



Talking about Equity

There's a difference between doing well and doing good and in that difference the excluded crave the chance to work, learn, earn sufficient food and shelter—opportunities that were available to you, enabled by the striving or influence of your parents.

From the expert to novice, skills are transferred, practiced, then through time and diligence, superseded, improved. These are our nobler stories—from seed to agriculture, from encouraged mind to mathematician and astronomer.

The essayists and scientists write of enlightenment, progress, the threat of planetary extinction. Now as ever, decisions of great consequence must be made.

By your actions you'll be named—
Leader. Listener. Negotiator. Visionary.

Consider your purpose, the best use of your gifts.

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Portrait of a Bookshop Browser

Time. You seem to have an ample supply.
Haste is on holiday, hasn't sent a postcard.
Exiting the shop is low on your agenda.

Books are opened, closed, dropped, retrieved,
Returned to shelves in non-alphabetical disorder.
Operatic are your yawns and feigned interest in our
Wares, the revelations of ten thousand authors.

Snails climb the walls on their way to Mount
Everest as you examine further titles. Your money doesn't
Rise to the occasion. You leave and gently close the door.

Ink Adventures

Prepare your question mark self. The blank page is ready for your
Entrance. It may invite you to take a stroll around the
Rings of Saturn or write a poem about a talking egg.
Sometimes an ant will scour the blank page, searching for
Exacting words to describe itself, which you
Victoriously release from your pen. Now you're
Exhilarated, vaulting nouns, juggling conjunctions,
Racing through the open valleys of reference books,
Advancing towards the cliffhanger, the lost tribes of
Namibia, the inner thoughts of the family dog.
Curiosity will never leave you short of breadth. Be wary,
Ego may cloud your vision. All are imperfect. Take solace in that.





Poet's Exegesis

The poem "Talking about Equity" is a poem commissioned by a good friend of mine who headhunts CEOs for major international organisations. In writing this commissioned poem, I aimed to address both leaders (people in executive positions in corporations and organizations) and the individual. I'm trying to write a poem that will be useful to the reader, in both the corporate and personal settings; to make the reader think about contemporary equity, and how society excludes certain groups of people from having the same opportunities, and excludes them from participation.

The poem "Portrait of a Bookshop Browser" is inspired by my having worked in bookshops and record stores for thirty years, along with my "guilt" of at times being more of a browser than a buyer in times of having an empty wallet. In the poem, the browser arguably has the right to browse. But for the bookshop employee or owner, such a customer can be an annoying time-waster. The poem tries to be a light-hearted way for the speaker to let off steam. Arguably, not enough contemporary poems have humour in them, not enough humorous observations taken from real life. There is also humour and absurdity in surrealist poetry, and it'd be interesting to see more poets write surrealist 21st-century poetry. But the difficulty is that you can't just sit down and say, "Today I'm going to write a humorous poem"—unless you are Woody Allen.

The poem "Ink Adventures" is an acrostic poem. Eagle-eyed readers may have already noticed that I used the word "perseverance" vertically as the spine of the poem. Starting off the process of writing an acrostic poem by using a single word to serve as the scaffolding of the poem, one can begin to flesh out the poem with clear focus on the essence of the word/quality the poem is about.

Biography

A Melbourne-based poet, Peter Bakowski has been writing poetry for more than 30 years. No matter how many books he writes in his lifetime, they'll all be about what it's like to be a human being.

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