
Why Poetry Matters Jay Parini

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Milton Springer

A new book, the first in over a decade, from acclaimed

poet Jay Parini This volume revolves around his deep connection to nature and underlines his concerns about the impacts of pollution and climate change. In these beautiful, haunting poems, Parini writes about the landscapes of mining country, of the railroads of Pennsylvania, of

farm country, of worlds lost and families dispersed. He explores faith and how it is tested. He limns the deepest crevices of the human heart and soul. He surprises and moves us. In addition to a complete volume's worth of new work, called *West Mountain Epilogue*, offering more than fifty poems never before published in any form, Parini has collected the very best work from his previous four volumes, the poems, as he tells us, "written in the past forty years that I wish to stand by." Lavishly and deservedly praised over the decades for his work as an essayist, critic, biographer, novelist, and, especially, poet, Parini shines as never before in this generous volume.

One Matchless Time
Routledge

"David Orr is no starry-eyed cheerleader for contemporary poetry; Orr's a critic, and a good one. . . . Beautiful & Pointless is a clear-eyed, opinionated, and idiosyncratic guide to a vibrant but endangered art form, essential reading for anyone who loves poetry, and also for those of us who mostly just admire it from afar." —Tom Perrotta Award-winning New York Times Book Review poetry columnist David Orr delivers an engaging, amusing, and

stimulating tour through the world of poetry. With echoes of Francine Prose's *Reading Like a Writer*, Orr's *Beautiful & Pointless* offers a smart and funny approach to appreciating an art form that many find difficult to embrace.

The *Damascus Road Anchor* Until the late 1970s, W. D.

Snodgrass was known primarily as a confessional poet and a key player in the emergence of that mode of poetry in the late 1950s and early 1960s. Snodgrass makes poetry out of the daily neuroses and everyday failures of a man—a husband, father, and teacher. This domestic suffering occurs against a backdrop of more universal suffering which Snodgrass believes is inherent in the human experience. *Not for Specialists* includes 35 new poems

complemented by the superb work he wrote in the Pulitzer Prize winning collection, *Heart's Needle*, along with poetry from seven other distinguished collections. from "Nocturnes" Seen from higher up, it makes its first move in the low creekbed, the marshlands down the valley, spreading across the open hayfields, the hedgerows with their tops still lit, laps the roadbed, flows over lawns and gardens, past the house and up the wooded hillside back behind us till only some few rays still scythe between the tree trunks from the far horizon and are gone. W. D. Snodgrass, born in Pennsylvania in 1926, is the author of more than 20 books of poetry, including *The Fuehrer Bunker: The Complete Cycle* (BOA, 1995); *Each in His Season* (BOA, 1993); and *Heart's Needle* (1959), which won the Pulitzer Prize for Poetry. His other books include *To Sound Like Yourself: Essays on Poetry* (BOA, 2002), *After-Images: Autobiographical Sketches* (BOA, 1999) and six volumes of translation, including *Selected Translations* (BOA Editions, 1998), which won the Harold

Morton Landon Translation
Award.

The Last Station Knopf

Explore the transcendent world of unity and ultimate beauty in Edgar Allan Poe ' s verse in this complete poetry collection. Although best known for his short stories, Edgar Allan Poe was by nature and choice a poet. From his exquisite lyric " To Helen, " to his immortal masterpieces, " Annabel Lee, " " The Bells, " and " The Raven, " Poe stands beside the celebrated English romantic poets Shelley, Byron, and Keats, and his haunting, sensuous poetic vision profoundly influenced the Victorian giants Swinburne, Tennyson, and Rossetti. Today his dark side speaks eloquently to contemporary readers in poems such as

" The Haunted Palace " and " The Conqueror Worm, " with their powerful images of madness and the macabre. But even at the end of his life, Poe reached out to his art for comfort and courage, giving us in " Eldorado " a talisman to hold during our darkest moments—a timeless gift from a great American writer. Includes an Introduction by Jay Parini and an Afterword by April Bernard

The Passages of H. M. Anchor

Chronicles the life of the master writer, offering insight into his involvement in the politics and religion of his era, and covering such topics as his writings against King Charles, his troubled relationships, and the impact of the Restoration

on his survival.

The Wadsworth
Anthology of Poetry
Penn State Press

The poetry of Peter Davison, of which this is the ninth volume, covers a broad range of subject matter. Musical and supple, with rewards for the eye, the ear, and the mind, concerned as much with country as with city matters, Davison's poems move past personality. They open questions of identity, explorations of the natural world, personal and religious conflict, and the mysterious workings of memory. His poetry, such as the long poem "The Great Ledge," is especially moving and powerful when read

aloud. Though Davison is perhaps most widely known as an editor of poetry, his poems are neither academic nor exclusive. John Hall Wheelock wrote, after Davison's earliest book won the Yale Series of Younger Poets Award in 1963, "With Peter Davison, feeling has come back into poetry." May Swenson, reviewing his second book, said: "There is a savage self-revelation and deep understanding of the hearts and minds of others." Alfred Kazin spoke of "the bone-sharp integrity of Davison's poetry, with its notable openness to difficulties, both personal and historic." When Davison's fourth book was published in

Great Britain, John Fuller wrote, "What an assured talent is here revealed! It is a splendidly accessible body of work," and Robert Penn Warren concurred: "He has found a new depth and force...He has splendidly found himself...himself and his way." Vernon Young called him, in Parnassus, "one of the few poets of the first order writing in English today," and James Dickey said, Peter Davison's quiet, deep poems are among the best being written. Any thoughtful reader will be moved by his clear, unpretentious writing, his imaginative participation in life, his passionate balance."

Jay Parini, in Virginia Quarterly, called Davison "one of America's finest contemporary poets, whose sharpness of vision and candor [leave] the reader breathless," and Phoebe Pettingell, in The New Leader, said, "Peter Davison's verse illuminates the commonplace with a mystical sense of the divine revealed in nature." This volume, combining Davison's most recent work with all the earlier poems he wishes to preserve, reveals a poet in his late middle age writing out of the midst of a life both active and contemplative, yet given over to poetry. He is a worthy heir to

the passionate poetic tradition of Thomas Hardy and Robert Frost.

The Spider's Thread
University of Pittsburgh Press

"Fascinating snapshots of remarkable encounters which, when brought together, chart a delightfully unusual path to literary success." Booklist

"Reading this memoir is like being at one of those memorable dinner parties, attended by the best and brightest, sparkling with wit and excellent conversations. You don't want it to be over, the conversations to end! But with books, you need not worry. You can go back to the party, savor it, reread it again, and again." Julia Alvarez, author of *In the Time of the Butterflies* and

Afterlife "Gioia has been uncommonly lucky in meeting many major poets, among them Elizabeth Bishop. His portrait of her in these pages is shrewd and subtle. The famously elusive poet quivers into life here." Jay Parini, author of *Borges and Me: An Encounter In Studying with Miss Bishop*, Dana Gioia discusses six people who helped him become a writer and better understand what it meant to dedicate one's life to writing. Four were famous authors Elizabeth Bishop, John Cheever, James Dickey, and Robert Fitzgerald. Two were unknown Gioia's Merchant Marine uncle and Ronald Perry, a forgotten poet. Each of the six essays provides a vivid portrait; taken together they tell the

story of Gioia ' s own journey from working-class LA to international literary success.

How to Read Literature
Knopf

Unlike most other poetry anthologies, arranged only chronologically or limited to the exploration of one type of poem, Jay Parini's

WADSWORTH

ANTHOLOGY OF POETRY

collects 24 smaller, more accessible anthologies in one volume. With the guidance of an editorial board of pre-eminent literary scholars and world-renown poets, Parini has managed to offer a meaningful structure to an ambitious collection, spanning from Beowulf to Jorie Graham. Perhaps more a teaching and learning text than a definitive body of work, Parini's arrangement of poetry by form, content, and context offers a new way of learning poetry.

Conversations with Jay Parini
Harper Collins

An examination of metaphor in poetry as a microcosm of the human imagination—a way to understand the mechanisms of creativity. In *The Spider's Thread*, Keith Holyoak looks at metaphor as a microcosm of the creative imagination.

Holyoak, a psychologist and poet, draws on the perspectives of thinkers from the humanities—poets, philosophers, and critics—and from the sciences—psychologists, neuroscientists, linguists, and computer scientists. He begins each chapter with a poem—by poets including Samuel Taylor Coleridge, Sylvia Plath, Walt Whitman, Emily

Dickinson, Robert Frost, Theodore Roethke, Du Fu, William Butler Yeats, and Pablo Neruda—and then widens the discussion to broader notions of metaphor and mind. Holyoak uses Whitman's poem “A Noiseless Patient Spider” to illustrate the process of interpreting a poem, and explains the relevance of two psychological mechanisms, analogy and conceptual combination, to metaphor. He outlines ideas first sketched by Coleridge—who called poetry “the best words in their best order”—and links them to modern research on the interplay between cognition and emotion, controlled and associative thinking, memory and creativity. Building on Emily Dickinson's declaration

“the brain is wider than the sky,” Holyoak suggests that the control and default networks in the brain may combine to support creativity. He also considers, among other things, the interplay of sound and meaning in poetry; symbolism in the work of Yeats, Jung, and others; indirect communication in poems; the mixture of active and passive processes in creativity; and whether artificial intelligence could ever achieve poetic authenticity. Guided by Holyoak, we can begin to trace the outlines of creativity through the mechanisms of metaphor. The Contemporary Narrative Poem Anchor Becoming an effective teacher can be quite painful and exhausting, taking years of trial and error. In *The Art of*

Teaching, writer and critic Jay Parini looks back over his own decades of trials, errors, and triumphs, in an intimate memoir that brims with humor, encouragement, and hard-won wisdom about the teacher's craft. Here is a godsend for instructors of all levels, offering valuable insight into the many challenges that educators face, from establishing a persona in the classroom, to fostering relationships with students, to balancing teaching load with academic writing and research. Insight abounds. Parini shows, for instance, that there is nothing natural about teaching. The classroom is a form of theater, and the teacher must play various roles. A good teacher may look natural, but that's the product of endless practice. The book also considers such topics as the manner of dress that teachers adopt (and what this says about them as teachers), the delicate question of politics in the classroom, the untapped value of emeritus professors, and the vital importance of a settled, disciplined life for a teacher and a writer. Parini grounds all of this in personal stories of his own career in the academy, tracing his path from unfocused student--a self-confessed "tough nut to crack"--to passionate writer, scholar, and teacher, one who frankly admits making many mistakes over the years. Every year, thousands of newly minted college teachers embark on their careers, most with scant training in their chosen profession. The *Art of Teaching* is a perfect book for these young educators as well as anyone who wants to learn more about this difficult but rewarding profession.

Common Wealth Houghton Mifflin Harcourt

From the author of the international bestseller *The Last Station*, a superb historical novel of the Apostle Paul, whose tireless and epic preaching of the message of Jesus brought Christianity into existence and changed human history forever. In the years after Christ's crucifixion, Paul of Tarsus, a prosperous tentmaker and Jewish scholar, took it upon himself to persecute the small groups of his followers that sprung up. But on the road to Damascus, he had some sort of blinding vision, a profound conversion experience that transformed Paul into the most effective and influential messenger Christianity has ever had. In *The Damascus Road* novelist Jay Parini brings this fascinating and ever-controversial figure to full human life, capturing his visionary passions and vast contradictions. In relating

Paul's epic journeys, both geographical and spiritual, he unfolds a vivid panorama of the ancient world on the verge of epochal change. And in the alternating voice of the Gospel writer Luke, Paul's travel companion, scribe, and ghostwriter, a cooler perspective on his actions and beliefs emerges -- ironic but still filled with wonder at Paul's unshakable commitment to the Christ and his divinity. James Merrill Anchor This book explores the much debated relation of language and bodily experience (i.e. the 'flesh'), considering in particular how poetry functions as revelatory discourse and thus relates to the formal horizon of theological inquiry. The central thematic focus is around a 'phenomenology of the flesh' as that which connects us with the world, being the site of perception and feeling, joy and suffering, and of life itself

in all its vulnerability. The voices represented in this collection reflect interdisciplinary methods of interpretation and broadly ecumenical sensibilities, focusing attention on such matters as the revelatory nature of language in general and poetic language in particular, the function of poetry in society, the question of Incarnation and its relation to language and the poetic arts, the kenosis of the Word, and human embodiment in relation to the word 'enfleshed' in poetry.

The Columbia History of American Poetry Yale University Press
Renowned poet and novelist Jay Parini's *The Way of Jesus* is a book for progressive Christians and spiritual seekers who struggle, as Parini does, with some of the basic questions about human existence: its

limits and sadnesses, and its possibilities for awareness and understanding. Part guide to Christian living, part spiritual autobiography, *The Way of Jesus* is Jay Parini's exploration of what Jesus really meant, his effort to put love first in our daily lives. Called "one of those writers who can do anything" by Stacy Schiff in the *New York Times Book Review*, Parini—a lifelong Christian who has at times wavered and questioned his beliefs—recounts his own efforts to follow Jesus's example, examines the contours of Christian thinking, and describes the solace and structure one can find in the rhythms of the church calendar. Parini's refreshingly undogmatic approach to Christian

thinking incorporates teachings from other religions, as well as from poets and other writers who have helped Parini along his path to understanding.

The Complete Poetry of Edgar Allan Poe

Beacon Press

This fascinating reassessment of America's most popular and famous poet reveals a more complex and enigmatic man than many readers might expect. Jay Parini spent over twenty years interviewing friends of Robert Frost and working in the poet's archives at Dartmouth, Amherst, and elsewhere to produce this definitive and insightful biography of

both the public and private man. While he depicts the various stages of Frost's colorful life, Parini also sensitively explores the poet's psyche, showing how he dealt with adversity, family tragedy, and depression. By taking the reader into the poetry itself, which he reads closely and brilliantly, Parini offers an insightful road map to Frost's remarkable world.

Poetic Revelations

Anchor

In this urgent outpouring of American voices, our poets speak to us as they shelter in place, addressing our collective fear, grief, and hope from eloquent and diverse individual perspectives. “ One of

the best books of poetry of the year . . . Quinn has accomplished something dizzying here: arranged a stellar cast of poets . . . It is what all anthologies must be: comprehensive, contradictory, stirring. ” —The Millions **Featuring 107 poets, from A to Z—Julia Alvarez to Matthew Zapruder—with work in between by Jericho Brown, Billy Collins, Fanny Howe, Ada Lim ó n, Sharon Olds, Tommy Orange, Claudia Rankine, Vijay Seshadri, and Jeffrey Yang** As the novel coronavirus and its devastating effects began to spread in the United States and around the world, Alice Quinn reached out to poets across the country to see if, and what, they were writing under quarantine. Moved and galvanized by the response, the

onetime New Yorker poetry editor and recent former director of the Poetry Society of America began collecting the poems arriving in her inbox, assembling this various, intimate, and intricate portrait of our suddenly altered reality. In these pages, we find poets grieving for relatives they are separated from or recovering from illness themselves, attending to suddenly complicated household tasks or turning to literature for strength, considering the bravery of medical workers or working their own shifts at the hospital, and, as the Black Lives Matter movement has swept the globe, reflecting on the inequities in our society that amplify sorrow and demand our engagement.

From fierce and resilient to wistful, darkly humorous, and emblematically reverent about the earth and the vulnerability of human beings in frightening times, the poems in this collection find the words to describe what can feel unspeakably difficult and strange, providing wisdom, companionship, and depths of feeling that enliven our spirits. A portion of the advance for this book was generously donated by Alice Quinn and the poets to Chefs for America, an organization helping feed communities in need across the country during the pandemic.

Fear of Dying BOA Editions, Ltd.
Fear of Dying is a hilarious, heart wrenching, and beautifully told story about what happens when one woman steps reluctantly into the afternoon of life. Vanessa Wonderman is a gorgeous former actress in her 60's who finds herself balancing between her dying parents, her aging husband and her beloved, pregnant daughter. Although Vanessa considers herself "a happily married woman," the lack of sex in her life makes her feel as if she's losing something too valuable to ignore. So she places an ad for sex on a site called Zipless.com and the life she knew begins to unravel. With the help and counsel of her best friend, Isadora Wing, Vanessa navigates the phishers and pishers, and starts to question if what she's looking for might be close at hand

after all. Fear of Dying is a daring and delightful look at what it really takes to be human and female in the 21st century. Wildly funny and searingly honest, this is a book for everyone who has ever been shaken and changed by love. *New and Collected Poems: 1975-2015* Penguin

An intimate, authorized yet totally frank biography of Gore Vidal (1925 – 2012), one of the most accomplished, visible, and controversial American novelists and cultural figures of the past century. The product of thirty years of friendship and conversation, Jay Parini's *Empire of Self* digs behind the glittering surface of Gore Vidal's colorful career to reveal the complex emotional

and sexual truths underlying his celebrity-strewn life. But there is plenty of glittering surface as well—a virtual *Who's Who* of the twentieth century, from Eleanor Roosevelt and Amelia Earhart through the Kennedys, Johnny Carson, Leonard Bernstein, and the *crème de la crème* of Hollywood. Also a generous helping of feuds with the likes of William F. Buckley, Norman Mailer, Truman Capote, and *The New York Times*, among other adversaries. The life of Gore Vidal teemed with notable incidents, famous people, and lasting achievements that call out for careful evocation and examination. Jay Parini crafts Vidal's life into an accessible, entertaining story that

puts the experience of one of the great American figures of the postwar era into context, introduces the author and his works to a generation who may not know him, and looks behind the scenes at the man and his work in ways never possible before his death. Provided with unique access to Vidal's life and his papers, Parini excavates many buried skeletons yet never loses sight of his deep respect for Vidal and his astounding gifts. This is the biography Gore Vidal—novelist, essayist, dramatist, screenwriter, historian, wit, provocateur, and pioneer of gay rights—has long needed.

Looking for The Gulf Motel BRILL

Connecticut may be a small state, but it is

large indeed in its contribution to the nation's literature. *Garnet Poems* features forty-two poets whose work has a strong connection to Connecticut. The first major anthology of Connecticut poetry to appear since the mid-nineteenth century, it includes the work of such notable poets as Wallace Stevens, Lydia Sigourney, Mark Van Doren, Richard Wilbur, Susan Howe, and Elizabeth Alexander. Distinguished writer-scholar Dennis Barone has supplemented the poems with an editor's preface, notes that illuminate the poet's (or poem's) relation to the state, and informative

biographies. The book
also features a
foreword by Dick Allen,
the current Connecticut
state poet laureate.

Borges and Me
Bloomsbury Publishing
USA

Poetic Inquiry: Vibrant
Voices in the Social
Sciences, co-edited by
Monica Prendergast,
Carl Leggo and Pauline
Sameshima, features
many of the foremost
scholars working
worldwide in aesthetic
ways through poetry.

Modern Poetry and
Ethnography Knopf
-- New York Times Book
Review