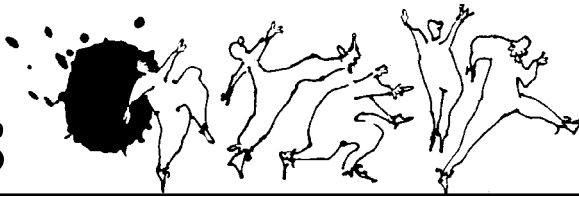


Deanotations



Issue 98

June, 2001

Dear Reader,

We plan to add Deanotations issues to our website (www.blehert.com) after issue 100. Meanwhile, we'll start putting back-issues on our site. (There are already lots of poems there, plus many of Pam's paintings.)

Since we had so little snow this winter, I'm making up for it in this issue. The snow must go on.

Another school shooting. Far too little attention is given the danger of allowing people to have hands. Without hands, it is hard to grasp guns, pull triggers, punch, commit sexual abuse, etc. Hands have been involved in ALL the recent school shootings. Yet in our competitive society with its corporate ethic of GRAB GRAB GRAB, hands go uncontrolled, unlicensed, are seldom confiscated even where used in multiple crimes, and are readily available to anyone, even small children! The United States is particularly backwards in this respect. In Sierra Leone, hands are frequently confiscated. A thief forfeits a hand in Saudi Arabia. Why do we give hands such a free hand?

On the other hand, say some, we have always had hands, but we have not always had shootings in our schools. True, but we also had guns in our society -- and with far looser gun laws -- in earlier decades when there were no school shootings. Yet we denounce guns with fervor, while ignoring hands.

What we did NOT have in our schools before these shootings were "values clarification" courses teaching students to disregard morals derived from church or family and create "their own" (i.e., politically correct) values. We also didn't have large numbers of students put on psych drugs (e.g., Ritalin, Prozac) and given psychological counseling in the schools. In fact, we didn't consider schools to be clinics (how odd!).

This SOUNDS relevant, since nearly all the kids who've shot up schools were previously given counseling and put on psychiatric drugs and then given a clean bill of health. Then they killed people. But that can't be significant. After all, the drugs came from the schools themselves, who surely know what's best for their students. And the shrinks are so sure of the safety of these drugs that they've used medical privacy laws to make it hard to discover what drugs the shooters were on. But *they're* Mental Health Professionals. If we can't trust shrinks, who CAN we trust?

So that leaves us with guns, and, more to the point, HANDS. If we take away guns, kids can still find knives. But if we take away their hands, they can't even give us the finger! I see no drawback, except, perhaps, the added expense of having school nurses place the daily capsules on the students' tongues for them.

*From the hand of
Dean Blehert*

I see a cookie, I grab it. Whee!
Cookies get sucked in by grab-it-y.

Serious people resent my take-it-or-levity.



Folk songs -- all this singing about people losing the ability to breathe: Eat your hearts out, you dead and dying sailors, cowboys, knights, maids, lovers, soldiers, as you hear us wasting all this easy priceless breath on sad songs.

Her paintings make me see. She's an oil pointer.

Poetry: Talking Hello-quently.

Spring! We want MORE! A season for all men.
[Note: Sir Thomas MORE: "A Man for all Seasons"]

When I was young, I craved the ability to knock people's hats off a block away by sheer intention. I really worked at it. You notice how hardly anyone wears a hat these days?

I've relaxed in recent years. The kids are wearing caps again, seldom knocked off, just nudged sideways or backwards (got to keep in practice).

Looking at myself in a mirror, I see me, but if I notice my body in a mirror before I notice I'm looking in a mirror, what I see, increasingly, is someone my age -- that is, someone much older than I am. And increasingly, someone my age looks like anyone my age.

"Yes, you've told me that before." We say that to each other more often as the years pass. Or have I already mentioned that?



Critics condemn the new film as a mediocre reworking of Hollywood platitudes. The rest of us enjoy it. Critics have seen it all before. They remember everything. They skulk about among us like pouting adolescents forced to put up with boring grandparents who tell the same stories over and over again.

Be Still, My Tongue

The heart is a muscle. That's comforting: to know this vital thing inside me is no wimpy blob of fat or brittle bonework, but tough, leathery, like a bicep or a fist, pounding away, POW! WHAM! But the strongest muscle in the body (one of those novelty factoids endlessly circulating through internet limbo) is the tongue, which explains how easily our hearts are overpowered by our deadly tongues.

When Hearts Go Bad

My friend's heart was broken, but is mending now, I hope.

Our bodies are more alive than we like to think. Hearts, for example, are not chunks of hard red candy. I hear they are muscles, tough, maybe leathery, but I think they are full of motion, pliant and willful as puppies, not the same heart from one moment to the next.

"Heart" we say as we say "our love" to grant identity to the cloud formations so unlike one another from moment to moment in our heaven. Invested, thus, so heavily in stasis, it astonishes us, the sudden agony when something actually stops moving.

The dream we clutch too tightly is not our own. Hence the dread of getting what we pray for. The heart tries to deliver and becomes a false heart, a broken piece of hard red candy.

Shot Down by Slow Guns

How to tell when thought is nearly dead?
See the buzz words circling overhead.

School Daze

Crazed with thirst to learn, the kids are reeling;
Poor schools: The vouchers overhead are wheeling.

TV sucks up our attention. We'd like a refund,
but first pay off the national attention deficit.

Run, Darwin, Run!

Is there a missing link --
Or did that gorilla wink?...

A Gory Tale

The debate is rough -- poor Dubya;
Gore will drub and drub and drub ya;
If on just one fact you flub, you'll stay in Texas
evermore:
With blunt sarcasm he'll club ya,
Interrupt and sneer and snub ya...
Voter, does it start to rub ya the wrong way? Hard
to ignore
Shifty eyes of Tipper's hubby - ya dare elect this
scary bore?
Quoth the craven, "Never Gore!"

Stone Killer

What does that idiom mean,
Idi Amin?

Treason

The meeting came to order, but not I,
Though no one knew, because I held my tongue.
While all the cheers are cheered and songs are sung,
In silences the good intentions die.



He must have been chained to a mountain once,
because he's staggering along with the mountain
still on his back, which, I guess, is one way
to escape from a mountain.

"You're a real loser," she said re luck, tauntly.



Awesome Aush!

There is no soup like aush,
By Gawsh!
It's the jewel
of Kabewel!
One bowl is a whole meal --
Such a deal!
No mere nosh
Is osh.
What could be more culinarily gauche
Than never to have tasted auche?
But a mean half-man, I,
When deprived of the crown of cuisine Afgani!
Avgolemono? Mulligatawny? Borscht! Oh BOSH!
I want my osh!
I'm full of boulanee, not baloney,
When I say that "aush" that tastes like minestrone
is phony!
May you spend all your winters in Oshkosh or be
consigned to all the demons in Hieronymus Bosch
If you serve such limp-noodled tangless stuff and
call it osch!
What! No fresh cilantro? Home-made yoghurt? Noodles
made on the premises?!

You aush-huckster! May you be visited by Nemesis!
I'd give my 21-jeweled bulova wautch
For one bowl of da autch
Or French-kiss (ouch!) Caliban
Or moon the Taliban!
Not whole, but half man I stand
Without the sour hot heartsblood of Afghanistanstand.
You can print it huge, paint it in oil or gouache!
Mark my grave: Here Lies One Who Loved His Ouache.

Opening today: SNOW! with a cast of millions.

"Make me like you," says the earth, weary
of weight, to the clouds; the clouds do their best,
covering earth with soft, fluffy whiteness.
We go outside to walk on a cloud. Our feet sink in,
then are supported, like angels in cartoons.
And here on earth, too, soft stuff of clouds
supports giggling angels.

Snow highlights every branch and twig.
Voila! says the sun. Are children still impressed?
Or is it tame compared to marking a block of text
and making it all red bold giant Italics?

Here Comes a Crystal Ball: What Do You See?

The snow seems to fall slowly
unless I focus on one or two flakes spinning and
swooping down as if eager to get into the fray.
What creates this illusion of slowness? The
counterbalance of some flakes blown upwards?
The sense of an unchanging flow where snowflakes
go through a beam of light, as, in a torrent,
droplets form sculpted patterns of purl and braid?
The way a snowflake touches hand or eyelash
so gently? All this slowness made of swiftness,
all this purposeful descent made of random jitter,
all these curved shapes, these softenings
of fence post and branch composed of sharp, cold
6-pointed crystals. No wonder it is so tempting
to hurl snowballs at each other's faces: To reveal
snow as fast, unexpected, hard and edged.



Collapse (or Snowfall Snuffle)

White is the summation of all colors.
For three hours I scrape up
scoops of collapsed rainbow.

Now our driveway is a dark, gleaming river
between steep banks, and my face a patchwork
of red, blue and milky frost. My nose dribbles
(so there's just a hint of yellow), and my feet
are a battlefield where, from the edges,
whiteness impinges on pulsing purple.

Hours later, I still hear the rasp of my shovel
like a throat clearing, the ploof of snow landing
in snow. I lie down for a while, close my eyes.
If I'm looking at colors, I'm not aware of it.
If I'm looking at anything, I'm not aware of it.
I don't want to get sick. I don't want to get sick.
Actually, I think I'm looking at the inside
of my nose. Why is it the size of a cathedral?
Scrape...ploof. Scrape...ploof. Scrape...

Global warming: Where are the snows of yesteryear?
(Huddling in Noah's Arctic?)

The Argument From Design

Snow is made of tiny water crystals -- flakes. Put one on your fingertip or tongue, and you can see/feel/taste it melt. No flake, just a wetness. Snow minus structure. No points, no lace, no design, no crisp intricate unique symmetry. Just a fingertip shiny in sunlight, which magnifies the parallel ridges of your finger print, reflecting (if you look closely) sun and trees and your eye. Just a drop on the tongue becoming part of the human labyrinth. Now you see it...

Does it make one believe in God (a sun that melts and holds latent all design)? I keep staring at the snow. Would I care for a God I could believe in? This morning, knowing each of trillions of flakes as far as I can see is one of a kind and perfect and (in all this brightness) about to vanish, I give God (in exchange) what any magician craves: Rapt disbelief.

This tenderness visits me again and again, no matter how roughly I've abused it before. What can my clumsiness do with this feeling? I try to give it away, but it shatters in my grip. My lips smother it, my words blow it away. I can't give it to you. Perhaps I can give myself to it; then it may find a way (as sculptors make rock dance) to use me to find you.



I take a mug from the window sill -- a black spider zips for cover. Odd, his alarm: He looks so tough, squat, like a weight lifter, furry limbs bulging. He's like a tiny Bluto about to bully a pre-spinachy Popeye. But he scoots, like something a slack-muscled poet could crush casually with a fingertip. I'd run after him (if I could squeeze behind the window-sill mugs), catch up to him, grab his hairy coat-tail, say, "Look, you're a big tough spider, see, I'm trembling! Don't be scared of me," but bodies are bodies, and mine's a mountain to his (once imagination falters), and if our sizes were reversed, he would scuttle as quickly TOWARD me and not to play, no, he and I will never be playmates (this is sad!), not in this rigidly hierarchical universe, where, if I say "Shall we dance?" any bug in footshot had better be afraid, very afraid.

For a long time I've been convinced that my friend is someone very special. He tells me how special I am to him. In his light, my other friends dim -- they are good, but not Perrier. Is he special? What do you think, reader? Is he more special than you are? But you can't be very special, because when I feel friendly towards you, I feel friendly towards everyone.

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DEAN BLEHERT
11919 Moss Point Lane
Reston, VA 20194
<http://www.blehert.com>
dean@blehert.com
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ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED