

TAKE YOUR POET TO WORK DAY

Celebrated the 3rd Wednesday in July

Tony Hoagland

Tony Hoagland was born in November 19, 1953, in Fort Bragg, NC, to mother Patricia and father Peter (an Army doctor). He grew up on military bases in Hawaii, Texas, Alabama, Louisiana and Ethiopia.

"My parents were disconnected from their parents," he said. "We were middle class. There was no religion in my family. So there was an absence of ceremonial knowledge, there was an absence of inherited knowledge, there was an absence of family stories, and there was an absence of instruction. ... I got deeper and deeper into the world of poetry, simply because it was the only thing that stayed constant in my life continuously, year after year, and then decade after decade."

He dropped out of Williams College before getting his degree from the University of Iowa and his MFA from the University of Arizona, then publishing seven poetry books and seven chapbooks, as well as two essay collections. Titles include *Donkey Gospel* (1998), *What Narcissism Means to Me* (2003), *Unincorporated Persons in the Late Honda Dynasty* (2010), and *Priest Turned Therapist Treats Fear of God* (2018).

Hoagland didn't want to exclude anyone from poetry and didn't want people to take his work too seriously. His poems ranged from the biographical to the broadly social, combining precise and everyday imagery and a deep appreciation for nature with thoughtful intelligence, critique, and humor. "I'm proud to be a funny poet," he said. "Humor in poetry is even better than beauty...because it doesn't put people to sleep. It wakes them up and relaxes them at the same time."

Hoagland taught creative writing at the University of Houston and was on the faculty of the Warren Wilson College MFA Program. He received NEA grants and a Guggenheim fellowship. He was married to fiction, essay, and travel writer Kathleen Lee. He died in Santa Fe on October 23, 2018, from pancreatic cancer at the age of 64.



*"We would give anything
for what we have."*

How to take your favorite with you on Take Your Poet to Work Day

1. Color your poet
2. Cut out your poet along dotted lines
3. Attach a popsicle stick to the back of your poet with tape or glue
4. Take your poet to work



For more poets and celebration ideas, visit us at TweetspeakPoetry.com