

From Maxwell Coyden Wheat, Jr., *Paumanok Poets' News Bulletin*, October 11, 2006

If Prof. Falk's book sounds like an academically textual thesis about the technical side of poetry – well, it is partly that. But there are anecdotal accounts of relationships; a tough marriage, pregnancy and a teacher telling her not to use the word, “feminist” which lead her to “speak” as she does in the book. “I am trying to locate who I am as a woman and a writer in the world. It will happen as I speak.” Some of her speaking in the book is with poetry. The book's cover is a vividly colorful acrylic, paper collage, “Anonymous No More” by Miriam Schapiro. That is what the book is, Prof. Falk asserts, “a collage.”

“As we continue to explore, challenge, open, speak – images of isolation change,” Prof. Falk says. “We have become engaged in a process, individually and collectively,” changing perceptions of ourselves within and apart from the community of men.” Nevertheless, her book is also for the male poet. Prof. Falk's approach is a self-searching process that male and female poets can following coming out of the historical and societal contest that we know, but about which the author reminds us, was a “patriarchal...creative process” that the author says “had something to do with polarity, binary thinking, hierarchy, institutionalized logic.” She adds “It often embodied misogynist attitudes and assumptions about women and women's creativity.”

The book is an opportunity and model for female and male poets to initiate or step up self-searching that can result in fresh, interesting, compelling ideas and language in their poetry – as Prof Falk does, asking whether “To reclaim the soul is to reclaim eros? Yes,” she answers, “for women poets to feminize form, we must reclaim eros...” for the male poet, the book is a source for thinking about the feminizing of form that can revolutionize his poetry.

*It Happens As We Speak: A Feminist Poetics* is a dramatically useful book for all poets.

