The story goes that Margaret Atwood was buttonholed at some social function by a brain surgeon. He told her he was interested in writing, too, and intended to take it up after he retired. She snapped back, "And when I retire, I'm going to take up brain surgery."

Writers love this story. Perhaps it warms our hearts because half the people we meet, from brain surgeons to cab drivers, tell us how they want to write a book—as if it was roughly equivalent to wanting to tour Spain this year. All they need is a little holiday time. Or perhaps we love it because we are secretly insecure. Is it really so hard to write a book? I write poetry because I find it easier than the options. It would be much harder for me to be a brain surgeon or a cab driver.

One of my other very favourite stories concerns William Hamilton, the great mathematician who gave his name to the Hamiltonian equations that describe the total energy of a system. Hamilton wanted very much to write poetry, and it took his friend William Wordsworth to point out tactfully that his talents did not lie in that direction. "You send me showers of verses which I receive with much pleasure ... yet we have fears that this employment may seduce you from the path of science." Hamilton was a phenomenally creative, inventive thinker, and part of me thinks that anyone who could handle the symbolic language of equations so jauntily could surely crank out an equally good poem. That he found it difficult is a relief. It seems to confirm that I'm doing something that does indeed require something special.

Yet, I also argue with people who tell me, "Oh, you were born that way," as if I had won some odd lottery. No one says that to the brain surgeon. People assume he may have arrived on the planet with some useful predispositions that were subsequently developed, but those predispositions might equally well be applied in engineering or a biochemistry lab rather than to the manipulation of scalpels. The decision to go down one avenue rather than another is attributed to relatively prosaic forces of inclination; brain surgeons do not assume their choice has to come from a celestially dictated organization of their brains.

So is the ability to write poetry innate or acquired? If it's the former, what kind of special organization might be required? If it's the latter, how do we attend to the schooling of poets?

If poetry is innate, you'd expect to see a wide divergence of talent emerging at a very early age. Surely infant prodigies clearly illustrate a divine tap on the head. However, in comparison...
Neurosurgeon Dr. Lipani specializes in Cranial procedures, brain surgery and brain tumor removal. Our practice serves New Jersey. Image-Guided Brain Surgery. Non-Invasive Brain and Spine Radiosurgery. Cutting-Edge Neurosurgery with. Ablative brain surgery (also known as brain lesioning) is the surgical ablation by various methods of brain tissue to treat neurological or psychological disorders. The word “Ablation” stems from the Latin word Ablatus meaning "carried away". In most cases, however, ablative brain surgery doesn’t involve removing brain tissue, but rather destroying tissue and leaving it in place. The lesions it causes are irreversible. There are some target nuclei for ablative surgery and deep brain stimulation. Those Brain surgery is used to treat a variety of conditions, such as tumors, blood clots, aneurysms, epilepsy and Parkinson's disease. It is performed by a neurosurgeon and involves a physician anesthesiologist with extensive knowledge of the types of anesthesia, monitoring and post-operative care required for these sensitive operations. In some cases, this physician anesthesiologist will be a neuroanesthesiologist who has received advanced clinical training in anesthesia for brain and spinal surgeries.