

REMOVING THE FILTERS

Poems by
Robert H. Deluty



Otter Bay Books
BALTIMORE, MD 2018

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Library of Congress Control Number 2018930559
ISBN 978-0-9904594-9-1

Published by
Otter Bay Books, Ltd.
3507 Newland Road
Baltimore, MD 21218-2513

Printed in the United States of America

In honor and celebration
of the blessed arrival of
my third granddaughter,
Diana Leigh Bauer

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The Noblest Pleasure: Poems (2017)

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Removing the Filters

*Only a child sees things with perfect clarity,
because it hasn't developed all those filters
which prevent us from seeing things that
we don't expect to see.*

Douglas Adams

At the Mall

After withstanding
Relentless beseeching
By his granddaughters,
Aged five and three,
He explains that there are
Hundreds of thousands of
Toys, games, crafts, foods,
Drinks, clothes, shoes, books,
Movies, phones, tablets, posters,
Necklaces, rings, and bracelets
For sale, and that he doesn't have
Enough money to buy them all --
To which the three year-old responds
How about tomorrow?

in his semi,
a Detroit teamster singing
'O sole mio . . .

on his tractor,
a Lubbock farmer singing
Getting to know you . . .

after sneezing,
the atheist glaring at those
who said *God bless you*

ancient Greek scholar
assuming the sports cars are
Alpha Romeos

for no good reason,
the groom opting to wear
a white tux, red *Crocs*

his girlfriend noting
why she couldn't be a shrink:
I love to gossip

her boyfriend noting
why he couldn't be a shrink:
I'd abuse power

Katz telling Quinn
a *rear-end* in Yiddish
isn't a *too-kiss*

Wellington Redd,
a bibliophile, asking
to be called *Well*

How's your dinner? . . .
the child spitting out his food
to respond *Great!*

health-conscious man
finding in his bag of kale
a live scorpion

How do you differ? . . .
annoyed identical twins
showing indifference

Anne O'Malley
scowling as the professor
calls her *Anomaly*

asked to print
her last name first, first name last . . .
Donna Prima moans

Who do you love? . . .
his great-grandchild responding
Shouldn't it be Whom?

young Gail Knox
requesting that her teacher
pronounce the K

Let's catch some rays . . .
his wife wanting a tan,
he wishing to fish

the old patron
paying his young waitress
not to ask questions

mid-wake . . . recalling
Mom taking worms off sidewalks,
placing them on lawns

Manhattanite
loving that most of *cynic*
is *n,y,c*

asked how she got
her answer, the math student
responding *My brain*

asked how he got
his answer, the chem student
responding *I prayed*

mid-session . . .
watching her psychologist
scratching his groin

mid-session . . .
hearing her analyst
talking in his sleep

child with celiac,
pointing at wheat bread, asking
Where's the gluten?

resigning teacher
confiding she loves the kids,
hates the grading

resigning coach
confiding he loves the kids,
hates the parents

nearing the baby,
their three year-old asking
Can I pet him?

his granddaughter
assuming Yogi Berra
meditated

while swimming,
eighty-year-old twin sisters
discussing pool boys

naming their newborn,
delivered mid-hurricane,
Mercy Grace

naming their newborn,
weighing eighteen ounces,
Samson Victor

pre-med student
asking the old mortician
to be her mentor

pre-law student
using invisible ink
to cheat on a test

her child assuming
Nobelist Curie's first name
was Madame

Sunday crossword . . .
their child filling the boxes
with emojis

Sunday crossword . . .
their teen filling the boxes
with profanities

Richard Shaw
requesting to be nicknamed
something besides Rick

Richard Sack
pleading to be nicknamed
anything but Dick

her young son asking
if folks in prison can get
pizza delivered

museum guide
referring to himself as
a leading figure

a zaftig woman,
in a tube top, walking
a greyhound

a tall, stout man,
in a three-piece suit, walking
two dachshunds

hoping, if he gets
dementia, he'll forget
only the bad stuff

the dentist
explaining to her patients
I've a job to fill

their ten year-old
inquiring if it's O.K.
to skip puberty

post-delivery . . .
describing her twelve-pound son
as *big, red, jolly*

doctor and lawyer,
during dinner, trading
priest/rabbi jokes

on his truck's windshield,
finding the handwritten note
Park Less Shittyly

on her car's windshield,
finding the handwritten note
U Rich But Cant Drive

first grader learning
if you throw up in school,
they'll send you home

novelist's mother
telling him how much she loves
his new book's color

farmer's young son
weeping upon discovering
veal comes from calves

the barber/pilot
christening his private plane
Hair Force One

fifth grade wise guy
regarding detention hall
as his home room

Great-Grandma noting
she begins each breakfast
with peach schnapps

Great-Grandpa noting
he begins each breakfast
reading the obits

on Mother's Day,
her husband inquiring
where's the *Pine-Sol*

on Mother's Day,
her teenaged son asking
if they own a mop

writing his memoir,
the actor opts to exclude
three of his ex-wives

making a statement . . .
the bride's mother and aunts dressed
as if in mourning

in the pet shop,
a parrot owner seeking
to purchase perches

slow Friday night . . .
their roommate planning to shave
her shoulder hair

Queens pastor choosing
for Sunday's sermon topic
why God hates the Mets

young job applicant
trying to field the question
How'd you like to die?

Uncle Monte
telling his young niece it's short
for Montezuma

the miner
informing the guitarist
I dig hard rock

as they say grace,
a dear crashing through
their kitchen door

Jewish girl asking
could she trade ten good deeds
for one scallop

Jewish boy asking
could he trade twenty good deeds
for one bratwurst

triplets bringing Mom
cards, bouquets, wine, chocolates
on their birthday

Your goal in life? . . .
his child responding *To be*
a superhero

Your goal in life? . . .
her teen responding *To be*
an antihero

June '17 . . .
fuming that his wife's birthday
falls on Father's Day

child abuse victim
beginning her internship
at Disneyland

her tall, wide uncles
wearing coats that could double
as king size quilts

the kosher chef
claiming **nothing** tastes better
with bacon

Gayle Cobb resisting
the urge to name her child
Cornelia

Kate Graham succumbing
to the urge to name her child
Millicent

asking his grandchild
when did *dope* become
a compliment

Passing It On

The young mother with
Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder
Begins to tear up as
She watches her four-year-old son
Line up against his bedroom walls
All of his toys and stuffed animals
By height

calling her Dad's sib
who always brings candy
Uncle Gummy

calling her Mom's sib
who always brings health food
Aunt Sugarless

twenty-first inning . . .
MLB coach running out
of chewing gum

triple overtime . . .
NBA coach running out
of antacids

describing
her unicycling husband
as *one tired man*

Baltimore boy
stating he wants to attend

Johnny Hopkins

New Orleans girl
stating she wants to attend

Two Lanes

her spouse avowing
he hates blue cheese: both the taste
and the concept

Thai adoptee
turning four, sporting a new tee,

Little Citizen

the comic's wife
giving birth to quadruplets
on April 1st

nine-year-old catcher
wiping away Mom's kiss
with his new mitt

on one knee, asking
his girlfriend, a skydiver,
to take the plunge

a Dad depicting
his middle son as deranged,
but malleable

the midshipman
wishing *seaman* and *semen*
weren't homophones

weed smoking execs
referring to themselves
as *high achievers*

What's all the racket? . . .

from his room, her son responds

Fighting temptation

kickboxer's girlfriend

struggling to watch his match with

either eye open

Fred Behr insisting,

after the birth of his child,

to be called Papa

her spouse assuming

brasseries specialize in

undergarments

express checkout line . . .

asking if a dozen eggs

are twelve items

high school tennis champ,
joining the Marines, noting
he's happy to serve

shoe salesman
calling the young sled dogs
mush puppies

Saul Kahn joining
the physicians' practice of
Dev Khan and Pat Conn

his young son musing
why are Sox red in Boston,
white in Chicago

putt-putt course, midnight . . .
stoned man sinking a golf ball
with a pool cue

Jehovah's Witness
ignoring the door knocks
of trick-or-treaters

the exorcist
admitting that his new car
was repossessed

with his last breath,
the old scholar amending
his prior remark

English professor
preferring *Falstaffian*
to *roly-poly*

ditching the cello,
their Dad noting *My talent*
lies in listening

technical writer
boasting that her child
attends Bard

ad jingle writer
bragging that his child
goes to Emerson

Juan pronouncing
whack-a-mole as if it rhymed
with *guacamole*

Wanda pronouncing
Worcestershire as if it rhymed
with *poor jester's lyre*

on Halloween . . .
demolition crew razing
the wrong building

*Nothing in life is to be feared.
It is only to be understood.*

Marie Curie

*The possession of knowledge
does not kill the sense of wonder
and mystery. There is always
more mystery.*

Anais Nin

nine-year-old Matt
wondering if, in heaven,
he can eat burgers

ninety-year-old Max
wondering if, in heaven,
he can learn Chinese

selecting
the deluxe space heater as
their housewarming gift

Duluth councilman
preferring Tom Hagen to
Sonny Corleone

Miami banker
preferring Hyman Roth to
Pete Clemenza

music teacher
praising the young harpist
for her verve and pluck

a druggist named Ned
telling customers it's short
for Nedicinal

anxious man rooting
for the Giants infielder
Joe Panik

characterizing
her irritable husband
as a *whine lover*

old locksmith
citing skill and kindness as
the keys to success

missing both thumbs,
enraged he can't give others
the middle finger

What's a fault line? . . .
the attorney responding
Mea culpa

What's a chorus line? . . .
the voice coach responding
Tra-la-la

young scholar
coupling CV length
with happiness

old scholar
equating CV length
with worthiness

archaeologists
calling their disagreements
bones of contention

fiftyish woman
eyeing her saggy tattoo,
No Regrets

married thirty years,
still unsure what his wife
finds amusing

married thirty years,
still unsure what her husband
does for a living

baseball coach
describing high heels as
grate catches

Sid Blume enraging
his parents by adopting
the nickname Bubba

status seeker
regarding ants as
social climbers

Grandpa singing
to his ailing dachshund
Who let the dogs out? . . .

Grandma singing
to her sickly parakeet
Fly like an eagle . . .

the homophobe
feeling uneasy hearing
the word *sashay*

the prof stating
Never generalize!
to his students

her son explains why
the name Ahmed Adoudi
is comical

her spouse explains why
the name Holden McGroin
is hysterical

mythologist
defining *satyr* as
a Pan pal

Valentine's Day . . .
giving his meat-loving wife
a bacon bouquet

Gary Marks hoping
to write an Econ textbook
with Steven Ingalls

Peter White hoping
to write an Ethics textbook
with Martin Wong

in the ER . . .
an ill mother's toddler
licking an armrest

mid phone session . . .
the psychologist cutting
into a pork chop

Pflug's and Knight's sons
wanting first names that commence
with silent letters

paranoid man
not trusting that his new car
can park itself

the minister
regarding *amoral* as
see no evil

two taverns
competing on the same block:
Moe's and *Cheers*

two barbershops
competing in one plaza:
Calvin's and *Floyd's*

Stop talking! . . . his kids,
squabbling in the car's backseats,
respond *Can we sing?*

Jewish youngster
threatening the class bully
with a slingshot

research lab, midnight . . .
untentured Chem professor
sucking his thumb

convincing herself
fat-free sherbet tastes like
Haagen-Dazs ice cream

convincing himself
gluten-free donuts taste like
Krispy Kreme crullers

tourists alighting
in Maui, trying to get
the lei of the land

The Honest Truth

The elderly gentleman,
Standing outside the ladies room,
Explains to a young woman that
His wife is inside.
When asked how long
He's been waiting for her,
He responds with a sigh,
Our entire marriage.

Halloween evening . . .
a Pittsburgh toddler dressed
as the Stanley Cup

film student giggling
as she learns *Dead Man's Gold*
starred Lash LaRue

film student roaring
as he learns *Cimarron*
starred Richard Dix

after a hard day,
the world-class chef makes himself
a Fluffernutter

You can't have it all! . . .
their teen responding *That's fine,*
I only need most

on campus,
an old, cigar-loving prof
missing ashtrays

in Hollywood,
an astronomer buying
a map of the stars

a child pronouncing
sweet Aunt Eunice's name
You nice

a child pronouncing
mean Aunt Evelyn's name
Evil-in

post-funeral . . .
her boss asking *How's it feel*
being an orphan?

arcade lover

requesting for his tombstone

Game Over

buxom blonde

requesting for her tombstone

My Eyes Are Up Here

actors deeming

Arsenio and Deidre

Halls of fame

singers deeming

Lena and Marilyn

Hornes of plenty

activists deeming

Doris and Dorothy

Days of devotion

stock car racer,
in Manhattan, fearing
the taxi cabs

big city cop,
in Cheyenne, fearing
the grasshoppers

Al's Diner . . . her date
placing his dinner order:
liver and grits

Al's Diner . . . his date
placing her dinner order:
half a grapefruit

Bangkok tourists
watching elephant polo
while high on yaba

neurosurgeons,
after three rounds of drinks,
telling knock-knock jokes

psychoanalysts,
after four rounds of drinks,
telling ethnic jokes

Allan Malone,
post-divorce, calling himself
All Alone

Augusta golfer
defining the word *putt*
as *a Masters stroke*

aged ninety, dying . . .
ex-Auschwitz guard rehearsing
his excuses

the scholar scowling
at a child for confusing
affect and *effect*

ditching ace roofers
for displaying on their trucks
Trump bumper stickers

law school grad
calling the bar exam
a legal hurdle

leaving her blind date
upon learning his top film:
Freddy Got Fingered

leaving his blind date
upon learning her top show:
Fox & Friends

his wife
fearing introspection
more than violence

her husband
fearing intimacy
more than loss

two psychologists
debating who's more deranged:
Scarecrow or Two-Face

two ministers
debating who's more evil:
Bane or Ra's al Ghul

climatologist
complaining she's only got
fair-weather friends

death camp survivor
daydreaming of opening
an ice cream parlor

requesting
that his shrink stop quoting
from *Seinfeld*

requesting
that her lawyer stop quoting
from *The Godfather*

after work,
two ballet lovers meeting
at a local barre

the optician
claiming his favorite note
is C sharp

Who painted “The Scream”? . . .

high school freshman answering

Edward Mulch

Who wrote “War and Peace”? . . .

high school sophomore responding

Leo Toystory

Who drew “Sorrow”? . . .

high school junior replying

Vincent Van Lines

Who penned “Dubliners”? . . .

high school senior asserting

James Joyce Brothers

Regina Updike

and Peter Schmuck comparing

name-induced woes

asked to define *coop*,
the English prof responding
Place to pick up chicks

hearing him called
Doorman, a child asks *Are you*
a superhero?

Wilson technician
noting how much he loves
making a racket

Why'd you get undressed? . . .
the three year-old explaining
Itchy tushy

Why'd you get undressed? . . .
the ninety year-old answering
Thanks very much

bipolar plumber
admitting to co-workers
he runs hot and cold

anxious plumber
sharing with the therapist
his sinking feeling

Christian boy ponders
if Pope Francis ever wears
tee shirts

Jewish girl ponders
if Pope Francis only owns
white yarmulkes

Gramps using fireworks
inside his garage to remove
a wasps' nest

Sound Argument

Over breakfast,
Her eight year-old
Asks if *lush* is
Rich and juicy,
And *plush* means
Fancy and swank,
And if a *rush* is
Really thrilling,
Then why is *crush*
So cruel?

Cayenne's country? . . .

a tenth grader offering

French Iguana

the groom's brother

giving as his wedding gift

two Swiss Army knives

the bride's sister

giving as her wedding gift

a melon baller

OCD gambler

feeling uneasy that odds

can be even

Any allergies? . . .

his new patient replying

In-laws, New Jersey

*Isn't it enough to see that a garden is beautiful
without having to believe that there are fairies
at the bottom of it too?*

Douglas Adams

multiple sneezer
hearing her husband remark
*You get **one** "Bless you"*

Mom modifying
yet another adjective
with *kinda*

Dad ending
yet another sentence
with *ya know*

asked to complete
Do unto others . . ., her child
answering *real fast*

asked to complete
Two wrongs don't make . . ., his child
answering *a lot*

standing room only . . .
the hand surgeon's office
on July 5th

How are you doing? . . .
their preteen remarks *Better*
than I deserve

asked the meaning
of *noogies*, the prof replies
knuckle-headed acts

teller applicant
noting on his resume
Human cannonball

four-year-old boy
pleading with his depressed Mom
not to hurt herself

mid-match, French Open . . .
defaulting after destroying
his last racquet

the kindergartner
telling her younger brother
farts are *butt thunder*

the poet naming
his new sailing vessel
T. S. L. Yacht

young prof reading
her student's evaluation:
Try ditch-digging

old prof reading
his student's evaluation:
You so don't suck

Paper or plastic? . . .

anxious shopper answering

Whichever's safer

Paper or plastic? . . .

deranged shopper answering

The lesser evil

What's a plateau? . . .

Granddad responding *Highest*

form of flattery

second grade teacher

pointing out that nice people

can have *brute strength*

third grade teacher

noting *awfully kind* is not

a contradiction

the tennis pro
explaining why he retired:
Too lonely out there

the eighty year-old
placing in a new wallet
his junior prom pic

Jewish Dad sighing . . .
four sons, all over thirty:
no professionals

Jewish Mom crying . . .
four sons, all over thirty:
no daughters-in-law

Your next goal? . . .
the new Nobelista responds
To be happy

wishing others
wouldn't misread his *MOM* tat
as *WOW*

their math teacher
noting her favorite snake
is the adder

corn growing lovebirds
pointing out that *maize* is part
of *main squeeze*

libertine farmer
noting that *rye* is part
of *roving eye*

at first base,
the young umpire erring
on the safe side

Telling It Like It Is

In the Acknowledgements
section of her dissertation,
the doctoral candidate
expresses her appreciation
to her examining committee,
research participants, classmates,
parents, siblings, grandfather,
aunts, friends, and husband.
Finally, she gives thanks
to her beloved children,
aged four and two, noting
that were it not for them,
she would have completed
the work far, far earlier.

protesting a bath,
her child points out *washed up*
means *useless, done for*

archaeologist
asserting he often dates
older women

referring
to her ex-husband's Dad as
*my father-**un**-law*

Adam's family? . . .
her wise-guy son replying
Cain, Abel, Itt

hearing from Harvard . . .
the letter of acceptance
was sent in error

phone session . . .
the shrink providing
therapy naked

asked the sources
of her many tweets, their teen
deflects with *Bird nests*

family photo . . .
Great-Gram and her three sisters
holding their handguns

trainers describing
the circus elephants as
ring heavyweights

Yale prof informing
his grad student how she should
pronounce her own name

asked by the coach
how he works out, their son states
I tend to run late

while doing eighty,
the driver eating dinner
with a knife and fork

the lawyer calling
spelling bees and science tests
class actions

the judge calling
well-mannered bureaucrats
civil suits

Beatrice Larkey
insisting young relatives
not call her *Ma*

job recruiter
viewing *junk art* as
refuse work

Navy SEAL struggling
through a nightmare involving
Oz flying monkeys

in Copenhagen,
tourists learning *bae* means *poop*,
not *sweetheart*

discovering
Gram has on her bucket list
French kissing Brad Pitt

discovering
Gramps has on his bucket list
learning to joust

mountain's summit . . .
three climbers singing a song
from the top

Larry Clark, Lee Child,
Lynda Carter holding dear
Borden's Elsie

Max Carver, Marc Cohn,
Morris Chestnut, Michael Che
acclaiming emcees

during spring break,
their eight year-old designing
a seesaw for three

her Dad's funeral . . .
dry eye sufferer wishing
she could weep

high school pic . . . trying
to explain to his grandsons
a girlfriend's mullet

high school pic . . . trying
to explain to her great-aunts
a boyfriend's skullet

New Jersey butcher
boasting that his sausages
are best of the wurst

error-prone shortstop
holding a mock funeral
for his fielding glove

runway model
noting her love of fashion
is wearing thin

ex-POW

praying for just one night of
deep sleep, sweet dreams

Intro Psych pupil
assuming *superegos*
are the best ones

Intro Psych pupil
assuming *introjection*
leads to pregnancy

the old barber
preparing for Thanksgiving
all the trimmings

his widow . . . hearing
We're so sad Jim passed, screams
*No, he **killed** himself!*

stand-up comic
hoping to win over folks
bit by bit

entomologist
defining *apian* as
bee-fitting

blind/deaf elder
praying to see and hear
if he's an angel

her obese great-aunts
finding pants that fit to be
sizable problems

told Jesus loves them,
Ruth and Meyer Moskowitz
shouting *Mazel Tov!*

a youngster giggling
as her great-grandfather
utters *My bad!*

an elder roaring
as his great-granddaughter
utters *My word!*

eve of his birthday . . .
bragging to friends *Tomorrow*
I'll be a decade

a chef daydreaming
of opening chic bistros
in the Bronx subway

Olympic athlete
describing *sunning* as
going for the bronze

the young runner
assuming a marathon
is twenty-six blocks

job interviewer
asking which playing card suit
is her favorite

gynecologist
and his patient, an actress,
discuss female parts

a fifth grader
inquiring how can there be
private exhibits

a seventh grader
inquiring how can there be
permanent loans

pet store owner
describing the serene birds
as *unflappable*

a yachtsman
calling the marina
his *berth place*

Baptist boy asking
whether Jesus, as a child,
ever misbehaved

Baptist girl asking
whether Jesus, as a teen,
ever dated

the fisherman
explaining to his blind date
why he's a great catch

French chef gasping
hearing melted *Velveeta*
called *liquid gold*

Thai chef weeping
watching his children eating
mac 'n cheese pizza

history prof
referring to Russian tsars
as *pre-Red heads*

A/C installer
working overtime to get
his ducts in a row

Friday the thirteenth . . .
bouncing a home run off
the left fielder's head

eyeing her tattoo,
a Marine tells his daughter
Better be henna!

P.E. teacher's obit
noting how much he loathed
rhythmic gymnastics

autocorrect
changing his mistyped *perfect*
to *pervert*

autocorrect
changing her mistyped *crackers*
into *crack whores*

their six-year-old son
assuming *slot machines* are
candy dispensers

Fenway Park mowers
referring to themselves as
diamond cutters

rural wind vortex,
near an orchard, causing plums
to rain on Main Street

the scholar claiming
he finds the study of frogs
ribbiting

after marrying
James Grace, Amy Singh opting
to hyphenate

after marrying
Frank Maas, Mary Crist choosing
not to hyphenate

health club locker room . . .
urging his three-year-old son
not to stare or touch

touring India,
eyeing one banyan tree
shading three acres

the banker
describing *home loans* as
dollars for quarters

cruise ship passenger
guessing the average incomes
of the servers, served

the jilted bride
serving her wedding cake
to homeless vets

Father Knows Best

The young couple and
Their six-month-old daughter
Meet the veteran photographer
Who employs every tried-and-true
Tactic to get the baby to smile.
Tickles are met with grimaces.
Squeak toys evoke tears.
Funny faces elicit blank stares.
Finally, Dad takes
The baby from Mom and
Throws her in the air.
The infant comes down with
A joyous, open-mouthed grin,
Mom and Dad beam, and
The photographer whispers
Got it.

Author's Note

Dr. Robert H. Deluty is Associate Dean Emeritus of the Graduate School at the University of Maryland, Baltimore County. A psychology professor at UMBC from 1980 to 2016, he was named Presidential Teaching Professor in 2002. He and his wife, Barbara (a clinical psychologist), live in Ellicott City, Maryland and have two children, Laura and David, and three granddaughters, Ava, Claire, and Diana. Dr. Deluty's poems and essays have been published in *The Wall Street Journal*, *The Baltimore Sun*, *The Pegasus Review*, *Modern Haiku*, *Voices: The Art and Science of Psychotherapy*, *Psychiatric Times*, *Jewish Currents*, the *Journal of Poetry Therapy*, *Welcome Home*, *Muse of Fire*, *Maryland Family Magazine*, *Gastronomica: The Journal of Food and Culture*, *The Faculty Voice*, and many other newspapers, journals, and anthologies. *Removing the Filters* is his fifty-fourth book.

