



## All-American Poem

*Matthew Dickman, Tony Hoagland (Introduction)*

[Download now](#)

[Read Online ➔](#)

# All-American Poem

*Matthew Dickman , Tony Hoagland (Introduction)*

**All-American Poem** Matthew Dickman , Tony Hoagland (Introduction)  
Winner of the *American Poetry Review*/Honickman First Book Award.

“Matthew Dickman’s all-American poems are the epitome of the pleasure principle; as clever as they are, they refuse to have ulterior intellectual pretensions; really, I think, they are spiritual in character—free and easy and unself-conscious, lusty, full of sensuous aspiration. . . . We turn loose such poets into our culture so that they can provoke the rest of us into saying everything on our minds.”—Tony Hoagland,  
APR/Honickman First Book Prize judge

“Dickman crystallizes and celebrates human contact, reminding us...that our best memories, those most worth holding on to, those that might save us, will be memories of love....The background, then, is a downbeat America resolutely of the moment; the style, though, looks back to the singing free verse of Walt Whitman and Frank O’Hara....(Dickman’s) work sings with all the crazy verve of the West.” —*Los Angeles Times*

“Toughness with a smile....(Dickman) breathes the air of Whitman, Kerouac, O’Hara, and Koch, each of whom pushed against the grain of what poetry and writing was supposed to be in their times.” —*New Haven Review*

*All American Poem* plumbs the ecstatic nature of our daily lives. In these unhermetic poems, pop culture and the sacred go hand in hand. As Matthew Dickman said in an interview, he wants the “people from the community that I come from”—a blue-collar neighborhood in Portland, Oregon—to get his poems. “Also, I decided to include anything I wanted in my poems. . . . Pepsi, McDonald’s, the word ‘ass.’”

*There is no one to save us  
because there is no need to be saved.  
I’ve hurt you. I’ve loved you. I’ve mowed  
the front yard. When the stranger wearing a sheer white dress  
covered in a million beads  
slinks toward me like an over-sexed chandelier suddenly come to life,  
I take her hand in mine. I spin her out  
and bring her in. This is the almond grove  
in the dark slow dance.  
It is what we should be doing right now. Scraping  
for joy . . .*

**Matthew Dickman** is the winner of the May Sarton Award from the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, a poetry editor of *Tin House*, and the coauthor, with brother Michael Dickman, of *50 American Plays*. He lives in Portland, Oregon.

## All-American Poem Details

Date : Published September 1st 2008 by American Poetry Review

ISBN : 9780977639540

Author : Matthew Dickman , Tony Hoagland (Introduction)

Format : Paperback 85 pages

Genre : Poetry

 [Download All-American Poem ...pdf](#)

 [Read Online All-American Poem ...pdf](#)

---

**Download and Read Free Online All-American Poem Matthew Dickman , Tony Hoagland (Introduction)**

## From Reader Review All-American Poem for online ebook

### Dorianne Laux says

New kid on the block Matthew Dickman will give you faith in poetry's future. Human, humane, humongous! A book for a new generation of poets. come one, come all.

---

### Marne Wilson says

I've had this book for quite a while but never got around to writing a review. Today (July 4th) I picked it off a shelf and decided this was the perfect day for it. The poems in this book are frequently humorous but never light or shallow. Instead, we get the idea that Dickman has thought about life so seriously for so long that he's able to see the humor in every situation. I also love the way his poems go on for pages and pages, seemingly wandering all over the place, before finally coming home in the end and proving he knew where he was going all along. Even if you don't like poetry, you may very well end up liking this book!

---

### Shappi says

Interestingly, I had a similar reaction to this book as I did to Chris Martin's American Music, though the two are very different in both form and content. I found myself drawn to particular passages in here, and to the strength of voice. However, the poems went on and on and on. They could have been edited to a third of their length and perhaps worked better. Still, there's a great energy to these poems, despite their rambling and occasional sappiness.

---

### Karyna McGlynn says

I hate this book. It's brilliant.

It's invigorating, startling, beautiful, easy-going, funny, prolix in the best possible way... and just too darn likable. It does everything I can't do in poetry and wish I could.

I scoffed when I first saw the title ("All-American Poem? Whether it's Hoagland-snark or Whitmanesque, it's \*still\* \*wrong\*).

But, no, it's the perfect title for this book, which is young, sunny, big, bounding--both cultured & pop-cultural, political & apathetic, ambitious & unpretentious.

Not to sound too 'woo,' but this book reinvigorates the way I look at the world and makes me reevaluate my own aims and audience as a writer.

It both increases my scope & finely focuses it. Also, I've never seen my students respond to poetry as enthusiastically as when I read them Dickman. We did a Dickman inspired writing exercise and it produced

some of the best work I've seen any of them do.

Special tingle feelings, blah blah blah. Just buy it.

---

### **Michael says**

If I could give this book no stars, I would. I expand on this opinion at the following link:

<http://michaelschiavo.blogspot.com/20...>

---

### **Ramón says**

I am reluctant to review poetry because I don't know enough of the technicals to feel like I'm saying anything useful. However, this collection is a wonderfully breathless dance through rich imagery and a montage of particularities, be they places or people.

Reading this was like having a conversation with a friend who was hopped up on caffeine and wanted to talk until the world began to make sense. I read it in a few hours, and look forward to going back and letting some of the poems soak in.

---

### **C says**

I want to give this book five stars.

I want to hate this book.

Both of these are true, but that's what happens when a voice this blunt stops you in your tracks and makes you see yourself in a different light.

Yes, this poetry is blunt, sexual, loud. And yet, there is a quiet voice beneath it singing an off-key sort of harmony with every verse. Though there is an anger and a sadness, primarily this book is ecstatic - overflowing with the world and its possibilities.

This is a poetry whose narrator is immature and fiercely clinging to that immaturity in a way while also showing an extremely deep understanding of the condition of humanity. I've read comparisons with Bukowski and I can see where that is coming from, but I disagree. There is a fierce hope here that I just don't see in so much of Bukowski.

This one enters the pantheon of my favorite books of poetry. Not 5 stars because I could never compare this to Levis or Fairchild, but still... I can see myself re-reading this book many times and there were times I felt a

chill roll across my shoulderblades.

And it is a book that made me feel like writing. Conceited as that might be, it is reason enough sometimes for me to love something.

(purchased in the Denver International Airport - the best airport I have found to purchase poetry in.)

---

### **Grace says**

I really loved almost every poem in this book. Some of them I will probably read over and over again. Some of them made me uncomfortable, but that's not a bad thing. It's powerful. It was slow to read because after every poem I wanted to stop and think. Dickman captures so many truths and situations in such concise and excellent packages, and they are all a pleasure to read.

---

### **Cammy says**

Easily my favorite book of poems.

---

### **Michelle says**

I loved the whimsy, the concreteness, the tangibility and the esoteric in this collection. I love the reverence and the irreverence and the articulation of the contradiction I feel in myself everyday. It's all so normal and universal, but it's definitely Dickman. Check out the poems American Standard, Grief, Trouble, All-American Poem, Love, Some Days, Slow Dance; maybe you'll get what I'm feeling.

---

### **Ace Boggess says**

A solid collection of flowing, narrative poems, Dickman's book reminded me of Bob Hicok's work, or Matthew Lippman's, two of my favorite writers. On whole, I didn't connect to the book as much as I'd hoped, but it was well worth reading.

---

### **Sophfronia Scott says**

Note: I am not a poet. I can tell you nothing about this book's rhythm or structure or lines. However I am a reader and I can write candidly on how Matthew Dickman's poetry made me feel. Reading this book has been like riding in my convertible with a dear friend, sharing profoundly emotional moments that leave us at times solemn and at other times laughing with joy. We talk about an uncle serving in Vietnam who "would scratch his wife's name over and over into the tough leather of his boots...Alice, Alice, like an antidote for death." Then just a few minutes later I am laughing because "You can go from one state to another and still not know how to act." It's too true!

Matthew Dickman speaks with a certainty and clarity that makes you trust every image, and with a childlike hopefulness that glows with the belief that there is wonder in the world and he is all too happy to share it with us. Because of this clarity and positive energy I especially took to heart every time the poet used the word "love." It seems to me he never uses this word lightly--in fact I felt like he was snapping his fingers in my face every time I read the word as if he were saying, "Look! Love is here! It is real! Attention must be paid." I liked that feeling, as though I could trust him with his emotions--and perhaps mine as well.

Favorites from the collection: The title piece, "All-American Poem," "Slow Dance," "Love," "Byron Loves Me," "Snow," "Chick Corea is Alive and Well," and "The World is Too Huge to Grasp." In truth, though, I didn't find one wrong note in the whole book. It was refreshing to read poetry that is smart, funny, fearlessly emotional and conscious of all the little, loving details that make up our lives.

---

### **Jennifer says**

This writer makes you want to make out with people at parties, take picnics in the park, think about how much you love a sibling....he's a really sensual, excitable writer and I bring this book with me to re-read now that I finished it. I'm not a huge poetry reader but Matthew Dickman is a really different kind of writer--very fun and funny and insightful and in the moment.

---

### **Shawn Sorensen says**

Matthew Dickman swims in passion, speaks truth to power, embraces vulnerability and jumps for joy. Dickman's exuberant style fits free verse like a high quality sleeping bag filled with you and your favorite person.

This book contains some of my most favorite poems, including "Slow Dance" and "Love". For some reason, "Love" makes me even more disappointed Obama won the Nobel Peace Prize.

I'd give this a higher rating, but nit-picky me says he could have written a couple pieces in a different style to add a nice change-of-pace feel to the whole thing. The book also has sort of a sophomoric feel at times - Dickman for example finds a couple of different and unpoetic ways to discuss sleeping with other people's wives - that takes a little away from the important major themes of the book. Still, I think most of us would choose exuberant over resigned.

This Oregon Book Award winner will have major lasting power, yet I look forward to more of his work. I glance at the celebrity tabloids while grocery shopping and wonder what Dickman will write next. I watch Men in Black 3 and wonder what Dickman will write next. I read about repression all over the world and wonder what Dickman will write next.

He titles one poem here "The World is Too Huge to Grasp". Yet, sooner or later, so much of what you reach for will end up grasping you back.

---

### **Daniel Grear says**

I've decided to, for the most part, stop doing written reviews of poetry books because, in truth, I'm tired of pretending like I know what I'm talking about. Individual poems are fine, but when I attempt to make meaning out of entire collections, I feel like a fraud. However, I have a few personal words to say about "All-American Poem." Matthew Dickman is the only poet who's ever inspired me to ask someone out on a date, and not because he or his characters were expressly doing so, but because his poetry is so full of defiant self-advocacy and sexual pride. It's rare that such short pieces of writing make me want to get out and do things in the real world, to live more recklessly. And for this, I am grateful.

---