. by Aaron Kramer, MacMillan Co., 1972. It is ironic that it is the tragic oneness of mankind that is underlined in this thorough collection, as the horrors of war and the fragility of peace are set out in nearly 200 poems that span the ages from biblical times to the atomic age, and encompass poets from many lands and cultures. The poets represented range from Aeschylus, Milton, and Blake, through Wilfred Owen, Rupert Brooke, and Siegfried Sassoon, to Ted Hughes, Denise Levertov, and Laurie Lee. The works are divided thematically and march determinedly from peace, through rumors of war, the height of war itself, into the aftermath, to tenuous peace once more. The sections are not set off by titles within the body of the work, although they are divided by effective pen-and-ink wash drawings that sometimes eerily convey the mood, as war-torn landscapes take over from the cheering crowds, and homeless children find shelter in ruins. Conflicting attitudes towards war and heroes are represented, although the futility of strife seems the ascendant attitude. While other eras and wars are represented, poems concerning the World Wars predominate, as do the contemporary poets of those eras. Women are not as well represented as men. The title and the cover are striking, but ...the beginning poems are less than gripping. There are poems in the middle, however, that are startling and moving. A book of indisputable quality.

Peace and War: A Collection of Poems, ed. by Harris and Stuart Clark, Oxford University Press, 1989.

Peace is Our Profession: Poems and Passages of War Protest, ed. by Jan Barry, East River Anthology, 1981.

Poems from the Women's Movement (American Poets Project) (Hardcover)

~ [Honor Moore](#) (Editor) THE WOMEN'S MOVEMENT OF THE 1960s, 70s, AND 80s generated an extraordinary outpouring of poetry that captured an age of expectancy, of defiant purpose, and exuberant exploration. Here, brought together for the first time, are the poems that gave voice to a revolution, including works by Sylvia Plath, Adrienne Rich, Muriel Rukeyser, Anne Sexton, Sonia Sanchez, Lucille Clifton, May Swenson, Alice Walker, Anne Waldman, Sharon Olds, and many others.

Library of America, 2009

Poems of Protest Old and New, ed. by Arnold Kerseth, MacMillan Co., 1969.

Poetry for the Earth, ed. by Dunn and Scholefield, Fawcett Columbine, 1991.

Poetry Slam: The Competition Art of Performance Poetry, ed. by Gary Mex Glazner, Manic D. Press, 2000, ISBN# 0-916-397-667.

This Sporting Life: Contemporary American Poems About Sports and Games, ed. by Buchwald and Roston, Milkweed Editions, 1987.

Tygers of Wrath: Poems of Hate, Anger and Invective, ed. by X.J. Kennedy, University of Georgia Press, 1981.

Unsettling America: An Anthology of Contemporary Multicultural Poetry, ed. by Gillian and Gillian, Penguin, 1994.

We Animals, ed. by Nadya Aisenberg, Sierra Club Books, 1989.

Voices of the Rainbow: Contemporary Poetry by Native Americans, ed. by Kenneth Rosen, Arcade, 1993.

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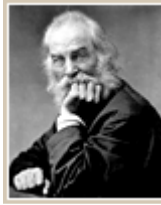
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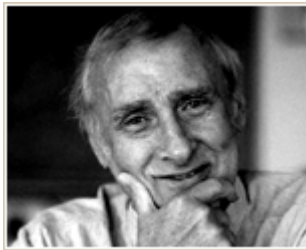
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## Poet of the Month - Spike Milligan (1918 - 2002)



"Spike" Milligan was born in Ahmednagar, India, on 16 April 1918 to an Irish-born officer in the British Army and his wife. Though he lived most of his life in England and served in the British Army, he was declared stateless in 1960, and took Irish citizenship. He suffered from bipolar disorder for most of his life, having at least ten mental breakdowns. He was a strident campaigner on environmental matters, particularly arguing against unnecessary noise. He served in the Royal Artillery in World War II in North Africa and also Italy, where he was hospitalized for shell shock. During most of the 1930s and early 1940s he performed as a jazz trumpeter but even t...

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"A sure cure for seasickness is to sit under a tree."

- Spike Milligan



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